

2010

Sathya Sai Service Organisation

Republic of Ireland, Zone 9, Region 91

**SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER
SEP - OCT 2010**

Dear Devotees of Sathya Sai,

The advent of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's 85 Birthday is an event long awaited by His devotees. Large crowds are expected in Prasanthi Nilayam, for this memorable occasion.

Prior to this, on November 20th - 21st., there will be the World Conference in Puttaparthi. Should any devotee wish to attend, please contact Jagan, (tel. 01 6405267 & 085 7782971) to register as soon as possible.

The Annual Satsang will be held, this year, in the Gilooly Hall, Sligo, from 10am. to 5pm., Sat. 2nd October.

I am advised that Swami suggested that we should spread the name of the Lord, by organising Bhajan sessions in devotees' homes. This can be arranged by first contacting Jagan, for further details. *Ed.*

Divine Letter to Students, 1974.

Dear Boys,

Accept My Blessings and Love. In the world today so full of people who are selfish, unloving and unloved, this brand, this kind of atheism is almost a religion.

What is the SELF? It is the Self that says 'Not I', for if it says so, then it is unreal self, since the real Self has no thought has no thought of itself. The real Self is the selfless self, the self that has no thought either of or for itself. It is the Self that has forgotten itself because somehow it remembers itself only in others. It is the Self that seeks the truth without a thought of

self because truth is selfless wisdom. It is the Self that is quiet because quietness is the cessation of self through the worldness of the mind. It is the Self in wordless meditation, because wordless meditation is the stopping of the mind through union with the Divine. It is the Self that does not judge, does not evaluate, does not compare, does not condemn, does not separate, does not seek security of any kind, and does not seek even itself.

It is the Self that has completely abolished itself and yet in a strange and mystical fashion is never more complete, never more real, never more itself than it has ever been. This is the real Self. God is Love, Love is Selflessness. Selflessness is the abolition of all sense of selfhood and separateness, all thoughts of you, all identification with the isolative life of the counterfeit being called self. Self is separateness.

Separateness is the denial of wholeness. Wholeness is God. The denial of God is Godlessness, God privation, atheism. Atheism therefore as now understood, is not the denial of this or that religion, or the denial of this or that concept of God. It is rather the denial of a life of love, which is the nature of God. It is the assertion of the life of self, which is negation of the being of God. In short, real atheism is the denial of love, the assertion of selfishness.

The process of God-ward called self-sacrifice is in its most real essence, love. For, God is love and love alone can lead to Him. As the most God-full act is the act of love, so the most God-less act is the act of non-love or hate. But hate, which is separateness, can arise only when there is selfishness or self-fullness. Thus it comes to pass

that the most Godless, loveless act is the act of selfishness or self-fullness.

Love must be completely selfless to be God-ward, to be Divine. Its creation must be the beloved first, its technique must be your happiness not mine. This way to happiness is the forgetting of oneself and the remembering of God (Sai Krishna).

Whatever we do reacts upon us. If we do good, we shall have happiness and if evil, unhappiness. Within you is the real happiness, within you is the mighty ocean of the nectar Divine. Seek it within you, feel it, feel it. It is here, the Self; it is not the body, the mind, the intellect, the brain. It is not the desire not the desiring. It is not the object of the desire. Above all, these are you. All these are simply manifestations. You appear as the smiling flower, as the twinkling stars.

What is there in this world, which can make you desire anything?

It is the pure heart that reaches the goal. Follow the heart. A pure heart seeks beyond the intellect. It gets inspired.

With Blessings. Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Devotion today is almost always only “part-time”. Whenever disease, defeat, or disappointment happen to assail you, you turn to God and pray for His grace; but when you are happy, prosperous, healthy and in good shape, you ignore God and claim that they are all due to your own abilities and achievements. God is ignored in sunshine. He is wanted only when there is night. Devotion must persist and flourish, unaffected by

time, place or circumstance. God too has to be experienced in His fullness, and the Annandha of that experience made one’s permanent possession.

- BABA (Onam Discourse, 1974)

Kundalini

From the very beginning of my existence, I found myself being pulled in many directions.

My curious mind travelled far away, yet my soul remained at peace with her Divine Creator and Saviour.

Everywhere my free spirit roamed, I felt welcomed.

A burning sensation penetrated and consumed my entire being. My inner self re-invigorated.

A gentle touch. I felt as if my sensitive soul had finally arrived home.

Kundalini! A spiritual and sacred safari to be travelled time & time again.

My soul, now freed from evil distractions. Gracefully pursues her sacred journey, forever inspired by Divine Love.

Raymond D. Tremblay, (Ottawa) (C)

Importance of Human Birth

(from ‘Shri Sai Satcharitra’)

In this wonderful universe, God has created billions of creatures or beings (including Gods, demi-gods, insects, beasts and men) inhabiting heaven, hell, earth, ocean, sky and other intermediate regions. Of these,

those creatures or souls, whose merits preponderate, go to heaven and live there till they enjoy the fruits of their actions and when this is done, they are cast down; while those souls, whose sins or demerits preponderate, go down to hell and suffer the consequences of their misdeeds for as long as they deserve it. When their merit and demerits balance each other, they are born on earth as human beings and are given a chance to work out their salvation. Ultimately, when their merits and demerits both are worked out completely, they get their deliverance and become free. To put the matter in a nutshell, souls get their birth or transmigration according to their deeds and evolvment.

