

## Dear Devotees of Sathya Sai,

The Holy Festival of Christmas is about to be upon us.

*“Nowhere in the world is it celebrated like it is in Prasanthi Nilayam”, Sai Baba has said. And, indeed, how true!*

Sadly, for many people today, the spiritual aspect of Christmas is non-existent. One might be tempted to suggest that Christmas is a spiritual flop, but a commercial success. Also, it is a time of merry-making of the lowest order.

The Christian faith is, of all the world’s religions, the one least respectful of its most sacred occasion; the birth of its Lord. Sad but true.

It need not be so! As Sai Devotees it is up to us to set standards that will influence others to re-kindle the sacred flame of Christmas...in its truest form. This does not mean that one need not enjoy oneself. Of course not; Christmas after all is a festival, and one is entitled to celebrate it...but in a more respectful and fitting way.

A Happy (and holy) Christmas to all!

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Swami has spoken on many occasions on the singing of

## Bhajans

*“The spiritual vibrations produced by Bhajans confer great joy both to those who sing them and on those who listen to them. Bhajans remove all negative thoughts, soothe the nerves, purify the mind and fill the body, and the heart, with sweet love of the Divine. As one sings Bhajans, the mind is saturated with God Consciousness and a great ecstasy wells up from within. No mental or intellectual effort is called for, as there is no need to understand anything while uttering the holy names of God and singing His glory. The singing and the atmosphere created by Bhajans takes one beyond the realms of the body, mind and intellect, and helps to establish communion with the Higher Self (Consciousness) within.”*

*“People say that when you go to Sai Baba, there is nothing but Bhajans. Each and every person will, and should, realise that there is nothing greater than Bhajans. Bhajans are Pure Bliss. They give Divine Vibrations in uttering the name of the Divine Lord! If you sing Bhajans with Love and Devotion, the*

*Divine Vibrations return to you as a reaction. When you sing the Glory of God, the bad germs in the air are destroyed and the air gets purified by a treatment of Divine anti-biotics, as it were.”*

*“After Bhajans there should be meditation for five to ten minutes. People should return from Bhajans carrying the elevated and uplifted atmosphere created after the Bhajan. So, after the Bhajan people should disperse quietly, maintaining silence. The joy of singing the Lord’s Name will linger long in everyoe then.”*

*“You may get some thoughts which are like clouds. Do not be carried away by them. Do not pay heed to all and sundry and ruin yourself. You should rise to the level of Divine and not degenerate to the level of demon. In order to rise to the level of Divine, Satsang is very essential. ‘One thought, one vision and one action.’ These three must be united. When you do Bhajans you will have only one thought. You will experience the Bliss of Bhajan. It is the non-dual Bliss.*

*Why is it prescribed that you should do Bhajan? Bhajan is done to control the mind and focus it on Divinity. Some people keep discussing about worldly matters even while they are doing Bhajan. Do not go anywhere near such people.”*

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**Be careful what you ask of Me, for I grant what you seek. -BABA.**

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## DEEPAVALI

### “the array of lights”

“Lead me from darkness to light”, is an Upanishadic prayer, that means where there is darkness light is needed.

*“What is this darkness? Sorrow is one form of darkness. Peacelessness is another. Loss is another. Disappointment is one form of darkness. Misery is yet another. Lack of enthusiasm is another. All these are different forms of darkness. To get rid of the darkness of sorrow, you have to light the lamp of happiness. To dispel the darkness of disease, you have to install the light of health. To get over the darkness of losses and failures, you have to usher in the light of prosperity.”*

Swami further stated during His Divine discourse on November 5th 1991:

*“Looking at the Deepavali festival from the scientific point of view, it should be noted that*

at one time in the distant past, our ancestors lived in the Arctic region (the Polar region). In this region, darkness prevailed for six months. The sun appears on Mesha Sankranti (the sun enters Libra). In the movement between these two signs, there is an interval of six months. After the sun sets in Libra, the dark half-year starts.”

In the same discourse Swami said that the Deepavali is a festival which is designed to celebrate the suppression of the Ego by the Higher Self. Man is plunged in the darkness of ignorance and has lost the power of discrimination between the permanent and the evanescent.

“When the darkness of ignorance caused by the Ego feeling is dispelled by the light of Divine knowledge,” Swami says, “the effulgence of the Divine is experienced. Deepavali is also the day on which the Emperor ascended the throne.”

“The inner significance of Deepavali is to lead man from darkness to Light. Man is perpetually plunged in darkness. Every time he is enveloped in darkness, he should light a lamp that is ever shining within him. Carry that lamp wherever you go. It will light your path wherever you may be.”

“The scriptures lay down Bhajans, Namasmaran and Sankertan, as the Sadhanas of this age. Bhajan is the process of singing your prayers to God, praising His Glory and compassion, and pleading that He may fill you with His Grace. Bhajan should never be done as a painful necessity; it has to be a thrilling experience, which must leave the participants full of pure energy and elevated enthusiasm.”

