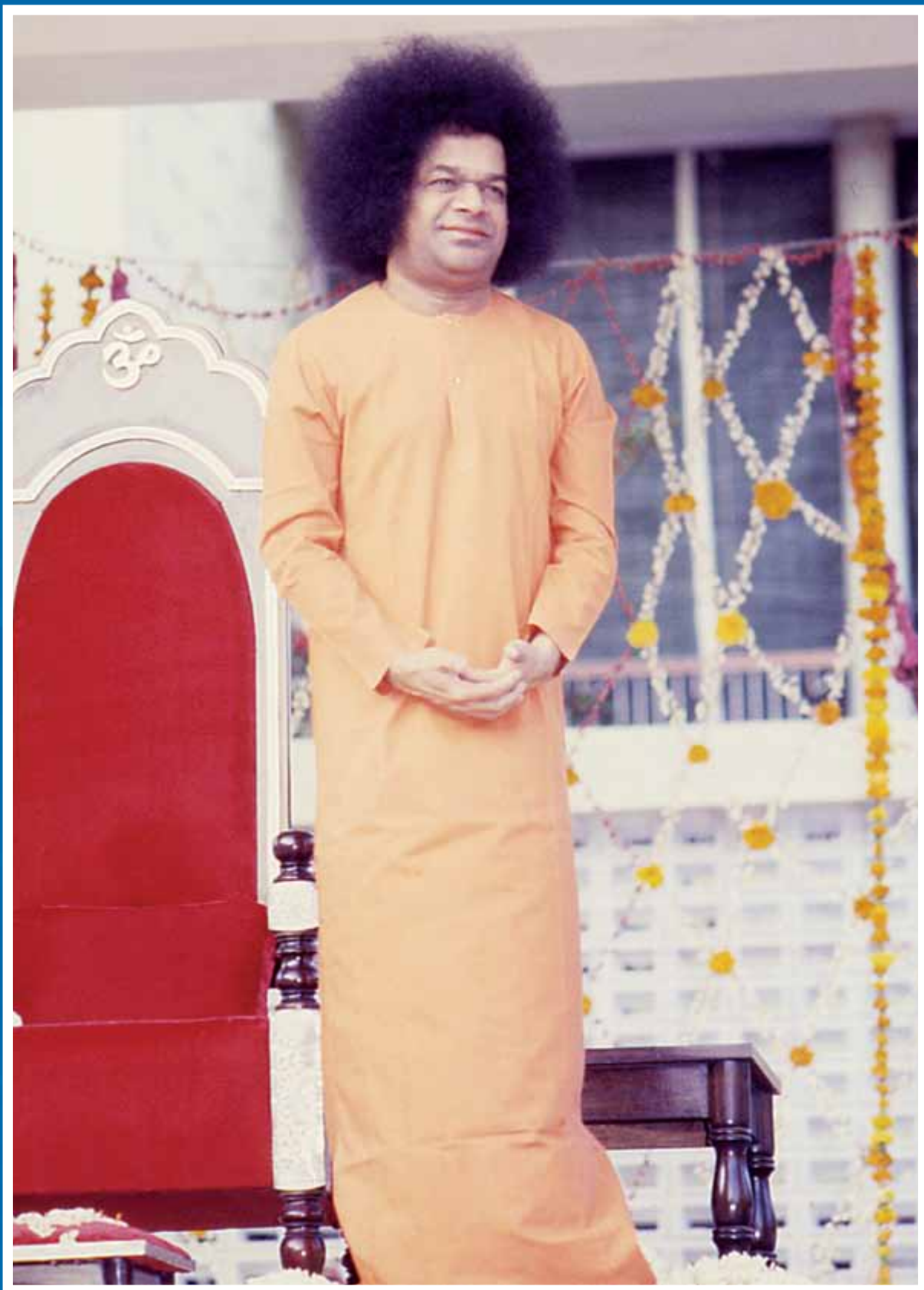


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*"The spiritual path is very easy
but due to our ignorance we are
confused. Accept that whatever
happens is for your own good
and for the good of the world. If
your desire is not fulfilled, do not
feel bad."*



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*"Sanathana Sarathi" wishes all
devotees a holy and prosperous New Year*

AVATAR VANI

UNDERTAKE SADHANA TO EARN GOD'S GRACE

DEVELOP DIVINE QUALITIES

Embodiments of Divine Love!

IN ORDER TO ATTAIN AND experience Divinity, it is necessary to have divine thoughts and perform divine actions. Many people pursue various paths to spirituality and expect results, but at times they become disappointed and frustrated. What is the reason? Everyone has to examine whether he is obeying God's command or not. People behave in a wayward manner and therefore do not gain freedom (liberation). Everyone should know all the aspects of Sadhana (spiritual practice). Most aspirants today consider Sadhana to be Japa (repetition of a Mantra), Bhajan (singing hymns), meditation, etc., but these are merely worldly practices as they involve the use of the body, the mind and the intellect. We should transcend these three, for the body is temporary and the mind is wavering.

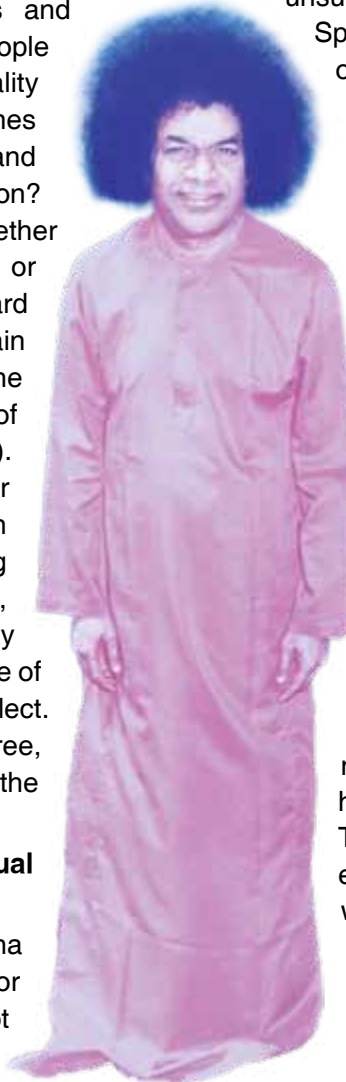
Sadhana Signifies Spiritual Wealth

What does the word Sadhana mean? 'Sa' means identity or proximity. Dhana does not

mean worldly wealth, power, etc., but it means Divine Wealth or Truth, and oneness with that Truth which is eternal, ancient, pure and unsullied. This wealth is called Sadhana.

Spiritual practices do not consist only of sitting with eyes closed and limbs controlled. We should also understand the environment in which we live and then we would gain God's grace. We must bear all opposites such as heat and cold, rain and sun, pleasure and pain, profit and loss, equally. Vyasa taught the essence of the Vedas in just two sentences: Helping others is meritorious. Hurting others is sin.

The word "Paropakara" consists of three syllables – 'Para', 'Upa' and 'Kara'. 'Para' means the Supreme or the Highest Abode; 'Upa' means nearness and 'Kara' means to do or to go. Paropakara, therefore, means that one should do good and help others in order to go near God. This is the proper spiritual path, the essence of the Upanishads. In the word "Upanishad", 'Upa' means near and 'Shad' means sit. What is the meaning of sitting near? The significance is that a disciple must



sit down at the Feet of God (Guru) who is on a higher level. All the spiritual texts teach how to go near God. Just as one goes near an air conditioner to get coolness and comfort when it is hot, similarly, when one goes near God, he would develop Divine qualities. This is Sadhana.

What is “Papa” (sin)? Harming others is sin; classifying and diversifying and forgetting unity is a sin. Names and forms may vary, but the Spirit is only one. The maxim, *Iswara Sarva Bhutanam* (God is the indweller of all beings) says that God is in every being. God and Nature are in union where God is the cause and Nature is the effect. There cannot be an effect without a cause. To consider unity as diversity is a sin. The spiritual path is very easy but due to our ignorance we are confused. Accept that whatever happens is for your own good and for the good of the world. If your desire is not fulfilled, do not feel bad.

Have only the Desire for God

You are not one, but three: the one you think you are (the body), the one others think you are (the mind) and the one you really are (the Atma). Take, for example, a piece of cloth. It consists of cotton, threads and cloth. Our many desires may be compared to threads. If you remove them one by one, the cloth would disappear. Likewise, the mind would disappear after the removal of all desires. Less luggage, more comfort, makes travel a pleasure in the journey of life. Have only the desire for God. Develop this unique novel desire and also follow the command of God. Develop the faith and determination to desire only God, to follow His command and trust that whatever God says is for your own good.

Once there was a king in India whose custom was to drink sugarcane juice during a certain festival. The king desired to cut the sugarcane himself. As he had no experience

All our experiences are temporary like passing clouds. They are not permanent. Sadhana teaches us that pain and pleasure are interconnected.