...It is said that, though God created various sorts of creatures, He was not satisfied, for none of them was able to know and appreciate His work. So he had to create a special being - man, and endow him with special aculty, viz, Knowledge; and when He saw that man was able to appreciate His Leela, marvellous work and intelligence, He was highly pleased and satisfied.

So, really, it is fortunate to get a human body, better still to get birth in a Brahmin family and best, to get an opportunity of having recourse to Sai Baba's Feet and surrendering to Him.

Every being who is handicapped by hunger has the right to ask God for food! He has inflicted hunger; so, it is His duty, His pleasure to provide the food, which can reduce it! So, you have also the

right to pray that He helps you realise Him. That is the Vidhya (education), which you must encourage among yourselves. - BABA. (June 1971)

The Prophet Mohammed

The Prophet used to take a certain route to preach the Message of Allah to the people. Along the route there lived one woman whose heart could not take in the message of the Prophet. Day and night she was lost in thought brooding and planning how to injure the Holy One. At last she came up with the stratagem. "Although I may not be able to stop him from preaching this strange doctrine," she thought to herself, "I am going to disturb his peace and ignite the fire of anger in his heart."

Even before the rays of the sunshine had entered her windows, she was busy sweeping her house. She carefully collected all the garbage in a basket and placed it on the roof of her house waiting eagerly for the Prophet to pass that way as was his custom every day. Her intention was to provoke the Prophet to anger, and to disturb his peace so that he can be an object of laugh and corn to people.

Every day she would stand by her window listening for the approaching footsteps announcing the coming of a man dressed in clean white clothes. She would then climb to the roof of her house, taking the basket in her hand and throw the garbage on him as he passed.

Much to her dismay, the Prophet used to continue on his journey without saying a single word, or

looking up to see who was pouring the garbage on him. The Prophet was the same in praise and blame.

This routine continued and the woman became more determined to provoke the Prophet. The Prophet did not want to disappoint the woman and so he continued to walk down the street every day, instead of picking an alternate route and prayed for the woman to recognise the Truth.

One morning, the Holy Prophet did not receive his usual shower of garbage as he was passing by her house. So, he stopped and looked up; he did not find the woman on the roof. This worried him because he thought something must have happened to her. He knocked on her door. "Who is it?" asked the feeble fainting voice. "Mohammad Bin Abdullah," was the reply. "Can I come in?" The woman was apparently very sick and feared that Mohammed had come to take revenge on her for what she had been doing. But the love she felt in the voice of the Prophet made her allow him in.

Mohammed entered the house and told the woman that not finding her on the roof had worried him and he thus wanted to inquire about her health. On finding out how ill she was, he gently asked if she needed any help. Overwhelmed with the power of love which poured fourth into her soul as the Prophet spoke to her, she forgot all her fear and asked for some water. He kindly gave her some and prayed for her health, while she quenched her thirst. She was then gripped with remorse for being so cruel to him in the past, and she apologised for her mean

behaviour. He duly forgave her and thereafter came to her house every day, cleaned her surroundings, fed her and prayed for her, till she was on her feet again. The kind attitude of the Holy Prophet transformed her totally and through that she recognised the message of Love and Peace which the Prophet preached.

(The Prophet Mohammed [Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon Him] was born in 569 AD in the city of Mecca in Arabia. He was orphaned in childhood and as a boy was a cowherd and looked after cows with intense love. This reminds us of Lord Jesus who called Himself, "the Good Shepherd" and Sri Krishna who is adored as the Divine Cowherd Boy.)
Sourced from: Heart2Heart.

Do not pull down Sai Baba's picture from the wall and hang some other picture there at first disappointment. Leave all to Him; let His will be carried out - that should be your attitude. Unless you go through the rough and the smooth, how can you be hardened? Welcome the light and the shade, the sun and the rain. Whoever walks straight along the moral path, whoever acts as he speaks and speaks as he has seen, whoever melts at another's woe and exults at another's joy - is a devotee, perhaps a greater devotee.
- BABA.

ISA - SAI ISWARA

by Professor Anil Kumar

"I was kneeling down and praying. It was about seven o'clock in the

evening. Ours is a traditional Catholic family. I bolted the door from inside so that no one could disturb me. I felt as though someone placed his hand on my shoulder. Slowly I opened my eyes and looked back. I noticed Sri Sathya Sai Baba clad in His orange-red robe lovingly looking at me with a smile.

