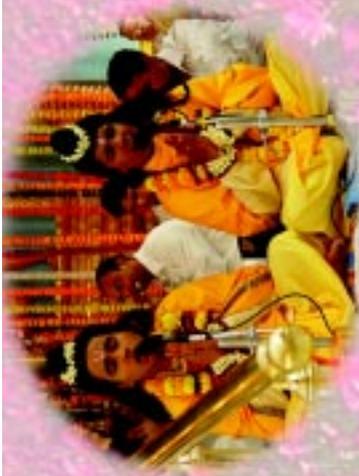




**SAI INTERFAITH
CONFERENCE**

22nd JULY 2005



**RAMAKATHA
A MUSIC PROGRAMME**

21st JULY 2005



**SAI SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA**

20th JULY 2005



**CULTURAL PROGRAMME ON
ASHADI EKADASI**

18th JULY 2005



**GURU PURNIMA CELEBRATIONS AT
PRASANTHI NILAYAM**





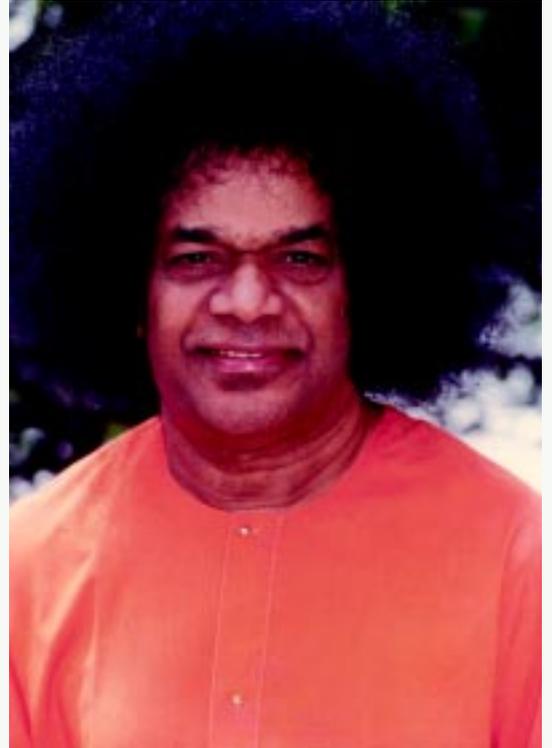
EVERYTHING DEPENDS UPON GOD'S GRACE

Everyone has to face the consequences of his Karma (actions). Who has made the bats to hang from the branches of a tree with their heads downwards? Has anyone tied them upside down out of hatred? No, it is their fate. Likewise, nobody can escape from the consequences of Karma.

(Telugu Poem)

BIRDS FLY IN THE SKY WITH THE help of their wings. Bats too have wings and they can also fly. But unlike other birds, they hang from the branches of trees with their heads downwards. Is it not their fate? One may perform any type of action, but one is bound to face the consequences of one's each and every action. This is the law of Nature.

Whether one is a Pamara (ignorant person) or a Mahaneeya (noble soul), one has to face the results of one's actions. Let no one be under the illusion that he can commit sin and go scot-free. Hence, one should enquire before performing an action whether it is



When you adhere to Swami's words, the power of Sai will manifest in you. Chant any name of your choice, Easwara, Rama, Krishna, etc., but always remember that God is one. I will never force you to chant a particular name. One should not limit God to a particular name or form. You may call Me by any name, I shall respond.

None can Escape from the Consequences of his Actions

Students – Boys and Girls!

People may act as they please, but they cannot escape from the consequences of their actions.

good or bad. Wherever you go, the results of your actions will follow you like a shadow. However, it is possible to mitigate the consequences of actions



by the grace of God. God is always by your side, and is always blessing you by saying "Tathastu!", "Tathastu!" (so may it be!). Man is not realising 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. All that man experiences in life is the result of his own actions, good or bad. You may think that you can commit a sin surreptitiously and feel that no one has seen you. But you cannot hide your actions from God. The consequences of your actions will follow you wherever you go. A person cannot be judged from his outward appearance. He may appear to be noble and great and speak in a pleasing manner; but his actions may not be compatible with his words. You may undertake any number of good deeds, but they cannot nullify the consequences of your past evil deeds. You have to bear this truth always in mind.

Embodiments of Love!

No one can comprehend the ways of God. They are inscrutable, mysterious and full of wonder. The principle of divinity is not visible to the naked eye, but it is this principle which makes you to experience the fruits of actions.

*The stories of the Lord are amazing,
They purify the lives of people in all the
three worlds,
They are like the sickles that cut the
creepers of worldly bondage,
They are like a good friend who helps you
in times of need,
They are like a shelter for the sages
and seers doing penance in the
forest.*

(Telugu Poem)



The Water Supply Project work in East and West Godavari districts is nearing completion. Plans are ready for the Water Supply Project in Krishna district also. I am taking up and completing these projects of My own accord without anybody's asking. Water is very important for the survival of everyone. It is the sustainer of life. What greater service can there be for mankind than providing drinking water to the needy?

Embodiments of Love!

You may not be able to comprehend fully all that is being said. But you will understand it when you experience it yourself. It is impossible to escape from Karma Phala (fruits of action). Sometimes, you may experience Karma Phala later, much after the performance of the action. But you cannot escape from it. You may hide your action by saying that you have not committed any mistake. But you cannot do away with the action or the result thereof. You cannot cover up your sins forever. You read a number of books. But do you practise all that you have learnt? No, no. You practise only that which is necessary and convenient for you. But there is no such option with regard to the results of your actions that you have once performed.

Develop Deservedness to Attain God's Grace

Students!

You may wonder if there is a way to escape from the consequences of Karma. Yes, it is possible for those who earn the grace of God. Once you become the recipient of God's grace, you will be saved from experiencing Karma Phala. Hence, you should strive to earn Divine grace. Scholars say, it is impossible to escape from Karma Phala. What they say is true to a certain extent. But once you earn Divine grace, even if you have to experience the consequences of Karma, you will not feel the pain. Take, for instance, a bottle containing a medicine. You find the expiry date mentioned on the bottle. After the expiry date, the medicine will lose its potency. Likewise, Karma Phala will not affect you because God's grace nullifies its potency. Hence, it is possible to escape from the consequences of Karma by earning Divine grace. Man should therefore develop deservedness to earn Divine grace. You will be free from the shackles of Karma once you attain Divine grace.

Lord Easwara had granted only sixteen years of life-span to Markandeya. But Markandeya was unaware of it. One evening, he found his parents full of sorrow. On enquiry, they revealed that his end was imminent, and that was the cause of their sorrow. They said, "Lord Easwara had ordained that you would live only for sixteen years and today happens to be the last day of your earthly sojourn. Tomorrow our earthly ties will be snapped." Markandeya was surprised to hear this. He also felt sorry that he was not made aware of it earlier. He said,

"I would have made proper use of my time if I had known that I would live for only sixteen years." He went to the temple of Easwara without wasting even a moment, hugged the Siva Linga and started chanting *Om Namah Sivaya* wholeheartedly. At the appointed hour, Lord Yama (god of death) cast his noose around the neck of young Markandeya. As he was hugging the Linga, the noose fell around the Siva Linga also. Easwara manifested there and admonished Yama, "How dare you cast the noose around me?" Pleased with the devotion of Markandeya, Easwara blessed him with the boon of eternal life.

In fact, it was Easwara who had stipulated 16 years of life-span for Markandeya. But on account of Markandeya's intense devotion and total surrender Easwara had to change His decree. Markandeya's life story bears ample testimony to the fact that one can escape even from the god of death if one becomes the recipient of God's grace. Hence, contemplate on God and chant His Name incessantly.

Once when Lord Yama was going round the world, he noticed that everyone was chanting the Divine Name. Wherever he went, he found devotees contemplating on the Lord. "If everyone starts chanting the Divine Name, how am I to discharge my duties?" He wondered and prayed to Easwara, "How can I cast my noose around a devotee?" Then Easwara said, "You may cast your noose around anyone at the appointed time. But remember that only those

who have to experience the fruits of their actions get caught in it. It cannot touch those who have no trace of Karma Phala. That is why Markandeya



became My property and I showered My grace on him.”