The importance of Sadhana lies in maintaining equanimity at all times. God has no selfishness. He is totally selfless. Whatever He does, it is for the good of the devotees. We should never question the actions of God. He is the embodiment of love and His love is totally selfless. Man should follow God and develop selfless love. As God is complete totality, man should surrender totally to reach God.



in this, by mistake he cut off his finger. His minister declared, “O king, this is very good for you”. The king became very angry and had the minister imprisoned. The minister declared that to be imprisoned was good for him. One day, the king decided to journey into the forest, and after some time he stopped to take rest under a tree. While resting, he overheard a nearby tribal king and his tribe members discussing their need for a perfect human being for a sacrifice. They soon discovered the king and expressed great happiness. They captured him, gave him a bath and made all the preparations for the sacrifice. Suddenly, they spotted the place on his hand where the finger had been accidentally cut off. They decided to release him as he was imperfect, and the king returned to his kingdom. He mused, “What the minister said was true indeed. It was for my own good that my finger was cut off”. He went to the prison cell, told the minister that what he had said was true and released him. The minister replied, “Yes, the prison was also good for me. If I had followed you into the forest, they would have sacrificed me instead”.

The king now believed that everything that happened was due to the Divine command. He said, "Pleasure and pain are good for me. Whatever God chooses for me is good for me". Everyone should have full knowledge of this truth. This is Sadhana.

Sadhana is not only Japa, rituals, Bhajans, etc. The essence of all Sadhana is to obey God's command. In God's treasury, there are many gems and valuables. What is God's nature? It is to give more than you can understand; but if you ask, your prayer may not be fulfilled.

Do not ask, oh mind, do not ask. The more you ask, the more you will be neglected. God will certainly grant you what you deserve without your asking. Did He not grant the wish of Sabari, who never asked? Did He not redeem Jatayu, who never asked but sacrificed his life for His cause?

(Telugu Poem)

God gives more than you could ever ask when you follow His command, worship Him wholeheartedly and with full surrender. That is true Sadhana.

Once when Rama, Lakshmana and Sita were wandering in the forest, Rama sat down at a place pretending to be tired and asked Lakshmana to build a hut at a place Lakshmana liked. Lakshmana sat down and started weeping. "Why are you weeping? What has gone wrong?" asked Rama. "After dedicating my everything to You, do I have any separate liking? I carry out whatever You like. I have dedicated my mind, body, senses, everything to You. I am empty inside. There is nothing of my own." Lakshmana had surrendered completely to Rama. Rama said, "Yes, this was My mistake". Rama hugged Lakshmana and said, "It is easy to get an ideal wife or mother, but to get a brother like you is not possible". Divine Love has no limits.

The world is ephemeral and full of misery, but there is Eternal Divinity within it. Today, love, worship and other acts are merely a show; true spirituality is not being practised. If you cannot follow the command of God, your worship is of no use. One should not have a dual mind; a man with a dual mind is half blind. If you have the feelings of mine and thine, then it is business partnership; there should not be any business between God and the devotee. There should only be Divine relationship. Give and always give. Give without expectation. That is your duty. Maintaining the heart in purity is spiritual practice. There is no wisdom in dualistic attitude. What is wisdom? Non-dualism is wisdom. Recognising the One without a second is wisdom.

Unbridled Freedom Takes Man to Wrong Path

People today talk about freedom. They interpret freedom as Swechchha. But Swechchha does not denote doing as you like. What does Swechchha mean? Swa + Ichchha = Swechchha. Swa means Atma and Ichchha means desire. So, the desire of the Atma is Swechchha. It is not the desire of the mind; it is not the desire of the intellect. It is the desire of the Atma. The body is like a water bubble and the mind is like a mad monkey. You will go wrong by following the body and the mind. So, do not follow the body, do not follow the mind. Follow the conscience. Then only will you earn the grace of God. You cannot have God's grace by unbridled freedom of the body, mind and intellect. When you realise this truth, you will be able to gain God's grace. So, Sadhana does not mean just sitting in meditation and doing Japa. It has many more aspects.

We should also know that pleasure and pain are not separate. Without pain, pleasure has no value. *Pleasure is an interval between two pains.* Without night, day has no value. We should accept both pleasure and pain with

equal-mindedness. All our experiences are temporary like passing clouds. They are not permanent. Sadhana teaches us that pain and pleasure are interconnected. The importance of Sadhana lies in maintaining equanimity at all times. God has no selfishness. He is totally selfless. Whatever He does, it is for the good of the devotees. We should never question the actions of God. He is the embodiment of love and His love is totally selfless. Man should follow God and develop selfless love. As God is complete totality, man should surrender totally to reach God.

In Italy, there lived a very famous maker of violins named Antony. He used to make violins par excellence and took one year to make a single violin. His friends used to mock at him, saying, "You are taking one year to make one violin. How are you going to look after your family? You are indeed a fool". Antony replied, "Whatever I do, I do it perfectly. God is perfect. Even if one string is imperfect, it amounts to betraying the Lord. So, I do not do it that way. I make the violin perfect in all respects in order to win the grace of God". Whether a task is small or big, it should be done perfectly. Jesus said, "The Lord in the heaven is perfect. I am also perfect like Him. Otherwise, I will not be a befitting son of the Lord".

God is the embodiment of compassion, kindness and love. We should manifest similar perfection in this world. In order to attain perfection in this world, we ought to be kind to one and all. A true spiritual aspirant believes that God is perfect and so he too should attain that kind of perfection.

*Poornamada Poornamidam, Poornat
Poornamudachyate,
Poornasya Poornamadaya,
Poornamevavashishyate.*

(That is full, this is full. When the full is taken out of the full, what remains is again the full.)

God is full and infinite. So, the nature of the devotee should also be full and infinite. Always experience fullness. That is God's command. That is real freedom. Obedience to God's command leads to spiritual freedom.

Only God is your True Friend

Though it is difficult to have good friends in Kali Yuga, try to have only good friends. So long as you have money, all will come and say 'hello' to you. When your pocket is empty, they will not say even goodbye to you. They are not true friends. So long as there is water in the tank, thousands of frogs will swarm the tank. When the tank is dry, there will not be even a single frog. Worldly friends are like that only. Your only true friend is God who is in you, above you and all around you. God is the embodiment of true freedom. We should therefore have faith in God. Our faith in God should be steady. For this, we need to have total surrender.

That is love. Experience love. Do not analyse love. Enjoy it. When you are immersed in Divine Love, you will think of God and nothing else. Once Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa took his disciple Paramananda to river, caught hold of his head and immersed it in water. Paramananda was totally confused. After Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa pulled his head out of water, he asked his disciple, "What did you think when your head was in water"? Paramananda replied, "I could not think of anything except how to get out of water as I was gasping for breath". Similarly, when you are totally immersed in Divine Love, you will only think of God. That is real concentration. Do not waste time. Time waste is life waste. Time is God. So, love God every moment of your life.

(Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan, "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram").

– **Bhagavan's Divine Discourse in Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal on 8th April 1996.**

Starting with this issue of Sanathana Sarathi, we will publish from time to time the letters of Bhagavan which He wrote on various occasions. These letters contain the pearls of wisdom and advice to everyone, irrespective of caste, creed or race for an ideal life.



Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

PRASANTHI NILAYAM P.O.
ANANTAPUR DT. (A.P.)
PHONE NO. 30

Message

you as body, mind or soul are a dream, but what you really are is existence, knowledge, Bliss. You are the GOD of this universe. you are creating the whole universe and drawing it in. To gain the infinite universal individuality, the miserable little prison individuality must go. Ashanti is no crying or any negative condition. it is seeing of all in all we see. it is the heart that reaches the goal. follow the heart. A pure heart seeks beyond the intellect. it gets inspired. whatever we do reacts upon us. if we do good, we shall have happiness and if evil, unhappiness. within you is the real happiness, within you is the mighty ocean of nectar divine. Seek it within you, feel it, feel it, it is here, the self. it is not the body, the mind, the intellect, the brain. it is not the desire or the desiring. it is not the object of desire. Above all there, you are. All these are simply manifestations. you appear as the smiling flower, as the twinkling stars. what is there in the world which can make you desire anything?

With Blessings
Baba

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

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Message

You as body, mind or soul are a dream, but what you really are is Existence, Knowledge, Bliss. You are the God of this universe. You are creating the whole universe and drawing it in. To gain the infinite universal individuality, the miserable little prison individuality must go. Bhakti is no crying or any negative condition, it is seeing of all in all we see.

It is the heart that reaches the goal, follow the heart. A pure heart seeks beyond the intellect, it gets inspired.

Whatever we do reacts upon us. If we do good, we shall have happiness and if evil, unhappiness. Within you is the real happiness, within you is the mighty ocean of nectar divine. Seek it within you, feel it, feel it, it is here, the self. It is not the body, the mind, the intellect, the brain. It is not the desire of the desiring. It is not the object of desire. Above all these, you are. All these are simply manifestations. You appear as the smiling flower, as the twinkling stars. What is there in the world which can make you desire anything?

With Blessings

Baba

BHAGAVAN'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE

MANIFEST YOUR DIVINITY

The Lord and the Cosmos are inextricably united.

This is the Truth declared by Sai.

Not visible in the phenomenal world,

The Atma that is immanent in it is the

Cosmic Consciousness.

That sustains the Cosmos like the string

Running through a necklace of gems.

(Telugu Poem)

All things happen according to the dictates of time;

Both good and bad depend on time;

Prosperity and poverty likewise depend on time;

Time is the determinant of all things.

There is none who is not subject to time

in this entire world; that's the Truth.

