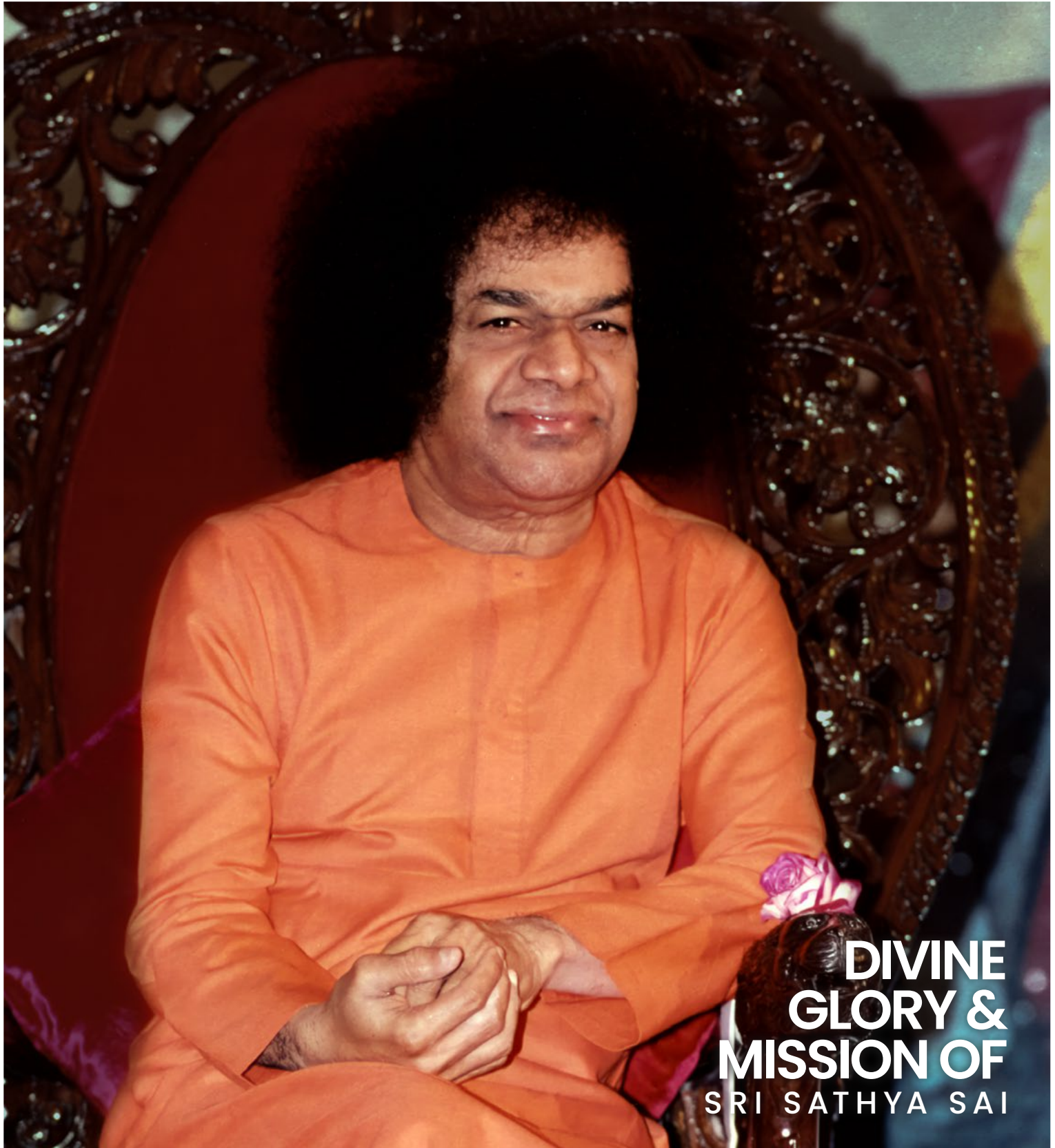


SATHYA SAI  
THE  
ETERNAL  
COMPANION



VOLUME 4, ISSUE 06  
JUNE 2025



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



I am beyond the reach of the most intensive inquiry and the most meticulous measurement. Only those who have recognized My love and experienced that love can assert that they have glimpsed My reality. For, the path of love is the royal road that leads mankind to Me. Do not attempt to know Me through the external eyes. When you go to a temple and stand before the image of God, you pray with closed eyes, don't you? Why? Because you feel that the inner eye of Wisdom alone can reveal Him to you.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

June 19, 1974

---





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







Volume 4 • Issue 6 • June 2025

ISSN 2831-6908 (Online)  
ISSN 2831-6916 (Print)

Copyright © 2025 Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation  
Riverside, California, USA

The views and opinions expressed in the articles in this publication are solely those of the authors and do not reflect or imply in any manner expressed, construed, or otherwise the opinions of the editor or publisher.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any manner without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

To request permissions, please contact the  
publisher at [info@sathyasai.org](mailto:info@sathyasai.org)

Editor: Dr. Narendranath Reddy  
Published by: Sri Sathya Sai International Organization

[sathyasai.org](http://sathyasai.org)



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Volume 4 • Issue 6

June 2025

## **6 Editorial**

Five Gifts of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

## **14 Divine Discourse**

Attain God's Grace Through Sacrifice and Love, Part 2, May 7, 2001

## **20 Experiences of Devotees**

Everything at the Right Time by Mr. Krishna Samy

I Am Your Property; You Are My Property by Mr. Sanjai Murali

## **28 Centennial Celebrations**

Australia, Hungary, and Mexico

## **36 Humanitarian Service**

Love in Action–Australia, Mauritius, USA, and Zone 8

## **38 Glory of Womanhood**

Let Go and Let God by Ms. Alida Parkes

## **44 Ideal Sai Young Adults**

Sai Blossoms: Blooming from the Inside Out, USA

Graduating Into Grace, Sri Lanka

Called to Serve by Ms. Sarika Udhin

## **50 Sathya Sai Education**

With contributions from Advik, Dhaatri, Hamsini, Hanu Rish, Krish, Manasa, Manasvee, Sai Kautilya, and Sreenika

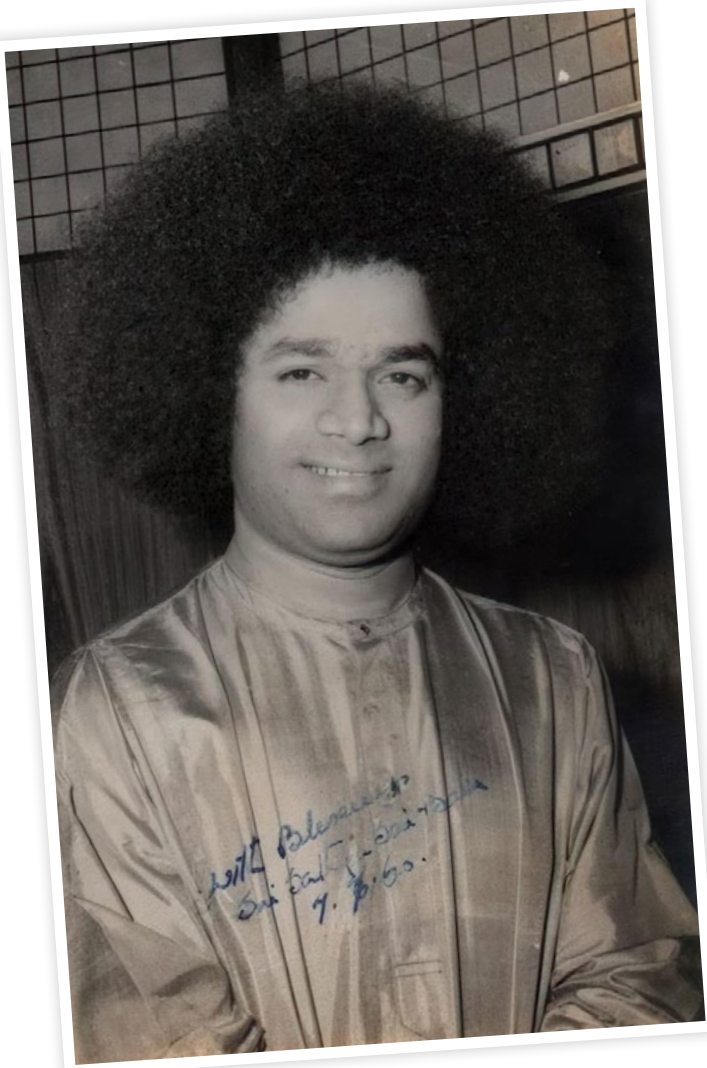
## **52 SSSIO Events and Websites**

Subscription for **Sathya Sai – The Eternal Companion** is Free

[Click here to subscribe](#)

Past issues of Eternal Companion are available on

[sathyasai.org](http://sathyasai.org) and also [Google Books](#)



# FIVE GIFTS OF BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA

*paritranaya sadhunam vina-  
shaya cha dushkritam  
dharma samsthapanarthaya  
sambhavami yuge yuge*

*(To protect the righteous,  
destroy the wicked, and rees-  
tablish dharma, I manifest on  
this earth, from age to age.)*

Lord Krishna declares that God incarnates from age to age whenever there is a decline in the practice of *dharma* and a rise of *adharma* (unrighteousness). He further adds that God comes for the protection of the good, the destruction of the wicked, and the promotion of the practice of *dharma*. (BG 4.07 and BG 4.08)

*yada yada hi dharmasya  
glanir bhavati bharata  
abhyutthanam adharmasya  
tadatmanam srijamyaham*

*(Whenever there is a decline in  
righteousness and an increase  
in unrighteousness, O Arjuna, I  
manifest Myself on earth.)*

He then explains further that God takes birth in the human form, with a sweet name and divine qualities cloaked in *maya*. **Anyone who understands the divine birth and divine works in the light of truth will be liberated from the cycle of birth and death, merging in the Lord.** (BG 4.09)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the *paripoorna Avatar*, and the incarnation of pure divine love, has shown that the purpose of human life is to realize our true nature—that we are embodiments of the divine *atma* and love. So, He always addresses us as *divyatmaswaroopulara* or *premaswaroopulara*. Swami also expands on the purpose of the descent of the Lord as an *Avatar*. He says that apart from establishing *dharma*, such



a descent is to teach man about divine love, and only through love can one realize God, just as one can see the moon only through moonlight!

Lord Sai has come to teach us what divine love is and how one should live in such love. **Love is the source, love is the path, and love is the goal of our lives. This love alone grants us bliss, or union with God.** However, most of us who live in body-consciousness will find it difficult to be immersed in divinity all the time. For helping us achieve this goal, Swami has not only shown the way but also blessed us with five precious gifts to stay connected with Him easily. Let us dwell on them, one by one, in this editorial.

### His Sweet Divine Name

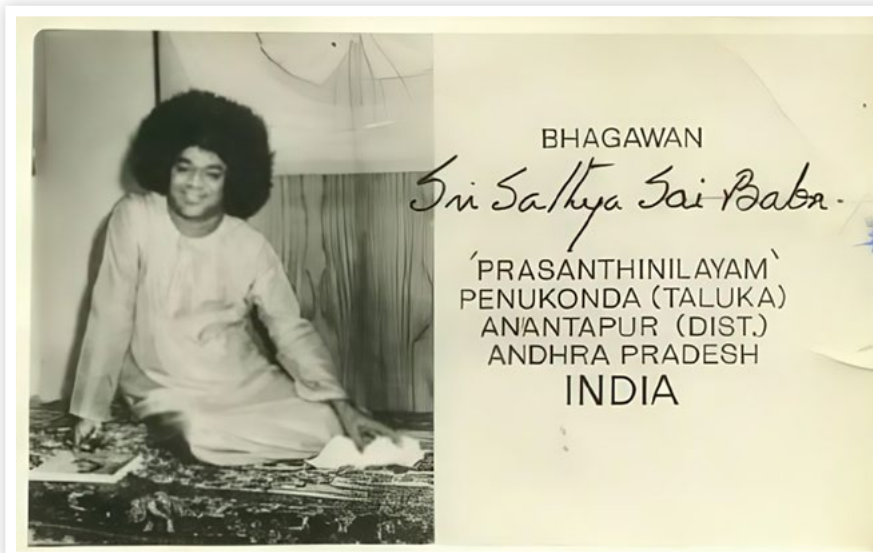
The first gift I would like to discuss is His sweet divine name, 'Om Sri Sai Ram.' Swami once wrote a beautiful letter to the teachers and students in Brindavan, assuring them that anyone who has the name of Sai always on their lips will be a *jivanmukta* (liberated while alive). What an assurance that is! It is important to recognize the power of His name in 'Om Sri Sai Ram.' There are **two powerful *Taraka* mantras embedded in this. *Taraka* mantras are mantras that lead to liberation. The first is Om, which is also called *Pranava*, as chanting it grants liberation.** Om is mentioned in the Bhagavad Gita 8.13 as *Om Ityekaksharam Brahma*, which means that one-syllable Om itself represents the supreme *Parabrahman*. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna assures us that those who chant Om in their last moment of life will merge with Him.

