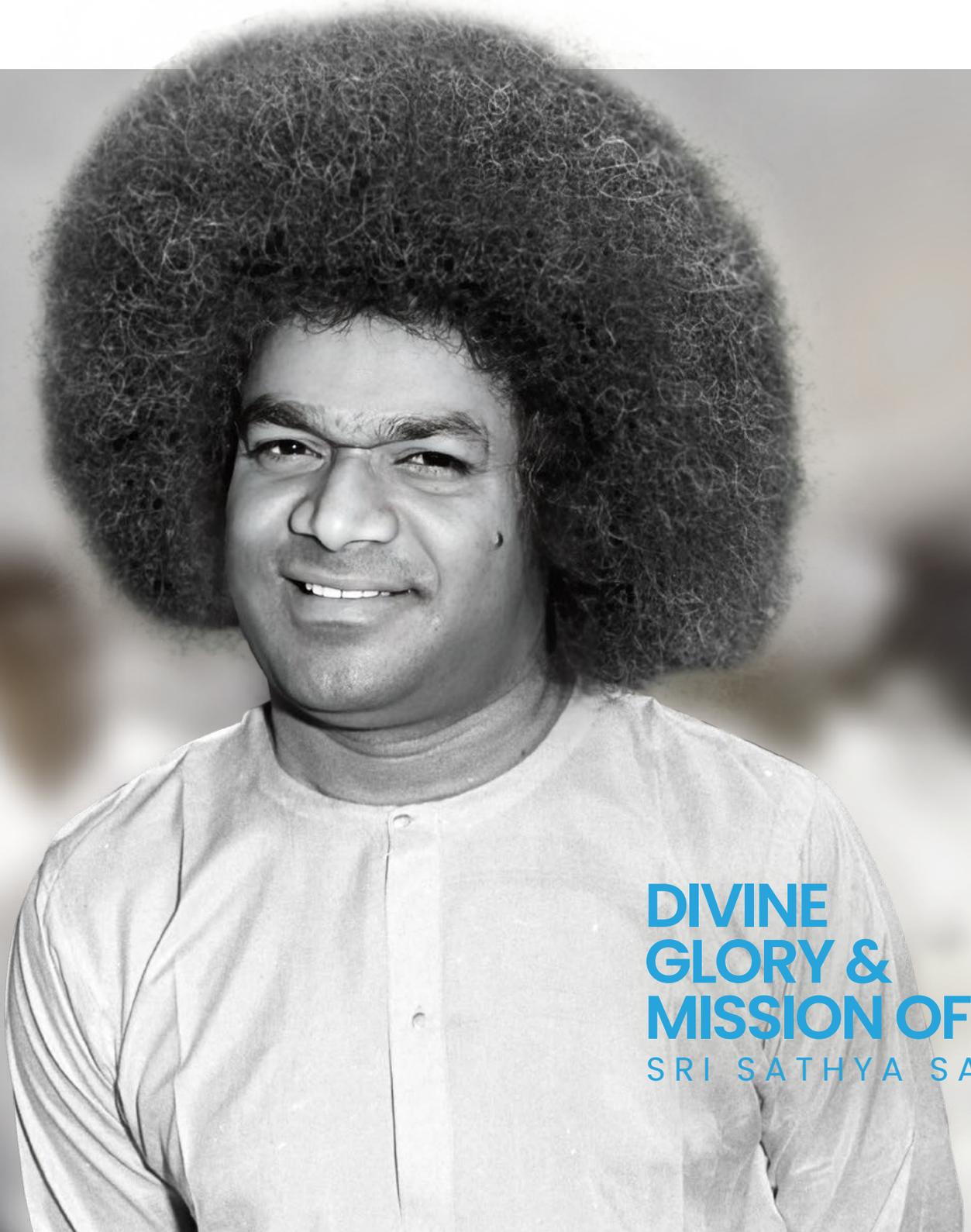




S A T H Y A S A I

THE ETERNAL COMPANION

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 8
OCTOBER 2022



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



Embodiments of Love! One who thinks of God constantly will never be put to hardships. You may argue that you continue to suffer though you think of God all the time. How can you say that thinking of God has not helped you at all? It certainly would have mitigated your suffering without your knowledge. God's grace will certainly alleviate your suffering. By chanting the divine name, even mountains of sin will vanish like mist into thin air. You should think of God at all places, at all times, and under all circumstances (*Sarvada Sarva-kaleshu Sarvathra Hari-chinthanam*) with pure love and total faith. Your prayers will be answered only when there is sincerity in you.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

October 19, 1999



DEDICATED WITH LOVE AND GRATITUDE TO
BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA





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Cover picture taken in Brindavan, in the summer of 1972, when Bhagawan graciously smiled for the photographer, Sri S. Balasubramanya.

OM

ITS POWER AND SECRETS

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is the embodiment of Om, the supreme *Parabrahman* (supreme Godhead). In this auspicious month of October, as we celebrate Avatar Declaration Day, let us dive deep into the significance, power and secrets of Om.

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba proclaimed that Omkar is the correct address of the Lord and we get Self-realization by chanting Om.

Om, also called *Pranava* is the primordial sound that indicates *Brahman*, the supreme reality that is beyond name, form, attributes, time, space, and causation. Om is the direct method to attain *Brahman*. Om is considered indicative of *Brahman*, but the scriptures emphasize that ultimately Om is *Brahman*. **Brahman is the goal and is attained by chanting Om.**

Om is the source of all creation and creation is sustained by Om. Om is the source of all the manifest and unmanifest universe. All sounds, symbols, and letters in the universe are derived from the syllable Om.

Hence, it is important to dwell on the teachings of the great *Avatars* about the significance of Om.

Why Chant Om Twenty-one Times?

The day's program in Prasanthi Nilayam starts with the recitation of Om 21 times in the morning, followed by *Suprabhatam*

(morning awakening prayer to the Lord). The chanting of Om is called Omkar. The chanting of Om helps to purify the five organs of action, five organs of perception, five vital airs, and five sheaths as noted below:

- Five organs of action (*karmendriyas*): speech (*vaak*), hands (*pani*), feet (*pada*), organs of excretion (*payuh*), organs of procreation (*upastha*).
- Five organs of sense perception (*jnanendriyas*): Eyes (*chakshu*)—organ of sight, Ears (*karna*)—organ of hearing, Tongue (*jihva*)—organ of taste, Nose (*ghrana*)—organ of smell, and Skin (*tvak*)—organ of touch.
- Five vital airs (*vayus*): vital airs associated with the lungs and heart (*prana*), abdomen (*apana*), whole body (*vyana*), throat (*udana*), and navel (*samana*).
- Five sheaths (*koshas*):
 - ♦ food sheath (*annamaya kosha*)
 - ♦ vital air sheath (*pranamaya kosha*)
 - ♦ mental sheath (*manomaya kosha*)
 - ♦ intellectual sheath (*vijnanamaya kosha*)
 - ♦ bliss sheath (*anandamaya kosha*)
- Thus, when all the *indriyas* (ten senses), *pranas* (five vital airs), and *koshas* (five sheaths) are purified, by chanting the Om 20 times, then the twenty-first Om, which represents Brahman or Atman, is realized.

Events and functions in the Sathya Sai organization always begin with the chanting of the Om and conclude by chanting *Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti*. Thus, Omkar is an integral part and source of all spiritual practices. In fact, when we sing the *Aarthi* to Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, we say, “*Omkara Roopa Ojaswi*” which means He is the brilliant embodiment of Om.

It may be noted that Om represents the attribute-less, formless *Brahman* (*Nirguna Nirakaara Brahman*). However, followers of theistic religions like Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jains who worship God with name, form, and attributes (*nama, rupa, and guna*), also add Om as an epithet to *mantras* they chant.

When **Lord Rama** was asked by Hanuman, His dearest devotee, “What is the way to Self-realization?” He replied, “The only scripture one needs to know is the *Mandukya Upanishad*,” where the main focus is on the citation and the significance of Om, namely *Pranava*.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, **Lord Krishna** declares that “Amongst vibrations, I am the syllable Om.” He is Om; He is the *Pranava*. Sri Krishna also says, “Om is *Brahman* (*Om ityekāksharam Brahma*), and, anyone who leaves the body while chanting *Om* will be liberated from the cycle of birth and death (Bhagavad Gita, Ch 8:13).”

What Scriptures Say About Om

The *Upanishads* also extol Om. The *Mandukya Upanishad* is the shortest *Upanishad* with only 12 verses. The first verse of the *Mandukya Upanishad* starts with “*Harihi Om*.” This proclaims that Om is *Brahman*, and how one can realize the Self through Om.

The very first sentence of the *Chandogya Upanishad*, a part of the *Sama Veda* says, “One should meditate on the letter Om to realize *Brahman*.” Also, many other Upani-



shads, including the *Mundaka Upanishad*, *Shvetashvatara Upanishad*, *Taitriya Upanishad*, *Prashna Upanishad*, *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, all extol the significance of Omkar and proclaim that Om is *Brahman*.

In the *Yoga Sutras*, Sage Patanjali proclaimed in sutra 1:27, “Om is the word that denotes God (*Tasya Vachaka Pranava*).”

How to chant Om?

Om, is a composite of the phonetic sounds, A, U and M. ‘A’ emanates from the back of the throat (gullet), ‘U’ from the palate in the interior of the mouth, and ‘M’ from the closing lips. But when Om is uttered, the sound truly emanates from the region of the navel.

One should not utter Omkar in two stages because of fear of failing to hold the breath long enough. One should persevere and hold the breath until one can chant it one sweep with a steady ascent (‘A’), crescendo (‘U’), and descent (‘M’) of a curve, and the intervening silence equally. Swami says we should undertake this *Pranava sadhana* by watching the breath as it goes in and out listening in silence to the *Soham* (I am

that) and pondering over the meaning of *Soham*.

Om Represents Triads

Three types of knowledge:

1. Om enables one to listen (*shravyadi*)
2. Om enables one to recite (*samshadi*)
3. Om enables singing (*udgayati*)

Thus, by listening, reciting, and singing, one's mind gradually merges into Om. Thus, Om is the essence of all essences.