Chant the Divine Name Incessantly

As demonstrated by Markandeya, devotees can alter the Will of God by their sincere prayers. Nothing is impossible for God; God can accomplish anything. If you



Chant the Name of God day in and day out. That alone will protect you at all times. Just as air is all-pervasive, God is present in you, with you, around you, below you, above you. Hence, you should be in constant communion with Divinity. When you develop faith in Divinity, you will naturally have unity. Consequently, there will be no scope for enmity.



surrender to Him completely, He can cancel the consequences of your actions and confer His grace on you. One need not feel depressed or dejected, thinking that he is bound by Karma Phala. God can cancel your Karma Phala if your

prayer is sincere. In this manner, God protected the lives of many devotees and alleviated their suffering in response to their prayers. Some people out of their ego doubt the power of God and try to test Him. They think, “Let us see how He will do this.” But God cannot be understood or experienced

by such tests. Such tests are futile exercises. Evil qualities like ego, jealousy and hatred will ruin man’s life. One should make every effort to earn the grace of God. *Sarvada Sarva Kaleshu Sarvatra Hari Chintanam* (everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances contemplate on God). That is why Swami is exhorting you to undertake various spiritual practices. No one knows when one’s end will approach. Yama does not care what one is doing, good or bad, at the time when he casts his noose. Many people do Nama Sankirtan. It is also possible that your end may approach while you are singing the glories of God. Hence, you should always be prepared to face Yama by engaging yourself in chanting the Divine Name incessantly. You should undertake spiritual practices and earn divine grace so as to be free from Karma Phala. One need not be afraid of fate; it can easily be changed with

sincere prayer. The story of Markandeya proves this point beyond doubt. Everything depends upon God’s grace.

Embodiments of Love!

You may undertake any number of spiritual practices, but never forget



God's Name even for a moment. This will provide you Divine protection and grace. Never do anything that will make you distant from God. You can achieve anything by prayer. There is no need for you to pray loudly; it is enough if you pray mentally. Some people have a mistaken notion that God will not come to their rescue if they do not pray loudly. God resides in your heart. He listens to your prayers. Contemplate on Him constantly to become deserving of His grace. Worldly difficulties come and go. One should not attach much importance to them. One can overcome worldly difficulties somehow or the other. What is important is the deservedness for God's grace. One should strive to attain it.

Embodiments of Love!

Chant the Name of God day in and day out. That alone will protect you at all times. Just as air is all-pervasive, God is present in you, with you, around you, below you, above you. Hence, you should be in constant communion with Divinity. When you develop faith in Divinity, you will naturally have unity. Consequently, there will be no scope for enmity. You need not perform any rituals in order to win the grace of God. It is enough if you do Namasmara (chanting the Divine Name) from the depth of your heart. *Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin...* (one cannot attain peace and happiness without singing the glory of God). If you incessantly chant the Divine Name "Rama", no harm can ever befall you.

Embodiments of Love!

It is because of your good fortune that you all have gathered here today. You have earned great merit





People may act as they please, but they cannot escape from the consequences of their actions. Whether one is a Pamara (ignorant person) or a Mahaneeya (noble soul), one has to face the results of one's actions. Let no one be under the illusion that he can commit sin and go scot-free. Hence, one should enquire before performing an action whether it is good or bad. Wherever you go, the results of your actions will follow you like a shadow.



by coming here. Do not fritter away this opportunity. Make the best use of your stay here and get the maximum benefit out of it. Remember that God is always with you wherever you are.

God is your sole refuge wherever you may be, in a forest, in the sky, in a city or a village, on the top of a mountain or in the middle of deep sea. (Telugu Poem)

Students, Embodiments of Love!

I am very much aware that you think of Swami always. It does not matter whether you chant the Divine Name loudly or silently. I see only the feeling behind it. Nothing can come between God and His devotees. Rishis of yore went to the Himalayas to contemplate on God. Wherever you are, God listens to your prayers. Do Bhajans sincerely. Swami will certainly take care of you. Never give room for any weakness. Be always courageous. When you adhere to Swami's words,



the power of Sai will manifest in you. Chant any name of your choice, Easwara, Rama, Krishna, etc., but always remember that God is one. I will never force you to chant a particular name. One should not limit God to a particular name or form. You may call Me by any name, I shall respond.

Sai is Always Engaged in Serving Mankind

Recently, a strange incident took place. Subramaniam of Larsen & Toubro and Chief Engineer Kondal Rao had gone to East Godavari and West Godavari regions in connection with the Water Supply Project work. As they were conducting a survey in a forest area, they were confronted by a group of naxalites. The naxalites questioned them, “Who are you? Why have you come here? Who has sent you here? How dare you enter our area without our permission?” They replied, “We have come here in your own interest. As there is scarcity of water in this region, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has sent us to make arrangements for the drinking water supply.” On hearing this, the naxalites were overwhelmed and overjoyed. They said, “We are living in the forests and hence are not aware of the magnificent service projects that Swami has undertaken.” They guided the engineers as to where to lay the pipes and fix the taps.

The Water Supply Project work in East and West Godavari districts is nearing completion. Plans are ready for the Water Supply Project in Krishna district also (*loud applause*). I am taking up and completing these projects of My own accord without anybody’s asking. Water is very important for the survival of everyone. It is the sustainer of life. What greater

service can there be for mankind than providing drinking water to the needy? I do not expect anything from you. I am doing it out of My love for you. East Godavari, West Godavari and Krishna districts are now being covered under Sri Sathya Sai Drinking Water Supply Project. The people of these districts are extremely happy. All living beings need water to sustain their life. I am providing this essential means of sustenance of life to all. You need not ask for it. I am giving it out of My own accord. Till today no government or individual for that matter could provide drinking water to Krishna district. It is only Sai who is providing water to all. I am always engaged in such humanitarian projects. Devotees should pray that everybody should have water to drink. Pray for the welfare and happiness of all. This prayer is the need of the hour. You should never forget this prayer.

You may be worried that Swami is not able to walk. But always remember that Swami is not the body. I have no connection with the body. I am always happy and healthy. Do not pray to God for the fulfilment of your desires. Pray for the welfare of all. When I had a fall, the people of East Godavari and West Godavari came and prayed, “Swami, we want only Your health and not water.” I told them, “Your welfare is My welfare.” They are bringing a helicopter for Me with the prayer that I should pay a visit to East Godavari and West Godavari districts. Very soon, I will be visiting these districts. Treasure the bliss you have received today forever. Do Namasmarana.

– **From Bhagavan’s Guru Purnima Message in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 21st July 2005.**



LOVING DIVINE BENEDICTIONS

A MAMMOTH GATHERING OF devotees from all parts of the world thronged Prasanthi Nilayam to pay homage to their Sadguru Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the holy occasion of Guru Purnima. This being the 80th year of the Advent of Bhagavan, many excellent cultural, musical and other programmes were held during Guru Purnima celebrations this year.

GURU PURNIMA CELEBRATIONS

The holy festival of Guru Purnima was celebrated with great piety and solemnity on 21st July 2005. Sai Kulwant Hall, the venue of celebrations, was aesthetically decorated for this occasion. It started reverberating with sweet devotional music when the Nadaswaram group of students started playing their mellifluous tunes beginning with Mahaganapatim Bhaje ... Veda chanting group of students started chanting sacred Vedic Mantras as soon as Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall to shower the bliss of His Divine Darshan on the huge concourse of devotees. Panchavadyam group of students also joined the Nadaswaram group to welcome Bhagavan with their sweet music when He entered the Hall at 7.35 a.m.

Before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan, four speakers addressed the gathering. The first speaker was Sri V. Srinivasan, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations. Sri Srinivasan explained the significance of Guru Purnima and advised the devotees to put into practice three most important lessons taught by Bhagavan, viz., faith in God, service

to humanity and Namasmarana so as to become worthy of His love and grace. Obviously pleased with his talk, Bhagavan showered His love on the speaker and also materialised a gold ring for him. The next speaker was Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Explaining the difference between Guru and Sadguru, Dr. Venkataraman observed that the Guru removed the veil of Ajnana (ignorance) that covered reality in man, but a Sadguru created a thirst for Jnana (wisdom) in his devotees. Bhagavan, the erudite speaker said, creates yearning in us for God and gives us the experience of His Divine Love which is totally selfless. Where we see love, we see God because God is nothing but selfless love, concluded the learned speaker. The next speaker, Sri R. Satish, a student of MBA (Final) narrated a personal experience and remarked that on this holy occasion of Guru Purnima we should surrender at the Lotus Feet of our Divine Guru, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The last speaker was Sri Anil Vinayak Gokak, Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Dwelling on the meaning of Guru Purnima, Sri Gokak elaborated that a real Guru would have inner awakening as his mind was fully illumined like the full moon. The task of a Guru was not only to impart information but also to facilitate transformation of the disciple by illumining his mind, said Sri Gokak. He added that interaction between a teacher and a student was necessary as prevailed in the Gurukul system of education.

After these talks, Bhagavan gave His Guru Purnima Message (full text



given elsewhere in this issue) exhorting the devotees to strive for God's grace to redeem their lives. Bhagavan concluded His Divine Discourse at 10.00 a.m. after which Bhajans started. Prasadam blessed by Bhagavan was distributed to all during Bhajans. The morning programme came to a close at 10.15 a.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

In the afternoon, the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning presented a programme entitled "Rama Katha" (story of Rama) enriched with soul-stirring devotional music and lively commentary. The programme, which was prepared under the direct supervision of Bhagavan, started at 4.30 p.m. in His Divine Presence and kept the audience spellbound for more than one hour. Two students in the excellent make-up of Lava and Kusha rendered the Rama story and other devotional songs flawlessly with deep devotional feelings sending the devotees into raptures with each song. It was really a feast for the soul and a most fitting finale of the holy Guru Purnima celebrations, which came to a happy conclusion with Arati to Bhagavan at 6.00 p.m.

