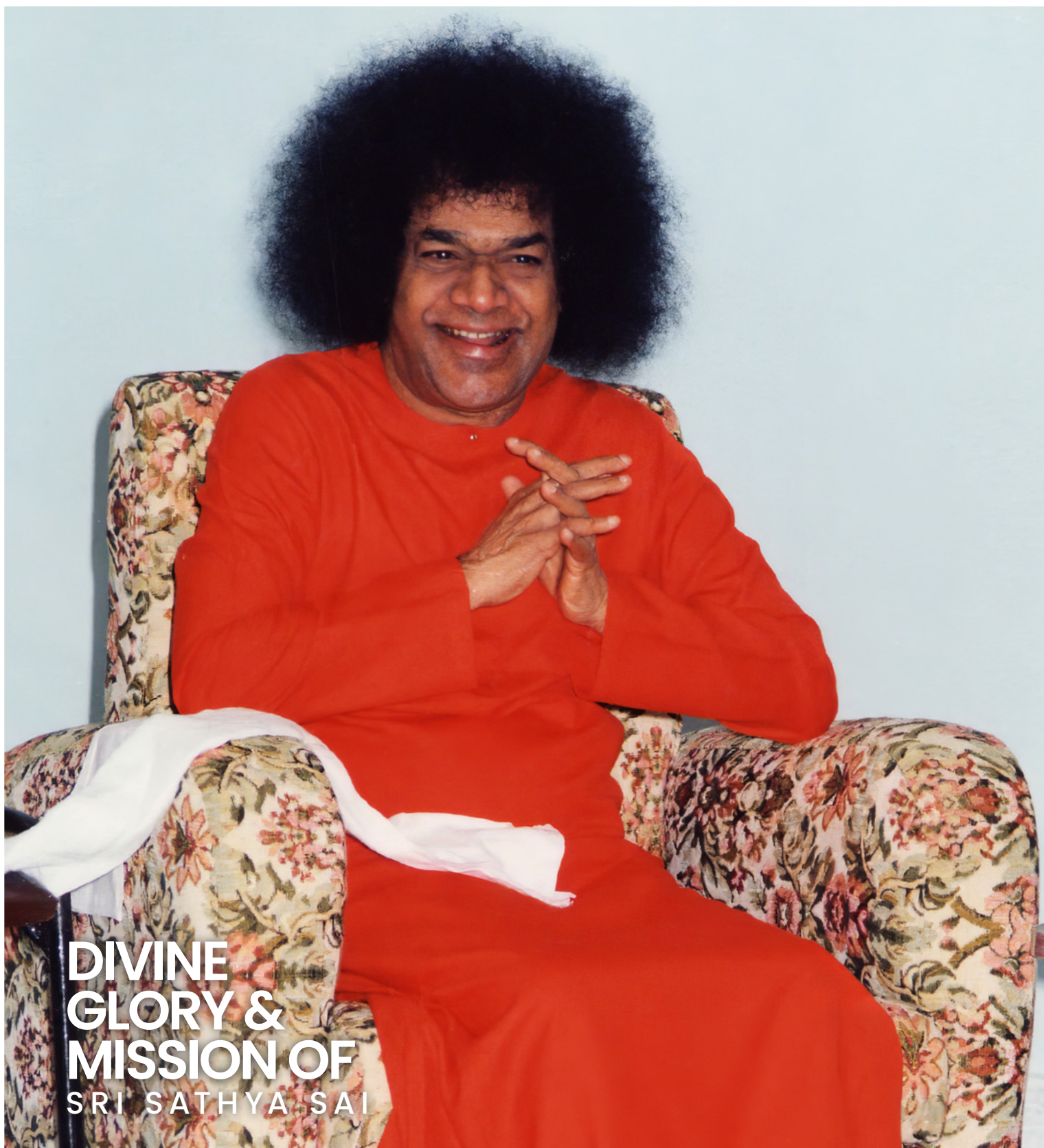


SATHYA SAI  
THE  
ETERNAL  
COMPANION



VOLUME 4, ISSUE 8  
AUGUST 2025



DIVINE  
GLORY &  
MISSION OF  
SRI SATHYA SAI





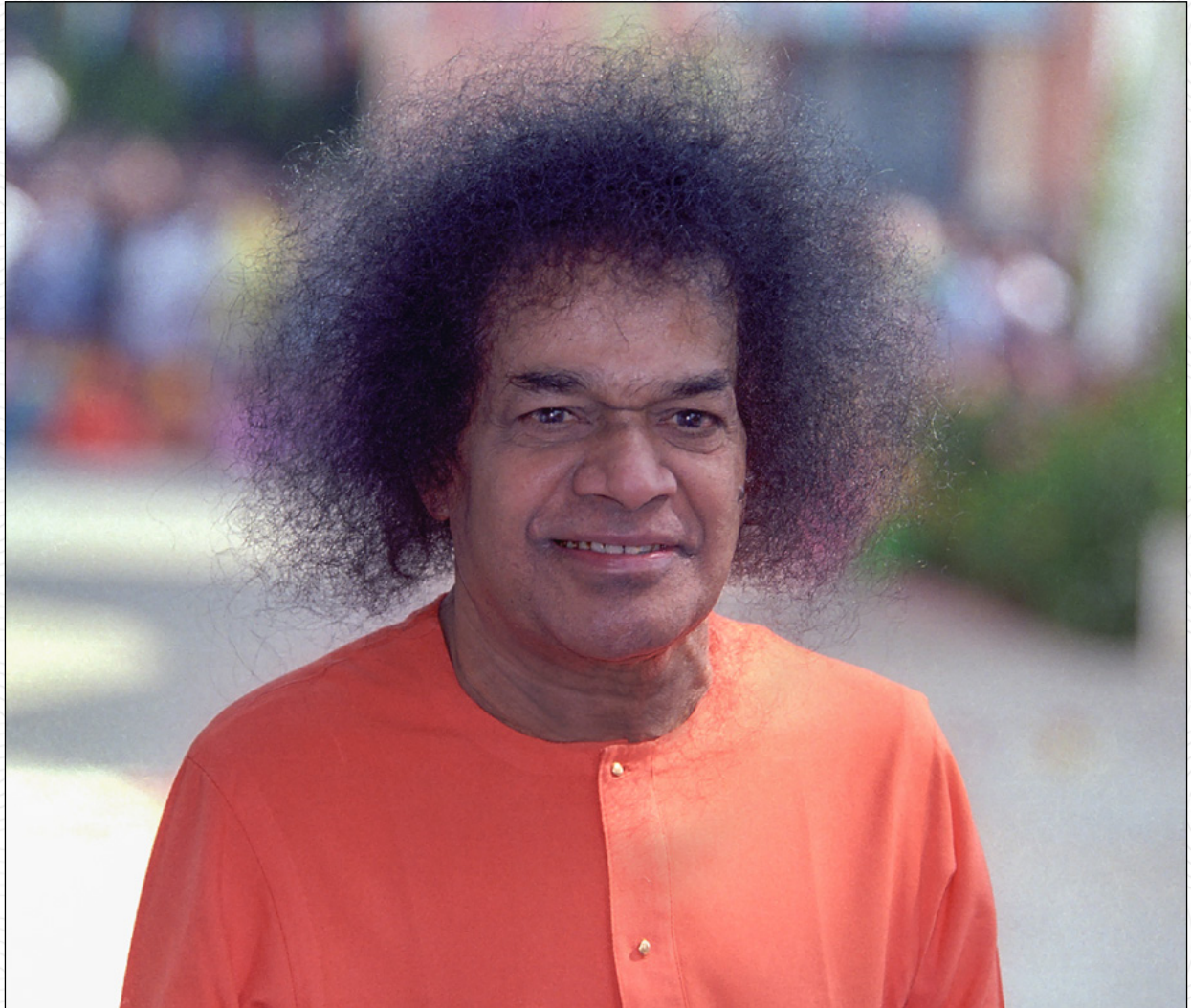
In order to experience God, you have to aspire for a vision of God. That is the way to lead an ideal and blissful life. Ganapati should be worshipped for this purpose because He is the master of the senses. Only the mastery of the senses can make man turn his mind God-ward. If you want to lead a life of happiness, free from troubles and difficulties, you have to pray to Ganapati, the remover of all obstacles. There is no need to go to any temple. Vigneshwara dwells in each one of you as intelligence (*buddhi*) and wisdom (*vijnana*). When you make proper use of your inherent intelligence and wisdom, you will be successful in life.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

September 7, 1997

---





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







Volume 4 • Issue 8 • August 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 8

August 2025

## **6 Editorial**

Sadhana Chatushtaya, Four-fold Qualifications of a Spiritual Seeker,  
Part 2

## **14 Divine Discourse**

Always be a Yogi, Part 2, July 23, 1971

## **20 Experiences of Devotees**

From Ashes to Vibhuti by Mr. Sivakumaran Sathyamoorthy  
Crossroads: My Journey to Sai by Dr. Michael Thrush

## **32 100th Birthday Offerings**

Regional Retreats in USA

## **40 Humanitarian Service**

Love in Action–Indonesia, Mauritius, New Zealand,  
and Trinidad & Tobago

## **42 Glory of Womanhood**

Lifetime of Love and Lessons by Ms. Eleni Morhopoulou

## **48 Ideal Sai Young Adults**

National Young Adults Gathering, Mexico  
A Joyful Celebration with Elders, Sri Lanka  
Power of X+1, USA  
The Cleansing Within by Ms. Shruthi Vijayakumar, New Zealand

## **56 Sathya Sai Education**

With contributions from Jivika, Kirav, Riya, Sai Sarvaantharrvani,  
Sri Harshini, Srinika, and Surabhi

## **58 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](#)



# SADHANA CHATUSHTAYA

## Four-fold Qualifications of a Spiritual Seeker, Part 2

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

The Brahma Sutras composed by Sage Vyasa stand as one of the three foundational texts of Vedanta philosophy, alongside the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. These are called the *Prasthan Trayam* (Three Canonical texts of Vedanta). These texts systematically present the path to Self-realization. **The Brahma Sutras present a great and invaluable roadmap for the spiritual seeker in the quest to realize the ultimate goal through the famous four-fold qualifications and spiritual practices known as *Sadhana Chatushtaya*.**

Of these four qualifications, we covered the first two qualifications—*viveka* (discrimination), and *vairagya* (dispassion or detachment) in the first part of the editorial (July 2025 issue). In the second part of the editorial, we will cover the next two essential qualifications and spiritual practices: *Shad Sampatti* (the six noble virtues) and *Mumukshatvam* (intense desire for liberation).

Discrimination between the real and the unreal, between the temporary and the permanent, between the good and the pleasant, is necessary to develop intense dispassion. The best way to cultivate this detachment is through attachment to God. Once we develop this detachment from the world through ‘deep attachment’ to God, we are ready to cultivate the six noble

virtues. **With this *Shad Sampatti*, we will have a strong desire for spiritual practices (*Mumukshatvam*), the fourth qualification, to attain the ultimate goal of Self-realization.** This is how all four qualifications are interconnected.

We will explore the deeper meanings of these in light of the teachings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and other great masters.

### *Shad Sampatti*

*Shad Sampatti*, meaning “six-fold wealth” or “six virtues,” help stabilize the mind, discipline the senses, and prepare the seeker to absorb and realize the subtle truths of the Self. The six virtues are:

#### 1. *Shama* (Control of the Mind)

The mind is the key to unlocking the heart, as Swami explains. Turning it ‘right’ toward God liberates us. Turning it the other way gets us ‘left’ behind in bondage. Therefore, controlling the mind becomes a critical ‘wealth’ to acquire for attaining liberation. As the scriptures say, “*Mana eva manushyanam karanam bandha mokshayoho*” (The mind alone is responsible for bondage and liberation).

In the 6th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, *Atma Samyama Yoga*, Lord Krishna reveals significant pointers for meditation. Arjuna,



“A cloth is made of threads.  
When we go on removing  
the threads, then, ultimately,  
there is no more cloth!  
Similarly, once one gets rid  
of these thoughts by constant  
practice, then there is no  
mind! In that case, we are in  
touch with our real nature,  
that is Atman or Brahman.



who is a sincere spiritual seeker, asks Lord Krishna (BG 6.34)

*chanchalam hi manah krishna  
pramathi balavad dridham  
tasyaham nigraham manye  
vayoriva su-dushkaram*

*(The mind is very restless, turbulent,  
strong, and obstinate, O Krishna. It  
appears to me that it is more diffi-  
cult to control than the wind.)*

The Lord, in His compassion, answers (BG 6.35)

*asamshayam maha baho mano  
durnigraham chalam  
abhyasena tu kaunteya  
vairagyena cha grihyate*

*(O mighty-armed son of Kunti, what  
you say is correct; the mind is indeed  
very difficult to restrain. But by practice  
and detachment, it can be controlled.)*

Swami explains that the mind is merely a bundle of thoughts. **If we have good thoughts, we will be happy. If we have bad thoughts, we will have grief and misery. However, when we have no thoughts, we will be enlightened!** That is the state called *Manonasha* (destruction of the mind) where there is no mind. Swami further elaborates on this with a simple analogy. A cloth is made

of threads. When we go on removing the threads, then, ultimately, there is no more cloth! Similarly, once one gets rid of these thoughts by constant practice, then there is no mind! In that case, we are in touch with our real nature, that is *Atman* or *Brahman*. But this is not easy to do because Swami says that the mind is like a monkey, a mad monkey. Nay, it is a mad monkey which is inebriated and which has been stung by a scorpion! You can only imagine how it will jump all over!

During an interview with Swami, I observed a young girl, about 10 years old, asking Swami what should be done when bad thoughts come and disturb. Swami gave an easy-to-understand and practical example. **He said, “Watch the mind. Don’t catch the mind.”** Elaborating on it, He said that when a little baby is going all over, there is no use going after it. It will keep running away, even more. But if you just watch the baby, then, after a while, it gets tired and comes back! In the same way, be a witness to your mind.

Another analogy Swami gave that day was that of a truck full of beautiful jasmine flowers passing by the house. Then, you get a nice fragrance. But at a different time, another truck may be carrying garbage, and it smells



foul! Just as you witness both the trucks passing by, witness your thoughts which are also passing, without jumping in to get involved and doing action. Swami emphasized the importance of practice, which Lord Krishna also emphasizes. He gave yet another example to that young girl. “When you are learning to ride a bicycle, you fall and get minor injuries. But once you learn how to ride through constant practice, a stage will come when you can ride the bicycle even without holding the handlebars!”

