

2011

Sathya Sai Service Organisation

Republic of Ireland, Zone 9, Region 91

**SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER
MAY - JUN 2011**

Dear Devotees of Sathya Sai,

The hearts of all Sai devotees skipped a beat when they heard the startling news of the death of their dear Lord Sathya Sai Baba. The Avatar of this Age, had passed from this physical life at 7.40 a.m. on 24th April 2011 (Easter Sunday) at the age of 85 years.

The loss of this Noble Being is incalculable, leaving a gap in the hearts of all those who loved and cherished Him, that will not easily be filled.

His was a life of total service to man-kind, marked by selflessness, and placing service to mankind as a vehicle for our spiritual emancipation.

He had stated, *"Service is the highest spiritual discipline. Prayer and meditation, knowledge of scripture and Vedanta cannot help you reach the goal as quickly as service can. Service has a double effect; it extinguishes the ego and gives bliss."*

Sathya Sai Baba has placed a worthy legacy in the hands of His devotees, that they may nurture and care for it, in the years ahead.

My comforting thought is that He did not leave us without saying "Goodbye", as He offered His Namaskar to the world. And like so many others I am left with beautiful memories, not just of the many, many dreams I experienced, but particularly my visits to Prasanthi Nilayam.

On my first visit there, He kindled the "Lamp of Love" in my heart. I can relate the joy of this first visit, when

I received a 'chit' from Indulal Shah, that permitted me a front row position at darshan. My initial view of Swami left me breathless. I didn't feel I could cope should He stop and speak to me, as He was doing with others. I feel He picked up that thought and slowly walked by. But it was some time later, when I saw Swami, some distance from me, with excited devotees attempting to get Padnamaskar, or just to touch His robe. How lovely, I thought, to touch the feet of our Lord. No sooner had I thought this that He turned and walked straight to where I was seated and stood slightly to my left as my neighbours struggled to touch His feet. Not knowing what the protocol was regarding this act of touching Swami, I hesitated, but slowly Swami's left foot came out from under His robe and was positioned directly in front of me and I could almost sense Him saying, *"Go ahead, you may touch"*. This I did, and received the feeling of being ennobled.

On another occasion I went down with heat-stroke, and was in bed for a couple of days. The next night was Sivarathri, and I was determined to attend, if only for a few hours. Presenting my 'chit' I was led into the hall and put seated in front of the front row - all by myself! This allowed me to have a clear view of Swami seated in His chair on the stage.

Eventually prasad was served with each person being handed a 'plate' consisting of three banana leaves stitched together by tiny twigs, called *Patravalis*. On to this was ladled rice and also a vegetable dish. I sat wondering when to start eating and what the veg. dish was called. No

sooned had I thought this that Swami arose from His seat and walked down from the stage towards my direction. As He glided slowly passed me He said, "Sweet and sour. Eat up, eat up!" answering both mental thoughts. I was stunned and needless to say, I was very careful with my thoughts after that!

These are memories that will stay with me always. I may never have had the treasured interview, but I had many innerviews during my sojourn to the Lord's Abode! Ed.

If you lift the hand to serve, to help, to console, to encourage another man, you are lifting it for God, because in every man is God.
-BABA.

STEPPING ASIDE

I recently sent the following communication to our Chairman and Sai Committee, and for your information I now reproduce it here.

Sai Ram, Everybody,

It is with a heavy heart that I have decided to resign my position on the Committee of the Sathya Sai Organisation, Ireland, after so many years associated with it.

I now feel the need for a rest and introspection, as I slowly glide into my 80th year.

These have been fascinating years, sometimes like a roller-coaster, with its ups and downs, but all done joyfully in the service of our Lord Sai.

I shall take only one thing with me and that is the "Sathya Sai Newsletter" which I deem to be my own personal Seva. It will always be available to the Chairperson and Committee, for use of announcements, etc. I enjoy producing it as much as you enjoy receiving it.

From now on I will be watching the 'play' from the wings, rather than performing any active role in the play itself.

In conclusion may I thank you all for the many kindnesses I received over the years, and my deep thanks to Swami for the privilege of serving Him.

God bless and Sai Ram,

Patrick Gallivan.

P.S. I would like to extend my grateful thanks to all those who sent me gracious comments on my decision to 'step aside'. I deeply appreciate their kind words.

"NAMASMARANA"

Following on from the Editorial of the last issue - Mar. Apr. - I would like to make further reference on the subject of "Namasmarana". The following was by N.Kasturi:

"Dear Fellow Pilgrim!

'Namasmarana' is a spiritual exercise which is simple, sustaining and univers-ally acceptable. The Name by which each person invokes the one God may be in any language; it may posit any type of relationship with God -Son, Servant, Subject, Companion; it may enshrine any one

or more of the infinite attributes and achievements of God. In every case, the Name is the sign and signal, the casket that enshrines the Beauty and the Bene-volence of the Almighty, the Glory and the Grace of Providence, the Majesty and Mystery of God. When it is recited and remembered with each breath, it provides divine oxygen to strengthen and sanctify our lives.

"Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the World Teacher,

has revealed the significance of 'Namasmarana' as an instrument for individual divinisation and social integration - group singing of the Name of God, is encouraged and appreciated by Him since the vibrations reduce pollution in the environment and in the mind.

"Dr. Brahmanand Mavinkurve has gathered in this book the utterances of Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the value and validity of the sadhana of 'Namasmarana'. Every devoted and dedicated pilgrim will, I am sure, offer gratitude to him for placing this sturdy staff in the hand in order to lighten the step and brighten the path. *N. Kasturi.*"

'Namasmarana' is considered "King of all Sadhana". One priceless advantage which Namajapa or Smarana grants is indeed unique. The term 'Hari-Nama' when analysed, literally means "The Name that Saves". Hari means "Saviour", thus "Hari-Nama" is that Name which when taken on meditated on annihilates all sin. The Name saves us from our sins, not the least of which is egoism and pride.

Bhagavan Baba has likened the Name to a thunderbolt which

destroys mountains of sin. He says, *"The consequences of Karma can be wiped out only through Karma, as a thorn, which can be removed by means of another. Do good Karma to assuage the pain of the bad Karma which you have done and from which you suffer now.. The best and simplest Karma is (repeating) the Name of the Lord; be ever engaged in it. It will keep out evil tendencies and wicked thoughts. It will help you radiate love all around you."*

"Many saintly beings practised through the ages, the Name. In recent times, Mahatma Gandhi, who had practised and tasted the efficacy of Rama Nama, tells us that Ramana alone helped him pass through the struggles in the political, social, economic and religious spheres which he underwent. He also discovered that the Name was a remedy against physical ailments. There is no limit on the amount of time the Name is to be remembered or chanted, he has said. The deeper one drinks of it, the more the thirst for it grows. It is like ambrosial nectar. For 'Ananda' exists in us. And the Name releases that Ananda stored up in us. The ecstasy, the peace, the calm, the bliss, which once released, fills up our hearts is inexpressible.

"Indeed, the Power of the Name is such that it verily converts the Lord into your bond-slave. The Lord becomes your companion, your guide, your mentor. He yearns for you as much as you yearn for Him. He will be at your beck and call, if you constantly take His Name."

Do not confine Me to the few acres of land around Prashanti Nilayam. Wherever a person prays earnestly for Prashanti, the spot from where the person prays will become a Prashanti Nilayam. - BABA.

Swami's Letter to Students -July 1977

"My Dears,

The time will come when the whole of this frame will vanish. To everyone of us there must come a time when the whole universe will be found to have been a mere dream. When we shall find that the soul is infinitely better than its surroundings. In this struggle through (what) we call environments, there will come a time when we shall find that these environments were almost zero in comparison with the power of the soul. It is only a question of time, and time is nothing in the infinite. It is a drop in the ocean. We can afford to wait and be calm.

With Blessings,

Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Religions arise from the minds of good men, who crave to make all men good. They strive to eliminate the evils and cure the bad. It is therefore appropriate that the birthday of Jesus, Who felt the need to save mankind and Who strove to achieve it, be celebrated. But the celebration must take the form of adherence to the teachings, loyalty to the principles, practising the discipline and experiencing the

awareness of the Divine that He sought to arouse. These days, the world is deriving satisfaction in mere words, and in witnessing clever ruses designed to cover up one's faults. The birthdays of the Great are honoured by such hypocrisy and external pomp. There is no examination in the light of the message they gave, not any effort to practise it and derive the bliss it promises. - BABA.

Swami's Guidelines for conducting Bhajans

Unless you sing bhajans for your own ecstasy, you cannot bring joy to others, thus preventing them from sharing 'Ananda' (i.e. bliss). With each bhajan sung the mind must be rendered purer, free from passion and stronger in faith.

In this 'Kali Yuga' remembrance of the Lord's Name, is enough to win His Grace and attain liberation from the cycle of life and death.

Everybody should be seated a few minutes prior to start of the bhajans. Men should sit on one side of the prayer hall and women on the other. Bhajan leader and instrumentalists must be seated in the front few rows. Devotees arriving late must not disturb those already seated.

They must quietly seat themselves behind the already seated devotees.

Do not look around greeting one another, nor talk during the bhajan.

Maintain perfect silence and restrict your movements to a minimum while sitting in the prayer hall.

Sing sweet, familiar and devotional bhajans in any language which can be understood and sung by other devotees.

Musical instruments used during bhajans should not drown the voices of the singers and those who follow, thus maintaining a balance between the instruments and singing.

Do not clap out of tune. Do not monopolise the time in bhajans by singing one bhajan for six or ten minutes repeating the same lines again and again.

