



# Prashanthi Council

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Dear brothers and sisters,

Loving Sai Rams to all of you. With love and reverence, I offer my prayerful pranams at the divine lotus feet of our Omnipresent and loving Lord Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

I wish you a very happy, healthy and holy new year 2013 filled with divine love, peace and joy. We are blessed and fortunate to be contemporaries of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the embodiment of pristine and universal love. This is the time to reminisce and contemplate on the historic revelation of His divinity during the first world conference of Sathya Sai Seva organization on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 1968 in Mumbai in which He said, “Your good fortune is greater than what was available for anchorites, monks, sages, saints, and even angels or demigods... This is a human form in which every divine entity, every divine principle, that is to say, all the names and forms ascribed by man to God are manifest... Do not allow doubt to distract you. If you only install in the altar of your heart steady faith in My divinity, you can win a vision of My reality.”

The glory and mission of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is taking a quantum leap after His Mahasamadhi, which is another reassurance that He is still with us and He will be with us for eternity. During the celebrations on Mahasamadhi day in 2011, I shared that Swami’s work will continue with more enthusiasm and dedication. When we recently compiled information for the annual report 2011-2012 of the Sri Sathya Sai International Organisation, we were delighted to find that loving selfless service is being done in the name of Sai in over 115 countries including Afghanistan, Botswana, Columbia, Croatia, China, Kuwait and Kyrgyzstan. This annual report was released on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2012 by his Excellency, the governor of Tripura and is available online on the Sathya Sai International Organisation website:

<http://sathyasai.org/files2012/WorldReport2012-Reduced.pdf>

We witnessed the glorious birthday celebrations of our Loving Lord Sri Sathya Sai Baba in Prashanti Nilayam from 18 – 25 November 2012. Devotees from around the world participated in the festivities and experienced the divine presence. Overseas devotees from Thailand, Bali, Dominican Republic, Japan and Malaysia expressed their love and adoration for Sai through many cultural events including dances, plays and music programmes. Senior devotees from overseas, Dr. Phil Gosselin, Mrs. Marianne Meyer, and Mrs. Kayoko Hira gave inspiring talks about the divine love, glory and works of Bhagawan.

During the birthday festivities, there were several meetings of the directors of the Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation, members of the Prashanthi Council, zonal chairs and central and deputy central coordinators in Prashanthi Nilayam. The focus of the discussions was on how to go forward in sharing Swami’s Love and message with the world. New initiatives like global service

day, leadership conferences, workshops for the officers, and using electronic media to share information about the service activities of the organization were also discussed.

For the first time the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust members met with the directors of the Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation, members of the Prashanthi Council, zonal chairs and central and deputy central coordinators. The trustees gave an update on the annual report of the trust and the workings of the medical, educational, and water supply projects founded, blessed and guided by Swami. The annual report of the trust can be viewed using the web link below:

[http://www.srisathyasai.org.in/Pdf/Annual\\_Report\\_2011-12\\_Web.pdf](http://www.srisathyasai.org.in/Pdf/Annual_Report_2011-12_Web.pdf)

This is our divine legacy and the international leaders expressed their sincere desire to participate and support these projects. All the major institutions, the Sathya Sai Central Trust, All India Organisation and Sathya Sai International Organisation renewed their commitment to work in greater unity and harmony towards a common goal of serving in the divine mission.

The Christmas programme was celebrated in Prashanti Nilayam by devotees from over 40 countries. Sai Kulwant Hall was decorated beautifully by devotees from New Zealand with “Aroha: Live in Love” as the central theme. The festivities began on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2012 and concluded on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2012. The programme included the international choir by the adults and children, Christmas carols and dramas. The drama by the South African devotees entitled “Christmas with Gogo” with the central theme being “God is Love, Live in Love,” touched the hearts of devotees. Two speakers, Ms. Petra von Kalinowski from Germany and Dr. Deborah Ellens from the USA shared the message of Jesus in light of their personal experiences of the Love and teachings of Sri Sathya Sai. Many devotees who previously attended Christmas functions in their own countries felt that the Christmas spirit was more palpable in Prashanti Nilayam. Swami’s Love was experienced by all and reverberated throughout Sai Kulwant Hall.

Once again, during the past year, Sathya Sai volunteers and devotees around the world received special accolades. For instance, at the invitation of Mrs. Sara Nazarbayeva, the First Lady of the Republic of Kazakhstan, a seminar on Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) was organised in the city of Almaty, from 21-24 August 2012. The First Lady sent a letter of appreciation to Ms. Marianne Meyer stating, “The generosity of your soul is infinite. You have given the opportunity to teachers to enrich their methodological experience, to fill their teaching activities with creative meaning. I express my heartfelt gratitude for your noble work.”

Another noteworthy achievement is that of Mr. Dipak Fakey who has been recognised for 'Services to Education and to Community Cohesion in Leicester' for which he has been awarded the most honourable Order of the British Empire (OBE). Mr. Fakey started the Good Values Club in Leicester which he was using to spread Swami's Message on human values. He turned the public school, Abbey Primary School which was at the brink of closure due to its poor performance to one of the top ranking schools in Leicester by implementing values based education.

Another remarkable event took place in the city of San Luis Potosi, Mexico, where a three day conference on SSEHV was held from 26-28 October 2012 for educators from all over Mexico. 1200 teachers attended the conference and the vast majority was previously unaware of Sathya Sai.

These educators were inspired and evinced interest to take an active role in the SSEHV programme.

There was also a meeting of educators in April 2012 at the South China Normal University in Qinghai, Guangxi. The leaders of the SSEHV projects including university professors and postgraduate students attended. The SSEHV has spread to several schools in addition to the schools in which the SSEHV project was initiated.

Highlights of many additional wonderful service projects, educational and medical works in other places such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Africa, Canada and USA are available in the annual report.

Having the great fortune and blessing of association with Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, we need to make the best use of our opportunity. Swami said, “Obeying my instructions is enough; it will benefit you more than the most rigorous asceticism. Practice Sathya (Truth), Dharma (Righteousness), Shanti (Peace), and Prema (Love), which are dear to Me; resolve to keep those ideals before you ever, in all your thoughts, words and deeds. That can confer on you the summum bonum of mergence in the Supreme Divinity.”

Finally, we need to remind ourselves that the main objective of the Sathya Sai Organisation is to help us realise our Divine nature. The best and easiest way to achieve this is to hold on steadfastly with one pointedness to the divine lotus feet of our Lord Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and practice His eternal message of love. His message for us is to saturate our thoughts, words and deeds with the elixir of love and attain eternal bliss. We should resolve to realize this supreme goal in this very lifetime with our sincere effort and the grace of Bhagawan.

*“The year becomes new, the day becomes holy, when you sanctify it by Sadhana, not otherwise. Sadhana can grow only in a field fertilized by love... The love you have for material objects, name, fame, wife, and children, etc., should be sanctified by being subsumed by the more overpowering love of God.”*

***Sri Sathya Sai Baba, 1/1/1967.***

With loving regards,

Narendranath Reddy M.D.