(Telugu Poem)

ONLY INTEGRAL VISION CONFERS BLISS

Embodiments of Divine Love!

TIME MOVES FAST LIKE A whirlwind. Each one's life span is getting reduced every moment, like a melting block of ice. Time passes even before man realises his duties in life. The human body is not easily acquired. The end of man's life should not be to waste his precious human birth without realising its primary purpose.

It is the duty of every man to realise the purpose of life and utilise his time in the performance of his duties to sanctify his existence. Given the will, there is nothing that man cannot achieve in this world. But before embarking on any enterprise, man should recognise his abilities and endowments.

Today's man, who claims to know everything and engages in exploring space,

is unable to experience bliss. If he acquires the ability to explore the stars or walk on the moon, but is unable to understand his own true nature, he misses his integral consciousness. This consciousness is not related to knowledge of the external world. It can be experienced only by turning one's vision inward. Only when he has *Samagrata Bhavam* (integral awareness) will he have the right perception of a sage. Only such integral vision can confer bliss.

The Greatest Cause of Bondage

When people speak about man's bondage, what is it that binds man? Man can liberate himself only when he knows what it is that binds him. Are wife and children the bondages? No. Is it property? No. Are they sensual desires? No. The greatest cause of

bondage is the failure to know himself. An individual who is not aware of his true self cannot escape from sorrow. As long as sorrow is there, bliss cannot be experienced.

What is the sorrow that envelops man?

Sorrow envelops man in three ways and afflicts him in many ways. One source of sorrow is Asath (unreal). The second cause is Tamas (sloth). The third cause is death. In this context, the Vedanta mentions three categories: Prakriti (Nature), Jivatma (individual soul) and Paramatma (Universal Self). As long as man does not give up what he ought to renounce, he will not experience bliss. As long as he is not aware of what he ought to know, he cannot get bliss. Bliss will elude man until he reaches the goal he should aim at.

Give up the Fascination for the World

What is it that man should give up? What is it that he ought to know? What is his goal? What has to be given up is *Jagat Bhavam* (the fascination for the world). The reason is the world is not different from God. *Isavasyam Idam Jagat* (the entire world is permeated by God). *Viswam Vishnu Swarupam* (the entire universe is the

embodiment of Lord Vishnu). Disregarding this profound and sacred truth, man is becoming a prey to grief by his worldly attachments. The world should not be treated as merely physical, but should be looked upon as a Divine manifestation. It is only

when man is filled with godly thoughts that he will be rid of sorrow. Hence, what should be given up is worldliness. Then alone Atmananda (bliss of the Self) can be got.

The second thing that has to be given up is *Jiva Bhava* (the feeling of separate individuality). Who is a Jiva? Jiva is God. Jiva (individual soul) resides in the body. God dwells in the heart. They come together and engage in mutual sport. There is a director who directs the play of the puppets. Both good and bad are present in the puppets. The Jivatma and the Divine principle are not two distinct and separate entities. Out of ignorance, man forgets the basic reality and cherishes delusions which cause sorrow. It is like a man who is seized with fear when he mistakes a rope for a snake. When the truth is known, the



fear goes. Likewise man, looking at the world, considers it a separate phenomenal entity – Jiva Tattwa. But in reality it is Divine. When the Divine nature of the cosmos is understood, man is free from the delusion of separateness.

The Lord shines radiantly throughout the Cosmos;

The Cosmos exists in the Lord;

The Lord and the Cosmos are inextricably united.

This is the Truth declared by Sai.

(Telugu Poem)

Human Destiny is Realisation of his Divinity

What is the destination that man should attain? It is the original home from where he came. What is this original home? It is the awareness of one's own true self. It is for the realisation of this truth that the body has been given to man by the Divine. Where can one search for one's self? Can the search be made outside of you? No.

Similarly, the search for God in the external is futile. "His hands and feet are everywhere. His eyes, head and mouth are everywhere. He stands forth encompassing everything in the cosmos" (Bhagavadgita). When the Divine is omnipresent, it is foolish for man to search for God in some place.

Hence, the destination for man is the realisation of his divinity. This realisation must come through the Vedantic process of exclusion ("Neti, Neti" "not this, not this"). "I am not the body. I am not the intellect. I am not the Will. I am not the Antahkarana (the inner instrument)." All these are only instruments. Man should realise: "I am the master of all of them". When by this process of elimination man realises his true Self, he is freed from sorrow. Man's most precious and sacred gift from God is Buddhi (intelligence). The

intelligence that should be used for seeking the Atma (soul) is being used by man today to seek Annam (food). When you are given a mirror to recognise your face, if you turn it in the reverse direction, how can you see your face? Use the mirror of Buddhi to recognise your true Self. That is known as Sakshatkara (direct vision of one's true Self).

Unfortunately, man today seeks to know everything except his own true nature. He asks everyone: "Who are you"? but does not put the question, "Who am I"? One who does not know himself, what right has he to know about others? Such an enquiry proceeds from ignorance. Without the awareness of his own true Self, man can never attain bliss.

God Contains Everything within Himself

It is to set men on the path of such self-inquiry that the celebration of the New Year is intended. God as the embodiment of Time, is worshipped by the name Samvatsara (year). This name also means that God contains within Himself everything. God is also known by the name Kalatmaka (the Time Spirit). God incarnates on earth for revealing to man his divine essence. Man has been endowed with intelligence so that he may use it for discovering the Divine within him.

The name Samvatsara represents the cosmic manifestation of the Divine. The Divine displays four kinds of Vibhutis (glorious potencies) as the Supreme Omni-Self. As such, He is called Chaturatma. This means He is the Self that embodies three potencies. The three are: Vasudeva, Sankarshana and Aniruddha. When these three Vibhutis are understood, the fourth one, Pradyumna becomes intelligible.

The Meaning of the Four Potencies

Vasudeva indicates that the entire cosmos is the Lord's dwelling place. It also means that

He is the Supreme Master of the universe. This means that the Divine resides in all beings as the indwelling Spirit. Moreover, He pervades the entire universe. The Upanishad describes Him as "Narayana who is inside and outside and pervades everything".

Sankarshana refers to the Divine's capacity to attract and transform all beings. All beings, moreover, have emerged from Him. The name is also associated with His power to transfer any object from one place to another. The child that was in the womb of Devaki was transferred to the womb of Rohini (another wife of Vasudeva) and for this reason the child got the name Sankarshana (another name for Balarama, the elder brother of Sri Krishna). The name Sankarshana also means one who attracts what is pure. Sam (pure) Karshana (attracts). Aniruddha is one who is beyond the control of anyone. He can be swayed only by His grace and not by any other means. This term applies to one who is all-pervading, all-powerful and all-knowing.

Pradyumna refers to one who possesses Aiswarya (infinite wealth). He confers by His grace all prosperity and happiness on those who adore, worship and love the Lord. Aiswarya includes not only material wealth, but every kind of wealth such as health, knowledge, intelligence and virtue. Another name of the Divine is "Bhagavan". The term "Bhaga" represents six attributes: Divine wealth, righteousness, power, fame, detachment and supreme wisdom. The Lord is called "Bhagavan" because He has these six attributes.

Thus, every name of the Lord is related to specific attributes and not an expression of the devotee's feelings or fancies. Because of the Divine's myriad attributes, the sages hailed Him as "Om Samvatsaraya Namah".

As the Creator of the universe and as the One from whom everything emerged, God is also called Yugadi (the initiator of every Yuga or aeon). He is the One who willed to become many.

What is Srishti (creation)? Srishti is an expression of the Will of God. This is called Prakriti. Everyone who emanates from Prakriti should have divine qualities. That which has emerged from the Divine should have divine qualities and not the traits of an animal or a demon. A human being without the feeling of compassion or love is not human at all. Every human being should manifest his inherent divinity. He should make himself a 'messenger' of God. Instead, he behaves like a 'miss-inger of God', as one who has 'missed' what he should know about himself.

When man realises his true nature and his role in life, he becomes one with God. This is described in Vedanta as the Turiya Avastha, the fourth state of consciousness in which the individual Spirit is one with the Universal. It is a transcendental state which is beyond the body and the mind – beyond the waking, dream and deep sleep states.

What do we understand by the term Vyakti (individual)? This term is applied to one who manifests the unmanifested Divine power hidden within him. It is meaningless to apply it to anyone who does not manifest the Divine within him.

The Cosmic Form of Divinity

Manifesting one's inner divinity does not mean producing something new. Divinity is inherent in man. It is called Swabhava (one's true nature) – the Atmic nature. It is the Atma that confers all powers on man. Those who bemoan their weakness are not aware of their inherent potential and are not putting it to right use. The first feeling which one has to get rid

of is the identification of his physical form with his real Self. Those who ask, "Where is God"? do not realise that all they see in the cosmos is a manifestation of the Divine. That is why the scripture declares, *Pashyannapi Cha Napashyati Moodho* (he is a fool who sees yet does not recognise the reality).

Man is all the time seeing the universe around him and yet declares he has not seen God. What is the form of the Cosmos? Is it not Divine? You are seeing the Divine in the form of the physical universe. In the Bhagavadgita, this cosmic form of the Lord is described as Viswa Virata Rupa. What is Viswa? It is the whole cosmos. The Viswa Virata Rupa is the collective form of everything in the universe.