Bhajans should be sung in two speeds: slow and fast. In the slow speed, sing each line twice and in the fast speed only once except the last line which should be sung twice to signal the conclusion of the bhajan.

If your voice is not sweet or pleasant, it is best to remain silent; that is the best service you can do. Keep devotional songs as simple as you can, without competitive pomp or show.

When you sing devotional songs, dwell on the meaning of the songs and the message of each name and the devotional singing must be pleasant and it should not jar on the ear.

If your voice is grating or out of tune, repeat the words in your mind. Bhajans are best held on Thursday evenings and Sunday evenings - but that is no unbreakable rule, for it is not the day that counts. It is the heart that must be ready and eager to sing the joy and share it. Share aloud the glory of God and charge the atmosphere with divine adoration.

Think of it as a part of spiritual training to be taken seriously for reducing the attachments to fleeting objects, for purifying and for liberating you from the circle of birth, death and consequent misery.

You must grasp the essentiality of My love. Whatever Sai does, or thinks, or says, or sees, it is entirely for your sake and not for Sai's sake. I have no happiness of My own; your happiness is My happiness. - BABA.

Prayers for Mother Earth

Swami has been very much concerned about the consequences, and with the possibility of recurring major earthquakes around the globe. The most recent event, such as the recent earthquake in Japan, was a very severe matter requiring Swami to intervene in limiting the possibilities of mass destruction around the globe. Equally the greatest concern Swami had was the possibility of heavy leakage of Nuclear Radiation spreading over the world.

Swami has previously stated the following:

"It is under these frightening moments of the humanity, that the Lord decided to interfere in restoring safety and confidence in the humanity at large. Bhagavan had to take over the severe impact of the situation, risking His own Physical conditions. It is also important to minimise the impact of further earthquakes elsewhere. You should understand that it was the Lord's intervention

that the effects of nuclear leakage had been contained. Here, you should know that the Divine Power can protect humanity better than the skills and knowledge of the scientists and engineers."

Swami continued:

"I mentioned about the cause and effect of positive and negative vibrations. The prayers, Yagnas, the attitude of seva and other noble activities create the positive energies across the globe, which can nullify the negative energies. I am aware that all devotees across the world are engaged in deep and sincere prayers, and the severe bad effects of negative energies are being slowly and steadily, wiped off or neutralised.

"When the negative energies are ultimately won over by the Sathwik and prayerful activities, Swami will be relieved of the pains He is presently undergoing. The good effects of positive energies had already started working and you will very soon find Swami regaining His health.

"I am very happy that the whole world is in prayerful mood, which had never been witnessed so far. The whole of humanity, especially the Sai devotees, are playing their part, engaging themselves in a great task.

"My blessings to one and all."

I am always with you, even when you don't believe in Me, even when you laugh at Me even when you hate Me and even when I seem to be on the opposite side of the earth. I am in you; you are in Me. Don't forget that. We cannot be separated. - BABA.

"FAITH...is to believe what you do not see, and the reward of that faith is to see what you believe".

- St. Augustine.

Why feel ashamed to be good? The ridicule that may be cast on you has been the reward of many Saints. It will soon fade away. Mohammed was driven out of Mecca by those who could not appreciate his teachings. Jesus was crucified. But their names resound in reverence in the hearts of millions. - BABA.

"Duties & Responsibilities of Officers"

Sourced from "Pathways to God"

Of paramount importance in the Sai Organisation is the role of centre officers. Those who speak for the organisation must lead lives which are an example to others...It is not appropriate for them to adhere to other teachings and practices that do not conform to the ideals laid down by Sai... If they adhere to teachings which are not consistent with Sai's message, they should not serve as officers.

It is laid down strictly that those who are in our organisation should not have any connection with other organisations of spiritual or religious character...Though people can revere and worship whomsoever they like, we should not have in the organisation men with dual

loyalties. Only those with faith and devotion in this name and form can carry out its objectives with zest and enthusiasm. - Sathya Sai Speaks 7, p.343

Officers must follow closely the guidelines and code of conduct laid down by Sai. If they are unable to do so, they should not hold office. Office signifies service to others, not lordship over them. By their service, officers must demonstrate humility and spur the members onto greater effort.

Office bearers cannot claim any privilege or exemption. They must evince leadership; by their devotion and faith, they must inspire the waverers. That is their function. -Sathya Sai Speaks 7. p.166

Selection of officers is not based on popularity or length of service; the important factor is whether the nominee leads a good life and is able to properly administer the affairs of the centre. Faith, humility, devotion, service, and love towards all are the primary requisites. An officer who is attached to power or ego fulfillment is a positive danger to the centre.

So the very first ideal you must keep in mind when you start and run these organisations is: do not crave for status or authority or position; do not allow any pomp or show; do not compete for publicity or for recognition or for praise.