“Bhajan is the process of singing that which originates in the heart, not from the lips or the tongue. It is the expression of the joyous thrill that wells up from the heart when, the Glory of God is remembered. It is the spontaneous manifestation of inner ecstasy. No attention is paid to the blame or praise that others may give. It does not seek the admiration or the appreciation of the listeners.”

Talking about “Akanda Bhajan” in June in 1965, Swami, answering a question on the importance of “Akanda Bhajan” said, “Bhajan is done only to make yourself Divinely Pure, but also to make your surroundings and everyone around you become Spiritually uplifting. When you do Bhajans for an “Akanda” (long) period, it

means that you are calling all the Divine Souls and all the Gods to purify the entire world. When one sings Bhajans throughout the day and night with great vigour and devotion, the whole world is benefited and everyone becomes Divinely charged. When you sing during “Akanda” bhajans, you sing for the whole world and for everyone’s well-being, that is why each and every person should sing during “Akanda” Bhajan with great devotion.”

Once Swami, after chiding a student for not singing Bhajans full-throatedly, said most wonderfully, “Those who sing Bhajans get a ‘double promotion’. Why? Because they derive joy from themselves and also distribute joy to others.”

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### **The Sarva Dharma Symbol**

One afternoon, Sri N. Kasturi and Sri Indulal Shah, while in the company of Swami, they noticed that He was drawing a sketch on a sheet of paper. After a while, Swami handed it over to them and to their surprise, they saw the symbols of the five religions drawn in a circle, while in the centre there was the back portion of Swami’s own head, mostly showing His hair.

“Swami, why the back of the head and not the front?” asked Kasturi.

Swami explained, “So that you may not keep it in a safe and do nothing about it!”

Clarifying the point, Swami said, “This will be the symbol of the Sai Organisation, -five religions in the circle with the symbol of Prashanti, viz, the Lotus in the centre.”

This was the birth of the Sarva Dharma symbol, which we all adore in every Sai Centre, and displayed at every function and exhibit wherever we intend to carry the Sai message.

(Sourced from: Diary 2004 - Religion of Love.)

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### **The Brigadier’s Life In Swami’s Hands**

Reviving the dead has an almost biblical connotation. We accept them all as a matter of faith, but when it comes to the present day, such miracles take on quite a different meaning as is the case of Brig. Bose, who had completed tasks given to him by Swami at a function.

Swami was giving a discourse when He suddenly stopped His narration and hurried to where Bose was sitting experiencing

shortness of breath and a fever. Though he was lifeless, his consciousness perceived the scenes around him. He saw a golden Garuda bird watching him with compassion, at which point Swami hurried to where Bose was seated slumped. Lifting him with one hand while massaging the back of Bose's neck with His other hand. Actually, Swami kept his fist clinched while approaching Bose, as if He was holding the life of Bose in His fist, and have it enter the body of Bose. It was as if Swami was holding Bose's life in His hands!

Suddenly Bose found his consciousness and offered his pranams to Baba.

Swami told him to go on stage and sit there and gradually Bose's face regained its glow.

It is interesting to note that it was Brig. Bose who successfully completed the Super Speciality Hospital, in Puttaparthi, within five and a half months employing around 2,000 workers, day and night.

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### ***The Miraculous Cure of a Dumb & Lame Child***

Howard Murphet met with Mr. Russi Patel from Mumbai, and received the first-hand account of the healing of his young daughter, Ketu, who could not speak, walk or stand.

No treatment seemed to work; physiotherapy, modern drugs, etc. -and the source of the trouble was a mystery.

In Feb. '65, Mr. Patel decided to go to Puttaparthi to seek Swami's help, despite her wife's reluctance to 'waste time and money'.

The days passed, and while many were called for interviews, Mr. Patel told friends, "When Baba wants me, He will call me."

On the last day there, and still no interview, Swami blessed the gathering from the balcony, and Patel felt a great outpouring of compassion onto the crowd and into his own heart.

Returning home, he was very depressed, imagined his wife's reproaches about the time and money he had wasted. Opening the door, his first sight was of his daughter, Ketu, running down the hall to him, calling, "Daddy, Daddy!"

After much tears and hugs, Patel checked the time the healing occurred, as being the time when Swami blessed everyone from the balcony. Soon afterwards, Mr. Patel, took his wife and daughter to see Swami when He visited Mumbai. Swami picked them out from a crowd of thousands, and He, in Patel's

words, "He greeted the little girl as if she was an old friend returned after a long absence." Taking her on to His lap, He materialised Vibhuti and put it into her mouth.

Soon afterwards, her speech improved greatly and she began using longer words.

"Sai Baba: Man of Miracles", by Howard Murphet.