No attempt is made to understand the inner meaning of such expressions as Viswa Virata Rupa. The intellect is used to misinterpret words and create confusion. What is needed is understanding through the heart. Even a highly evolved person like Arjuna confessed to Krishna that the mind is ever wavering and fickle. Are the intellectuals of today, with all their degrees, greater than Arjuna? Not at all. Above all degrees and intellectual attainments, one needs the grace of God. Krishna recognised Arjuna as His devotee. That is the supreme accomplishment.

The Abode of the Lord is Man's Heart

When you earn from the Lord the epithet of Bhakta (devotee), you will be equal with Arjuna. God is not calling you as His devotee. It is not enough if you style yourself a devotee of God. God should hail you as His devotee. It is only when your devotion is acknowledged by the Lord that you can call yourself a devotee. If you have not received the acknowledgement, it may mean that you have given the wrong address in your devotion. The correct address of the Lord is Hridayavasi – the indweller in the heart. This means that you must continue with

your devotion to God until your own conscience is satisfied. To achieve this satisfaction, you have to purify yourself constantly. This means that you have to get rid of your bad qualities, bad thoughts and bad actions.

Body is an Instrument for the Realisation of Dharma

Realise that the body has been given to you for the service of others. How is this service to be rendered? Through righteous and pure means. The body is an instrument for the realisation of Dharma (righteousness). This truth is allegorically conveyed by the example of the Pandavas in the Mahabharata. The Pandava brothers (Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva) and Draupadi representing Prakriti (Nature) followed truth and righteousness as represented by Dharmaraja (the eldest of the Pandavas) and sanctified their lives.

This applies to every human being. It is only when he adheres to truth and righteousness that he can realise the Atma. Worship of the Divine must stem from the heart. When devotion flows from the heart, the voice of the Divine can be experienced in silence – Sabda Brahman (sound of the Supreme Spirit). This was the experience of Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He observed perfect silence awaiting the voice of God at any moment. Can the Divine voice be heard in the cacophony of daily sounds? No. Devotees must practise reticence. When speech is restrained, the voice of the Spirit within makes itself heard. That is subtler than the human breath.

It is only through Prapatti or total surrender, that the Divine can be experienced. It is an experience that can be had every moment of your life.

– Excerpted from Bhagavan's Discourse delivered on 1st January 1992.



BHAGAVAN BABA'S TEMPLE OF HEALING – SSSIHMS, WHITEFIELD

Dr. D.C. Sundares

BHAGAVAN SRI SATHYA SAI Baba started His first Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital at Puttaparthi on 4th October 1956 to fulfil the wish of Mother Easwaramma, who was concerned about the difficulties of the people of that area, because they had to travel long distances for getting healthcare.

Healthcare with Love and Compassion

This model of free healthcare delivery with love and compassion was destined to create history, to set an example to mankind and to prove that it was indeed possible. This was really a gift of love by Bhagavan to humanity. His ever-expanding love went on to create a Super Speciality Hospital at Puttaparthi in 1991 and later another one at Whitefield in 2001. To this Mission, a Mobile Hospital was also added to cater to 12 villages around Puttaparthi on 30th March 2006. Many devotees of Bhagavan from India and across

the world realised the value of this Mission, and started participating, and contributing in the Mission in kind and deed on a large scale. To assign monetary value to this phenomenal Mission is an injustice to the fundamental principle of compassionate service to the needy, and therefore to Bhagavan. This Mission had created a great facility of holistic treatment especially for those who could not afford financially, as also a great opportunity for the talented people to serve and to share their love with the needy.

The five core values recommended for those rendering service in these temples of healing were: love and compassion, spirit of unity and harmony, sense of belonging and gratitude to society. The healthcare professionals are blessed with the rarest opportunity to serve as instruments in Bhagavan's Healthcare Mission. This Mission of Bhagavan in my opinion is the most well-conceived and

meticulously functioning Mission ever known to mankind. This unique healthcare delivery system, created by Bhagavan in His Divine benevolence and concern for humanity, is continuously being pursued as per His Mission statement: "Healthcare with love and compassion, delivered free of cost to all those in need, without any distinction of caste, creed, religion or financial status."

Swami said, "Your decisions should always help the patients. Patients first, Institution next, all other considerations after that". On more than one occasion, Swami said that all treatment should be filled with love and compassion and surgery as a treatment modality should be offered as a last resort.

Looking at this phenomenal endeavour with disbelief, a question frequently asked is, "How is this enormous mission sustaining itself even after the Maha Samadhi of Bhagavan"? This question in fact is an expression of wonder as to the financial sustainability of these five iconic institutions of Sai Healthcare Mission – the two Super Speciality Hospitals, the two General Hospitals and the Mobile Hospital. There is more to it than meets the eye. There is no force on the face of earth that can stop this Divine Mission, which has been willed to serve humanity for eternity! The expenditure for running these free healthcare institutions is met by interest earned out of the corpus fund accumulated over years upon voluntary donations from devotees of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba across the world, as also fresh donations being received continuously.

Voluntary Service by Devotees

The hidden factor here is the huge dedicated human resource who are constantly endeavouring to run these institutions efficiently, starting from the Trustees of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, to the employees



The author with Bhagavan.

and all those who render voluntary services in these healthcare Institutions.

During my tenure as Director of the SSSIHMS, Whitefield, I have come across a cross-section of groups of people who have contributed to the cause of the Sai Healthcare Mission in various ways. I would like to highlight the importance of Bhagavan's personal involvement to bless these persons to serve in the SSSIHMS, Whitefield. These individuals have gone through a long journey to reach their present destination with the continuous blessing of Bhagavan.

During the first anniversary of the hospital in 2002, Bhagavan had declared that this hospital would be known to the world by the unity of its staff. What we noticed during

the implementation of various projects was tremendous unity amongst the staff in ensuring swift progress. Active participation was observed from all categories. This can happen only if the projects are led by Bhagavan using us as His instruments.

Healthcare delivery is a group effort by professionals consisting of doctors, nurses, technicians, administrators, etc. The unique feature of Sri Sathya Sai Healthcare Mission is the participation of a large number of volunteers, who render dedicated service at various levels without expecting anything in return.

The Seva Dal men and women, who come from different districts of Karnataka, serve in the SSSIHMS, Whitefield with dedication week after week. They are involved in all kinds of tasks – as security guards, helpers in the wards, as also in operation rooms, intensive care units, outpatient areas, laundry, stores, kitchens of the hospital, canteens, etc. It is interesting to note that some of them are very senior officials in the government or private sector.

Voluntary Service by Doctors

Senior specialists (doctors) from the city of Bengaluru have been visiting for many years on a weekly basis to treat patients in areas of General Surgery, ENT, Orthopaedics, Ophthalmology, Urology, Dermatology and other specialities. Another group of doctors who come all the way from United States and other countries for periods of one to two weeks have been treating patients in the departments of Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery. In addition to offering their expertise, they also contribute by way of arranging for very expensive implantable devices.

Volunteer Counsellors

This is a unique service for patients. This group of ladies bridges the gap of

communication between the patients and doctors. They also add a great value in spiritual education to patients to help them cope up with the stress of illness and treatment.

Technology at its Best

The facilities provided in this temple of healing are the best available in the market. This is seen in the magnificent building with its most beautiful appearance and the sprawling lobby. On entering the hospital, the impression of the visitor has consistently been, “this looks like a temple”! This feature is carried over to the facilities and equipment, provided in the 12 operating rooms, the 80-bed intensive care unit and the wards. The state-of-the-art diagnostic facilities provide immaculate diagnosis to complement the high standards of expertise of the doctors.

Quality Service

The outpatient service caters to about a thousand patients on a daily basis. On an average, the specialists perform 22 operations per day in the general specialities and super speciality departments of neurosurgery and cardiac surgery. The department of cardiology performs on an average 16 interventional and diagnostic cath procedures per day. The diagnostic departments render over 200 imaging studies including X-ray, magnetic resonance imaging, computerised tomography and ultrasound scan in a day.

Given this volume of work, the outcomes as measured by the standard measures of infection, duration of hospitalisation, incidents of reoperations, long-term results and patient satisfaction are far superior to the world standards in any comparable hospital.

Education and Research

The institutional goal will be service always first and training next. Since our hospital is well equipped with very good ethical and medical standards of practice, so it provides

a very good environment to train people and to conduct research that goes to help find solution to intriguing medical problems, as also to cut down costs in countries like India. This has been our aim. These were the guidelines Swami gave to us

With this goal, the institution has a College of Nursing offering Bachelor's programme in Nursing and Allied Health Services. There is a postgraduate programme in the fields of cardiology, cardiac surgery, neurosurgery, anaesthesia and radiology with fellowship programmes in the fields of cardiology, radiology and anaesthesiology. The staff and students of these departments are actively involved in research which is relevant to the patient care and are published in indexed journals.

Bhagavan's Continuous Shower of Grace

These Institutions are conceived and put in place for eternity by Bhagavan Baba Himself directing the operation from conceiving to construction and implementation to the finish with His personal touch. In this process, several of the current staff at the SSSIHMS, Whitefield have had the opportunity of interacting with Him at various stages of the implementation.