“This most certainly is the advent of Christ. He is indeed the Cosmic Christ born again to fulfill His promise to humanity. I am a reputed cardiac surgeon from Italy. I have won a lot of honours and recognition. My Church may think of me what it pleases, but my conviction does not change. I affirm that Sri Sathya Sai Baba and Christ are one and the same”. These words are still ringing in my ears. As I recollect these words of the eminent and experienced cardiologist, I can vividly picture the excitement and reverberating applause in the meeting hall where he spoke them. The foreign expert was sharing his experiences with fellow participants at an International Seminar on Cardiothoracic Surgery, and these were his concluding remarks. Bhagavan was presiding over the meeting. Because of my thirty odd years of close association and teaching experience in the Andhra Christian College, the Italian surgeon’s words left me stunned. This was the first time I heard a Catholic, and a distinguished doctor at that, make such a statement.

It gradually began to dawn on me that thousands of Catholics from all over the world, hold the same firm belief as this surgeon. What Dr. Frank G. Baronowski, of Arizona University, once said at a Summer Spiritual Training Course at the

Brindavan campus near Bangalore, still lingers in my mind. This happened some thirty years ago, I think. Those were the days when Kirlian photography was a novelty, with the excitement of ascertaining an individual’s personality by means of a photograph of the aura round his head. Kirlian photography made it possible to clearly identify not only traits such as jealousy, hatred, and enmity, but also serenity, patience and love in an individual.

Dr. Baronowski had taken Kirlian photos of many great saints in India. Finally he had the good fortune of taking a photograph of Bhagavan Baba. His words on this occasion had a lasting impression on the audience.

As Sri Kasturi records, “Towards the end of the course, on the eight day, the trainees had the singular good fortune of listening to a talk given by Dr. Frank G. Baronowski, of Arizona University, on the uniqueness of Bhagavan’s aura. This speech equipped them with faith in the divinity of Baba - precious possession that would fortify them throughout their lives. Dr. Baronowski said, “The scientific community in my country finds it difficult to accept God. ‘It is not scientific,’ they assert. The aura that Swami projects is not that of a man. The white was more than twice the size of any man’s, the blue was practically limitless and then there were gold and silver bands beyond even these, far beyond the building, right up to the horizon! I am risking my reputation when I make this statement. Two days ago, right outside this hall, I looked into His eyes. They had a glow in them. It was clear to me that I had looked into the face of Divinity. If ever I can use the

phrase, "I have seen Love walking on two feet," it is here".

Spiritual aspirants realise through personal experience that in whatever form or by whatever name one may pray to God, that prayer goes directly to our Swami. God is One. He is the bestower of all boons; He is the embodiment of all Gods in all forms. He is Sri Sathya Sai.

The Native American visionary, Lame Deer, referred obliquely to Baba in prophesying, "There is a Light Man coming, bringing a new light. It will happen before this century is over. The man who has the power will do good things, too - stop all atomic power, stop wars."

Wherever you go, the results of your actions will follow you like your shadow. However, it is possible to rescue from the consequences of actions by the Grace of God. God is always by your side saying, "Tathastu!, Tathastu!" (so shall it be!). Man is not taking cognisance of this truth and is indulging in wicked deeds. He knows pretty well what is good and what is bad, yet, he is unable to give up his evil ways. One's experiences in life, good and bad depend on his actions. - BABA.

"The Test Of Faith" by Mrs. Poppy Hillcoat

Here's one of Swami's stories of faith - or rather lack of faith. Once a village in India was inflicted with severe famine. The rivers were dried up; the trees were reduced to

branches and twigs. And there was no sign of any greenery anywhere. The villagers were in torment. A solution had to be found. The elders of the village discussed the matter over and over again. But couldn't come up with a solution.

At last, they met a sage in a nearby village. Hearing their sufferings, the sage replied: "I shall come to your village. Instruct all the villagers to assemble at the village square this coming Thursday at five p.m. We'll pray to get the rains; it is sure such a collective prayer will be answered."

Hearing this, the people were overjoyed. Everyone anxiously waited for the day. At last the day arrived. Even before five o'clock the ground was full. The sage arrived, ascended on to the stage, and looked around. He looked around for quite some time. And then he said, "However loud you pray, there is going to be no positive result!"

It was unbearable for the villagers. They had expected so much. But now the sage continued: "You have no faith! All of you have come to pray for rains, haven't you? But not even one amongst you has brought an umbrella!"

What message was the sage conveying here? In prayer, faith is a must. Only prayer with faith will work. "More things are brought by prayer than this world dream of," said Lord Tennyson. Make prayer a part and parcel of your life. "Prayer is the key of the dawn and the bolt of the dusk," said Gandhi.

Fill your hearts with love. There is no wealth, no Dharma, no

meditation greater than love. I expect all of you to live in unity like brothers and sisters. If you become the embodiment of love, you will become divine.
-BABA (1999)

Swami's Divine Guidance

A questioner asked Swami about meditation and concentrating on the candle flame:

SWAMI: Don't concentrate directly on the flame. Your eyes will be damaged. You should see it for a few minutes and close your eyes. Then you must imagine the flame in your mind. This is for the beginners. You do not need that. I have taught you the best sadhana. If you leave Japa, do Dhyana. If you leave Dhyana, do Japa. This is good for you. Try to do what I have told you.