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**Develop love in order to acquire Divine Grace. You cannot get even a handkerchief unless you pay for it. You are asking God for peace, happiness and liberation. But what are you giving to God in return? Offer your love to Him and receive His Grace in the form of peace, happiness and liberation. You have no right to ask unless you give. Only through love and service will you earn the right to ask. -BABA (Jan. 2000)**

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### ***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, and then you do not have to worry anymore about anything. Say farewell to all fears and discouragement. You demonstrate that you do not trust Me.*

*"To surrender means to turn your thoughts away from troubles, to turn them away from difficulties you encounter and from all your problems. Leave everything into My hands saying, 'Lord, Thy will be done. Thou think of it.' That is to say, 'Lord, I thank You, for You have taken everything in Your hands, and You will resolve this for my higher good.'*

*"Remember that thinking of the consequences 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 to end? What is going to happen? If you give in to 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 about it! I shall guide you only if you completely surrender to Me and when I must lead you into a different path than the one that you expect, I carry you in My arms.*

*"What seriously upsets you is your reasoning, your worry, your obsession, your will to provide for yourselves at any price. I*

*can do so 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 he closes his eyes and rests quietly. You will receive a lot, but only when your prayer will rely fully upon Me.*

*"You pray to Me when in pain so that I intervene, but in the way you desire it. You do not rely on Me, but you want Me to adjust to your requests. Don't behave like sick ones who ask for a treatment from the 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 to 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 diminish. Do not get agitated. Close your eyes and tell me with faith: 'Thy will be done. You think of it.' And when you speak thus, I 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.*

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**Many spiritual aspirants are under a misconception today. If you ask them why they are doing various forms of Sadhana (spiritual practices), they reply that they are doing them in order to merge with God. Do not think that you are human and that you have to reach the state of the Divine. Know that you have descended from God, as a human being, and that eventually you will go back to your source. Do not regard God as someone separate and distinct from you. God is very much within you. -BABA.**

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### ***Baba's Forgiveness & Grace***

It was evening and Swami approached two men who were seated for darshan; one was a Chambal dacoit (bandit), and the other a practicing sadhaka. The dacoit stood up and presented Swami with an envelope, who took it and threw it to the sadhak. Similarly Sai Baba took the sadhak's letter and threw it to the dacoit.

As soon as Swami went into the interview room, the dacoit demanded his letter back

from the sadhaka. The sadhaka refused saying, "It is Bhagavan Baba's prasad to me."

Later, both started fighting and created chaos. A crowd intervened and convinced the dacoit to stop fighting. One of Swami's oldest devotees took both envelopes and opened them. The envelope given by the dacoit (which was originally the sadhaka's letter), contained a Rs. 500/- note. The other letter with the sadhaka (originally belonging to the dacoit) contained the same paper on which he had written his letter, but it was empty with all previous matter erased!

Both sat the next day in darshan lines and Baba came to them and said to the dacoit, "You had faith in Me. You wrote all your sins on that sheet of paper and said if I accepted it, all your sins would be forgiven. The letter you gave Me came back empty. That showed that I've forgiven your sins. Just like the letter is empty to be written anew, start your life afresh."

Swami said to the sadhak: "You had My darshan for 7 days. You have exhausted all your money here. In your letter, you asked for money to go back home. What I've given you is enough to reach your home and fill your stomach on the way."

Both fell at Baba's feet and returned home with Swami firmly affixed in their minds.

Source: 'Divine Leelas of Bhagavan Sathya Sai Baba', by Smt. Nagamani Purnaiya.

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**Truth is the mother of the entire humanity. Those who follow this mother will never face any difficulties in life. -BABA.**

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### **The Deep Meaning Of Vibuthi**

During a discourse in the 1960's, Swami referred to His materialisation of His sacred Vibuthi Ash.

When He gives Vibuthi Prasadam to anyone it means that Swami's sacred qualities are with you and it is up to us to use these qualities for the benefit of everyone.

*"Swami never does anything or gives anything without a reason; Swami does not waste His words and Actions like all of you do. Talking to everyone is the Most wasteful of actions that anyone can do. Swami talks only good things. Why do you feel happy when I talk to you even everyday. You see and talk with many people everyday. Because Swami is Pure and only Love for all of you."*

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### **“Offering All With All Intensity”**

Seeing Swami in the world means being with Him all the time and offering everything to Him. By always asking, “Is this what Swami wants?” He becomes a constant companion and closest friend.

To accomplish this closeness, our efforts must be intense, sincere and steady, even through adversity.. Dr. Hislop once asked Swami, “Why, after many years of sadhana (Spiritual Discipline), have I not yet attained self-realisation?” Swami answered with one word, “*Intensity*”.

Sai Baba spoke about an unusual incident that happened about one hundred years ago in India. It illustrates that all consuming closeness with God can actually make us one with Him. This closeness is achieved when we offer everything to God with no other thought and with renunciation of all attachments to the self. It also cautions us that the path can be trying.

Swami told a poor woman who took to the task of cleaning her humble abode in a disciplined manner everyday. She would sweep the floor of her house with a dung ball, which had antiseptic properties. When she was finished, she took the remaining ball of dung in her hand and threw it out of the back door with a prayer on her lips, offering it to Lord Krishna with all love.

She thanked Him for giving her strength to clean her house, for the cleanliness in her house, and for the means by which she could clean her house.

At the same time that the woman offered the dung ball to Krishna in this manner, a strange event occurred in the temple in the middle of the town. In this temple, there was a small statue of Krishna hanging on the wall. The priest was amazed to see that each day at the same time, out of thin air, a dung ball mysteriously flew through the air and splattered all over Krishna’s statue.