### The second *Taraka* mantra is Rama.

Swami extolled this name in many of His discourses. Swami explains that the name Rama includes three seed letters: 'ra,' 'a,' and 'ma,' which symbolize fire, the sun, and the moon. Fire burns away all our sins, negative tendencies, and bad *karma*. The sun

dispels the darkness of ignorance, illuminating us with the light of wisdom. The moon represents coolness, providing calmness and peace. This illustrates the power of the Rama principle encompassing these three seed letters. **Furthermore, Rama combines two powerful mantras: the syllable 'Ra' from the *Ashtakshari* mantra, the eight-letter mantra, *Om Namo NaRAYanaya*, and the syllable 'Ma' from the five-letter mantra, *Om NaMAh Shivaya*.** Chanting each mantra individually leads to the goal of Self-realization. Thus, there are two powerful *Taraka* mantras contained in Swami's name: Om and Rama. Additionally, it has a beautiful description of divine qualities. **'Sri' signifies auspiciousness and prosperity. In 'Sai' (Sa+Ayee), 'Sa' represents Shiva and 'Ayee' represents Shakti. Thus, the Sai name implies both Shiva or Brahman and its power, Shakti.**

Next comes the 'Sai' principle, which provides various spiritual lessons on where to start and where to end. It offers a clear spiritual direction and path to all spiritual seekers. **First, Sai Baba. In the very word Sai Baba, 'Sai' means mother, and 'Baba' means father.** We need to develop a relationship with God while we still have body consciousness. God is our divine mother and divine father. When we develop that relationship, divine love flourishes. **Next thing to do**



# PRIORITIES

- 
- 1 **'S'** *Swami first*
  - 2 **'A'** *all others next*
  - 3 **'I'** *individual I last*

is give priority to 'S,' Swami in our life, then 'a,' all others next, then 'i,' the little individual I last. When we give the highest priority to God in our lives, the next stage follows naturally—we follow His teachings. One of His major mandates is **SAI**. 'S' stands for service, which is *karma yoga*, or doing selfless service. Next is 'A' for adoration, which is *bhakti yoga*. We worship and love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. Then comes 'I', illumination, which is *jnana yoga*, wherein we explore the true nature of ourselves through self-inquiry.

When we follow these three paths of Service, Adoration, and Illumination, what happens? We get transformed by His love. We see that people who came in touch with Swami over time get transformed, and that transformation is 'S' for spiritual transformation, 'A' for association transformation, and 'I' for individual transformation. That is why Swami says spirituality is not for gathering information but for transformation. This is what He expects from us. When we get transformed, what will happen to our mind and senses, which are always going outward? They go inward! **SAI, See Always Inside.**

When we go inward, what do we experience? **BABA**, Being, Awareness, Bliss, and Atma. That is *sat-chit-ananda*, the ulti-

mate unchanging reality, or *Brahman*, which is our true nature. Then, we go beyond name and form, and realize knowledge, existence, and bliss that is *Satchidananda*. When we reach the ultimate goal, what is that S-A-I? **We realize that 'Sai And I' are one. So, there is no Swami separate from us; we are one.** Swami exhorts us to constantly repeat

"I am God," which is a very powerful mantra. Then we realize '*Aham Brahmasmi*,' I am Brahman. Thus, the entire spiritual path is laid out within His name. We can chant this name in any way with love. We can do verbal (*Vachika*) *japa*, verbal repetition, or write down His holy name repetitively, which is called *likhita japa*, or sing and glorify His beautiful name 'Sai' through melodious *bhajans*. We can contemplate His name in any of these ways, and it is bound to give us wonderful results.

Of the 8.4 million species of living beings on Earth, man is the pinnacle of creation. Man is the only one who is endowed with speech, which can express knowledge, poetry, and music. This great gift of speech, Swami says, is misused by the majority of people in slander, gossip, and rumor-mongering. **The best way to sanctify our speech is by repeating the divine name, which is the first among the five gifts of our Lord Sai.**

Just like the lamp on the threshold of the door illuminates both the inside and outside of the home, the name of the Lord on one's tongue illumines and sheds light both outside and within!

## His Enchanting Divine Form

Next, the second gift is His unparalleled, enchanting, and beautiful divine form. We



## The best way to sanctify our speech is by repeating the divine name, which is the first among the five gifts of our Lord Sai.

---

are very fortunate and blessed, since many pictures and videos of this *paripoorna* Avatar, *Kaliyuga* Avatar, are available, capturing His beautiful form. The more we see this form, the more we are drawn to see it. Swami referred to **this divine beauty as *sanatana* (eternal) and *nityanutana* (ever new).** That is why the more we see it, the more we want to enjoy that blissful experience. We can meditate on light, on His form, or various divine attributes of God, like mercy, compassion, and love. But for most devotees, it is a very easy and joyful experience to meditate or contemplate on His beautiful divine form. Swami assured us at the World Youth Conference on July 27, 2007, **that if we contemplate for just 11 seconds, with a steady and calm mind, He will give us His *darshan* and also talk to us.**

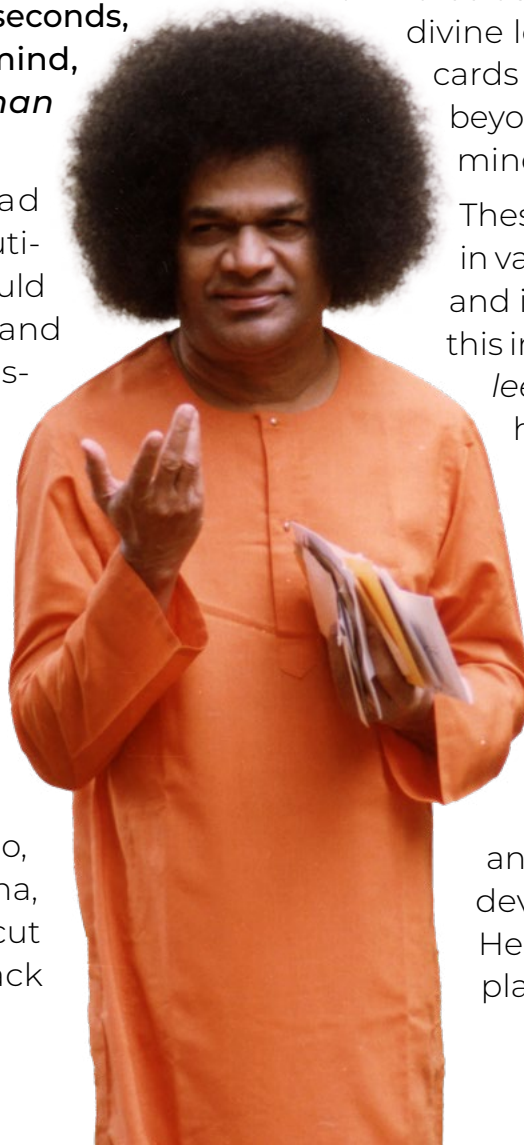
We read in the Srimad Bhagavatam that the beautiful form of Lord Krishna would make one forget oneself and easily lose body-consciousness. Swami relates the episode of one of the *gopikas*, Suguna, who saw the enchanting form of Lord Krishna in the flame of a lamp and put her finger into the flame to touch Him. She burned her finger but didn't feel it as she had gone beyond body-consciousness. So also, the demoness Shurpanakha, whose nose and ears were cut off when she tried to attack

Mother Sita, stood motionless during the infliction because she was mesmerized by the unparalleled beautiful form of Lord Rama. She even said that she would not have realized it even if her head had been chopped off! **That is the beauty of the Lord in human form, which we see in our dear Swami as well. That is why each picture and video of Swami looks unique and special, since His divine beauty is enchanting, eternal, yet ever new.**

### His Amazing Divine Leelas

Next, the third gift of Swami is His divine *leelas*—His wonderful, awe-inspiring, astounding, and loving divine sports. These divine *leelas* are an expression of Swami's divine love; they are also His calling cards to attract devotees. They are beyond the comprehension of the mind and logic.

These divine plays are described in various ways by many devotees and in several books. You can see this in the early years, called *balya-leelas*, which means His childhood sports. It is enchanting to listen to them or read about them. Swami used to go to a wish-fulfilling tree, a tamarind tree on the banks of the Chitravathi river, to fulfil the wishes of the devotees. From that tree, He would pluck an apple or a strawberry or any fruit or anything which the devotee desired. In those days, He used to have a lot of fun and play games. He would simulta-





neously appear in many places. He used to materialize various sweet dishes and delicacies for the devotees to relish. People near Him were blessed to witness many such beautiful *leelas*. Those days, Swami used to entertain the devotees with His beautiful singing for hours and hours. Then came the mind-boggling *leelas*, accompanied by important spiritual lessons.

One time, there was a geologist next to Swami, and there was a stone nearby. Pointing to it, Swami questioned, “*What is this?*” Being a scientist, the geologist replied that it was silicon and went on described the various structural and geological components of the stone. Swami then said, “Now, see.” He turned the stone into a beautiful, sweet sugar idol of Lord Krishna, giving the message that it is not just a stone. Even in the stone, God is present in the form of Lord Krishna holding His flute, and it is sweet. So, God is sweetness. God is beautiful. He wants us to see divinity in everything, and this *leela* illustrates that lesson.

Swami taught another beautiful lesson. He took a stone and gave it to a devotee, and it turned into rock candy. Then Swami asked, “*What will you do with it?*” He replied, “I will eat it.” Then Swami said, “*Look at it,*” and it turned back into a stone again. That teaches

one that if one is selfish and self-centered, it will turn back into a stone, as one ought to share one’s blessings selflessly. In contrast, when an individual started to lovingly share with everyone the sweet Swami gave him, his hands never ran empty. So, the lesson is to unflinchingly share the love and gifts He gives us with one and all. Devotees were fortunate to witness many other *leelas* throughout His lifetime.

**Swami made the lame walk, the blind see, and resurrected the dead to life.** There are many well-documented instances of these *leelas*. We have heard personal accounts of how He resurrected Walter Cowan, Colonel Bose and many other devotees, which are in the annals of Sai history. **All these wonderful *leelas*, preserved for eternity, are called Sai Bhagavatam: His glory, His history, and His divine story.** We are fortunate that it is available in well-known books written by great devotees, such as Professor Kasturi (*Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram*) Howard Murphet (*Man of Miracles*), and books written by Dr. Jack Hislop, Mrs. Diana Baskin, and many others. But these *leelas*, these divine sports, are never-ending. Even now, after Swami left His physical form, they occur because He is omnipresent and omniscient. He never left us. **He is our Eternal**

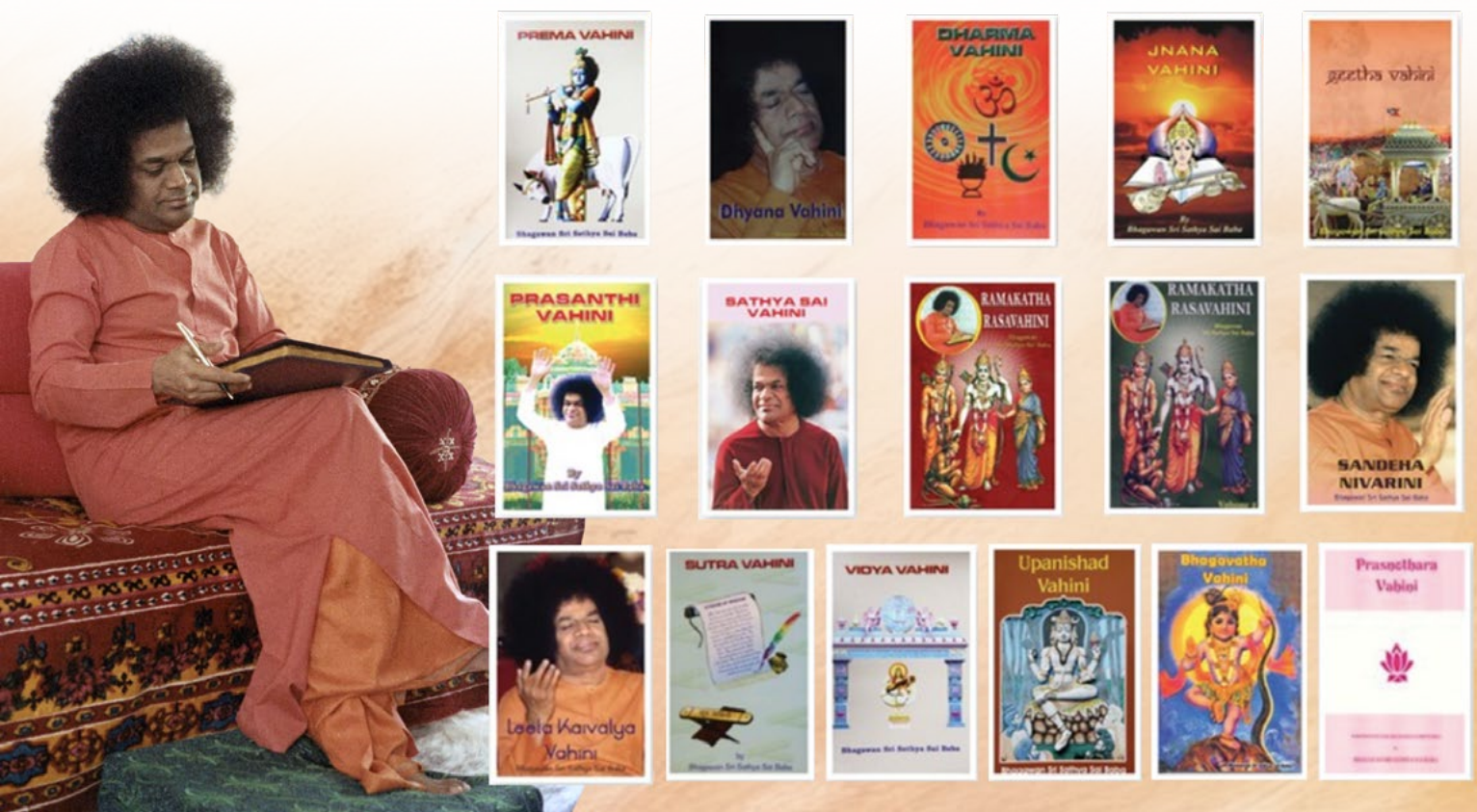


**Companion. He was with us, He is with us, and He will be with us forever.** Many experiences with Him are being shared in this magazine, *Sathya Sai-The Eternal Companion*, every month. In these pages, devotees from all over the world describe their spiritual journeys, how their lives have changed, how they are transformed, and how they enjoy a purposeful life full of peace and joy. This issue, too, has three such stories, namely those of Mr. Sanjai Murali, Mr. Krishna Samy, and Ms. Alida Parkes.

