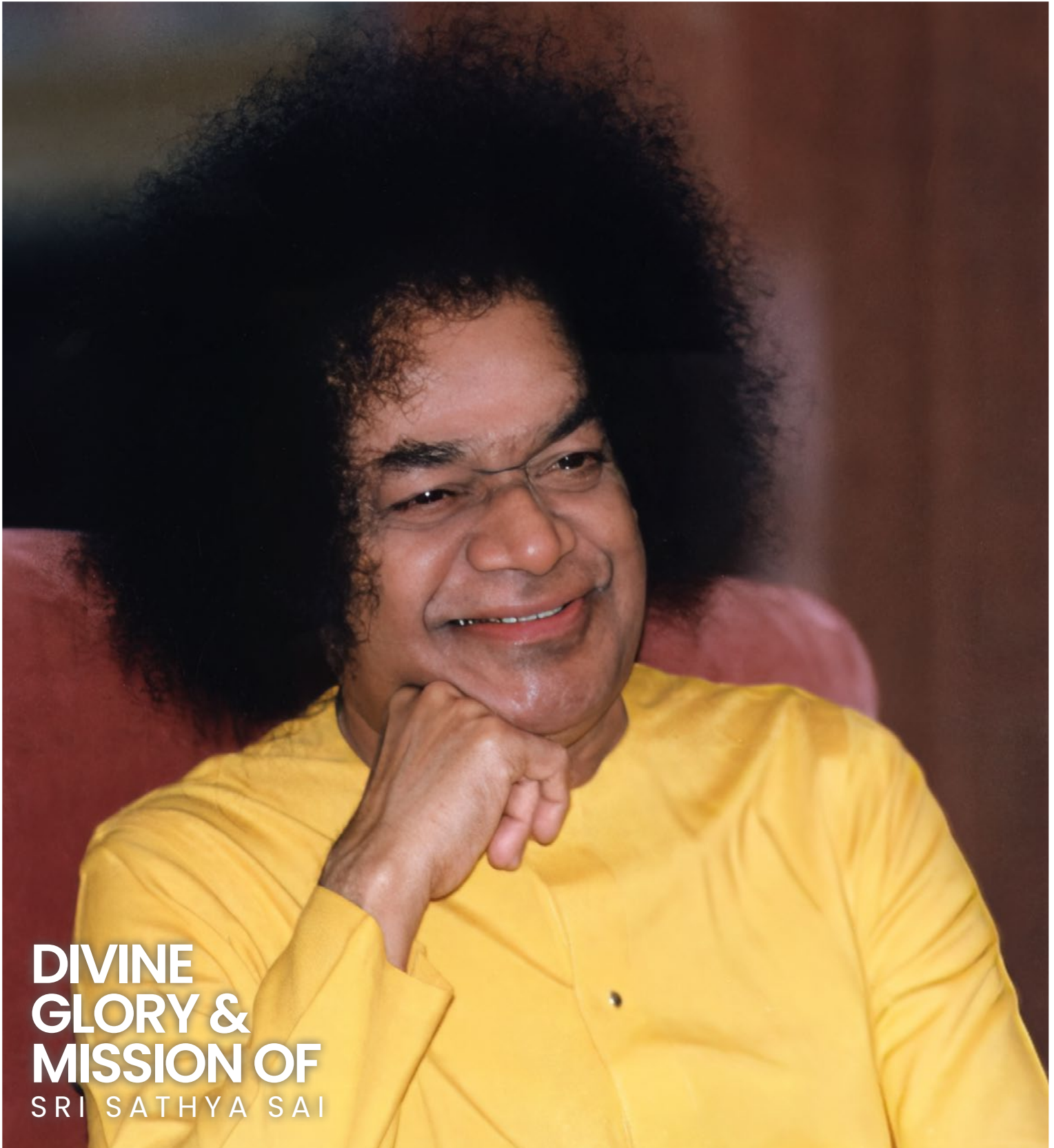


SATHYA SAI  
THE  
**ETERNAL**  
COMPANION



VOLUME 2, ISSUE 6  
JUNE 2023



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



*Sathatham yoginah*—always be a yogi! Be calm, unruffled serene; unaffected by good fortune or bad, for you are a puppet making motions and contortions according to the pull He gives to the strings! Be pleasant in speech and manner; do not inflict injury or insult on others, nor be affected by any adverse act or remark by others. Be happy for everyone and everything is ordained by God. It is His play, His sport!

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**  
July 23, 1971

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





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# DIVINE VISION, DIVINE MISSION, DIVINE ASSURANCE

God, who is beyond name, form, and attributes, and transcends time, space, and causation, incarnates in His infinite love and compassion when there is a decline in the adherence to right conduct (*Dharma*). In today's world, people run after wealth and material pleasures from dawn to dusk and are caught in grief and bondage. Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba incarnated to redeem humanity and show the way to live in peace and happiness and **attain ultimate freedom by the practice of the five fundamental human values, Sathya (Truth), Dharma (Right Conduct), Shanti (Peace), Prema (Love), and Ahimsa (Nonviolence)**—which are universal to people of all nations, religions, faiths, cultures, languages, and ages.

When He was barely 14, He declared that He was Sai Baba with no traditional family ties. He then discarded His schoolbooks and made history with His first *bhajan* with an indelible and universal message to awaken humanity—*Worship the feet of the Divine Master in the mind (Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam...)*, and you will be liberated from the cycle of birth and death. Reinforcing the efficacy and supremacy of that message, in the historic discourse given on May 17, 1968, during the First World Conference, Swami said, “Following my instructions is enough. That

*will give you the summum bonum of life. It will give you more benefit than any austerities and penance undertaken.”*

As Prophet Isaiah has said (Isaiah 40:8), “The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.” Therefore, we must take His message to heart and follow His command implicitly, immediately, and completely. This is the duty and obligation of all Sai devotees. In this connection, let us remember Swami's profound declarations in the epochal letter He wrote to His brother, Seshama Raju. The message in that letter applies to all humanity, and I will touch upon the nine important divine proclamations in it. **These proclamations show the clear path of Swami's divine vision, His divine mission, and His divine assurance for all those who tread that path.**

1. **“No one can understand me either today or in the distant future, whoever that may be, whatever the method of inquiry and however long it takes.”**

We should not try to understand Swami because He is beyond the comprehension of the mind and the intellect, as the Taittiriya Upanishad proclaims. (*Yatho Vacho Nivarthanthe Aprapya Manas Saha*, which means God is beyond the scope of speech and mind)

Sri Satya Sai Baba



PUTTAPARTHI,

(BUKKAPATNAM P. O.,)

(Via) PENUKONDA.

25.5.1947.

శ్రీ కృత్యం.

నాయనా! దీని ప్రతిబింబం పాప కర్మ ప్రారంభం

సీ. శ్రేణిల మానవులకు. నాదం నయే నశురై,  
రక్షించు నుండు నీ వీటి నాకు,

పాపాన్ని వదులు వీని. ప్రతిబింబం నాకలా,  
నట్లు గా సాక్షురై ప్రతిబింబం నాకు  
నీ నాదం లక్ష్యం పెనుగా నలాదింబ.  
త్రవిన నా కృత్య ప్రతిబింబం నాకు.  
నిమన లక్ష్యం లక్ష్యం నా గాల్గ వాని  
నా సాక్షురై నీ ప్రతిబింబం నాకు.

మం దింపి కలగ. మనమల్ల సమమగా,  
నా నాయనా నుండు నీ. శక్తి నాకు.

సీ. నే నే నా నాయనా నాయనా నాయనా.  
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నాయనా నాయనా నాయనా నాయనా నాయనా

Excerpt of handwritten letter from Swami on May 25, 1947 containing the declarations described in the editorial

My father, a faculty member at Sathya Sai University, once traveled with Swami to the villages for rural upliftment work. When they came to a fork in the road, Swami asked them which road they should take to reach the village. My father was puzzled because he knew that Swami is omniscient. Wondering why He was asking such a question, my father responded, "You know everything. Why do you ask which

way to go?" "Never try to understand Me. Experience My love, enjoy My love, live in My love", was the reply!

This is an important message for all spiritual seekers—**God is beyond the mind and the intellect.**

2. "I do not belong to any place, and I am not attached to any name."

In Telugu, He said beautifully, "Naku Ooru Ledu, Peru Ledu."

It means that He does not belong to any place, and He is not attached to any name. He said, "*Call Me by any name. I will respond because all names and forms are Mine.*" That is why Swami says his name is Baba. Though He never formally completed high school, Swami says He is a double graduate—B.A., B.A. (Baba)! The real meaning of B-A-B-A is that Swami is Being-Awareness-Bliss-Atma. Swami also says that **there is only one God, and He is Omnipresent**. So, we should not confine Swami to any particular name, form, place or attribute because He is beyond all. Swami said, "*Call upon me, and I will come to you, wherever you are.*"

Swami tells the story of how Draupadi called for Lord Krishna to save her when she was being disrobed in an open assembly of the Kauravas' Royal Court. Lord Krishna came to her rescue, providing her with an endless stream of sarees draping her, thus preserving her honor. Later, she expressed her gratitude to Lord Krishna and asked, "Lord, you saved me from humiliation. But why did you take so much time? You could have come right away."

Lord Krishna replied, "But, you called me O! Dwarakavasi (the Resident of Dwaraka). So, I had to come all the way from Dwaraka, true to your call. Similarly, you said O! Mathuranivasi (the Resident of Mathura). But the moment you called me as O! *Hridayavasi*, the indweller of the heart, I came to your rescue right away." **So, when we have the conviction that He is our *Hridayavasi*—the indweller of our hearts, He will manifest instantly. That is His assurance.**

3. "*If you worship me with faith and love Me with steadfastness, I will protect you, guard you, and guide you.*" This is the reassuring promise He gave us.

During my travels around the world, I hear innumerable stories about how Swami is guiding, guarding, and protecting people. There are many personal experiences of Swami's protection, but one incident stands out, which I would like to share. In 2006, when my mother went into a coma and was admitted to the ICU (Intensive care unit), we were very sad and sent a fax message to Swami for His protection. Swami then sent word that He would take care of her. Within two days, my mother completely recovered, much to the surprise of the doctors! She came home and lived for many years after that. So, wherever we are, in Los Angeles or any other part of the world, He responds to our prayers. **He was with us, He is with us, and He will be with us always. He is our eternal companion—we should have firm faith and conviction in this Truth.**

4. "*I have a 'vow': to lead all who stray away from the straight path again into goodness and save them.*" There are many examples of how Swami has transformed people. Swami said, "I do not want your devotion; I want transformation of your heart."

The sight of Swami (*darshan*), the touch of Swami (*sparshan*), and the words of Swami (*sambashan*) have transformed millions of people worldwide. A taxi driver who used to take us to Prasanthi Nilayam from Bangalore was a chain smoker who could not quit the habit. When he came to Prasanthi Nilayam for the first time, he saw Swami from a distance. Even without Swami talking or interacting with him, he instantly lost the urge to smoke and gave up his bad habit of many years! That is the power of *darshan* in transforming people.

There is a story related by the late Professor Kasturi regarding how Swami transformed a man who used to abuse his wife. There was





a devotee of Swami (Ananthappa) whose son-in-law was an alcoholic and used to abuse his wife, Ananthappa's daughter, both verbally and physically. Ananthappa and his wife prayed to Swami earnestly to help their daughter. Swami answered their prayers and called the entire family in for an interview in Puttaparthi. Despite the loving advice from Swami, the son-in-law refused to mend his ways. He even decided to harass his wife and in-laws further.