-Sathya Sai Speaks 6, p.32

The method of choosing officers is referred to as "selection". Officers should be selected by the unanimous decision of the membership after thoughtful discussion. Adjustments

to centre policy or programmes should be acted upon openly and with careful consideration prior to selection of officers. Centre policy should not hinge on the will of the officer in charge at the time. A situation where all members cannot agree on leadership or policy signifies deeper problems. It indicates the exercise of ego and attachment to personal goals.

The opportunity to learn and to serve is a priceless treasure. Work within the Sai centre is a chance for devotional practice of a high order. It provides a field for reducing the ego and serving selflessly.

The benefits are incalculable. Membership forges a close bond to Sathya Sai Baba. That relationship provides us with an unparalleled opportunity for spiritual progress. If we dive into that sea, we can obtain the treasure which it holds. It is useless to stand at the shore and proclaim that the sea holds no riches. Only if we work with the highest ideals and dedication can we secure the prize.

Recognise the truth that Sai is in all. When you inflict pain on another, remember that the other is yourself in another form, with another name. Give up this vice; be happy when another is happy. That is more pleasing to the Lord than the prayers you recite or the flowers you heap on His picture or image. Be simple in your method of living, have saathwik (pure) food and moderate recreation. Let your mind be fixed on the ideals of service. Let your thoughts be guided by Sathya, Dharma, Shaanthy, Prema. - BABA.

Q. & A.

Hislop: Swami, You had incarnated as Shirdi Baba, and now You are the reincarnation of that deity eight years later? Swami, where were You in that short span of eight years?

Swami: I permeated the whole universe down to every single atom. There is no such thing as a single place for Me. I am the whole universe.

People do not understand the ways of God. How can they know why a particular event takes place at a particular time, in a particular manner? He alone can know. But people try to sit in judgment and talk ill when, for example, someone dies of illness at this place. How can anyone escape death?

Even Avatars cast off the physical form when the task for which they have come is over. It is the height of foolishness to lose faith in God, when someone you care for dies. The sentence that he earned is over and he is released. No one is born and allowed to live for the sake of another. - BABA.

In this Kali Yuga, namasmaran is enough to earn salvation and release from the otherwise unbroken cycle of birth and death. - BABA.

The Artist Who Tried to Capture the Image of the Lord

There was once a world-famous artist, with an extraordinary talent. Visiting Krishna, in Dvaraka, to paint the Lord's portrait, Krishna said, "*Well, if you want to paint My image you can certainly do so. Tell Me what I should do.*"

"Swami, if You would kindly just sit still for an hour in the same place, I will draw an outline, and then later on I will fill in the details."

Krishna sat down for the artist and remained still without moving, as the artist made some preliminary sketches. Prostrating himself at Krishna's feet, the artist said, "Swami, I am done now. By tomorrow, at this time, I should have completed it."

Throughout the night he worked. The following morning the artist was extremely pleased with his work and covering the painting with a cloth he brought the picture to Krishna. Placing the picture alongside Krishna, he looked at the picture, then at Krishna, and realised there was little resemblance between the two.

Krishna also looked at the picture and said, "*My dear fellow, there seem to be a number of defects.*" The artist begged forgiveness and said he would try again to get it better. This went on for ten days, but he failed to achieve the likeness. He felt humiliated by his failure and chose to leave the city and on the way was met by the sage Narada, who asked him, "You seem quite disturbed. Tell me what is making you so unhappy."

The artist explained what happened. Narada thought for a moment and said, "Well, Krishna is a master actor and a master director. He is enacting this whole drama. If you really want to succeed listen to my words and follow them implicitly, to which the artist agreed.

The following day the artist returned to Dvaraka, to see Krishna, carrying with him a picture covered with a fine cloth, saying, "Swami, I have finally been able to bring your exact picture. Please have a look. This will always give the correct likeness of You." Removing the cloth covering, he said, "Please accept this as my best picture of you." When the cloth came away it revealed a clean mirror!

If you want to paint a portrait of the Lord who is permanent, with materials like paints, brushes, etc., you will not be able to succeed. In the physical universe everything is temporary. All forms are constantly undergoing change. Such transient forms cannot give a proper vision of the permanent Lord.

If you want to have a clean and unchanging vision of the Lord, you will be able to obtain it only in the clear mirror, which is your own purified heart. *Sai Baba Gita.*

When you said, "Yes" to Me, you gave up the right to be like everyone else. That is why you draw experiences to yourself that will cleanse yourself of that which does not fit who you are - over and over, again and again, until I make you see that the past no longer works. I challenge you and tempt you every day with your past, so

that you may see that the past is ultimate delusion. When you said "Yes" to Me, you gave Me your body, your thoughts, your actions. When they do not suit the new you, the uncomfortableness is unbeatable.