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES

The Only Element – A Dance Drama

This excellent drama on the lofty theme of love was enacted by the children of Sai Spiritual Education of the USA (Region X) on the afternoon of 4th July 2005 in Sai Kulwant Hall. Commencing with the depiction of the story behind the custom of Thanksgiving in the USA, the drama showed how giving and sharing

generated joy and love in human heart. It depicted that man could have peace, amity, happiness and fulfilment in life when he established harmony with the five elements of Nature, viz., earth, water, fire, air and ether



A scene from the drama - "The Only Element". (Inset) Children depicting Love as the only element.

by expanding his love which formed the undercurrent of these five elements, and was in fact the only element. The drama concluded with Thanksgiving to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba whose Divine Love is spreading peace and harmony in the world. Meticulously planned and skilfully executed, the drama was a captivating presentation from all aspects, be it the acting of the children, selection of costumes and props or sweetness of music. Dances of the children, especially the dances depicting the five elements in appropriate costumes for each element along with visual presentation of the element in the backdrop, were very appreciable. Simultaneous chanting of the Vedic Mantras relevant



to the creation of each element was an added attraction. The drama concluded with the group song “Viswarupa Darshanam” (vision of the Cosmic Form). This was followed by a music programme and Sai Bhajans by the USA group. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan.

Bhagavan Inaugurates the Premises of Easwaramma Women’s Welfare Trust

The premises of Easwaramma Women’s Welfare Trust located in the northern part of Prasanthi Nilayam was inaugurated by Bhagavan on the morning of 19th July 2005. After inaugurating it, Bhagavan went round it and observed the various activities being carried out there for the all-round welfare and uplift of women especially from underprivileged sections of society. Earlier on the occasion of 10th year of Ladies Day celebrations in the year 2004, Easwaramma Women’s Welfare Project was inaugurated by Bhagavan in a simple function in Sai Kulwant Hall. The seed sown then has now grown in the form of Easwaramma Women’s Welfare Trust under the direct supervision of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust. This Trust has been established to benefit women at large. It has been founded on the teachings of Bhagavan to address the problems of women in a meaningful way, and to bring peace and comfort to them, without any distinction of religion, caste, colour or creed. Two schemes have been started under the aegis of this Trust, namely, “Mother and Child Programme” and “Easwaramma Self-Help Programme”.

The Mother and Child Programme has as its objectives the following:

- Monitoring and improving the health and nutritional status of expecting mothers.
- Providing regular pre-natal check ups and medical support during pregnancy.
- Training local birth attendants in early problem identification and in providing support to expectant mothers.
- Counselling and education in health and hygiene.
- Emergency care to ensure safe delivery.
- Providing medical and nutritional support for the newborn child and infants.
- Immunisation programmes for children.
- Education and training in child health and nutrition.
- Assessment of and support in growth and development of the infant.

The programme is to be initially operational in the villages in and around Puttaparthi, with the scope slowly expanding to include a growing circle of villages as the programme moves forward.

The Easwaramma Self-Help Programme for women seeks to empower women to achieve self-reliance and to provide means of steady livelihood and thereby improve the health and quality of life of women, their families and children. The Easwaramma Self-Help Programme seeks to train women in making a variety of useful products using locally available and environmentally friendly raw materials for



sustained development. The Self-Help Programme will work towards establishing opportunities for gainful employment so that no person suffers from pangs of hunger.

On the afternoon of 19th July 2005, Easwaramma Women's Welfare Trust organised a programme of devotional vocal music in Sai Kulwant Hall in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan. The vocalists were: Vidushi Sumitra Guha, an exponent of Hindustani vocal and Vidushi Bombay Jayashree, a reputed artiste of Carnatic music. Both the artistes presented Mira Bhajans and Sai Bhajans and earned the appreciation and applause of the devotees. Thereafter, Begum Parveen Sultana presented excellent rendering of two Mira Bhajans, 'Nanda Nandan Giridhari' and 'Sakhiri Mein Giridhar Ke Ranga Rati'. At the conclusion of this soul-elevating musical presentations, Bhagavan blessed all the artistes and distributed Saris to them. The programme which started at 4.10 p.m. came to a happy conclusion at 5.45 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

Guru Purnima Concert by Sai Symphony Orchestra

A grand and soul-stirring musical presentation was made by overseas devotees to offer their homage to their Sadguru Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the eve of the holy festival of Guru Purnima. More than 60 artistes from nearly 20 countries participated in this "Gurupurnima Concert" presented by Sai Symphony Orchestra on the afternoon of 20th July 2005 in Sai Kulwant Hall in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan. The



"Gurupurnima Concert" by Sai Symphony Orchestra.

concert comprised famous compositions of well-known composers of the world, namely, W.A. Mozart, L. Van Beethoven, Rossini, A. Dvork and J. Jimenez. The programme which started at 3.50 p.m. enthralled the audience for one and a half hours by its soul-elevating compositions and came to a close at 5.00 p.m. This was followed by Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam. In the end, Arati was offered to Bhagavan.

An Excellent Cultural Programme

A very lively cultural programme depicting a few episodes from Lord Krishna's childhood and delineating the rich cultural heritage of Assam along with the life story of saint Sankardeva was presented by the Bal Vikas children of Assam, Manipur and North-Eastern States on the afternoon of 23rd July 2005 in Sai Kulwant Hall. The programme presented through a lively dialogue between a father and his son showed the glimpses of rich culture of Assam, its famous temples and the sacred river Brahmaputra in the backdrop. It portrayed how the great saint-poet and reformer Sankardeva





Bal Vikas children of Assam, Manipur and North-Eastern States presenting a cultural programme in Sai Kulwant Hall.

(1449-1568) brought about a spiritual awakening in Assam and brought the knowledge of the scriptures like the Vedas and the Upanishads to the doorstep of common people. The programme depicted some childhood pranks of Krishna, like stealing of butter and vanquishing of demon-snake Kaliya. Beautiful dances of the children, sweet music and perfect choreography added to the beauty of the presentation. The programme which began with two prayer songs concluded at 5.00 p.m. with a Sarva Dharma Sai Bhajan.

Bhagavan's Love in Action

In a function held in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on the morning of 24th July 2005, Bhagavan distributed sewing

machines and wet grinding machines to 84 women to provide them the means of livelihood. The function was organised by the staff and students of Anantapur Campus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning as part of the celebration of 80th year of the Advent of Bhagavan. The programme began after the arrival of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall at 8.15 a.m. As soon as Bhagavan was seated on the dais, the students of Anantapur Campus invoked the blessings of Lord Ganesh by singing a sweet song in his praise.

Thereafter, the programme of distribution of sewing machines and wet grinding machines started. All the beneficiaries came near the dais one by one, offered their Pranams to Bhagavan and received the machines and other gifts.

This was followed by an excellent presentation of "Sai Katha" with the accompaniment of soulful music by the students of Anantapur Campus. The students narrated the story of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Advent and sojourn on earth and described His Divine glory. Bhajans started at the end of this programme and Prasadam was distributed to all. The programme came to a close at 9.40 a.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

Nishkama Karma or selfless service is a fragrant flower of altruistic love. It is not to be performed for the satisfaction of the person rendering the service or the person at whose bidding it is being done. The feeling should flow through the nerves and bloodstream and permeate every cell of the person's body. Whatever be the nature of work, we should do it as an offering to God.

- Baba

OBEY DIVINE COMMAND WITH TOTAL FAITH

Embodiments of Love!

EVERYBODY HAS TO FACE THE consequences of his actions; there can be no escape from them. Karma has neither feet nor eyes nor mouth. But man cannot escape from it. That is why our ancients declared that one has to bear



the consequences of one's Karma. The results of Karma do not depend upon your likes and dislikes. It is not because you desire it that something

happens. Similarly, something is averted not because you do not desire it. Irrespective of your thoughts and desires, Karma follows its own course.

Mysterious are the Ways of God

The world is full of mystery and wonder. It is nothing but the manifestation of five



Whatever you have learnt here, share it with others. But sharing with others is also not enough; you should put your knowledge into practice and derive benefit therefrom. We prepare many delicious items at home and serve them to the guests. Is it not necessary that we should also partake of them? Likewise, you should digest the Vedic knowledge you have acquired and also share it with others. All knowledge has originated from the Vedas. That is why the Vedas are extolled as Sarva Vijnana Sampatti (treasure chest of all knowledge). But, unfortunately, we are not making proper use of this treasure.



elements. It undergoes change with the passage of time. Likewise, the physical body which is also made up of five elements is subject to change. Only the indweller is permanent. The ways of



God are mysterious and beyond the grasp of human understanding. All that you see is not indeed the reality. In fact, man is incapable of fathoming the deep divine mysteries with his senses. It is not possible for anybody to hold on to the physical body forever. It remains so long as it is destined to be. It will perish at its predestined time. Nobody has any control over death. It is decided at the time of birth itself. The date of departure is imperceptibly written on the body when it comes into the world.