He worked as a railway official and boarded a first-class compartment while his wife and in-laws were placed in a third-class compartment. He was all alone when suddenly, the place became deep red and Swami appeared, filling the entire compartment. Blows rained on him from all sides. Swami told him that his wife was innocent and to give up his bad habits and treat his wife properly. The son-in-law could not take this punishment anymore. As the train reached the next station, Thondebhavi, he ran out of the compartment,

yelling that he was being beaten. The guard on that train came to his aid but could not find anyone. Interestingly, this guard was a student of Prof. Kasturi and a critic of Swami! Needless to say, the son-in-law changed for the good immediately—and the son-in-law's experience also transformed the guard! The lesson of the story is that if we do not transform ourselves and do not give up our bad habits, Swami will intervene directly to change us for the better.

Another way Swami can transform us is through the love of His devotees. Swami performed my daughter's wedding. After the wedding, my daughter and son-in-law (who wasn't a 'Sai devotee' at that time) went to Italy, where they were inundated with the loving hospitality of the Italian Sai devotees. This was a new experience for my son-in-law. He was intrigued, and the process of the transformation of his heart began. Thus, my son-in-law was transformed because of Swami's devotees who

radiated His love. **Swami says, “My life is my message.” Then He said “Your life is My Message.”** So, it behooves us that we live His message as per His directive and spread His Love always and everywhere.

**5. “I am attached to a ‘work’ that I love: to remove the sufferings of the poor and grant them what they lack.”**

We know about the free food, water, shelter, education, and healthcare services He has provided to millions of people in need worldwide. He provided free education from kindergarten to the doctoral level, where the emphasis is not only on academic excellence but equally on character development. He also provided primary to tertiary healthcare through His medical institutions, which provide free, state-of-the-art healthcare with love and compassion. Thousands of such service projects are ongoing around the world.

**6. “I treat the honour and dishonour, the praise and blame that may be the consequence, with equanimity. Internally, I am unconcerned.”**

In the same letter, Swami defines devotion, saying, “I expect those devoted to me treat joy and grief, gain and loss, with equal fortitude. This means that I will never give up those who attach themselves to me.” This is the true definition of devotion.

Swami says it is good to do spiritual practices like *Japa*, meditation, and service, but the real proof of devotion is to have equanimity. **We should always be steady with a peaceful and blissful attitude, accepting everything as God’s will.** That is true equanimity. Swami’s life is an example of equanimity. Whether it was sorcery and torture that He was subjected to as a young lad or the rumors and criticism He received throughout His life, He was always in bliss and continued His divine work unceasingly with determination.

**7. “I will not give up my mission or my determination.”** This is His determina-

tion (*Sankalpa*)! Swami’s *Sankalpa* is Vajra (strong as a diamond) *Sankalpa*. It is so strong that no one can stop His mission or His divine will.

There are many instances where His divine *Sankalpa* produced amazing results. One of the examples is when Swami announced in 1990 that a Super Specialty Hospital would be opened in Prasanthi Nilayam by His next Birthday, i.e., November 1991. Nobody believed that it would happen. In April 1991, construction began, and the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences was inaugurated during the birthday celebrations in 1991. Four cardiac surgeries were successfully performed in the hospital on the inauguration day itself! Only by divine will, *Sankalpa*, could such a massive and magnificent hospital project be completed in six months in a remote corner of rural India. Swami says that **nothing can come in the way of His divine *Sankalpa*.**

**8. “You can yourself see the full glory in the coming years. Devotees must have patience and forbearance.”** Swami said this when He was barely 20 years old!

We have been seeing Swami’s glory continuing to grow, and we can only imagine the magnificence of His divinity to unfold in the future. I remember during Swami’s 60th Birthday, Mrs. Kamala Sarathi, the wife of the Defense Secretary of India, shared that when Swami was only 20 years old, He told them that in the future, many will come to see Me and you have to see Me from a distance like a small orange dot. In those days, only 50-100 people were at the *Ashram*, and they could not even imagine what Swami was talking about. On that day in the stadium, she remembered Swami’s prophetic words of how His glory would expand and grow in the future. It is amazing that though Swami physically traveled to only three countries—Kenya,

Uganda, and Tanzania—His glory and His mission have spread to so many countries worldwide. It is indeed an irrefutable fact that never in the history of humanity, during the lifetime of the Avatar, His glory and mission have been experienced in more than 120 countries. Still, it continues to expand, and **more and more countries are becoming aware of His name, form, and glory.**

To have a glimpse of His glory and His mission, please visit the official international organization's website (<https://sathyasai.org>) to see how:

- 39 Sathya Sai Schools and 28 Sathya Sai Institutes of Education provide free, value-based education to many around the world.
- Healthcare professionals provide free, state-of-the-art, loving, and compassionate medical services through medical camps, medical clinics, mobile clinics, and preventive health education.
- Food, water, and humanitarian assistance are provided to the needy, particularly in many countries in Africa and Latin America where the need is extreme.

**9. "I have a 'task': to foster all mankind and ensure for all of them lives full of bliss (Ananda)."**

This is the most important divine proclamation. When we recite the 108 names of Swami, we chant 'Om Sri Sai Anandaya Namaha,' which means that Swami is the embodiment of bliss. We also chant 'Om Sri Sai Anandadaaya Namaha,' which means He grants us Ananda or Bliss. **He has come to confer bliss on all of us.**

On December 25, 1998, Swami said that whenever anyone asks you to talk about who is Sai Baba, sing this song. And then Swami sang the *bhajan*, "Love is My form,

*Truth is My breath, Bliss is My food."* So, Bliss is His food. If we want Swami to be happy, we should all be blissful because that is our true nature. For that, Swami has said the simplest thing is to hold on to Him; to remember that we are in the presence of the Kaliyuga Avatar, the greatest divine manifestation. In this context, it is important to remember that on May 17, 1968, during the First World Conference, Swami said, "This is the human form in which every divine entity and every divine principle, that is to say, all names and forms attributed by man to God, are manifest, and never let any doubt distract."

So, if we have faith and follow His divine teachings with sincerity and love, we will live in bliss. **Swami says that Love is the royal road to attain bliss** wherein we experience oneness (*Advaita*) and divinity in everything, everywhere, and ever. As the Taittiriya Upanishad says, this divine bliss is quintillion times that of ordinary human happiness. When you consider human happiness as one unit, this bliss is 10 to the power of 18 (1,000,000,000,000,000,000) units—which we cannot express in words but can only experience. This is our good fortune, and we should make the best use of this unique, precious lifetime opportunity the loving avatar gifted us.

So let us all remember His nine divine proclamations, which reveal the divine vision, divine mission, divine glory, and divine assurance for our redemption. I pray to Swami that **we will have the determination and devotion to practice His divine command in our daily lives and reach the supreme goal of Self-realization.**

Jai Sai Ram!

# Discipline–The Life Breath of Man

*Birds and animals do not have any type of education,  
Yet they learn to lead a disciplined life.  
But, alas, man, who is endowed with all intelligence,  
lacks the intelligence to lead a disciplined life.*

*(Telugu poem)*

Embodiments of Love! **Discipline is like the primordial life principle for every living being.** For all human beings, it is like the backbone. Discipline means following certain rules and regulations implicitly. Without discipline, there can be no well-being (*Na shreyo niyamam vina*). Humanness cannot survive in the absence of rules and regulations.

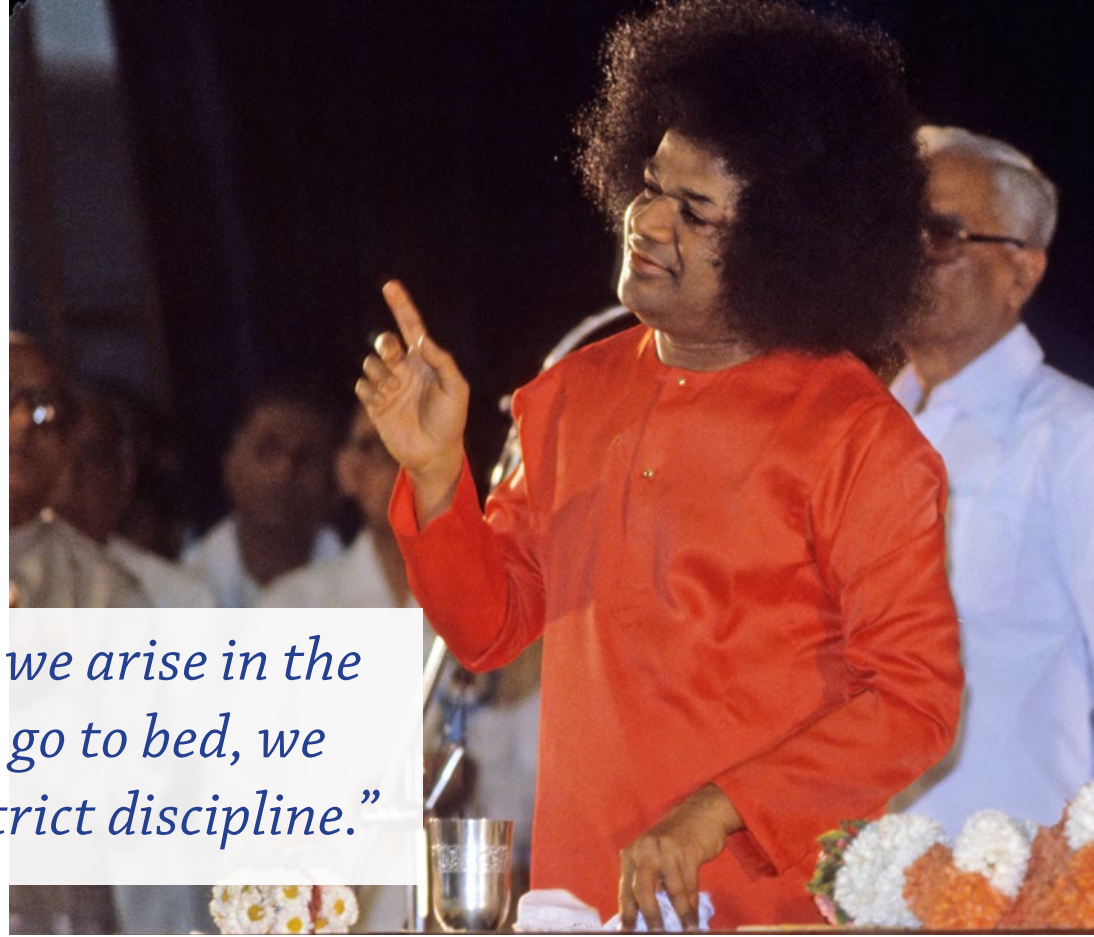
## **No Society or Nation Can Exist Without Discipline**

Discipline cannot be acquired from books, nor can it be taught by a teacher. Discipline should become a habit in one's daily life in carrying out one's duties. **It is essential to follow discipline every moment of one's life from morning to evening.** It is necessary for every community, every society, every race, and every country.

Even in the field of politics, discipline is very much necessary. Discipline is essential for every society, organization, and political system. It is discipline that brings about unity between people, in society, and between societies. Therefore, discipline is the hallmark of human life.

It is essential to follow discipline not only in our speech but also in games, sports, and other activities. When singing *bhajans*, even though there are many people singing in the chorus, they should all sing at the same pitch. If each person sings in a different pitch, it will not be pleasing to the ear. Therefore, singing with the chorus requires great discipline. While playing games, the referee tells the players to follow certain rules. Every player, including the captains of the teams, should follow these rules implicitly.

Since there is a lack of discipline in every aspect of human activity, life has become a nightmare. Therefore, **discipline is essential in every field of human activity and in all professions** like business, agriculture, and so forth. People who occupy positions of authority should also follow discipline and should not misuse their power. Just because they have a pen in their hand, they should not exercise authority. Since the tongue has no bone and can be twisted in any manner, one should not speak as one pleases.