The three sounds of A, U, M:

1. A, U, and M, represent the **three worlds**, the physical (*bhuloka*), astral (*bhuvarka*), and solar worlds (*suvarloka*).
2. It represents **three Vedas**, Rig, Yajur, and Sama, which elaborate on what is contained in Om.
3. It also represents the **Hindu Trinity**, Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwara. BRAHMA is represented by the sound 'A'. The sound 'U' is the manifested form of VISHNU and the sound 'M' is the form of MAHESHWARA or Shiva, representing the principles of creation, sustenance, and dissolution respectively.

Swami says that the three forms comprising the Trinity are not permanent because they have taken form. Anything which has a form cannot be permanent. In the worship of the divine with the attributes, the trinity exists in each individual as the witnesses. But there's only one syllable consisting of A, U, and M, which is the One underlying all three forms, and that is *Omkaara*, *Pranava*. It is an expression of the attributeless divine principle. Any number of births we may take and however long we worship these three forms, we will never free ourselves from the cycle of birth and death. If one wants to get rid of birth forever, one must worship the formless and attributeless principle, which *Omkaara* represents.

Pranava as the Source of Eight Divine Treasures

Om is an integral syllable that stands for the eight divine treasures (*Ashta-Aishwaryas*), namely the audible form of *Brahman* (*shabdabrahma-mayi*), that which pervades the universe of the animate and inanimate things (*charachara-mayi*), that which is the resplendent, divine light (*jyothirmayi*), that which is the master of speech (*vang-mayi*), that which grants eternal bliss (*nithyananda-mayi*), that which is the transcendental reality (*paratpara-mayi*), that which is the mother of illusion or *maya* (*maya-mayi*), and the eighth that is auspiciousness itself (*Sri-Mayi*).

Pranava - the Controller of Spiritual Centers (*Chakras*)

In the human body, there are spiritual energy centers in the form of a lotus flower at each center. These are also called *Chakras*. These are centers of divine energy and chanting of OM helps in gradual movement of the divine energy from the lower *chakras* to higher ones till one gets Self-realization.

Four States of Consciousness

The direct method of realizing *Brahman* is by chanting Om, the *Pranava*, which grants us enlightenment.

The *Mandukya Upanishad* beautifully explains that Om has four states represented by the letters A, U, M, and the silence that follows. The Upanishad refers to these three states, as waking, dreaming, and deep sleep that are common to everyone. Then there is a fourth state that is called the *turiya*, the stage of consciousness of the Self that is represented by the concluding silence in Om.

Following is a brief description of these four states:

1. **'A'** represents the **waking state** (*Jagrat*). In this state, consciousness is turned outward to the external world, it is about experiencing gross material objects through the senses.
2. **'U'** represents the **dream state** (*Swapna*). In this state, consciousness is turned toward the inner world. The mind can work out its unfulfilled wants, wishes, desires, and attractions that are not allowed to play out in the external world.
3. **'M'** represents the **deep-sleep state** (*Sushupthi*). In this deep-sleep state, there exists neither the desire for any gross or subtle object nor any dream sequence; the deep impressions of the mind are stored here in latent form like seeds. When certain conditions are met, they can play out in dreams or grow into actions in the waking stage.
4. Finally, the important state, **pure consciousness, turiya** is the fourth state. Herein the consciousness is neither turned outward nor inward; it permeates everything and just observes. It is the state of consciousness that is present through all the other states, waking, dream, and deep sleep. It is the unchanging reality.

Once Swami explained to me that what we go through in the daytime is 'day-dream,' just like what we dream at night is the 'night dream.' Then I asked Swami, "If everything is a dream, then aren't You also a dream?" Swami beautifully replied that He is present in all the states, including the waking, dreaming, deep-sleep, and even beyond in the *turiya*. That is divinity, which **is divine consciousness. This is what we experience when we get Self-realization.** We see the same consciousness, which is pervading all states, in all places, at all times, and in everything as the eternal reality. That is the supreme goal of chanting *Omkar*, or *Pranavopasana*.

Benefits of Chanting Omkar or Pranavopasana

The greatest and **ultimate benefit and experience is to be liberated** or get Self-realization. However, there are other benefits too.

The *Mandukya Upanishad* directs the spiritual seeker to divide 'Om' into its three syllables, A, U, and M, followed by silence.

The seeker should contemplate in the waking state when uttering the syllable 'A'. This is the most pervasive and common stage, and the experiencer of this waking state is called *Vaiswanara*. The one who meditates on this state **fulfills all desires and becomes a leader.**

Next, the dream state represented the syllable 'U'. The experiencer of dream state is called *Tajjasa* and one who meditates on it attains superior knowledge and is treated fairly by all. His progeny and his descendants in his lineage all **attain Self-knowledge.**

Third, the one who meditates on the deep sleep state as represented by 'M', wherein all things become one, will realize the nature of things and beings and **becomes the knower of all things.** The experiencer of the deep sleep state is called *Prajna*.

Finally, the silence between the chanting of two consecutive Omkars is used to contemplate on the *turiya* state, the *Atma*, or consciousness. This state is soundless, formless, incomprehensible by the mind, beyond the senses, blissful, and non-dual. This fourth state is the Self. The one who knows it merges in the Self, which means **one attains Self-realization.** The knower of *Brahman* becomes *Brahman* (*Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavati*).

Once we realize *Brahman*, we experience *Brahman* in everything, everywhere, ever, and thus live in Love and Bliss.

Jai Sai Ram.



Divine Discourse



**All are One,
Be Alike to
Everyone**

*Karmamuna puttujanthuvu,
karmamuna vrudhhi pondi,
karmamune chanun
Karmame Narunaku Daivamu
Karmame sukha dukhamulaku karanamilalo*

Beings born out of action (*karma*),
grow in action (*karma*),
and perish in action (*karma*).
Karma is verily the God for man
Karma is responsible for joy and sorrow in this world
(Telugu poem)

People experience pain and pleasure in this world. When they experience joy, they would say it is due to their deservedness. On the other hand, when they undergo difficulties, they attribute it to their fate (*karma*). Really speaking, both pleasure and pain are the results of one's own actions (*karma*). "As you think, so you become (*Yad bhavam tad bhavathi*)."
Based on the type of action we perform; we will experience the results accordingly. As is the food we partake in, so will be the belch that follows. Similarly, the entire world will revolve around the type of actions (*karma*) undertaken. **The whole world revolves around *karmas*. Hence, the actions (*karma*) performed by people should be sacred.**

The Three Facets of the Female Divine Principle

It is now Dasara festival time. What is Dasara? The celebration of Dasara festival is meant to purify the actions performed by the *dashendriyas* (5 senses of action and 5 senses of perception). Every human being in this world has to perform some kind of action (*karma*). **The presiding deity or the driving force behind these actions is the Divine Mother (also known as *Devi, Shakti or Durga*), who is the personification of energy.** Durga is the bestower of all kinds of energy (*shakti*) to perform various kinds of *karma* by human beings.

Goddess Lakshmi bestows various types of wealth like money, food grains, gold, different kinds of objects, vehicles, etc., so that one can lead a happy life in this world. The third facet of the female divine principle is Saraswathi, the goddess of learning and intellect. It is because of the Divine Energy that we can receive money, food grains, different kinds of objects, vehicles, education, and intellect.

Thus, the Navaratri (Nine Sacred Nights) festival teaches the importance of worshipping the Trinity of Durga (goddess of energy), Lakshmi (goddess of wealth), and Saraswathi (goddess of learning and intellect). One Bilva leaf with three petals is offered to the three-eyed Lord Siva, Who is the embodiment of the three attributes (*gunas*), Who holds the trident in His hand, and Who destroys the sins accumulated over three births (*Tridalam Trigunakaram; Trinetrām Cha Triyayudham; Trijanma Papa Samharam; Eka Bilvam Sivarpanam*).

Human Intellect is to be used for Righteous Actions

Everyone performs Devi Puja (worshipping goddess Devi) during the Navaratri festival, which confers energy to the individual. The worship of Lakshmi brings all kinds of wealth, and that of Saraswathi, learning, and good intellect. Hence, the worship of

“*My love is supreme and pure. I love those who love Me. I love even those who develop hatred toward Me. ...There is no one in this world whom I do not love.*”

all three aspects of the goddess in nine different forms is very important during the Navaratri festival. In all this worship, righteousness (*dharma*) is of utmost importance. **One should enquire deeply what result would accrue on account of a particular action and then get into it.** This intellect (*buddhi*), which is all-pervading in the human body, is expansive as represented by the deity Vishnu. Just as the electric current passes through the wire, intellect enters and influences all tendencies or attributes (*gunas*) of a human being. Hence, every human being should make proper use of one’s intellect and always undertake only righteous actions.

No doubt, one is bound by the result of one’s own actions – good or bad. No result is possible without performing an action. The Pandavas experienced the result of their *karmas*. So did Sita in the Ramayana. Hence, we should undertake good and sacred *karmas* beneficial to society, thereby sanctifying our lives.

This Unique Avatar is the Embodiment of Truth and Righteousness

This Sathyanarayana moves among people with smiles, converses with all, and makes them happy. Lord Lakshminarayana reclines on Adishesha, the mythical thousand-headed serpent. This Sathyanarayana too was gently rocked by a serpent under the bed, when He was a newborn baby. Sathyanarayana looks like any other ordinary human being, but He possesses extraordinary and superhuman powers.

They are indescribable. He appears as if He is an ordinary person and comes across as if He does not know anything, But His powers are unparalleled and beyond comprehension. **For Sathyanarayana, Sathya (Truth) is fundamental, and He propagates this principle. Wherever He goes, He teaches Truth only, the Truth that is not ordinary.**

*Sathyambu-nandundi Sarvambu
Srushtinche*

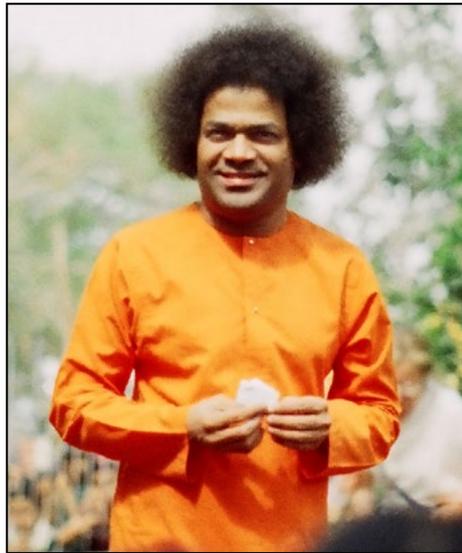
*Sathyambu-nandanage Sarva Srushti
Sathya-mahima leni sthalamedhi
kanugonna*

Shuddha Sathyamidiye choodarayya

Everything was created out of Truth
The entire creation rests in Truth
Can there be a place not permeated by
the power of Truth?
Behold this pure Truth

From Truth emerges righteousness (*dharma*). “There is no dharma greater than adherence to truth (*Sathyannasti paro dharmah*).” In fact, Sathyanarayana is the embodiment of Truth and Righteousness (*Sathya and Dharma*)! It is for propagating these two human values that Lord Sathyanarayana has incarnated in this human form as Sathyanarayana. Sathyanarayana is a unique Avatar, though He appears to be an ordinary human being. People often commit the mistake of taking Him to be an ordinary human, since He very closely interacts with them at a personal level. Whatever He speaks is Truth, Truth, and nothing but the Truth!