It is not possible for man to comprehend the way the universe functions. Who is responsible for the wonders and mysteries that we witness in this world? What one has to do, when, where and how, all this is predestined. Man has no control over it. Everything happens according to God's Will and His command. It is the primary duty of man to obey the divine command implicitly. Everything in this world, perceptible or imperceptible, happens according to the Divine Will. One need not pay heed to what others say when it comes to obeying God's command. You have to obey the divine command in letter and spirit without adding any comma or full stop to it. Unfortunately, today nobody is making any real effort to understand the mysteries of God's creation. Scientists boast of having unravelled the mysteries of creation, but they do not have true experience of the reality behind the phenomena of the universe. Each and every activity that takes place in this universe is full of wonder. When you observe carefully, you will be able to perceive the unseen hand of God at work everywhere.

(Narrating the story of Markandeya's victory over death,



You should not chant the Mantras in a mechanical way. You should assimilate and digest them. Why do you eat food? Is it to preserve it in the stomach? No. The food partaken should be digested so that its essence is supplied to all parts of the body. In the same manner, you should understand and assimilate the Vedic knowledge and derive strength from it. It should manifest in your thoughts, words and deeds. You will experience bliss when you share your knowledge of the Vedas with others.

Bhagavan said): God responds to the prayers of devotees and comes to their rescue when they have purity of heart. One with a pure heart can even alter the Sankalpa of God. The story of Markandeya bears ample testimony to this. Markandeya had no desires. He made sacred use of the time granted to him. It is the primary duty of devotees to cultivate noble thoughts and perform sacred actions. Markandeya remained a Chiranjeevi (one with eternal life), served his parents and gave them immense happiness. In the normal course, God's Will cannot be altered. But sometimes God does change His Sankalpa in answer to the prayer of a devotee who is sincere and pure at heart. Such a devotee has the power to change the Will of God. Devotion does not mean mere vocal expression of prayer; one should have purity of heart.

All Systems of Philosophy Propound the Same Truth

Adi Sankara was born in Kerala in 8th century A.D. He propounded the philosophy of Advaita (non-dualism) and propagated the truths which were the base of all scriptures. But he left his body at an early age of 32 years. Ramanujacharya was born in 11th century A.D. and propagated the efficacy of the divine name. That was the time when devotion to God was on the decline. It was because of Ramanujacharya's teachings that people developed devotion and spirit of surrender to God. Madhwacharya lived during 13th century A.D. Though he propagated the principle of Dvaita (dualism), yet he maintained that Jiva (individual soul) and Deva (God) were not different from each other in essence. However, the underlying principle in all the three systems of thought as propagated by Adi Sankara, Ramanujacharya and Madhwacharya is one and the same. The same principle of Atma is present in all beings. It is referred to as Easwaratwa (Divinity). Divine incarnations such as Rama and Krishna can be recognised by their divine forms. Every incarnation has a particular form. But Easwaratwa has no form. It represents the principle of truth that is present in all beings. It is responsible for Srushti, Sthiti and Laya (creation, sustenance and dissolution).

Easwaratwa, which has no specific form, is symbolised by Linga. A Linga is usually placed on a horizontal base which is known as Panavatta. Do you know how it looks like? (At this moment, Bhagavan with the wave of His hand materialised a Linga with Panavatta amidst a



The Vedas are the very form of God. There are many Mantras in the Vedas to propitiate the Pancha Bhutas (five elements). The five elements are our very life-breath. They sustain our life. The faculties of Sabda, Sparsha, Rupa, Rasa, Gandha (speech, touch, form, taste and smell) in man represent the five elements of ether, air, fire, water, earth, respectively. The world itself is a combination of the five elements. But people forget to express their gratitude to the five elements.

thunderous applause of devotees.) Lord Easwara gave a Siva Linga to Markandeya and his parents and exhorted them to sanctify their time in the contemplation of God. They redeemed their lives by worshipping the Linga. Linga represents the Atmic principle which is present in all. It is not possible for anyone to understand or estimate the power of God. Though the principle of Atma is formless, it can assume any form in accordance with the feelings of devotees. Linga is not something which man has made for worship. It is the direct manifestation of divinity (Sakshat- Akara). This truth was very well understood by Markandeya and his father Mrukanda and hence they worshipped divinity in the form of Linga.

Man is endowed with not one but three bodies – Sthula, Sukshma and Karana (gross, subtle and causal). The physical form represents the gross

aspect and can be seen. But the subtle body cannot be seen. It is the source from which our thoughts and words originate. The causal body represents our true nature. But the same principle of divinity is present at all the three levels. Without thread, there can be no cloth. Without silver, there can be no plate. Without clay, pot cannot be made. Likewise, without Brahman (Divinity), there can be no world. Without the Creator, there can be no creation. The Creator can be compared to thread and the creation to cloth. The Creator embodies all the three aspects – gross, subtle and causal. When you contemplate on God, you should transcend the mind. By merely having thread, one cannot make cloth. One has to weave the thread to make cloth. Likewise, self-effort and divine grace, both are essential in order to achieve the goal of life.

Experience Bliss by Chanting Vedic Mantras

Many people today chant Vedic Mantras. Each Mantra is attributed to a particular form of divinity. It is, therefore, necessary that one knows all the relevant Mantras. If one wants to purify one's thoughts and understand one's true self, one should take Veda as the basis. Unable to understand this truth, many people resort to deception when it comes to chanting Vedic Mantras. If one does something wrong and feigns ignorance, it amounts to acting like a thief. Similarly, if one has the ability to chant the Vedic Mantras but does not do so wholeheartedly, he is no better than a thief. All our students can chant the Vedas, but some of them are not joining others in chanting. They are not making proper use of

what they have learnt. They are keeping to themselves all that they have learnt. I am observing the students as they chant the Vedas. Having learnt the Mantras, they are expected to chant them. But some of them are keeping silent. In a way, they are resorting to Vidya Chorathwam and Daiva Droham (theft of knowledge and betrayal of God). Only those who chant wholeheartedly what they have learnt deserve Sakshatkara (God-realisation). When the boys chant the Mantras, the ladies sitting on the other side also join them. They have every right to chant the Vedas. None can deny them their right. They feel inspired to chant the Vedas when they see the boys chant. There are many small children sitting here. Who has taught them the Vedas? They hear attentively when the senior students chant the Mantras and learn them by heart. However, there are some educated persons who sit by the side of Veda chanting boys and yet remain tight-lipped. I am observing them. What is the use of sitting with Veda group if they do not make efforts to learn and chant Vedic Mantras? They listen to Vedic chants but do not participate in them. One should listen and also chant the Mantras in order to experience divinity.

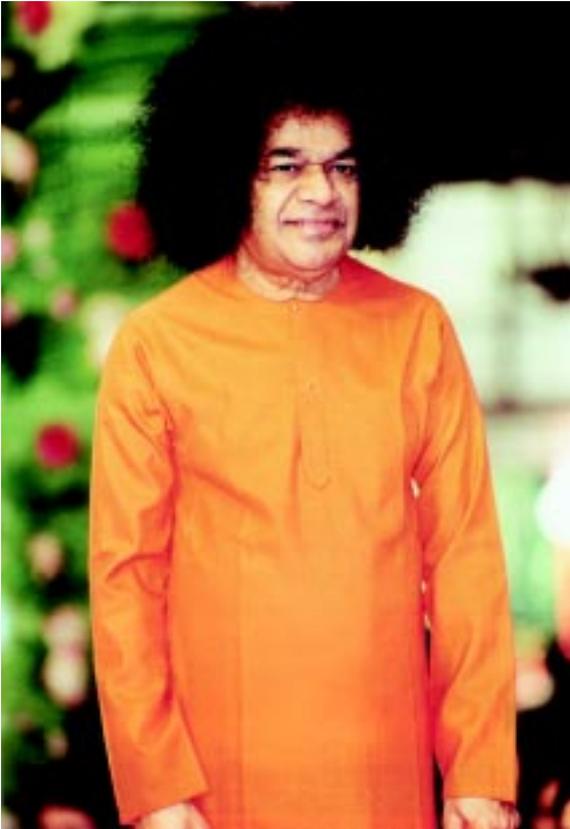
The Vedas are the very form of God. There are many Mantras in the Vedas to propitiate the Pancha Bhutas (five elements). The five elements are our very life-breath. They sustain our life. The faculties of Sabda, Sparsha, Rupa, Rasa, Gandha (speech, touch, form, taste and smell) in man represent the five elements of ether, air, fire, water, earth, respectively. The world itself is a combination of the five elements. But people forget to express their gratitude to the five elements. What



a sin it is! We stuff our minds with all unnecessary information but do not make any efforts to acquire the knowledge which forms the very basis of our life. It is therefore incumbent upon everyone to learn the Vedas, contemplate on them and chant them wholeheartedly. There is no point in learning the Vedic Mantras if you do not chant them. There are some who chant the Mantras when

Embodiments of Love!