The priest was incensed by such an occurrence and could not understand from where the dung ball came. Thinking that someone in the village must be behind this incident, he searched the village night and day for the culprit.

He heard of a woman living nearby who threw a dung ball out of the back door of her

house at the precise moment that the dung ball splattered on the Krishna’s statue.

The priest hid behind a tree and watched the woman’s home for a few days. Sure enough, each day he saw her sweep her home with the dung ball and throw it out of her back door into the yard. He concluded that she must be the culprit.

Infuriated, he picked up a stick, jumped over the fence of the yard, and fell upon the woman, beating her badly. The woman’s arm was broken and bleeding and she wept in pain. The priest, satisfied that he had protected Krishna, proudly walked back to the temple. He was sure that the statue would be clean this day. However, to his surprise, the arm of Lord Krishna had been broken and appeared to be bleeding. The woman he had beaten was none other than Lord Krishna Himself!

Her selfless and holy offering to Krishna, made her one with Him. Not understanding this, the priest has actually attracted his Lord. Now aware, the priest fell at the statue’s feet and prayed for forgiveness. He learned that offerings done with a pure heart, reach the Lord and those selfless acts merge the two into one. He also learned that God resides in the hearts of all.

*“With Love Man is God”*, Dr. Sandweiss.

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**The word *Shanthi* is pronounced three times at the end of every prayer, ritual or offering. What is the meaning behind this? The first *Shanthi* means: “May we enjoy peace for the body.” It means that the body should not get heated by feelings of jealousy, hatred, attachments and the like. Whatever news you receive about any event, you should receive with calmness and serenity...The second *Shanthi* pertains to the mind. You should not get worked up when someone says something about you which is not true...and the third *Shanthi* refers to peace of the soul. This peace has to be realised through love. This world has to be brought back on the rails and it is love and peace alone which can achieve this. Fill your thoughts, actions, emotions with love, truth and peace. There may be people who may hate us but love them too.**  
-BABA (Dec, 1985)

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## **Truth Is God**

The following is an extract from a discourse by Swami, on the 21st October, this year.

*“Truth is God. If one follows Dharma with Sathya, all problems will be solved. With Truth in heart and Dharma in hands, march on. No other sadhana is needed. If Dharma follows the principle of Sathya, all sins will be gone.*

*“God is one and everything and everyone are reflections of God. Rama, Krishna, Allah, Jesus - all these are only names of the same God. To know this Truth is more important than doing all sadhana, charity, etc. Follow this Truth and victory is certain.*

*“The Truth is one alone. all the rest will pass away like clouds. And anything done with the changeless Truth in heart, becomes Dharma.*

*“Nowadays, the times are such that we notice a new trend. Boys falling in love with boys, and girls falling in love with girls. They live and behave like husbands and wives. But how long is this? Maybe one or two years. Later all will change. It is only for temporarily satisfying the senses. this trait is seen right from the primary school till the Institute. When you love anyone, know that you are loving God. But that love is not permanent. It will change. True Love is changeless. The moment body is gone, who is related to whom? The body has senses and it is bound to fall. It is never permanent. But the Dehi, indweller, is permanent. The indweller has no birth or end; no bondage or liberation. This Dehi is Sathya Swaroopa...*

*“Sathya (Truth) and Dharma (Righteousness) are the most important. Keep them with you day and night - in all the three worlds and the three periods of time.”*

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**Man is a part of the human community. Mankind is a part of nature. Nature is a limb of God. Man has not recognised these inter-relationships. Today men are forgetting their obligations. The Cosmos is an integral organism of interrelated parts. When each one performs his duty, the benefits are available to all. Man is entitled only to perform his duties and not to the fruits thereof. Man is a kind of stage-director of what goes on in Nature. But forgetting his responsibilities, man fights for rights. It is foolish to fight for rights**

**without discharging one’s duties. All the chaos and conflicts in the world are due to men forgetting their duties. If everyone discharges their duties diligently, the world will be peaceful and prosperous. -BABA**  
(Thought for the Day)

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## **Divine Avatars through the Ages.**

Swami once stated that Lord Krishna was 300 years old during the Dwapara Yuga (or age), when the Kurukshetra battle was fought. That great age was natural at that time. People lived longer in those times than they do now: the average life span today is in the region of 60/70 years.

Swami, Himself, is taking three terms of Avatarhood, with an average of 96/98 years of life-span of each of the three Sai Avatars, and Sai declared Himself as Kalki Avatar, the same Lord Krishna, Who has come again to foster mankind, and for “the destruction of evil doers”. So, the Kalki Avatar is not one, but three!

The list of Avatars up to this time, amounts to twelve. They are:

*1/ Matsya, 2/ Kurma, 3/ Varaha,  
4/ Narasimha, 5/ Vamana, 6/ Rama,  
7/ Parasurama, 8/ Krishna, 9/ Buddha, 10/  
Shirdi Sai, 11/ Sathya Sai,  
12/ Prema Sai.*

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## **The ‘Exemplary’ God**

Talking to students about His school days, Baba disclosed that, being the monitor of the class, He was burdened with duties and clothed in authority.