Bhagavan's inimitable way of touching the hearts and souls of individuals is seen in the experiences of these dedicated workers of the SSSIHMS, Whitefield.

Bhagavan in His infinite grace not only founded these temples of healing and learning but chose the people to take care of them. Now after His Maha Samadhi, He continues to shower His grace by revealing His constant presence in this hospital by way of Vibhuti manifestation in the Director's office and in Bhagavan's room at the hospital. This is a source of inspiration and re-dedication to many of the staff members and other devotees.

My salutation to Bhagavan for giving us, the medical profession, such an opportunity to serve humanity and to all those who are contributing to this much-needed Healthcare Mission of Swami. We, the servants of the Lord, pray to Him for His continued blessings for all the patients who have to utilise the services of this Temple of Healing and to those who are serving here.

– The author is the former Director of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Whitefield, Bengaluru. He is currently the Pro Vice Chancellor of Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences, Bengaluru.

	New Titles – Printed Books	Cost	Pages	Grams	Classification
16853	Sri Sathya Sai Sathyanarayana Vrata Kalpam – Sanskrit	₹25.00	56	80	Sadhana / Prayer
16861	Sai Smruthulu – Telugu	₹30.00	66	100	Experiences
16862	Sai Samipyam – English	₹55.00	128	150	Experiences
16838	Sri Sathya Sai Baba His Sojourn on Planet Earth – English	₹25.00	60	80	Life and Teachings
16854	Universal Divine Friend – English	₹135.00	232	370	Experiences
16857	Transforming Self to Transform the World – English	₹110.00	312	350	Teachings
16863	Human Values for the Heart (3HV of EHV) - English – 23 x 15.8 cm	₹50.00	235	340	Teachings
16865	From the Heart – English - In Art Paper	₹100.00	136	279	Experiences
16864	Sai Antarvani – English	₹65.00	262	285	Inspired Thoughts
16858	Chinna Kathas of Sri Sathya Sai – Part 6 English	₹80.00	148	140	Stories in Poetic Form

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SWAMI'S BENEDICTIONS ON SPIRITUAL LIFE

P.S.A.S. Srinivasan Chettiar

MY FATHER LATE SRI P.S.A. Subramania Chettiar was an ardent devotee of Swami from his 22 years of age. When he completed his 59th year, Swami bestowed on him His grace by assuring to conduct his 60th birthday as per tradition in India. With faith in Swami's words, my father proceeded to Puttaparthi with my mother and brother one month prior to his 60th birthday with the thought to spend time with Swami. But Swami did not see or speak to both my father and mother for nearly 28 days. My father tried to pass on messages through Sri Kasturi, Sri Kutumba Rao and Ashram in-charge, but Swami was categorical and told all of them that if needed they could leave the Ashram. So, my father was grief-stricken on his plight and confused about the reason for this state of affairs. On the 29th day, our extended family and I started to Puttaparthi because father felt that come what may, the celebration should happen only at the Divine precincts. On the 29th day, Swami graciously called both my parents, and gifted them with silk Dhoti and silk Sari. He not only granted His permission to conduct the 60th birthday function but again assured that He would conduct it Himself. The function was conducted on 23rd September 1970 from 9.45 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. At the end of the function, Swami blessed everyone present and also elaborately instructed on various aspects of spiritual life.

Tests are Required for the Mind to Mature

Sashtiapdhapurti (a ritualistic celebration of sixtieth year) is celebrated for a purpose.

One imagines that all the worldly activities are permanent and would yield peace. But one does not realise that it is all Maya and one day one needs to leave behind everything. All that we witness is subject to continuous change.

When one lives in this attachment, one does not spend time to realise that it is one's duty to utilise the body made of all senses to know what should be known. One should make effort to realise the 'I' at least from the sixtieth year and thus shed attachments.

There is no real benefit when one utters that one has given up on all attachments but still has the reins firmly in one's hands. All the horses can be controlled if reins are in one's hands. So, even the hold on the reins should be given up. This may be difficult. To begin in this process, one should discard the Arishadvargas (six qualities that impede spiritual evolution) within us. Importantly, one should understand the Trigunas, Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas and contemplate on That which is beyond. That is the purpose of tests.

How much tribulation did you face the last one month? You tried various things daily. You visited the post office daily. You even thought that Swami might not provide joy from the conduct of this function. How many times you tried to return to your place? Why all these? During all these, you have not lost faith. Therefore, for all the mental disappointments, now you have happiness. If I had permitted the function to be conducted the next day of your arrival, you would have returned to your place. And you would have created a fanfare here.

But such a path would not have bestowed this opportunity.

For the past one month, you experienced too much mental pain. But if you had trained yourself to keep your mind in your grip, you would not have suffered this much. These kinds of travails are given only for the mind

But today, those who come here want their wishes to be fulfilled immediately. That is difficult. Even to have a proper photograph, one needs to charge the battery of the flash for some time. Then how can one expect one's prayers alone to be fulfilled immediately? Even though every drop of milk has butter, yet only on



Bhagavan conducting the Sashtiapdhapurti function of Late Sri P.S.A. Subramania Chettiar and his wife..

to mature. Only when two days were left, you thought whatever Swami does now is acceptable. But this state of mind should have been there from the beginning. Even for the successful conduct of one function so much of arrangements are needed. So too to realise oneself, we need to do many things. To make a cooking fireplace in the open, we need three bricks. Those three bricks are the three Gunas – Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. The body is the vessel kept on the three bricks. The water inside the vessel is our mind. The rice that is put into the water is the thoughts. Now if we light the fire of Jnana, it would permeate the vessel, then the water and finally rice. To reach realisation is not easy. Like the rice gets slowly cooked to become soft, so too our thoughts need to mature into softness. As one kindles the fire till rice reaches the desired softness, so too the heat of trying circumstances is needed to soften the thoughts.

churning, we can bring out the butter. Stones and wood too have fire inherently within them but only when they are rubbed with each other we get fire. Likewise, for the mind to mature, tests are essential. One needs to be patient till the mind gets matured enough.

A cow takes care of her calf only for three years. But because man has discriminating power, a mother is always a mother and a father is always a father. This power of discrimination is the fundamental difference between man and animal. So, this power should be used for good things and one should evolve to higher levels.

Valuable Lessons of Life

When one digs a pit, as the pit gets deeper, simultaneously a mound will grow next to the pit with the dugout earth. At the end, one can see that the depth of the pit and height of the mound are in similar proportions. But

one sees only the deep pit and not the earth mound. Likewise, as one experiences sorrow, there is happiness to follow. Unfortunately, man sees only the sorrow and does not see the happiness that is waiting to follow.

If a thorn pricks us, we would use another thorn to pick it out. Later, we throw both the thorns away. We need one diamond to cut another diamond. In the same way, one can cross over Karma only with Karma. Our eyes are very powerful. We can see so many things with our eyes; we can see even the far-off stars. But if some dust falls into our eyes, till it is taken out, we are troubled a lot. The same happens if a small stone falls into our shoes or a small fly enters our ears. In the same way, in the clear mind if a small doubt crops up, it will cause severe pain to us. So, we should strive to keep away doubts which disturb our mind.

If one thinks of an event immediately, so many other related items come to our mind. If we think of dinner, immediately, all associated items like plates, tumblers, eatables fill our mind. If one wants to conduct Sashtiapdhapurti, immediately we think of our relatives, and other paraphernalia. If a person wants to come to Puttaparthi, he will pack clothes and items of daily need in his bag. In the same way, Sakshatkara is one. But one needs to perform various Sadhanas to attain it. Sweets items are many but the sweet taste is one. Bulbs are many but current is one. Likewise, we may identify God through various forms and names, like Rama, Krishna, Christ, Buddha or Sai but God is one.

Swami is the only Deenabandhu (eternal dear one). All other worldly relatives are temporary like the frogs that occupy the pond till water lasts. Once water dries up, all the frogs would go away. Therefore, always hold on to the Feet of the Lord during all troubles you face and be assured that one who planted the seed would tend it also.

Sacrifice is an essential quality of human life. Sacrifice confers a lot of good. Blood keeps circulating. If it stops at any place, we get a clot. Whatever food we eat, it needs to be excreted next day. If not, we will fall sick. Also, if we don't let out the inhaled air during breathing, we may even die. Therefore, wealth and blood need to keep flowing always.

What is Dharma? Charity is not Dharma. Dharma is of various kinds, like Balya Dharma, Vidyarthi Dharma, Purusha Dharma and Stri Dharma (Dharma of child, student, man, woman). For example, in Vidyarthi Dharma, a student needs to do what is expected of him, like studying well, being obedient to parents, not expending huge amounts. For a student to be good, parents too need to perform their part properly. If there is a need for 10 annas expense, they should provide only 9 annas. Then the student will learn to make up the deficit amount. But if you provide 15 annas, then the student will think of ways to spend the extra 5 annas and will eventually fall into wrong ways. This is one of the reasons for children to get into wrong ways. There may be many differences and squabbles between a couple. But it is Stri Dharma not to show to the outside world. Nowadays, if there is a tiff between husband and wife, within an hour it spreads around the town. An individual should start practising Vanaprastha Dharma after 50 years of age. Then alone he would be at peace when he reaches 60 years of age. The sixtieth birthday function is called Santhi Kalyana only for this reason. Vanaprastha does not mean one need to go to the forest leaving all household behind. Roaming around in ochre clothes too does not mean anything. Behaviour is the main thing. Even when within the boundaries of worldly existence, one needs to slowly shed the familial attachments. Then at sixty this practice would bestow peace. After

sixty, one should hand over all responsibilities to proper persons and should fix his mind on God. Namasmara (chanting of Lord's Name) is important in this pursuit. One should guide youngsters on proper path and keep repeating Lord's Name continuously. Then the grace of Lord is assured.