Q: Initially I sit straight. Later, without my knowledge, my back bends.

Swami: That is not your mistake. Sit straight in the beginning; the rest is left to Him. You should keep your *thumb and middle finger in contact*. Some people keep the thumb and the forefinger in contact. That is wrong. The job of the forefinger is to say, 'that is wrong, this is wrong; I want that, I want this; see that, see this.' So you should join the thumb and the middle finger.

Q: Swami, is it not possible to attain self-realisation in one's lifetime itself?

Swami: It is possible. You can realise your soul by the grace of the Guru in just one second, one hour, one day, one month or a year.

Q: Swami, we have not made any progress in Sadhana. When do we go to the next stage?

Swami: Forget about the stages. It is enough if you make yourselves eligible for God's Grace. That is why I tell you often to keep your mind in a ripened state. In a single birth, one cannot have unwavering Bhakti.

Q: Swami, we have Your Darshan in our sleep. Is that true?

Swami: Yes. Answers to your spiritual doubts come in dreams. But I will not come in your dreams just because you think of Me. Only when I think of you, I will come in your dreams.

Q: Swami, is it possible to attain salvation by Naamasarana in just one life span?

Swami: Rather than the number of lives, the sincerity in Sadhana is important. More intense the devotion, better are the results. Do not pray to Me asking for forgiveness. You should pray, "God, make me suffer for all my mistakes and take me into You quickly." If you pray for forgiveness, it may act as an obstruction in your Sadhana.

Q: Swami, what kind of acts should be done and what type of acts should be avoided for self-realisation? We are ignorant of this.

Swami: If you have strength in your body, money in your purse, help others. If you are weak and poor and cannot help others, do not harm others. If you do not have strength to help anyone, stay quiet. Not wishing bad to others is nothing but help. Do not find fault with others. Since you too have the tendency to commit the

same mistakes, try to mend yourselves every time... Do not believe in mesmerism. Do not try to learn it or practice it. What you see then are evil spirits. God is not that easily attainable. God, Who is a form of satvaguna, will never enter into these lowly things and talk. Man is seven steps below God. Evil spirits are six steps below God. God's aura falls on all these steps. Evil spirits have slightly greater strength than man. With this extra strength, they have the power to masquerade themselves as gods. (Do not be cheated by these spirits. Beware!)

When the mind is totally steady, free of thoughts, then it is meditation. - BABA.

Anandamai - The Blessing of Sai Baba by Sanjeev Abbi

My journey to Bhagavan began even as a little boy, way back in 1975.

My mother was then to undergo an operation. As she was wheeled into the operation theatre, the doctor left the stretcher out for a minute to go in and check if everything was ready.

In those moments of solitude, my mother closed her eyes, when someone came and whispered in her ears, '*Anandamai*'. She instantly looked to see who the person was but couldn't find anyone. Dismissing the event as a dream, she forgot all about it.

Meanwhile, the operation was successful, and mother was brought home. The doctors had advised her strict bed rest for three months. During that period, my mother came

in touch with a family who were Swami's devotees. The lady of that family gave her a book on spirituality to read during her long hours of confinement.

One day, my mother decided to leaf through that book, '*Sathya Sai Speaks, (Vol: 1)*'. As she opened, on the first page were the words, '*Anandamai*', under the word the meaning given was "*To clear the doubts and fear of the person.*"

After reading the book midway, when my mother went to the introduction (page) again, that word -along with its meaning- had somehow disappeared!

It was a revelation!

Mind is sometimes characterised as a snake. This is because it doesn't move straight. It delights in crooked stratagems and clever contrivances. It avoids the straight path of sincerity and veracity. But, the snake charmer plays on his instrument, the snake sways its hood entranced; so too, the mind will sway with the music that emanates from the recitation of the Name of God! -BABA.

From Talk by Prof. Anal Kumar

Secret of a long life, Swami said, "*Only two things are needed, one is sacrifice and the other is love or Prema. Sacrifice and love will give you long life. Sacrifice is the medicine, while love is the diet. If we take the medicine without following the diet, the disease will never be cured. If we follow the diet without taking the medicine, we are nearer to the grave.*"

Unless we have the diet and the medicine together, the disease cannot be cured. So the medicine of sacrifice and the diet of love - both are necessary to live a long life." That's what Baba said.

Swami gave an example from the United States - Rockefeller. Today, in the U.S., there is the Rockefeller Foundation. This charity is working all over the U.S. How did this come about? Rockefeller was fabulously rich - very, very rich. He had no time to think of anything other than making money. He reached the stage where he forgot the amount of money he had because he was so busy.

But Rockefeller fell sick at the age of about 48. And the doctors said, 'Look here, you are not going to survive for more than eight or ten months. You are not going to live much longer.' Who said this? His doctors in the U.S. spoke this, 'You won't live very long.'