*“From the time we arise in the morning till we go to bed, we should follow strict discipline.”*

Observe appropriate limits in your writing and speech. **Before saying anything, enquire whether what you are going to say is proper or not. Do not write anything without forethought because it may cause great danger to you in the future.** Therefore, take proper care while writing something. The only way to safeguard your position is to follow proper discipline. When you follow discipline, you do not need any other protection.

### **Discipline In Sitting**

Discipline is also necessary for walking, sitting, and even laughing. The proper way of walking is to walk on the pavement without disrupting the traffic. On the other hand, by not following traffic discipline, you would not only violate the law but can also cause harm to others. Therefore, it is said: Help Ever, Hurt Never. **You should observe discipline that will be beneficial to others also.** Observance of discipline should be started at an early age. Start early, drive slowly, and reach safely.

Discipline is absolutely necessary for students. In fact, it is also necessary for

officers, teachers, and all citizens. When you come across your elders, know how to offer respect to them. Always sit in a proper posture, keeping in mind in whose presence you are sitting. Even in such small matters, follow proper discipline.

When small children sit, they tend to sit with their backs bent like a bow. They should not bend their spine in this manner. They should sit properly, keeping their spine straight. **When you keep your spinal column straight, your thoughts will directly reach your intellect.** In this way, you can attain concentration within a short time.

Our spinal column encases the central nerve (*sushumna nadi*). When you keep the spine straight, the spiritual power (*kundalini shakti*) located at the base of the spine, represented by the form of a serpent, will rise and reach directly to the thousand-petaled lotus in the head (*sahasrara chakra*). Kundalini is not a serpent; it is a type of energy, and it rises upwards, crossing all the chakras in the spine. **Therefore, you should keep your spine straight**

to enable the *kundalini shakti* to rise upwards smoothly. That is why people who practice yoga sit straight. This is a very good practice. It gives you memory power and develops the power of concentration. Therefore, sitting is also a great discipline.

In order to follow this discipline properly, certain purifications are necessary. First, purify your body. It is not mere cleaning of the body with soap and water. **You should engage in good deeds to purify the body.** It is only the good deeds that can purify it. You should purify your mind with good thoughts. When the body and the mind are purified in this manner, the intellect will always remain pure.

What is the primordial sound that emerges from the body? *Aham, Aham, Aham* (I am). From where does this 'I am' (*aham*) emerge? It emerges from the *Atma* (Self). The mind is born out of this 'I am' (*aham*). Speech is born out of the mind. Therefore, this 'I' is the son of *Atma*; the mind is the grandson, and speech is the great-grandson. Hence, the great-grandson, the grandson, and the son all belong to the same family of *Atma*. Therefore, the mind should be as pure as the *Atma*. Likewise, speech should also be as pure as the mind. **There is an intimate relationship between the 'I am' (*aham*), mind, speech, and the *Atma*. Fill these with sacred feelings.**

### Discipline In Speech

At times, we go back on our word. There is no greater sin than this. Emperor Bali said, "Is there a greater sin than going back on one's own word?" **There is no sin greater than lying about the given word.** Therefore, protect the purity of your speech.

### Discipline In Eating

To begin with, we should purify our body with the right actions. From the time we arise in the morning till we go to bed, we should follow strict discipline. We should observe discipline in eating also. We should

eat only as much as is necessary. When we eat in excess, we will suffer from indigestion. But many a time, we don't observe this discipline and do not pay heed to the inner voice.

Before meals, we chant this prayer:

*Brahmārpanam Brahma Havir  
Brahmāgnau Brahmanāhutam,  
Brahmaiva Tena Gantavyam  
Brahmakarmā Samādhinah.*

The act of offering is God. The oblation is God. By God, it is offered into the Fire of God. God is That which is to be attained by him who performs action pertaining to God.

When you pray in this manner before you partake of your food, God immediately responds thus:

*Aham Vaishvānaro Bhutvā  
Prāninām Dehamāshritaha,  
Prānāpāna Samāyuktah  
Pachāmyannam Chaturvidham.*

I, the Supreme Spirit, abiding in the body of living beings as the *Vaiswanara* (digestive fire) in their stomach, associated with their *Praana* (life force) and *Apaana* (vital air), digest the four types of foods (foods you chew, drink, suck, or lick).

But you eat much more when the food is tasty. Then the digestive fire present in your stomach starts cautioning you repeatedly, "Be careful. Do not put anymore." But you do not listen to this. You go on loading your stomach with tasty food items. Ultimately, you get an upset stomach and suffer. Therefore, you should observe proper discipline in eating.

**If you do not follow discipline in food, you will suffer from ill health.** An unhealthy stomach is the root cause of all diseases in the body. **Therefore, you should fill only three parts of your stomach with food and leave one-fourth part empty.** That is the way to bring proper discipline in eating; follow this discipline every day.

“*Whatever discipline you observe in your daily life, never give it up.*”

### Discipline In Actions

Whatever you do from dawn to dusk, perform all your activities with proper discipline. Be it worship or walking or sitting or eating, everything should be done in a disciplined way. Then your life will become exemplary. Discipline in whatever you do is verily *karma yoga* (the path of action). This *karma yoga* will lead to perfection in action. Man has the right only to perform action. We should always keep ourselves engaged in action (*karma*). What type of actions should you perform? Perform actions within limits. **Follow the divine commands. First and foremost, purify your body by performing noble deeds. That is the primary discipline.** From the time you wake up in the morning till you go to bed at night, always follow discipline. Obey the divine command. Whatever discipline you observe in your daily life, never give it up. Then only you can call yourself truly educated.

What is the meaning of *vidya* (education)? What does ‘*vid*’ mean? It means knowledge (*jnana*). This is the path for attaining knowledge.

*Do not feel proud of your education.  
If you do not offer your salutations to  
God and do not think of Him with  
devotion,  
All your education will become  
useless.*

(Telugu poem)

Do not be proud of your bookish knowledge, thinking you have read so many books. Join both your hands in reverence and offer your salutations to the Lord. This is the first step in spirituality.

What is the meaning of bringing the ten fingers together? It means *namaskar* (respectful salutation). **What is the inner meaning of *namaskar*? It is to bring about unity in the five senses of perception and the five senses of action. That is unity in diversity.** *Namaskar* connotes the unity of everything. The *Atmic* principle, in reality, is one. Therefore, *namaskar* has great significance in the field of spirituality.

*Namaskar* has a deeper meaning: “*Na-mama*,” meaning “I am not.” It signifies the destruction of ego. “*Mama*” means “mine.” “*Na-mama*” means “not mine.” Therefore, **offering everything to the Lord with a total sense of surrender, saying, “Oh Swami! Everything is Yours,” is the inner meaning of *namaskar*.**

### Disciplining The Senses

People today do not know what discipline really means. Nor do they know what sense control means. Your eyes see anything and everything. You should tell your eyes, “Oh eyes! What are you looking at? Do not look at anything that is bad.” **See no evil, see what is good; hear no evil, hear what is good; talk no evil, talk what is good; think no evil, think what is good; do no evil, do what is good; this is the way to God.** Therefore, think good, do good, be good, see good, and speak good. You should develop the discipline to follow this noble path.

Let people talk to you in any manner, but you should exercise control in your speech. Students! Even birds and animals observe certain discipline. But people who are highly educated and intelligent do not observe any discipline. You can see this yourself. There are monkeys near

your hostel and college. Every day, they observe silence for at least one hour. Even birds observe silence for an hour. But poor humanity! The tongue gets no rest, even for a minute! The tongue keeps making noise all the time like a drum. It does not observe silence at all. On the other hand, we make fun of those who observe silence.

Instead, we should follow this discipline of silence enthusiastically saying, "This person is observing silence. Let us also follow the same." **It is said that 'silence is God' (*Nisshabdham Brahma*). In fact, the quiet that is there in silence is *Brahman*.** There is immense greatness in observing control in speech. When you control your talk, you are able to control everything.

How is it that God gave so much power to the tongue? Our eyes have only the power to see and no other power. Similarly, our ears have the power to hear and no other power. The nose has no other power except the power to smell. But **the tongue has two powers; it has the power of taste as well as the power of speech. Since it is endowed with two powers, it must be kept in control first.**

We cannot attain divinity without discipline. If you follow a certain routine one day, and on the next day, you follow a totally different routine, that is not correct. Here is a small example. Suppose you do devotional singing (*bhajans*) or meditation every day at 6 o'clock in the morning or evening. Sometimes, you may have to go on a trip. During this travel, you may be on a bus at 6 o'clock. Some people say that you should not change the place and time of your spiritual practice. We should never forget our duty even if there occurs a change in the place. You may be on a bus, but 6 o'clock is 6 o'clock wherever you are. When you are on a bus at 6 o'clock, think about the place where you do *bhajans* at that time. Then your mind will reach that

place. You need not go to the place; the place will come to you.

You should follow the discipline without a break. If you follow the discipline, the time and the place will come to you.

### **The Puranas (Sacred Scriptures) Contain Eternal Truths**

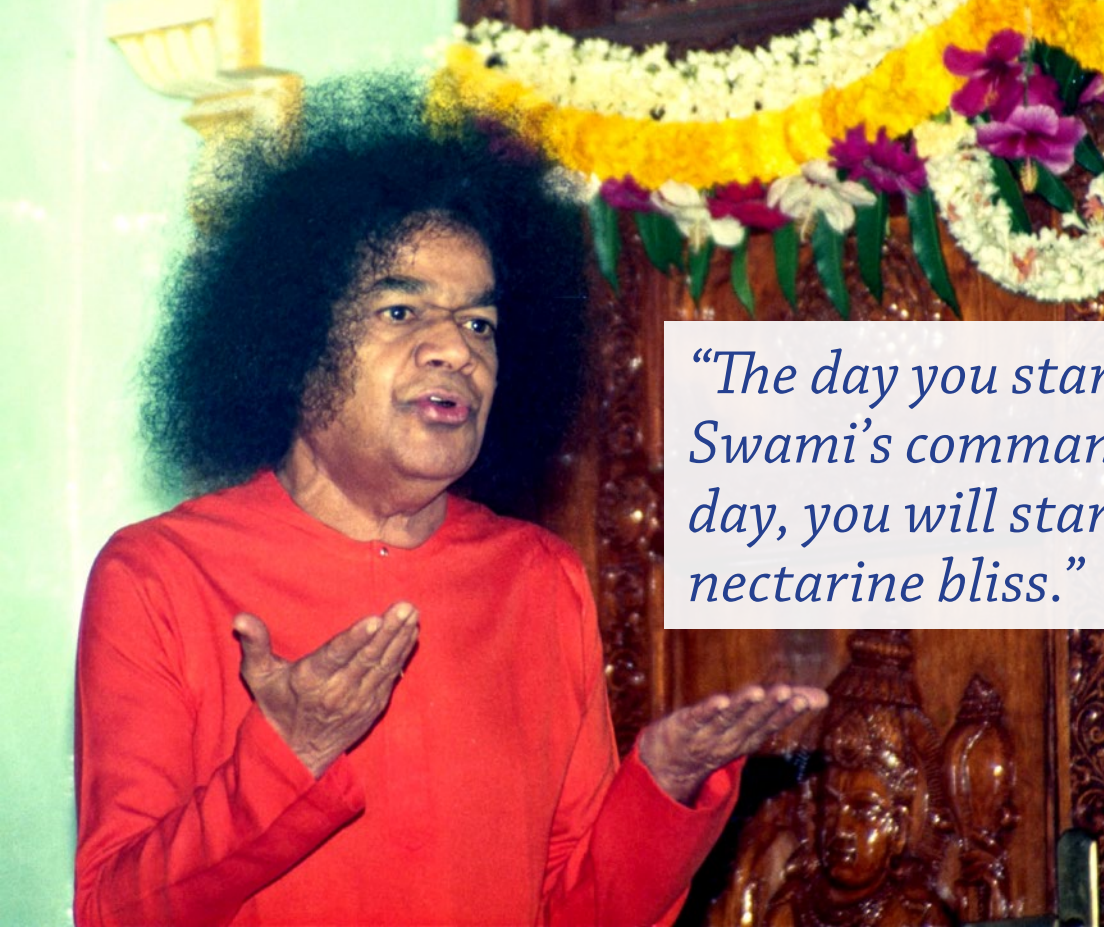
Good and bad emerge from us only. That is why it is said: As are the feelings, so is the result (*Yad bhavam tad bhavathi*). Never brush aside things from Puranas as untruth without knowing their inner meaning. Take some time and get rid of your doubts and become free from worries. **Don't spoil your mind with doubts. There is no scope for doubting the Puranas.**

Who are the authors of these Puranas? These are not written by ordinary writers. These are written by great saints and rishis like Valmiki and Vyasa. They were great scholars. There are no other scholars greater than them. Some people may call them untrue stories on the basis of their own feelings, but the reality is that they are true and nothing but the truth.