**“I undertook to show the students and the monitors of other classes, how a monitor should conduct himself. I reached school a few minutes earlier than the rest. I cleaned the blackboard before the class commenced and often had to clean even the benches and desks,”** Swami explained. **“Rama sat at the feet of Vasishtha and attended class with other boys. Krishna, too, had Sandeepa as His guru, while Sudhama and others were His classmates. When the formless, attributeless Divine Principle takes human form and appears among men, it has to conduct itself as an agreeable comparison and as an understanding example to contemporaries.”**

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## **Divine Miracles**

In her recently published book in Telegu, by Smt. N. Purnaiya stated in the foreword, “I

have availed of every opportunity of witnessing His Divine powers.” The book describes more than 140 miracles, by Sathya Sai Baba, of which she says, “more than 115 were witnessed by me with abundant joy.”

Swami creates Tulsi, garlands, rings and pendants for personal wear, but He also performs surgical operations. One witness said she saw Swami throw something like a banana peel over the wall. She related, “Then He came towards me and asked for water to wash His hands which were red with blood. ‘You had prayed to Me to cure that man, so I operated upon him,’ He said. That night I could not sleep due to my anxiety for the man, since he was operated without cocaine and in full consciousness.

“I was very troubled by the thought of the pain he must be suffering in the adjacent room, so I stayed wide awake. At daybreak Swami called me and asked me to give the patient some surgical cotton. ‘Go and give the cotton at once,’ He commanded. When I went in, after hesitating at the door for a while, I found the patient eating a plate-ful of idlies and chutney. Swami stood behind me. ‘This is not an operation by a doctor,’ He chuckled. ‘I have done it, so there is no pain caused, no rest required and no special diet prescribed. He can eat whatever he wants.’

I was shown a long mark on the stomach but could discover no stitches. Swami said, ‘The Vibhuti I created and applied on his brow, acted as an anesthetic. I created a Trisul (trident) and a knife for the operation. After I had finished, I smeared Vibhuti and it was all over.’”

**One filled with Divine Love will be fearless. will seek nothing from others, and will be spontaneous and selfless in expressing his love...There is no need to pray for gifts from God. God will give of His own account what is good for any devotee...God will decide what to give, when to give, and where. Hence, all actions should be dedicated to God and He should decide what the devotee is fit to receive. When everything is left to God out of pure love and total faith, He will take care of His devotee. People today lack such firm faith. -BABA.**

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## Baba’s Divine Letter to His Students

(10th August 1979)

*My Dear Children,*

*There is no longer time for slumber. You have been asleep and dreaming for thousands of lifetimes. If you do not awaken now, this chance may not come again for thousands more.*

*Come with Me. Separation is no longer the order of the day. I separated Myself from Myself, so that I could love Myself more. The experience is finished. I want all Myselves to return and merge into Me, the one self.*

*I gave many of you the advantage of an unhappy childhood, including conflict or separation from your mother or father. In doing this I removed from you the temptation to become attached to human parents or a specific family situation. That left you with only one option - that is to attach yourself to Me.*

*Why do you not avail yourself of this opportunity instead of continually seeking those relationships, which can never satisfy you? Even if your childhood had been idyllic, as you would have liked, it is not even the love of this form that you long for. Your deepest innermost urge is to return to yourself - to love yourself - to become the being, Awareness, Bliss which is all you will ever be.*

*Let go of the past. Stop trying to get from each other what you still think you missed in childhood or marriage. You will never find anyone who is enough. Not even Me. Love yourself, know yourself, be yourself. Only you will be enough. Can you not love yourself because I love over and over again? Did I not virtually move heaven and earth to bring you to Me?*

*I have asked all My devotees to repeat the mantra, “I AM GOD, I AM NOT DIFFERENT FROM GOD”.*

Now I ask you to specifically follow that instruction. It will be more helpful than anything you can do. Now remember that I love you, and as I do, Love yourself.

With Love and Blessings,

BABA.

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## The Lizard and the Tiger

Once a lizard, perched on a wall, began chirping vigorously. This was considered an ill-omen, until a devotee asked Swami what

evil it portended. Baba said, "There is no evil portend in this. The lizard's sister will presently come here from Aurangabad to meet her. So she is singing with joy."

Everyone thought that Swami was joking, as was His wont. But very soon a *bhakta* arrived from Aurangabad for Baba's darshan. As he opened his sack, a lizard jumped out and straightaway she scaled the wall and embraced her 'sister'. They were overjoyed to meet each other.

How could Swami know this in advance? All were now convinced that the lizards were, indeed, 'sisters'.

There is the case of the tiger that used to do tricks for its master. But as the tiger grew old it could no longer play the tricks, so the tiger and its master both had to face starvation. Ultimately, the tiger became mad and uncontrollable, as it faced its end.

The dervish brought the tiger to Swami for his last grace. Swami asked the dervish to release the animal, that at once became quiet.