So Rockefeller started distributing his money to everybody - educational institutions, medical institutions and many others all over the United States, with the result that he lived for almost 90 years!

A person, who should have left this planet earth 40 years earlier, got an extension of his life. How is that possible? Because of his sacrifice.

What is required today is for our hearts, which are hard like stone, to melt. Even stones wither and become ordinary sand with continuous exposure to rain and heat. Similarly, our hearts of stone should melt, seeing people's misery, so we will be prepared to sacrifice.

Swami, the Divine Master of the Universe.

Once when Swami was in Bombay, the whole Dharmakshetra was full of devotees all round, a sea of humanity, vast humanity, all heads - that's all!... It was very cloudy, with just a slight drizzle. His discourse was planned. The Convenor and the office bearers were worried. What will happen to the public? What will happen to the ladies who came with their children? How can we still have Bhagavan's discourse? One gentleman said slowly, 'Swami, why can't we have your discourse now instead of at five o'clock? Let us have it at four.'

Bhagavan said, *'Since the announcement has already been made, nothing doing. You keep quiet!'*

So this man had no choice. He returned. Then what happened? Swami opened the windows, looked at the sky full of dark clouds and lightning. It could shower anytime.

And Bhagavan said, *"That's all."*

He moved His hand like this. Believe it or not, within ten minutes it was clear. Everything - the whole sky was clear without any clouds. And Bhagavan's discourse went on as scheduled, uninterrupted, without any disturbance. This miracle shows that Bhagavan is the Master of the whole universe. He is the Master of the five elements. He can control anything. Om Sai Ram.

The human body is like a car. The Mind is the steering wheel. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha are its four wheels. They should

be filled with the air of faith. Even if one of the tyres is punctured, your life will be put to danger. Have firm control over the steering wheel of the mind. Only then can you reach the goal of life safely. -BABA.

At The Lotus Feet

About 1,200 devotees from Canada, were in Prasanthi for ten days, including seven hundred 'pilgrims' and 300 patients who have benefitted from the Medicare Mission of Bhagavan and subsequently rehabilitated under the "Sai Rehabilitation Programme", were expected for a "Hrudaya Sangamam" in the Divine presence on 18 August. This includes 150 Muslims whose lives have been touched by the Divine Benevolence of Bhagawan!!!

"Hrudaya Sangamam", counselling and reunion programmes, normally organised at various district centres in Kerala, is scheduled in Prasanthi Nilayam this time, at the special insistence of a group of Muslims beneficiaries from Malappuram and Kozhiko districts of Kerala, who were eager to meet the 'source of inspiration' behind the free medicare at the twin super speciality hospitals run by Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust. Huge crowds have already been there for Onam and a big contingent of devotees from Canada.

Blind are they who lack faith in God, for man sees the divine with the eyes of faith. -BABA.

BABA LISTENS TO ENGLISH

Crystal Pearl, California.

Baba has said that it is important to understand the meaning of every prayer, chant and devotional song that we offer. He says that when we understand the meaning of prayers, we do so by utilising our intelligence, not our minds, which He says, "*...are a bundle of desires.*" Our intelligence enables us to connect with the God within or the *Atma*. As most of our prayers and devotional songs are not in English, I have found this directive difficult to follow. Admittedly, while engaged in group *bhajan* singing, a distractive mental process occurs when I attempt to understand the meanings.

For years, I have studied the meanings of the Indian *bhajans* and prayers, trying to understand them. However, what usually happens when I sing in an Indian language is that I lose the flow of the prayer as I am trying to grasp the translation. At best, I am able to hold on to only a few of the meanings. I find that in this process, prayer for me is downgraded to a mental activity rather than a gift of devotion to God from my heart.

In recent years at the Sathya Sai Baba Centres, most devotional songs have been sung in English. Baba has even encouraged His college students to sing some of these songs for Him on various occasions.

When English songs are sung, I find I can clearly understand their meanings. This understanding enables me to open my heart even more to the Lord. Because many English songs use Baba's teachings as the theme, they act as reminders

to practice His teachings in daily life. I still enjoy singing the traditional Indian *bhajans* at the Sai Baba Centres, but find that I spiritually respond best when a verse in an Indian language is paired with a verse in English to the same melody.

This language issue left me with a challenge as to what prayers to offer to the Lord upon awakening, before taking food and when retiring for the night. I enjoy the benefit from prayers such as: *Gayatri*, *Asathoma* (prayer for truth, light and immortality), *Samastha Lokaaha* (prayer for peace) that we recite in our centres. After years of struggling with foreign languages, I felt that I needed to add more to my private worship.

At a Sai Conference in Southern California, I was given copies of prayers which have successfully filled this void. The morning and evening prayers were written by Baba, in English. The food prayer is based on an Indian food prayer. When I say these prayers, I always add whatever may come to my heart at the time and close with *Sai Ram*, two Indian words naming God and which have great meaning to all followers of Sathya Sai Baba around the world. These prayers speak to my heart as well as provide me with great comfort and spiritual fulfillment.