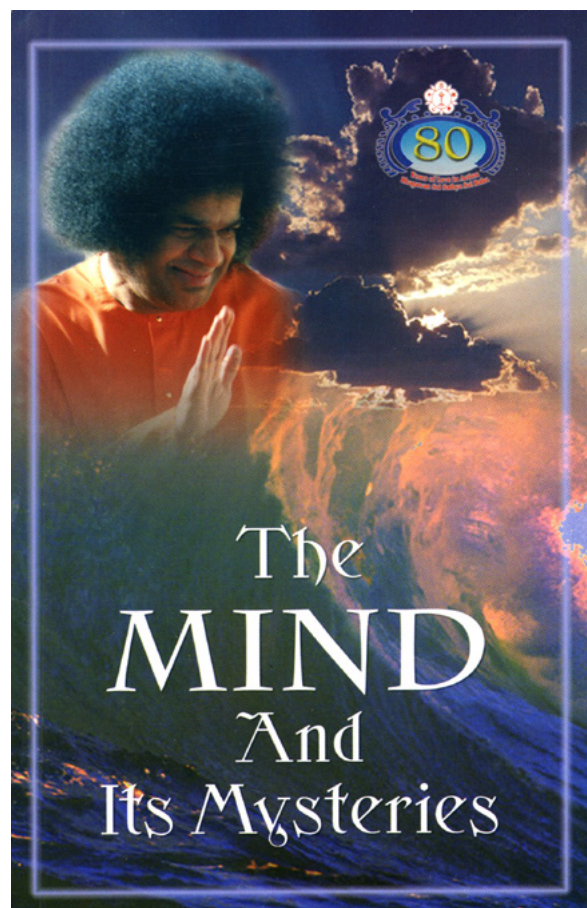
**Sage Patanjali, the great teacher of yoga, in his Yoga Sutras, says that the fundamental yoga is ‘chitta vritti nirodha’ (controlling the tendencies of the outgoing mind).** Whether one does *raja* yoga, *bhakti* yoga, *karma* yoga, or *jnana* yoga, the control of the mind is the underlying principle for all these spiritual practices.

The ability to quiet mental chatter and focus the mind inward, especially during meditation and reflection is critical for our spiritual progress. If we turn the mind toward God, it gives us joy, bliss, peace, and freedom. If we turn toward the world, its pleasures and attachments, it gives us bondage, resulting in grief and sorrow. The choice is left to us. In this context, **it is highly recommended to everyone to read this beautiful series of discourses that Swami gave in 1976 during the Dasara festival.** It is published in Telugu as *Manasu Marmam* and in English as ‘Mind and Its Mysteries.’ Swami goes into great detail about the mind and how, if properly directed, it will take us toward liberation.

## 2. Dama (Control of the Senses)

*Dama* is restraining the sense organs (eyes, ears, tongue, nose, skin) from running outward toward distractions. In the modern sense, it involves mindfully limiting indulgence in sensory pleasures like overeating, gossip, or over-stimulation by the media.

Swami’s advice beautifully sums it up: “*Bend the body, mend the senses, and end the*



*mind.*” Bending the body does not mean one should become a hunchback! It means that one should strive to serve. It also means that one should be humble. When we serve, humility will develop automatically. This humility is an important quality for spiritual seekers.

It is commonly said, “Pride comes before a fall.” Lord Jesus said, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5). Swami says that God’s grace descends like rain on those who are humble. Humility also helps in withstanding life’s challenges and vicissitudes. Swami gives the example of a time when there is a strong, terrible wind blowing. The grass, which is low-lying and ready to bend, remains unaffected. On the other hand, the rigid and firm tree gets broken and uprooted by the wind.

Mending the senses refers to having sense control. The senses are always outward-going. The eyes want to see that which offers instant pleasure and gratification. The ears turn toward gossip and rumors. The tongue enjoys indulging in slander and sensational-



ism. **Mending the senses involves using the senses in the right direction—seeing godly things, listening to *satsangs*, and seeking anything that arouses divine feelings and experiences.**

We are blessed to have more than a thousand discourses given by our dear Swami in SSSIO's Sathya Sai Speaks website. These documents also contain audio recordings of the divine voice. Reading and listening to them is a sure way to sanctify and purify our senses and practice *dama*. If we want to talk, let us talk about God; if we want to go to some place, let us visit a place of worship—a temple, mosque, synagogue, or *bhajan* center. Let us avoid going to places of ill repute, be careful, and utilize our senses and hands to serve others or worship God.

Baba says that *dama* should not be misunderstood as torturing the senses. It is not suppression of senses but their sublimation! It is directing the senses to sacred and holy paths.

### 3. *Uparathi* (Withdrawal)

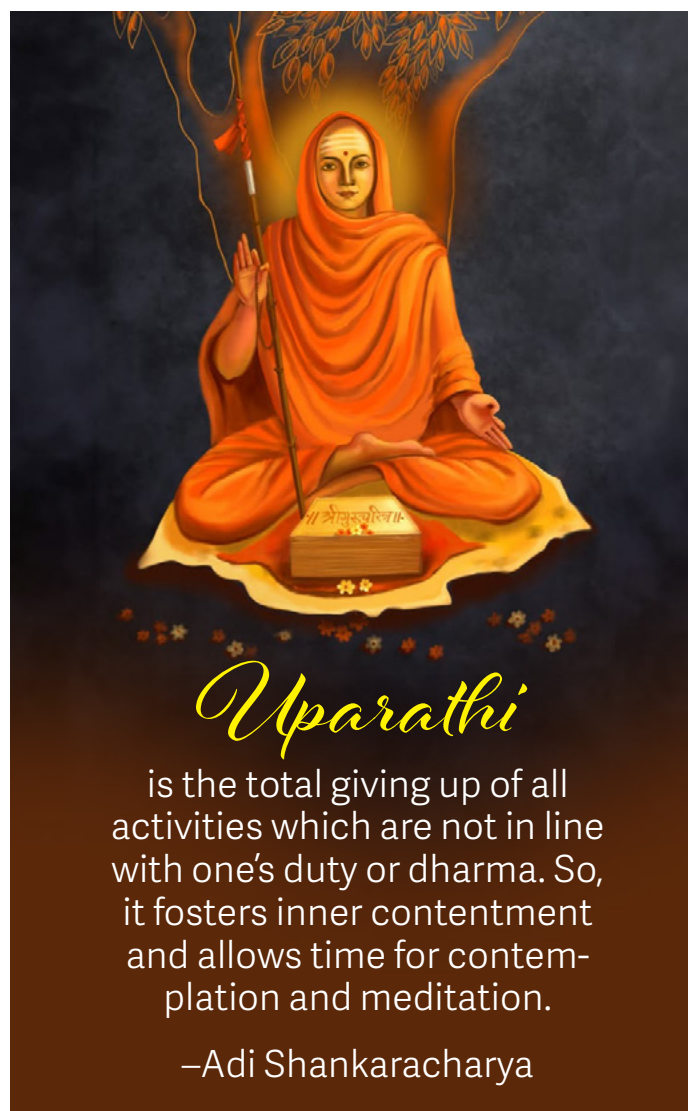
*Uparathi* means withdrawal from worldly duties and distractions not aligned with the spiritual path. Letting go of excessive involvement in rituals, social obligations, and pursuits that distract from Self-realization allows the seeker to turn fully inward, resting in the Self without outward pulls. Adi Shankaracharya says in his *Viveka Chudamani* that *Uparathi* is the total giving up of all activities which are not in line with one's duty or *dharma*. So, it fosters inner contentment and allows time for contemplation and meditation. But this withdrawal from the outside world is not physical renunciation. It is mental detachment. **This is well summarized in Swami's words, "Hands in the society; head in the forest." Sri Ramakrishna also said, "Live in the world, but do not let the world live in you."**

There is a vivid analogy for this in the Bhagavad Gita (BG 2.58):

*yada sanharate chayam kurmo  
nganiva sarvashah  
indriyanindriyarthebhyas tasya  
prajna pratishthita*

*(When, like a tortoise withdrawing its limbs from all directions, a person withdraws the senses from sense-objects, his wisdom becomes steady and established.)*

A tortoise does not constantly engage with the world. It extends its limbs when needed, such as walking or eating, but quickly retracts them when there's danger or when movement is unnecessary. This withdrawal is natural, effortless, and protective.



## Uparathi

is the total giving up of all activities which are not in line with one's duty or *dharma*. So, it fosters inner contentment and allows time for contemplation and meditation.

—Adi Shankaracharya

Similarly, a spiritual seeker with *uparathi* does not suppress the senses but mindfully disengages them from unnecessary external entanglements. **Such people interact with the world when required, with awareness. But they can pull back at will, resting in stillness, unaffected by external noise.**

Swami provides us with a key insight about this quality in His discourse of June 23, 1988, “Uparathi is the process of turning the mind inward and purifying one’s thoughts and feelings. By these means of self-control and self-regulation, one should try to get self-satisfaction. This comes when one lives up to the dictates of one’s conscience. Make your conscience your master.”

#### 4. *Titiksha* (Forbearance)

The capacity to endure life’s adversities—such as heat, cold, pain, insult—without complaint or mental disturbance is called *Titiksha*.

It implies remaining unaffected by dualities. One should go beyond the dual buffetings of the world, like pain and pleasure, honor and dishonor, loss and profit, heat and cold, success and failure, and praise and blame. While such dualities are an integral part of life, one’s focus should firmly rest on God alone.

**I strongly recommend studying Bhagawan’s divine discourse given on May 25, 2000.** Titled ‘*Kshama, the Greatest Virtue*’ the entire discourse is about forbearance. It is difficult to translate the Sanskrit word *Kshama*. **The closest translation is forbearance, but it also includes patience and forgiveness.** Challenges in life are inevitable. *Titiksha* ensures that they don’t derail the spiritual aspirant’s inner journey to Self-realization.

Swami’s life itself is His message. We see many instances of His forbearance, even when He was a mere child. Such divine forbearance is what made Lord Jesus on the cross say, “Lord, forgive them for they know not what they do.” Instead of cursing and

condemning the wrongdoers, Jesus sought to forgive them. Another example from the Bible involves Peter the Apostle, who asks, “Lord, how many times should we forgive?” The Lord says, “Seven times seventy,” which means that we should forgive any number of times those who wrong us.

**Such forgiveness is possible only with immense patience, which is the greatest strength one can have. When we have these two qualities, we acquire forbearance automatically.** Swami says that we develop

this forbearance via challenges, adversities, problems, and difficulties in life. That is why Swami says that we should welcome them. The more we face them, the more we become spiritually strong. Swami gives us the greatest example of Kunti, the mother of the Pandavas. She went through many difficulties, personal and those of her children. But after the triumph in the war, when Lord Krishna asks her what she seeks, she prays, “Lord, give me more and more difficulties!”

When everyone is wondering why she is praying like this, she says that during difficulties and challenges, she thinks more of the Lord! Swami says adversities are like tests in life that help us in our spiritual progress.

Swami also adds that when we have forbearance, we develop the noble quality of *anasuya*. That means one would not have any jealousy or envy. And *anasuya* has three good children—pure heart, pure mind, and pure speech. But if we don’t have forbearance, we will have *asuya*—jealousy and envy. *Asuya* has three bad children—pride, greed, and anger. So, there are many benefits of having forbearance. According to Swami, the true hero is the one who conquers these inner enemies—desire (*kama*), anger (*krodha*), greed (*lobha*), attachment (*moha*), pride (*mada*), and jealousy (*matsarya*)—and this is possible by developing *Titiksha*.

#### 5. *Shraddha* (Faith)

Faith in God, the Guru, the scriptures, and the Self is called *Shraddha*. It is very import-



*Swami assures us that those who serve Him in the organization, selflessly, also serve humanity. They will be liberated from the cycle of birth and death.*



ant for spiritual seekers who tread the path of Self-realization.

Shirdi Sai Baba always emphasized that for a spiritual aspirant, the two most important attributes are *Shraddha* (steady faith) and *Saburi* (patience). Swami's analogy in this regard is enlightening. Spiritual life is like crossing a river where one shore is, "*Samshayatma vinashyate*" (the one with doubt will perish (BG 4.40) and the other shore is, "*Shraddhavan labhate jnanam*" (the one with faith will be enlightened) (BG 4.39). **So, as spiritual seekers, we should travel from doubt to doubtlessness or complete faith in the Guru, in God, in the scriptures, and in oneself.**

Having come to Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, having experienced His love and His works, having been blessed in so many ways, we should have absolute faith in His divinity and hold on to Him. We should not be confused and distracted by anything and anyone else, especially false gurus and prophets. Our minds should constantly dwell on His lotus feet, as He taught us through the first-ever *bhajan* He composed and sang:

*"Manasa bhajare guru charanam,  
dustara bhavasagara tharanam."*

*(Meditate in thy mind on the feet of the Guru, which can take you across the difficult ocean of worldly existence, birth after birth.)*

**Complete faith in the Guru and God also means complete faith in divine teachings.**

This means complete faith in the scriptures—Bhagavad Gita, Bible, Quran, Zend Avesta, Granth Sahib, etc. But for us, we have Swami's teachings. Apart from the treasure trove of discourses mentioned already, Swami has also written the Vahinis, where He covers everything there is to be known to attain Self-realization. Swami's teachings contain the essence of all the scriptures, and we should practice them with complete faith.

We should also have faith in the divine mission, the organization that Swami Himself founded, nurtured, and guided, and continues to guide. It is among the greatest blessings for all of us to be part of this divine organization (SSSIO) and mission. **This is the ultimate sign of His divine grace.** We should never lose this opportunity. We should be grateful and continue to do more and more work for the organization.

Swami assures us that those who serve Him in the organization, selflessly, also serve humanity. **They will be liberated from the cycle of birth and death.** This has been recorded by a longtime devotee from Mysore, Mrs. Karunamba Ramamurthy, in her book "*Sri Sathya Sai Anandadayi*." During Dasara 1961, Swami made this important announcement:

*"I am starting a Seva Samithi. The persons who become members of this samithi and perform selfless service will*

*be liberated from the cycle of birth and death; not only they, but also their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. But the test will be severe. I will see how many will withstand this trial and emerge victorious in the end."*

Finally, all of this should translate into faith in ourselves, or Self-confidence. This is not faith in the little self, the ego, but faith in our divine *Atma* (*Atma Vishwas*). **Swami says that the mansion of Self-realization is built on the foundation of Self-confidence.**

### **6. Samadhana (Equanimity or One-pointedness)**

*Samadhana* is the complete focus of the mind on the Self or the object of meditation. Adi Sankaracharya considers *Samadhana* as the fruit of discrimination and dispassion. **Our Swami teaches that true *Samadhana* is the 'harmony of thought, word, and deed' when the heart is aligned with the goal of God-realization.** Sri Ramakrishna says that one-pointed devotion or *Samadhana* is the ladder to God-realization.

Lord Krishna gives a beautiful message (BG 2.41)

*vyavasayatmika buddhir  
ekeha kuru-nandana  
bahu-shakha hyanantash cha  
buddhayo vyavasayinam*

*O descendant of the Kurus, the mind of those who are cultured is resolute, and their aim is one-pointed. But the intellect and mind of those who are uncultured are many-branched and scattered.*

**This sixth virtue is a calm, undisturbed, focused mind fixed on the goal of liberation (*moksha*). It is the culmination of the earlier five virtues.** With *Samadhana*, the mind becomes a polished mirror, capable of reflecting the Truth. In this state, one maintains equanimity at all times, and in His May 25, 1947 letter to His brother, **Swami defined devotion as this state of equanimity.**

That means we are always connected to the *Atma*. Whatever we think, say, or do, we are

always aware that we are the *Atma*. That is *Samadhana*, which is a very important spiritual practice. This means we no longer identify ourselves with the body, mind, and intellect, but identify with our real Selves, the *Atma*.