They set great ideals. They have not shown the wrong path to anybody, nor have they spoilt anyone. They show the path of truth. They are ideal texts. You should follow these ideal texts and make your life ideal. If you want to make your life ideal, talk less. Obey the command of God and follow discipline. Whatever the circumstances, never give up discipline. Truth is one. It is not as if there is one Truth for children and one for the elders; or one for *brahmins* and one for *sudras*. Truth is one for all. Truth is one, not two. God is one without a second (*Ekameva adviteeyam Brahma*). Truth is only one.

Do not be carried away by the vagaries of your mind. Put a check on your mind and bring it back when it wanders hither and thither. Direct your mind in such a way that it follows your command. **The mind**





*“The day you start following Swami’s command, from that very day, you will start experiencing nectarine bliss.”*

**is your servant; you are not the servant of your mind. Hence, use your mind as your servant. Do not become its slave.**

Whose slave should you become? Slaves of God. That is why Saint Ramdas sang, “Oh Lord! I should become the servant of Your servants. I should serve Your devotees. Right from dawn to dusk, I am Your servant. Not only that, I am the servant of Your servants.” God is very broad-hearted. He does not have a narrow mind. No other person has such a broad heart. The broadness of God’s heart is incomparable.

Divinity signifies the expansion of love. But people today suffer from the contraction of love. They have become narrow-minded. **What you must learn is to broaden your heart and follow the command of Swami in letter and spirit. Then only will you attain bliss.** Till such a time, you will not experience total bliss. The day you start following Swami’s command, from that very day, you will start experiencing nectar-

ine bliss. I am always ready to confer bliss on you, but you are not ready to receive it.

When a photographer wants to take your photo, he will say ‘ready’ to alert you before clicking. You may move this side and that side before this, but when the photographer says, “Sir, ready,” you should be steady. Only then will you have a good photo. Prior to that, it does not matter even if you move. You should be ready when he says ‘ready.’ We may be ready when the worldly photographer alerts us to be ready. But the divine photographer will not say, ‘ready.’ So, we should always be ready.

When will He click? We do not know! Only when you are always ready will your picture be imprinted in His heart properly. God is the greatest photographer. But He will not say, ‘ready.’ He may click at any moment. Therefore, always be ready. That is the quality of a true devotee.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**  
June 19, 1996

# My Journey to God

## *Divine Memories with Sathya Sai Baba*

**MY WIFE AND I ONCE DECIDED TO ATTEND A SEMINAR TITLED “MEN AND WOMEN.”** I was 32 years old and had been married for ten years. Though we had no spiritual background, my wife and I felt strongly that we belonged together and would reach the goal of our lives together. And yet, it was a time when difficulties darkened the skies of our mundane worldly lives. We hoped to get answers through that seminar.

To my surprise, the facilitator of the seminar was a disabled lady, not much older than me. She had been born without arms and with hands attached directly to her shoulders! But she appeared to be full of joy and strength with an aura of confidence. During the lunch break on the first day of the seminar, I could not resist asking her about the source of her energy that allowed her to lead a life of joy despite her challenges. **She answered, “Oh, I have found my teacher for life—He is a holy man living in India—and I gain the courage to face life through Him.** It is indeed a stroke of luck that I have a videotape of His work with me. If you are interested, I can show it to you in the evening.”

We gathered in the living room to watch the video at the end of the first day. But something extraordinary happened. When the facilitator played the tape, my wife and I fell asleep immediately! Regrettably, the video was over when we woke up, and we did not see even a single frame! We did not think much about it and assumed we had dozed off, exhausted from the long day attending the seminar. This incident happened during the spring of 1989.

“I think I have finally found  
what I have always sought.  
This is my real home!”

In the autumn of the same year, we attended a follow-up seminar with the same lady as the facilitator. During the lunch break, another participant asked her the same question I had asked before, and she gave him the same answer. She offered to show him the video in the evening. “Second chance,” my wife and I said to each other and eagerly gathered in the living room at the end of the day. Again, the unbelievable happened! We fell asleep exactly when the start button was pressed, waking up only when the video ended. We felt strange this time but didn’t worry too much about it.

The participants gathered in a large conference room at the end of that seminar. The men were seated on one side and the women on the other. After discussions and cordial goodbyes, the facilitator said, “Oh, by the way, I will be traveling to India during Christmas and New Year this year to see my guru. I always take a group of people with me, and there are still some spots that remain vacant. So, if any one of you is interested...” At that moment, my wife and I raised our hands simultaneously and said at the same time, “I will join you!” Then, looking at each other, we said, “Did you just say you would join her?”

We had never been to India, nor had we ever thought of going there. But weeks later, we found ourselves in the Prasanthi Nilayam Ashram at the lotus feet of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. **Today we are convinced the Lord Himself invited us to start a lifelong spiritual journey!**

### **The Awakening and Another Decision**

In 1989, there were no direct flights to Bangalore. One had to fly to Delhi or Bombay and then take a connecting flight to Bangalore. When we landed in Bangalore, an adventurous taxi driver in an old Ambassador car took us to Prasanthi Nilayam. There, a yellow, light blue, and rose color building welcomed us. It was early morning, and we sat on our suitcases in front of the accommodation office, which was not yet open. Our guide told us we would have to wait until the end of the morning *darshan* (the sight of a holy person) to get a room for our stay. At that time, I had no idea what *darshan* meant.

A stream of people was passing by us, and suddenly, my wife joined the women’s group and disappeared into the crowd! I wondered what she was thinking, but I was too tired to pay attention. But when she returned about two hours later, she clasped my arms, sobbing like a child, **“I think I have finally found what I have always sought. This is my real home!”**

I began to wonder whether my wife had suddenly lost her mind!

“You should have been with me during *darshan*.” she continued, **“When this person in the orange robe with a crown of black hair appeared, I was suddenly overwhelmed with energy, and He seemed to radiate a constant stream of love.”**

I was not sure what to make of it and what had transpired. In addition to my wife’s

strange behavior, I learned that we would share accommodation with 300 other people in a shed. This was a far cry from the hotel room accommodation I had hoped for.

But I was open to the experience of a new continent and what this special place had to offer. After a scorching day, I missed the evening *darshan*, sleeping on an old mattress, and had a restless night with almost no sleep due to the strange surroundings of smells and noises. In the morning, I joined the devotees lining up on the sands in front of the *mandir* for *darshan*. Sitting there in the early morning hours was a unique and wonderful experience. Everyone was quietly praying. An elderly man was going to the front of each line and letting the first man in every row pick a token out of a small bag. This was a lottery to determine the sequence in which the lines would be let into the *mandir* for orderly seating.

Then, beautiful soothing music started as we took our seats on the ground in front of the *mandir*. Soon Swami emerged from the *mandir*, walking slowly from the women's side towards us. I will never forget the moment when **He first looked in my direction, and I felt He was looking straight into my heart!**

That memorable first *darshan* made us change our travel plans in India and stay a little longer in the *Ashram* of this extraordinary man who willed our stay according to His plans!

### The Interview and Inner View

Our guide, the seminar facilitator who had invited us, insisted on having a short meeting every day to inform us about the routine in the *Ashram* and the rules to follow. One of the most important instructions was to go for *darshan* as a group to increase the chances of being called for an 'interview' by Swami. We were a group of nine, and I was happy that my best friend, Michael, had also come with his wife. Since the men and women assembled separately, Michael and I were always together like twins!

On our third day, we were sitting together in the morning *darshan* when something happened unexpectedly. The women of our group stood up after Swami passed them and began walking towards the *mandir*, although *darshan* was not over. It took us a while to realize that Swami had called our group for an interview! We also got up and joined the others who were seated in front of the 'interview room.' I tried recollecting all the questions I wanted to ask Swami (for example, whether He is really God), but suddenly they all seemed utterly irrelevant. I also felt a constant stream of tears filling my eyes, which I could not stop. It felt like I was weeping away all my grief over the past 32 years!

After *darshan*, Swami invited a second group, including my wife, me, and Michael, into the inner interview room. Michael was the first to enter so that he could sit directly next to Swami on the men's side. I was beside him. After some general questions

such as, “Where are you from?” and “How long are you going to stay?”, Swami turned to Michael and asked him, “What do you want?”

Michael had told me before that Swami should prove He is God by materializing a ring for him. Therefore, he answered, “A ring, Swami!” Swami moved His right upturned palm in circles, and a moment later, a gold nine-gem ring appeared between His fingers. He threw it into Michael’s lap. As he glanced at it, Swami asked, “Do you like it?”

“Oh yes, Swami!”

“Then pass it around!”

The ring made its way through the hands of everyone in the room before it came back to Swami. He looked at it, then turned again to Michael and asked him, “Do you really like it?”

“Swami, I would like a Christian ring even more!”

Swami put the ring in front of His lips, blew on it, and immediately it became a silver ring with a golden cross, and once again, it landed in Michael’s lap. Swami again asked him to pass the ring around. When it finally came back to Swami, He asked Michael, “Do you still like it?”


“Oh yes, Swami!”

But then Swami blew on the ring again, and it was gone!

Much later, we realized that Swami had fulfilled Michael’s wish precisely—He had materialized a ring for him—but there was no discussion about wanting to keep the ring!

**That day, I learned an important lesson: we must be very clear in our prayers about what we want from God.**

(... to be continued)

**Mr. Manfred Müller-Gransee**   
GERMANY



**Mr. Manfred Müller-Gransee** came to Swami in 1989. Since then, he has been a member of the SSSIO and has served in different positions. Since 2018, he has been the Chair of Zone 7, Northern Europe. In addition, he is the Chairman of the SaiCare Foundation in Germany.

Manfred graduated from the University of Brunswick in 1981. He worked in education before starting an institution for management training and consulting in 1988. Since 2005, he has run a recycling company for electronic waste.

# Love (Prema)

Love is guileless and honest. Love is only for the sake of love. If one loves with an expectation of something in return, it is not love. That is selfish love. Love can verily bind even God. Selfish love, on the contrary, binds one to the world. Everything is permeated with love. When one loves all living beings, it becomes divine love. Selfless love expands the heart; it purifies and transforms you into a divine being.