Listening to the glories of God, again and again, and reading about them is in itself a good *sadhana*. **Shirdi Baba emphasizes that reading the divine stories of the Lord will lead us to the supreme goal. Hence, this is an important *sadhana*.** When we talk about Hanuman, who is a great devotee of Lord Rama, it is said he had two noble qualities. He is always keen to be part of the divine mission and do His work. Second, he is always longing to hear about the stories and the glory of the Lord and His devotees. This is a rare and great blessing, a gift from the Lord, by which we can connect with Him and His devotees.

## His Universal Teachings

Then the fourth and wonderful gift is His teachings. His universal and eternal message transcends the barriers of nationality, race, religion, faith, creed, gender, age, and culture. It applies to all people at all times, now and forever. **His message is the quintessence of all scriptures.** His every word is a *mantra*, every sentence is a *sutra* (aphorism), every discourse is a Veda, and every conversation is a Gita. What we need to do is to dive deep into these teachings. **We are blessed and fortunate that, for the first time in human history, His divine teachings and His divine discourses are readily available** in various media formats. In the print media, we can read books such as *Sathya Sai Speaks*. In the audio and video formats, we can hear, see, and enjoy His universal divine message. In addition, for the first time in the history of humanity, an Avatar out of His love and infinite compassion has written books with His own hands in the form of Vahinis (streams of spiritual essence) on various spiritual topics. These include *Dhyana Vahini* on meditation, *Prema Vahini* on divine love, and *Prasanthi Vahini* on peace. He has also expounded on various scriptures, like the *Bhagavad Gita* in *Gita Vahini*, *Brahma*





## Sri Sathya Sai International Organization



Sutras in Sutra Vahini, and Bhagavatam in Bhagavata Vahini. **Sixteen such Vahinis are available for all to read, and they are also available free as ebooks on the SSSIO website.**

Being our eternal charioteer and eternal companion, Swami has proclaimed that this Avatar has come not only to share the divine message in a new light but **also to give the innermost and deepest insights to the ancient scriptures in the simplest form for everyone.** He explains in plain language the profound divine meaning and inner significance, apart from the literal meanings, of these scriptures.

### His Organization

The fifth gift is an important one. The most significant divine gift is the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO), which the Avatar Himself founded. In times past, many faith organizations were founded after the Avatar, such as Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, etc., left their physical form. **But during the very lifetime of this Avatar, the SSSIO was founded, nurtured, and guided by Swami and continues to be guided by Him for over 60 years.** After more than six decades, we can feel His tangible divine guidance even today. Furthermore, Swami assured us that those who participate and serve in the divine Organization

will be liberated. During 1961 *Dasara*, He said all the people who serve selflessly with love and dedication in the Organization will be liberated from the cycle of birth and death. Not only they, but also their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren will be liberated. This is a wonderful assurance and blessing. Therefore, we need to jump into working in the divine mission with all our energy and enthusiasm because Swami has given us this noble platform and rare opportunity. **He has given us a platform through which we can come together and intensify our *sadhana* in holy company rather than doing it alone. The more like-minded people come together to pursue a common and noble goal, the quicker and more easily divinity responds.**

In this organization that Swami gave us, **He established three wings along the lines of the three yogas: *karma*, *bhakti*, and *jnana*.**

**The Service Wing is the path of *karma*** where we do selfless service to not only humanity, but also animals and nature. This is being carried out in around 110 countries where food, water, shelter, education, healthcare, and environmental services are provided to those in need. **This is the path of *karma yoga*, the path of selfless service, which purifies our hearts.** Swami says, "Purity is enlightenment." Jesus also says,



“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

Next is the **Devotion Wing, the path of *bhakti***, where we come together expressing our love and gratitude to God by singing His glory in *bhajans*, reciting prayers, chanting mantras, doing *japa* and meditation, and other devotional practices. This is a time-tested method, which is easy and one of the best for spiritual seekers.

**Then comes the path of *jnana***, wherein we study Swami’s teachings intensely through study circles, dive deep into them, and explore how we can incorporate them into our daily lives. Thus, we get transformed and finally attain wisdom and experience Oneness. Then we realize that only one thing exists, and there is no duality because Swami says the dual mind is half blind. **Finally, we experience, *sarvam khalvidam Brahma* (everything is pervaded by God). That is why this year, we chose Swami’s maxim, ‘Purity is Enlightenment,’ as the theme for the 11th World Conference. The SSSIIO website also has a Study Guide on this subject, which was distributed earlier.**

As an expression of love and gratitude to Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, devotees around the world started 100th Birthday celebrations, glimpses of which are presented in this issue.

## **Attain Eternal Bliss (*Brahmananda*)**

Having received these wonderful five precious gifts and divine blessings, what is our responsibility and duty as devotees?

**Swami says that the only thing He wants from us is love and the transformation of our hearts.** We need to become purer and get rid of the six inner enemies—desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride, and jealousy.

When we do *sadhana* with love, intensity, dedication, and determination, we can surely reach the goal quickly and easily and **attain *brahmananda*, supreme bliss. It is eternal bliss, never-ending bliss, which knows no suffering, no grief.** It is beautifully described in the *Taittiriya Upanishad* that *brahmananda* is one hundred quintillion times that of ordinary human happiness. Nine stages of happiness are described between human happiness (*manushyananda*) and *brahmananda*, where each stage is 100 times greater than the previous one. One hundred quintillion is 10 to the power of 20. That is why it is said that **this eternal bliss cannot be expressed in words nor comprehended by the mind. It can only be experienced.** God will take us to this exalted state when we do *sadhana* sincerely and steadily with love and determination and practice His divine teachings with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength.

Jai Sai Ram.



# Attain God's Grace Through Sacrifice and Love

## Part 2

(Part 1 of this discourse appears in the May 2025 issue of  
Sathya Sai—The Eternal Companion.)

**Ultimately, Buddha experienced bliss upon realizing Oneness.** He relinquished his attachment to sensory pleasures, recognizing that what he was experiencing was futile. He viewed these sensory pleasures as a form of bondage that did not provide true fulfillment. He realized that the senses could distract from the sacredness of humanity.

He renounced his wife and son as he developed a deeper understanding of life and its complexities. After this transformative journey, he let go of all sense pleasures and distractions. He recognized that there is only one Atma and found true happiness.

Ananda, Buddha's cousin, who always accompanied him, observed this happiness. He shed tears at the sight of the Buddha attaining liberation (*nirvana*).

Buddha called Ananda and said, "Ananda, you were born only to experience bliss. Keep your senses given by God on the proper path so that you can attain this happiness. Moreover, you can share this happiness with many others."

That is why it is said,

*Nityanandam, paramasukhadam,  
kevalam jnana murtim  
Dwandatitam, gagana sadrusham,  
tatwamasyadi lakshyam  
Ekam nithyam, vimalam, achalam,  
sarvadi sakshibhutam*

(Sanskrit verse)

*(Eternal bliss, supreme happiness,  
who is true wisdom; who is beyond  
dualities, who is infinite, whose  
attention is always on the divine; who  
is One, eternal, pure, steady, and who  
is the eternal witness)*



“A human who is born crying should be smiling at the time of death. It is essential to guide one’s life onto the right path. When you direct your senses on the right path, you will die with a smile.

**Your senses are preventing you from experiencing that divine bliss.** Instead, you are experiencing the same worldly happiness as dogs, foxes, and monkeys. If that’s the case, why do you need to be a human being? You could have just been born as a monkey. Monkeys also experience all that you experience. Yet, you are not a monkey, but ‘mankind.’ You are meant to embody the qualities of humanity and kindness. You should be a person full of love.

You are not born merely to enjoy fleeting pleasures. Every creature enters this world with a loud cry. That moment expresses a profound realization: “Alas, I am reborn in this world, separated from bliss and my true essence of Atma.” What is the purpose of a person who comes into the world crying and leaves it crying? We must understand the true purpose of our existence. I was born crying, and I have also been crying throughout my life. I cried even as I approached the end of my life, and pondered, “What have I truly achieved?” **No, no! A human who is born crying should be smiling at the time of death. It is essential to guide one’s life onto the right path. When you direct your senses on the right path, you will die with a smile.** So, one should be smiling during one’s final moments.

What is death? Death is merely a transition, like changing clothes. We wear this dress of physical body during our lifetime. When it is shed, a new one awaits. Death does not mean losing life. Instead, it represents liberation (*nirvana*). Everyone aspires to attain liberation (*nirvana*), but how much effort are they putting into it? In our journey, we

have deposited with God the merits we have accumulated over many lifetimes. These merits will be in safe custody with God. God will also grant us interest. How do we access these blessings? We must sign a “check” and present it to the divine manager, God. He provides us with the “checkbook” of sacrifice. We all possess this checkbook of sacrifice. But what good is it if we don’t sign our check of sacrifice with the signature of love? Thus, every human being needs both love and sacrifice. **Only when love and sacrifice unite can we achieve the results we deserve.**

God allows us to experience so much and extends His love generously. Yet, what prevents some unlucky ones from receiving these gifts? The answer lies in the disparity between God’s will and the receiver’s will. This lack of alignment is often the root cause of unfulfilled desires. God is kind, loving, and compassionate. Why do you lose the gifts that God is giving? Because you are filled with worldly feelings, worries, and thoughts. You must first rid yourself of the unsacred to receive something sacred. It is easy to fill an empty head, but is it possible to fill anything in a head that is already full of extraneous matter? Then, how can you fill it with the essence of love that God has given you? So, empty what is in the head and sacrifice it to make room for positivity (thoughts filled with love for God). Yoga practiced with sacrifice is great. Which type of yoga are you practicing? You are practicing meaningless yoga. You are entering a meaningless path. True yoga is controlling the aberrations of the mind (*yogas chitta vritti nirodha*). But the focus



*God is not  
confined to one  
form and one  
place; all forms  
are His.*

on physical yoga alone is akin to a disease. Many people today suffer from misunderstandings about yoga. **Instead, develop pure love, which helps your mind. A person becomes pure only when the mind is purified. Remember, “As you think, so you become (*yadhbhavam tadbhavati*).”** That is why keeping your thoughts pure is essential for receiving what is holy. So, what is the proper practice of purifying the heart? It isn’t meditation, chanting, or just doing yoga exercises. What good is it to sit with your nose closed? You should be inhaling positive energy, not negativity. Inhale the goodness that sustains life rather than the harmful emotions that can cloud your mind. All the negativity stems from this chaotic state of mind, and these thoughts can be poisonous.

Avoid this poisonous atmosphere of negative feelings, take in the nectarous air of positive feelings, and fill your heart. The precious gifts of the touch of God, vision of God, and conversation with God (*Darshan*, *Sparshan*, and *Sambhashan*) are beyond words. You are just looking at people but reflect on who those people are. They are manifestations of God. Reflect on that feeling, and then only will your vision become pure. Therefore, everything that is seen is sacred. Everything is God. But you look at the world and think, “I haven’t seen God.”

**God is not confined to one form and one place; all forms are His. The all-witnessing God exists in every form.** Only when you have this realization will you find the right path. You consider the paintings of Vishnu and Krishna made by renowned artist Ravi Verma to be real. Remember that God has no form, and all forms are His.

*Ishvara sarva bhootaanam,  
Isha vasya sarvamidam,  
Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*

(Sanskrit Verse)

*(God is in all beings. All this is God.  
Everything is pervaded by Brahman.)*

Wherever you look, you see God. This understanding enables you to see your mother as God, your father as God, and your wife as God. When you refer to someone as your wife, she becomes your wife after you marry her, but who was she before that? And when you refer to your mother, she became your mother after you were born, but who was she before? All these relationships develop in time, but life is like the passing clouds. It comes and goes. Morality comes and grows. Therefore, we can achieve anything through the control of our senses. Patanjali emphasized this with the principle that true yoga is controlling the aberrations of the mind (*yogah chitta vritti nirodhakaha*).



Today, human beings have become weaklings. One who is verily divine has now become meek. **When even the slightest challenge can incite anger and grief, how can one experience divinity? Take everything with equanimity.** When a son was born, you were happy, and when he died, you grieved. Who was born? Who died? All these are like the passing clouds that come and go.

### **Ascend to Divinity Do not descend to meekness!**

God is formless, and yet He is all forms. We imagine the mirage of marriage as real. [Just as the mirage cannot quench a person's thirst, marriage cannot give happiness.] In a mirage, you see water everywhere. But if you pursue this mirage, how can you ever quench your thirst? This is what you get from a mirage. You must do your duty. That is the right path. Duty is God. Work is worship. Consider your work as divine, and your duty as divine. **Do not make distinctions such as housework, office work, and schoolwork. Consider all your work as God's work.** Because you are residing in a place, it becomes your home. When you work at a place, it is called an office. As you studied at a place, it became a school. These are all structures that were built, but they were not there to begin with. However, there is only one thing that neither comes nor goes.

Embodiments of love! You have to recognize these three things:

- That which comes and goes
- That which comes but does not go
- That which neither comes nor goes

*Ajnana* (ignorance) comes and goes. *Jnana* (wisdom), once it comes, it stays. **The one that neither comes nor goes is *Atmajnana* (knowledge of the Self). It is steady and eternal; it never changes.** The knowledge of Atma is nectarine. All

your worldly knowledge is useless without the knowledge of the Self. We read many books. Where does the material in the books come from? All you read in *pusthaka* (books) comes from the *masthaka* (head). Essentially, the knowledge that comes from the head returns to your head (when you read books). But the knowledge of the Self cannot be found either in *pusthaka* or *masthaka*. It originates from the heart. To attain such *Atmic* wisdom, you must control your mind. The mind is like a mad monkey. It is nothing but a conglomeration of thoughts. Bad thoughts pollute the mind. Therefore, first, purify your mind.