Some may say that helping the needy can also be Dharma. No, that is called Paropakara (helping). When one feeds the poor, one should realise that God resides in them too. As the same God resides in our heart too, it is like helping oneself. There are many more meritorious deeds like visiting holy places, taking dip in holy waters. When we arrange a dinner for ten persons, we derive a satisfaction out of that act.

Man may aim to spend millions of dollars to land on the moon. But more important is using funds to help the poor. This is more beneficial use of money. What we bring from the moon is the same type of dust that is present on the earth. What one sees on the moon is the same sand, hills, craters that one sees on the earth. But if one sees the same moon on a full moon day from here on earth, how beautiful is the sight! More important is seeing the moon inside our heart. Indians have always tried methods to master this art.

If a man has self-confidence, then he will get self-control. Self-control leads to self-sacrifice. If there is self-sacrifice, only then will it bestow Self-realisation.

– The author, an old-time devotee of Bhagavan, is Chairman, Sri Sai Padhuga Trust.

	New Titles – eBooks During the Year	Cost	Classification
16742	Adi Shankara the Precocious Redeemer of Advaita - eBook Format	₹60	From the Discourse of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
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Symbols of Divinity

THE SAMADHI OF THE DIVINE PARENTS

Bishu Prusty

ONE OF THE MOST SERENE, sublime and spiritually uplifting places of Puttaparthi is the sacred resting place of the Divine Parents of Bhagavan, Mother Easwaramma and Sri Pedda Venkama Raju located at Samadhi

I'm coming"! Swami came down with a silk Sari in His hand, and went straight to Mother Easwaramma. In those few seconds, she merged with Swami. Swami then revealed: "She is extremely fortunate. She attained what she always prayed for – a painless end".



Inside view of the Samadhi.

Road, Puttaparthi which is at a walking distance from Sai Kulwant Hall.

Even though this place is outside the Prasanthi Nilayam Ashram, the moment you step in here, you feel that you have entered the Ashram all over again. You are welcomed with beautiful chirping of birds, gentle breeze and a kaleidoscope of flowers and trees.

It was in the early morning hours of 6th May 1972 at Brindavan, Whitefield (Bengaluru) when Mother Easwaramma suddenly called out, "Swami! Swami!" And Bhagavan instantly responded from upstairs saying, "I'm coming!

The body of the Divine Mother was taken to Puttaparthi the same day where large crowds gathered to have her last Darshan. Amidst Vedic chants and Bhajans by hundreds of devotees, she was laid to rest the same evening by the side of her husband Sri Pedda Venkama Raju who had merged with Swami on 4th November 1963.

Professor Kasturi, the author of "The Chosen Mother" likens the call of Mother Easwaramma to that of Gajendra calling out to Lord Vishnu and the Lord immediately responding. It is like two wires connecting in that split second and the release happening simultaneously.

Mother Easwaramma is revered, adored and worshipped the world over not just because of the unique fortune she had of mothering the Divine but because of the matchless things she achieved with the opportunity she was blessed with. At the root of all the social welfare initiatives of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, be it the schools, the hospitals or the colleges, it was her sincere prayer to Bhagavan to establish them.

Her heart melted at the misery of the rural folk around. In fact, she was the happiest when the construction of the Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital began in 1954. She herself would join the women devotees hauling sand, stone and bricks up to the construction site. She would go into the homes of the villagers, take the women patients to the doctor and advise them not to go to the local quacks.

Once they were admitted, she would be there with them till they recovered so that they palpably felt that there is a mother in this village who cares for them, and who is deeply interested in their health, happiness and welfare.

There are any number of instances when Mother Easwaramma, unable to bear the suffering of a devotee, went to Bhagavan and pleaded on the devotee's behalf.

For instance, there was a couple from West Godavari district who had come to Puttaparthi with a sick child. They stayed at Prasanthi Nilayam for seven days seeking Bhagavan's audience. However, they could not get that opportunity. Crestfallen, they were leaving. At that moment, Mother Easwaramma saw them and when she heard their plight she took the little child by her hand and went straight to Bhagavan's room and pleaded, "Swami, You have to do something for this child". Swami heard her prayer very patiently and simply said, "Chustanu...", meaning, "I will see..." But Mother Easwaramma was persistent: "No, Swami, You have to cure this little one". And Bhagavan finally did give in to her prayer and healed the child.

The prayer of a mother never goes unfulfilled. But imagine the prayer of the Divine Mother! That is why our prayers to her are important. Her blessings for us are potent.

Perhaps it is to cultivate in us this sense of reverence, gratitude and love for the Divine Mother that Swami Himself used to visit this shrine every year on Easwaramma Day.



Bhagavan visiting the Samadhi of the Divine Parents.

In 2010, Bhagavan was physically 85 years old. Nevertheless Swami insisted on coming inside and He personally gave the Sari to be adorned on the Divine Mother.

In fact, the statues of Mother Easwaramma and Sri Pedda Venkama Raju (the Divine Parents) were installed in that year. Now we know that Bhagavan had divinely orchestrated it so on His very last visit to this shrine.

A sculptor from Jaipur had carved the two beautiful images and when they came to Prasanthi Nilayam, Bhagavan was so ecstatic looking at these idols that He kept both of them in His residence in Yajur Mandir for over a month.

Every day when Bhagavan came out of His room, He would always look at these statues with great joy. Sometimes the boys who were serving Bhagavan would decorate them with flowers and Swami would say, "Look at the mother... doesn't she look beautiful"! And then Swami would go behind her and look at the way



her hair had been sculpted and merrily say, “See, how nicely she has braided her hair”! He would see the earrings and joyously remark, “See how splendid those earrings look”!

Even though Bhagavan is beyond time and relationships, He was perhaps demonstrating to us how powerful, sweet and deep this connection with our parents should be.

In fact, there were any number of occasions when the very mention of the word “Easwamma” would moisten Swami’s eyes. It could be in a Discourse, in an interaction or even in a Bhajan.

Beside the sparkling statue of the Divine Mother, there is also the statue of the Divine Father, Pedda Venkama Raju.

His life indeed was a testimony to the Biblical statement: “Blessed are the humble, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven; blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”

Born in April 1885, Ratnakaram Pedda Venkama Raju was the eldest son of Kondama Raju. Almost saint-like in his persona, he loved to act and sing in plays that described the glory of the Almighty.

However, when the same Almighty appeared as a reality in his home, the complexity that he was surrounded with everyday was too much for his childlike heart to comprehend. He was in a continuous state of bewilderment.

Perhaps to put an end to his pitiable plight at the earliest, Bhagavan made the Avataric Declaration first to him saying – “I am not your Sathya... I am Sai! My devotees are calling Me”.

It was the Lord’s infinite empathy and love for this blessed soul that He chose not only to be born in his clan but also to introduce Himself to the world through him.

But once Pedda Venkama Raju had his doubts cleared, he spent every ounce of his energy and every second of his life serving only Bhagavan whom he too addressed as “Swami”.

He travelled regularly to neighbouring towns of Puttaparthi to procure materials and essential commodities that would make the stay of pilgrims at Prasanthi Nilayam a little less inconvenient.

Everyone who stepped into Puttaparthi was his family and he took care of their needs selflessly.

At the ripe age of 78, when a short and sudden illness took him away from the earth, it was no wonder that Swami communicated the following to all through Sanathana Sarathi:

“The day he became the father of this Manifestation, that very day he became blessed, his life was rendered holy and sanctified. Remember, this fortune comes only to one individual in an entire age. It is beyond the reach of all.”

Sri Pedda Venkama Raju indeed gloriously marched into the Kingdom of Heaven and inherited the earth like few have ever done in the history of mankind.

The sacred home of Mother Easwaramma and Pedda Venkama Raju is truly a lovely spiritual sanctuary.

It is a place to fill oneself with the blessings of the ones who are unmistakably The Chosen Ones – Souls born only to show us how we should sanctify our lives on this earth. Next time you are in Prasanthi, do not miss this holy abode!

Easwaramma Day has now become an important event in Prasanthi calendar when offerings are made on the idols of the Divine Parents, Bhajans are held and Narayana Seva is organised every year on 6th May. Various spiritual and social welfare programmes are held in almost all Sai Centres across the globe to offer homage to the Divine Parents.

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16804	Sri Sathya Sai Vachanamrutham 1965 Part 1 (Telugu)	₹75	Divine Discourses
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OUR BELOVED SWAMI SRI SATHYA SAI IS OMNISCIENT

A humble narration of a personal experience

K. Thillainayagam

IT WAS IN THE YEAR 1990. OUR SWAMI gracefully gave me a once in a lifetime opportunity of designing, fabricating and erecting the steel skeleton, the main supporting structure of the 65 feet tall Hanuman Statue atop the hill overlooking the Hill View Stadium. The skeleton was fabricated out of heavy and very heavy Rolled Structural Steel sections like channels, angles, etc.