Truth is often times construed as giving expression to one’s own thoughts. It is not as simple as that. It is much more import-



ant to put them into practice. **Truth is one with the perfect accord between one's thoughts, words, and deeds.**

People do not follow My words properly. They take My words lightly, thinking them to be just a joke or fun. Whatever I speak, even if it is a joke or for fun, it is Truth, Truth, and Truth only! Unfortunately, people do not recognize this Truth, even those who move very closely with Swami. They, therefore, take it lightly. They just listen and forget about it. But surely the result of their apathy would be apparent sooner than later.

Only those who are unable to visualize the future will be taking My words lightly. Though Swami is moving in front of them, giving them *darshan*, talking to them now and then, and performing several gigantic tasks right in front of their eyes, people are unable to recognize His true nature and get convinced by His words. How strange it is! It is nearing 83 years since this body was born. I have not forgotten a single incident in this earthly sojourn but people say, "Swami forgets things." No, there is no truth at all in this statement. Forgetfulness is not in My dictionary.

It is a human weakness to misunderstand Truth, which is beyond the three periods of time (past, present, and future) and the

Even though God may appear to be involved in so many activities in this world, it is only for the pleasure of His devotees. He has no desires of His own. He has only one desire: "May all the worlds be happy (*Samasta Loka sukhino bhavantu!*)"

three states (waking, dreaming, and deep sleep). **I am now revealing that Truth. I have never tried to reveal this so far.**

Since the time has come to reveal it, I am doing so. You must recognize this Truth. Truth does not make any kind of distinction or differences. It has neither friends nor foes. It has no hatred or dislikes against anyone. All are the children of Truth (*Sathyam!*)! Hence, all are equal to Me. I do not make any distinction between people. You may think that I am giving more attention to some people or favoring some. You may also think that I am ignoring some people. No, this is not

true. You all know, and you must have also seen Me—I do not at all get angry against anybody, even though some talk ill of Me. I will always be smiling. Even the anger that I display sometimes is just to correct an individual. The students vouchsafe for this attitude of Mine. They wonder how Swami can keep such a smiling countenance in the midst of great criticism and how could Swami muster such great patience!

One Resident God as Self Immanent in All

For Me, all are one even though individuals appear to be different in form and qualities; there is only one divine force working through them. That is the power of *Atma* (*Atma shakti*). There is only one *Atmanarayana* (Resident God) immanent in all human beings, nay, all living beings.

“All are God’s children. God is the only father of all. Hence, we must love all. Others may or may not love us, but we must love all and serve all.

Every human being must try to realize this *Atmic* principle (*Atma Thathwa*). So many bulbs illuminate this hall. However, the electric current flowing in all these bulbs is the same. The bulbs may appear to be different, but the current is the same. Similarly, even though the names and forms of the living beings in God’s creation appear to be different, the *Atmic* consciousness permeating them is only one. If the main switch is switched off, all these lights go off and darkness envelops. **Thus, God illumines the entire universe as the *Atmic* principle that is immanent in all living beings and objects.**

Even though God may appear to be involved in so many activities in this world, it is only for the pleasure of His devotees. He has no desires of His own. He has only one desire: “May all the worlds be happy (*Samasta Loka Sukhino Bhavantu*)!” However, human beings will be experiencing the results of their own actions. It is not possible for all to be always happy in this ephemeral world. One may experience happiness, while another may suffer at the same time. This is the nature of the world. The sorrows and difficulties or pleasure and pain bring different experiences to different people, but the *Atmic* principle present in all human beings is only one. Electric bulbs may be of different colors and sizes, but the electric current passing through them is the same. Only the wattage of the bulbs is different. Depending upon the wattage, some bulbs may be bright while others are dim. The brightness or dimness is due only to the wattage of the bulbs and has nothing to do with the current. **Similarly, the difficulties, losses, sorrows**

and worries experienced by different individuals are only of their own making, and God has nothing to do with it.

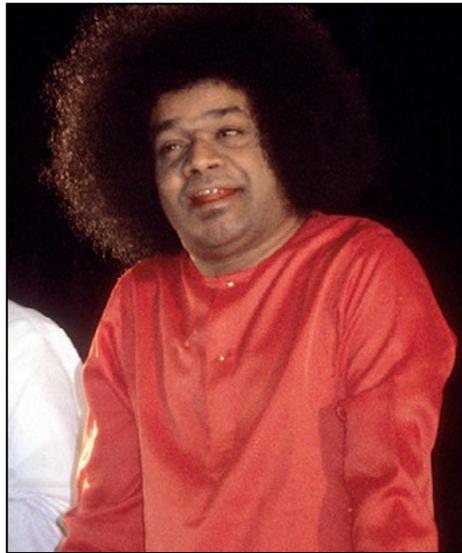
Lord Sathyanarayana is also called Vishnu. Lord Vishnu has incarnated as Sathyanarayana in this world. Hence, Sathyanarayana is verily Lord Vishnu. This has been explained in the Vishnu Purana (sacred Hindu text detailing the incarnations of Lord Vishnu). You must understand His true nature (*thathwa*) well. I have not given a discourse during the last ten days. What is the reason? People attributed different reasons for this, according to their imagination. But one thing is true. I am in front of the microphone today to reveal the truth. **My love is supreme and pure. I love those who love Me. I love even those who develop hatred toward Me.** I am also extending My love to those who are demonic and who try to put Me to great inconvenience. There is no one in this world whom I do not love. Unfortunately, people do not realize this truth.

People think, “Swami is not talking to us; perhaps Swami is angry with us.” Let Me assure you that I have no anger at all. I have only one thing: ‘hunger’, hunger for devotees! It is only due to this hunger that I draw devotees in large numbers to Me. Be assured that God is the embodiment of Love. He has no hatred toward anybody. It is to teach this principle of love that the Navaratri celebrations have been started. Different people worship God and talk about Him in different ways. I have no difference at all! I wish that all should live as embodiments of love and like brothers and sisters. Men are more valuable than all the

wealth of the world. All are God's children. God is the only father of all. Hence, we must love all. Others may or may not love us, but we must love all and serve all. People keep a distance from us if they do not understand the power of love. **Once our Love is transmitted to them, like the current, it will bring a good transformation in them instantaneously. I am waiting for such a transformation in the hearts of people.**

Thousands of people have heard My discourses. Thousands and thousands of people witnessed My divine powers on various occasions. Despite all that, people are unable to understand the true nature of My Divinity. People talk of so many things according to their perceptions and understanding. It is not their fault. There are very few people who realize the Truth and conduct themselves accordingly. Only those who realize the path of Truth will be able to follow it.

When people develop anger or hatred or differences of opinion about Truth, they keep themselves away from the Truth. Irrespective of their love or hatred, we should always love them. People keep a distance from one another due to anger or differences of opinion. This is a big mistake. This is because you are not different from others.



Only the fully blossomed flower spreads its fragrance. Similarly, people will be in different stages of evolution—some are like the bud, some are at the blossoming stage, and some others are like the fully blossomed flower, spreading their fragrance.

Today, they may appear to be different, but tomorrow they may come close to you and will become your brothers and sisters. All are brothers and sisters! Hence, all should love all, and live like brothers and sisters with love and unity. **“All are one; be alike to everyone.” This is My special message on this holy occasion of Navaratri.**

You will be able to realize the Truth sooner or later. When a tree bears fruit, not all the fruits in a bunch will ripen at the same time. Similarly, when a plant bears flowers, not all the flowers blossom at the same time. Some will be in the process of blossom-

ing, some have fully blossomed, yet others will be only in the bud stage. Only the fully blossomed flower spreads its fragrance. Similarly, people will be in different stages of evolution—some are like the bud, some are at the blossoming stage, and some others are like the fully blossomed flower, spreading their fragrance. We must wait patiently till the fragrance stage comes. This is My main message.

Today is the *Purnahuthi* (oblations at the conclusion of the *Yajnam*). What is meant by *Purnahuthi*? It means total sacrifice. My life has always been one of sacrifice! This sacrifice continues forever. That is full, this is full. When the full is taken out of the full, what remains again is full, says the ancient Vedic peace prayer (Because

Divine Consciousness is Non-Dual and Infinite).

*Purnamadah purnamidam,
Purnat purnamudachyate,
Purnasya purnamadaya,
Purnamevavashishyate.*
(Sanskrit verse)

Those who understand the Truth will be able to know. Students are still in the budding stage. They may not understand in depth. As they grow in age, they will be able to understand Swami's message in depth. It will take some time for them to understand the true spirit of Swami's words. Hence, keep patience till then and lead your life peacefully and in silence.

Students Must Avoid the Use of Mobile Phones

One more thing I wish to mention in this context. I see several boys keeping small phones in their pockets. They think that they are keeping phones for convenience and easy communication. They do not realize the ill effects of these instruments. Mobile phones are often misused. These are leading to establishing connections between boys and girls. They develop bad feelings and thoughts and form bad connections between them. Avoid such connections altogether so that bad thoughts do not enter the minds. It is said, **"The mind is the cause of bondage and liberation (*Mana eva manushyanam karanam bandhamokshayoh*)."**

To avoid bad thoughts, it is better not to have these connections. It is a common practice to give our telephone numbers to all and sundry. What happens thereafter? Bad contacts develop. All unnecessary calls are made to verify whether we respond to them or not. Thus, boys and girls develop unnecessary contacts and establish undesirable relationships between them. Hence, I strongly advise you not to overuse your mobile phones. It may be convenient in the beginning, but gradually it will lead to bad

ways. I will be approaching 83 years shortly. I have not made use of a telephone till now. Several people want to make calls to Me to express their sorrow and seek solace. Come what may, I do not use the phone. Hence, I have a right to guide you and warn you.