It will be so EVERY time; until you realise this fully. Then and only then will you completely give up the desire. For this is the only way man will learn. Very seldom does he learn by quite reminders. Man's desires and pitfalls are placed there so that I may do my work. When you give up totally, then the temptations will fade. I will never give up on you! Every slip will become harder to bear and less easy to remedy. You will tire of your foolishness because I love you, and though not completely aware of it, you did say "Yes"! - BABA.

**Swami speaks on
"SATVIC FOOD
AND HEALTH"**

Good food and good health go together; for both physical and mental health.

His advice, in His own words, appears in *Satvic Food & Health*, an excellent Sai Towers publication with lots of health advice for one's body, mind and soul.

Because of space restrictions, I am only able to quote a few salient points to assist you in preserving your health. Apart from food His advice extends to our daily activities, whether we're walking, sitting or sleeping. Swami stated the following:

"Disease happens for two reasons: faulty food and faulty activities. It is only through food that birds and beasts set their health aright!"

Also; "Bad thoughts, bad habits, worry, jealousy, despair, all these cause diseases. Fear, anger and affection are the closest comrades of attachment. When you get angry with someone, quietly repeat the name of the Lord, or drink a glass of cold water, or lie down, or go for a long walk, until the fit of fury passes.

"Cancer, heart diseases, all these have increased as a result of deleterious habits such as smoking, drinking, sitting long hours in cinemas and theatres, and subjecting oneself to all kinds of shocks and tensions. What is the reason for heart disease? Hurry, worry and curry (fat). Heart disease is more prevalent among non-vegetarians."

The following are some simple pieces of advice:

- * Do not eat too much rice.
- * Drink large quantities of water, boiled and cooked, not during meals, but some time before it or after it.
- *The main cause of cancer is commercial sugar. Too much medication is also bad.
- * And finally, just before taking your food, you should pray and offer the entire meal to God, in order to cleanse and purify it; it then becomes consecrated food.

I am reminded of a news report many years ago when during a military conflict in an African country, the patrolling U.N. troops came upon a water hole and took their fill. Unknown to them the

rebels has fouled the water and all the men got very ill, all that is except the Indian commanding officer who prayed over the water before he drank it!

Swami asks: *"What is the main cause of ill-health? Out of 8,400,000 species of living beings on earth, 8,399,999 species of creatures, like birds and other animals, live on what is provided by God in nature, and hence they do not generally suffer from disease... They eat things raw and consume the strength-giving vital essence. So they do not fall victim to the many ills man brings onto himself."*

In conclusion, never forget to pray and to offer the food to God before eating it.

I commend this book to all who value their health, and particularly that of their children.

Everyone must learn the secret of happiness, which consists in refusing to shed tears for anything less than God. You have won this chance, this unique good fortune of being able to get Darshan of Sai. Plunge deep into the waters of this tumultuous ocean of samsara (worldly existence), you have heroically emerged from the depths with this rare pearl in your hands - the grace of Sai. Do not allow it to slip from your clasp and fall into the depths again. Hold on firmly to it. Pray that you may have it forever and be filled with the joy it confers. - BABA.

Our Guru - The Divine Lord

A humble, remote and battered village was visited by Seva workers, to distribute packets of food, medicine, clothes and blankets. Upon arriving there in the after-noon and found the entire village was submerged, and it was still drizzling. The volunteers waited at the gate for someone to direct and show them where the survivors who were most in need of their services and goods might be.

Eventually villagers came running, not to assist, but to snatch the rescue items. The volunteers stood dumbstruck not knowing whom to pacify and whom to control. They stood there drenched and exhausted.

Suddenly a young girl from the village appeared and pacified the crowd, telling them sweetly the necessity of being patient and disciplined and to allow the helping team to carry out their mission. She enabled the volunteers to reach those in urgent need first, such as with first aid, medicine and food. The villagers calmed down and she spoke a few kind words and also lent a hand in the distribution of food packets and medicine. She worked with the team throughout the day, and leading them through the muddy and flooded roads to every nook and corner where the most urgent need was.

She never looked tired and was always radiating with gratitude and loving-kindness.

The team finished their duties and sat down for a rest and realised that she had not taken any food for herself. When asked why not, the girl hesitatingly said her Guru had told

her that duty towards others should be the prime concern and when that duty is fulfilled, He Himself would take care of their needs.

Such a small girl, living in poor conditions and imparting knowledge, the knowledge of the highest teachings, reflecting implicit faith in her Guru held the team in awe and admiration. They inquired about the Guru and where to meet Him, she replied, "I have not met or even seen my Guru personally but I have His photo given to me by my teacher." The team asked her Guru's name, "Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba," came the reply. "I am a Bal Vikas student," she added, with a voice soaked in reverence and pride.

When narrated to them, the team members of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, were in tears listening to Swami always reminding us, "There is no other quality than Love in this world."

The highest spiritual practice is to transform this love into service.

OUR LIFE IS HIS MESSAGE.