Immediately after the erection of the skeleton was completed, Swami instructed me to design, fabricate and erect some steel work at the stage for the Poornachandra Auditorium inside the Ashram, using the same Larsen and Toubro (L&T) workers engaged for the Hanuman skeleton work. Under this work, we provided false ceiling to the stage, a semi circular support for the curtain at the periphery of the stage at the false ceiling level, and a steel Truss (without any intermediate support!) to support the art work: Images of Elephants, Shirdi Sai, Parthi Sai and Flower Work exactly above the partition wall having the small central door.

Swami wanted us to complete the whole work including the art and finishing works before Onam celebration 1990. Swami said, "I have invited my Kerala children to come here and celebrate Onam. Therefore, hurry up with your work. If necessary, carry on even during night. I will not mind the disturbance to Me by your noisy work"! Swami was staying in the Bhajan Mandir at that time and we used the open area west of Bhajan Mandir (Yajur Mandir site) to hammer the structural steel



sections, producing deafening sound day and night except Bhajan time.

Swami was personally following up with the progress of my work by visiting Poornachandra Auditorium daily, sometimes twice in a day. On one such afternoon visit, Swami called me near Him and said, "Do not show Me off as if you are working with your full workforce from morning to evening. You bring in workers just before I enter this Hall and they disappear the moment I leave". I was trying to defend myself, but Swami immediately called one of the workers and asked him in Tamil, "Bangaru, when did you come for work"?

Swami knew that he is a worker from Tamil Nadu even though He was seeing him for the first time. The boy replied in Tamil, “Just now, Swami”. “Will you work here till evening?” Swami enquired. Prompt came the reply from the boy, “No, Swami. I will leave immediately after You leave this Hall”. Swami looked at me in His inimitable style. I was left speechless, clueless and defenceless. Swami immediately created a dazzling white fragrant crystal sugar candy by waving His Divine Hand and gave it to me to be shared with all working there. We had never seen such a fragrant shining candy with very unique taste!

It so happened that our workers needed some additional materials from the L&T Stores

near Bakery area. They loaded those materials on to a trolley and they needed an additional hand to push the loaded trolley from the stores to Poornachandra Auditorium and take the empty trolley back to the stores. Swami picked up the very same boy, the additional hand to teach us a lesson that He knows everything! It is needless to say that by His Grace, we completed the work on time and Onam was celebrated by the Keralites in the Divine Presence.

– The author is currently working as Honorary Engineer in Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Prasanthigram (Super Speciality Hospital).

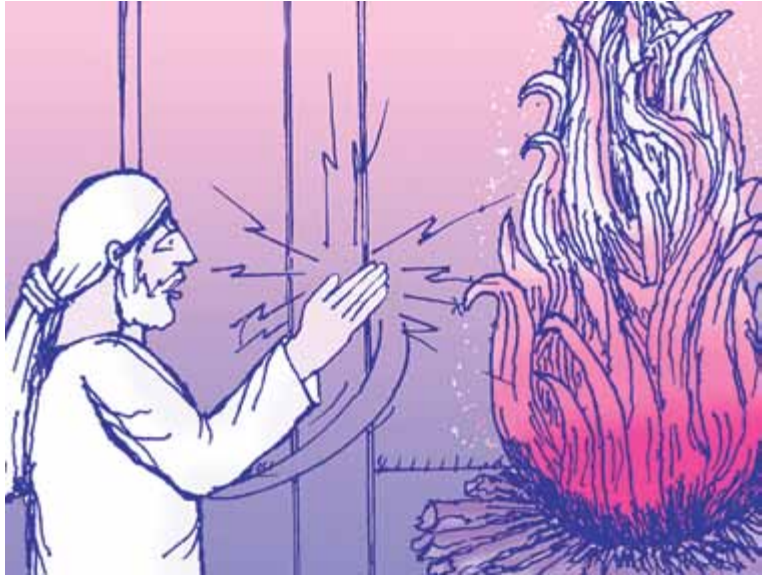
Start from today the chapter of Sadhana, of Japa and Dhyana, and of Viveka, Vichakshana and Vairagya. But, adhere to some regular routine, some measured timetable. Just as the doctor prescribes a certain fixed measure of weight of the drug, so too you must keep strictly within certain limits, both the physical and the mental exercises and disciplines. If you have no faith in any Name and Form of the Lord, it does not matter at all; adhere to Truth that is the Godward path. Adhere to Prema that is the road to Godhead.

Do not get panicky or down-hearted. There is no reason for fear. The Lord has come to save the world from catastrophe; your duty is to keep calm, to pray for the happiness and prosperity of all; to share your joy with others; and to help as much as you can to alleviate the misery of others. Leave the rest to the Lord.

– Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Baba Controls Fire

WHILE BABA WAS in Shirdi, fire was always kept burning in the Dhuni in Dwarakamai. Devotees used to buy firewood from outside and offer it in the fire to keep it burning continuously. They wanted to have some satisfaction of offering wood in the sacred fire. They did not think of the pros and cons of their act. Once some foolish devotees came and offered a lot of wood in the fire without thinking to what height the flame would rise when they put so much of wood in it. Huge flames started rising after some time. Seeing this, Shyama came running and called out, "Baba, Baba". Baba asked, "What Shyama? What has happened?" "See Baba, God of fire has manifested before us," said Shyama. Baba replied, "The fire god has manifested, but who is interested in seeing him here"? Then he addressed the fire god and said, "Whom are you trying to show your prowess here? You are behaving like this because there is no one to teach you a lesson. You should show your prowess when and where it is required. Why do you unnecessarily exhibit your power



Fire subsided when Shirdi Sai Baba commanded it not to show its prowess.

now"? Saying this, he hit the pillar with a stick. The raging flames subsided in a moment. What is the meaning of this? Nothing should happen without a cause. Is there any such foolish person who will go to the bank of the Ganga and call out everyone, saying, "Come, come, I will give you water." Who is he to give water when the river Ganga is flowing? Due to the influence of Kali Age, people sometimes act in a foolish manner without any proper reason. This type of behaviour is seen even in scholars.

Today the entire life of man is full of all types of fears and anxieties. See, some people are afraid of even a rat! We should not be afraid of anything. Don't fear. Fear is the cause of all types of anxieties.

– Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

HOW MY LORD CHOSE ME

Mahesh Vishandas Manyal

IT WAS BY THE DIVINE WILL OF Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba that I had the Darshan of Bhagavan in Vallabhai Patel Stadium, Worli, Mumbai. It so happened that two of my friends were to meet me at a fixed place in Lamington Road to see a movie that year. It was the time for the movie but one of my friends did not turn up. So, we dropped the idea of the movie without him. My other friend whispered, "Have you heard of the holy saint"? "No... whom are you talking about"? I wondered. He replied, "There is a saint who has come to bless his devotees at Vallabhai Patel Stadium. Why not go"? We both went there and had Darshan of Swami. Swami was walking and moving around very fast. What energy, grace and speed! After the programme was over, all devotees were in a rush to go back to their respective homes.

In the Fold of Bhagavan

When we both came out, we saw a vendor selling Bhagavan's photos. During those days, photos were in Litho Paper and it was a full size picture. I asked the vendor for its price. He said, one rupee. A police constable was standing next to him. Seeing him I called out to the constable complaining of the vendor looting me. The constable said, "If you want, you take it and don't pay him". I took the photo of Bhagavan and went home without paying the vendor. On reaching home, I gave Bhagavan's photo to my mother. She was at once attracted to the photo. I narrated to her the full story. Her immediate reaction was to go to the Mandir exactly opposite our house and offer one rupee in the donation box. Though it was late, I went to the Mandir and put one rupee in the donation box and came back.

From that day, there was no looking back. This is how our entire Manyal family was chosen by Bhagavan. Since then, all in the family believe only Parthi as their place of pilgrimage.

Duty as Seva Dal at Dharmakshetra Gate

A few years later, Bhagavan visited Mody Bungalow in Andheri (East), Mumbai. I happened to get the gate duty. I had to work under Sri Raja Navalkar, and this was possible only because of Late Sri Gurudutt Bailur who was looking after the volunteers. While on duty at gate, it once so happened that it was overcrowded and the bungalow had limited space. There was a sudden rush of devotees for Darshan and the gate had to be closed. Devotees were anxious to have Bhagavan's Darshan and they forced their entry thus hurting me. After Bhagavan left Mumbai, Sri Gurudutt Bailur was constantly in touch with me and used to give me some work of Bhagavan to do. No sooner did the work given by him was over than he would come up with another work. This continued ever after. This is only because of Gurudutt's efforts that I am till today active at the age of 75.