You must be very careful. You are still young and should act according to your age. Conduct yourself carefully, keeping your age in mind. If you don't take proper care of yourself, the world will look down upon you. You will be branded as a care-less youngster. **Respect and disrespect in the world depend on the way you conduct yourself.** You may think that your conduct is good, but it is for others to judge. Always conduct yourself in such a way that you do not give scope for any misunderstanding by others. The elders may exercise discretion and try to understand you in the proper spirit, but children of your age cannot do so.

Once misunderstanding sets in, you will miss the finer things in life and become doomed. Hence, I wish that all of you are very careful in your contacts and relations with others. If possible, dump your mobile phones in a well. You will be happy and peaceful. Better you don't acquire them at all! Even if you acquire one, establish contact and connection with only those with whom it is desirable. Do not develop unnecessary and undesirable contacts with others. By developing such contacts, you gather news from all and sundry and pass it on to others. You will not only spoil your mind with unwanted things but will also spoil the minds of others. Why all this unpleasantness? Is it not because of your unwanted and undesirable telephone contacts? Hence, **be careful and earn a good name for yourself.**

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

October 9, 2008



MY JOURNEY TO SWAMI

It is difficult to express Sai Baba's omniscience and omnipotence in words since it is well beyond anyone's comprehension. Swami's miracles abound around the world.

Swami's *Vibhuti* Cures Cancer

His devotees have been witnessing *Vibhuti* falling from His pictures in various places, Kumkum manifesting on the left side, and *Vibhuti* on the right side of Swami's pictures, corresponding to the *Shakti* and *Shiva* aspects of the Avatar.

While living in Delhi, I came to know of such a place – 101 Sunder Nagar, Delhi, where *Vibhuti* was manifesting, and I went with my family to visit this home in Delhi. *Bhajans* were going on, and we also joined in and enjoyed them. People collected the *Vibhuti* that appeared, before returning home. We stayed back to meet the lady of the house and expressed our desire to see the manifestations of *Vibhuti*. She took us to their puja room where we saw a large amount of *Vibhuti* on Swami's photo, some of which had fallen to the bottom. I was amazed, yet a bit skeptical, and I asked her about how she came to believe in Swami. Then she told me the story which I share below.

She said that she was suffering from cancer and was almost in the last stages. Then someone advised her to take Swami's *Vibhuti* to cure her cancer. Considering that she did not have many choices left, she decided to follow this advice, took the *Vibhuti*, and was completely cured. I found this story hard to believe. Furthermore, she also identified the doctor who attended her during her treatment for cancer – who was Dr. C. L. Sahani, a well-known physician. We left her home with *Vibhuti*.

The following Sunday, we went to Dr. Sahani's house and his wife received us cordially as the doctor was at the clinic. Mrs. Sahani inquired about our visit, and we asked her how they started believing in Swami. Then she started narrating the story of the same cancer patient, whom we met earlier at Sunder Nagar, Delhi. She said that by the time this patient came for consultancy, her cancer was in an advanced stage. Doctor Sahani performed a biopsy and informed her that there was only a bleak chance for recovery. The lady responded, "I want to take *Vibhuti*, Swami will save me." Seeing not many options, Dr. Sahani said, "Go ahead, nothing wrong with that." Thus, she started taking *Vibhuti*. After about two to three months, she reported feeling very well, almost normal. **Dr. Sahani did a biopsy and found no signs of cancer! The doctor had a second biopsy performed after 2-3**

days, which reconfirmed that her cancer was gone!

The first thing that came to my rational mind after hearing this story was that it is not humanly possible! However, Swami says, "Do not believe blindly. You must see and then believe. Believing blindly sometimes leads you down the wrong path." I was always skeptical, but after hearing this unbelievable incident first-hand, I started to develop faith.

My First Darshan of Swami in 1970

I heard that Swami was visiting Delhi. I was then working in Patna and I took a flight to Delhi with my family to have Swami's *darshan*. During the flight, accompanied by my wife, I thought that I have heard many stories about Swami, but will I be able to see Him from close range? I also thought, 'Is it possible to touch His feet? I know that He creates *Vibhuti*, but will I be blessed to receive it?' While all these thoughts were going through my mind, the flight landed in Delhi.

The next day, arriving at the venue, I saw big *shamianas* (canopies) at the Golf Links, Delhi in order to accommodate the large gathering expected for Swami's *darshan*. The hall was almost full when we reached, and we ended up near the last row. When Swami came out, we had only a brief glimpse of Him from far away. I also remember seeing a lady seated with her child on her lap, from some distance. The child started crying and

she tried to cover the child's mouth. As soon as Swami came near her, He just waved His hand and a banana appeared. He gave it to the crying child and told the mother, "She's hungry, give her this."

Soon after, the crowd dispersed. Upon learning that Swami was staying at a home next door, we went to the house where Swami was staying for *darshan*. As we were standing at the house gate, the gatekeeper kindly asked, "Do you want to come in?", and opened the gate. My heart was beating fast with anticipation and excitement. We took courage and went inside, although I was concerned that the owner of the house may turn us out as we were strangers. From the veranda, I could see that a door was partly open, and Swami was moving inside with 8 to 10 people around Him. I was in a dilemma. I thought, 'I am uninvited; I did not know anyone in the house; should I enter or not?' Finally, we gathered courage and went inside. Nobody paid attention to us, as they were all engaged in conversations with Swami. **I thought how fortunate I am to see Swami at such close range!**

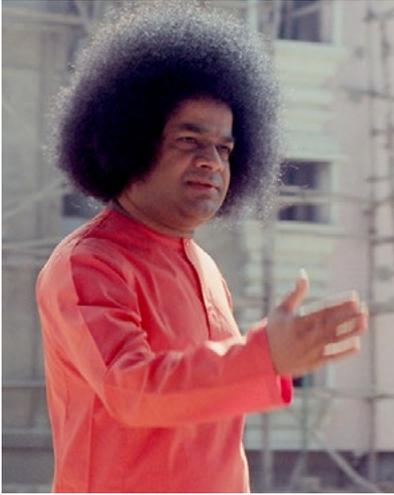
I wondered if it was possible to get His *padanamaskar* (blessings from touching the feet). Incredibly, just then, Swami came to my wife and me – and gave us *padanamaskar*! I was stunned and in bliss, not able to comprehend what transpired. Then I thought, 'Swami, if you have granted us this boon, can you also bless us by creating *Vibhuti*? Not for me, but at least for my wife and my little daughter. I will be happy even if you do not give it to me.' Unbelievably, once again, Swami came toward us, created *Vibhuti*, and gave it to my wife and my daughter, but not to me, and went away! **I was in complete ecstasy! After this experience, how is it possible not to believe that He is God?**

My First Visit to Puttaparthi

Now I want to share the story of our first visit to Puttaparthi in 1971. Slowly my faith grew with my experiences of Swami. I first visited Puttaparthi with my wife, my three to four-year-daughter, friends, and family members from Allahabad. One of them had polio and the other had physical challenges. We reached Puttaparthi with the ladies in our group, and found there was no accommodation, no electricity, and no water. We all sat at the gate on the sands in front of Swami's house. On the way from Bangalore to Puttaparthi, we experienced a heavy downpour of rain which stopped only a few kilometers from Puttaparthi, but heavy clouds still remained. Hence, I wondered why everybody was sleeping under trees, in case there was a sudden and heavy deluge.

We arrived on 22nd November 1971, the day before Swami's Birthday on 23rd November. When I reached Puttaparthi, I could not even find a place to spread our bed. There were seven people in our group, and I was not sure where we could sleep at night as we reached late in the evening. Someone said, "Sometimes Swami passes by the verandah on the first floor of His residence. Enjoy His *darshan*." We stayed near the gate and Swami came and blessed everyone with His *darshan* and left.

As I was wondering about our accommodations for the night, **I smelled the fragrance of incense which is believed to indicate Swami's presence.** Rays of hope lit up my mind upon smelling the fragrance. Within a minute or two, a young boy came and asked me, "Are you from the family of K. L. Misra?" That was my father's name, and we hailed from Allahabad which was far away. I do not know how he knew my father's name in that remote village in South India. The boy came straight to us in that large crowd and asked



I thought it would be an exalted blessing to receive a Shiva Lingam from Swami, who was Shiva Himself. I would relish such a blessed gift throughout my life. ... During my very first interview, He created a Shiva Lingam and gave it to me! ... How can one doubt His Omniscience?

me, “Are you searching for a place to stay?” We said, “Yes, yes, can we get a place?” He said, “Follow me.” We followed him as he led us to a place just behind the present Ashram, where there were tall, fully grown eucalyptus trees. Below one tree, there was enough room for seven or more persons to sleep. He said, “This is your place to stay for tonight.” I wondered how this spot was still available despite the entire area being packed with visitors. But we encountered yet another problem. There were ladies in our group, and there were no restrooms for them to answer nature’s call, and no electricity or water.

As I was wondering what to do, I remembered that a lady from Allahabad had informed me earlier that she lived in Puttaparthi. I thought maybe she still lived here and I asked the boy if he knew that lady. The boy said simply, “Follow me.” I was surprised at his reply but followed him. The boy took me straight to the lady I wanted to meet. Upon seeing me, she immediately said, “Oh Misraji, when did you come?” I was much relieved to see her, and she made all other arrangements for our stay for the next day. Then, I looked around for the boy to thank him, but he was nowhere to be found! I searched everywhere and also asked the lady from Allahabad about this boy. She replied, “Don’t worry. This is Swami’s grace.

You can see it everywhere. Since you were very uncomfortable, Swami made all the arrangements for you to have a comfortable stay.”

At that time, I was relatively a new devotee of Swami and did not know much about His miracles. **Later, I saw for the first time how a polio patient was cured by Swami. The person who went limping to Him, carried by others, actually walked back home on his own!**

My First Interview with Swami

Let me relate the experience of my first interview with Swami. Although I never asked for anything from Swami yet I had a desire in the back of my mind. Since He was Shiva–Shakti Avatar, I thought it would be an exalted blessing to receive a Shiva Lingam from Swami, who was Shiva Himself. I would relish such a blessed gift throughout my life. When I went into the interview room, He was talking with everyone present. During my very first interview, He created a Shiva Lingam and gave it to me! He asked me to worship it every day and do *Abhishekam* (ceremonial sacred bathing) by pouring water on the Shiva Lingam and drink the consecrated water. This incident happened in 1990, and even today, **I enjoy worshipping the Shiva Lingam, a precious blessing from Swami. I never asked Swami for this,**

although I had inner cravings. How can one doubt His Omniscience?