### **What Is Nirvana?**

Have the right type of desires. When you are hungry, you desire food. Once you eat food, your hunger is satiated. Likewise, today, man aspires to attain *mukti* (liberation). What is *mukti*? It is not a specially built, comfortable, air-conditioned place. No, no. *Mukti* means freedom from suffering. **You need *mukti* at three levels—body, mind, and soul.** For example, you are hungry. When you eat food, you are free from hunger. This is also a kind of *mukti* (freedom). But these are all related to the world. You are suffering from a disease. You take medicine and become free from illness. This is also *mukti*, which is related to bodily health. *Mukti* is also needed for the mind. At the mental level, *mukti* means controlling the vagaries of the mind. This is *mukti* in the mental realm. These are all related to the world. **However, true liberation lies in understanding the principle of Atma, which neither comes nor goes.** Atma is present in all. "*Ekatma sarva bhootantaratma*" (One Atma is present in all beings). To understand this principle, Buddha performed various types of spiritual practices.

This liberation is called *nirvana*. **What is this *nirvana*? There are three principles**

of humanity. These principles are the real *nirvana*.

- One should observe morality in society, have fear of sin and love for Truth (God).
- One should feel blissful looking at any expression of love.
- Live in harmony with everyone in society.

That is real *nirvana*. You should never give way to sinful acts. Being in the presence of God is real wealth. That is the real *nirvana*. However, ignorant people are unable to understand the divine principle properly. They feel that they can experience God through 'meditation'. There is nothing in 'meditation'; it is a way of life itself. While walking on the road or driving a car, if your vision is not focused on the road, you may have an accident. Thus, every act in our entire life is 'meditation.' Concentration is necessary for all acts you perform. Can this concentration be considered meditation? No, no, this is only concentration. **One should go beyond concentration. This means the mind and feelings should become still. One should see that thoughts do not arise. That is true meditation.**

### One-pointed Devotion of the *Gopikas*

The *gopikas*, the ardent devotees of Lord Sri Krishna, also followed this path. Their minds were constantly fixed on Krishna. Once, a new daughter-in-law named Suguna came to that village. She wanted to go to Yashoda's house to light the lamp and bring it to her house. As Lord Krishna was born in Yashoda's house, she believed that by lighting the lamp from Yashoda's house, her house would also become the house of Lord Krishna. She felt that she would also be blessed with such sacredness. With such conviction, she carried the lamp (to Yashoda's house) to get it lit.

She started to light the lamp. **As she was focused on lighting the lamp, she had a**

**vision of the beautiful form of Krishna in the flame.** She was so lost in seeing the enchanting form of Krishna that she lost all awareness that her hand was burning in the flame. Yashoda smelled something burning and ran to the spot. She asked Suguna, "What is this? Why are you standing like that while your hand is on fire?" So saying, she pulled Suguna's hand out of the flame and took her out of the house. Yashoda told the *gopikas* outside the house, "Has Suguna gone mad? She came to the house to light the lamp. Even though her hand was getting burned, she seemed to have lost all awareness and wisdom (*pragnya*)."  
All the *gopikas* questioned her, "Suguna, why did you stand like that (while lighting the lamp)"? Suguna replied, "I could see Lord Krishna in the flame. How can I leave Him and come?"  
Listening to Suguna's reply, all the *gopikas* jumped in ecstasy and started singing:

*Sugunaku kanipinchenanta  
Mana Sugunaku kanipinchenanta  
Nanduni inta gopaludanta  
Dipana kanipinchenanta  
Mana Sugunaku kanipinchenanta*  
(Telugu Song)

*(Our Suguna saw Lord Krishna, the  
Gopala, at the residence of Nanda.  
He appeared to her in the flame of a  
lamp.)*

Suguna saw Lord Krishna at the residence of Nanda. Where did He appear? Lord Krishna appeared in the flame of a lamp. What is the inner significance of this? When you have one-pointed concentration toward the Lord, you will see Him everywhere. Thus, our attributes (*gunas*) should be sacred. Our actions should be sacred. Our vision should be sacred. Our speech should be sacred. **When one leads such a life, one verily becomes God. There is no need to search for God. God Himself will come searching for you.** At one time, Annie Besant, a renowned socialist and theosophist, said, "People of India are



searching for God. What is this madness? Are human beings searching for God? No, no. In fact, God is looking for a good human being." God Himself is searching for a good man. **One who receives God's love is a good man. That 'good' man is a 'God' man.** The one without good feelings is a bad man. We must become good men, not bad men. There lies the fulfillment of human life.

Embodiments of Love! The principle of love in you is pure. But now and then, because of delusions, you are polluting it. Thereby, you are diminishing your value. I want to give a small example before I close. You have a gold chain. When it is pure gold, it shines brilliantly. Its value is also very high. If you add copper to this pure gold, its purity will decrease; in addition, the value will also decrease. If you add brass, its brilliance will decrease further. If you add more copper, its brilliance will be reduced even further. Ultimately, the value of gold is lost. Likewise, a human being is as sacred as pure gold. **When copper in the form of desires is associated, the brilliance of gold in the form of humanness decreases. The value of gold in the form of humanness also decreases.** By further adding brass (in the form of more desires), the value of gold in the form of humanness decreases completely. Through this action, the effulgence is also decreased. What is the reason for the lack of value for human beings? It is because of mixing unnecessary things that human values are lost. Truth (*sathya*) is a human value; Right conduct (*dharma*) is a human value; Peace (*shanti*) is a human

value. **When you practice all these human values, you will become effulgent. Wherever you go, people will respect you.** And every person will regard you highly.

Embodiments of Love! Do not pollute your mind, which is sacred. You have attained this human birth as a result of meritorious deeds done over many lifetimes. Human life is highly valuable. You can maintain your value only by improving and practicing your human values. This was also the teaching of Buddha. Even today's Buddhists do not follow Buddha's teachings. *Nirvana, nirvana, nirvana! Nirvana* means attaining *moksha* (liberation). *Moksha* means getting rid of one's sins completely. The heart should be purified. Morality in society should be promoted. Fear of sin should be inculcated. **We should foster love for God, fear of sin, and morality in society. This itself is *nirvana*.** Therefore, we should earn love for God. One should fear sin. An animal does not know what fear of sin is. What is the reason? It does not know what sin is. A human being who knows what sin is should fear sin. That is why fear of sin, love for God, and morality in society—the unity of these three is true *nirvana*. Therefore, we should follow the right path and must first have control over our senses. **We should recapitulate all these teachings and keep ourselves charged. Being in the company of good and godly people (*satsang*) will provide the required charge.** As you keep up the charge and follow these teachings, you will progress in life to great heights and become an ideal human being.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba  
May 7, 2001

# Everything at the Right Time



**BORN IN A TRADITIONAL HINDU FAMILY IN FIJI, I WAS BROUGHT UP WORSHIPPING MANY GODS AND GODDESSES.**

In the late 1960s, someone gave my parents a picture of Swami, telling them He was God living in India. At that time, from my perspective, India was a place on a different planet, and a living God made no sense. But my parents developed faith in Him, which meant no more meat on Thursdays! There was also a new lamp to be lit on our altar, but that was about it. We had no special *bhajans*, nor any information about Sai Baba or His teachings, just the mandatory penance on Thursday to abstain from eating meat!

This was how things were for many years until I grew up and got married. One day, someone told us that there was a Sai Center not far from the Lautoka Sugar Mills where

I worked. This was in the early 1980s, and my wife decided to go for *bhajans*. I had to take her there since she did not drive. I chauffeured her on one condition that I would not have to attend the *bhajans*. I would use this time to enjoy the local kava (a traditional drink made from the root of the *piper methysticum* plant, which has a mildly sedative and relaxing effect without being intoxicating) with my friends.

On September 19, 1987, we moved to New Zealand. It was this “New Sai-land” that made me strongly feel the spiritual vacuum in life! Just at that time, someone introduced us to the Mt. Eden Sai Center. We started by attending the *bhajans* at the center, which slowly became a weekly affair. But again, that was about it. We did not participate in any of the other organization’s activities.



I now see that every challenge, every decision, and every unexpected turn is part of a larger plan—one that is always for our highest good, ordained by God.

---

### The 'Forced' Travel to Puttaparthi

The very first book I read was the popular book titled *Sai Baba the Holy Man and the Psychiatrist*, which inspired me very much. My wife decided it was time to visit the lotus feet of Bhagawan Baba. Once again, I had no intention of going on the trip, especially as there was also a requirement that anyone traveling with the group to visit Baba needed to be a vegetarian six months before arriving. It was difficult for me to do that. My wife followed the instructions of 'Mother Madeleine,' who was revered as a senior devotee and very dear to the Lord. She is among the very first founders of the Sathya Sai Organization in New Zealand. She served as the General Secretary of the SSSIO New Zealand and was the author of the New Zealand Newsletter.

Even though I told my wife to go and see Baba on her own and then share her stories upon returning, she booked two tickets and paid the deposit for the trip! I resisted and insisted that I would decide later. But the idea of sending her that far alone did not seem right, especially since my cousin and his family also was going. I eventually rushed to Mother Madeleine and confirmed my travel. Our flight was on December 25, 1994. It was Christmas Day, and my cousin and I took advantage of drinking on the flight.

Though I had turned a deaf ear to be a vegetarian for six months before the trip, out of respect for Baba, I became a vegetarian a few days before arriving at the *ashram*.

### Swami Always Responds

In those days, accommodation at the *ashram* was limited, but a room on the third

floor of a round building was allotted to us. I was missing my drinks and non-vegetarian food and was upset with my wife for forcing me into this situation. It was the eighteenth day of our stay, and I was very frustrated. I mentally challenged Swami, "I have been touching your feet in the picture for so long, but if you are truly God, I want to touch your feet physically. Can You make that happen and show me?"

Out of the blue, that very day, I had the number one token in the lucky draw for *darshan* and sat in the first line, facing north. Our beloved Lord came walking, stood right in front of me, and slightly lifted His robe, revealing His feet while collecting the letters. As He stood so close, I grabbed the opportunity to take *padanamaskar* (touch the feet of the Master)! I wasted no time in touching His divine feet.



Offering a letter to Swami during a *darshan* in Brindavan, Whitefield in Bangalore.

My real journey to Sai began that day because tears spontaneously poured from my eyes. It was tears of joy, which I shed all the way back to the room as I shared the experience with my wife! At last, I had realized who He is from personal experience.

### The Transformation

It was time to leave for home, and during my final *darshan*, the eye-to-eye contact bestowed by my beloved Bhagawan is still imprinted indelibly on my mind in the form of Lord Krishna. It was never my intention to become a vegetarian, but on the return flight from Singapore to Auckland, I heard a very strong voice from within saying, "That's it. Stop!" I told my wife that I was becoming a vegetarian and would no longer eat meat or consume alcoholic drinks!

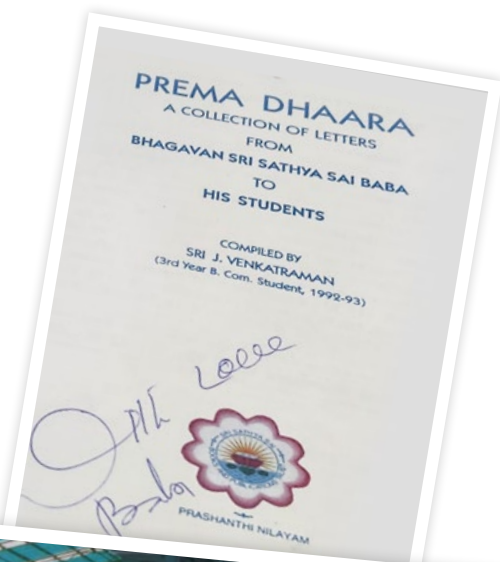
On our second trip to Bangalore (Whitefield), during an interview, I had the blessed opportunity to massage His feet for the entire duration of the interview. I could feel His blessings as He was enjoying it, and I massaged His legs. During our second interview in Puttaparthi, I had a book in my hand called *Prema Dhara*, a collection of Swami's letters to His students. While He was talking to us, I quietly presented the book to Him for blessings. He very lovingly autographed it, "With Love-Baba." This book is so precious to me now. He also talked with my wife and me. After that, many trips followed to His lotus feet, year after year.

### Sai's Omnipresence

I have enjoyed, and am still enjoying, participating in selfless service. Bhagawan has always guided me, and I have been part of the Fiji medical camps for several years. In 2011, I was responsible for organizing the logistics of

the camp. Two days before our departure to Fiji, I heard Bhagawan say in my dream, "Make sure everything is organized properly." I understood it was time to return to the drawing board, listing and checking every item. But everything had already been done. All local flights had been arranged, and all medicines had been sent to Fiji for transport to the destination island. I had coordinated with my counterpart in Fiji via emails and phone calls, and things seemed organized and in place.

Only upon arrival at the second island in Fiji did we realize that some of the medicines had not reached the island and were still stuck on the mainland. The very first thing that



The visit to Brindavan resulted in an interview with Swami.



came to my mind was Swami's caution in my dream. Sometimes we take things lightly. My beloved Lord has been giving me so many messages from the early age of 14, yet I had gotten caught up in just His physical form.

### Sai's Omniscience

In 2013, having served 25 years in a company, I found myself at a crossroads. The company was not doing well, and discussions were already underway for downsizing. As a result, I was given a golden handshake (retirement offer). Though I was not happy to leave, I received a sizable severance package and accepted it as His will.

I spent the next three years searching for work, constantly moving from one company to another. It was a challenging time with much uncertainty. But at least, I had a job. Then I received news from a former colleague that the company I had worked for had gone into receivership (financial difficulty). The department I worked in was dismantled, and employees were left with minimal severance pay.