Thus, the *Shad Sampatti*, the six virtues, are the means to the next step to develop intense longing for the Lord, which leads to God-realization.

### ***Mumukshatvam***

*Mumukshatvam* is the intense longing for God or the intense longing to realize the Self. This burning desire to attain *moksha* (liberation from the cycle of birth and death) is the most important qualification and spiritual practice of *Sadhana Chatushtaya*, mentioned at the beginning.

***Mumukshatvam* is a burning aspiration for liberation. It is not a casual interest or a lukewarm devotion, but a fierce longing and an unwavering determination to realize the Brahman.** Adi Shankaracharya, in his *Viveka Chudamani*, says that three things can only be obtained through God's grace. *Manushyatvam* (human birth), *Mumukshatvam* (intense longing for Moksha), and *Mahapurusha Samshraya* (association with a realized master).

**As Sai devotees, we are blessed to have not just a *Mahapurusha* (Great Being) but the *Parama Purusha* (Supreme Being), the *Adi Purusha* (First Being), and the Supreme Godhead in Swami!** He is there to ignite our fiery longing or intense craving for God.

This boon is undoubtedly a sign of divine grace, as Lord Krishna says (BG 7.03)

*manushyanam sahasreshu kash-  
chid yatati siddhaye  
yatatam api siddhanam kash-  
chin mam vetti tattvatah*

*Amongst thousands of people, there is hardly one who strives for perfection; and amongst those who have achieved perfection, there is hardly one who knows Me in truth.*





**If you long for God the way you longed for air, you will have God just as you got air.**

There are billions of people on Earth, but very few seek liberation or knowledge of the ultimate truth. Even among them, only a handful realize that goal because the majority of the people have just lukewarm or mild devotion, and very few people long for God with great intensity. The more intense the effort, the faster we move toward the goal.

When there is such intense longing, no sacrifice seems too huge to make. One of the greatest examples of *Mumukshatvam* is Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the saint of Dakshineswar in India. He used to cry for the Divine Mother Kali. He would shed torrential tears and rub his face on the ground till it bled, saying, "Oh Mother! Another day has gone by, and I still haven't seen you yet... Please appear before me." Such was his longing that he saw the Mother just as he saw anybody else. **And thus, by his own example, he assures that anybody who cries for God intensely will surely have *darshan* of divinity within three days!** This intensity is also exemplified by the life of Lord Buddha, who renounced his family, the royal palace, and worldly comforts, to find the end of suffering and attain *nirvana*. He had such an intense desire to know the truth that he renounced everything spontaneously without hesitation.

On one occasion, I was with Swami in the car when I asked Him, "Swami, how do I know I have love for God?" He replied, **"When you have intense longing or intense yearning for God, feeling that you cannot live without Him, that is devotion."**

Sri Ramakrishna beautifully said that when the child asks the mother, "Mother, please

wake me up when I am hungry," the mother says, "Child! Hunger itself will wake you up! You don't need to worry." Similarly, when the hunger for God gnaws at us, everything will automatically fall into place. But to ignite and sustain such hunger, the great masters say that *satsang*, or association with holy people who have similar aspirations and spiritual practices, helps. This is like adding ghee (clarified butter) to fire, so that the fire continues to burn more intensely. The study of the lives of the great masters also intensifies this longing.

*Mumukshatvam* is very important for a spiritual seeker because without it, all other qualifications are of secondary importance. There is a small story that Swami narrates to illustrate this yearning. A Guru wanted to show the disciple how the longing for God should be. He takes him to a nearby river and tells him to take a dip in it. When the disciple is taking the dip, he presses his head under, not allowing him to surface. As he struggles to get a breath of air, the Guru releases him and says, **"If you long for God the way you longed for air, you will have God just as you got air."**

Swami assures us that such longing automatically moves us toward Self-realization.

The Brahma Sutras thus present the four-fold qualifications and spiritual practices that are essential prerequisites for attaining Brahman or *Atmavidya* (knowledge of the Self). I pray to Swami to bless all of us with His love, grace, and guidance so that we will develop these four qualifications and achieve Self-realization in this very lifetime.

Jai Sai Ram.

# Always be a Yogi

## Sathatham Yoginah

### Part 2 of 2

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

#### He is Here, There, Everywhere

The knowledge derived through the mind utilizing the senses is always incomplete, and incoherent; but, the knowledge that is earned through the *buddhi* (intellect) illumined by the *Atma* (divine Self), is full, grants freedom, and reveals the Truth. The first is termed *manojnana* and the second, *Atmajnana*.

*Manojnana* (mental knowledge) tells you that you are distinct from others; that God is at Kailas, Tirupati, Kasi, or Prasanthi Nilayam, and that the God at Kailas, or Kasi, or Prasanthi Nilayam is different from the other! **Limiting to names, forms, and temples is only for the kindergarten stage.** You may use the pictures of a head, a net, or a wave and place under them the words, *thala* (head), *vala* (net), or *ala* (wave), so that a child may learn the letters quickly by pronouncing the name of the object the picture represents. Once the letters are learned, the picture can be discarded. The *kshara* (temporary) picture can be given up when the *akshara* (which means 'letter of the alphabet' as well as 'that which is permanent') is learned. The picture is only a

crutch. **The transient is only an illustration of the permanent, unchangeable Truth that it reflects.**

The *kshara* can be wiped off the blackboard when the *akshara* is fixed in the mind. **The brick-and-mortar structure**





“*Bhajan* must spread goodwill, love, and ecstasy;  
it must cleanse the polluted atmosphere;  
it must invite all to share in the joy and the peace.

where God is installed to reside can be erased from the ‘mind board’ once the presence of God is experienced. When you change your prayer (*puja*) room in your house, it does not mean that God too shifted from one room to another, that He is no longer where He was, and that He has been brought over to a new place! He is not a piece of furniture that you can transfer hither and thither! He is here, there, everywhere, inside and out, above, below, and around you. Accommodate all forms of God in your heart; do not exclude some and welcome others. Bear with those who adore Him in another form, through another name, and acclaim Him in another language.

### Adjust and Accommodate

There was once a heavy downpour of rain in a small village. A lonely monk was caught unaware and ran hither and thither, seeking shelter from the hard-hitting drops and the chilly wind. He found a little dry floor on the raised verandah of a house where the residents were fast asleep behind closed doors. Being a renunciant (*sanyasin*) with no burden on his mind, he fell asleep soon and was lost in deep sleep. Very soon, another forlorn man, who also had no shelter, espied the verandah and came to it. The yogi woke up and, finding another person looking for shelter, sat up and said, “There is room for two to sit; come, we shall sit the night through!” Within a few minutes, another desperate man arrived, and he had to be accommodated. The two who were sitting agreed that there was standing room for three! They decided to stand until dawn. That is the spirit of tolerance

that has to be cultivated by the children of God toward their brothers and sisters in distress. **God is love; so, you must become love to merge with Him. He is beauty; so become beauty, with no ugliness in you. Then, you can be one with Him. He is compassion, so be compassionate.** Water mixes easily with water, not with oil.

God is sweetness; His words are sweet; His sight is sweet; His voice is sweet; He is sweeter than sweetness itself. But when your tongue is afflicted with illness, you will find Him bitter. Cure the illness by cultivating love for all. There is no need to take refuge in a forest or go into solitude. You cannot give up activity. You have to move along the line to which you are attuned. You cannot lead a life of renunciation on the spur of the moment. It requires long years of preparation.

### It is All His Will, His Plan

Once a monk saw Arjuna walking listlessly in the forest looking for something. The monk asked him why, and Arjuna replied, “I am searching for edible roots and tubers because, my brother is certain to be invited to a game of dice as soon as this exile is over. Since he is certain to wager us once again and lose, we are destined for another long exile in the forest. So it is better to accustom oneself to sparse and saintly *sathic* food now itself.” Then the monk said, “No! You are a *Kshatriya* (warrior), born and raised to wage war on wickedness and evil. How can you renounce your inherent nature in despondency? Besides, why take to *sanyasa* (renunciation) to discover that your real core is *Madhava* (God)? **It is God that spurs you, activates you, admon-**

ishes you, and administers you! A minute's introspection must convince you of this truth." Know that you are but an instrument; what can you predict, what can you prepare for? It is all His Will, His Plan.

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

Also, be eager to confer consolation and courage; be anxious to be of help. Watch for the chance and snatch every opportunity to expand yourself by sympathy, to expand the horizon of love, through understanding and prayer. Don't keep another at arm's length, saying, 'My God is different from yours,' or 'My God is opposed to yours.' It can never be so. *Paramatma*, the name for God, refers to the supreme God. Who can vouch for the correctness of the picture of Rama or Krishna you now worship? The poet described and the painter delineated, but both relied on their imagination, rather than an actual, authentic experience of seeing Rama or Krishna.

### **Nobody Can Set Limits to God's freedom**

A shepherd boy heard a Brahmin's discourse on God, describing Him as a dark blue being of human form, riding a white eagle. He prayed for many days continuously, giving up food and drink, that God must come down where he was tending the fold and partake of his gruel. At last, on the tenth day, when he threatened to take his own life (for he had become desperate), God came in the form of an old man

and demanded the gruel. The old man declared that he was God, but the shepherd would not accept his credentials! He did not see the dark blue complexion or the white eagle! The shepherd refused to share the gruel with Him unless the Brahmin certified that the visitor was genuinely God. The same Brahmin was brought post haste, but what could he say? He had only expounded from books, written by equally 'blind' persons and from pictures drawn by equally audacious painters! Who can set limits to the boundless God, who can assume any form He likes or any form that the devotee likes? For the shepherd, God was valid, vital, and very near; for the Brahmin who expounded the texts, He was a mystery, a distant possibility, an image created by fancy.

### **Love is the Path to *Advaita* (Oneness)**

**Be convinced that God, can and will, appear in any form as all forms are His.** Don't refuse to recognize divinity in the form you dislike or did not expect! He can appear as a fox, as a dog, as a beggar or in any form. When you call on God, whatever form appears, treat it as God. Totapuri taught Ramakrishna that Mother Kali was *viswaswarupini*, the all-comprehensive form of the formless energy that pervades the universe, and not the eight-armed resident of the shrine at Dakshineswar, the form that was appearing between his brows, whenever he tried to go within and discover the unity behind all the multiple manifestations! **She is the One without a second. With no name, form, body, sex, or age; she is beyond time, space, and causation! She was all forms and so, of no form; she was all attributes and so, beyond the attributes.** She is *saguna* (with attributes) as well as *nirguna* (without attributes), the *nirguna* being the basis of the *saguna*.



“  
The  
*ananda* I derive from  
bhajan, I do not get  
from anything else.



We divide the One into two and play the game of duality, positing one-half as giver and the other as receiver; one as seer and the other as seen; one as subject and the other as object! We say *Sarvam Brahmayam*—All is Brahman, as if there is an ‘All’, which is to be identified with another thing called ‘*Brahman*.’ *Sarvam* and *Brahman* are One, not two! That is why we say, *A-dwaita* (Not-Two), in spite of the appearance as two. In deep sleep, you are one with yourself, though at that time you have no *Chith* and no *Ananda*. The realization that you are not two but One will endow you with awareness and bliss.

To earn that consciousness of ‘not-two,’ love alone is the path. *Prema* means *seva*, which means *sadhana*, which means expansion, reaching out to the very horizon of ‘being’ and ‘becoming,’ until all is I.

### Sing Bhajans with Enthusiasm

***Prema* must grow with every moment of *sadhana*. It must sweeten every word, deed, and thought of yours.** Emerge from *dhyana* as a person more charged with love! Emerge from singing *bhajan* with a greater measure of love! Return from *nagarasankirtan* (walking around singing devo-

tional songs) with a firmer conviction that everything is surcharged with the same divinity that is the basis of all your activity. I find now that these have become mere routine procedures, a matter of schedules, timetables, and attendance registers and reports! The thrill, the exhilaration, and the enthusiasm are absent; the singing starts like a wail, without strength and joy. Begin with a vigorous song on Ganesha. Also, have as *Arati* song, both morning and evening, during all occasions of *Arati*, ‘*Jai Jagadeesa Hare*’—and give up the song ‘*Pavana Purusha*.’ When you sing without the thrill of ecstasy, I do not derive any joy, nor does the I that resides in every one of you get any joy.

*Bhajan* must spread goodwill, love, and ecstasy; it must cleanse the polluted atmosphere; it must invite all to share in the joy and the peace. The *nagarasankirtan* must be inspiring, radiating devotion and love. **The *ananda* I derive from *bhajan*, I do not get from anything else. That is the reason I am emphasizing these points.** Be sincere, feel in your heart what you are singing. The emotion will express itself through the *raga* and *tala* it chooses. You need not worry about the *raga* being appropriate

*Shravanam leads  
ultimately to Atmanivedana,  
the surrender of the individual  
to the universal.*

or the *tala* being accurate. **When Rama is prompting you to sing, the *raga* and the *tala* can never be wrong.** Rama is the pen, Rama is the thought, Rama is the word, Rama is the style, Rama is the composition. How then can errors creep in?

Fill every moment with energy, enthusiasm, and effort. The epics teach you how to succeed in this. The Mahabharata describes how, when all the Kauravas died except Duryodhana, who was challenged by Bhima to a duel. When at last, he fell to the ground, Bhima struck his head with his foot to add insult to injury. Duryodhana's pride was hurt; a *Kshatriya* (noble warrior) such as he could not let that insult pass. He retorted, even as he lay dying, "Do not exult that you have done some big heroic act by trampling on my head! In a few seconds, dogs and vultures will be doing the same act. It does not require a hero to plant his

foot on a dying man! You dared not do this when I was capable of hitting back, you coward!" That kind of awareness of one's potentialities and quick response to all that is happening must be present in you, too. Heroism gushed out of his lips even when he was passing away!

Today is the first day of the *Shravan* month. *Shravan* is the month when the Vedic studies are considered most fruitful, for, Vedas are *Sruthis* (that which is heard), coming to man through *Shravanam* (hearing from the Guru). *Shravanam* is the very first stage of spiritual progress. So, it is a good day for inaugurating spiritual study and practice. ***Shravanam* leads ultimately to *Atmanivedana*, the surrender of the individual to the universal.** I bless you that you may achieve that goal.