God is love incarnate. God is the ocean of love. If you want to experience such God and attain such Godhood, you should expand that love; nay, you must immerse yourself in It, and also drink that love. Then only can you become permeated with that love just as the water that enters the ocean assumes the radiant form and shape of the immensely vast ocean. Pure love is verily Bliss; it is sweetness itself. It speaks the language of the heart. It serves all.

Jealousy gets destroyed by jealousy. Anger suffers destruction by anger. But love feeds and fulfills love. Love conquers all. There is nothing that does not surrender itself to the weapon of love. Love is God. God is Love. Only love can win love. Love is eternal, infinite, and immortal. Indeed, it is divine nectar. Love infuses enthusiasm and shines in full brilliance.

Love is not transactional give and take. It is total dedication and surrender. Through love, man can lead a life of exemplary character, replete with respect, honor, and supreme peace. Love is the prelude and foundation for abiding peace. In this world, there is nothing so precious and unique as love. Love serves as a balm for broken hearts. Dry hearts blossom because of love. Love is the light that dispels darkness. It is the key that opens the door to liberation (*Moksha*). This love shines with virtues. It unites hearts. Love seeks no reason. It operates freely and magnanimously unhindered by any blame, censure, or insults. Love sees, not through the eyes but through the heart. Love is the crown of mankind. It is the sacred form of the *Atma*. Love is heaven on earth. It destroys fear.

*continued on page 21...*



శాసనము వలన సుఖమును గలిగి వినయమును గలవారు, తమ  
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...continued from page 18

Love your neighbor as yourself. Love God in thought, word, and deed—that is, love thyself. Love is the immortal Divine power. It is the eternal brilliant Divine light (*Divya Jyothi*). Always wishing for the welfare of others, offer and spread joy without just enjoying yourself.

Wisdom is the concretized form of love. To manifest one's love through one's actions is called selfless service. Without true love, you cannot serve anyone. Love alone is true wealth (*Aishwarya*)—it prolongs life. It bestows not merely long life but divine life. Sacrifice your life for the sake of love. The whole universe is the manifestation of God. If you want to love God, you should love the entire universe which is nothing but His form. All are verily the forms of God, so do not hate anyone. Serve all without expecting any reward.

Begin the process of loving starting from the home first; love your mother and father, brothers, and sisters. Next, extend your love to your relatives and friends, and then to your neighbors. Just like the small seeds sown becoming gigantic trees, love sown in the tender hearts of young children will sprout, spreading the love to flourish around the universe.

God's Love cannot be understood by dry scholarship; Love can be experienced only through love.

*Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

Who better than our Bhagawan Himself to summarize the essence of the five human values? Swami granted this gift to mankind when He inaugurated the first museum in Puttaparthi, the Sanathana Samskruti Museum, on November 19, 1990. Commonly known as the 'Eternal Heritage Museum', this museum is located on top of the hillock on the southern side of the ashram.

Swami had blessed the auspicious occasion by writing the essence of the five human values in His own hand for placement in the museum. A copy of the precious document was shared among a few of the senior devotees at that time. We are fortunate to have obtained a copy of Swami's gift to mankind and intend to share it, one value at a time, with devotees around the world.

# LOVE IN ACTION



## AZERBAIJAN One-to-One Service

Using decorations of ‘Syamyani’ (sprouted wheat), SSSIO volunteers in Bilgah, Azerbaijan, heralded Spring’s arrival in a special manner. On March 12, 2023, fourteen SSSIO volunteers lovingly cooked and served warm food, one on one, to 14 people with disabilities, including four young children. Apart from distributing dolma made of grape leaves, pilaf, salad, pancakes with cottage cheese, vegetable cutlets, apples, bananas, tangerines, and oranges, the volunteers shared words of encouragement and instilled enthusiasm. All the children also received gifts along with sweets.



## BELARUS Feasting in the Name of Sai

In recent times, the Republic of Belarus in Eastern Europe has faced significant political, social, and economic challenges. **Building cheer and dispelling gloom in the Sai way**, 21 members of the SSSIO in Belarus decided to come together in an atmosphere of unity and gratitude. In March 2023, they cooked and distributed food to needy people while building camaraderie. The volunteers whipped up a veritable feast, including buckwheat porridge with vegetables, cucumber salad, pancakes, fruit pie, pumpkin muffins, bulgur with mushrooms and onions, cheesecake, apple pie, bread, candy, cookies, and served along with hot tea.



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



## NEW ZEALAND Medical Camp and Human Values Awareness

A dynamic SSSIO team of two physicians, four nurses, and a dietician from New Zealand celebrated World Health Day on April 8, 2023, in a memorable way. They **provided free medical tests and nutritional advice to more than a hundred people** during the Otara Manafest event, which was held at the Otara Town Center in Auckland. Synchronizing with 'new zeal,' the Sri Sathya Sai Preschool, Rongomai, **set up a stall next to the medical team to increase awareness of the school's human-values-based teachings to 2 to 5-year-old children.** The school is a registered charity where free preschool education services are provided from Monday-Friday along with free breakfast. As an added bonus, the Young Adults entertained visitors with face painting and applied eco-friendly Henna tattoos.



## THAILAND Care Packages for the Needy

**"Lovingly serve the needy, and my Sai will be happy"** (*Deena Dukhiyon Se Prem Karo Mera Sai Prasanna Hoga*) goes the opening line of a popular bhajan. Experiencing the divine through service on February 12, 2023, fifteen SSSIO volunteers in Thailand lovingly distributed care packages to 96 families in a low-income community. These packages contained generous amounts of rice, oil, soya sauce, soap, detergent, toothpaste, baby milk, cakes, and medicines. The volunteers felt Swami's presence as the atmosphere was filled with divine love during the service.



On the spiritual path, the first step is selfless service. Through selfless service, one can realize the Divinity that is all this creation.

–Sri Sathya Sai Baba  
November 20, 1970



# SATHYA SAI SCHOOLS BRAZIL

## 1993

The Sathya Sai School of Vila Isabel is set up in Rio de Janeiro to serve children from extremely needy communities for early childhood education. This is the third Sathya Sai School set up outside India after Zambia and Thailand.

## 2000

The Sathya Sai School of Goias is inaugurated to provide early childhood education.



## 2002

The Sathya Sai School of Ribeirão Preto, in the state of São Paulo is inaugurated.



## 2017

The Sathya Sai School of Ribeirão Preto, receives a congratulatory message in its 15th year of service from the President of the Local Government, who cites the human values in the school syllabus as a tool to build the character of students.



## 2019

The Sathya Sai Schools of Vila Isabel and Goias undertake several tree-planting activities while reciting prayers. They plant Brazilian native species of redwood, yellow ipe and white ipe trees in multiple community spaces.

## 2020

*"Guardians of the Environment,"* a video depicting the importance of human values in man's relationship with nature made by Sathya Sai School of Goias wins an award from the Agrinho Social Responsibility Program. The Program, an initiative of the Federation of Agriculture of the State of Goias (FAEG), also awards the school for its vegetable garden, ecology classes, and encouraging respect for Nature.



## 2021

The Sathya Sai School of Ribeirao Preto receives multiple awards in the Brazilian Astronomy Olympiad. The school has received seven gold, ten silver, and 21 bronze medals from 2019 to date.

## 2022

The Federal Senate of Brazil, the Upper House of the National Congress honors the contribution of the Institute of Sathya Sai Education (ISSE) of Brazil for its tireless work over 22 years in developing values-based education in Brazil.





# Coming Home!

## My Pilgrimage to Sai Prema Nilayam

When I learned about the planned SSSIO International Conference at Sai Prema Nilayam, I eagerly looked forward to seeing my Sai brothers and sisters of the SSSIO whom I last saw in November 2019 in Prasanthi Nilayam.

That the Conference would be held in Los Angeles underscored to me the SSSIO's courage and determination to journey independently on the path just as laid out by Bhagawan Himself. **At a personal level, it was truly exciting for me to travel to one of the Lord's newest abodes outside of India, so aptly named Sai Prema Nilayam.**

I believe we misunderstand Swami by thinking His abode on earth is confined only to Prasanthi Nilayam. As much as I treasure that sacred place, since my younger days, I have always known that Swami is beyond the physical form. The Bhagavad Gita affirms unequivocally that the Lord pervades His entire creation.

Since He withdrew from His body in April 2011, Swami blessed many with the ultimate realization that **He is the indweller of every heart, His true home on earth. This realization has sustained me, protected me, and helped me grow spiritually since then.**

My journey to Los Angeles was, thus, to celebrate His omnipresence. It was to celebrate His benevolence in providing another place to gather with our fellow pilgrims in *satsang* to adore and worship Him. Before my travels to the USA, I had seen a



few pictures of the altar at Yajur Mandir, the newly named worship hall and auditorium in Sai Prema Nilayam. However, no one could have prepared me to imagine the awe-inspiring spectacular sight of the new abode of our Beloved.

### Love at Every Sight

I remember arriving on the property for the first time and entering the main building when I was greeted by *sevadals* (volunteers) at the registration desk, who kindly helped me place my bags in one of the many rooms along the sides of the Yajur Mandir.

I entered the Yajur Mandir and laid my eyes on the altar. It was rivetingly beautiful. But then I got distracted by greeting my Sai brothers and sisters I had not seen for a long while—it was nice to see them again. In this process, I did not allow myself the opportunity to imbibe the sacredness and majesty of the altar. Eventually, I made my way to the front of the pews. I just sat there facing the altar, waiting for the program to begin. In that stillness, I said my first prayer, thanking Bhagawan for allowing me to come here and making my journey of over 11,500 km easy, rewarding, and filled with Swami's love befitting the name Sai Prema Nilayam.

As my mind quietened further, it focused more intensely on the magnificent statute of Shirdi Sai seated on the golden throne, **the towering and impressive picture of Bhagawan at the center of the altar walking majestically towards His devotees**, and

His chair on the right—the golden throne where I knew He would come to take His seat as the proceedings began.

It slowly dawned on me that the large spacious Yajur Mandir, with its high vaulted ceiling and the grand altar, is a holy place that befits my beloved Lord's glory. I knew instantly that this property was sacred and this temple of worship could not have become a reality without His Love and Grace.

As quiet preparations for the Conference were still going on, I was drawn to walk to the altar in front to approach the external manifestations of my God's Being to take His blessings and express my deep gratitude to Him for everything He has given me. As I immersed myself in that quiet, contemplative moment at the altar all by myself, I felt physically close to my God.

Although that was my first visit to Sai Prema Nilayam, **I felt I had come home!**

I returned to my seat, and my heart was full again, realizing that **this place on earth is sacred and will always fill my heart and that of every Sai devotee.**

### A True Satsang—Gathering of People United in Love for Sai

Eventually, more people came streaming in, people I had not seen for years. I was so happy to see them ... it was as if they had not aged in the three-and-a-half years since we met in November 2019. They were all full of joy, whether finishing off last-minute tasks for the Conference or just taking their seats



at the pews. The senior leaders of the SSSIO took their seats alongside the inter-faith guests for the day's program, which began with multi-faith prayers. In that instant, three-and-a-half long years just evaporated, and all was well again, thanks to His continued guidance and protection.

Over the next three days of the conference proceedings, **I heard countless stories of the glory of Bhagawan and His Mission from people I knew and some I did not know.** They are truly dedicated devotees who selflessly serve others. They dedicate their lives, and the education they have been gifted with, to help others in the name of their Guru and God. They seek no attention, no reward, and no position of leadership. They simply serve from their hearts, and they are clearly making a difference in the lives of many.

I start my observations about the Conference by acknowledging them because they have made a lasting impression on me. I am honored to be a member of the SSSIO alongside them.