Approaching Swami the tiger prostrated itself at Swami's feet and Swami began stroking its back. The tiger opened its jaw and breathed his last.

Baba said, "*This was a great bhakta of Lord Siva. He has gone to Kailasa. Now bury his mortal remains in front of Shiva.*"

Swami is at-one with every being and animal in this world.

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**Despite the striking progress in the fields of science and technology, there has been deterioration in morals and social behaviour because of the growth of selfishness. Self-interest is predominant in every action. If one's entire life is governed by selfishness, what happens to society? Every individual has a responsibility to society, from which he derives so many benefits. Society is based on the principle of mutual give and take. your primary duty is to show your gratitude to your parents, your kith and kin, your friends, teachers and others, who have helped you in various ways to make you what you are.**

-BABA.

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## Sathya Sai Retreat

A Retreat for Sai devotees is being organised for the weekend of 18th and 19th January '08, in Co. Mayo, at the home of John & Fionnuala O'Dowd. The suggested theme of

the Retreat is "Baba - the Indweller of the Heart" or "Hridayavasi".

This, hopefully, will be a time for reflection and renewal in a peaceful and secluded environment. We wish to emphasise that this is a retreat and not a Workshop, so we encourage those who want to attend to share ideas on how this weekend may be fruitful.

A limited number of places exist, so we ask participants to contact us by 31st. Dec. 2007 at the latest, if they are planning to attend. This Retreat is non-residential, but there are many good B&Bs in Louisburgh and in the Westport area. The West View Hotel, in Louisburgh, is also very convenient and they often do deals for groups, especially off-season.

For further details contact John or Fionnuala at (098) 66368.

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## A Letter from Howard Murphet

I well remember reading my first book on Sathya Sai Baba, way back in the mid '70s, and being so, so impressed. Indeed, that book led me on towards many other books on Swami and His mission amongst us. They changed much in my thinking at the time, and honed a new perspective in my life's journey.

The late Howard Murphet wrote the following letter to his friends.

*(This is an edited version of that letter).*

"Dear Devotees,

My good friends -or some of them- in the Sai movement have expressed the opinion that the present time is really the dividing of the ways, 'the sifting of the chaff from the wheat', or what the Bible might call dividing of the sheep from the goats. Whatever the way we see it, this is a difficult time for some people, especially for those followers of Sai Baba who are fairly new..."

"...the greatest of His miracles is the Divine Love by which He brings about a deep change in the nature of people, His followers. I have described this inner change which might be called the 'birth of the Divine Child within us', or the initiation into Divine Life..."

"You have read in one of my books, that some years -in fact in 1982- when I was diagnosed as having an incurable disease, I prayed very earnestly to Sai Baba, my Guru. I was in a beautiful room in the Adelaide Hills, while Sai Baba (in the body), was of course at that time in India at His ashram. My prayer was so intense that after a sleep on a couch where the sun was shining through the windows, I woke up to see Swami's head and arm as it circled over me, and I knew that He had come and that this was a healing gesture. I saw it in that brief time when everybody has a

short period of clairvoyance. When that short period passed, His hand and body disappeared from my vision, but He was still there in the room. I knew by the unbelievably soul-moving sense of the luminous in the room. In fact the room was filled by it, and it penetrated the wall to where my wife was sitting in the breakfast room and then when Swami left, the luminosity went too...I knew then that I was cured of the disease and tests afterwards proved that this was so...I have come to a firm, unshakable conviction that we have with us, in Sathya Sai Baba, one of the greatest Avatars of all time."

"I know too, that He is being supported by many in the force-field of light, such as the Ascended Masters, two of whom I had much to do with while I was researching the biographies of the outward founders of the Theosophical Movement. They are Master El Moya and Master Kuthumi, who are two of the most powerful masters behind the launching of the Theosophical Society in the last century. Their purpose, in their own words, was 'to turn the crest wave of intellectual thought, that was being enlarged by the rapid growth of science during the latter half of the last century, to turn this -or at least some of it- towards the spiritual shores instead of letting it all break on the rocks of materialism...These two great Ascended Masters have given the weight of their spiritual perception and knowledge, to confirm what I myself, and many others throughout the world, have experienced. I feel beyond doubt that we are greatly honoured to have an Avatar of the caliber of Sai Baba on earth amongst us today. The two Masters stated in the book, "The Light will Set You Free", that, 'Avatar Sai Baba is carrying the Divine Consciousness in the world today'."

"Another great Indian saint and seer, Ananda Mayi Ma, stated to a Sai devotee that, 'Sai Baba is not only a great Avatar, but the Greatest that has ever walked the Earth'". No doubt many people may waver, and other faithless ones may turn away from the Avatar, but it will not change His mission, which is to raise the consciousness of people in the world. When enough of them have evolved, it will bring about a quantum leap in the consciousness of humanity, and thus start the new Age of Truth (the Sathya Yuga)...You make your own decision as to which road to travel. One leads to the Light, and the other to the darkness through which the world has suffered during the long centuries of the Kali Yuga... Those working against the Avatar, unless they go to the unredeemable level of being demonic, will some day, in some life, come back to the Divine Feet. This I pray for as I send them my love. God bless you, Sai Ram."