Prasanthi Nilayam  
July 23, 1971









## From Ashes to Vibhuti

# MY JOURNEY TO SAI

As I sit in the serene surroundings of my home in Sydney, Australia, my heart brimming with gratitude and love for Swami, I cannot help but reflect on the incredible journey that brought me here. **The story of my transformation is not merely about a change in geography or career—it is the metamorphosis of a soul, shaped by fire, fear, and ultimately, faith.**

### **Jaffna to London: A Dream Shadowed by Conflict**

I was born in Jaffna, in the northern province of Sri Lanka, into a conservative, religious Tamil family. My roots were deeply entrenched in tradition and discipline, but in my younger days, God for me was little more than practices steeped in rituals. My academic path was clear as I pursued my education diligently, eventually qualifying as a chartered accountant in Sri Lanka. Yet,



I whispered a prayer—not polished, not poetic, just a raw plea from the depths of my soul. “God, if You exist, please save us. I have lived honestly and tried to serve my people. If goodness counts for anything, please protect us now.”

---

even as my ambitions of personal development were taking shape, the political climate in my homeland was unraveling.

Sri Lanka in the late 1970s and early 1980s was a place of religious and sectarian tension and unrest, particularly affecting the Tamil minority. Systemic discrimination and marginalization had created a fertile ground for discontent. Like many others from the northern and eastern regions, I found my dreams shadowed by political turmoil and violence. Job opportunities were scarce, and a sense of hopelessness permeated our lives. Seeking a better future, I moved to London, guided and supported by my uncle, Dr. Sara Pavan, a man whose quiet strength and unwavering faith would later play a pivotal role in my spiritual journey.

### **Inner Turmoil: Choosing Revolution Over Personal Pleasure**

In London, while continuing my education in cost and management accounting, I could not remain a silent spectator to the suffering of my people back home. The horrific events of 1983—the infamous anti-Tamil pogrom that left thousands dead—galvanized me into action. My Tamil identity was no longer just a part of me; it became my cause. I immersed myself in political activities, lending my voice and efforts to the Tamil liberation struggle, driven by an idealistic belief that we could achieve justice and dignity for our community.

The political landscape grew ever more volatile, and in 1987, duty and love for my family



called me back to Sri Lanka, via India. The Indo-Sri Lankan Accord had been signed, and for activists like me, it was a narrow window to reconnect with our homeland. My primary mission was personal: to attend my only sister’s wedding. But fate had other plans.

I had not seen my family for nearly nine years. My heart was torn between joy and foreboding. I was still a bachelor, and I had long resigned myself to a life of celibacy, devoting every ounce of my energy to the Tamil cause. But returning to Sri Lanka placed me squarely in the crosshairs of a brutal conflict. The Sri Lankan armed forces and the political militants were locked in a deadly tug-of-war, and activists like me were constantly at risk. It wasn’t long before I found myself on the run.

### **The Miracle in the Tobacco Oven**

One fateful day, a group of us sought refuge in a farmer’s house. This humble man, risking his own safety, sheltered us in a small hut on his tobacco farm, where giant clay ovens were used to dry tobacco leaves with smoke.



Inside view of tobacco oven

As dawn approached, danger loomed closer. The farmer rushed in with alarming news that the Sri Lankan army had encircled the village, ordering every single resident to assemble in the marketplace.

Panic set in. We were a group of young political activists, and I was the oldest among them. The farmer offered a desperate solution: to hide us inside the massive clay furnace, concealing us behind tobacco leaves while he lit coconut husks to produce thick smoke. This oven was used to smoke-dry the tobacco leaves and was an unlikely hiding place. But it could also be a potential tomb!

My younger comrades wanted to flee to the marketplace, hoping to blend in with the villagers. But I understood the army's tactics. They had brought local informants, their faces covered with gunny sacks, ready to identify us. I pleaded with my friends to stay put, trusting that hiding in the tobacco oven, desperate as it seemed, was our only chance.

We crouched in that oven, smoke filling our lungs and fear suffocating our hearts. Through a tiny hole, we watched the soldiers approach. They stomped about, their boots thudding ominously close. Their rifles poked through the oven's entrance, prodding the smoking tobacco leaves. At any moment, we expected death.

Until that moment, I had lived my life relying on my conscience but without faith. God was absent from my thoughts, which were all filled with by the cause to which I had devoted myself. But in that dark hour, faced with the certainty of death, something stirred within me. **I whispered a prayer—not polished, not poetic, just a raw plea from the depths of my soul. “God, if You exist, please save us. I have lived honestly and tried to serve my people. If goodness counts for anything, please protect us now.”**

We had to take care to breathe gently, drawing smoke in through our noses and exhaling slowly through our mouths to suppress any cough that might betray us. My eyes were fixed on the entrance which was both

our lifeline and our doom. The soldiers were there. Their weapons glinted as their eyes scanned the area. I braced myself for the inevitable.

But the miracle of miracles happened! Though the soldiers poked, prodded, and even bent down to peer inside, they did not find us! It was as if an invisible veil cloaked us from their gaze. **My prayer had been answered, and in that instant, my heart knew—God exists. And more than that, God had personally intervened to save my life.**

Later, as I internalized this extraordinary escape, I realized something profound. The furnace, filled with smoke and ash, reminded me of *vibhuti*, the sacred ash my uncle, Sara Pavan, had once brought for me from Sri Sathya Sai Baba in Puttaparthi. I had kept that packet of ash tucked away in a drawer, never quite believing in its power, yet unwilling to discard it. **In my darkest moment, it was Baba's form that flashed in my mind, and it was His divinity I had called upon.**

### **A Perilous Escape to Freedom**

We eventually escaped from Sri Lanka, braving a perilous journey by motorboat across the Indian Ocean to the safe shores of India. My mentor and guide through much of this was Mr. Anton Balasingham, a towering figure in the Tamil liberation movement. Together, we navigated not just the treacherous seas but the stormy uncertainties of life as political fugitives.

The journey across the Indian Ocean was fraught with peril, and every decision made in the boat was a calculated risk. We were on a small boat with a motor that lacked the power of larger vessels. The reason for this was simple—a quieter, less powerful engine would create less noise, which was crucial for evading detection by the patrol boats of both the Sri Lankan and the Indian armed forces. Every time the boat's hum threatened to rise above a whisper, the engine would be cut, plunging us into eerie silence, broken only by the sound of waves slapping against the hull.

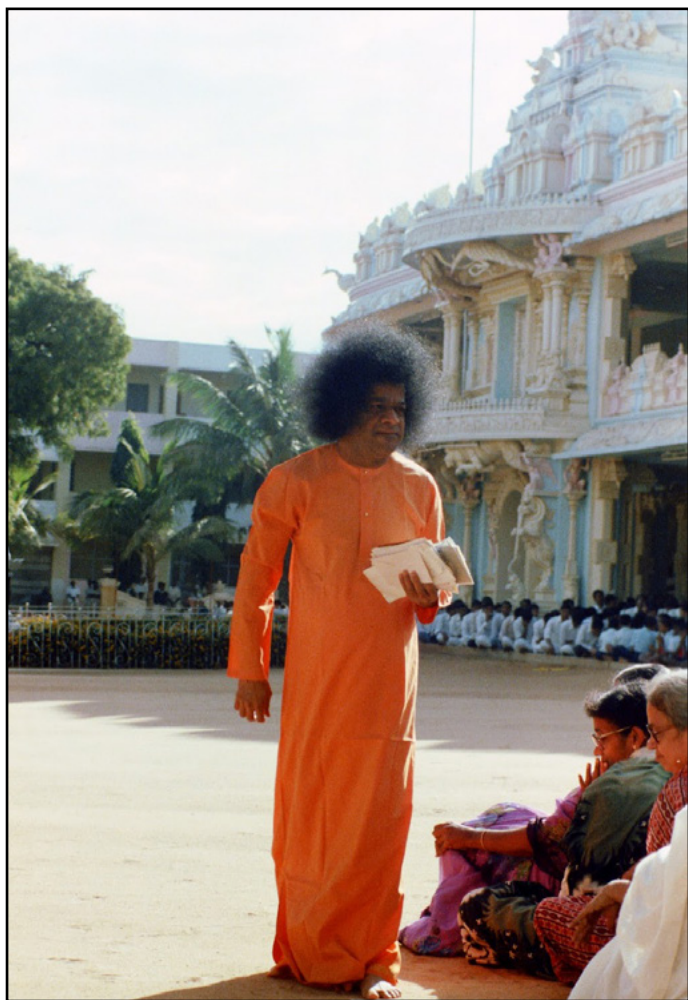
Once we reached the shore, the boat was carefully camouflaged into the sand along the shore, sheltered behind nearby rocks and foliage. The darkness, the unpredictable weather, and the natural camouflage of the landscape were our only allies.

By the time we finally reached Tamil Nadu, a cloud of sorrow had descended there as the revered Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Sri M.G. Ramachandran, had passed away. Since the entire state was focused on mourning his passing, we escaped detection. I was able to stay in Tamil Nadu for nearly two years without drawing attention.

Yet, as time went on, the political landscape began to change. The Indian government in Tamil Nadu clamped down on our political activities, and I felt the walls closing in. The space I had once used to stay hidden began to shrink, and it became increasingly diffi-







cult to navigate the ever-watchful eyes of the authorities. I knew the time had come to make a decision. My path in politics, once so central to my life, no longer seemed like the way forward. I had been a part of the movement, driven by the desire to serve my people, but now I realized that the kind of service I longed to offer could not be found in the world of politics.

### Finding Final Sanctuary in Sai

I needed to find a new way to serve, a deeper and more meaningful way. **It was in that moment of uncertainty that my heart was drawn once again to Swami.** Over the years, I had heard my uncle speak of the divine presence of Swami and His transformative grace. Though I had never visited Puttaparthi before, I knew in that instant that it was the only place where I could find solace.

In August 1988, during the festival time of Onam, I made my way to Puttaparthi. When

I arrived, something miraculous happened. The locals, unaware of my identity, assumed I was just another Indian who had come to the holy land. There was no fanfare, no special attention, just the quiet anonymity that allowed me to immerse myself in the sacred atmosphere of Prasanthi Nilayam. I spent nearly four weeks in the ashram, not seeking anything extraordinary. **My uncle had advised me to pray to Swami, to seek His blessings for a new way of life, and it was this prayer that I carried with me every moment.**

Though I never had the privilege of an interview with Swami or the blessing of touching His feet (*Padanamaskar*), the very presence of the divine in that sacred space filled me with a peace I had never known. My days were spent in the simple, peaceful rhythms of *ashram* life: going for *darshan*, reading spiritual books, and surrendering my heart to Swami's grace. Despite the looming danger of being a wanted person with expired travel documents, strangely, I felt no fear. **I was enveloped in Swami's love and omnipresence, and it was as though all my worries had melted away. I had no need for a passport, no need for permission; all that mattered was that I was in His loving care.**

### A New Dawn in Australia

It was on the advice of my dear uncle, Sara, and his wife, Aunty Devi, that I took the next step. With my future uncertain, they suggested that I apply for asylum in Australia, a safe haven where I could rebuild my life. I applied for a Red Cross travel document, a special document issued to refugees, and I awaited the results. It was a blessed Thursday—Swami's special day when the official approval came. I had been granted asylum. The sense of relief was indescribable, and with Swami's blessings, I embarked on a new chapter in my life, one that had once seemed impossible.

003089

## Document for travel to Australia

This document does not entitle the holder and those included in this document to enter Australia. To gain entry the holder and those whose names are included in this document are required to obtain an ENTRY PERMIT on arrival in Australia. The Australian Government does not accord the holder of this document or a visa not those included in it any official or other status or recognition as representatives of a government or regime which the Australian Government does not recognise. This document is granted on the understanding that the persons concerned will not make any such claim whilst in Australia.

**PERSONAL DETAILS OF HOLDER**

Family Name: SATHIAMOORTHY

Christian or Given Names: SIVAKUMARAN

Date of Birth: 23 JUN 19 50 Place of Birth: INUVIL

Travel Document (Passport) Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Citizenship: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status: NEVER MARRIED SIGNATURE OF HOLDER: \_\_\_\_\_

This document includes the details and photographs of persons whose details and photographs appear below. (cross out unused lines)

Name	Date of Birth	Place of Birth	Relationship to holder
<del>_____</del>	<del>_____</del>	<del>_____</del>	<del>_____</del>
<del>_____</del>	<del>_____</del>	<del>_____</del>	<del>_____</del>
<del>_____</del>	<del>_____</del>	<del>_____</del>	<del>_____</del>
<del>_____</del>	<del>_____</del>	<del>_____</del>	<del>_____</del>

Photograph (Cross out if unused)

Photograph (Cross out if unused)

Photograph (Cross out if unused)

Photograph (Cross out if unused)

589000028221 58900002822 (Official Use - On Arrival/Departure)

**AUSTRALIA ENTRY VISA**

CLASS 202 RESIDENT

CONDITIONS

1. SATHIAMOORTHY SIVAKUMARAN NOT TO MARRY BEFORE INITIAL ENTRY (REG 17.1.83)

ISSUED 12SEP90 VALID UNTIL 29AUG91 MULTIPLE TRAVEL 1009216

Swami. We became fellow travelers, walking together on the sacred spiritual path laid out by Swami. **In Australia, I found peace within myself and a deeper connection to the divine mission that Swami had laid out for me. By His grace, I was able to serve not only my community but also the wider society in ways that were meaningful and impactful.**

In time, I served in various official capacities in the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization, working to spread Swami's message of love, selfless service, and peace. Looking back on everything I have now, my family, my life in Australia, and the opportunities to serve, I can say with absolute certainty that it is all due to Swami's boundless blessings. **All that I am, all that I have, is His gift.** And my heart overflows with gratitude.

**Mr. Sivakumaran Sathyamoorthy**  
AUSTRALIA 

I travelled to Australia, and the journey that began in uncertainty and hardship transformed into one of peace and fulfilment. Here, I met my wife, a fellow devotee of



**Mr. Sivakumaran Sathyamoorthy** resides in Sydney, Australia. He is trained in accounting and auditing, as well as Information Technology (IT). He worked for the New South Wales State Government of Australia for 21 years in the Department of Education and Training.

Mr. Sathyamoorthy has served the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization of Australia in various capacities, including President of the Sai Center of Homebush, Regional President, New South Wales State Region, Chair, SSE Teacher Training Committee, and Chair of IT and Media Committee, SSSIO Australia.





# CROSSROADS

## MY JOURNEY TO SAI

My wife was the pioneer of our journey to Sai. In 1987, she was drawn to Him just by the photo on the cover of the book, *'Man of Miracles'* by Howard Murphet. She borrowed the book from a friend and was hooked. I was disturbed by her sudden obsession with an Indian guru! To gain some understanding, I also read it, and another popular book, *'The Holy Man and the Psychiatrist.'* The miracles in them had no appeal for me, and

I skipped over them. **I couldn't accept the claims of divinity, but reading Sai's teachings intrigued and somewhat reassured me.**

For two years, I tolerated her obsession and even allowed the local Sai group, which formed around this time, to hold their weekly devotional meetings in our home. However, I generally found some excuse not to attend these sessions.



I would pray to Swami daily, reminding Him of His promise, ‘You take one step toward Me; I will take a hundred steps toward you.’