That is when I had a profound realization that what initially seemed like a difficult and uncertain phase in my life was, in fact, a divine blessing. Swami had ensured that I left at the right time, before the roof fell, securing my rightful pay before the company's downturn.

We often believe we are the doer, but there is a higher power that knows our future and guides us accordingly. **This experience reaffirmed my faith in Swami's divine play and His infinite wisdom. I now see that every challenge, every decision, and every unexpected turn is part of a larger plan—one that**



New 'Sai-Land' group picture at Brindavan ashram.

**is always for our highest good, ordained by God.**

Through this journey, I have learned to trust, surrender, and remain ever grateful for His guiding hand throughout my life. By His divine grace, I am fully engaged in seva through various SSSIO initiatives, including the preschool, medical camps, and Sai library, as well as other responsibilities that keep me fully engaged in divine works. **I feel great fulfillment in these service opportunities, as it has always been my heartfelt wish to retire early and dedicate my life entirely to seva.** Swami has given me the golden opportunity to do it until my last breath.

Mr. Krishna Samy   
NEW ZEALAND



*Mr. Krishna Samy holds a New Zealand School Certificate and did his apprenticeship at the Lautoka Sugar Mill in Fiji. He worked in a foundry in New Zealand as a plant maintenance engineer for 25 years. Mr. Samy served in the SSSIO, New Zealand, in various capacities, including service coordinator at the center, regional, and national levels. He has been involved with the Sai medical mission in Fiji for the past 18 years and also served in medical camps in the Philippines, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania.*

# “I AM YOUR PROPERTY YOU ARE MY PROPERTY”

It was a pleasant January morning in 1987. I was barely getting out of my tumultuous teen years and midway through college. Bhagawan graciously pulled me by my hand as He took His seat in the private interview room in Prasanthi Nilayam. His manner was brisk, and His attention was unmistakably laser-focused on me. It was a moment filled with exhilaration and apprehension—exhilaration to be in the field of pure love, and apprehension as to what aspects of conduct and character He might call out for chiseling. Swami looked into my eyes and said, **“I am your property; you are My property.”** **The profundity of those words would take decades to sink in.** I was preoccupied with getting through college and the next steps during those years, and it didn’t even occur to me to ask Bhagawan what those words really meant.

Avatars are the ultimate teachers of truth. Even so, spoon-feeding is not their style. Swami states that Avatars point to the truth succinctly and leave it to the seekers to find the truth for themselves through the experiences that come with life’s journey. In retrospect, I am in a far better position now than when I was a teen to understand the meaning of His profound revelation that Swami is my property and I am His property.

## The Unforgettable Car Drives

My fascination with toy cars as a child evolved into a deeper interest in everything related to cars when I was an adolescent living in Chennai. I couldn’t wait to apply for a driver’s permit. Whenever my father drove, I carefully observed him and noted the sequence of steps involved in the process. I repeated this when my uncles drove, as well. I quizzed my older cousins, who had recently learned





## Swami is our true property – There is no one else we can call our own.

---

how to drive and had acquired the coveted driver's license.

One afternoon, when my siblings were away and my parents were napping, I decided it was the perfect time to put the knowledge I had gathered about driving into practice for the very first time. I took the keys from my dad's desk, started the car, and drove onto the driveway for a short spin. Having enjoyed the drive, I carefully parked the car back in its original spot, left no telltale signs of wrongdoing, and replaced the keys in their rightful original place. No one knew, and I couldn't have been happier to gain real driving experience.

A few months later, my father, Dr. M. Vijai Kumar, offered his car for Swami's use during His visit to Chennai in 1985. Our car was thus parked near the red Mercedes Swami was using at that time. One day, Swami chose to bless us. He asked my father to bring the car, and as my father drove Him, Swami took a short ride within the Sundaram compound. I was standing on duty as a *sevadai* (volunteer) and noticed my father was elated by the blessed opportunity. Then, much to my joy, Swami got out of the car right in front of me and asked, *"Do you know how to drive?"*

For some time, I had fancied a secret desire to drive Swami's car. My immediate thought was that my prayers had been answered and that Swami would now give me a chance to drive Him in His car. I replied, "Yes, Swami! I know how to drive." By then, unbeknownst to me, my dad had stepped out of the car and was within earshot. Swami asked the following question, *"Have you driven before?"* "Yes, Swami!"

*"Do you have a license?"* "Errr... No Swami..."

Swami then turned to my dad, who was right behind, and said, *"See what he is doing!"* I was caught red-handed—all escape routes were sealed!

*"Don't do this. Learn properly. Get a license, and then drive,"* Swami said as He moved on.

### Being Swami's Property

We are possessive of our property because it belongs to us. This is the same possessiveness, even more so, when it comes to Swami. **He not only sees us as His own but also views us as a part of Himself.** Therefore, He expects us to abide by the standards of perfection that He embodies!

My car ride and the subsequent confession to Swami seem like trivial incidents or errors arising from devotion unbridled by discipline and duty. They could also be considered a predisposition of sorts during adolescence. However, Swami never entertains the idea that "to err is human." He demands conduct of the highest order, as He views us as perfect reflections of Himself. **This incident made me realize how much**





He cares for us, His precious property. It is truly beyond measure.

### “Swami is My Property”

Years later, as a busy young professional, my weekdays were filled with travel that sometimes extended to Saturday, as well. That is why, when I was asked to take on the role of an SSE teacher at the Sai Center in New Jersey, USA, I was hesitant. I wasn't sure I could do justice to it, given my travel and time constraints. However, after much persuasion from my Sai brothers and sisters, I agreed and immersed myself in training and getting the SSE program up and running.

That is when I realized the meaning of Swami being my property. Swami tells us that “properties are not ‘proper’ ties.” What, then, are our ‘proper’ ties, the true bindings in this world? They are the ones with Swami, and Swami alone! **Everything we think, speak, or do must serve to reinforce our ties with Him. That should be the perspective with which we must approach anything in life.**

### SAI-See Always Inside

As an SSE teacher, one of my responsibilities was to convey the importance of human values to children and parents. There is a treasure trove of Swami's discourses and numerous resources drawn from the organization's vast experience. But how can I distill that and communicate it effectively to parents who are new to Swami's teachings?

Somehow, saying human values are essential because Swami said so did not appeal to my heart. This was all about winning hearts and not just parroting what Swami says. **I wanted to drive home the key point that human values are the center of our lives.** And I wanted to do it in a practical manner within 40 minutes, the time allotted for interaction.

I prayed and prepared. I sought the solution from the Swami in my heart. That is when He inspired me with the idea of the “puzzle, magic square.” It was the perfect way to drive home the message about human values in a practical manner. It begins with a simple puzzle with a 3x3 grid that needs to be filled with numbers from one to nine. Each number can be used only once so that the sum of numbers in each column, row, and diagonal totals 15.

The puzzle has only eight possible solutions as shown below:

Once the parents solve the puzzle, the solutions are compared. All solutions have one

8	1	6
3	5	7
4	9	2

4	3	8
9	5	1
2	7	6

2	9	4
7	5	3
6	1	8

6	7	2
1	5	9
8	3	4

6	1	8
7	5	3
2	9	4

8	3	4
1	5	9
6	7	2

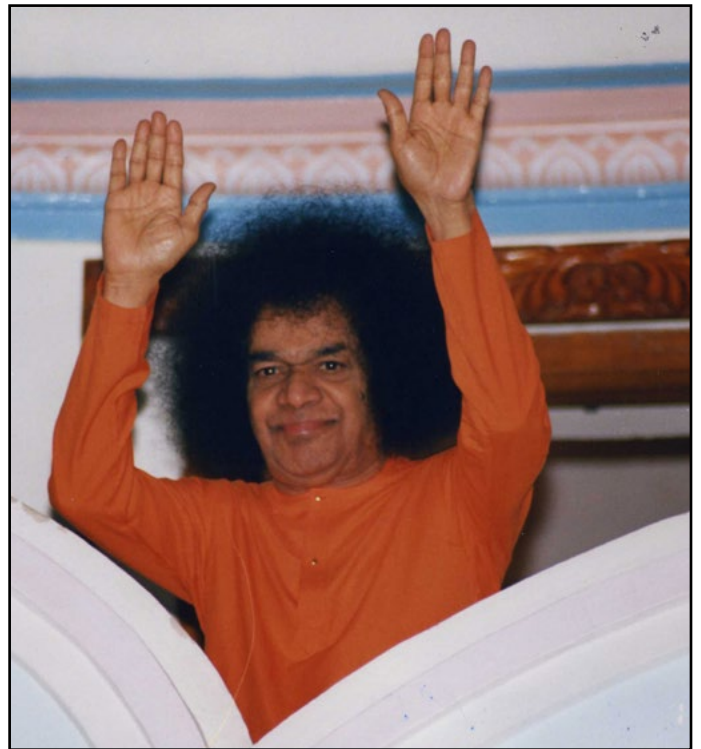
4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

2	7	6
9	5	1
4	3	8



thing in common—the number ‘5’ must be in the center square, or else the puzzle cannot be solved. “Just like this,” I would say to them, **“keeping the five human values of Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love, and Nonviolence at the center of our lives is the only way to solve the puzzle of life.”** Solving the puzzle and relating it to life and human values impressed upon parents the importance of human values. For those who are new to Swami and the Sai Organization, we have to explain Swami’s teachings in a manner they can easily relate to.

Where did the idea of the magic square seep into my awareness? Let’s suppose we have kept a few items in a closet at home that we seldom open. Over time, we forget the items in the closet. One fine day, we open the closet and find just what we were looking for – it is already there! Swami is the property in the closet of our hearts. **We forget He is always there and is readily accessible. Preparing for the presentation helped me realize that Swami is my property, and I can count on Him to help me always and in all ways.** Distinctions of ‘Sai work,’ ‘housework,’ ‘office work,’ and ‘outside work’ are labels we give. Spiritually, there is no distinction; all work done with the spirit of devotion becomes worship and His work.



**Indeed, each one of us is Swami’s property and therefore priceless in value. Swami is our true property and there is no one else we can call ‘our own.’** May this sense of belonging to Swami, and of Swami being our only treasure, animate our lives. May Swami bless us and help us realize this eternal truth.

Jai Sai Ram.

**Mr. Sanjai Murali**   
USA



**Mr. Sanjai Murali** lives in the USA. His grandparents were devotees of Swami from the 1960s in India. His tryst with divinity began on a trip with Balvikas (Sai Spiritual Education) children to see Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba in the early 1980s and has continued since then. He was blessed to have interactions and guidance from Bhagawan during high school and college. Sanjai is the founder and CEO of JOGO Health – a novel therapeutic platform for migraine, chronic pain, pelvic floor disorders, and neuromuscular disorders. He currently serves as the Young Adult Advisor of the Mid-Atlantic region of the SSSIO–USA. Mr. Murali helps facilitate SSE Group 4 classes at Central Jersey Sai Center, New Jersey.



# Centennial Offerings

EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE  
FOR SAI  
ACROSS THE WORLD

With hearts brimming with love and gratitude, devotees from across the world are preparing to celebrate the sacred Centennial Birthday of our beloved Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on November 23, 2025. **In this context, the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO) has witnessed a surge of spiritual fervor and selfless service across the world.** This report offers a glimpse into a small, yet vibrant sample of activities from three of the ten SSSIO zones—each a radiant expression of devotion, unity, and love in action.

These initiatives are more than events on a calendar; they are heartfelt offerings of love, inspired by the teachings and life of our dear Swami. Whether through service projects, devotional gatherings, or innovative outreach, the devotees are channeling their inner transformation into meaningful action for the good of society.

**May these glimpses inspire the readers to deepen their own journey toward the Sai within,** and to join in the joyous march toward this once-in-a-lifetime celebration of the 100th year of the advent of our eternal companion, guide, and source—Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.





# Spiritual Homecoming in Hungary

From March 28-30, 2025, twenty-one Sai Young Adults held a heartwarming and spiritually uplifting meeting themed **“Purity is Enlightenment”** in Budapest, Hungary. The meeting welcomed Young Adults from Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. **Though born in different lands, the participants felt like one family, united by Swami’s love and the shared joy of spiritual fellowship.** A serene countryside retreat in the suburban part of Budapest provided a perfect setting for spiritual reflection, reconnection, and renewal on the way to celebrate Swami’s 100th Birthday.

In His love for the devotees from Hungary, Swami had previously manifested a gold chain with a large pendant—a treasured symbol of His grace. In 2025, that same love was felt as a **purifying light** in the Uhu Villa, where the gathering took place. The energy of the space, filled with warmth and unity, made everyone feel that they had returned to their spiritual home.

The event began with an icebreaker, **“Breaking the Ice with Sai,”** followed by soulful *bhajans*, morning prayers, and chanting the *Vedas*. Each day featured inspiring workshops centered on the themes **“Purity in Motion”** and **“Purity is Enlightenment.”** The first topic invited the participants to explore the true meaning of purity and how to embody it through elevated, conscious living. The session culminated in a *Kundalini* experience—a dynamic blend of breath, movement, and chanting to clear energy blockages and connect to the heart. In the second theme, the participants turned inward to reflect on the nature of the mind. Through a simple yet symbolic exer-



cise involving an object dropped into a body of water, they examined how sensory inputs ripple through our entire being. **“100 Steps to Sai” was an interactive activity enabling YAs to see that every step in life can be rooted in human values and spirituality.** They retraced over 100 symbolic steps—from when Sai entered their lives to journeys to Prasanthi Nilayam and back home to practice His teachings—through fun, value-based activities like a spiritual quiz, *bhajan*-guessing game, and living out Sai quotes. A highlight was the interactive game **“Seekers of Light,”** where players enacted roles such as seekers, nonbelievers, and the nearly-liberated devotees—mirroring life’s spiritual challenges and triumphs.