On the first day of the Conference, Dr. Narendranath Reddy gave the Inaugural Address, and he was followed by Mr. Leonardo Gutter, who gave the Keynote Address. I had previously heard both of them speak in the divine presence of Swami, in Sai Kulwant Hall, and many times to SSSIO members around the world. But, after the long gap of three-and-a-half years, it felt like a new beginning in a new Sai Prema Nilayam amongst brothers and sisters. My love and respect for both

the leaders and all brothers and sisters were refreshed.

And then followed Swami's Divine Discourse on Love to explain the theme of the Conference, *Love & Service*. Swami's sublime, sweet voice is ever-present, endearing wherever it is heard. It reverberated in the hall the same way it filled Sai Kulwant Hall in the past, with the same love and intensity, urging us to transform ourselves, gain spiritual wisdom, intensify our journey toward Him, and ultimately achieve Self-realization.

That afternoon and the next two days were filled with workshops and sharing personal experiences with Swami. It was clear that **these workshops were intended to provide fresh ideas and momentum to empower each participant to further the Sai Mission in their respective countries while making personal spiritual progress.** Not only was there a commitment to the work, but there was a fraternal feeling and openness to ideas.

There were also cultural performances and dramas by the Young Adults and SSE children. The days were filled with everything we had expected and much more.

### **Each One Lives for the Other, And All Live for God**

What was significant about all the presentations was that sufficient time was allocated to all the speakers to share their visions, their work, and the glory of the Avatar they had experienced. The stage was occupied by many, but no one came across to claim





any special privilege or unique wisdom. I am grateful to the senior leaders for empowering so many devotees to lead the Sai Mission and bring the vision together.

Three meals were provided each day under the canopies at the back of the main building by **dedicated sevadals who were enthused to serve the delegates lovingly**, even if they missed out on some of the Conference proceedings. The mix of Indian and Western meals provided the satisfaction of authentic home-cooked meals served to every palate. Thanks to Swami, the weather was delightful throughout the meeting days, typical for sunny Southern California.

*Aradhana Mahotsavam* was observed on April 24, 2023, after which we were scheduled to depart from Sai Prema Nilayam. How fitting that we were able to offer gratitude to Bhagawan not just for His Avatarhood but for that moment, the journey to Los Angeles, and the closing of a wonderful conference.

It had been one continuous celebration of love, with renewed vigor and commitment

to His mission, over the four-and-a-half days. It was clear that much thought and work had gone into preparing and delivering the Conference the 'Sai Way.' Everyone showed a quiet calm as if they knew that Bhagawan had taken over and was managing the Conference, and they were just His instruments. I gratefully acknowledge the warmth and dedication of the host country, SSSIO-USA. I also honor the many people I met at the Conference, including long-time devotees who had moved to the USA many years ago. One cannot but be impressed by their devotion and dedication to Bhagawan and their generosity.

This was undoubtedly one of the best Sai conferences I have ever attended. **There was so much love and warmth, and the contents were extensive, illuminating, and a memorable gift to all who attended.**

**Mr. Ashok K. Sakhrani**  
HONG KONG 



*Mr. Ashok Sakhrani's journey to Swami began in 1981 and there has been no looking back. He joined the Hong Kong Bar in 1987. Having served the SSSIO in various capacities, he currently serves as the Zone Chair of Zone 5 countries. He is also a member of the Media Committee and IP Committee and Chair of the Environmental Sustainability Committee.*

# HIS MISSION CONTINUES

Like travelers in a desert longing for the thirst-quenching waters of the oasis, hundreds of devotees converged on **Sai Prema Nilayam, Riverside**, near Los Angeles in the USA to have their souls nourished by spiritual *satsang* with fellow devotees around the world at the International Conference on Love and Service.

The **International Conference on Love and Service**, organized by the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO) during April 20–23, 2023, drew more than 700 participants from 35 countries. The incredible surge of love felt by devotees seeing each other in person after being connected only remotely for so long was indeed palpable. To top it all, being in the spectacular yet simply elegant setting of the new stately hall of Sai Prema Nilayam with the grand altar was so wondrous. All proceedings took place under the loving divine, benevolent, and loving gaze of Bhagawan Baba, whose tall, commanding presence in the middle of the white marble altar is truly stunning and made everyone experience His physical presence. It appeared to each devotee that His eyes met theirs irrespective of where they stood in that cavernous hall, and He seemed to be entering the hall through the center arch.





**Dr. Mustafa Kuko**



**Swami Mahayogananda**



**Swami Sarvadevananda**



**Ms. Debra Boudreaux**



**Rabbi Hillel Cohn**



**Reverend Petra Malleis-Sternberg**

### Love And Service Transcend Religions

The Sai Prema Nilayam was formally opened with the Inaugural Address on April 20 by the Chairman of SSSIO, Dr. Narendranath Reddy, who set the tone for the rest of the Conference on the theme 'Love and Service.'

What followed was a panel of six prominent representatives of major faiths who highlighted the essence of Love and Service as practiced by their respective religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Hinduism):

- Swami Mahayogananda, President, Interreligious Council of Southern California
- Swami Sarvadevananda, Head, Vedanta Society of Southern California
- Rabbi Hillel Cohn, Rabbi Emeritus, Congregation Emanu El, San Bernardino/Redlands
- Ms. Debra Boudreaux, Chief Executive Officer, Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation
- Reverend Petra Malleis-Sternberg, Pastor, First Congregational United Church of Christ, San Bernardino
- Dr. Mustafa Kuko, Former Director, Islamic Center of Riverside



interfaith harmony and manifesting Divine Love through Service.”

And so, **His Mission Continues!**

In the evening, Rev. Fr. Joseph Ngumbi Mutie, the National Chairman of the Inter-religious Council of Kenya who had traveled from Africa, addressed the congregation with a soul-stirring speech that touched every heart in the room with his message of service with unconditional love.

The evening ended with a peaceful stillness and silence, broken only by a beautiful flute rendition by a gifted artist. The music transported everyone within to the inner recesses of their hearts. In the Tapovanam (a biographical account of Swami), Swami had declared that His mission was to build a ‘Prasanthi Nilayam’ in every heart. As the gifted flutist stirred the audience with each beautiful melody of the instrument in his hand, everyone found the bliss of their own inner Prasanthi while sitting in Sai Prema Nilayam. Magical moments such as these

Rev. Fr. Joseph Ngumbi Mutie Each speaker expounded with clarity and profundity on the same universal theme that deeply resonated and reinforced Swami’s message of underlying unity of all faiths based on Divine Love. It indeed was a befitting opening for the Conference.

It reminded everyone of Swami’s clarion call:

*Believe that all Hearts are motivated by the One and Only God, that all names in all languages and all forms man can conceive denote the one and only God. Cultivate the attitude of oneness between people of all creeds, all countries, and all continents. This is the message of Love I bring.*

**–Sri Sathya Sai Baba, July 4, 1968**

Every devotee must heed this message and undertake initiatives to promote interfaith unity if we are to bring peace and harmony to a conflict-ridden world. Almost all the speakers of different faiths called for this imperative to join forces in this mission. As Swami Mahayogananda expressed after the Conference, “I was enriched through meeting colleagues from different faith traditions, hearing their message, and getting to know them. I applaud the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization for its commitment to





are rarely experienced in the hustle and bustle of everyday life as we lose ourselves in the challenges of the mundane world.

### Unity, Purity, and Divinity

April 21, the first day of the Conference, began with the flag procession to honor the presence of those who had come from far and wide. Flag bearers representing 35 countries marched in and placed their national flags at the altar amidst thunderous applause. The opening address was given by Dr. Narendranath Reddy. Armed with a deep understanding of the scriptures, he spoke eloquently of Swami's Divine message. He recounted many Sai experiences to drive home the salient points about Love and Service.

Mr. Leonardo Gutter, a member of the Prasanthi Council, reiterated the preciousness of this human birth and the incredible opportunity we have been given to redeem our lives by dedicating ourselves to Swami. The speeches of both SSSIIO leaders complemented each other and inspired everyone to **Continue His Mission** with renewed commitment.

On April 22, the second day of the Conference, Zone chairs presented various Sai activities in the 114 countries served by the SSSIIO. The presentation showcased inspiring work worldwide, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The human stories in the presentations moved the audience, including the plight of starving children in Madagascar who were eating insects and mud to ease their hunger. However, the audience was also uplifted by the efforts of Sai Spiritual Education (SSE)

children in Malaysia who raised money to buy food for 300 families in Madagascar by baking cakes, washing cars, and selling calendars and gift items to members of their Sai community. These inspirational presentations proved that **His Mission Continues**.



Dr. Narendranath Reddy



Mr. Leonardo Gutter



In the evening, it was the Young Adults' turn to take the stage with a play titled *The Journey towards AI, AI* standing for *Atmic* Intelligence. The play showed a practical way to transform ourselves and how we can be empowered to **Continue His Mission**. The essence of all Sai's teachings is to invoke *Atmic* intelligence, and the play creatively showed just how it could happen in the life of one individual. It drove home the point that excuses for not engaging in HIS MISSION were evidence that our mind had hijacked us from pursuing our divine mission. Life's challenge is to dethrone the mind and install the *Atma* to confer bliss on us.

### Riveting, Practical Workshops and Panel Discussions

The Conference attendees were rewarded with a fantastic opportunity to participate in inspiring and thought-provoking workshops sessions on wide-ranging topics such as:

1. Organizational Excellence
2. Healthcare Services and Preventive Healthcare
3. Environmental Sustainability
4. Communication and Media
5. Women: the Beacons of Nations
6. Education in Human Values, Sathya Sai Schools and Institutes
7. Public Meetings & Community Support
8. Sai Spiritual Education—What We Practice, We Become!

These workshops aimed to share best practices and offer a forum for devotees to learn from one another. Competent facilitators managed each of these workshops—thoughtful inputs from participants of diverse backgrounds and experiences made for lively, rich, and insightful discussions. The ideas and insights generated in these workshops will definitely help further the Social Action Initiatives (SAI) 100 program.

And so, **His Mission Continues!**

There were also panel sessions focused on practical spirituality to cater to devotees keen to clarify their doubts about spiritu-





Mr. Aravind Balasubramanya

Ms. Ingrid Lopez

tears as he reminisced about his precious moments with Swami as His student and then, His personal photographer. He transported us back to the time when Swami was present in His physical form, enabling us to visualize Swami, His smiles, and His loving gaze in our mind's eye.

ality. They were well-organized and well-executed to meet the interests and needs of the diverse SSSIO membership and keep the entire conference experience engaging. The panel on Divine Love was well-received and appreciated by all the attendees. Love is so simple to experience and yet so difficult to explain. The panel enabled people to understand the nature of Divine Love and how to share it. Similarly, the panel on spiritual practices and Self-realization attracted several hundred participants. It definitely marked the beginning of a deeper spiritual introspection for the attendees. There certainly was never a dull moment!