All bodies are like mirrors, and what you see is your own reflection. How then can you become angry with your own reflection? Understand that there is nothing greater than love. When you fill your heart with love, your thoughts, vision, words and deeds will all be suffused with love.
- BABA.

The Wish-fulfilling Tree

On 19th May 2011, there was a heavy thunder storm with rain resulting in the partial collapse of the famous Kalpa vrik-sham (wish-fulfilling tree, as it is commonly called).

This Tamarind tree was a historic one, for according to legend, Swami as a small boy, used to take some of His close friends and classmates to the tree, which is on a hill-top at the end of the Chitravathi road. There Swami used to ask His friends to think and ask of any fruit and He used to pluck the same fruit from the Tamarind tree.

He plucked apples, mangoes, etc. during unseason times, and would even give laddu and other sweets from that tree.

Many would tie letters of prayers and wishes to the tree, hoping that their wishes would come true. This tree is one of the main places of visit for every pilgrim coming to parthi. Over the years this tree had been neglected and didn't have proper maintenance, and now only a small part of the tree is left. Hopefully, some care will be taken to keep this DIVINE MEMORY alive for a few more years.

Do not distinguish between your work and God's work. Your work is God's work because you too are God. It is a mistake to think that all that you do in the prayer hall is God's work and outside it is your work. You should not entertain such feelings of separateness. Consider that your heart is the altar of God and turn your vision

inward. One who understands this truth and acts accordingly is a true human being. - BABA.

Some Wonderful Thoughts

Sri A, Ananta Vijaya

It was August 21st, 1986, the day MBA programme was inaugurated and we, the first batch of students, were sitting for evening darshan. Swami came to one boy and the following conversation took place:

Swami: Are you happy?

Boy: Very happy, Swami.

Swami: What makes you happy?

Boy: Swami, I got seat in MBA.

Swami: You did not get it, it is Swami's gift.

What a revelation. Anything is Swami's gift, good or bad. As Swami puts it, it is the Prasadam of Swami.

An incident relating to the same that happened in Kodaikanal in 1987.

Swami was "pulling the leg" of each of our class mates, saying; you got only this many marks (only 1 digit mark out of 100 for everybody but the figure varied from student to student), but I gave you admission in MBA.

One boy then asked Swami,

Boy: Swami, do boys get admission in Swami's institution by Merit or Grace?

Swami: Merit is also Grace, Sir.

Again, what a revelation. We feel many a time that it is out of our sheer intellect or hard word, we achieve something. Definitely wrong. Merit is also Grace, Sir.

I only wish and pray to you, "Get Swami's Grace at all costs."

If you love God intensely, you can achieve anything. As human efforts increases, God's Grace also lends strength and intensity to the effort, which ultimately leads man to success. - BABA.

PARTHI UPDATE

The construction of the Maha Samadhi, in Prasanthi Nilayam, will commence from May 27th, 2011, and will be open till the evening of May 26th.

This Maha Samadhi is going to be built as per Vedic injunctions and traditions, and it is likely to go for six weeks. Understandably during this period, there will be no Samadhi Darshan, however, from May 27th, Swami's chair and the Divine footstool, will be placed in front of the dais in the Sai Kulwant Hall, to facilitate devotees to offer their prayers and salutations.

The regular Vedam and bhajan sessions both morning and evening, would go on as usual and all other activities in the Ashram would take place as usual.

Divine Wisdom 2008

No disaster is imminent for the world. Over the vast globe, there

may be some mishaps here and there, from time to time. Suffering and misery are the inescapable acts of the cosmic drama. God does not decree these calamities but man invites them by way of retribution for his own evil deeds. Remember these calamities occur not because of what God had made of man but really because of what man has made of man. Therefore, man has to be unmade and remaid with his ego destroyed and replaced by be a transcendent consciousness, so that he may rise above the karmic to command.

In various parts of the world nature is causing various disasters such as earthquakes, famines, floods and volcanic eruptions. What is the reason? The spiritual lapse of man account for these calamities. Disturbances in the human heart are reflected in earthquakes. Man is thus the architect of his own life.

Prayer is the only remedy for alleviation of such misery. There is nothing in the world that cannot be achieved by prayer. Prayer melts the hardest of hearts. Pray wholeheartedly, "*Samastah Lokah Sukhino Bhavanthu.*" Do not pray just for the welfare of your family, friends and relatives alone. Such narrow-minded prayers are futile. Your prayers should be for the welfare of all people in all countries of the world. -Sathya Sai Baba.

All bodies are like mirrors, and what you see is your own reflection. How then can you become angry with your own reflection? Understand that there is nothing greater than love. When you fill your heart with love, your

thoughts, vision, words and deeds will all be suffused with love.
- BABA.