### The Call

Then came a crisis that left me deeply dissatisfied with my position at a bank after 26 years of service. I was prepared to resign, but I was convinced to take an extended leave instead. And then, out of the blue, came an irresistible and inexplicable urge to visit Sai Baba!

**Sai says that no one comes to Him without Him calling them. For me, that statement holds very true.** Once that urge surfaced, I had to respond, and I joined a group of about 30 people from Melbourne, Victoria, going to see Sri Sathya Sai Baba. This was in January 1990.

There were three things I wanted to resolve and get guidance on from Him, which I wrote in a letter to Sai: I wanted direction for the next stage of my life. I wanted Sai to irrefutably prove that He really was who He claimed to be. I wanted to have the same experience that Howard Murphet mentioned in his book, where he felt a flow of love through his body in Sai's presence.

The trip was to be treated as a pilgrimage, and abstaining from meat would be no problem. Our family became vegetarian in early 1988. The sight of animals being cruelly taken to a local slaughterhouse cured us of the desire to eat meat. Still, I enjoyed social drinking, and I had the opportunity to get free alcohol on the flight from Tasmania to Melbourne. However, while the pilgrimage was supposed to start from Melbourne, I decided to immediately refrain from drinking alcohol. **My resolve became permanent as I lost interest in alcohol from that moment to this day!**

### Darshans at Whitefield

The group flew to Madras (presently Chennai) and then to Bangalore (presently Bengaluru). We learnt that Swami was in His *ashram* at Whitefield, on the outskirts of Bangalore. Since no accommodation was available for our group in or near the ashram, we commuted by taxi twice daily, from our hotel in Bangalore to the *ashram*.

We had *darshan* of Sai under the old shed, which had a corrugated iron roof, beneath a sprawling tree. The first darshan was one of much anticipation. When Swami came out, my expectations were high, but I was disappointed that His appearance and presence made little impact on me. After *darshan*, we went to the street to board our taxis for the trip back to the hotel. The quiet calm that pervaded the *ashram* during darshan gave way to the unpleasant and strident noise of the street, including the crowded bazaar-like stalls, beggars, and the never-ending noisy traffic.

Over the next few days, during the process of lining up for seating tokens, I started an inner dialogue with Sai. During this time, a strange sensation also began to build up within me. At times, it felt almost as if I was being drugged. The feeling was pleasant at first, but with time, it became overwhelming. **As the days passed, the sensation gradually and pleasantly changed, and I thought that I was experiencing a surge of love.**

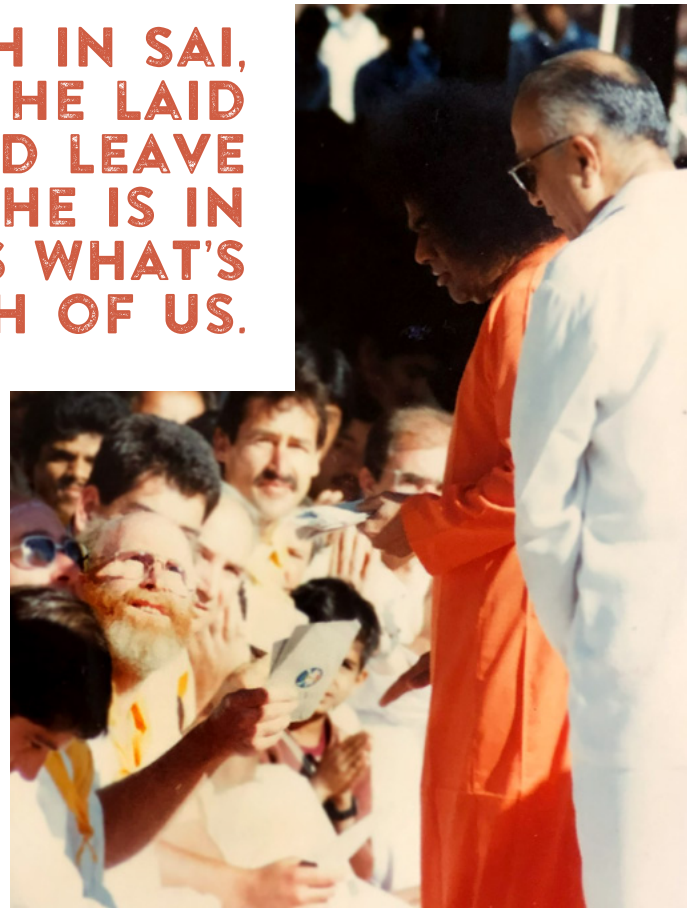
Our group leader had experienced many previous interviews with Swami as part of groups she had led, and the opportunity seemed very optimistic for our group. However, this optimism was misplaced, as Swami twice asked how many were in

**I PLACE MY FAITH IN SAI,  
FOLLOW THE PATH HE LAID  
OUT FOR ME, AND LEAVE  
THE REST TO GOD. HE IS IN  
CHARGE. HE KNOWS WHAT'S  
BEST FOR EACH OF US.**

our group but did not grant an interview. However, He did take my letter on the second day of our visit to the *ashram*.

As the days passed, I realized that I was enjoying the peace and quiet, as well as the good vibrations in the *ashram*. However, these feelings quickly dissipated once I was outside, and I found staying in Bangalore tedious. I started staying in the *ashram* by myself during the day while the rest of the group returned to Bangalore after morning *darshan*. At night, I would return with the group after the afternoon *darshan*. During the day, with no one to talk to, **I began meditating and going inward. I quietened my mind with my eyes shut, trying to connect with Sai and disconnect from the outside world.** I had no prior experience with meditation or real knowledge of it; yet, at times, what I was experiencing was peaceful and enjoyable, with that feeling sometimes lasting all day.

As the time for our return to Australia drew closer, I became increasingly concerned and restless that the three issues I had raised in my letter were not being resolved. While enjoying the love radiating from Sai, I also thought it might be a fabrication of my mind. I was having doubts and was particularly worried that I would not know what to do upon returning home. Eventually, I became desperate for Him to give me some answers. **I would pray to Swami daily, reminding Him**



Michael giving Swami a book to bless in Bangalore

**of His promise, 'You take one step toward Me; I will take a hundred steps toward you.'**

### **Sai Reveals His Power**

One afternoon, everything changed. That afternoon, the group returned from Bangalore, and we lined up for *darshan*. To our joy, we received token number one to go in first and get seated for *darshan*! As I waited to enter the *darshan* hall, I effortlessly went deeper inward while remaining conscious of my surroundings. Finally, we entered the hall and sat along the central aisle that Swami used to walk amongst us. Swami's students occupied the front rows on the men's side, from where they led the *bhajans*.

Sitting beside the aisle, I found myself slipping fast into a much deeper state when a beautiful, pale, sky-blue light appeared within, accompanied by the most exquisite sensation. I had never experienced anything like it before, and I wanted to remain in that state. After a while, the light turned golden, and I thought, Sai has come. Then, I heard 'Sai Ram' from someone in the assembly,

confirming my thoughts. I had to force myself to open my eyes to see Sai. I was torn between allowing myself to succumb to the exquisite state of bliss I was experiencing with my eyes closed, while also wanting to see Sai, the very purpose of my visit. I'd struggle to open my eyes for fleeting glimpses of Sai as He walked around the ladies' side, only to close them again, irresistibly, then forcing myself to open my eyes again to see Him. **This struggle continued, with momentary glimpses of Sai, interrupted as I went inward to experience the most blissful feelings.**

Sai had finished on the ladies' side, and when I opened my eyes, I saw Him coming toward me. However, no sooner than He started up the aisle, I was seized by a feeling that my chest was rapidly and painfully expanding. It was terrifying. I thought my chest was going to explode, and I was going to die in the hall. I felt I had to get out of the hall, but how? The sensation was becoming increasingly intense and frightening. Once it started, I closed my eyes tightly and clenched my body, fighting against the experience. It reached a crescendo and then began to ease. I opened my eyes for a second to see Swami walking away from me to the front of the hall.

### **Preparedness is Essential to Experience Divine Power**

Then the bhajans started, and the experience I was having changed dramatically. The sensation in my chest disappeared, and I began to experience a flow of energy from the ground beneath me, through my body, up my spine, to my head, and out through my skin, mainly at the crown. I felt my hair standing on end, and my entire body was tingling and radiating energy like an electrical charge. This whole unknown new experience terrified me. Resisting it, I hunched up as I sat, with my head down and legs crossed, clenching my body as I fought my feelings. As the singing continued, I became aware that the energy flow varied with the

enthusiasm of the *bhajan*-singing. This phenomenon continued with the energy level increasing significantly when the singers responded to particular songs with added fervor. I had been holding my breath at times as I clenched my muscles, but as I straightened up to take a deep breath, the energy flow surged up through me. It flowed along my spine and out through my head like a column of power coiled up inside me. This continued throughout the entire bhajan session.

And then it suddenly subsided. The bhajan session was over, but *arathi* was to follow, and I started to relax when the power dropped. **But suddenly, the *arathi* began, and the power level went straight up, stronger than it was during the singing. My fight against the sensation became almost unbearable as I strained my muscles. This continued throughout *arathi*, with Swami leaving before it was over.**

### **Experience Post the Experience**

Once the hall started to empty, I was utterly exhausted from my experience. I involuntarily relaxed from my sitting position. My eyes were closed, my legs still crossed, and I fell into the lap of a group member behind me. I couldn't speak or move but was still aware of what was happening.

This created immediate consternation. Several people responded quickly, assisting me. They allowed my head to rest in the lap of the person behind me, straightened my legs, and three people gave me 'Reiki.' They placed their hands above me, one at my head, one over my heart, and one over my feet. Someone started to painfully pinch my ear lobes and nostrils to try to revive me. They thought I had passed out as my eyes were closed, and I didn't respond to questions or move, but I knew exactly what was happening all the time! Indeed, I could feel a beautiful, warm sensation flowing through me, which I believed was the result of the 'Reiki.' The pinching, however, was painful and very unpleasant.



Eventually, I was able to communicate with them haltingly, getting them to stop pinching me. I said that I was alright, adding, “He wouldn’t hurt me.” I was convinced that this whole experience was orchestrated by Swami, even though I had no idea what had happened or what it meant. Eventually, I regained control of my limbs and was able to move them. About this time, a *seva dal* came to us with a small packet of a sweet yellow powder, which reportedly came from Swami. I was asked to take it. **When I did, I could move freely immediately. I even danced a little jig to show I was alright.**

Before going back to Bangalore, our group leader insisted that I be taken to the local Christian hospital near the *ashram* for a checkup, something I thought was unnecessary, but I agreed. The staff was contemptuous of me, a Christian, seeing an Indian guru. My examination consisted of me describing what had happened, stating that I was feeling fine, and that was the end of it.

### Direct Life-Changing Experience

Naturally, this experience had a profound effect on my thoughts on Sai. Nothing in my normal, ordinary, everyday life prepared me for the experience. **I could not ignore**

**the fact that it was triggered by Swami,** and I am sure that if Swami had manifested something for me, I would never have accepted that as proof. By putting me through this experience, He was showing me something that was undeniable.

While Swami hardly seemed to notice me directly, nor communicate with me during the entire trip, I had several other extraordinary experiences during the first trip, including direction for the next phase of my life. That is another story.

My life has never been the same since that trip to see Swami. I moved in a new direction following my return to Australia. **I became deeply involved in a spiritual quest and the Sai Organization.** I haven’t had any further experiences like the one above. At times, I yearn for the beautiful meditation experience I had just before the firestorm Swami set off within me. However, I’m unsure whether that would be beneficial or not. **I place my faith in Sai, follow the path He laid out for me, and leave the rest to God. He is in charge. He knows what’s best for each of us.**

Dr. Michael Thrush   
AUSTRALIA



*Dr. Michael (Mick) Thrush is a retired banker who resides in Tasmania, Australia. He holds a Ph.D. in Physical Geography from the University of Newcastle. He has been a devotee of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for 35 years and has made several trips to be in the divine presence. Dr. Thrush has been an office bearer in the SSSIO of Australia for 34 years, serving at various center, regional, and national levels, including twice as the National Spiritual Coordinator. He is the Media Coordinator for Zone 3 and has served in the Australian Media Team over the last 10 years.*



# 100 High-Quality Photos Ready for Downloading

We are happy to announce a unique and heartfelt offering from the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO) to commemorate the 100th Birthday of our beloved Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

SSSIO has unveiled a new webpage featuring over 100 high-resolution photographs of our dear Sai.

By His grace, these precious images are available to download for use in homes, Sai centers, events, and other spaces for non-commercial purposes. In the future, we plan to add new photographs to the collection. We invite you to visit the webpage, explore, and share these beautiful images with your family, friends, and colleagues.

Let us joyfully celebrate Swami's 100th Birthday by immersing ourselves in His divine love and spreading His universal message and divine glory around the world.

Use the following link to visit the website:

- <https://sathyasai.org/sathya-sai/photo-download>





**100TH  
BIRTHDAY  
OFFERINGS**



# Regional Retreats in the USA

## Annual Regional Retreat of SSSIO USA, Regions 1 & 2

(Northeast Region – Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont)

(Mid-Atlantic Region – Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia)

**May 23-26, 2025**

The clarion call was '*Come one, come all; join the retreat and bask in the glory of God.*'

The 50th Annual Retreat of SSSIO USA, Regions 1 and 2 (Northeast USA), was a landmark spiritual event that brought together a thousand devotees from Sai centers across both regions. The event convened at the beautiful Camp West-

mont in the lush Poconos Mountains in Poyntelle, Pennsylvania.

**The momentous occasion was marked by the celebration of 50 years of the retreat, 60 years of the Sai Organization, and 100 years of the advent of our dear Lord, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.** As a fitting tribute, every activity was infused with feelings of unity, service, love, joy, and a spirit of celebration as devotees worked





together tirelessly to provide an uplifting and enriching experience for everyone.

The retreat began with the grand opening ceremony that invoked Swami's divine presence through a celebratory procession, the lighting of the lamp and the hoisting of the Sai flag. Two videos, one of Swami's divine discourses and one chronicling His life and message, set the tone for the event. Heartfelt gratitude was expressed for Swami's infinite grace in establishing the organization and for nurturing the Sai family over decades. The previous regional presidents were recognized for their leadership and outstanding contributions.

The theme, "*Sai, The Eternal Companion*," was explored through impactful talks by keynote speakers, Mr. Sunder Iyer and Mr. Satyajit Salian. Both speakers presented



their perspectives on the theme with conviction, devotion, and wisdom, drawn from their personal experiences of serving and connecting with the Lord, living in close proximity. Mr. Iyer spoke about how companionship is represented in both the 'giving hand' and the 'empty hand.' **Mr. Salian emphasized the concept of eternity, urging participants not to confine themselves to the physical realm but to transcend the gross, subtle, and causal levels, rising finally to the eternal.** Their talks were interspersed with



Mr. Satyajit Salian



Mr. Sunder Iyer

anecdotes and personal stories of Swami, illustrating how He guides, nudges, encourages, and instructs sincere spiritual seekers through both words and silence, leading them toward a higher reality. Devotees were uplifted with the candor and sincerity of their messages, feeling inspired to deepen their connection with Swami.