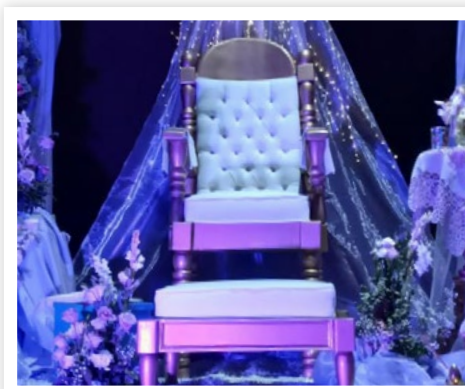
Meals at the big table, local Hungarian snacks, and shared laughter made the experience

deeply communal. Even the weather mirrored the inner journey—cleansing rains on the first days, followed by sunshine and the scent of jasmine on the final day, affirming the transformation within.

**This gathering was more than a program—it was a return to our spiritual home, a space to deepen our devotion, a means to purify our hearts,** and a way to prepare with joy and fervor for the 100th divine Birthday of our beloved Swami.

# 100 Years Illuminating the Path in Mexico

From April 17-19, 2025, the national spiritual retreat of the SSSIO Mexico was held in the beautiful city of San Luis Potosí, at Casa Don Bosco. **This year’s retreat was called ‘100 Years Illuminating the Path with His ‘Presence,’ and its purpose was to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the advent of Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.** It also embraced the sacred spirit of Easter, or “Semana Santa,” as it is known in Mexico.



## A Warm Beginning

The retreat began with the lighting of the flame and traditional prayers, setting an auspicious tone. Shortly afterward, a colorful parade featured representatives from about 40 Sri Sathya Sai Centers across the country. As each group came forward to offer their devotion and respect to Swami, for whom a chair was respectfully placed, a special





song composed just for the occasion filled the space.

Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Chairman of the SSSIIO, shared a heartfelt video message. His inspiring words were warmly received and truly moved everyone present.

Around 132 devotees from all parts of Mexico came together for this unforgettable experience. The stage was beautifully decorated to reflect the divine presence of our beloved Sathya Sai, creating a peaceful and loving atmosphere.

While the adults attended talks and workshops on light meditation, education, daily spirituality, and service projects, the children and teens had their own fun and engaging activities. Through games and group sessions, they joyfully learned important values. **Two discussion panels were held, one focused on the growth of Sai centers**

**in Mexico, and another on the future of the Sai Organization.**

**One of the most touching moments came during the celebration of Swami's 100th Birthday. Children, youth, and adults all gathered in the auditorium to sing the traditional birthday song (las mañanitas) to Swami, with mariachi music, no less! The joy was palpable and infectious.** Afterward, everyone enjoyed a slice of birthday cake and shared a truly magical moment.

On Friday night, the retreat took a poetic turn with a beautiful event called 'Voices of the Soul: A Gathering of Poetry, Stories, and Music.' Devotees read heartfelt poems and sang songs in honor of Swami. It was a night filled with emotion and deep connection.

Each morning began with *Omkar*, meditation, and *nagarsankirtan*, helping everyone start the day in silence and devotion.





# Celebrating Sai's 100th Birthday in Australia

Over the Easter weekend in 2025, the SSSIO of Australia hosted the Zone 3 Retreat as an offering to Swami for His 100th Birthday.

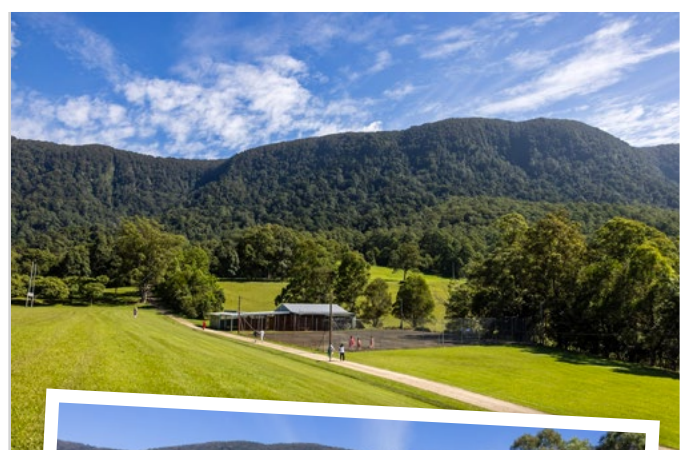
Preparations for the retreat, a sequel to the 2022 retreat, 'Omnipresent, Indwelling Sai,' started in early 2024. Previously having explored that Sai is within us and around us, **it was time to move the *sadhana* toward acknowledging, recognizing, and walking with Him, and ultimately seeing Sai in our lives daily.** The retreat planning was done by many devotees so that the love of Sai could be experienced by as many devotees as possible.

## Sai's Hand in the Preparations

The preparations were made meticulously and to the last detail. Different teams were formed to manage various aspects of the programs, Young Adult (YA) contributions, SSE children, venue setup, audio-visual systems, food, volunteer services, etc. **Everyone worked in perfect harmony and unity, from the Zone Chair to the National Council President, to the various Coordinators and volunteers.** And just as everything seemed set for launch, came the divine lesson of "love my uncertainty." Two weeks before the retreat, the local council told the organizers to identify a new venue since the registered participants exceeded the maxi-

mum capacity of 300! The search to find a venue to not only host 400 participants but also sleep 108 began in earnest over Easter! Finding any venue at short notice within a 10 km radius from the current location (as people had booked flights and accommodation) almost became an impossible mission.

**While putting their heads, hearts, and hands together in the effort, everyone prayed for divine intervention with total surrender, and a miracle happened!** Overnight, a pristine location was found that could not only accommodate 400 people but also had the capacity for breakout sessions, parallel SSE sessions, and accom-





modations, along with in-house cooking and dining!

Thus, the 'Journey with Sai' began on April 18, 2025, at the picturesque Tyalgum village in New South Wales, Australia! The extremely weak wireless signals also prompted the participants to have deep and powerful 'inner-net signals' and 'divine connectivity.'

### Start Early

Once the preliminary registrations and a meet-and-greet among the 400-person gathering were completed, the retreat started off enthusiastically with different service activities. While the SSE children lovingly prepared pet toys, the rest packed food hampers and planted trees. From karma yoga, the participants transitioned to bhakti yoga as they made their way to break-out rooms to engage in heartfelt *satsang* based on a special sadhana. **A large number of devotees had signed up for the daily reading of the Tapovanam book, which is a bouquet of beautiful experiences with Swami, akin to the Shirdi Sai Satcharitra.** The discussions were uplifting as everyone shared their heartfelt and divine experiences during sadhana.

This sacred sadhana of reading Tapovanam caught on like wildfire, with many participants committing to take it up, based on what they heard. There was also a divinely inspired *satsang* about this sadhana by the international guest speaker, Mr. Aravind Balasubramanya. He shared his spiritual journey and experiences, which brought tears to his eyes as well as the eyes of many in the audience. A quick dinner was followed by a 90-minute *satsang* by the same guest speaker on the first stage of the 'Journey with Sai,' which is 'Start Early.' Through numerous personal experiences and stories of devotees, the meaning of 'Start Early' was interpreted as 'Start now on the discovery of *sathya* (truth)'. The day concluded with joyous and enthusiastic *bhajan* singing.







### Drive Slowly

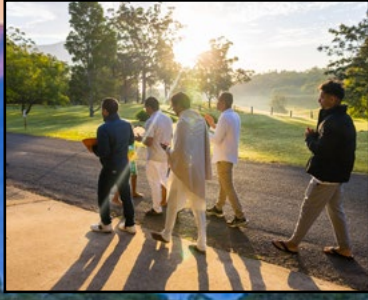
The 19th of April began with *suprabhatam* (awakening song), prayers, and *bhajans* before a hearty breakfast. After a welcome session that inspired everyone with an overview of various service activities undertaken in New Zealand, Australia, and Fiji, the reflective sessions began bridging bhakti yoga (path of devotion) to jnana yoga (path of knowledge). **This consisted of in-depth discussions and group *satsangs* on 'Journey with Sai,' which were invigorating, inspiring, and insightful.** They were led by different facilitators and included activities, games, and bonding sessions where 'each one participated with the other and all participated with 'God'. The afternoon tea was followed by a 90-minute *satsang* by the guest speaker on the second stage of the 'Journey with 'Sai', which is 'Drive 'Slowly'. This was interpreted as 'Drive carefully following *dharma* (right conduct)'. The intricacies of decision-making and taking a stand for Swami's principles and Swami's organization were brought to the fore.

The evening was a panorama of colors, songs, and excellent acting by over 80 SSE children who made an hour-long creative presentation titled 'Sai Outback Express.' It detailed the different stages of life with its challenges and solutions based on Swami's teachings, all delivered with a dash of humor and soul-stirring music and dance. The energy of the children was evident in the enthusiastic *bhajan* session that ended the day on a high note.

### Reach Safely

The highlight of the concluding day was a panel discussion among five senior devotees whose inspiring personal stories of devotion, determination, courage, and forbearance moved the audience's heart and soul. Each of the panel members answered three questions—how they came to Swami, did life become a bed of roses after getting Swami ('No' was the unanimous answer), and why they held onto Swami despite the challenges. Their answers addressed a hundred questions in the minds and hearts of the





awe-struck audience. The final stage of the 'Journey with Sai,' which is 'Reach Safely,' was delivered by the guest speaker. This was interpreted as 'Achieving peace that passeth all understanding.' Following that, the chair and co-chair of the retreat organizing committee shared their experiences over the months, which made it amply clear that in every activity, the journey is as important as the destination.

### Everything Happens For The Good

The retreat concluded with hearts heavy with sorrow because the retreat was ending, but determination and commitment to implement the resolutions from the retreat.

The participants bid loving "Sairam" to each other before returning home, charged with the spiritual energy of the 'Indwelling 'Sai'.

"A Temple In My Heart, A Prayer In My Soul, A Song On My Lips, And I Sing To You" perfectly encapsulated the retreat. Let us build a Prasanthi Nilayam (abode of supreme peace) in our hearts, let us chant His name in good times, because "bad times" are only our interpretation of events. Swami teaches us that everything happens for our good, and we should be ever joyful. Let us make Him our strongest desire, and He will look after us through every turbulent wave of life. That is the "Journey with Sai."





# LOVE IN ACTION



## AUSTRALIA

### "Clean Up Australia" Day

When we come together to serve, the synergy achieves more than just the sum of the parts. On March 2, 2025, Twenty-five SSSIO volunteers from the New South Wales Region, including eighteen Sai Center members, five Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) students, and two environmental activists, participated in 'Clean Up Australia Day' at Kissing Park Reserve, Putney.

After a safety briefing, the volunteers formed groups to clean various sections of the park, focusing on collecting and sorting waste like plastics, paper, and glass. The mild, overcast weather made for pleasant working conditions. **The event fostered a strong sense of**



**community, bringing families, youth, and environmental advocates together.** The day concluded with prayers and a shared meal. The SSSIO team expressed gratitude to the organizers and committed to participating in more environmental service activities in the future. Special thanks were given by Councilors Penny Pederson and Evelyn Hwang of the City of Ryde.



## MAURITIUS

### Celebrating 57 Years of Independence

On Wednesday, March 12, 2025, the Montagne Blanche Sri Sathya Sai Center in Mauritius became vibrant with color, spirit, and patriotism as 115 people celebrated independence and freedom in unison.

**In honor of Mauritius' 57th Independence Day, the air buzzed with the joyous energy of a vibrant march, where flags fluttered proudly and the laughter of children from the Sathya Sai Society for the Welfare of the Disabled mingled with the songs of freedom.** A lively prize-giving ceremony celebrated the young artists who captured the



spirit of the nation in their drawings. The event resonated with the uplifting rhythms of blissful bhajans and a soul-stirring play that reminded everyone of the divine presence in everyday life.





## USA

### Serving Hearty Meals with Love

Involving children in selfless service fosters gratitude and empathy while bringing joy to them. Eleven members from the Sri Sathya Sai Center of Louisville, USA, including four Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) students, participated in the “Meals from the Heart” program at Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kentuckiana. Together, they lovingly prepared and served a hearty Indian meal, consisting of naan (Indian flat bread), *chole* (garbanzo curry), *raita* (yogurt relish), fried potatoes, rice, and chocolate chip cookies, to about 60 guests.

Meal preparation and serving the food took about 90 minutes each. Leftovers were



thoughtfully packed and saved for latecomers. **The SSE students found the experience fulfilling, sharing how their small efforts brought comfort and smiles to families in need.** Adult volunteers reflected on the powerful impact of small acts of kindness, expressing deep gratitude for the chance to serve as instruments of love and compassion.



## ZONE 8

### Multi-National Food Service

In mid-March, about 100 SSSIO volunteers from the Volga-Ural, Ural, Central, North-West, and Siberian regions of Russia, along with Belarus, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and Moldova, participated in a large-scale food service project. Over two days, they lovingly served meals to more than 850 people, providing extra portions upon request. Family and friends also joined in the service. The meals included a variety of nourishing dishes like noodles with vegetables, porridge, borscht, pilaf, sweet pies, cookies, and herbal tea.

**Food was distributed to over 660 people in Russia, 15 in Belarus, 80 in Kazakhstan, 11 in Azerbaijan, 50 in Kyrgyzstan, and 30 in**



**Moldova.** The volunteers engaged warmly with the recipients, many of whom expressed appreciation and deep gratitude. Some volunteers also went above and beyond the call of duty and helped the disabled and fed birds and stray animals. The event filled everyone's hearts with happiness and gratitude to Swami for the opportunity to serve with love.