Students may sometimes commit mistakes inadvertently. But once they realise their mistake, they should not repeat it. You should be able to chant the Mantras the next day which you hear today. When all of you chant the Mantras in unison and in perfect harmony, Brahman will manifest right in front of you. Our ancient sages and seers





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they are here, but forget them when they go from here. You may go anywhere but you should repeat the Mantras at least in your mind. You should never become a Vidya Drohi (betrayer of knowledge). A Vidya Drohi is, in fact, Daiva Drohi (betrayer of God); he can never receive the grace of God.

declared: *Vedahametham Purusham Mahantham Adityavarnam Thamasa Parasthath* (I have seen that Supreme Being who shines with the effulgence of a billion suns and who is beyond Thamas - the darkness of ignorance). The sound of the Vedas is highly sacred. It is extolled as *Sabda Brahmamayi*,



Characharamayi, Jyotirmayi, Vangmayi (embodiment of sound, mobility and immobility, light and speech). If you understand this divine principle, you will know the significance of chanting the Vedic Mantras which are taken from all the four Vedas, namely, Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharvana Veda. Chanting of the Vedic Mantras signifies the chanting of the Name of God. It is essential for everyone to learn the Vedas. Whatever Vedic Mantras you learn, you should be able to chant them properly. Otherwise, what is the use of learning them? I have seen many boys, who learn the Vedas here, but forget them when they go to Bangalore. They chant one or two Mantras just to show to the elders who visit that place. You should chant the Vedas not for publicity, but for your own benefit of experiencing bliss.

Do not Chant the Mantras in a Mechanical Way

Chanting, practising and experiencing bliss are related to Karma, Upasana and Jnana (work, worship and wisdom), respectively. Karma leads to Upasana which in turn leads to Jnana (wisdom). Once you attain Jnana, you will experience peace and bliss. You should transcend Vijnanamaya Kosha (wisdom sheath) and enter Anandamaya Kosha (bliss sheath). Everything depends on Karma. You should not chant the Mantras in a mechanical way. You should assimilate and digest them. Why do you eat food? Is it to preserve it in the stomach? No. The food partaken should be digested so that its essence is supplied to all parts of the body. In the same manner, you should understand and assimilate the Vedic knowledge and derive strength from it. It should

manifest in your thoughts, words and deeds. You will experience bliss when you share your knowledge of the Vedas with others. God is all-pervasive; He is present everywhere in the form of five elements. Each element represents a form of divinity. All the five elements together constitute the form of the Atma. When you realise this truth, you will experience divine bliss.

Embodiments of Love! Students!

Whatever you have learnt here, share it with others. But sharing with others is also not enough; you should put your knowledge into practice and derive benefit therefrom. We prepare many delicious items at home and serve them to the guests. Is it not necessary that we should also partake of them? Likewise, you should digest the Vedic knowledge you have acquired and also share it with others. All knowledge has originated from the Vedas. That is why the Vedas are extolled as *Sarva Vijnana Sampatti* (treasure chest of all knowledge). But, unfortunately, we are not making proper use of this treasure. Chant the Vedas to the extent you have learnt. Never forget what you have learnt. With sincere effort, you will certainly be able to attain Sakshatkara. How did Markandeya attain Sakshatkara? He chanted the Panchakshari Mantra forgetting himself. As a result, Lord Easwara appeared before him and showered His grace on him. Those of you who wish to have the vision of God should digest the knowledge of the Vedas that you have acquired and share it with others.

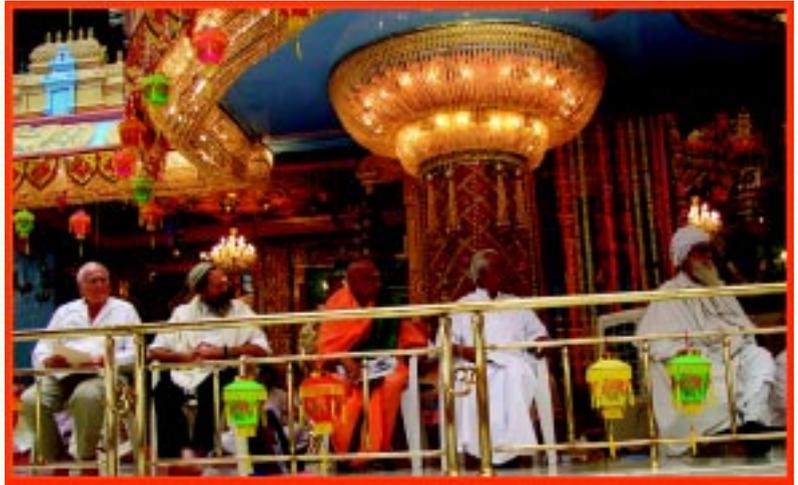
– **From Bhagavan’s Dasara Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 19th October 2004.**



SAI INTERFAITH CONFERENCE AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

ONE of the main teachings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is: There is only one religion, the religion of love. Representatives of five major religions of the world, namely, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism and Hinduism echoed this eternal truth while participating in Sai Interfaith Conference held at Prasanthi Nilayam on 22nd July 2005. The theme of the Conference was: "The Religion of Love".

The proceedings of the Conference commenced at 8.35 a.m. after the arrival of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall. In his introductory speech, Dr. Michael Goldstein, Chairman, Prasanthi Council remarked that selfless love represented God and the purpose of all religions of the world was to bring man back to God and make him regain his divine heritage. Thereafter, Dr. Goldstein introduced the speakers who were scheduled to speak in this Conference. The first speaker was Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, President of the Islamic Centre of Delhi, India. Referring to Prasanthi Nilayam as the international city of



Religious heads representing different faiths seated on the dais in Sai Kulwant Hall in the Sai Interfaith Conference. (From left to right: Father Henry Fehren, Rabbi David Zeller, P.S. Jayarama Sastrigal, Dr. Ahangamage Tudor Ariyaratne, and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan.)

peace, spirituality, love and harmony, the learned speaker observed that India was emerging as a spiritual land as envisaged by Swami Vivekananda. "Here, Swami Vivekananda's dream is being fulfilled", he said. Dwelling upon the teachings of Islam, the erudite speaker remarked that it was his firm conviction that Islam was a religion of love, peace and harmony. He exhorted all to put these teachings into practice. The next speaker was Dr. Ahangamage Tudor Ariyaratne, well known as the founder of Sarvodaya Shramdana Movement of Sri Lanka and a recipient of Mahatma Gandhi Peace Prize. The learned speaker spoke about the teachings of



Buddha and said that love and kindness towards all beings ignited in man a certain divine force which could link him to the Divine. Exhorting all to put the teachings of Buddha like Metta (loving kindness), Karuna (compassion), Mudita (altruistic joy) and Upekkha (equanimity) into practice, he observed that Bhagavan Baba's Divine Presence afforded a unique opportunity to mankind to redeem their life. "There can be only one Buddha and one Baba for many thousands of years; we have to make them live in our hearts", said Dr. Ariyaratne. At the end of this programme, Bhagavan blessed both the speakers. He also materialised a gold ring for Maulana Wahiduddin Khan and a gold bracelet for Sri Ariyaratne.

In the afternoon, the proceedings commenced at 4.00 p.m. after the arrival of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall. The first speaker of the afternoon session was Father Henry Fehren, a well-known Christian scholar from New York, USA. Dwelling on the teachings of Jesus Christ, the learned speaker said that Jesus taught mankind the lessons of love, forgiveness and compassion. Jesus, he said, never condemned anyone and prayed to God to forgive even his tormentors. Forgiveness, he said, was an aspect of love. Father Fehren said that Sri Sathya Sai Baba had been a great inspiration in his life ever since he was ordained to the Holy Catholic Church. He considered invitation to Puttapparthi as a great blessing and likened his journey to this holy centre of spirituality to a pilgrimage.

The next speaker was Rabbi David Zeller, an internationally known singer, teacher and a pioneer in Jewish spirituality from Israel. Narrating his experiences of Bhagavan's Divinity when he first visited Puttapparthi 33 years ago, Sri Zeller thanked Bhagavan for this great opportunity to take part in this Conference which meant so much for all religions and their followers. Drawing a parallel between human body and the body of human kind, the learned speaker said that just as man became healthy when all his organs functioned harmoniously, the body of human kind would attain health and wholeness when all the cultures, traditions and religions recognised each other and played their role for their health, peace, wholeness and love of entire humanity. Sri Zeller ended his speech with a charming song entitled 'Shalome' which meant peace and wholeness.