Whenever Bhagavan visited Mumbai, I was always given the gate duty (except once). From the year 1967, when Bhagavan came for laying the foundation stone of Dharmakshetra till His last visit, I performed this duty. While on duty at the Dharmakshetra gate during one of Bhagavan's visits in May, we four at the gate thought that we should sit when Bhagavan goes to Sathya Deep after giving Darshan to devotees. When Bhagavan reached the gate, He laughed and joked and said, they are hungry for food. Raja Navalkar who was

following Bhagavan started running to Anand Kutir (Guest House) to get food. Bhagavan instructed him not to run. Bhagavan was so kind and caring like a mother that He sent food for four of us at the gate duty.

Once Sri Pandurang Dixit came to me and said that we had to tour Maharashtra and Goa along with Sri N Kasturi. Being lucky, I was asked to join to operate the projector as we had to show films on Bhagavan in villages. We travelled to a number of places in both States for two weeks and I operated the projector showing Bhagavan's black and white films. I remember in those days, there used to be 16 mm spool films, and even during late night times crowds were unexpected. We were five of us including Sri N. Kasturi and stayed at the residences of devotees overnight wherever we went. We travelled in a Bajaj Tempo.

Once there was an All India Seva Dal Conference at Prasanthi Nilayam. It was held in Prasanthi Mandir. Dr. Keki Mistry was in-charge of the Seva Dal of Mumbai. I was trained as a Seva Dal Member under him. A Seva Dal certificate of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Mumbai was given to me in the year 1970 which I still preserve.

Since last 25 years, I have been chosen to be under His command and worked with five District Presidents: (1) Late Sri Dalal (2) Late Sri Ramesh Thakkar (3) Sri Nimish Pandya presently All India President of our Organisation, (4) Sri Anoop Saxena and (5) Sri Sushil Bhatia.

A few years later Sri Sathya Sai Trust, Maharashtra decided to start a school. In those days too, it used to rain heavily and we needed to not only inform the localities but also bring children from the nearby slums to reach out to maximum before the opening of the school at Dharmakshetra. By Bhagavan's grace now the school is up to 10th Standard.

The results of the school are very encouraging every academic year.

As the days passed and years flew, Bhagavan gave me the opportunity of His proximity. Each day, I was drawn closer to Him. He pulled the strings and I was placed as a help to Khyaldas in Parthi. Now I had a small role to play in the store (now a big shopping complex). I would be assisting there whenever I visited Puttaparthi. Those days, we travelled by broad gauge line up to Guntakal and changed to metre gauge from there. We also carried items to be sold in the store from Mumbai. We travelled up to Dharmavaram and then took horse cart up to Prasanthi Nilayam.

Knowing the financial crisis I was going through, Bhagavan once called me as though to give some important instructions and very quietly slipped three notes of ₹100 each into my hands assuring me, "I am always there for you". The notes are double the size of today's notes which my wife has preserved till today as Bhagavan's Prasadam.

During one of the gate duty occasions after Darshan, Bhagavan while walking back turned to me and asked, "Where is Pushpa"? I was not married and did not get it. Shortly after that, I got married and after marriage when we both went to seek blessings of Bhagavan, He named her Pushpa (a custom where the bride's name is changed after marriage in Sindhis). During those days, no rooms were there inside Mandir complex; we had to sleep in the open on the sand. As there was no other transport, I travelled by tonga, with a newly-wed who wondered whom on earth was I going to visit. Bhagavan blessed us with interview and gave me a shirt piece, and a pendant to Pushpa which she added in her Mangal Sutra.

Admission of my Daughter in Bhagavan's School

In 1975, a baby girl was born to us and Bhagavan came to Mumbai in the same year



The author doing Arati in Dharmakshetra during Bhagavan's visit to Mumbai in the year 2010.

and He blessed my daughter by naming her Kirti. When Bhagavan started Primary School in Puttaparthi, Sri Kishin Punjwani was in Puttaparthi and he wrote a letter for my daughter's school admission. Till today, the letter has not been received. On a certain Sunday, I happened to be in Dharmakshetra. Fortunately, Sri Punjwani met me. Surprised to see me, he said, "Why are you still here? I have written a letter to you long back stating for school admission of your daughter". I informed him that no such letter had been received.

I left Mumbai the very next day along with my daughter Kirti for the school admission in Puttaparthi. I rushed to the school next day and met the Principal. The Principal said, admissions were over. I came back to the room and was very sad. I stopped taking food and water, thinking I will not have anything till the admission is granted. On the 3rd day, Bhagavan was leaving for Whitefield in the afternoon. Bhagavan was about to sit in the car and I was standing there praying from my heart and soul. Just then looking towards me, Bhagavan called me from far and said, "Go to school tomorrow morning and take admission". I fell at His Feet, took Padanamaskar and blessings. I came to the room and drank water

to break my fast of three days and spent the day in thanking my Lord. I went to school the next morning, but the Principal refused to listen saying she had not received any instructions from Bhagavan. I came back and met Sri Kutumba Rao. He instructed me to go to school the very next morning, stating he had sent word to the Principal regarding admission. By Bhagavan's grace, next morning admission was granted to Kirti who completed her graduation from Bhagavan's Anantapur Girls College.

Showers of Divine Grace on the Entire Family

All the children of my family were named by Bhagavan. Almost all the children of my family were blessed to have their education from this Divine institution. I believe that they are what they are only because of this holy institution. Currently, my younger daughter's son is studying here. We were also lucky to be granted a room inside the Ashram and the whole family keeps coming to get themselves charged again and again. I request Bhagavan to keep showering His grace and blessings on our whole family and Kutumb (clan).

A few years later, in 1985, we had seen a match for my sister. The bridegroom too was a devotee. The brother of my would-be brother-in-law and me decided to visit Prasanthi Nilayam to request Bhagavan to perform her marriage and give us a suitable date for the same. For three days, Bhagavan did not even look at us. On the fourth day morning, Bhagavan called both of us and agreed to perform the marriage by giving us a suitable date too. In the year 1985, Bhagavan performed my younger sister's marriage in the interview room in the afternoon. The morning of the day of the marriage He called my

mother, my sister and me for an interview and explained to my sister regarding marriage and life thereafter and blessed her. Before we left the interview room, He gave her a Sari to wear for the marriage in the evening.

Even for my elder sister, Bhagavan approved and blessed her marriage. All other marriages were approved and blessed thereafter. It was in the year 1998, Bhagavan proposed a date for my elder daughter's marriage and asked to come for blessings after marriage. We followed the orders and were granted an interview. In the interview room, Bhagavan spoke to my father and gave him a ring. I was sitting next to Bhagavan when He told me that my father will be with us for two more years. On 29th December 1999, he merged at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan. During the same interview, Bhagavan also named my youngest brother's son.

One of the years, when my elder daughter was studying there and I was a frequent

visitor, it so happened after Bhagavan's morning Darshan, Sri Kutumba Rao asked me when I was leaving. I told him, I will be buying a ticket today and don't have one. Sri Kutumba Rao asked me to go to the Book Stall and contact Sri Bhatt; he will arrange the ticket. I met Sri Bhatt, gave him my details and to my surprise I got a confirmed sleeper ticket. Sri Kutumba Rao wanted to send some documents to Dharmakshetra. He said, the documents would be ready by 2 p.m. I told him my train was at 3 p.m. from Dharmavaram. He said that he would make some arrangements for me to be on time. Sri Kutumba Rao gave me the documents sharp at 2 p.m. and also a car for Dharmavaram. What a VIP treatment Bhagavan gave me which is still not forgotten by me! This is how He takes care of the minutest details for us. I bow down and pray for purity in thought, word and deed.

– The author is Convener, Sri Sathya Sai Samithi, Bandra Khar, Santacruz (Mumbai).

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MERRY CHRISTMAS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

SIMPLICITY AND SOLEMNITY marked the celebration of the holy festival of Christmas at Prasanthi Nilayam. The venue of the celebrations was Sai Kulwant Hall which was aesthetically decorated with Christmas stars, banners and other Christmas decorations, reflecting the glory of the spirit of the grand occasion. The programme started at 8.30 a.m. on 25th December 2020 after the regular Veda chanting for half an hour by the Prasanthi Mandir Veda Group. True Christmas spirit came alive when the Prasanthi Mandir Bhajan Group presented soul-stirring Christmas carols. Beginning with the inspiring number “We Wish you a Merry

Christmas”, they suffused the entire milieu with divine vibrations by presenting an elevating programme of Christmas carols. Some of the carols sung by the singers were: “This is Your House”, “O Holy Night”, “We Three Kings of the East”, “Shine on Jesus”, “More Love, More Service”, “I Offer my Life” and “Thank You Lord”. Screening of old video clips of Christmas celebrations when Swami used to give silver door Darshan on the Christmas morning enriched the programme and revived old memories of Christmas celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

About Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust Publications Division

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 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 Bhagavan 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.
- 3) Maintaining a reporting channel 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 Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and books on Bhagavan besides various spiritual and religious books.

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Utilise Every Moment in Thoughts of the Lord

With mutual friendship and affection, be engaged in Bhajan, Puja, meditation and the study of the glories of the Lord! Utilise the little time available in thoughts of the Lord, without wasting it in idle talk. Time, once lost, can never be reclaimed! The time that is yet to come cannot be claimed, as certainly yours! So, to transform each moment into joy, make this moment, while it is still with you, holy and pure. Give up all yesterdays and tomorrows and the days after; do now this very day, the task that is worthwhile. This is My New Year Blessings to you all.

– Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



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