Morning Prayer

"Oh Lord, I am now born from the womb of sleep.

I am determined to carry out all tasks this day as offerings to you,

With You ever present before my mind's eye.

Make my words, thoughts and deeds sacred and pure.

Let me inflict no pain on anyone; Let no one inflict pain on me.

Direct me; guide me this day!"

Evening Prayer

"Oh Lord, The tasks of this day, the burden of which I placed on You this morning, are over.

It was You Who made me walk, and talk and think and act.

I therefore place at Your feet all my thoughts, words and deeds.

My task is done; receive me, I am coming back to You."

Food Prayer

"Dear Lord,

You are the food. You are the Creator of the food. You are the provider of the food, and the consumer of the food.

Therefore, we offer all that we eat at Your lotus feet, and ask You to bless this food and bless us, so that we will do Your will in this world, do Your service in this world. And thus, achieve self-realisation."

Without compassion and love, one cannot be called a human being. Every human being is born to express his or her inherent Divinity. - BABA.

Al Drucker in Toronto

by Ardy Verhaegen, Toronto

Al Drucker is a long-time devotee of Swami and the editor of the well-known Sai Baba Gita, a compilation of Swami's 1984 discourses on The Bhagavad Gita to His students, and Self-Realisation: The Knowledge of the Absolute, a free rendering of the Astavakra Gita. He lived for many years at Prasanthi Nilayam, giving lectures to the foreign devotees and serving as a professor in Swami's university. Yaani Drucker, Al's wife, is the author of the recently published "Not Guilty", which shows how ego, the idea of separate existence is behind the suffering in our world.

In his talk, Al Drucker related how he first came upon Swami and His teachings in the words of Sathya Sai Speaks, how they offer a ray of hope and the power to alter the course of a world intent on its own self-destruction through the proliferation of nuclear weapons. He elaborated on Swami's teachings that this whole world of multiplicity and variety that we believe we are in, doesn't even exist; how there is only the One but we see separation and many.

Drucker stated, "This made-up world of delusion stands on one leg; kick it out, Swami said, and the world of difference falls and disappears. What an incredible message! It has become my one focus for the past 40-plus years of being a devotee of Swami."

Drucker illustrated his talk with many stories of numerous miraculous Sai experiences in his 30-add trips to India and his eight-year

stint living in the ashram and teaching at Swami's schools.

In her presentation, Yaani Drucker suggested that Swami is here for our enlightenment, that Swami needs our enlightenment to transform the world. She said that Swami states the greatest service we can render to the planet is to wake up to the truth of who we are; that when we know who we truly are we will have some inkling of who He is. She illustrated her talk with some experiences through which she realised that ego was an imposter that had duped us for many lifetimes.

She stated that Swami has said, "*I have come to make you completely ego-free,*" suggesting that as more and more of us free ourselves of ego, Baba can transform the planet into a world full of peace, love and joy.

After their talk, some light refreshments were served and the Druckers stayed on to answer several questions. As a token of gratitude the centre presented them with a pictorial history of the centre, DVDs of a recent centre pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam, and Walk for Values t-shirts.

Today, the typhoon of hatred and falsehood is scattering the clouds of Dharma (Righteousness), Nyaya (Justice) and Sathya (Truth) to the far corners of the sky and people feel that Sanathana Dharma itself is in danger of extinction. But that can happen only if the Lord wills, and the Lord Who has laid down the Dharma will not allow it to be destroyed. -BABA.

Abolition of Cattle Slaughter

Marc Ingelrelst (2005)

During a public discourse, Swami had in no uncertain terms, warned the Prime Minister of India, Sri P.V. Narasimha Rao that He expected him to abolish cattle slaughter during his tenure! Here is what Swami said;

“Another thing to which I want to draw the attention of the Prime Minister, is the slaughter of cattle that is being done in large numbers in order to cater to the sordid taste of people for meat eating. I have been stressing the vital importance of people giving up this habit of eating non-vegetarian food, from My boyhood days. Meat eating fosters animal qualities in man, making him descend to the demonic level. It is a heart-rending sight to see cows being slaughtered to serve as food for man. The cow has been worshipped as ‘mother’ in Bharat since ancient times. Go-Maatha (cow) Bhoo Maatha (Mother Earth) Desa Maatha (the Motherland) and Deha Maatha (the Uterine Mother) are all adored as Divine according to the culture and tradition of Bharat. Cow-slaughter is repugnant to the culture of this country. The provision of drinking water to the people, and putting an end to the killing of animals for food, are two prime needs for the country to regain its pristine glory. Violence in any form is evil, and to kill innocent animals is tantamount to blatant savagery. I bless the Prime Minister, and expect him to get these two things (alcoholic liquor) accomplished during his tenure.”

The following list is of famous advocates of vegetarianism:

But for the sake of some little mouthful of flesh, we deprive a soul of the sun and light, and of that proportion of life and time it had been born into the world to enjoy.

Plutarch (c. 44-120)

For as long as men massacre animals, they will kill each other. Indeed, he who sows the seed of murder and pain cannot reap joy and love.