God Is Your Only Friend

Swami asks young boys, *"How many brothers do you have?"* Boys invariably reply along expected lines by saying two, or three, etc., as is the case. Swami then smiles and softly whispers, *"All are your brothers!"* After this He asks of another boy, *"How many friends do you have?"* Taking the cue from the earlier conversation, this second boy would say, "Swami, all are my friends." Swami would again smile, and gently say, *"No, all are not your friends; God alone is your friend!"*

"HE IS A PURE ATMA"

There lived a lame dog, 'Kuttan' by name, that lived in the Niligiri Hills. In 1962, Baba visited the village called Bikatti. The organisers had leashed Kuttan at a distance so that he would not disturb the movements of Baba. Seeing Baba, the dog strained himself to come forward, and Baba stopped and patted him with great affection and asked the volunteers, *"Bangaroo, leave him alone, he is a pure Atma."*

So, Kuttan had a free time following Baba everywhere including the kitchen where Baba, after blessing the food asked the men to feed Kuttan first. Kuttan finished his meals and walked up to the dais to stand by the side of Baba's chair, observing the rest of the proceedings silently. The

villagers were being served food down below.

After a while he rested his head on Baba's footstool and breathed his last. So, Kuttan had earned enough merit to merge at the Lotus Feet of the Lord for which each one of us craves.

Men should try to understand women, and women should try to understand men. It is the harmony, peace and mutual love between men and women that brings happiness and peace to the family. People want happiness in the family, but they do not lead exemplary lives. The fault lies with both the husband and the wife. - BABA.

You ignore the Divinity you have as the core of your being; at the same time, you seek it in others. This is a tragedy. You insult yourself by feeling helpless, weak and inferior; cowardice and self-condemnation, these do not become a spark of the Divine flame.

Once the ego is suppressed, that very moment two consequences follow: Freedom from grief and Freedom from joy. To achieve this great consummation, you must take one step after another. Good deeds like puja (worship), dhyana (meditation) and the observance of vows, etc., are steps on the way; good thoughts like prayer for greater discrimination, more chance to help others - also help. Slowly, steadily, cleanse the mind;

sharpen the intellect; purify the senses and win His Grace.

Source: "Sathya Sai - The Almighty"

Why Fear When I Am Here

One fine day Jane Ikurere, who lives in Titahi Bay, Wellington, N.Z., went to hang out the washing, leaving her two pre-school children, Mandir (4) and Anand (2), playing inside. Halfway through her task, she happened to look back towards the house and her heart skipped a beat; thick smoke was pouring out of the kitchen. She dropped everything and ran inside to get the children. Not able to find them she became very frightened and called out, "Mandir, Anand, where are you?" After a few minutes she heard their voices calling from the prayer room. To her great joy she found them sitting quietly in front of the altar. "What are you doing here?" she asked. "You know you are not allowed to play here." Little Mandir answered, "Mum, Baba brought us here and told us to stay. He said it was dangerous to be in the kitchen."

Jane was shocked, she could not believe what she had just heard. Wanting to make sure what Mandir meant, she said, "Please tell me what you mean." Mandir replied, "Yes Mum. Baba took hold of us, one in each and brought us here. He looked like that," and Mandir pointed to Swami's picture.

Jane went into the kitchen and found water everywhere, the oven turned off and the potatoes burnt out. Mandir said that Baba had turned the switch off, and poured water over the oven from a bucket to

put the fire out. Then Baba led them to the prayer room. Unable to find any bucket, Jane became more and more curious. "Where did Baba go?" she asked. Mandir pointed to Jane's favourite picture of Baba on the altar and said to her, "He went back into the picture." Jane was overwhelmed. She washed the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan with tears of love and gratitude. Baba had saved her children.

("Satyavan Quarterly Vol. 1 - August 2000, as told by Saraswathi Dinamani - Wellington.)

I need only one "Mandir" - Temple - Your hearts! Preserve the Purity of your hearts, so that SAI may reside therein. - BABA.

Prayer of Surrender

"Why get agitated? Let Me take care of all your business. I shall be the One who will think about them. I am waiting for nothing else than your surrender to Me. I intervene only when you know how to completely surrender to Me, then you do not have to worry any more about anything. Say farewell to all fears and discouragement. You demonstrate that you do not trust Me. On the contrary, you must rely blindly on Me.

To surrender means to turn your thoughts away from troubles, to turn them away from the difficulties you encounter and from all your problems. Leave everything into My hands saying; Lord, Thy Will be done. That is to say, Lord, I thank You, for You have taken everything in your

hands, and you will resolve this for my highest good.

Remember thinking of the consequence of a thing is contrary to surrender, that is to say, when you worry that a situation has not had the desired outcome. You thus demonstrate that you do not believe in My love for you. You will prove that you do not consider your life to be under My control and that nothing escapes Me. Never think; How is this going to end? What is going to happen?

If you give into this temptation you demonstrate that you do not trust Me. Do you want Me to deal with it, Yes or no? Then you must stop being anxious. I shall guide you only if you completely surrender to Me and when I must lead you into a different path than the one you expect, I will carry you in My arms.