### Heart-to-Heart Sharing

Throughout the Conference, attendees were treated to the inspirational and often hilarious recounting of personal experiences with Swami by Mr. Aravind Balasubramanya. He delighted the audience, made everyone laugh, and then moved them to

Ms. Ingrid Lopez from Mexico, the Young Adults (YA) representative, shared her experience of making time for Swami despite her busy schedule managing a construction company. Her experiences drove home the timeless message that God is indeed time. For those of us who keep making excuses that we have no time to devote to Sai activities, her powerful message was that the more time we give God, the more He will provide us with all the time we need. **Time to rededicate ourselves to His mission!**

On the evening of April 22, the SSE children treated us to a lively multifait program. Using the plot of a plane journey creatively, they transported us to various destinations reflecting the spiritual heritage, traditions, cultures, and notable places of worship of different faiths—all connected by Love. It was indeed a creative and engaging presentation with a profound message. As Jesus said, *'Unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.'*



## Honoring Inspiring Stalwarts

Finally, it was time to recognize and honor Sai devotees who had dedicated their love, time, and energy to the Organization, serving in various capacities for more than four decades. As their names were read out, they walked on stage to be felicitated with the gift of a shawl and a prayer box. It was a wonderful gesture to recognize their dedication, for they had served more than four long decades out of selfless love despite numerous challenges and commitments. As these highly esteemed devotees were honored, an incredible surge of inspiration swept every heart that witnessed this moving ceremony. A silent resolve to follow in the footsteps of these wonderful role models formed in the audience's hearts, along with a prayer—**May I serve just as selflessly in His mission!**

On April 23, the final day of the Conference, the Young Adults held their focused workshop—a separate time and space for them to engage in a thought-provoking discussion about their current challenges in meeting the many demands of life while staying connected with spirituality, the Sai movement, and inclusivity within the Organization. The talks were passionate and lively, centered around meeting their needs and enhancing their engagement with the Organization. This was a crucially important session as **the future of His mission lies in the hands of the Sai youth.**

### SAI-100: A Birthday Gift for Swami

There was an inspiring session on the Social Action Initiative (SAI) 100 program—offered by the SSSIO as a homage to Sri Sathya Sai Baba for His 100th Birthday in 2025. The program includes 12 initiatives to serve humanity, intensify our





spiritual journey, and serve Mother Nature. The panel session was presented creatively in the format of a TV show with two sessions featuring panelists who addressed **organizational excellence, expansion of SSE, effective communication, media, young adults, happiness is within reach workshops, tree planting, tutoring programs, public meetings, community support, and medical camps**. The goal is to follow the program to create a beautiful bouquet of deliverables for the 100th Birthday celebration of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. We encourage **SSSIO members worldwide to engage in these SAI 100 activities** and dedicate themselves to making this planet a better place, and for spiritual advancement.

Trees were planted in the compound of Sai Prema Nilayam to commemorate Earth Day, April 22.

And so, **His Mission Continues!**

During the final session on Innovative Ideas—Going Forward, participants explored new ways to address current challenges in the Organization based on best practices. The engaging and informative session conveyed insightful ideas, especially using technology to disseminate information creatively.

### An Unforgettable International Conference

Every day the Conference commenced with prayers, meditation, and *bhajans*. Each day's highlight was listening to a short excerpt from Bhagawan's discourse—nectarine sweet and inspiring words that helped us stay grounded, stay on the spiritual course, and stay connected with Him. The evenings usually ended with *bhajans* or musical presentations such as the international bouquet of interfaith songs and the lyrical opera sung with piano accompaniment.

The Valedictory Address brought the four-day Conference to a close. Dr. Narendranath Reddy outlined the program's highlights and thanked all volunteers and participants whose immense dedication, determination, and diligence contributed to the success of the Conference. He reiterated Swami's clarion call to make our lives His message and integrate what we learned in the Conference into our lives. He reminded us that the beautiful, uplifting moments experienced during the Conference can be sustained only when one takes them to heart. These experiences should be relived—only then can we stay connected with the Divine and **be a part of His mission**.

## Behind The Scenes

Organizing this Conference was indeed a Herculean task—especially the completion of Sai Prema Nilayam before the commencement of the International Conference. It took endless hours of meticulous planning

to create a seamless program to engage people of different interests. Coordinating and carefully scrutinizing all details related to hospitality—food, accommodation, and transportation of guests—was another daunting task. Yet it was driven entirely by the dedication and determination of Sai volunteers who followed Sai’s precept “*Treat the Guest as God.*” The result was a memorable experience for the delegates—everyone who attended the Conference truly experienced Sai’s love. And this selfless service gave the volunteers manyfold returns since **all tasks undertaken in His name are rewarded with the sweet exhilarating joy of being His instruments in His divine mission.**

The entire Conference was a huge success. It reminded everyone of the attitude one should have when serving in His Mission, the mindset needed to ensure His ideals are expressed in every possible small detail, and most importantly, to leave His mark of Love and Service in everything we undertake.

## Gratitude Galore

Every participant was filled with appreciation and gratitude as thousands of emails, messages, social media posts, and personal expressions were exchanged. A sample would suffice to appreciate the impact of this magnificent event.



Ms. Usha Kapoor from Canada writes, “...Sai Prema Nilayam is a Pilgrimage for me. The altar is so beautiful. Swami’s picture is so real; I always felt swami walking towards me sitting in the auditorium.”

The hospitality touched Ms. Jenny Monson from Australia, “It was indeed a most memorable and moving event, and I was so touched by the wonderful and thoughtful hospitality of the local devotees who cared for us so well. I experienced Divine Bliss and supreme peace. attending the conference.”

Mr. P.V. Sambasiva Rao from Kenya was so inspired that he did not want the event to end! He wrote, “The programs are amazing, with beautiful topics, and we could see



Swami was in full control of everything. Sai Prema Nilayam is so beautiful, we never felt like leaving. The food was excellent, and you can't find better food than this anywhere. We feel in-person conferences like this, held at least twice a year, will bring more energy among SSSIO officers and devotees."

Mr. Oscar Morado from Mexico was inspired to write, "We feel blessed to have been in such an important event; in every moment, we felt Swami's presence. We could feel Swami's love through our sisters and brothers; everything was perfect."

Adriano Bratovic from Croatia was moved to tears, and he wrote "It was such a magnificent event for which it is difficult to find appropriate words. Love of Sai was so palpable and felt in devotees, place, program, everything...So much so, I had found it sometimes difficult to absorb such a quantity of Beauty and Grace.

Dr. Jayarani Pillay from South Africa watched the program online, and wrote, "I really enjoyed the presentations and the experiences shared in the various segments online. This strengthened our spirituality. Thank you to Dr. Reddy and his leadership for a Sai-filled experience. The Aradhana Mahotsavam program will be etched in our minds forever."

Mr. Alexis Treviño, a Young Adult from Mexico, said, "The International Conference

helped me regain a stronger connection with Swami. In every aspect of my pilgrimage to Sai Prema Nilayam, Swami showed me He was there for me, kindly taking care of everything and making sure everything came out smoothly. The activities, especially the devotional programs, confirmed once again why I'm on this path, why I chose Swami as my Guru, and why I want Him to be part of my life."

Ms. Hemma Sundaram, from Singapore, wrote, "I am grateful that Swami had kindly given me the time off to attend this conference. What I experienced most was not only the beautiful sharing of experiences from brothers and sisters around the world but experiencing the love and wonderful hospitality from everyone I met. Every devotee from the host country truly demonstrated 'Love and Service' in everything they did. I look forward to attending many more conferences organized by the SSSIO."

We are filled with gratitude for the tireless devotees of the USA who made this event a reality. Their gracious and generous hospitality made our stay memorable. Above all, we are grateful to Swami for His immense and abounding Grace which left an indelible impression in our hearts as we boarded our flights back home...and now it still continues to reverberate in our hearts like an echo...

Yes...**His Mission Continues!**



## Aradhana Mahotsavam

In perhaps the most fitting conclusion for the International Conference, Aradhana Mahotsavam was celebrated on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April at the same venue. That is the day when Swami chose to leave His physical frame. One might wonder how we can celebrate that. The truth is that it is the day when Swami chose to move from the Yajur Mandir in Puttaparthi to the 'Yajur Mandirs all over the world.

That was what was witnessed at the Yajur Mandir, the primary worship area and auditorium in Sai Prema Nilayam where His presence was palpable. After the morning prayers and a sumptuous breakfast, it was a treat for the ears and the hearts as the Sathya Sai alumni from across the USA rendered some of Swami's favorite songs. This was followed by Bhagawan's discourse where He expounded on different types of 'Aradhana' (worship). He concluded by saying that irrespective of the kind of *Arad-*

*hana*, love for God is the undercurrent and it should be expressed by singing *bhajans*.

This was followed by the most beautiful Satsang sessions where several speakers shared their personal experiences with Swami along with the insights and wisdom learned at His divine, lotus feet. The speakers were Mr. Srikant Vaidyanathan, Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Mr. Leonardo Gutter, Mr. Aravind Balasubramanya, Ms. Sravani Alla, Mr. Maarten Wagener, Mrs. Saroja Perera, Mr. Srinivas Manthripragada and Ms. Praganya Alekal.

Time flew by as everyone immersed themselves in the stories and glories of the Avatar of the Age. The program concluded with *bhajans* and *Arati* to Swami, bringing to a close five days of pure joy and bliss, being immersed in His message and His works.

And so, **His Mission Continues!**

**Dr. Suresh Govind**  
MALAYSIA 



*Dr. Suresh Govind is a professor and former Head of the Department of Parasitology at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya. He has several publications with the World Health Organization. He has received several awards for his work, including the prestigious Malaysian Toray Science Award.*

*He has served the SSSIO for several decades. As President of the SSSIO of Malaysia, Dr. Govind was instrumental in implementing many national programs. He has traveled extensively around the world as a motivational speaker and has authored seven books on human values and the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Suresh is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Malaysian UNITY Foundation and Chair of the Sri Sathya Sai Scriptural Studies Committee of the SSSIO.*

# Miracle of Transformation and Gift of the Organization



**IT ALL BEGAN AS A MISUNDERSTANDING ON DECEMBER 8, 1989!** I left home to go shopping in Milan with a lady friend of mine. Instead, she took me to the Sai Baba Center of Milan at Via San Gottardo! Disinterested yet curious, I entered the place and was struck by the prominent image of Swami on the wall above the door leading to the worship (*puja*) area. He appeared stern, which impressed me. Then we saw a short film on Swami walking among the crowd of devotees, and I remember thinking how strange it was that you could not see His feet. After the video, the *bhajans* (devotional singing) followed. It was my first experience listening to *bhajans*, and even though I could not understand their meaning as they were primarily sung in Indian languages, I appreciated the rhythm. At the end of the *bhajan* session, fragrant white ash, *vibhuti*, was shared. My friend told me that it had therapeutic and miraculous properties and, if I wished, I could put it on aching parts of my body, or taste it, as many devotees did.

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Then something inside me moved, and I felt 'He is here.' This sensation, just like a veil, began to descend from my head to toe.

### The Miracles of Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Five days after this tryst with Sai Baba, my friend called me to share the miraculous experience of her classmate who had also attended the *bhajan* session. Her bone had grown over the instep, and she was scheduled for foot surgery to remove it. On her friend's advice, she applied *vibhuti* to the affected part, and now, she was all fine and did not need surgery!

I also learned that my friend went to the Sai Baba Center to hand over her passport to the travel team coordinator, which was required for my friend to travel to Puttaparthi with a group on December 31. Before she left, she gave me two books: *Sai Baba, Man of Miracles* by Howard Murphet, and *Christ is back* by Giancarlo Rosati. I read them both more out of an obligation to my friend since I did not particularly care much for manifestations and miracles.

But I was impressed with my friend when she returned from India after three months. She came to my house, and I was surprised to see her transformation. **Happiness seemed to ooze out from every pore of her skin.** She told me things I could not relate to then, but her happiness gave me tremendous joy, and I continued listening to her. She also invited me to her birthday

party on May 22, 1990. She told me she had also invited some people she had met in India.

### A Very Special Birthday Party

I went to her party, curious to see whom I would meet. The room was in a large attic with a very high roof and a large photograph of Baba. I ended up sitting cross-legged on the ground with about thirty people, which was unusual for me. My friend, standing before us, started reading a discourse by Sai Baba. Just then, five swallows entered from the window on my left and started flying over my head. I have a phobia of anything flying close to me, including birds, bees, butterflies, flies, etc. So, I crouched down to dodge the birds, but they kept flying silently in circles above me. I thought, "How strange, they are not making any noise!"