The last speaker of the Conference was P.S. Jayarama Sastrigal, a well-known Sanskrit scholar of India. Referring to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba as Love Incarnate, the learned speaker narrated how Bhagavan gave him a new lease of life twice by curing his serious diseases. Further, he related on the basis of his personal experience, the potency of Sai Rama Mantra for man's liberation. This Mantra, he said, was the quintessence of the Vedas and the Upanishads and uplifted man to great heights of spirituality. He concluded his speech with verses in chaste Sanskrit in praise of Bhagavan. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan.



80th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS THE WORK CONTINUES

1. Community Service Programmes

Kenya: Malaria kills up to 1.8 million children in a year in the African continent and 350 million people live at high risk of malaria in 26 African countries. Kenya ranks high among countries where malaria is endemic with 8.2 million cases reported each year. Annually, 34,000 Kenyan children below the age of five die from malaria, which translates to 90 deaths everyday. Sri Sathya Sai Organisation after several discussions and briefings with National Ministry of Health Malaria Control Programme (MCP) has accepted the Sainet Project as a partner in roll back malaria programme (RBM) and now have a plan to provide 50,000 nets to the people of Kenya particularly to the high risk people (pregnant women and children below 5 years of age) by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's 80th Birthday in November 2005. This project was started on 11th June 2005 in Kitale in west Kenya. Sai volunteers, some of them being experienced doctors from Sri Sathya Sai Organisation, provided two nets along with 4 kg of maize meal to each family. These insecticide-treated mosquito nets in distinctive ochre shade are branded as 'Sainet', and have the message of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba "Love All, Serve All" inscribed on them. A total of 2,200 nets were given with love to 4,400 households with a population of 16,800 spread over 20 villages.

Awareness raising sessions were held in each village to inform the people about the use and

maintenance of nets and the local environment.

A total of 95 Sai volunteers came from different parts of Kenya: from as near as Eldoret and Kisumu and from as far as Nairobi and Mombassa. They included students and teachers from the University of Nairobi and the Sai schools in Kisaju, Uthiru and Sai Amboseli. Five convoys, each comprising a Canter truck, a minibus and two to three four-wheel drive vehicles carried 12 tonnes of food supplies and 4,400 Sainets to these remote villages. At the first stop, Nabingenge village (literally, mosquito village), Hon. Noah M. Wekesa, M.P. and Assistant Minister of the Government of Kenya and the district authorities welcomed the convoy and gave a rousing talk to the villagers, highlighting how Sainets could change their lives. As volunteers approached the villages, a truly memorable sight awaited them. The womenfolk came singing and dancing, welcoming them to their village. The village elder and the village health committee rushed to greet them. The service was the first ever in Kenya to make these necessities freely available to the poor on a significant scale to create a measurable health impact. Also, this was the first time that nearly 100 per cent coverage of the 20 villages was achieved, using a community-based approach to reach the poor directly as pioneered by Bhagavan Baba through the

Grama Seva projects. The medical faculty of the University of Nairobi and the Government of Kenya have jointly



initiated a research project to monitor the impact of this unique service among the population in 20 villages. Significantly, Kenya was chosen by Bhagavan Baba as the first country to be blessed by His visit in 1968. The experience with this project in Kenya will provide valuable lessons for design and implementation of similar projects elsewhere in Africa.

Indonesia: Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of Indonesia has completed a water project in village Mbuliloo, located in the Wolowaru district of the Nusa Tenggara Timur Province of Indonesia. For years, the people of this impoverished region had struggled to cope with lack of fresh drinking water. The scarcity of potable water forced the villagers to



Laying of pipes being undertaken by Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of Indonesia.



Work in progress for providing water to a remote area in Indonesia.

water to individual houses, thus providing clean water to more than 234 families. The local authorities, on behalf of the villagers, submitted a formal letter of appreciation which reads, in part, *“We could never have imagined that in this world full of politics, turmoil and social crisis, there are still people out there who care to help small, helpless people like us. We take this opportunity to express how delighted and thankful we are to Sri Sathya Sai Organisation that has given the greatest gift of kindness that we will never be able to repay. Many thanks from all of us, the people of village Mbuliloo.”*

2. Medical Camps

survive upon a well in a distant location, which only had toe-deep water to be shared among more than 234 families. The Sai Study Group acquired a privately-owned well and built a tank to collect water from the well. From the tank, 900 pipes were laid over a distance of approximately 7 km to channel the

United States: The Mid-Central Region of Sathya Sai Baba Organisation of America conducted a free medical camp at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in St. Louis on Saturday, 11th June 2005. The main goals of this camp were free health screening and health education for the poor. The team of 153 volunteers





Hearing test being conducted by the Sai Organisation medical team.



Sai volunteers conducting osteoporosis screening.

comprised physicians and nurses, interpreters and non-medical personnel. Services included body mass index check, blood pressure check, blood cholesterol and blood sugar check, lead screen, asthma screen, paediatric assessment, vision test, hearing test, dental check and skin care assessment, mammograms, pap smears and osteoporosis screening. A total of 238 people, including 47 children, benefited from this camp. Health education was provided on first aid, nutrition, exercise, diabetes and other areas of health concern. The emphasis of this camp was also on ideal body weight to reduce heart disease, hypertension and diabetes. Body mass index, which reflects obesity, was done on 153 people. Diet and exercise instructions were given to overweight people. Free bicycle helmets were provided to children. Infant car seat checks were also provided by the St. Louis Safe Kids programme. Distinguished guests included St. Louis County executive, Sri Charlie Dooley and St. Louis Health Commissioner,

Ms. Melba Moore. Sri Dooley paid glowing tributes to the Sathya Sai Organisation. He observed that there was great need for this type of free service in the community.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: A medical and a veterinary camp were organised on 21st May 2005 in the city of Modriëki Lug in the Republika Srpska region of Bosnia and Herzegovina. A team of 5 physicians and 1 pharmacist examined 99 patients and disbursed free medications. They were supported by a dedicated team of 29 Sai volunteers from Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia. The veterinarian inspected 5 dogs and distributed medicines for poultry to 9 families in the settlement. In addition, 36 packets of food items and clothing were handed out during the course of the camp and play-workshops were conducted for the children.

Nepal: Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Nepal has declared 2005 as the 'Grama Seva Year' to mark the 80th year of the Advent of Bhagavan Baba.



The year-long celebrations were initiated with a medical camp in Kathmandu earlier this year. Held during the Sivarathri festival in the premises of the world-renowned Pashupatinath Temple in Kathmandu, the camp was aimed to serve pilgrims from various parts of Nepal as well as neighbouring India who visit the temple during this auspicious festival. Altogether 158 patients availed of the medical services. About 60 Sai volunteers worked assiduously during the camp, serving refreshments and assisting the elderly and disabled pilgrims.

3. Public Meetings

USA: A public meeting on Bhagavan's exemplary life, teachings, and social endeavours in the fields of education, medicine and public service was held on 15th May 2005 at the Shrine Centre in Denver, Colorado. Around 200 guests were in attendance at this event and many of them were first time visitors. Sri Satyanarayan, President of South-western Region of Sai Organisation introduced the two speakers: Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Member, Prasanthi Council and Sri Jonathan Roof, Vice President of Sathya Sai Baba Central Council, USA. Dr. Reddy gave an uplifting talk on Bhagavan Baba as embodiment of love and universal teacher of truth. He emphasised that by following the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba we should be able to realise and manifest our divine nature in this very life. In his insightful presentation, Sri Roof dwelt on the perennial questions that have resonated within the human heart: "Why am I here? What is the purpose of my life? What is the reality of my existence?" The film 'His

Work' moved even the most stoic of viewers by the sheer simplicity and poignancy of Bhagavan's exhortation to 'Love All, Serve All'.

A public meeting on Bhagavan's exemplary life, teachings, and social endeavours in the fields of education, medicine and public service was held on 4th June 2005 at the prestigious Cobb Galleria in Atlanta, Georgia. The two-hour long event included talks by Dr. Samuel Sandweiss and Dr. Philip Gosselin. Dr. Gosselin, President of the USA Sathya Sai Baba Central Council, articulated the compelling need to spread Bhagavan's message of universal love. He spoke about the amazing grace of Bhagavan in encouraging people to become better individuals following the faith of their choice. Dr. Sandweiss, member of the USA Sathya Sai Baba Central Council, spoke of his own personal metamorphosis from an enquirer into a devotee and of the tangible, external works that have been conceived and overseen by Bhagavan. His talk was followed by the screening of the film, 'His Work'. A newspaper report portrayed the impact of the meeting thus, "... even the most stoic of listeners was moved by the sheer simplicity and simultaneous poignancy of the message of Swami – for that is the aspect that stands out most significantly about Him – the fact that He can inspire millions of people across the world to the most fundamental of all positive human actions – service to all ..."