Throughout the retreat, a series of spiritually enriching programs unfolded. SSE students presented a delightful and inspiring play on the 5Ds (Dedication, Devotion,





Discipline, Discrimination, and Determination), while the Young Adults made a dramatic presentation highlighting how Swami's delays and denials often nudge us toward a deeper spiritual realization. A soulful music program illustrated the journey of a seeker through the vagaries of life culminating in the realization of 'I am divine.' Mr. Iyer's powerful chanting of 'Shivoham—I Am Shiva' sanctified the atmosphere, bringing sublime joy and inner peace.

One of the retreat's highlights was a colorful parade in which a beautifully decorated palanquin carrying Swami was led in a joyous procession across the camp, symbolizing one's spiritual journey with our Beloved 'Eternal Companion.' The symbolic march embodied unity and purity, with the devotees walking together in love and devotion. Vedam chanters, vibrant drummers, the SSE band, and *bhajan* singers in color-coordinated attire, made the event festive and uplifting. A specially composed retreat theme song was presented and a beautiful cake, lovingly decorated for Swami's 100th

Birthday, was ceremoniously cut, adding a sweet and soulful touch to the celebration.

Adding depth to this experience was the culmination of the 100-day **GIFTS** (Go Inward & Find Thy Sai) *sadhana* undertaken by devotees. Each center had chosen one teaching of Swami to reflect upon and practice for 100 days. During the parade, the fruits of these reflections were offered as birthday gifts to Swami in the form of creative expressions, including posters, 3D models,





sculptures, garlands, and banners. All devotees wore purple shawls especially monogrammed for the event, and the joy on their faces radiated as they approached Swami's altar. The evening concluded with a grand celebration featuring a spectacular fireworks display.

Despite the unusual wet weather, the skies cleared at just the right moment for key outdoor events go uninterrupted, from the flag hoisting and the parade to the fireworks –a testament to Swami's divine grace.

The meticulous planning, attention to detail, and dedication of countless volunteers brought the grand vision of the retreat to a beautiful reality, filling everyone's hearts and souls. **Nestled in the lap of nature, the retreat offered an uplifting spiritual experience with a beautifully adorned altar and a thoughtfully designed program that included Suprabhatam, yoga and meditation sessions, the enchanting sounds of *bhajans* and *nagarasankirtan*, as well as inspiring talks and workshops.** Complementing this was the tireless service of dedicated volunteers, who lovingly prepared delicious, nourishing meals round the clock—ensuring that while the soul was nourished, the body was equally cared for.

The retreat concluded on a high note with a special tribute to senior devotees aged 80 and above, recognizing their decades of selfless service. This was followed by a presentation titled 'Retreating into the Heart,' reflecting on the genesis of the retreat, the first of its kind in the USA, and tracing its evolution over five decades. A heartfelt vote of thanks and a lively *bhajan* medley led by the Young Adults brought the retreat to a joyous and energizing closure. As the participants bid farewell to Camp Westmont, they eagerly looked forward to the next retreat, and despite the cold weather, carried back warm memories, renewed inspiration, and a deeper connection with Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, their Eternal Companion.





# Annual Regional Retreat of SSSIO USA, Region 3

(Southeast Region – Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina)

May 24–25, 2025

Each year, devotees from SSSIO USA, Region 3 (Southeast USA) gather for a retreat during the Memorial Day weekend. This year, however, the regional officers decided to conduct the retreat virtually. On the last weekend of May, SSSIO USA, Region 3 hosted **'Path to Sai'** for its members, while **also extending the invitation to all devotees, nationwide.** Many devotees across the country, and from around the world, attended this uplifting spiritual event.

In preparation, the Young Adults (YAs) organized weeknight Zoom sessions from April 7 to May 23. A YA was assigned to read a chapter aloud from *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks Volume 1*, while devotees listened and reflected on Swami's words.

Day 1 of the retreat began with Multi-Faith Prayers followed by a video clip excerpt of Swami's divine discourse on What to Know, What to Give Up, Where to Reach.

The first speaker, Dr. Suresh Govind, spoke on the topic, **'Knowing the Path.'** In his energetic style, he provided practical pointers to understand the path and reach the goal. Next, Mr. Aravind Balasubramanya spoke on **'Walking the Path.'** He beautifully narrated the story of a devotee who used the power of *Namasmarana* and *Vibhuti* while walking on the Sai path to overcome various obstacles. Lastly, Ms. Vahinie Pillay talked about **'Staying on the Path.'** She emphasized the importance of courage, confidence, faith, and gratitude.

Following the talks, three interactive break-out sessions, for different age groups, provided an engaging and uplifting interaction.



Dr. Suresh Govind



Mr. Aravind Balasubramanya



Ms. Vahinie Pillay

The first session, titled ‘Turning Trials into Triumphs on the Path to Sai,’ engaged the attendees with unique examples to remind them **that getting on the path to Sai is the greatest gift of their lives, and staying on the path is their goal.** For 90 minutes, devotees discussed their friends, foes, successes, losses, lessons, and wisdom gained on this path.

In the YA workshop titled, ‘Fork in the Path: How to Let Swami Guide You,’ participants were presented with various scenarios and had to make decisions based on human values. YAs were encouraged to reflect on whether their choices aligned with Swami’s teachings and would please Him.

The SSE children had a fun-filled session titled, ‘One Step at a Time on the Path to Sai.’ The session involved storytelling, sing-along, value-based games, and scenarios

emphasizing Swami’s teachings on WATCH (Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character, and Heart). Also included were teachings on COD (Ceiling on Desires), and the 5 Ds (Dedication, Devotion, Discipline, Discrimination, and Determination).

The second day, began with the ‘Oh Lord Prayer’ written by Swami. The three speakers then were invited back to share their final thoughts on the path to Sai. This was followed by a Q&A session with questions compiled from the submissions of the participants. The speakers responded to each question with thought-provoking answers, providing guidance and inspiration.

The participants were grateful to Swami for bringing everyone together for such a wonderful event, as they resolved to continue on the Path to Sai.

## Annual Regional Retreat of SSSIO USA, Region 4

(Mid-Central Region – Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee)

May 23–26, 2025

During the Memorial Day weekend, the SSSIO-USA, Region 4 (Mid-Central USA) held its annual Retreat from May 23-26, 2025 at the Sri Sathya Sai Center of Greater St. Louis, with the theme of *Shining with Sai*. Dr. Ramadevi Sankaran, the guest speaker, kept the audience spellbound with many stories of dedicated service at medical camps around the world while reminding the attendees of the grace and blessing of being His instruments of love.

Devotees gathered to sing His glory, sharing His love, and in the process, became even more inspired to be ‘Shining with Sai’ through service. Attendees delved deep within their hearts to experience His presence, inspired and moved by Dr. Ramadevi’s stories and how through His grace, so many lifesaving miracles occurred. **They were also inspired by the way she incorporated His**



Dr. Ramadevi Sankaran







teachings into her medical practice. She reminded everyone that Swami is the doer, and if we remembered this, we would surely 'Shine with Sai.'

Hearts were touched and joy was experienced through devotional singing. Center presidents shared updates on various service projects and activities zealously carried out at their centers. An update on the activities of the Women's Wing was also presented. Attendees stayed through Saturday evening to participate in a service project that involved knitting 100 colorful baby caps, in honor of Sathya Sai's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday. With great enthusiasm, **participants learned a new skill to weave and knit while engaged in a three-step *sadhana* as they knitted the cap: (i) purifying oneself by identify-**

**ing negative thoughts; (ii) surrendering all negativity to Swami; and (iii) channeling Swami's love and grace to the newborn who would receive the cap.**

The retreat concluded on Sunday morning with more heartwarming, inspirational words of wisdom from the speakers. This was followed by entertaining performances by young Sai devotees. The Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) children gave a wonderful and engaging presentation, while the older SSE Group 4 children (aged 15–18) presented an interactive activity on the five *koshas*. Afterward, SSE graduation was held for the high school seniors in recognition of their 'Transition to the Young Adults Program.' The retreat came to a close with a dynamic offering of a skit and music by Young Adults.







# 100th Birthday Celebrations of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba & 11th World Conference

19–23 November 2025

19 Nov 2025

**Ladies Day**

20-22 Nov 2025

**11th World Conference**

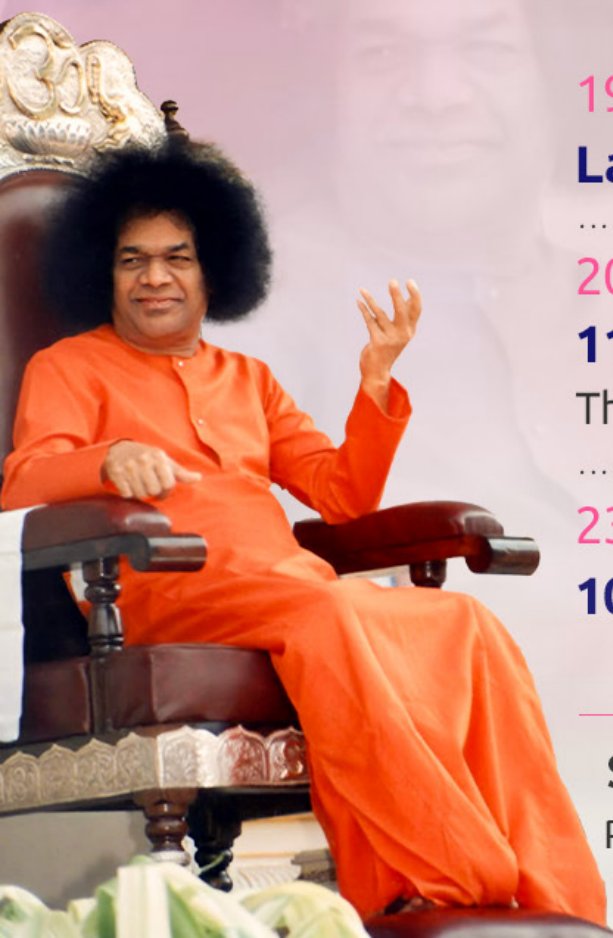
Theme - "Purity is Enlightenment"

23 Nov 2025

**100th Birthday Celebrations**



Scan the QR code  
to Register



**Sai Prema Nilayam, Riverside, California**

Register now: [www.sathyasai100.org/registration](http://www.sathyasai100.org/registration)

2025 AUGUST 39



# LOVE IN ACTION



## INDONESIA Wheels of Love

In commemoration of Guru Poornima 2025, volunteers from Sathya Sai Group, Bandung, Indonesia, embraced a sacred mission of love and service, bringing mobility, dignity, and joy to those in need. On July 11, 2025, the team ventured to Garut Regency, West Java, distributing 22 wheelchairs to individuals across several sub-districts. The event, held in Ngamplang Village, Cilawu Sub-district, was not merely an act of charity but a heartfelt expression of compassion and unity. For the recipients, each wheelchair was more than just a support device—it was a doorway to independence, a chance to participate more fully in daily life, and a loving reminder that they are not forgotten. The smiles, tears of gratitude, and shared moments of connection made the day truly memorable.



A particularly touching moment came when a child with a disability presented the volunteers with a handcrafted, painted puppet—a humble yet profound gift symbolizing the beauty of giving and receiving love.



## MAURITIUS Gifting Life by Donating Blood

On the occasion of Mother's Day, Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO) of Mauritius organized a blood donation drive in 2025, in collaboration with the Moka District Council and the National Blood Transfusion Services under the Ministry of Health. A total of 212 individuals participated in the campaign with enthusiasm, including 200 adults and 12 youth. Held from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., the event aimed to support hospitals with an adequate supply of blood for surgeries and other medical needs. The event



reflected the spirit of selfless service taught by Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, with devotees coming together to offer the gift of life as an expression of love—a fitting tribute on Mother's Day.



## NEW ZEALAND

### Blanketing Babies with Baba's Love

In the lead up to the 100th Birthday Celebrations of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, inspired ladies from SSSIO New Zealand's Northern Region launched a loving and innovative project. The initiative was designed to handmade 100 blankets and donate them to children in two of Auckland's major hospitals, Kidz First and Starship. During their first joyful gathering on June 15, 2025, 39 blankets were lovingly hand-sewn in just four hours. The activity was held at Sai House, the national resource center of the SSSIO in New Zealand. The



camaraderie shared among the participants brought added warmth and joy. A few Young Adults also joined in, adding to the vibrancy of the gathering. With future sessions planned on July 27 and August 10, this project is indeed a heartfelt expression of unity, service, and love.



## TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

### Devotees Unite in Tree Planting

On June 19, about 30 devotees gathered at Eco Park in Central Trinidad at dawn, beginning the day with *Omkar*, *Suprabhatam*, and *Nagarasankirtan*. After breakfast, they were joined by three other volunteers to plant ornamental, shade-yielding, and fruit trees around the park. A simple lunch was shared, and later that day, devotees planted an additional 39 trees at their homes, spreading Swami's message of love for nature.



For more stories of loving service by volunteers from around the world, please visit the Sri Sathya Sai Universe website:

<https://saiuniverse.sathyasai.org>



# Lifetime of Love and Lessons



It was Thursday, May 28, 1992—midday. I was driving back from the Rural Peace Court of Tritaea to Patras in Greece. Having finished my work earlier than expected, I pulled over under a massive mulberry tree along the quiet provincial road. Just a few days ago, I had done the same thing: to stop, breathe deeply, and thank Sai Baba for His boundless grace.

The night before, two ladies, Mrs. Mary Tambourlou and Mrs. Gina Kokkali, had unexpectedly visited me. They were heading elsewhere but stopped by with something extraordinary—**Baba's robe and a lingam gifted to them by Baba Himself! It felt as if Swami had visited me in person! My heart was brimming with joy.** This happened right after I had booked my first trip to Puttapparthi. The timing felt divine.

As I sat silently in my car under the tree, I suddenly heard a loud thud on the car roof.

## Sathya Sai Baba Comes to Me in Greece

"What was that?" I stepped out and looked around—nothing. I got back in the car. Bang! Another sound. I decided to leave, but the car wouldn't budge. It seemed nailed to the ground. I stepped out again

to see what the issue was and found a thick part of a tree wedged under the front wheel!

"Swami... what now?" I muttered, unsure what to do. The road was deserted. The nearest gas station was over a kilometer away. I was wearing shoes with heels and carrying a heavy bag of legal files. Walking in this situation seemed impossible.

That is when I remembered what Mrs. Tambourlou had said, "**When I'm in trouble, I simply call out—Hare Swami!—and He comes.**"

I closed my eyes and softly repeated, "**Hare Swami...**"

Just then, I spotted an old bus coming uphill. "Maybe help is coming!" I thought, expecting someone sent by Him, to come and help me. But the bus simply passed by. My heart sank. "So that wasn't it?"

I turned left, and there, from behind the bushes, walked **a man in orange**. He didn't come from the road but from behind the clearing. Strange, I thought.