Pythagoras (born 580 BC)

Nothing will benefit human health, and increase chances for survival of life on earth, as much as the evolution to a vegetarian diet.

Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

If a man aspires towards a righteous life, his first act of abstinence is from injury to animals.

Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910)

The greatness of a nation, and its moral progress, can be judged by the way its animals are treated.

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)

We manage to swallow flesh only because we do not think of the cruel and sinful things we do. If after our pity is aroused, we persist in trotting our feelings simply in order to join others preying upon life, we insult all that is good in us.

Rabindrath Tagore (1861-1941)

My mission is to raise the consciousness of man to a level at which he neither rejoices nor mourns over anything. You must

not only have freedom from fear, but freedom from hope and expectation. Trust in My wisdom; I do not make mistakes. -BABA.

My Journey

(by the late Harry Mansbridge, 1923-2006)

I had been searching for about ten years for some meaning to life, when I was introduced to Sri Sathya Sai Baba, in May 1980, when my initial reaction was, 'Oh no, not another Guru'. Within six weeks I was sitting at His Feet in Prasanthi Nilayam, not even having heard a bhajan sung and wondering what on earth I was doing there. I was soon to find out!

Baba called me in for a private interview and then proceeded to tell me my life story up to that moment, including traits of my character, which are best not talked about! He even mentioned discussions that I had had with my wife in the UK. I received an incredible blessing and I staggered out of that interview knowing that I had been in the presence of the Divine and ready to start a new phase of life, and here I am twenty years later, older and wiser, but still feeling that my foot is only on the first rung of the spiritual ladder.

I am 77 years old, but the last twenty years have been incredible. I have witnessed dozens of materialisations, healings and 'knowings', by Baba, of my thoughts and deep feelings on many occasions. On one visit to Prasanthi lasting three weeks, I witnessed four chair-bound people get up and walk

on His command, for the first time in many years.

These are all actions of His Divine Form but He has been stressing for several years now, for us to see beyond His Form - Advaita, Unity, all One, all God: transformation not information. Baba says, "*Know who you truly are and why you have come here on earth*", He told me once, "*Why do you worry about your heart when you know I am inside it?*" Why do we worry indeed, when we know we are on earth for only a short time and then we will merge with our Lord, providing our Divine bank-balance is healthy. Baba says that a lifetime of selfless service is necessary for this.

Baba has stated that there are two paths of merging with the Divine, the path of devotion and the path of wisdom, or knowledge. He states that the simplest way is that of devotion but in the West, we seem to be hedging our bets and trying both paths together. I find the more spiritual and religious texts I read, I realise that they are all teachings of Sai Baba with a slightly different approach. He stresses on unconditional love and you can see that if we express this at all times, all the undesirable traits of our personalities will vanish - selfishness, greed, jealousy, anger, pride, desires, etc.

Baba once said to me in a private interview, "*You know My teachings. If anyone in or out of the Organisation asks you to do anything, ask yourself, 'would Baba approve?' If you think I would approve, then do it. If you think I would not approve, then do not do it.*" I have used His advice since that

time, sometimes to the chagrin of others.

We must question our motive in whatever we do and call upon Baba within for help and advice if we are not sure. Try to get the 'I' out of the way and think with the Divine Principle, not personal principles.

It is not an easy path to follow and life does not flow effortlessly because we are trying to live the Truth. Everyone gets tests in their lives - tests of faith and tests of devotion and many 'red herrings' are dragged across the path.

Swami has done so much for humanity, inspired so many millions with His teachings and of course, continues to do so. He holds out to us the promise of merging with the Divine - we have to Let Go and Let God accept our surrender in life to Him! *(From, 'Sathya Sai - The Saviour')*

Spiritual progress is not merely intellectual exercise. It is right living, good conduct and moral behaviour. These attitudes are the automatic consequences of belief in a good, just and compassion God Who is watching and witnessing every act. -BABA.

The Cat in the Monastery

Once upon a time, there was a monastery in Tibet. The monks in the monastery meditated from dawn to dusk.

One day it so happened that a cat trespassed into the monastery and disturbed the monks. The head

monk instructed that the cat be caught and tied to the banyan tree till dusk. He also advised that every day, to avoid hindrance during the meditation, the cat be tied to the banyan tree. So it became a daily practice, a tradition in the monastery; to catch the cat and tie it to the banyan tree before the monks starts meditating. The cat remained tied to the banyan tree as the monks meditated. The tradition continued.

One day the head monk died. As per tradition the senior-most monk was chosen as head monk and all other traditions including tying the cat to the banyan tree were continued.

One day the cat died, and the whole monastery was plunged into chaos.

A committee was formed to find a solution. It was unanimously decided that a cat be bought from the nearby market and tied to the banyan tree before starting the meditation each day.

This tradition is still followed in the monastery even today, unchallenged, unquestioned.