What seriously upsets you is your reasoning, your worrying, your obsession, and your will to provide for yourselves at any price. I can do many things when the being, as much in his material necessities as in his spiritual ones, turns to Me saying: You think of it, then closes his eyes and rests quietly.

"You pray to Me when in pain so that I intervene, but not in the way you desire it. You do not rely on Me but you want Me to adjust to your request. Do not behave like some sick people who ask for a treatment from a doctor, all the time suggesting it to him. Do not do that, but rather even in sad circumstances say, Lord, I praise and thank You for this problem, for this necessity, I pray you arrange things as you please for this terrestrial and temporal life. You know very well what is best for me.

Sometimes you feel that disasters increase instead of diminishing. Do not get agitated, close your eyes and say with faith, Thy will be done. When you thus speak I even accomplish a miracle when necessary. I only think of it when you trust Me totally, I always think of you, but I can only help you completely when you rely fully on Me. - BABA.

You cannot see Me, but I am the Light you see by.

You cannot hear Me, but I am the Sound you hear by.

You cannot know Me, but I am the Truth by which you live by.

- BABA

The Study of Books

From "Prema Vahini"

"When I see the heaps of books that lie around everywhere, I feel that the wisdom inside the book cannot succeed in penetrating the heavy binding and emerge into the light. God is hidden by the mountain-ranges of lust, anger, envy and selfishness. So too, the Sun of Wisdom is hidden by these heaps of books. Though these books have spread to all corners of the earth, we cannot say that culture has increased or that wisdom has increased; man is still not far from the ape. An attractive binding and title, a beautiful picture, these are what the reader seeks, viz., transitory pleasure and momentary contentment. Only those who, by means of discrimination, select the books they read and practise what they read can realise the Truth and enjoy

everlasting Bliss. Only these live worth-while lives. So, those who seek the highest path and who revel in thoughts of God should strive to read only the life histories of saints and sages, and books which help the contemplation of the Divine.” - BABA

“Remember God and Meditate”

Be careful not to discuss the pros and cons of your spiritual practices with all and sundry. If the people consulted are treading another path, they will decry your practice of repetition of the name and meditation, and treat them with scant respect. They will look down upon your practices as if they were elementary and as if you were but a beginner in school. As a result, you will start doubting the efficacy of your chosen path! You will find doubts where earlier you had joy, disgust where earlier you had love. Therefore, reflect within yourself or approach those who have tasted the nectar of that same Name. Do not argue about these things with everyone you meet. The time spent in these disputations is better used in the cultivation of joy through the repeated contemplation of the Name and meditation on the Form of the Lord. *-Dhyana Vahini, Chap. 7*

Service brings human beings closer to each other and promotes affection and friendship. Without this friendship and feeling of love for one’s fellowmen, one cannot attain intimacy with the Lord which among the nine forms of devotion to God is next only to complete surrender. - BABA.

Transforming Experiences

I had not heard about Sai Baba before, said Ms. Natalya Kandaurova. One night He came in my dream and told me, *“Come to Me soon. Don’t be late. You will come to Me in two weeks with six more people.”*

The next day, one of my patients came to see me and casually mentioned about her friend who had been arranging trips from Alma-Aty, to India, Prasanthi Nilayam in particular. I took her phone number. In three days I bought my ticket to India. I went there with a group of seven others, and asked the organiser to show me a picture of Sai Baba. You will not be surprised - He was the same person who came in my dream.

Ever since then, Swami is my heart and life, and for all my family. Swami assured me that He will always be with me, giving healing energies as a column of bright orange light in the centre of my room where I see my patients. I always request my patients to stand in the middle of the room. I seldom tell them about this Divine Phenomena since only a few can see this column of orange light; but invariably the healing has very positive results. On the first pilgrimage to Swami I came for a month. After three weeks, Swami came again to my dream and said, *“Now you can go.”* So we decided to spend the last week visiting some other sacred places in India. On my last day Swami went out around the ashram in His car, and as the car was passing us He looked at me and lifted His in His benevolent gesture of Blessings. I felt very happy to receive His bountiful blessings and

benedictions. Swami's Love is so dear to my heart. Truly speaking, my spiritual awakening happened five years before I came to Swami. At the age of 33, I had nearly died four times and had undergone three cancer operations. Then, my doctors said I had only one or two months to live. Needless to say, I was shocked to hear this. That night I had a prophetic dream that changed my whole life. The late Kazakh poet, Abbay, came to my dream and said, "You will read the Holy Book Qur'an. You will heal people. Your path is Islam." In the morning I started spontaneously reciting prayers from the Qur'an in Arabic!

I had never learnt Arabic and when I asked people what I was saying, they remarked that these are recitations of the *Fatihai* and *Ihlas*, which are prayers from the Qur'an!