"Excuse me, sir," I called out, "Can you help me, please?"

He placed a folded newspaper on my car and listened quietly as I tried to explain. Then, he simply raised his hand. No words. Just reassurance. **That gesture—I recognized later—was Swami's *abhayahasta*! A blessing hand to be fearless, assuring, "Don't fear. I'm here."**

He looked at the wheel. "I'm going to the village to get a jack."

"I already have one!" I hurried to open the trunk.

He knelt down and began working, calm, precise, and radiant. His shirt was freshly ironed, his feet were clean, and his hair shone in the sunlight. I was mesmerized.

"Come to the other side and help," he asked. I did what he said, though I don't recall how I helped. Before I knew it, the car was freed from the obstacle.

"Thank you so much for your time! May God bless you!" I said, feeling overwhelmed with gratitude.

He smiled, "My time? What time?"

"I took up your time..."

"Where from? What from?" he quipped and began to leave.

"Wait!" I pleaded. "Let me check the other wheel."

But he was already gone. I didn't notice which way he went!

Still dazed, I drove to a gas station and sat in silence. "What just happened?" I wondered. **It was as if my whole consciousness had shifted to a higher plane, like in the presence of divinity!**

My first thought was to go to Asteri—the village he'd mentioned. But I had to pick up Gogo, the little girl I had adopted, from school. That night, I was plagued by thoughts such as, "Why didn't I offer to drive him back to the village when I knew

it was Him?" The only answer that brought me peace was, **"Maybe I had already served Him by giving a lift in my car to the old villagers walking uphill."**

The next day, I went to Asteri, where there were just 11 elderly residents. Later, I saw a photograph of the young Sathya Sai Baba for the first time. And then it struck me!

**It was Him. He is the one who came and helped me.**

Having gone through various stages of investigating, criticizing, rejecting, and doubting before finally accepting Swami, this experience convinced me that God is always with me, no matter where I am in the world. Since that day, the jack that He used that day has always stayed in the trunk of my car. I have changed cars a couple of times, but the reminder of His omnipresence always stays with me!

### **What Swami Gives Us is Grander than We Can Ever Imagine**

In the summer of 1994, a group of Greek devotees, including me, were blessed to be in Brindavan, Whitefield (in Bangalore), daily enjoying Swami's *darshan*. One afternoon, Swami lovingly announced that He would grant an interview to all the Greek devotees the following morning.

Excitement buzzed through our group as everyone began preparing in their own way. Wanting to get something sacred to be blessed by Swami, I ventured outside the *ashram* and hastily bought a wooden statue of Lord Ganesha. It was far from perfect, and poorly polished, but it was the best I could find.

I'd heard that idols required ritualistic worship to invoke divinity in them. Since I did not have time, I asked some women near the water taps to help me wash the statue and perform worship. The next morning, I was among the first to reach the interview room. There, the lady ushering us asked me if worship had been done



*“What do you want?”*  
He asked gently.

Pointing to my heart,  
I said, “Swami, to  
have only love in my  
heart.”

for the idol. I nodded. Once inside, I sat directly in front of Swami's chair, holding the veiled Ganesha in my hands. When Swami entered, His gaze fell on me. He asked sternly, *“What is this?”* Breathlessly, I replied, “Ganesha, Swami,” and removed the veil. With a disapproving look, *“This is from the market!”* He said sharply, then pointed to the back row. *“Keep it back there.”*

I felt I was dissolving into the floor. I meekly placed the idol at the back and took my seat there. I felt that I was now far from Swami in every way! I heard nothing about the interview. When *darshan* ended, I stood outside like an empty shell. A fellow devotee asked, “What was that you were holding? Had Swami spoken to me like that, I would have died!” I realized that luckily I had not died, but my spirit was bruised badly.

That evening was a haze of confusion and darkness. Had I done something very wrong? I thought, “Of course, I bought the idol in the market outside—where else I could have found it? Were items sold outside the *ashram* not sacred?” I spiraled into rejection, silently pleading, “Mercy, Swami... You know how much rejection I've endured...”

Swami responded the very next day with gentle glances and smiles. But I resisted

His love. It appeared as if I didn't want consolation; I wanted to continue being miserable!

The following year, once again in Brindavan, Swami called us in for another interview. During this interview, He patted me on my head several times and even said, *“Good girl!”* A fellow devotee, Anna Tambourlou, joked, “He almost meant the best girl, the way He said it!” Despite the compliments, His stern words during the Ganesha idol episode lingered in my heart like a wound.

During the winter of 1997, I was living in Khalkida, Greece, where my sister Maria, and her daughter Vivi also lived. One cold day, we found a novel pastime at their place to spend time; cracking walnuts, eating the kernels, and tossing the shells into the fireplace to hear their characteristic crackling sound. It was December 19, 1997, the day after my birthday.

There were a few walnut shells left in a bag that Maria was holding. As we headed to my house, she asked me what to do with them. “Leave them by the fireplace or throw them in the trash bin,” I said. Suddenly, she cried out, “Look at this!” **She held a half-shell in her hand and, inside it, carved in exquisite detail, was a small Ganesha!**

Stunned, I questioned her sharply; too sharply maybe. Maria wasn't a devotee of Swami, and yet, she said, “See, these are His miracles!” I wondered if she was mocking me. But Vivi examined all the shells. Each had a matching half in the bag, including the one that housed Lord Ganesha! **This Ganesha was not from any market. It was a gift, crafted by the divine sculptor Himself!** It had emerged naturally from a walnut shell—right in our hands!

I stayed awake many nights, marveling at this miracle. Was it meant for Maria and Vivi? Or was it Swami's gift to heal

my lingering pain? Over time, the shell wore away and was transformed into a smooth, flame-like shape. But the Ganesha remained seated, trunk to the right. Under magnification, I noticed changes in it as well: a fresh polish and added weight. **The once fragile nutshell had become solid wood. I was convinced it was my Swami's gift of compassion and love that healed my heart instantly!**

Gratitude remains my deepest feeling. The pain of rejection has evaporated. The incident I once viewed as punishment was, in truth, preparation for a divine reassurance that I was never unloved, never forsaken!

The other Ganesha, from the 'market-place,' stands 45 cm tall on a 25 cm base, with a leftward-turned trunk and a dance pose that decorates my humble home. After being left in a corner for a long time, I finally felt I had to paint and decorate Him as attractively as I could, giving Him a joyful place in my home and heart. **I came to appreciate the Ganesha idol's contribution and role in this astounding *leela*, the divine play of our dearest Swami.**

### **The Masterplan is Always Perfect**

In 2005, several public meetings were being organized across the world to spread Swami's message. Following the directive of Dr. Michael Goldstein, the Greek Sai Organization began preparing for one such event in Athens. I was entrusted as the coordinator of this event, and we arranged the venue at the Aigli Hall at Zappeion, paying a deposit. Days before the event, I flew to Puttaparthi to have Swami's blessings.

On my second morning there, Sister E., a respected figure among the devotees, approached me. In a stern voice, she said, "Swami is very angry with the Greek devotees for organizing the public meeting. Why haven't you asked Him?" I stammered, "But we were following Dr. Gold-



Flame-shaped walnut shells with inner sculpting of Ganesha.

stein's instructions..." She replied, "Swami is here. You are here. And you talk about someone else's instructions?"

Her words pierced through me. I felt exposed and shaken. That morning, Swami did not even glance in my direction. My heart sank. Returning to my room, I wrote a short letter through tears, "Swami, forgive me. Your Greek devotees could never be disobedient. Swami, a short interview please..."

That afternoon, Swami emerged from His car and, from a distance, gestured for me to come forward. I approached, trembling, and handed Him my letter. **"What do you want?" He asked gently. Pointing to my heart, I said, "Swami, to have only love in my heart."** He looked where I pointed, then raised His gaze and hand skyward, uttering Telugu words I could not understand—but my heart did. I was lifted up. I knew then that He had seen it all, understood all, and taken care of everything.

The meeting planned in Athens never happened. Over time, I came to realize that the work simply continued in a different form. For many years, starting in 2006, a Greek weekly magazine, *Hi*, shared Swami's teachings through articles and photos reaching over 50,000 readers





Eleni in the Whitefield ashram

across all sections of society. I, too, contributed to the magazine from 2008 to 2011. For years, His message flowed, week after week, through human values and stories from *The Eternal Charioteer* and *Ellosai* publications. **In the end, public meetings were replaced with something of greater value: not a single-day event, but a long, open communion with countless hearts.**

### ***Vibhuti, Lingam, Grace and LIFE***

In early August 2006, my 94-year-old mother suffered a stroke. After she had received initial care at a state hospital, I transferred her to a private clinic in Aigaleo, Athens. Only one bed was available. The other bed, hidden behind a large curtain, drew quiet footsteps and teary-eyed visitors. I instinctively tiptoed around it, sensing something delicate lying behind the curtain.

The eldest lady in the group approached me and thanked me for being so considerate over the past few days. She gently revealed that behind the curtain lay her 18-year-old daughter who had been ‘nearly dead’ for eight months after a tragic New Year’s Eve accident. Doctors had declared her condition hopeless. She suffered from brain damage and a persistent fever, and her weight had decreased to 35 kg. In

desperation, they’d brought her to this clinic.

When she drew back the curtain, I was prepared for sorrow, but what swept through me was something else—**Love. It was a surge that consumed all fear.** I mentally embraced the frail, intubated body and whispered into her ear about Prasanthi Nilayam, about beaches, about laughter, and about Swami. I showed her a pendant with Swami’s image. Her eyelids flickered for an instant, or maybe my heart just believed it did.

The girl’s mother asked what powder I used to gently rub on my mother’s forehead and feet. Before I could tell her about *vibhuti*, the doctors entered, so I stepped out. I also recalled that it was Tuesday, and that meant the new issues of *Hi* magazine, where Swami’s articles were featured, would be released. Going to the newsstand, I opened the magazine directly to the center page. Most amazingly, the title read **“What is *Vibhuti*?”** I returned to the room, and when the mother repeated her question, I handed her the magazine. **She was stunned; it was that day’s issue, and her question had been answered by the divine Himself!**

Soon after, a friend from Puttaparthi gifted me a photo of Swami holding a *lingam*. He had materialized, advising me to place it on patients to invoke divine healing. The synchronicity was astonishing. So, on September 12, I placed the photo before the girl, applied *vibhuti* on her, and whispered, “If you can hear me, move your fingers.” She did! Her hand trembled. Her eyes fluttered open. I was shaken! With delight overflowing in my heart, I quietly shared it with her mother, who told her other daughter. But the sister dismissed it, clinging to the grim forecast from the CT scans.

Two days later, on September 14, the day of the **Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy**

**Cross**, the patient's young nephew came to visit. He lovingly urged her, "Come on, hug me." To the amazement of everyone in the room, she did just that! **Her arms moved and she embraced him. Jaws dropped to the ground in astonishment, and tears flowed freely from all eyes! It was a miracle!**

Days later, the girl finally unclenched her teeth and opened her mouth; her return to life had begun. From that day on, she began to call me "Godmother." Our bond has remained strong ever since.

### Divine Farewell

I had long waited for my 40th pilgrimage to Puttaparthi. Each of the 39 trips before had brought about a quiet death of the old self and a gentle resurrection of the soul. My last visit, in December 2009, felt like a farewell to His beautiful loving physical form.

On December 19, during the final afternoon *darshan*, I sat in the front row, overwhelmed with bliss. As *arati* concluded and Bhagawan's wheelchair passed in front of me, the hall was steeped in sacred silence. I closed my eyes in a silent good-

bye when suddenly, I heard His voice: "*Where are you from?*"

Startled, I opened my eyes to find that Swami had turned toward me, just a breath away. "Greece, Swami," I replied, barely containing the tide of emotion. He looked at me with playful affection. When He asked about the lady beside me, I answered, "From Poland, Swami." He also allowed her to touch His Feet.

**During that *darshan*, which I did not realize at the time would be my final one, Swami permitted me to kiss His feet—those feet that had guided me for decades!** When I returned to my room, I quickly filled a large glass with water and sipped it so that my lips, which had kissed His feet, touched the water. I then filled a bottle with that sacred water, scented with the divine sweetness of farewell and eternal love. I still have that water with me.

More importantly, I still have His love and grace guiding my life, and I know they will be with me forever, across lifetimes, because He is my Eternal Companion.

**Ms. Eleni Morphopoulou**   
GREECE



**Ms. Eleni Morphopoulou** studied law at the University of Athens. She is a retired Judge in Greece and has been elected multiple times to the Board of the Union of Judges and Prosecutors in Greece.

*She is an ardent devotee of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and served as the first president of the Metamorphosis Sai Center in Athens. For ten years, she cared for an orphaned child who was blessed by Swami three times during interviews. She has given public presentations on Swami's teachings and published articles in a magazine with a weekly circulation of 70,000.*





# *from the* International Sai Young Adults

## UNITED IN LIGHT



## GUIDED BY DHARMA

### **National Young Adults Gathering–México 2025**

The “Casa Don Bosco” Retreat Center in San Luis Potosí served as the sacred venue for the National Spiritual Gathering of Young Adults (YAs) of the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization of México on April 19, 2025. With 23 participants from across the country, the day was filled with an uplifting atmosphere of deep spirituality, inner reflection, joyful camaraderie, and unity.

Centered around the theme “*Young Adults in Action*,” the activities emphasized inner growth, the practice of human values, and a renewed commitment to the legacy of love of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Thoughtfully curated spiritual sessions encouraged introspection, engagement with everyday ethical challenges, and the joy of learning and serving together.

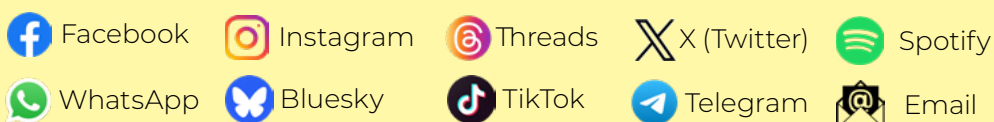
Key highlights included:

- **Igniting the Inner Light:** a guided meditation and small-group reflections on the life, message, and shared experiences of Swami.
- **The Race of Unity:** a dynamic, lively teamwork challenge symbolizing the power of collective spiritual progress.
- **The Path of Dharma:** an interactive discussion on applying human values in everyday decisions.
- **The Dance of Joy:** a free-form movement session celebrating love, joy, and the bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood.

The gathering also served as the launchpad for the **'Strengthening the Sai Legacy'** national campaign, which aims to inspire the creation of Young Adults clusters in every Sri Sathya Sai center and group across México. The campaign encourages the youth to carry forward Swami's timeless message of **truth, right conduct, peace, love, and nonviolence**. The YAs are confident that the seeds sown in the San Luis Potosí gathering will blossom across the nation, reminding every Sai YA that **true service begins in the heart and radiates to all creation**.