The Omnipresent Swami

In Puttaparthi, once we met a couple from Canada in the Ashram. My daughter earlier saw the couple being called by Swami for an interview and wanted me to ask them about the interview. I told my daughter never to ask anyone about what Swami told them because it was their personal matter. But on my daughter's persistence, I relented and requested the couple if they would be kind enough to share their experiences with Swami, without specifically asking about the interview. The lady agreed to do so and shared the following experience.

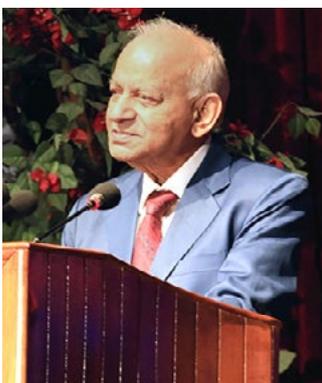
As we well know, Swami never asked anyone to change their religion or their chosen form of God. This couple were followers of Christianity and came to see Swami during the Christmas celebration. Swami called them for an interview and said, **"This is your God's Day. Ask me for anything, and I will give it to you."** They replied, "Swami, you have given us everything. We don't want anything more." Swami insisted that they ask for a boon since they were with Him on their God's Day. Finally, the lady said,

"Swami, we have only one son and he lives in Canada. Please bless him." That was the only thing she asked for and the matter ended there. It was a simple request.

When they returned to Canada, their son came to receive them at the airport, visibly excited. He said, "You know, Swami came and blessed me here!" The couple said, "You must be dreaming. How is it possible?" The son responded, "No, no, I was on duty at my station in the Canadian Air Force. I was not dreaming." Then the couple asked their son on which day this happened. The son responded that it was on Christmas day. The couple said, "No, no, on that day Swami was in Puttaparthi." But **the son was quite adamant that Swami had indeed visited him and blessed him. When the couple enquired about the time of Swami's visit, they realized that it matched exactly with the time when the wife had requested Swami to bless their son in Canada!**

Hence, Swami was physically present both in Puttaparthi and in Canada at the same time. This is a true account of a devotee and not a dream. Such is the Omnipresence of Lord Sai!

Justice A. P. Misra
India



Honorable Justice Ajay Prakash Misra has been an ardent devotee of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for many decades. He served as a Justice of the Supreme Court of India and the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court. He also served as the Chairman of the Human Rights Commission (Uttar Pradesh). A prolific and erudite speaker who has addressed many social and religious congregations, he was awarded the Mahatma Gandhi Peace Visionary Award on 12th December 2014 by the President of the Republic of Croatia.

He has served as a trustee of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust and as a member of the Education Trust of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.

FAITH AND TRUST IN GOD

We experienced and saw that all stars and planets were part of Swami, the entire universe was Swami. It was overwhelming.

My path to Swami began when I was very young. I had the privilege of having a twin sister. For me, life was a gift, and my twin sister and I shared everything. At the age of 27, my sister died in a traffic accident, and that was the beginning of my search for a deeper meaning of life. Whenever I walked down the street people would stop and exclaim "Oh! we thought you had died!", unaware that I am the surviving twin.

In my first interview together with my husband Stig in 1983, I asked Swami "Why are we born as twins?" and Baba answered, "That is not your business, it is something between the parents!" This gave me comfort and an answer so that I could let go of further thoughts about "Why my sister?"

In 1983, my life as a primary school teacher started in earnest. I taught students from first to sixth grade for my whole life, and I started again a new first-grade class based on my new spiritual knowledge. My students were like my children, and their parents were like my family. As a devotee in the Sathya Sai Organization since 1983, I incorporated Swami's message and His teachings in my classes. In 1984, I became an SSE teacher and teacher-trainer in the SSSIO.

Besides classroom teaching, I had the privilege to be a leader of the Remedial Center – a self-governing team with 8 teachers and class teachers. I wanted to combine Swami's values and His profound message with my duties as a remedial teacher. During meetings with the children, parents, and teachers, I explained the fundamental truth that the source of wisdom already exists and the child has all the values and potentials latent within him/her. This close cooperation with different teachers, parents, and children gave me the opportunity to have a heart-to-heart connection with all. I had the opportunity to be heard and seen by many and demonstrated that Swami's values and message were part of my daily life.

I served for 33 years as an elementary school teacher. During the last 20 years of service, I developed an awareness of Swami's presence, and **I hoped to follow Swami's words, "My life is My message" and further demonstrate that "my life is His message."**

It has been a gift to be His instrument throughout my life and teaching career. With Swami's inspiration and support, I have been able to transform the lives of many children who became young people, leading value-based lives. Many of them also came to believe in the Divine.

Experience of Divine Love

In 1984, Stig and I visited Baba again. This time, I got very ill, suffered much, and sought divine help. During darshan, I appealed to Swami mentally, asking Him if I could be relieved of my pains soon. In my mind, I heard Swami reply, 'Yes, in a couple of days.'

We were staying in the sheds at that time, Stig with the men and I with the women. The sheds assigned for families were unavailable, so we had to stay apart from each other. In the Ashram, we were part

of a group of ten from Denmark. Once, we needed to have our visas extended during our stay in India. One evening, along with another Dane, Stig went out to get the visas extended. He returned to the Ashram from the town Dharmavaram after picking up the duly extended visas and passports of all the Danes. Meanwhile, left alone in the Ashram, I had the good fortune to be relocated to a family shed. I wondered how this move could have happened – perhaps because I was ill. But it was odd that only my husband and I got accommodation in an otherwise empty shed. They gave me the key to the shed and told me to lock the door from inside so that no one else could enter.

After Stig returned late in the day, I shared with him the wonderful news of getting accommodation in the family shed. But I felt very weak at night due to the sickness and laid down to rest. I called for help deep within my heart and meditated on Swami to help me bear the pain. Lying alone in the big dark shed by ourselves, both of us had the same amazing, awe-inspiring vision at the same time.

We experienced that the roof opened up, and a powerful white light was pouring in. The light took over, and we saw Swami's face appear clearly in the expanse of the universe. Divine energy and pure love enveloped us. **We experienced and saw that all stars and planets were part of Swami, the entire universe was Swami. It was overwhelming.** No sound could be heard, everything was filled with the vibration of Divine Love; we were - in a state of being - with Swami in His majestic universal Divine form. The vision lasted for a long time.

Experiencing the love, vibration, and Divine Love so profoundly, it was permanently imprinted in our hearts. We knew that

Swami is the entire universe – the omnipresent Divine consciousness! Then the vision disappeared, the bright light diminished, but **we were still vibrating with His Divine energy of pure Love.**

Outside, several volunteers, began knocking on the door shouting, ‘What is happening?’ They shone their flashlights through the windows and wanted to come inside to check. We kept completely silent. We were so moved by what we had just experienced and seen that we could not think of anything else.

The next morning, when we came out of the shed, the Seva Dals were looking at us

as if we came from another planet. The day before, I was asked by the accommodation office to return the key, and in the afternoon, married couples and families with children were allowed to move into the shed.

Stig and I have talked about this overwhelming experience only once before. We have quietly saved the grace and gift of Swami in our hearts – as a token of His love, and an insight into His omnipresence, together with all other spiritual gifts that Swami has showered on us through the years.

Mrs. Birgitte Meincke
Denmark



Mrs. Birgitte Meincke has been a devotee of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba since 1982. She worked as primary school teacher and remedial teacher for 33 years and implemented the human values taught by Swami in her classes for many years. She was also the leader of the Remedial Center for learning disabilities.

Birgitte has been a member of the SSSIO Denmark since 1983 and has served as a Sathya Sai Education in Human Values teacher, both National and International Teacher Trainer, Center President, and National Coordinator for Devotional and Education Wings.

"There was no one to know who I am till I created the world, at My pleasure, with one word. Immediately earth and sky were formed, mountains rose up, rivers started flowing, sun, moon and stars sprang out of nowhere to prove My existence. Came all forms of life – plants, insects, beasts, birds and men. Various powers were bestowed upon them under My orders. The first place was granted to man, and My knowledge was placed in man's mind."

Bhagawan's written message to Shri. R.R. Chatterji of the Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Calcutta, announcing the mission for which He has assumed this human form.

– Sathyam Shivam Sundaram, Volume 4



Bhagavann

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Puttaparthi Post

Pudhucherry Dist. Perukonda Taluk

Dearest Mamekha & Ramu,

'Fling all your cares and burdens
Do not be doubtful about ^{your} path
For the path wakes up of itself
Under the dancing steps of freedom!'

I am happy to receive all your letters. you had written to me saying that you were going to Bombay, and so I had not written to you from all these days. Whether and whatever you may be, in your moments of suffering and joy alike you think of me, I know. You too know that I am always with you as the 'life of your life'. I am aware of the sufferings you are undergoing, not due to any sins or mistakes on your part, but due to the inhumanity of the humanity amidst which you are living. I make my beloved ones tread the path of suffering to reach me.

Well, Mamekha, in a way I am sorry to know that you are leaving for your country. you have left your people, your wealth ^{& wealth} and are come down to India in search of the path that leads you to God. you have left the material wealth to know the spiritual one and have come down to India, but I am afraid India has given you less than what you deserve. now you are returning to your country your dreams half-realised and unfulfilled. yes, Mamekha, I too want to see you before you leave India. let me know when you are intending leaving for your country, so that I may come down to Bangalore to give you Darshan and Bless you with peace.

With blessings to you & Ramu
Sri Sathya Sai Baba.
(Pranontheamilayam.)

Wherever You Are,
I am There and I yearn for You

Dearest Mamutha & Ramu,

*Fling all your cares and burdens
Do not be doubtful about your path
For the path worship of itself
Under the dancing steps of freedom!*

I am happy to receive all your letters. You had written to me saying that you were going to Bombay, and so I had not written to you from all these days. Wherever and whatever you may be, in your moments of suffering and joy alike you think of me, I know. You too know that I am always with you as the 'life of your life'. I am aware of the sufferings you are undergoing, not due to any sins or mistakes on your part, but due to the inhumanness of the humanity amidst which you are living. I make My beloved ones tread the path of suffering to reach me.