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

# Let Go and Let God

**SINCE MY TEENAGE YEARS, I HAVE BEEN A SPIRITUAL SEEKER.** I would not take anything for granted, especially when I noticed inconsistencies in practice and precept. I was prepared to look here, there, and everywhere in search of the Truth. It was that search for truth that led me, in 1991, on a spiritual journey to India. That was when I first visited Prasanthi Nilayam.

## The Two Wishes

**I was overwhelmed and deeply touched by the energy and vibration of love I felt when Baba walked into the *mandir* during *darshan*. It is a feeling that has never left me since.** I stayed only for a couple of days, but it was enough for me to realize that I had finally found what I was looking for. A spontaneous wish formed in my heart to be part of Swami's divine mission, although at the time, I did not know what His mission was.

To learn more about Baba, I went to the bookshop in the *ashram* and found a book that immediately attracted my attention, probably because it was written by a fellow Italian: "*A Catholic Priest Meets Sai Baba*" by Don Mario Mazzoleni. I read it in one stretch, fascinated and deeply impressed as the author, who was a priest, had similar doubts, and was on a journey in search of the Truth, like me. My second wish was to meet him in person and ask him more about his experience, which was so similar to mine.

**“The love that I felt, and still feel, whenever I think of Swami, is so overwhelming, fulfilling, enveloping, and reassuring that I have never felt the need to ask for anything else.”**

### **The Two Blessings**

When I came back home, I immediately searched for a Sai Center to find out what its activities were and if I could be of any help. I told the center president, who welcomed me, about my first experience with Swami. She looked at me, smiling, and asked, “Do you speak English? Can you use a computer?” I said yes to both, and she said that she had prayed to Swami for help, and here I was! She added that she needed help to sort out and file all the center-related duties on the computer. Then, she continued, “Don Mario Mazzoleni! I don’t know if you know him. He needs help with the translation of his Sai books. Are you interested?”

I was amazed! Both my wishes—to be part of the Sai Mission and meet Mazzoleni (and even work with him)—had been answered in moments! So I started to work in the center and soon afterward, I was introduced to Mr. Pietro Marena, who was coordinating the activities of the SSSIO in South European countries. He asked me to assist him too, as he was not fluent in English.

Knowing very little about Sai teachings and the Sai Organization, I immersed myself in both, with the best mentors I could get. It was Mazzoleni who helped me to understand Sai’s teachings in depth, and Marena, a lawyer, who inspired me with his organizational skills,

wisdom, and experience. He taught me how to coordinate work in many countries with different cultures and deal with challenges in the organization.

### **His Love is His Greatest Gift**

**The love that I felt, and still feel, whenever I think of Swami, is so overwhelming, fulfilling, enveloping, and reassuring that I have never felt the need to ask for anything else.** Whenever I had the chance to speak to Him, I just felt an incredible urge to express my gratitude for His love and His blessings. **I was always sure that this amazing divine love would take care of me and remove all obstacles in my path.**

Every time I visited Prasanthi Nilayam, I felt like I was visiting a Super Specialty Hospital for spiritual seekers! All the good and the bad in the outside world were concentrated and reflected in Prasanthi Nilayam—the “microcosm in the macrocosm.” Challenges and blessings coexisted side-by-side, giving the visitors a chance to learn how to love and respect each other and practice patience, tolerance, humility, and understanding. If we learn the lessons, we could improve our relations, fill ourselves with peace and love, and return home recharged.

### **SSSIO—An Extension of Swami**

It is the same in the SSSIO because Swami makes us face our imperfections



and faults until we recognize them and overcome them. Baba knows how to heal each one of us and make us better and whole. He brought us together to become beneficiaries and instruments of this amazing healing process and to witness the transformation of the world alongside.

I am very grateful to Swami for fulfilling my desire by allowing me to serve Him over the past three decades in many roles within the SSSIO. In my duties and tasks, I had to pass many tests, which helped me to open my mind and heart to listen to the views of others. It taught me patience and perseverance and built fortitude. **It also taught me that everything happens at the right time for the right reason and by His will alone.**

**I have learned in all these years of serving in the SSSIO that when I am asked to do something, I should respond as if the request came from Swami Himself.** In this way, whatever I do, I do it for Swami, and I do my very best because nothing less than the best should be offered to Him.

So, my personal goal and challenge in life is never to fail Swami but always live up to His expectations!

### ***Daiva Preeti; Paapa Bheeti; Sangha Neeti***

In one of my very first interviews, Swami looked at me and said, *"Remember three principles: Love God, Fear Sin, and Practice Morality in Society."* He repeated it twice, patting my head firmly as if He wanted to fix these teachings in my brain! Then, to ensure I understood and memorized His advice, like a schoolteacher, He said, *"Repeat!"* So, I always remember His words and do my best to follow His guid-

ance and try to analyze and fully understand the message behind them.

**Swami also repeatedly tells us not to be attached to His human form; that to love God does not mean just to love Swami's form. It means to love all living beings. He gave me, over the years, very clear indications that I should internalize Him and experience Him in everything and everywhere.**

On another occasion, Baba told me that to progress in my spiritual transformation, all I needed to do was *"be peaceful all the time."* With full trust and faith in Swami, I can say that if we are at peace within ourselves, then there will be peace around us. If we always dedicate ourselves to Swami, offering Him all our actions, we cannot do wrong.

I never felt the need to ask Baba for help to solve my personal problems or fulfill my wishes, because **I knew He would always be there to guide, protect, and take care of me and my family.**

### **Swami's 'Triple' Grace**

My first experience of Swami's grace happened when I returned from my first trip to India.

One day, my daughter called me, sobbing, because she lost her wallet with her newly issued driving license. I tried to calm her down, saying that she could get a duplicate. It was to no avail. She was upset and said that Swami's picture was also in it, and asked me to pray to Swami to help find her wallet. She added, "Please ask Swami to bless me with His grace to find it." I was pretty puzzled by the term 'grace' she used. It was quite unusual for her, but she repeated it three times, "Please ask Swami for grace..."

I was thinking to myself that if Swami granted her this 'grace' it might increase her faith in Him. While I was pondering over this, the phone rang again, and a man's voice said, "Good morning! I am the sacristan of the church, Saint Mary of the Three Graces. I just found a wallet on the altar with the documents of a young lady called Sheila. You can come any time to fetch it." I must admit that this unexpected, unlikely call bewildered me. I was amazed by the fact that the wallet was at St. Mary of the Three 'Graces' church, how fast the events unfolded, and how the sacristan found my phone number. Overwhelmed, I thanked Swami and promptly called my daughter to convey the good news that Baba granted her the grace for which she prayed so earnestly.

**With that profound experience, our faith in Swami never wavered again.**

### **Swami Takes Care of Everything**

During one of the World Conferences held at Prasanthi Nilayam, besides my usual tasks, I was assigned to coordinate the accommodation arrangements for the participants. Since many of them arrived during the night, it became a 24-hour job. I hardly slept for a week and was quite exhausted. Still, I felt that I could not miss *darshan*, so I sat in the *mandir* in the morning, feeling tired and weak from lack of sleep. Swami walked in, and I immediately felt His love and energy enveloping me. He stopped in front of me and asked, "How are you?"

"Very well, Swami!"

"No," Swami said, "you are not well and are very tired!"



Then, Swami materialized *vibuthi* for me to partake! **There is no need to tell or ask Him anything. He knows everything and always provides for us. He always takes care of us.**

Another incident happened in the early 1990s, in my early years with Swami. At the time, I owned a media company that produced TV programs, films, and documentaries. Since there were not many videos about Swami, I thought it would be good to produce one introducing Sai Baba, His teachings, and life in the *ashram*, based on my first experience in Prasanthi Nilayam, especially for those visiting for the first time. I named this video '*In Search of Truth*.'

I reached Prasanthi Nilayam with my crew, thinking that it would not be a problem to shoot a film. But I was wrong—it was a big problem! I could not get permission from the *ashram* authorities and staff, no matter how hard I tried. I asked them over and over again to please ask Swami for permission, but they just ignored me and said that He would not grant it. In the end, tired of my persistent requests, they suggested that I ask Swami myself. I doubted if I could get an interview and felt disappointed and discouraged.

Surprisingly, my group was called for an interview the following morning,





and I had the chance to ask Swami for permission to do the filming. He immediately agreed, but I was unsure if this confirmation was enough for the ashram authorities. I insisted on further confirmation, saying, "Thank you, Swami, but when I go to the office, will Your staff allow me to shoot? I ask this because I went there several times, and they said You would not give permission..."

Then Swami got up from His chair, placed His hands on His hips, looked at me, and said, "*Who is the boss here? I still count for something in this ashram, you know! If I say you can produce your film, you will be able to do it!*"

People in the room started to laugh. In fact, the scene was quite hilarious, but I was ashamed and sorry for being so 'cheeky' with Swami. Hoping He would forgive my insolence, I went back to the ashram staff saying that Swami Himself granted me permission to shoot the film. I was still doubtful, as they said they would check and asked me to return in half an hour.

**I got permission and produced the film, but more importantly, I learned never to doubt Sai's will.**

### Italy, Idli, and Chutney

As I have already stated, Prasanthi Nilayam is the microcosm in the macrocosm, since all the good and the bad that happens in the world could happen in the *ashram*. Over the years, I understood and learned many lessons there. One of the most important tests I took, and the lesson

I learned, happened when an Italian cultural program was going to be presented before Swami in November 2001.

Overwhelmed by the pressure, challenges, and stressful situations I was facing, I made up my mind to give up my position in the organization. I could no longer bear the weight of it all, so I was determined to resign. I mentally confided to Swami, "This is it. I will love You and follow Your teachings forever, but I can no longer handle all these stressful problems and challenges."

I was really upset, fed up, and angry, mainly with myself, for not being able to cope with the situation. The following morning, as I sat in the *mandir*, Swami stopped in front of me and asked, "*Where are you from?*"

I was puzzled by the question, and I replied, "Italy, Swami..."

Swami firmly, but quite sharply and angrily said, "*No! Not idli! Chutney!*"

Then He walked away. The Indian ladies next to me laughed and asked me if I understood what He said. I did not, and they explained that He said I was not *idli* (sounds like Italy), which is a type of bland rice cake, but *chutney*, which is a spicy side dish served with *idli*.

To me, it was not at all funny. Swami had scolded me for the first time since

I met him. You cannot imagine my feelings at that point. If I was frustrated before, I was now devastated by the turmoil inside me. I was in panic, pain, and despair, terrified that Swami would not forgive my behavior and would never talk to me again. While I was going crazy inside, at the conference, **someone gave a talk on the importance of being part of the Sai Mission and why we should never leave the organization He founded, no matter what happens.**

After *darshan*, I ran to my room, where I cried all day and night, praying to Swami to forgive me, and I promised that I would never react that way again. More importantly, I made a promise to Him that I would never even entertain the thought of leaving His organization, come what may.

The following morning, I went for *darshan*, afraid that Swami would never speak to me again. He walked by without even looking at me, while I kept mentally repeating, "I am so sorry, Swami." Then He stopped, turned around, and walked back a few steps, which was quite unusual. He looked at me lovingly and asked, "*Italy?*"

I said readily, "Yes, yes, Swami! Italy..."

With a big smile, He said, "*Very, very, happy!*" and walked away.



I can tell you this was the most touching, loving, and important experience and lesson learned for me. They were **only two words spoken by Him—'idli' and 'chutney'—but to me, they were worth more than an ocean of words.**

I continued serving in the SSSIO and served as a zone chair for a long time. I have the honor of being the first woman to hold this position, with Baba's direct approval and blessing. I also enjoy serving as the chairperson of the International Public Outreach Committee. I am deeply grateful to Swami for His love, blessings, guidance, and the opportunity to share these thoughts. **I am determined to continue to serve Him through the SSSIO till my last breath.**

**Ms. Alida Parkes**

ITALY



**Ms. Alida Parkes** is the Chair of the Public Outreach Committee and a member of the Media Committee of the SSSIO. She is the former Chair of Zone 6, which consists of the countries of South Europe. She came to Swami over 30 years ago and has been serving in the SSSIO for several decades.

Ms. Alida Parkes was the founder and general manager of a media production company. She also published a monthly magazine focused on media, produced TV programs, and organized media events in Italy.





# *from the* International Sai Young Adults

## Sai Blossoms: Blooming from the Inside Out



*Traveling alone can be empowering, but isn't the journey always richer when shared with kindred spirits?*

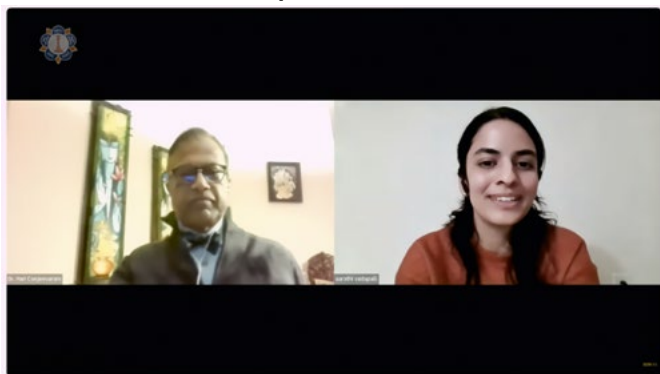
**Sai Blossoms** is a collective *sadhana* (spiritual discipline) offering by the Sai Young Adults (YA) of the United States to honor 100 years of the divine advent of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Open to YAs across the world, it is a spiritually rooted initiative designed to inspire YAs to blossom from the inside out by aligning their physical, mental, and spiritual energies with their conscience. This alignment enables individuals to achieve their aspirations and embody Sai's grand vision for His young adults through the **Body, Mind, Intellect (BMI)** framework. The BMI framework incorporates Swami's teachings and integrates them to keep the body at **EASE (Eat right, Awareness, Sleep well, Exercise)**, the mind in **TUNE (Turn inward, Understand and Navigate, Energize)**, and the intellect **RID (Read and Reflect, Introspect and Discriminate)** of doubt and delusion.