### Follow Young Adults on Social Media



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



# Spreading Love



## Spreading Love Through Avurudu: A Joyful Celebration with Elders

In the spirit of the Sinhala and Tamil New Year, more than 20 Young Adults from the Sri Sathya Sai Center of Colombo, Sri Lanka, thoughtfully and lovingly organized a special *Avurudu* celebration on April 20, 2025, at the Sathya Sai Suwaservana Cancer Hospice in Hanwell. The term *Avurudu* refers to the Sinhala and Tamil New Year in Sri Lanka—a time of renewal, family bonding, and festive joy. This event brought together 47 residents from both the hospice and the Sathya Sai Elders' Home in Meegoda, creating a heartwarming space of unity, celebration, and spiritual connection.

The day began with a soulful *bhajan* session and heartfelt New Year greetings, setting an uplifting and reverent tone for the festivities. Traditional *Avurudu* games, thoughtfully arranged by the Young Adults, followed, filling the atmosphere with

laughter and joy. An interactive segment allowed the elders to reflect on the occasion and share their heartfelt gratitude to Swami, making it a truly moving experience.

As a token of love, personalized gift packs were given to all participants. Residents at the Hospice received personal care items, including cologne, talcum powder, oil, slippers, and clothing. For the Elders' Home, recreational gifts such as carrom and dam board games were offered.

The celebration ended with a lovingly prepared lunch, served with reverence and warmth. Every moment of the day was a gentle yet powerful expression of Swami's love—a beautiful reminder that the truest celebration is in comforting hearts, sharing joy, and offering companionship to those in need.

# POWER OF X+1

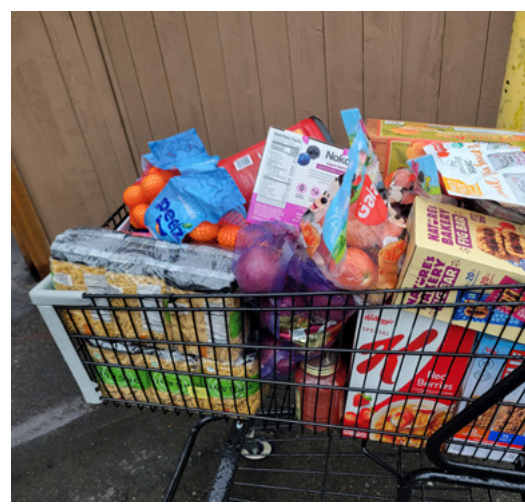


Over the past few years, Young Adults and members of the Seattle Sai Centers have been collaborating with Sound Foundations Northwest to build tiny homes as part of a growing effort to combat homelessness in the Seattle area in the USA. These homes, situated in thoughtfully designed villages with shared kitchens, bathrooms, and laundry facilities, offer warmth, dignity, and safety to members of the homeless community.

In 2023, during the **National Service Retreat**, the team was inspired by the **X+1 workshop**, which encouraged participants to reflect on how existing service activities (X) could be expanded by adding a new, complementary initiative (+1). This idea of taking one more step forward in service, which deepens and widens the impact, led the team to ask: *What more can we do for these tiny-home villages?*

With Swami's blessings, the answer soon came. Along with building homes, the team started a **monthly grocery service** to further support the residents in their journey toward stability. Currently, Sai volunteers provide **non-perishable groceries and fresh fruits** to two tiny home villages each month: Miracle Tiny Home Village in





Tukwila and Maple Leaf Tiny Home Village in North Seattle. Both villages are managed by the **Low-Income Housing Institute (LIHI)**. Grocery items include cereal, soup, coffee, oats, pasta and sauce, vegetables, juice, bread, peanut butter, and healthy snack bars. Since most items are non-perishable, they are provided in bulk, sufficient to last residents for several weeks. Volunteers have found that even small additions, such as a warm cup of coffee each morning, can offer comfort and dignity far beyond basic needs.

Encouraged by positive feedback from village coordinators, the team has since expanded its support. With Swami's continued grace and the relationships built through regular service, SSSIO volunteers are also providing **welcome kits** to new residents, which include practical items such as pillows, towels, hygiene products, sewing kits, dryer sheets, and more.

Each of these additions reflects **the spirit of X+1**, a continual commitment to ask, 'What is the next step to be taken?' With each step, may love deepen, humility grow, and the capacity to serve expand—one village at a time, with open hearts and steady hands.

### Feedback from the Village Manager:

*"The Low-Income Housing Institute (LIHI) is so grateful to the Sri Sathya Sai group for their ongoing support of our clients transitioning out of homelessness. They have provided multiple carts full of nutritious food and contributed countless volunteer hours in the construction and development of new shelters. Thank you, everyone at the Sri Sathya Sai group, for your contributions and for your unwavering commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of those in need."*

### Reflections from Volunteers:

- *"I have been participating in food service projects where we prepare meals once a month. However, this project also serves as a powerful reminder that the members of these communities are human beings with daily needs, such as a healthy breakfast or a cup of coffee, which are essential to their well-being."*
- *"This experience has been a profound journey of self-improvement, allowing me to witness the remarkable empathy and kindness of the residents of tiny homes. Their resilience and warmth have deeply enriched my understanding of compassion and service."*

# The Cleansing Within

Serving, Surrendering, and Awakening



**SERVING IN THE SRI SATHYA SAI INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION (SSSIO) HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE**, especially over the past four years. It was 2021, and amidst the peak of the COVID-19 lockdowns, global conflicts, unexpected organizational changes, and an emerging financial crisis, Ms. Vahinie Pillay and I took on the roles of International and Deputy International Young Adults Coordinator, respectively. Many Young Adults were struggling with mental health issues, experiencing fatigue and confusion, and questioning their faith. It felt as if Swami was shaking us all up.

The same was true in our own lives; personal challenges kept coming one after another. It seemed we were living through the very times Swami once described to Mata Betty, a devotee from New Zealand, in a private interview in 1990, and as recounted by others:

*“A time is coming in the near future when everything will be spinning. I will be cleaning, cleaning, and cleaning (like a washing machine). I will be cleaning every single heart. This has to happen before the golden age can begin.”*

Fast forward nearly four years to the present time, and my heart is filled with gratitude, renewed faith, and a deeper love for our beloved Sai. The way He has been “cleaning” all of us, especially the YA leaders we work with, is unfathomable. **No doctor, therapist, healer, or modern self-help Guru can reach the deepest corners of our hearts, the unconscious mind, or remove the *vasanas* (subtle tendencies) and negativities accumulated over lifetimes, the way our Swami can.** Whilst each of us carries our unique *vasanas* and pursues personal paths to purity, I seize this opportunity to reflect on some of the ways I’ve witnessed and experienced **Swami’s greatest miracle: the transformation of the heart.**

## Letting Go of the Pressure to Be Perfect

The role I was given helped me realize how much pressure I put on myself—and, unknowingly, on others as well. I saw how the mind constantly sets unrealistic expectations of what is “good enough.” No matter what we did, it was never satisfying; we were always chasing unattainable perfection.





Shruthi Vijayakumar speaking at the 2018 SSSIIO Go Green Conference

Despite the numerous calls we had with the YAs and the many initiatives we embarked on or completed, our minds were never truly happy or satisfied. One day, I was shocked to realize how much guilt it was generating—and how the mind used that guilt to push me to do more. Swami helped me see that this was an old tendency—one that had driven academic and extracurricular achievements in school, earning praise from parents and teachers. But now, I was conscious of the burden this tendency placed upon me. It made surrender difficult, as the mind clung to outcomes and judged the results of our efforts.

Through the work and projects we undertook, Swami gave me countless opportunities to bring awareness to this tendency and surrender it at His Feet. By His grace and love, guilt and pressure gradually transformed into a sense of lightness and joy in service. I began to feel peace with whatever sincere individual and collective efforts we could make, free from the mind's judgment. **A deeper compassion, peace, and acceptance began to awaken within me—toward both myself and others.** I noticed these changes not just in my role in the

Organization, but in all areas of life (Thank you, Swami!).

### The Humbling Journey of Patience and Change

As young people, we often have great enthusiasm and energy, but we can lack patience, which tends to grow with age and experience. When we began our roles, it was clear the YA program needed to adapt to changing times. However, we quickly realized that having an idea and executing it are two very different things!

Change takes time. It requires patience to bring people along, build understanding, address concerns, and move forward in unity, whether with fellow YAs or elders. It was a humbling process. Changes that we thought would take several months to complete took several years! Swami taught me that no matter how urgent change may seem, it's not enough to do the right thing; it must be done in the right way. **This requires humility, surrendering our willfulness, and trusting His timing.**

Just as a seed needs time to become a tree, I began to appreciate that any change, whether in our own transformation, difficult life situations, or organizational evolution, requires its own time. This experience has shown me the importance of resisting the urge to push or force things and instead developing the strength and faith to bear discomfort or pain, whilst change naturally unfolds in its own time.

### Growing Self-Confidence and Trusting Intuition

With Swami's grace, in 2024, after a five-year hiatus, Young Adults could finally meet in person, and we hosted an International Young Adults Leaders Retreat at Sai Prema in Athens, Greece. This gathering was a powerful opportunity to strengthen unity, build heart-to-heart connections, and carry forward the changes we were working on to evolve the YA program.

Planning and executing this retreat was another profound, meaningful learning experience. Situations arose that required difficult decisions. At times, I felt confident about our choices, but in other moments, emotions clouded clarity. There was fear, hesitation, or confusion, especially when faced with conflicting advice. Through these experiences, Swami uprooted many fears and instilled deeper courage to follow one's intuition, even when it led in a different direction than expected by others or that we had planned. **Most of all, He taught us to call on Him more sincerely and to rely on Him more and more.**

### Calling Him with All Our Heart

Swami, You humble us again and again by showing how polluted our minds are and how little we know, despite the mind feeling "convinced" it knows what is right. Please let us always remain humble and receptive to Your guidance!

Our prayers to Swami for guidance have never felt as sincere and heartfelt as they do now. In fact, my favorite part of Sai meetings has become the opening prayer, where we pause to yearn for His presence, guidance, and love. And it has been the most humbling and fulfilling experience to witness how Swami responds—by pointing us to a teaching of His, sending someone to help us, or simply dissolving our doubts and giving us the courage to move forward with what is in our hearts. **Time and time again, He has shown us that He is ever listening and ever responding.**

Swami has often taught us that what seva (service) does to you is much more important than the seva you do. Looking back on these years, I feel overwhelmed with gratitude for how Swami has shaped, cleansed,

and purified us. **Serving in the *karmakshetra* (field of action) of the Organization is one of the most powerful and accelerated paths for transformation I have experienced.** Situation after situation arises, sometimes daily, through which Swami teaches, refines, and weeds out our unwanted tendencies. And in those difficult moments, He blesses us with *satsang*—the company of our Sai brothers and sisters—who have given me much strength, hope, and courage. **They remind me that whatever is happening, however challenging, must be for our highest good, even when the mind or emotions struggle to see it.**

In a letter to Dr. John Hislop, Swami once wrote words that are especially close to my heart at this stage of the journey. **They remind us that all the churn and struggle we go through in life is not in vain—it is His divine alchemy at work.**

*"The harder the circumstances, the more trying the environments, the stronger are the men who come out of those circumstances. So, welcome all these outside troubles and anxieties. When the bubble bursts, it finds itself the whole ocean. You are the whole, the infinite, the All. Out of long churning (of) this milk of the world comes butter, and the butter is ... GOD. Men of heart get the butter, and the buttermilk is left for the intellectual."*

I pray that Swami blesses us all with the opportunity to serve Him throughout our lives. May we become hollow flutes in His hands, letting His divine melodies heal, comfort, and uplift all of creation through us.

Ms. Shruthi Vijayakumar  
NEW ZEALAND





# MY GURU, MY GUIDING LIGHT



Jivika | Group 2 | Malaysia

"Love is selflessness;  
self is lovelessness."

- SATHYA SAI BABA ♡

I think this quote defines love as putting others before oneself. Being selfless and prioritizing others' needs is one of the things that defines love. When someone is focused on themselves, they can't give & receive true love because their self-centeredness prevents them from doing so. Thus, the quote emphasizes the contrast between love as an outward, selfless feeling & lovelessness as an inward, selfish force.

Riya M | Group 2 | USA



This painting shows the friendship between me and Swami. We are at the beach, watching a beautiful sunset. He has always been a good friend to me. Swami says, "Friendship must bind two hearts and affect both of them beneficially, whatever may happen to either—loss or gain, pain or pleasure, good fortune or bad. The bond must survive all the blows of fate and be unaffected by time, place, and circumstance."

24 May 1973, Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 12

Sai Sarvaantharrvani | Group 2 | USA



## Sathya Sai, a Heart So Kind

A gentle smile, a loving hand,  
He taught us how to serve and stand.  
With truth and love, he lit the way,  
And gave us hope each night and day.  
He healed the sick, he calmed the mind,  
He taught us all to just be kind.  
Though he is gone, his light shines bright,  
A guide for us, an endless light.

Sri Harshini | Group 3 | Thailand

Swami, your eyes twinkle with kindness each  
time you shower your blessings on us  
Swami, your great acts of love are always  
adored and remembered  
Swami, the world is so much better with you  
in it  
Swami, you have helped many people in  
need and watch over us, your children,  
everyday  
Swami, your name is uttered with respect,  
love, admiration, and devotion  
Swami, you give us everlasting peace,  
comfort, and blissful energy  
Swami, thank you for dedicating your life  
to bring more good deeds, happiness, and  
prosperity to the world  
Swami, thank you for all that you do to take  
care of us

Srinika B | Group 2 | USA

There is no greater  
friend for anyone  
than god  
- Sathya Sai Baba

Surabhi M | Group 3 | Canada

Baba,  
My Guru, My Guiding Light.

Dear Baba, you are my guiding light;  
You never give me a fright.

You are always there in my difficult times;  
That is why I always thank you at bedtime.

I often face challenges;  
Through your messages I become courageous.

Through Balikas, I gain a lot of benefit;  
Your teachings grant me a lot of merit.

Thank you Baba for always guiding me;  
My Superstar always shining within ME!!!!!!

Love, Kirav Doshi  
Group 2, Year 1

Kirav D | Group 2 | Malaysia



# 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
August 9-10, 2025	Saturday-Sunday	Akhanda Gayatri
September 5-7, 2025	Friday-Sunday	Sri Sathya Sai International Conference, Zone 4, Malaysia. Theme: <i>"Celebrating 100 Years of Love, Service, and Human Values"</i>
October 11-12, 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 [↗](#)



Purity of the mind is of utmost importance. Keep your mind pure, free from all kinds of pollution. Whenever evil thoughts enter your mind, remind yourself, “This is not good; this is not mine; not mine,” and drive away those evil thoughts. Tell yourself, “These are all not my property; my property is only good thoughts and good ideas.” Constantly remember the truth that love is God. Live in love. If you can cultivate such positive and noble thoughts, everything will turn out good for you.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

July 28, 2007





**sathyasai.org**

Love All • Serve All  
Help Ever • Hurt Never