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**You are imprisoned in your ego. Though you should try to liberate yourselves from this bondage quickly and safely, most of you do not seek from Me the key to this liberation. You ask Me for trash and tinsel,**

**petty little cures and gains. Very few desire to get from Me the thing I have come to give - Liberation itself. -BABA.**

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### *A Prayer Answered*

"A patient being operated for a congenital heart defect, was unable to recover function sufficiently, to come off the heart-lung machine and generate adequate systemic pressure," said Ravi Mariwala, graduate of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, and holds a Master's degree in Business Administration. Many boys, especially with MBA degrees, volunteered to serve in the hospital, and Ravi was one of them, operating the heart-lung machine, the vital instrument in cardiac surgery

"We tried everything but nothing seemed to work. Everyone was beginning to despair. We discussed the matter, rested the heart again, and added some more drugs. We only failed once more. We were absolutely helpless. It occurred to me we had tried everything, but prayer.

"As I had been in the theatre for five hours already, I was briefly relieved by a colleague. I stood silently in a corridor outside the theatre, trying to recollect Swami's face in my mind's eye. I said a silent prayer for the patient's recovery and returned to the theatre. The situation had changed completely. The blood pressure had improved and the heart had recovered! Strangely, no one knew how or why; I did not say anything to anyone.

"The patient's recovery was smooth. On the Sunday that followed, Swami came to me, created vibhuti, put it into my hands and lovingly said, '*This is for the prayer that you said for the patient.*' He then proceeded to describe the incident to others. Here was Swami rewarding me for the miracle cure that He, in His Mercy, had effected!" (*Radiosai*)

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### *The Face of God.*

A newspaper photographer was sent to Ecuador in 1987 to cover the earthquake that devastated much of the country. He witnessed amidst the suffering a scene of compassion that moved him deeply to write the following;

"The line was long but moving briskly and in that line, at the very end, was a young girl about twelve years of age. She waited patiently as all those up front of that long line received a little rice, some canned food and a little fruit. Slowly but surely, she was getting

closer to the front of the line, closer to the food that was being distributed.

“The young girl did not notice the growing despair on the faces of those distributing the food. The food was running out. Instead, the young girl’s attention seemed to be riveted on three younger children who were standing as a distance, across the street.

“At long last she stepped forward to get her share of the food. All that was left was a solitary banana.

“Quietly she took the precious gift and smiled her gratitude. Then she ran across the street to the three younger children. She peeled the banana very carefully and divided it into three equal parts. She placed one part of the food into the hands of each child. Then she sat down and with a smile, licked the inside of the banana peel.

“At that moment”, the photographer concluded, “I swear I saw the face of GOD!” (*Radiosai*)

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### **Smile Awhile**

A Buddhist monk goes to a barber to have his head shaved. ‘What should I pay you?’ the monk asks. ‘No price, for a holy man such as yourself’, the barber replied. And what do you know, the next day the barber coming to open his shop, finds on his doorstep a dozen gemstones.

That day, a priest comes in to have his hair cut. ‘What shall I pay you, my son?’ ‘No price, for a man of the cloth such as yourself’. And what do you know, the next day the barber comes to open his shop and finds in his doorstep a dozen roses.

That day, Rabbi Finklestein comes in to get his *payoss* (sideburns) trimmed. ‘What do you want I should pay you?’

‘Nothing, for a man of God, such as you.’ And the next morning, what do you know? The barber finds on his doorstep a dozen rabbis! (*Sai International*)

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### **Give Up Non-Vegetarian Food**

The following is an excerpt from a discourse by Swami, on 23rd Nov. 1994;

*“Today, let it be anyone, whether one deems himself a devotee or not, he should give up meat eating. Why? Meat eating promotes only animal qualities and demonic tendencies. It has been well said that the food one consumes determines one’s thoughts. By eating the flesh of various animals, the qualities of these*

*animals are imbibed. Hence, those who genuinely seek to become devotees of God have to give up non-vegetarian food. Calling themselves Sai devotees or devotees of Rama and Krishna, they fatten themselves on chickens. How can they be deemed Sai devotees? Therefore, whether they are devotees in India or outside, they should give up from this instant meat eating. Those who aspire to become true devotees of God have to give up meat, liquor, smoking and gambling”.*

(Should you follow Swami’s advice, the turkeys will love you this Christmas!)