Well, Mamutha, in a way I am sorry to know that you are leaving for your country. You have left your people, your wealth and everything and have come down to India in search of the path that leads you to God. You have left the material wealth to know the spiritual one and have come down to India, but I am afraid India has given you less than what you deserve. And now you are returning to your country, your dreams half-realised and half-broken. Yes, Mamutha, I too want to see you before you leave India. Let me know when you intend leaving for your country, so that I may come down to Bangalore to give you Darshan and Bless you with Peace.

With blessings to you & Ramu

Sri Sathya Sai Baba
(Prasanthi Nilayam)

.....

Bhagawan's Letter in 1951 to Mrs. Adelina of Argentina. Sri Sathya Sai Baba endearingly called her Mamutha, which is 'dear mother' in Spanish. Ramu is her adopted son. This beautiful letter shows two aspects very clearly:

- Swami is always with us, wherever we are as the 'life of our life'.
- God too seeks, yearns, pines and craves for the devotee as intensely (if not more) as the devotee seeks, yearns, pines and craves for God.

LOVE IN ACTION



KAZAKHSTAN Environment Worshipped as a Limb of God

The Nura is a major river and the lifeline of northeast-central Kazakhstan. Yet, recent history shows the painful story of pollution in and around the river.

Offering their salutations to Baba, the in-dweller of Nura, SSSIO volunteers in Kazakhstan cleaned the banks for an entire day on July 23, 2022, collecting 12 large bags of garbage. Along similar lines, on July 25th, members of the Almaty Sai Center cleaned up the banks of their local river, Malaya Almatinka. Having filled the day in Karma



Yoga, they spent a few hours in Bhakti and Jnana Yoga through a zonal online meeting where they shared their experiences and lessons from the activity.



MALAYSIA Sai Annapoorani Mission

'Ladies Day' which is celebrated on the 19th of every month in accordance with Swami's directive, transformed into 'Nutritious Feast Day' for hundreds of needy and impoverished women across Malaysia. The Sai Annapoorani Mission 2022 sees more than 30 women volunteers across WP Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Pahang, Perak, Kedah, Johor, Negeri Sembilan, and Melaka join hands and hearts to serve fresh food to the homeless, seniors living in institutions, orphans, disadvantaged communities and municipal waste collectors on a monthly basis.

Implemented in coordination with the National Ladies Wing of the SSSIO Malaysia, the program aims to positively impact 2,000 lives by the 97th Birthday of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The total by August stands at 1,400.



The volunteers too are positively impacted as the joy of service is addictive and grows on them.

Besides that, the ladies supplied food, dry provisions, and hygiene items to flood victims on January 19 and organized a medical/cancer-screening camp on March 19, 2022 – both in Selangor.



MAURITIUS

Adding Life to a Day through Medical Service

Chantons l'amour, chantons la joie, chantons la paix, chantons Sai

(Let us sing for love, let us sing for joy, let us sing for peace, let us sing for Sai).

This was the refrain from the children at the Distress Shelter in Forest Side, Mauritius that energized and entertained SSSIO volunteers as they devotedly served in the medical/dental screening camp held on July 16, 2022. Here, 31 residents were given medical care, and those that needed further treatment were referred to the local health center.

What started purely as a service activity transformed into a gathering of love as every-



one joined together to enjoy the nutritious dinner cooked by the volunteers. The residents confessed that, for a change instead of adding a day to their life, they had added life to their day.



SRI LANKA

Home Sweet Home

The 'Pearl of the Indian Ocean' has been getting submerged under misfortunes galore. Yet, compassion and service abound aplenty in Sri Lanka.

Six poor families, each 'broken' in different ways were submerged in tears of joy as they received a gift they never imagined in their wildest dreams. One family had a mentally challenged girl in Urelu, two were headed by women without income in Katkovalam and Manthikai, two families in Kandy were living below the poverty line, and a family in Chavakachcheri comprised of an abandoned granny with her two young grandchildren.

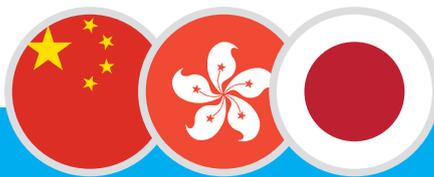
In the first half of 2022, the SSSIO of Sri Lanka constructed and gifted homes to these unfortunate families, receiving in abundance the blessings and love of the residents and, of course, that of our beloved Bhagawan.



See more stories of loving service by volunteers from around the world at the Sri Sathya Sai Universe website:

- <https://saiuniverse.sathyasai.org>

SSSIO ZONE 5



CHINA • HONG KONG • JAPAN

HONG KONG

1969

Bhajan sessions are held for the first time at a devotee's home, and became a regular activity.

1978

Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Hong Kong was inaugurated by the Consul General of India.

1995

"Stamp Your Mark on the World"
- Youth Convention in Hong Kong attended by 250 delegates

2011

"Bees" programme started by Young Adults to tutor local children in English, incorporating SSEHV

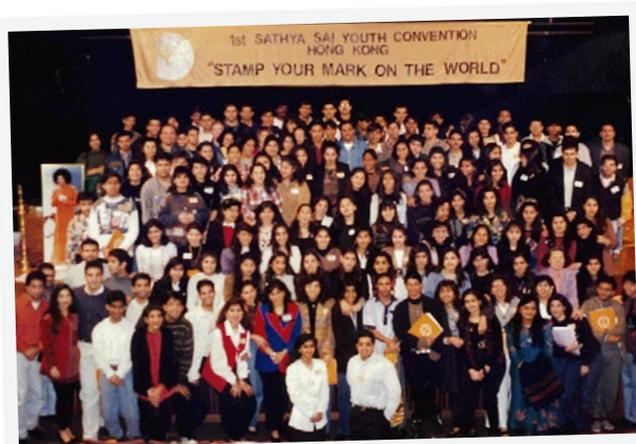


An early centre altar

In 1982, the Sathya Sai Centre borrowed a *lingam* from a Hindu Temple for Shivaratri celebrations. Devotees were thrilled as the image of Shirdi Sai appeared on the *lingam*.



One week later, the image of Sathya Sai also appeared on it! The Temple decided to install the *lingam* permanently at the Sathya Sai Centre where it currently rests. Everyone who has seen and touched the lingam has received many divine blessings!



Youth Convention, 1995



Interfaith Walk for Values, 2017

CHINA



2004

Hong Kong's Institute of Sathya Sai Education starts a Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values program in China.



2006

Service activities were started at an orphanage. When the orphanage supervisor saw Swami's picture, she said that she often saw him physically!

2012

A Sathya Sai centre was inaugurated in Guangdong Province.



Centre in Guangdong Province



Service at orphanage

Swami is my Guru Guide God

PROFESSOR KASTURI, THE BIOGRAPHER OF SWAMI, ONCE SAID THAT EVERY DEVOTEE'S EXPERIENCE IS AN UNWRITTEN BOOK.

I will share a few pages from the book of my life's journey and tell you how Swami has shaped my life.

I will now turn to a page in my life in 1999 when I attended the 2nd World Youth conference in Prasanthi Nilayam. Of the many spiritual pearls Swami gave us in His discourses during the conference, **a key recurring point Swami made that struck a chord within me and transformed my life was His emphasis on selfless service (Seva) and sacrifice.** Swami highlighted service as an essential means for one's transformation. I was inspired and determined to move forward and follow Swami's advice.

Miraculous Experiences in Medical Camps

Swami already had a master plan for my life. When I returned to the United Kingdom, I was given the opportunity by the Sri Sathya Sai Organization of the UK to help coordinate international medical camps in different corners of the world, including Kenya, Malawi, Sri Lanka, Russia, and India, among others.

During the planning phase and while conducting medical camps, Swami showed His omnipresence in different ways, which helped me internalize some of His precious teachings.

During a trip to Russia, the UK medical team had significant excess luggage containing medical items for the camp, and this was a cause for concern. We were unsure if this luggage would be allowed into the country without difficulty. Therefore, we silently chanted the Gayatri Mantra as we approached the airport check-in counter. When it was our turn to weigh the luggage, something unbelievable happened—suddenly, the weighing scales at all the counters of that airline went out of order, and all our baggage was accepted without any questions. **This was proof of Swami’s words: “Why Fear When I Am Here?” and “You do My work, and I will take care of yours.”**

During one medical camp in Kenya, I saw a patient at a distance and had this sudden urge to give him a packet of holy ash (*vibhuti*). I asked the patient to place the *vibhuti* under his pillow and sleep. The following day he came rushing over to me with an excited tone and said, “Madam, Madam, for the past 14 years, I have suffered from nightmares and disturbed sleep. But last night was different! I slept well and had no nightmares. It is God’s miracle. I request you to give me one more packet of this holy ash for my daughter, who also suffers from the same problem!” I realized that when we immerse ourselves in Seva and become instruments in His Hands, He

will work through us. I don’t know what made me give the *vibhuti* packet to this man. I believe Swami reached out to him to relieve his suffering. This incident made me realize that Swami will never let His devotees down wherever they may be. Also, when we unconditionally accept any opportunity for *servicing others*, **Swami will work through us and reinforce the faith in Him for both the person serving and the person receiving the Seva.** Swami has laid out a simple guideline for this: “Love all, Serve all.”

Such events deepened my understanding of Swami’s teachings and increased my faith in Him. Participating in Seva activities not only increased my faith in Swami and my love for others but also had an added benefit. I noticed that I had developed essential management and leadership skills, which were crucial for my professional life as an investment banker. Let me now turn the page to “Swami in my professional life.”

Swami Guides my Professional Life

Swami has always shown His presence and guided me in my professional life in addition to my service activities. The corporate and banking world is a challenging work environment, and our moral/ethical principles are at risk of being compromised. However, Swami took care of things for me – He gave me the right work ethic, taught me human values, and gave me the ability to work sincerely with a spirit of sacrifice. Therefore, despite all the challenges of the corporate world, Swami guided me to stay on the *dharmic* path, and He took care of the results.