(Sourced; 'Sai International')

The Inner Significance of Ritual

Prof. Anil Kumar: Swami! Spiritual aspirants observe austerities like upavasa, fasting, jagarana, vigil and consider them spiritual. We request You to let us know their importance and inner significance.

Swami: The traditions, rituals, and the age-old practices of Bharat have a meaning and significance. Aspirants undoubtedly get divine

experiences. But today people are after external and pompous rituals without any understanding of their inner significance. So they have forgotten the very goals and purposes for which they were originally intended. Almost all the rituals have become mechanical, monotonous and routine. There is none to explain to them lucidly. Most people are not aware of the subtleties. So, you don't find anybody practicing austerities or rituals sincerely. Man need not change. It is the mind that should change.

Suppose you are travelling to a distant place and you don't have food to eat on the way: Can you consider this *upavasa*, fasting? Will this be of any spiritual use? A patient doesn't take normal food. Is that fasting? What do you get out of it? To feel God in you is *upavasa* and not mere fasting as the literal meaning goes: *Upa*, near, *vasa*, living: In other words, *upavasa* means living close to or near God. It means one should turn inward, feel God and constantly think of Him. This is *upavasa* in its true sense. Today, we notice people who fast on the *ekadasi* day. But they eat double the normal quantity of food the next day. The madhvas (followers of Mahhvacharya) observe Bhisma *ekadasi* on which day they fast. They don't swallow even their saliva.

In the state of Karnataka, they say in Kannada, "*bida bedi bittu keda bedi*", which means, "do not give up and spoil yourself". When you give up anything, don't pick it up again. It is a bad habit. Instead, what is happening? They get flour ready well grinded and preserve the dough for three days. With this they make

nice tasteful dosas, south Indian tiffin. So in Kannada it is said, "*indu adideekadasi ondu tindu nalavattu dosa*", it means, in the name of *ekadasi*, on one fasting day in a month, preparations are made for as many as forty dosas. Is this *upavasa*? No definitely not.

Why should you observe vigil, *jagarana*? Why is *jagarana*, keeping awake throughout the night, observed? It means that you should keep off from your worldly happiness, sensual pleasures and material comforts. You should be unmindful of all these mundane matters, but awake or vigilant to the inner core, the atma. You should be awake in respect of the inner divinity while neglecting worldly botherations. But what is done in the name of *jagarana*? They play cards throughout the night or watch three movies one after the other throughout the night in the name of *jagarana*. Watchmen, nurses in the hospital on duty, Railway station masters on duty don't sleep in the night. Does it amount to *jagarana*? Certainly not! Merely skipping sleep is an external ritual. One should know the inner reality while observing these rituals. Since they are all done mechanically, they are made fun of and they look ridiculous in the eyes of others.

Published in "Sai International"

Several women come to me with a heavy heart and tell Me, "Swami. My husband's death has caused me deep sorrow and anguish. How do I bear this calamity?" Then I would respond saying, "Oh! Your husband died? Very happy." They

feel very unhappy with My attitude and question Me.

“What is this, Swami? Are You happy hearing the news of my husband’s death?”

What am I to say? I am always happy. I do not know what sorrow is. I always discharge my duty.”

God is the only person Who protects everybody. Therefore, pray to God always. -BABA.

The Lord’s Touch

The initial construction of the Mandir building at Prasanthi Nilayam, consisted of a chain of miracles wrought by Swami’s Grace, commencing with the transporting of the huge 40 feet long girders, for the central prayer hall, from the Penukonda railway station sixteen miles away.

The transporting of these girders along the road from Penukonda to Bukkapattanam, was a “district board with a sandy stream, at the seventh mile, and it passes through a few villages with delicately built houses.” Narrow roads with acute curves, a few dilapidated culverts, including the sift sands of the river Chitravathi, all these preceeded the difficult task of hoisting the heavy girders onto the 20 feet high walls.

Finally, the engineers gave up all hope of transporting the girders, and informed Swami that another proposal for roofing the prayer hall was required. But Swami did not relent!

The Road Transport Officer, a Sai devotee, woke one morning to find a huge crane from the Tungabhadra Dam, in front of his house. The transporter stopped and the driver was grappling with the engine in vain; he could not make it move! The R.T.O. rushed to inform Swami. Swami materialised vibhuti and instructed the driver to smear it on the engine. The engine burst into life and started towards Puttaparthi, coursing over culverts, negotiating hairpin bends, lurching over wet sands... then stopped!

Swami went to the crane, sat with the driver and handled the steering wheel. The Lord’s touch was sufficient for the crane to move happily to the work place and unload the girders.

The great teachers belong to mankind. It is wrong to believe that Jesus belongs only to Christians, and that Christmas is a holy festival for the West only. To accept one of them as one’s own and discard the rest as belonging to others, is a sign of pettiness. Christ, Rama, Krishna - they are for all men everywhere. -BABA. (Christmas 1972)

When was Krishna actually born? He was born 3228 years before the Christian era, on 20th July at 3 a.m.

So, today (2010) is the 5,239 Birth Anniversary of Lord Sri Krishna.