**Then something inside me moved, and I felt 'He is here.'** This sensation, just like a veil, began to descend from my head to toe. **All my fears disappeared, and I felt a great calm envelop my whole being, at which point I began to cry and could not stop.** At the end of the *bhajans*, after the meal, I was eating a piece of cake when my friend approached me and asked me how I was feeling. I answered that I was



okay but had gotten anxious when I saw the swallows enter through the window. She looked at me incredulously and replied that no swallow had ever entered that area!

**It was Baba's "Leela (divine play)." I was stunned, like St. Paul on the road to Damascus.** From that very moment, I became a devotee of Swami.

### Joining the SSSIO On Divine Command

I exuded such joy in the days following the miracle that the words '*just witnessed a miracle*' seemed to have been etched on my forehead! I felt blessed like those who saw the apparition of Our Lady. A month later, I also had my first dream of Swami when I was on holiday in a beautiful hotel on a cliff on Italy's Amalfi coast. At dusk, thousands of swallows would rise from the sea, chirping happily, reminding me of my memorable experience.

I dreamt of being in Baba's Ashram, although I had not been there yet. While He was getting into His car, I went up to Him and said, "Look, Swami, I brought my

mother." He replied, "But I want you." I was amazed at His answer but did not understand its importance for many years. But even then, my life completely changed. New inner happiness helped me face every difficulty with fortitude. I was also inspired by a quote by Swami, which I kept framed at the entrance of my house—"***Be ready to face any obstacle gladly; only in this way can you achieve the goal.***" Many years have passed since that first dream, and my understanding of His teaching has improved.

Despite being one of the founders of the Sai Baba Center in Bergamo, I did not want to be registered as a founding member. Two years passed, and on November 22, 1995, I was in Prasanthi Nilayam for His seventieth Birthday. I wrote a letter to Swami asking Him to let me know whether I should join His Organization. During the discourse He gave that day, Swami said, "*The Organization needs people.*" Those few words were enough to dispel all my doubts, so I became an SSSIO member on my return to Italy. I am extremely grateful





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“Be ready to face any obstacle gladly; only in this way  
can you achieve the goal.”

to Swami for giving me the opportunity to serve Him. I am now fully committed to the Organization, which has given me the opportunity to grow.

Swami taught me the true purpose of life, which is to help others. **As years have passed, meditation practices, participation in SSSIO events, and the various opportunities I have received have made me love and respect nature and all creation.** And it has been a great joy!

What a challenging experience to put into practice Swami's advice to practice Ceiling on Desires! It was hard at first, but slowly, it became natural, and I was happy even with little. I was delighted not to have worldly desires because His Love is what I wanted most of all. I have had many beautiful experiences which have helped me grow within and allowed me to feel His presence constantly.

In retrospect, I understood the meaning of the *Leela* with the swallows. Swallows are associated with spring—the rebirth after winter, and the number 5 is linked to the five human values. My work in the educational field is associated with the five human values, the SSE program with children, and the ISSE. I am infinitely grateful to Swami and feel honored because He took me by the hand and allowed me to have these experiences within His Organization. I am blessed to have the opportunity to meet Him and to be with Him in the interview room to listen to His sweet words. What a gift! I have been asked several times what the meeting with Sai Baba meant to me, and **my answer is always the same—a beautiful adventure, the most beautiful in my life.**

Ms. Cinzia Patrizia Lutti   
ITALY



*Ms. Cinzia Patrizia Lutti is a human values educator. She is a graduate of the Institute of Sathya Sai Education of Southern Europe (ISSE-SE) and an integral part of the trainers of the Italian and European teams. She is also the Referent of the Sai Vivere Committee ([www.saivivere.it](http://www.saivivere.it)) and the National Secretary of SSSIO Italy.*

# *from the* International Sai Young Adults

This month, we are excited to present the details of the Sai Young Adults' contribution and participation in the SSSIO International Conference held from April 20–23, 2023, in Riverside, California, USA. We also bring you inspiring updates from Mexico and Malaysia as we zoom into their recent YA initiatives.

## **Love & Service** INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

### **Young Adults Sessions at the SSSIO International Conference**

The International Conference, which was held from April 20–23, 2023, in Riverside, California, USA, with the theme Love and Service—Spreading the Glory of His Divine Mission, attracted many Sai Young Adults worldwide who came together and played a pivotal role in all aspects of the Conference while experiencing the divine love of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Various live interactive sessions were held during the 4-day Conference covering a wide range of topics relevant to young adults. The highlights of the YA sessions are:

#### **YA Cultural Offering, “The Journey towards AI”**

With the current technology boom, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is now an integral part of our daily lives. The Young Adults skit reminded us to rely on our inner AI (Atmic Intelligence). All the scenarios depicted in this skit were based on real-life experiences from YAs and illustrated that our inner voice is the voice of Swami within us.

#### **YA Workshop, “Lead with Love: Young Adults Across Borders”**

This workshop was designed to be thought-provoking, engaging, and inspiring. The session was aimed to encourage innovation within the Organization, build confidence in young adults, promote more open communication, engage with more involvement and foster a sense of belonging. The YAs discussed daily challenges and brainstormed ways to handle these situations with love.

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# AROUND THE WORLD

## Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of SSSIO-Mexico

Along with the 50th Anniversary of founding the SSSIO of Mexico, a retreat was held to commemorate and celebrate 50 years of sharing Sri Sathya Sai Baba's message in the country. The retreat took place from April 6-8, 2023. The Sai Young Adults of Mexico actively participated in and supported different activities, including devotional singing, a medley, musical programs, panel discussions, and SSE teaching. Further, the YAs provided support in logistical and operational areas, such as material delivery, media committee and serving as general volunteers, photographers, and translators for international guests.



## “Omkar” in Malaysia

The Sai Young Adults of Malaysia, conducted the first in-person Southern Region Omkar/SSS session post-pandemic at Sekolah Rendah Sathya Sai, Kuala Lumpur, on April 30, 2023, with 101 YAs. The session began at 6 a.m. with prayers and bhajans, followed by welcome messages and breakfast before the planned activities commenced based on Chapter 15 of the Sathya to Sai series, “Conferring, Comforting, and Correcting.”

The opening activity had participants passing a phrase from one to another by enacting it. Next, was a blindfolded obstacle course which required players to listen carefully to their guides. For the third game, each group formed a line with the last person having a balloon tied to their back or leg, and attempted to deflate the opposing team's balloons. The last activity for the day was for each group member to write a fact about themselves on a piece of paper, and group members were to pick out these facts and guess the author.



The session concluded with a debrief before Mangala Aarti, acknowledging Swami's blessings and the ability to recognize that they are blessings, which is an even greater blessing! For example, the opportunity to gather for the Omkar session, which went on without a hitch, meeting peers, and the existence of the community, the 'Sai Family,' are all blessings.

## Young Adults Sessions at the SSSIO International Conference

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### YA Interactive Sessions with Speakers

Panelists Mr. Leonardo Gutter, Ms. Tarini Ramaprakash, and Ms. Seema Miller met with the YAs for an honest conversation around many topics—including how to maintain a connection with Swami in daily life, tuning in to the Swami within, and the role of youth in society. Sessions with speakers Mr. Aravind Balasubramanya and Prof. Dr. Suresh Govind were filled with wisdom, love, and cheerful light-hearted discussions. Brother Aravind spoke about finding our passion and discovering the meaning of life. Dr. Govind spoke about filling every moment with joy while trying to find balance in life. The key takeaway was to stay connected with Swami through service and other activities, which will keep us balanced and grounded amidst the chaos of life.

### Mentorship Dinner with Sai Leaders

Young Adults had an open and candid dialogue with Sai leaders from around the world in an intimate and inspiring mentorship dinner. The goal was to inspire while fostering a safe space to share the Young Adults' questions and thoughts. The mentors provided encouragement and guidance to take on leadership roles in the Organization.. Groups were formed on communication platforms to ensure that the YAs and mentors remain in touch and the enthusiasm continues into the future.

### Young Adults Speakers

Several speakers and panelists spoke on various topics, including divine love, Self-realization, innovation, confidence, and mental health. YA speakers who went through the SSE Program emphasized the need to create awareness in the centers emphasizing the role YAs play at the grassroots level.



## Divine Activities

During the Conference, YAs could share their experiences while brainstorming ideas on activities moving forward. YAs rocked the night away with bhajans during the ever-popular jamming session. Everyone felt the energy, which will continue until the next Conference. On the last day of the Conference, YAs participated in a relaxing group meditation and then were asked to write inspiring letters addressed to themselves. These letters will be mailed out to the YAs in a few weeks to serve as a reminder to achieve their goals.

The Conference rejuvenated the Sai Young Adults by strengthening communication and interaction with each country in the Sai Universe, thereby enhancing the YA Program. We learned that happiness is Union with God and that by prioritizing our relationship with Swami, we can focus on the harmony of thoughts, words, and deeds. This mindset will help foster and strengthen our bond of love with Swami and we can love Him more and more every moment.



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**Sai Young Adults**

<https://sathyasai.org/ya>

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

# MOTHER EARTH

Respect Mother Earth  
Mother Earth gives us all our necessities  
It is not right to waste it.  
Protect and respect Mother Earth  
Mahalakshmi | Group 2 | Canada



Hamsini K | Group 1 | USA



Sai Prem | Group 4  
Online SSE USA



Mahalakshmi | Group 2 | Canada

## MY FRIENDS FROM THE WOODS

Era un dia muy fresco, el leon se fue a cazar con una tigresa y se encontro con la cebra.  
Como era un leon bueno no se la comio, sino la invita a jugar.

Luis B. | Grade 3 | Venezuela

It was a very cool day, the lion went hunting with a tigress and they found a zebra. Since he was a good lion, he didn't eat it. In fact, he invited her to play.



# GRATEFUL FOR THE Sun

The Sun shines bright every day  
It doesn't give up, and roll away  
Sure, the sun keeps life on earth going  
It's the reason that we all can keep growing  
But the sun has a symbolic meaning  
It's what connects both me, and you  
It illuminates the darkness of ignorance  
And shines for all without any difference  
Generations have seen the sun shine through  
And generations to come will see it  
I'm grateful for the Sun for always keeping  
witness for the love, peace and hope it brings us.

Karthik N. | Group 3 | USA



# Upcoming SSSIO Online Events

SSSIO has been conducting online events to share Swami's love, message, and works with everyone around the world. Hundreds of thousands of people have been reached through these events streamed on the [sathyasai.org/live](https://sathyasai.org/live) page.

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

Date of Online Event	Day(s)	Festival/Event
June 17-18, 2023	Saturday-Sunday	Akhanda Gayatri
July 2, 2023	Sunday	Guru Poornima
August 19-20, 2023	Saturday-Sunday	Akhanda Gayatri



[Streaming on sathyasai.org/live](https://sathyasai.org/live)



Stay in touch with SSSIO news and activities, by visiting the SSSIO websites and following/subscribing to the various communications channels below. **Click on each icon or name to visit the site.**



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- [Sri Sathya Sai Humanitarian Relief](#)
- [Sri Sathya Sai Young Adults](#)
- [Sri Sathya Sai Education](#)
- [Healthy Living](#)





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God can do anything. He can go anywhere. He can change anything. Do not give room for doubts. One who doubts divinity will certainly be doomed. Develop unwavering faith and follow the Divine command. True *dharma* (right conduct) lies in following the Divine command. When you follow God, you will be blessed with all goodness and auspiciousness.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

August 31, 2002

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**sathyasai.org**

Love All • Serve All  
Help Ever • Hurt Never