YAs used this framework to set **SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely)** goals tailored to the BMI aspects they wished to cultivate. To foster accountability and spiritual companionship, participants were paired as "**Blossom Buddies**"—small groups based on age, region, or shared goals. So far, 82 YAs have submitted their BMI goals, forming 24 Blossom Buddy groups across the nation.

To supplement personal goal setting, the Sai Blossoms program features a nine-part national *satsang* series, with three sessions each themed around the body, mind, and intellect. Each session includes talks by experts, YA testimonials, and practical tools for developing good habits.

## Body Series Highlights

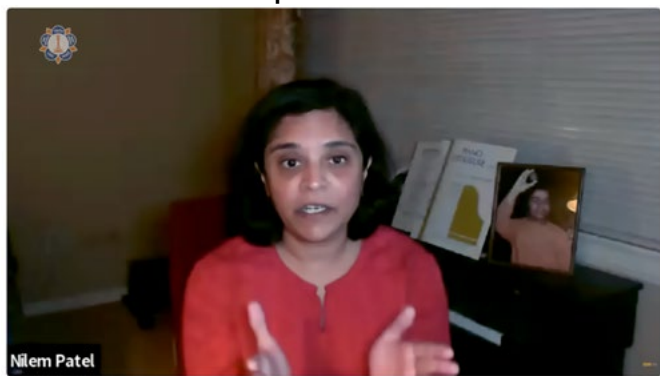
### Episode 1



#### *“Eating Right–Lettuce Talk About It”*

In December 2024, Sai Blossoms was launched with a lively and insightful session on responsible and mindful eating. Guest speaker Dr. Hari Conjeeveram (M.D., Gastroenterologist) joined a vibrant group of YAs to **discuss the dangers of consuming processed foods, the benefits of preparing meals, and calorie awareness.** The team set a strong precedent-busting myths, keeping things practical, and making nutrition engaging.

### Episode 2



#### *“Small Steps, Big Changes–Embracing Wellness with Every Move!”*

This episode spotlighted physical activity, featuring YA panelists who shared their experiences with fitness journeys, running marathons, dancing, and powerlifting. Joined by Dr. Nilem Patel (M.D., Endocrinologist), the session **explored the science behind exercise, realistic goal setting, and maintaining an active lifestyle at every stage of life.** Some key takeaways from the

episode were: setting SMART goals, focusing on quality over quantity, and practicing gratitude to our body that makes us capable and competent.

### Episode 3



#### *“Our Body is a Temple–Practicing Self-Care as Sadhana”*

Despite growing awareness, many YAs found it difficult to prioritize body care amidst their daily routines. Dr. Ramadevi Sankaran (M.D., Pediatrician) introduced the YAs to **the 3 Cs of self-care**–the first step being **confidence**, recognizing that the body is a temple of God; the next being **consistency**, maintaining the discipline for self-care; and lastly, **compassion**, giving ourselves grace throughout the journey. The session closed with a powerful affirmation, inspired by the *bhajan*, *Remind Me My Lord*, encouraging daily self-remembrance as divine remembrance.

## Blossoms in Bloom

### YA Reflection

The impact of Sai Blossoms is already being felt. One YA from the Mid-Atlantic region shares–“*Since participating in Sai Blossoms, I’ve incorporated the thumb exercise for concentration into my daily routine—it felt like a timely nudge. While I’m struggling to maintain physical activity and haven’t been active in my buddy group, I have adopted one helpful tool, and I am hoping to overcome my hurdle of incorporating more physical activity.*”



## Blossoming Online Creativity Meets Commitment

The Sai Blossoms social media team has been instrumental in spreading the message. Through vibrant posts, motivational reminders, wellness challenges, and even a popular health and wellness ‘Bingo Card’, they’ve captured the spirit of the program and inspired YAs to stay on track. All the episodes can be viewed on the SSSIO-USA YouTube channel. The Sai Blossoms app—designed by Young Adults—is an invitation to be part of this blossoming journey. It enables users to journal their thoughts, track habits, and stay connected with the Sai Blossoms community through announcements and upcoming events. The app is available for both iOS and Android users.

The Sai Blossoms program has been more than just a series of sessions—it has been a transformative journey of growth and self-discovery. **The program has allowed participants to deepen their relationship with themselves, others, and the Divine, demonstrating that strength is found in community and connection.** It has shown

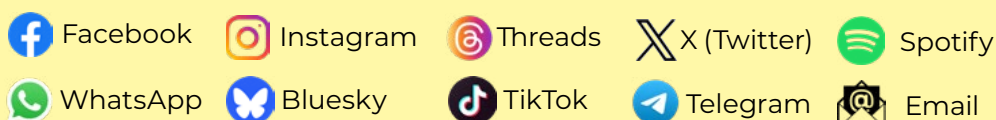


that, with proper support, guidance, and mindset, challenges can be overcome, and goals can be achieved. *Let us blossom, for Him, as Him.*

### Links to Sai Blossoms Resources

- [USA YA Social Media](#)
- [YouTube Playlist](#)
- [iOS App](#)
- [Android App](#)

### Follow Young Adults on Social Media



[yacoordinator@sathyasai.org](mailto:yacoordinator@sathyasai.org) | <https://sathyasai.org/ya>

# GRADUATING INTO GRACE

## The Pathfinder Leadership Journey

The **Pathfinder initiative** is a spiritually rooted journey of self-discovery and societal upliftment that empowers underprivileged communities in Sri Lanka through holistic development, education, mentorship, and sustained village support, anchored in Swami's educare and sociocare principles. As part of this ongoing Pathfinder initiative (featured in *Sathya Sai—The Eternal Companion*, Vol. 3, Issue 12), a **National Leadership Graduation Program** for Sai Young Adults was held from March 14-16, 2025, at the Miani Technical Institute, Batticaloa (Sri Lanka).

The event witnessed the heartfelt participation of **162 Young Adults, 29 children from adopted villages**, and over **30 elders and office bearers of the SSSIO Sri Lanka**, representing all regions of the country. With Swami's infinite grace, Mr. Vivekananda Sahoo, an alumnus of the

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prasanthi Nilayam, joined the gathering as a special guest.

The programme was a vibrant tapestry of spiritual *sadhana*, cultural events, sports activities, quizzes, workshops, and experience-sharing sessions—designed to nurture leadership, unity, and devotion. **It was an opportunity for young adults to hone leadership qualities and be moulded into ideal Sai Leaders.** For the children from adopted villages, it was a chance to participate in the joy-filled activities and experience Swami's boundless love in action.

As the Pathfinder journey continues, it stands as a **shining example of how inspired young hearts, guided by love and selfless service, can transform communities and lives—one village, one child, one leader at a time.**



# Called to Serve: The Spiritual Journey of My Heart



*"Your mission has begun. Those are My words to you, My devotees. Each of you has a valuable part to play in this lifetime. Only those whom I have called can serve Me. My mission has now reached that point in time when each of you now has work to do."*

—Charles Penn  
*My Beloved* (Page 96, 1981)

**MY JOURNEY WITH SWAMI BEGAN THIRTEEN YEARS AGO**, just after I had completed my university studies in Physics. My paternal grandmother and mother have both been devotees of Shirdi Sai Baba for more than three decades. From my childhood, I vividly remember the traditional Sai prayers with dried fruits on Thursdays in our altar room—images that remain clear in my memory even today. Back then, Sai for me meant only Shirdi Baba; an old picture of whom adorned the prayer space in the homes of my grandmother, my aunt, and my mother. When I was seeking employment, I tried to find a good job for over a year and a half. But only after I started praying to Shirdi Baba did I receive a good scientific position at our national university in Mauritius.

In 2012, driven by worldly ambitions for success, relationships, and material fulfillment, I started reciting special prayers to help me achieve these goals. I was still discovering life's deeper meaning. As the saying goes, to dive deep into the ocean, one must first clear the surface from litter and debris to taste the nectar, the *amrit*, hidden within.

In my spiritual search, I asked my aunt about the picture of Swami I had always seen in her home. **I had only heard His name: Sathya Sai.** And so began the journey defining my most cherished 'possession': the path of selfless service. I use the word "possession" intentionally because after twelve years of experience, I've realized that only what Swami gives us is truly ours. Everything else fades away with time or changing circumstances.

I started praying to Swami with the help of a tiny picture, barely 2.5 by 2.5 cm in size. Around the same time, I learned about the service activities of the Organization Swami Himself founded—the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO).

## That visit left me with a firm resolve—a physical and heartfelt determination—to serve Swami and His organization.

The greatest blessing Swami has bestowed upon me is allowing me to discover Him and the SSSIIO simultaneously. For me, the Organization and Swami are one and the same. My spiritual journey has grown with this faith as the foundation, and despite life's challenges, this belief has never wavered. Instead, it has only grown stronger over time through prayers and personal experiences. When Swami holds the string of something in our lives, it is part of the grand plan He has lovingly crafted for us. For me, that string is the SSSIIO. I can never fully express my gratitude for this divine call that set the direction of my life.

In that same message to Charles Penn, Swami says:

*"The multiplication of My Love will be felt throughout the world. I have prepared you for this work over many incarnations. I have drawn you to Me. I have made great steps in My mission over these past incarnations. My work is ceaseless, and so your work, too, is without end."*

Our human intellect may never fully grasp the power and beauty of Swami's words. But if we reflect deeply, these words are a compass guiding us toward our highest purpose. In June 2024, my family and I were abundantly blessed by Swami to travel to Kenya for the SSSIIO International Conference. This was a landmark event in my spiritual journey. The fact that I could contribute to the conference was purely by His divine will. Swami always responds to the loving and sincere call of His devotees, and I truly felt the divine presence at every moment of the conference. Being part of the media and the Sai100 teams during the event was transformational. It deepened my realization of how fortunate we are to

serve divinity, the *Avatar* of our times. This is what I wish to share: **any opportunity to serve Swami is a call from the Divine.** We must never let it pass us by. Missing such a chance is like missing the train that leads to our life's true goal—**liberation, and oneness with Him.**

While my focus during the Kenya trip was purely on working hard to support Swami's organization, Swami blessed me with a chance to visit the Sri Sathya Sai School in Kisaju. The children, teachers, staff, parents, and community were all living examples of Swami's teachings. Their love, hospitality, and the vibrant energy of the school took me to a deeper level of reflection on service. What a sacred blessing it was!

That visit left me with a firm resolve—a physical and heartfelt determination—to serve Swami and His organization even more sincerely. True transformation begins with our thoughts. Our thoughts become actions, which makes us instruments of Swami's love so that we may **Love All and Serve All.**

Swami was the source of every moment of love, compassion, and strength we experienced in Kenya. We witnessed how His presence touched even the smallest lives, transcending race, religion, caste, and creed. His guidance and blessings are the driving force behind all service activities.

And so, **how can we make a difference in Swami's mission?** The answer lies in surrendering completely to the divine will, recognizing the opportunities to serve, and living each day with the prayer, "*Swami, make me Your instrument.*" This, to me, is the real journey of the heart.

Ms. Sarika Udhin   
MAURITIUS



# Knitting Baby Beanies

Sai ram,  
I had so much fun and was deeply  
engaged in making baby beanie.  
Thankful to Baba and my SSE teachers  
for helping me learn new skill.

Advik S | Group 1 | USA



It made me have more courage. I felt like  
I can do anything that was hard to do.  
It also made me feel like I could do so  
many more beanies to help many more  
people. Thank you Swami for the opportunity.

Manasvee T | Group 2 | USA

I thought it was great: it was amazing and fun!  
I will make more and more! Thank you for  
teaching me how to make one. Sairam.

Hanu Rish K | Group 1 | USA



I really enjoyed being part of this project.  
Learning how to knit was a fun new skill,  
and it felt good to use that skill to help others. Making  
the baby hats gave me a chance to slow down and focus,  
while knowing they'd go to someone in need. It was a  
meaningful way to contribute, especially for Sai's 100th  
birthday. I'm glad I got to be part of something positive  
like this.

Manasa S | Group 3 | USA





I really liked the hat-making lessons because I have discovered a new talent and a hobby. You can do it any time and it kills boredom. I will do 3 hats of different sizes by the end of the year. The process was very challenging and fun.

Dhaatri K | Group 2 | USA



The experience taught me how to knit baby beanie. It was so much fun and is a really useful skill. I made three hats and they look so good. I will donate these to baby hospital. Thank you Geeta aunty.

Hamsini K | Group 2 | USA



Sai ram everyone!

I had so much fun making these cute little hats for babies in need-With lots of help from my awesome teachers! They showed me how to do everything step by step. Big hugs, and thanks to Neelima aunty, Geetha aunty, and all the amazing SSE teachers. U all rock!

Sai Kautilya N | Group 1 | USA



I really enjoyed knitting the baby caps. Thank you for teaching me a new hobby. The final step is really exciting and tough. Sairam.

Sreenika P | Group 2 | USA





# Upcoming SSSIO Events

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

Date of Event	Day(s)	Festival/Event
June 14-15, 2025	Saturday-Sunday	Akhanda Gayatri
July 10, 2025	Thursday	Guru Poornima
August 9-10, 2025	Saturday-Sunday	Akhanda Gayatri



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



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.**



Facebook



Instagram



WhatsApp



X (Twitter)



YouTube



Spotify



Telegram



Threads



Google Books



Email



Eternal Companion email list



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



When the heart is pure, man will be free from disease. How, then, is the heart to be purified? There is no other way except cherishing godly thoughts. All other rituals are of no avail except to provide temporary mental satisfaction. But the mind does not get satisfied easily. It is continually wavering and is uncontrollable. What should be done is to divert the mind towards God.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

April 11, 1997





**sathyasai.org**

Love All • Serve All  
Help Ever • Hurt Never