Mexico: On 24th April 2005, Mexico City hosted a Sai public meeting at the Convention Centre auditorium which was attended by 3,400 guests. Before the meeting commenced, Bhagavan's



quotes superimposed over beautiful scenes of Nature were displayed on the screen, thus setting a tranquil and peaceful mood. The speakers at the meeting were Sri John Behner, Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of Latin America and Sri Leonardo Gutter, Member, Prasanthi Council. Sri Gutter gave an inspiring speech about his personal experiences with Bhagavan, His universal teachings, and humanitarian works. Sri John Behner shared his experiences on the Sai path whilst living in El Salvador, focusing in particular on the omnipresence of Bhagavan and His love. The meeting concluded with the screening of the Spanish version of the film 'His Work'.

– Prasanthi Council

B H A R A T

Andhra Pradesh: Inspired by the teachings of Bhagavan, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Andhra Pradesh conducted preventive and primary health medical camp and Bal Vikas activities in villages named Vengalamma Cheruvu, Kambala Parthi, Bonthalapalli, Narsingapalli Tanda, Diguvacherlopalli and Bandlapalli in the Mandals of Puttaparthi, Kothacheruvu and Bukkapatnam. A door-to-door survey was conducted in these villages and inmates were explained the necessity for keeping their house clean and tidy, to take care about their personal health by taking daily bath, wearing washed clothes, cutting nails regularly, dental care, etc. They were also advised to utilise the opportunity of specialist treatment by expert doctors relating to eye, dental, ENT, gynaec and general sections who were to visit

their villages on the appointed days. On the specified days, the team of doctors along with paramedical and Seva Dal volunteers visited the villages and performed the examination of patients, and distributed prescribed medicines advising them to adhere to the dosages. More than 5,000 people benefited from this free medical service.

Bal Vikas teachers during this camp gathered the children of the villages, conducted Bal Vikas classes, explained about health and hygiene and got the children examined by the doctors, who issued special health cards enabling follow-up action also, besides the present medical treatment. A special feature of this camp was issuing of identity cards and preparation of computerised database for each patient examined, enabling follow-up action as may be deemed necessary.

Nellore district provided help to 18 families affected by fire accident in Babu Jagjivan Ram Colony on 28th June 2005. Each family was given the required utensils, some food provisions, fruits, shirts and pants, Dhotis, Saris and blouses, etc. Students in the affected families were also given notebooks, pens, slates, etc.

Srikakulam district started Sri Sathya Sai Orphanage (Deenajanodharana Seva) with 9 helpless children at Arasavelli on 4th June 2005. It started Sri Sathya Sai Mahila Vruddhasram also. This district dug nine wells for drinking water in June 2005, three of them in Sompeta tribal villages, one in Polla tribal village, one in Thudi village, two in the vicinity of



Kotabommali, one near Srikakulam and one near Narasannapeta.

Ranga Reddy district conducted Bheema Ratha Shanti function at BHEL Mandir on 19th June 2005 in which 50 old couples above 70 years took part. About 100 Sai Youth participated in Grama Seva, and carried out desilting of choked-up drains of Kerelly village, cleaning of the overhead water supply tank and door-to-door visit for distribution of Prasadam along with Namasmarana.

West Godavari district carried out 80 hours long Akhanda Bhajan at Tadepalligudem, Tanuku and Kovvur during 16th to 19th June 2005.

Assam, Manipur and N.E. States:

Patients undergoing treatment in the B. Barooah Cancer Institute, Guwahati received much-needed boost to their spirits when the Guwahati Mahila Vibhag (ladies wing) members organised a unique meet in the Institute premises under the banner "Holistic Healthcare and Medicare" on 19th May 2005 to mark the Sakthi Swaroopini Day. A sizeable number of male and female patients afflicted with the dreaded disease listened with rapt attention to Bhagavan Baba's soothing words on life and its problems as elaborated by eminent speakers. The wholesome effects of prayer and devotional music were stressed by the speakers. Soulful Sai Bhajans at the end heightened the spiritually charged atmosphere. Fruits, snacks and Vibhuti packets were lovingly handed over to all the inmates in the end.

A largely attended Sai meet in a remote village Rani, about 35 kms from Guwahati city, on 1st May 2005



Sharing love with patients in the B. Barooah Cancer Institute, Guwahati.

drew enthusiastic villagers eager to chart out a new approach to life organised by Uparhali – Sarpara Anchalik Samithi. The meet was marked by speeches on various facets of Bhagavan Baba's life and mission and its wholesome effects on the people, specially the younger generation. All through, an aura of spiritually elevated optimism bound the speakers and the audience by the thread of Sai Love. At the end, as desired by the villagers, a Bhajan Mandali was set up in the village.

Haryana and Chandigarh: As part of year-long programmes for celebrating 80th year of the Advent of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and with a view to create awareness in the public at large, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Haryana and Chandigarh organised Sri Sathya Sai Prem Rath Yatra from 1st April 2005. It was taken out in the form of massive rallies which coursed through the cities of Panchkula, Chandigarh, Yamuna Nagar, Ambala Cantt., Ambala City, Shahbad, Kurukshetra, Kaithal, Narwana, Jind, Hissar, Sirsa, Karnal,





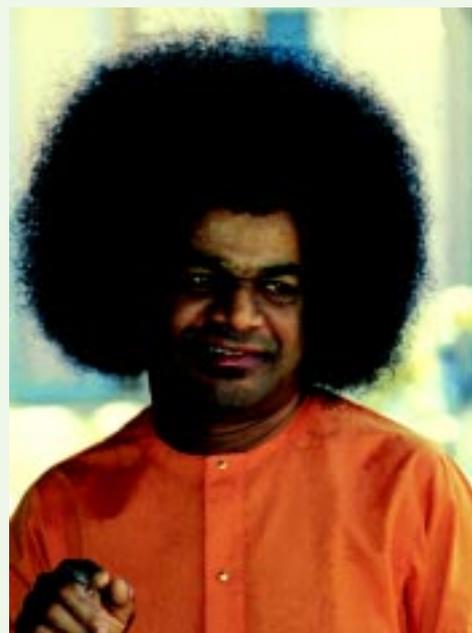
Spreading the Divine Message of Bhagavan through Sri Sathya Sai Prem Rath Yatra in Haryana and Chandigarh.

Panipat, Sonipat, Rohtak and Rewari. Around 500 youth, Bal Vikas children and devotees walked through the streets of these cities chanting Sai Bhajans. At many places, tableaus depicting various service activities of the Sai Organisation were put up. This Yatra covered a distance of 126.5 kilometres

in these cities. In all, 8250 devotees took part and about one lakh citizens witnessing Sri Sathya Sai Prem Rath Yatra were immensely benefited.

During the same period, a mobile exhibition on the “Life and Mission of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba” was organised for 2 to 4 days in all the afore-mentioned cities. The contents displayed on seventy-two panels chiefly highlighted the life of the Avatar, His mission, His teachings, and services rendered by Him to society. It also gave introduction, aims and various

Seva activities undertaken by the Sai Organisation. A large majority of over 15 thousand visitors came to know about Bhagavan Baba for the first time. The impact of the exhibition was evident from the fact that many of these people started taking interest in the activities of Sai Organisation.



Supposing the Lord blesses a man with a hundred years of life; he should not get puffed up with pride and start jumping from a tree with the confidence that he will live for a century. He may live for a hundred years, but may have his legs broken in the fall. So, in accepting the blessing of God, one should also try to lead a righteous life.

- Baba

ASHADI EKADASI CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

THE festival of Ashadi Ekadasi was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 18th July 2005 with gaiety and piety. Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Maharashtra and Goa which organised the celebrations presented two programmes, one in the morning and the other in the evening.

Sai Kulwant Hall was beautifully done up for celebration of Ashadi Ekadasi. Special decorations were done on the dais. Behind the dais there was a huge cut-out of Lord Vitthala with his beloved devotee Tukaram. The central part of the Hall presented the setting of a film studio with cameras, light reflectors, big banners and other paraphernalia of a film studio. Bhagavan came to the Hall at 9.00 a.m. to shower the bliss of His Divine Darshan on the devotees on this auspicious day. Maharashtra devotees offered Bhagavan a traditional welcome with Poornakumbham as soon as He came to the dais. Simultaneously, the singers of Maharashtra started singing a beautiful welcome song. Soon after this, Varkaris entered Sai Kulwant Hall from Gopuram gate side with Dindi palanquin. Coming to the central area of the Hall, they offered a Tulsi garland to Bhagavan marking the culmination of the Dindi procession. This was followed by a vigorous and vibrant dance along with devotional singing by Varkaris in their traditional dress. The entire Hall reverberated with devotional songs



Varkaris singing and dancing their way to Sai Kulwant Hall in their traditional dress.

like 'Vitthal Vitthal Jai Jai Vitthal' and 'Jai Jai Ram Krishna Hari'.