At this point, I recollect a beautiful incident. During one of the interviews Swami gave in Prasanthi Nilayam to the UK youth and medical group, I sat by Swami's Lotus Feet in the bhajan mandir, looking into His beautiful eyes. A young person asked Swami how to deal with stress in the workplace. **Swami promptly responded that the solution is to consider work as worship.** This declaration made a profound impact on me. I now consider any work or task given to me as a directive from Swami. In my profession, I try to understand the client's needs and make my best effort based on the client's needs and not my convenience. However, I always try to ask if this was the right thing to do or not, as I consider myself answerable to Swami.

Swami Gives Promotion

Swami has helped me tremendously in the workplace. Through His Grace alone, I successfully survived three corporate mergers in my work tenure when hundreds of people lost their jobs. Swami can make the impossible possible. When pay cuts were the norm in an environment of downsizing, I received a promotion. Again, these events reinforced my faith that **Swami protects and takes care of our personal needs when we are immersed in His work and consider work as worship.**

I have experienced Swami's guidance while working on important projects as well. When the 9/11 terrorist strike happened, I was working in New York. My seniors asked me to prepare a paper for the aerospace and defense sector with a same-day deadline. I found the task quite difficult, given the airline industry just faced a significant risk incident. I didn't know where to start. I then closed my eyes and prayed to Swami to guide me and show me how this should be handled. Lo and behold, within a few minutes, I received a phone call from someone I did not expect, and that person wanted to discuss the very same topic with me! This discussion helped me start drafting my paper and better understand the content. Hence, I could complete the task as scheduled due to Swami's Grace.

Similarly, there have been other times when I faced challenging situations, and Swami has helped me make the correct decision.

Swami is Always with me

Whenever I am traveling on business trips, Swami reminds me that He is with me. He manifests in one way or the other.

During one of my work travels to Vietnam, after a site visit to a power plant that my bank had financed, my client and I were returning to Ho Chi Minh City. As we approached the city, I asked my client if there were any temples nearby, and he said there was one next to his office, where he dropped me off. As I entered the temple, I saw a huge picture of our beloved Swami in His blessing (*Abhaya-hasta*) pose, to my astonishment! With tears of joy, **I thanked Swami for being my 'Eternal Companion' in all my travels.**

There was another time when I had to travel to Pakistan for work. My flight was delayed, and I eventually got to the hotel late at night. Usually, when I reach any hotel, I set up a small altar in my room with Swami's picture. I then realized something was not working in the room, so I called the hotel maintenance

for assistance. A middle-aged Muslim man came to help out, and his eyes fell on the altar, and he asked, "You know Sathya Sai Baba?" I said, "Yes, how do you know Him?" The Muslim man said that he was originally from Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh! **Although we know Swami is Omnipresent, such incidences reinforced my faith and conviction that Swami is always with me.**

Swami has guarded and guided my growth both in my spiritual and professional life. He is my Divine Mother, and He continues to write the book of my life. I offer my gratitude to Mother Sai for everything that I am today. Swami has showered me with the love of countless mothers, the protection of a father, the support of a friend, and the guidance of a guru. Dearest Mother Sai, I pray to You to make me an instrument to work in Your Divine mission.

Mrs. Urvi Widhani

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates



Urvi Widhani hails from Kenya and came to Swami at the age of 16. She pursued higher education in the U.K. and subsequently moved to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Urvi has arranged and participated in many SSSIO service projects and medical camps during the past 21 years in remote areas in India, Russia, Zone 8 countries, Africa, Sri Lanka, Guyana, the Philippines, etc. She is currently the Secretary of the International Medical Committee of the SSSIO. In her professional field, Urvi is an Investment Banker, currently serving as Managing Director and Head of Loan Agency, Global Corporate Finance, at the largest bank in the UAE.

from the International Sai Young Adults

We are pleased to share updates on the work of Sai Young Adults from Mauritius, along with a personal reflection from a Sai Young Adult. There is also news of events and initiatives from the Sri Sathya Sai International Leadership Programme, Ocean of Music, and Pathways subcommittees.

SSSIO International Young Adults Committee



Sri Sathya Sai International Leadership Programme for Young Adults Graduation Ceremony 2022 and Enrollment Open for 2023

With the Divine grace of our dearest Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, we are delighted to announce the SSSILP Graduating Class of 2022 who have been chosen to be the leaders and carry forward His Divine mission.

After successfully completing nine, online instructor-led sessions in conjunction with completing the module pre-reading material as well as post-module activities, the graduates will conclude this esteemed program with a virtual Graduation Ceremony. Please stay tuned to our social media platforms and website for further details.

Enriched by Bhagawan's sweet and inspiring teachings on leadership, the program encompassed practical tools and exercises to equip the graduates to become ideal leaders not only within the SSSIO but also in the society at large!

The graduates will be joining 1,800 YA Alumni around the world who have been equipped with the knowledge, skills and tools needed to progress on their spiritual journey and to effectively serve in leadership roles in the Sri Sathya Sai International Organization.

We are also pleased to announce that registrations are now open for the 2023 SSSILP. The Programme Plan and the Application Form, can be found on our website: <https://sathyasai.org/ya/sssilp>.



AROUND THE WORLD

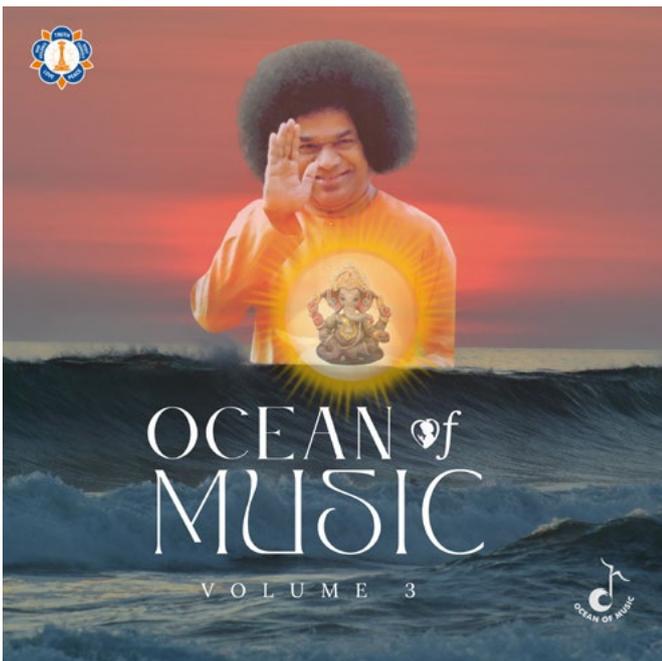
Tree Planting

Mauritius, Zone 9

Inspired by His teachings, young adults, children, and elders took part in the fourth phase of the Sai Tree Planting Service on August 27, 2022, in Mauritius. Large numbers of plants, saplings and trees of different varieties were planted at Camp Thorel State Land by enthusiastic and diligent volunteers. Participants shared that walking in nature, observing and absorbing its beauty, and the joy of service had to be experienced to be believed. This project not only helped everyone work in unity and learn about the importance of planting trees but also taught the importance of Mother Nature. Undoubtedly, spiritualizing our lives is the surest, best, and ultimate solution to not only protect Nature and keep the Earth pris-



tine but also help solve the major problems of this century. **Build today, plant for tomorrow. Let's save nature together!**



Ocean of Music, Volume 3

On the auspicious occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi, the Sai Young Adults of the SSSIO released "Ocean of Music, Volume 3." The album consists of an invigorating collection of 12 vibrant and blissful bhajans. To enjoy the bliss of music, the playlist is available on sathyasai.org/ya/ocean-of-music.

Stay tuned for Volume 4, coming soon!

Experiencing Sathya Sai Through Bhajans

I was born with multiple congenital heart defects and underwent open heart surgery when I was eight months old. A few hours before the surgery, I was placed in an incubator, ready to have the anesthesia administered. My mother wanted to open a bottle of *Vibhuti* when I grabbed it out of her hands. **The Vibhuti fell on my chest, and to the amazement of everyone around, it formed the shape of OM!** That was the assurance my parents needed from Swami that all would be fine. After the successful operation, I would wake up, eat, and sleep only to the sound of Sai *bhajan*.

When I was about four, I started asking my parents about the giant scar across my chest. My mother lovingly pointed to a picture of Lord Hanuman that she had intentionally hung on the wall behind my bed in which Hanuman is ripping open His chest, showing Lord Rama and Mother Sita inside. My mother said, "Just like Hanuman opened His chest to show the entire world that Rama resides in His heart, you too have this scar across your chest as a constant reminder that Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba resides in your heart." My mother also made me affirm every morning that just as Hanuman served Lord Rama, **I would serve the supreme Lord, Sai Rama.**

Later, I learned that the idol of Hanuman situated at the northern end of the Sai Kulwant Hall was installed by Swami on the very same day I was born – August 31, 1995! The idol depicts 'Bhajan Hanuman' – Hanuman in a trance, playing the cymbals, singing the glories of Rama. And I don't think this is a coincidence, as I shall explain later.

Experiencing Tears of Joy

In 2003, I had my first opportunity to see Swami in physical form. Before the visit, my mother told me that seeing Swami would be a life-changing experience and that I would shed tears of joy. But I could associate tears only with negative emotions, especially since I had lost my grandfather earlier that year. During my first *darshan*, Swami entered the hall in His car. In the distance, I could only see the chandeliers creating a glare



Born into a family devoted to Bhagawan for more than 55 years, Rushi Thanawala has served in various roles in the SSSIO including YA coordinator and devotional coordinator. He is currently a Deputy International YA Coordinator and Vice President of the Sri Sathya Sai Center of Jersey City, USA. Rushi holds degrees in Biology and Music, and works for a leading pharmaceutical company. His life-long passion is composing and singing Bhajans, and playing Tabla.

on the windshield. But as the car inched closer, Swami peered through and lit up something special in my heart. I burst forth in tears, and at that moment, I realized what it meant to have tears of joy.

It is the strongest memory from my childhood, permanently etched in my mind. **Every time I encounter a difficult situation, I try my best to reflect on the vision of the charming smile of Swami** on that beautiful day, which would create ripples of happiness in my heart.

Bhajan Craze

Inherently, I have always been attracted to and attached to *bhajans*. I would ask my grandmother to sing *bhajans* to me as I would fall asleep on her lap. I would demand *bhajans* to be played during every car ride despite my father wanting to hear other music.