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### **Swami’s concern for His students**

The following is from Swami’s Convocation Discourse, 2002;

*“Did any of you Students ever spend any money for your education here? Normally, I will not reveal such things. Usually, during examination time students study the whole night, keeping the lights on.*

*“One day, the warden advised the students to limit the period of their study during the night, since the charges for electricity are gradually on the increase. The students did not pay heed to the advice and continued to study for long hours in the night. Consequently, the electricity bill came to a huge amount.*

*“Meanwhile, exactly two months before the examination, the Electricity Department disconnected power supply to the hostel due to non-payment of the bill. They cannot be blamed, for, it is their duty. There were no lights in the hostel rooms. Students were feeling a lot of inconvenience. The warden came to Me and explained their plight. I enquired him, Why did he not bring it to My notice earlier. The warden replied, “Swami! You are spending so much amount on the education of the students. You are taking so much responsibility. How can I add some more burden? With that intention, I did not bring it to your notice.*

*“I enquired from him the amount of the bill. He replied that it came to Rs. 70,000/-. Thereupon I advised him, ‘Go immediately and pay the entire amount. Ask the Department people to restore the power supply immediately. Do not reveal to the students anything of what transpired between you and Me.’*

*“Thus, I take so much trouble to look to the convenience and welfare of the students”. - BABA 2002 Convocation Discourse*

**Love is in everyone, but, because it is turned to selfish ends, it becomes attachment. You should aspire to experience Dhaivi Prema (Divine Love). In the modern world, youth should know the nature of true love. Many from abroad mix with persons of the opposite sex, calling them boy friend and girl friend. If you really love each other you must get married and not continue living as friends. -BABA**

### **Swami’s Discourses on Education**

Over the years, Swami has given many Convocation Discourses, on Education. In recent years, His Convocation Discourses were many. I am happy to reproduce a few here:

*“You can call yourself a student only when you know the significance of education. Education does not mean mere acquisition of bookish knowledge. There are many that are experts in bookish knowledge. Many have become educational wizards and scholars. What services do these pundits and scholars do to the world? Having been born and brought up in society, having acquired their knowledge from society what is it they have done for the society?”*

*“What is the use of their scholarship and education, if they do not show their gratitude to society?”*

*“Sri Aurobindo once told at the university in Calcutta, ‘Students, why do you acquire this knowledge? This learning is not for your selfish ends. What is the use of your learning if you do not serve the community, wherein you have acquired your knowledge? If you do not repay your debts to society by using your talents, it is better you burn all the books that you read.’”*

*“Resolve to make the best use of the education you have received. Respect and revere elders and set an ideal to humanity. Let your conduct befit the degrees you have acquired. nothing great in obtaining good marks, see that you do not invite bad remarks. In modern system of education, a student is declared pass, if he secures just 35% of marks. What about the balance 65%? If a person completes only 35 out of 100 tasks assigned to him, can you call him a successful*

*one? One should secure 100% marks. That is true education.*

*“Attaining high marks is not the aim of education. Education is meant to broaden the mind. Education and discrimination should go hand in hand. The Prosperity of the nation depends on the progress you make in the field of education. The future of the nation rests on the students.”*

*“Education is the very form of God. The word ‘education’ has originated from the root word, ‘educare’, meaning ‘to bring out’ or ‘to elicit’. Educare has two aspects: that which relates to the head and that which relates to the heart...Modern education relates to the head, but true education relates to the heart.”*

*“Education should fill one’s heart with love and compassion. Two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen add up to make water, Greatness lies in sharing water equally, not making it. Everyone has an equal right in sharing water. Today everyone is fighting for rights but what about responsibility?”*

*“Students! You do not need to fight for rights. discharge your responsibilities, rights will follow. Do your duty, duty is God; work is worship. What is your right? To make everybody happy is your right. Serve everybody and make everyone happy without expecting anything in return. Service is God. ‘The best way to love God is to love all and serve all’. ‘Speak softly and sweetly’. ‘You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly’. That is the essence of Bhatatiya Vidya. Education does not mean, ‘Twinkle, Twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are?’ All this is artificial education.”*

### **Rely On Yourself**

A Disciple came riding on his camel to the tent of his Sufi Master. He dismounted and walked right into the tent, bowed and said, “So great is my faith in God that I have left my camel outside untied, convinced that God protects the interests of those who love Him.”

“Go tie your camel, you fool!” said the Master. “God cannot be bothered doing for you what you are perfectly capable of doing for yourself.”

### **Sathya Sai Baba’s 82nd Birthday Party**

A special thanks is extended to Mr. M. L. Shorey, and his family, for opening their

home to many Sai devotees, to commemorate this blessed and festive occasion.

Bhajans were sung for two hours by all, and afterwards a delicious supper was served to everybody. Great credit must be extended to the family for the preparation of this supper.

They have Swami's blessings and our thanks.

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**Never hate anyone, because the principle of Love is immanent in all. Divine energy is present too. Never criticise or malign anyone. Love all. When you love all, that itself is divine consciousness which transforms into divine power. Therefore never give scope to bad thoughts, and with pure conviction declare that you are the Cosmic Divine presence in all. Many people take recourse to many spiritual practices without understanding their own innate divinity. They take too many spiritual paths. -BABA.**

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**Any task undertaken with self-confidence is absolutely essential for every person. If you expect others to respect and love you, you should first respect and love them. Without respecting or loving others, you cannot expect any reciprocal feeling from them. In the same way, if you love God, God loves you. Life consists of reaction, response and reflection. You get back exactly what you do to others. -BABA.**

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**For Centre & Group Meetings**

**write to:**

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