After the conclusion of the Varkari dance, the main item of the programme was presented by the Bal Vikas children and Youth Wing of the Sai Organisation of Maharashtra and Goa. The programme was titled 'God – the only Friend'. It presented the story of a film actor who achieved great heights in his film career and prided upon his success; but one flop film brought the catastrophe and he was left friendless. At this time of adversity, he found that God was his only friend. After developing faith in God, he realised that God was the only doer and the success he had earlier achieved was the work of God who inspired him from within. It was a superb presentation on all accounts, be it acting of the children or realistic

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SAI EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS CONFERENCE

A CONFERENCE OF EDITORS AND Publishers of foreign language editions of "Sanathana Sarathi", Sai magazines, Newsletters and other Sai publications was held at Prasanthi Nilayam on 19th and 20th July 2005. Organised by the Prasanthi Council on the eve of the holy festival of Guru Purnima, this was the first ever Conference of overseas Editors and Publishers in which 170 delegates from 51 countries took part. It was significant that this important event in the history of Sai publications and magazines took place during the celebrations of 80th year of the Advent of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

The following were the objectives before the Conference:

- ❖ To translate the Divine Message of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba into the languages of this day and age
- ❖ To publish and make accessible in all countries the Divine Message of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
- ❖ To establish organisational accountability for the sacred responsibility of translation, publication, and dissemination of the Divine Message of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The proceedings of the Conference were conducted in the Conference Hall above the North Indian Canteen from 10.00 to 11.30 a.m. and from 7.30 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. on both days of the

Conference, i.e., 19th and 20th July 2005. With the blessings of Bhagavan, the proceedings began on 19th July 2005 at 10.00 a.m. with chanting of Om and Gayatri Mantra. In his introductory speech, Dr. Michael Goldstein, Chairman, Prasanthi Council remarked that it was our sacred responsibility to disseminate the Divine Message of Bhagavan to the people of the world and to maintain the sanctity of Bhagavan's words. Utmost caution therefore needed to be observed, he felt, in translating the Discourses of Bhagavan so that the translations in foreign languages were as close to the original as possible. After his introductory speech, Dr. Goldstein introduced the speakers who were scheduled to address the delegates during the course of the Conference.

The first speaker to address the delegates was Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Dr. Venkataraman observed that Sai magazines and publications should give first priority to the Discourses of Bhagavan so that the Divine Message reaches more and more people. Practical relevance of Bhagavan's teaching in the modern world and inspiring stories of Seva should also form an important part of the contents of Sai magazines and publications. He emphasised the need for special efforts to reach out to the youth of the world for spreading the teachings of Bhagavan.



Sri Anil Kumar, a faculty member of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, was the next speaker. Sai magazines and publications should cater to the needs of all, devotees and non-devotees, professionals and common men, rural and urban people, said Sri Anil Kumar. Sai magazines should therefore include articles on topics like unity of religions, Seva as Sadhana, healthcare, importance of festivals, experiences of devotees, interviews and articles of reputed persons, he suggested. The proceedings of the morning session concluded at 11.30 a.m. with chanting of the prayer, '*Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu*' by all the participants.

The proceedings of the evening session on 19th July 2005 started at 7.30 p.m. with chanting of Om and Gayatri Mantra by all the participants. Introducing the speakers who were scheduled to address the delegates in this session, Dr. Goldstein informed the participants that many Sai books centres had made great progress and provided maximum help in spreading the Divine Message of Bhagavan through books and magazines. He then invited the delegates representing the Sathya Sai Book Centre of America, Mother Sai Publications of Italy and Sathya Sai Book Centre of Argentina to address the gathering. They came one by one and informed the delegates about their book centres and the progress made by them. They were, respectively, Sri Robert Bozzani, Sri Enrico Barbieri and Dr. Ricardo Parada.

After these presentations, Sri K.S. Rajan, Convener, Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust addressed the gathering. Sri Rajan gave very

interesting facts about the past history of "Sanathana Sarathi" highlighting the devotion with which the volunteers of those days worked for spreading the message of Bhagavan and also the sacredness attached to the magazine by the devotees who were eagerly awaiting the receipt of the same from Prasanthi Nilayam. Further, he also outlined the important Do's and Don'ts about the contents of Sai magazines. He emphasised that special care was needed regarding the selection of photographs of Bhagavan for publication in books and magazines. The last speaker of this session was Sri G.L. Anand, Editor, Sanathana Sarathi (English). Quoting from the message of Bhagavan on the inauguration of "Sanathana Sarathi" on 16th February 1958, Sri Anand stated that "Sanathana Sarathi" was not an ordinary magazine since Bhagavan Himself had categorised it as a scripture like the Vedas and the Upanishads in His inaugural message. Stating that it was the Divine Sankalpa of Bhagavan which was responsible for its phenomenal growth, Sri Anand informed the gathering that at present "Sanathana Sarathi" was being brought out in as many as 25 languages of the world every month. The first day's proceedings came to a conclusion with prayer for the welfare of all the people of the world.

The programme on the morning of 20th July 2005 began at 10.00 a.m. with prayer. In his opening remarks, Dr. Goldstein expressed deep gratitude to Bhagavan who had shown great interest in the proceedings of this first Conference of Editors and Publishers of Sai magazines and books. Giving the details of the



agenda for the day's deliberations, Dr. Goldstein identified the subjects of discussion, viz., classification of Sai literature by content, the question of maintaining high standard of translations, the question of copyright and the question of accountability.

After the opening remarks of Dr. Goldstein, Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Member, Prasanthi Council spoke on the subject of classification of Sai literature. Outlining the broad categories in which Sai literature could be classified, Dr. Reddy emphasised the need for such a classification. He said, the classification was necessary and useful for prioritising the works to be translated. After his presentation, Dr. Reddy invited questions from the delegates. What followed was a lively interactive session in which doubts of the delegates were cleared and answers were provided to all their queries. After this, Dr. David Gries gave to the delegates important information about the websites of the Sai Organisation. Further, he showed on the screen the glossary of Sanskrit words which he had compiled for the benefit of all translators.

After the presentation of Dr. Gries, Sri Leonardo Gutter, Member, Prasanthi Council addressed the gathering and emphasised the importance of improvement of quality of contents of Sai literature. His presentation was followed by a brief talk by Sri William Harvey, another member of Prasanthi Council, who dwelt on the great responsibility of the Sai Organisation since this was the only organisation to which the Avatar had given His name. Thereafter, Dr. Art-ong Jumsai made a brief speech stressing the need for standardisation of textbooks being used by Sai schools and institutions in various parts of the world.

The evening session on 20th July 2005 was an interactive session in which the delegates expressed their views and interacted with each other. This proved to be a very useful and lively session. In the end, Dr. Goldstein summed up the proceedings of the Conference and thanked all for their cooperation which made this Conference a grand success. The Conference came to a happy conclusion with prayer for the welfare of entire mankind.

Joy to All Mankind

From this day, our Sanathana Sarathi is on the march, at the head of the spiritual cohorts – the Vedas, the Upanishads and scriptures – to subdue the evil ego brood – injustice, anarchy, falsehood and licence. May this “Charioteer” fight for world prosperity and, by making the drum of victory sound and resound, spread joy among all mankind.

Bhagavan Baba's Message on the
Inauguration of “Sanathana Sarathi”, Mahasivarathri
16.2.1958

A beggar stood before a house and begged for alms, saying loudly, “Mother, please give alms.” The master of the house shouted at him, “What’s this? You think this is a choultry? Go, go.” The beggar calmly asked, “Oh master! Who built this house?” “This is my great grandfather’s house. My grandfather, my father and our ancestors lived in it. Now it is my house,” said the householder with great pride. “Didn’t each of them call it his house, lived in it for some time and then left it? So, if this is not choultry, then what is it?” asked the beggar.

Don’t look down upon a beggar who goes from door to door and begs for alms. Actually, he is waking you up from the slumber of ignorance, saying: Since I did not give alms to anybody in my past life, I have met this fate in this life. Don’t become like me.

The world and all worldly relations are temporary. Only one thing is permanent; that is the proximity of God.

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story or wonderful sets or melodious songs or sweet music. The play was followed by Vitthal Bhajans and Prasadam distribution. The morning programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 11.05 a.m.

In the afternoon, Bal Vikas students and Youth Wing of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Maharashtra and Goa (Nagpur Zone) presented a musical ballet titled ‘Krishna Uddhava’ depicting the saga of love and friendship between Krishna and



A scene from the musical ballet “Krishna Uddhava”.

His dearest friend Uddhava. In a way, it was a continuation of the theme of the morning drama ‘God – the only Friend’. This extremely touching drama of supreme friendship had quite a few outstanding episodes such as the lifting of the Govardhana mountain by Krishna and melting of Uddhava’s pride of Jnana by the supreme devotion of the Gopikas of Vraj. All the sets were extremely beautiful and the acting of the cast thoroughly captured the theme of the ballet. After the conclusion of this excellent play, Bhajans were first led by Maharashtra devotees and then by Institute students. The programme of Ashadi Ekadasi came to a happy conclusion with offer of Arati to Bhagavan at 6.00 p.m.