One day, when I was 9, I picked up a Sana-thana Sarathi magazine from the pile lying on our kitchen table. At that time, the world was gearing up to celebrate the 80th Birthday of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. There was an article about the Sai Organizations in various States of India conducting 80-hour *Akhanda bhajans* leading up to Swami's Birthday. Innocently, I thought, "I am turning ten this year. Maybe we could have a 10-hour *bhajan* session instead of the usual restaurant outing with friends and family." Once again, my father dismissed the idea. Still, my mother cooked *Prasadam* (consecrated food offering to God) and invited local Sai devotees to join us for my birthday to offer *bhajans* to Swami.

With humility and gratitude to Swami, I profess that, since then, this tradition of having *bhajans* on my birthday has continued – with up to 27 hours of *bhajans* for my 27th birthday this year! By His grace, it shall continue beyond as well.

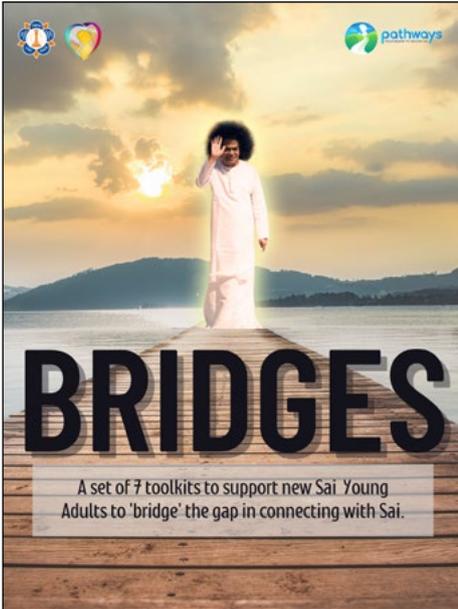
Connecting with Swami through *Bhajans*

Bhagawan has always shown His presence in my life through *bhajans* in simple but profound ways. I always called water "Ganga" (holy water of the river Ganges, and Ganga, the divine consort of Lord Siva). Thus, the *bhajan* "**Shambho Shankara Deva**," which ends with the repetition of "*Hara Hara Gange Mahadeva*," became my favorite *bhajan*. Interestingly, Swami invariably blesses my family and me at critical life-changing events or turning points through this *bhajan*. Either someone else sings it at a *bhajan* session, or we randomly play a CD, and it begins to play.

I was at Prasanthi Nilayam in 2016 for the International World Youth Festival. Apart from participating in the SSSILP residential course, Swami blessed me to serve as an MC for the opening ceremony, lead *bhajans*, and enjoy *satsang* with hundreds of young adults worldwide. On the final day of that trip, I had a passing thought of wanting Swami to send me back home in a "nice memorable way." As the Veda chanting started, there was sadness in my heart which only grew as the *bhajans* began. But just as my tears of sorrow were forming, the all too familiar "*Shambho Shankara Deva*" was sung as the concluding *bhajan*! I was overcome with emotion and cried comforting tears of joy and devotion, for Swami answered my prayer.

This experience drove home the lesson that **Prasanthi Nilayam is not a place we visit but a state of mind in which we can always find Bhagawan and connect with Him in our hearts!**

Mr. Rushi Thanawala
USA



Bridges Toolkit

The International Sai Young Adults Pathways subcommittee recently launched Bridges, a series of seven toolkits to guide YAs to foster a deeper connection with each other and ultimately with Bhagawan. These toolkits serve as an important resource for SSE Group 4 students, in particular, as they transition into the Young Adults Program and 'bridge' the gap – traveling on their spiritual journey, from one chapter to the next.

The objective of Bridges is to provide a general guide on various topics ranging from thoughts on how to introduce Group 4 SSE students and new YAs to young adulthood and the Sai Young Adults Program; developing mentorship opportunities for Group 4-YA teams at a center/regional level;

creating opportunities to engage with the community and build connections between Group 4 SSE students and YAs.

The seven toolkits include:

- Introduction to the YA-fold
- Mentorship
- General Orientation Hangouts
- Devotional Programs
- Selfless Service
- Joint Teaching
- Study Circles

For more information on Bridges and if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to pathways-team@sathyasai.org or visit sathyasai.org/ya/pathways

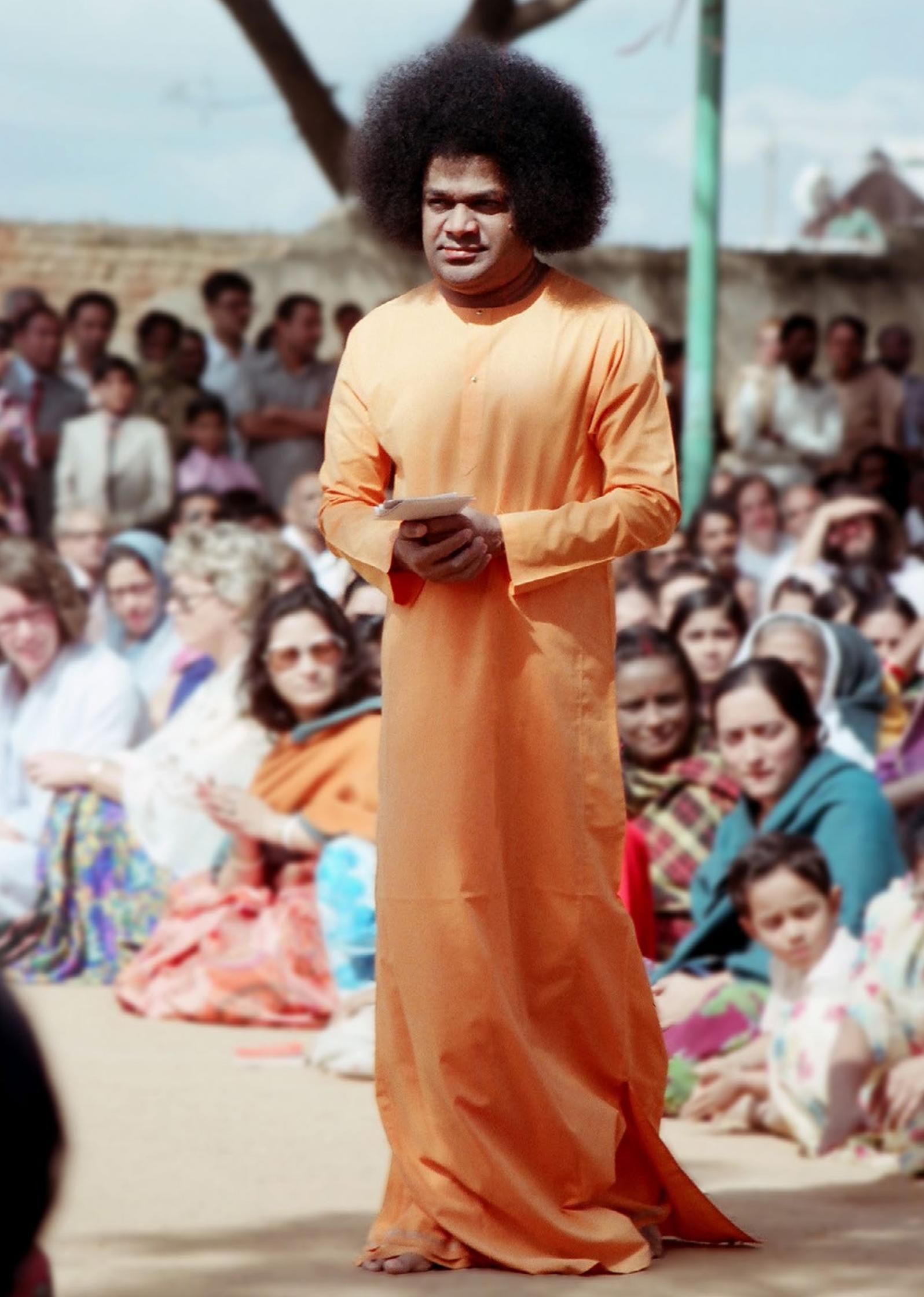
Follow the @saiyoungadults accounts on social media



Sai Young Adults

<https://sathyasai.org/ya>

yacoordinator@sathyasai.org



Practicing Human Values



SATHYA SAI , MY GURU

Sathya Sai Baba has taught me so many things which help me to be a good girl.

I have learnt ABC which means Avoid Bad Company

Aaradhya M | Group 1 | Philippines



This French note is translated below, "Fire":

FIRE

Our heart catches fire under the effect of anger, hatred, selfishness, greed, and self-interested attachment

We must call the Human Values firefighters to the rescue to control the fire,

To want to is to be able to
This is peace

Miary | Sathya Sai School | Madagascar



A Prayer

Dear Baba,

Thank you for your love and your blessings.
Thank you for my food and my bow and arrow.
Thank you for my drone and my videogames.
Thank you for my sister and my awesome
adventures with my dad.
Thank you for my living near wild life.
Please bless my cousins and grandparents.
Please bless my mom.
Please bless me to have peace in my life.
Thank you for my teachers and friends.
Please bless everyone in the
world to be happy.

Santosh V | Group 1 | Canada

Gratitude
is our
life breath

Sri Sathya Sai Baba



Upcoming SSSIO Online Events

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

Please visit sathyasai.org/events/worldwide for further details on scheduled events, local dates and timings.

Date of Online Event	Day(s)	Festival/Event
October 15-16, 2022	Saturday, Sunday	Akhanda Gayatri
October 22, 2022	Saturday	Avatar Declaration Day Presentation by Zone 8: <i>Our Life is His Message</i>
November 11-13, 2022	Friday-Sunday	Worldwide Akhanda Bhajans
November 18 & 19, 2022	Friday, Saturday	Ladies' Day
November 22 & 23, 2022	Tuesday, Wednesday	97th Birthday of Sri Sathya Sai Baba
December 10-11, 2022	Saturday, Sunday	Akhanda Gayatri
December 25 & 26, 2022	Sunday, Monday	Christmas



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



Stay in touch with SSSIO news and activities, by visiting the SSSIO websites and following/subscribing to the various communications channels below.

Click on each icon or name to visit the site.



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



I am present everywhere, at all times; My Will must prevail over every obstacle; I am aware of the past, present, and future, of your innermost thought and carefully guarded secrets. I am Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient (*sarvantharyami, sarva-shakta and sarvajna*). Nevertheless, I do not manifest these powers in any capricious manner or merely for display. For, I am an example and an inspiration for whatever I do or not do. My life is a commentary on My message.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

October 11, 1970



sathyasai.org

Love All • Serve All
Help Ever • Hurt Never