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The Canadian

Sathya Sai Newsletter

Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Organization of Canada
www.sathyasai.ca

The Sri Sathya Sai Baba Organization of Canada is part of a worldwide spiritual movement to awaken in all people the awareness of their inherent divinity and to encourage the practice of the universal principles of Truth, Right Action, Peace, Love and Non-Violence through personal example and selfless service.

Editor
Prof. Siva Nadarajah
<siva.nadarajah@mcgill.ca>

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In truth, you cannot understand the nature of my Reality either today or even after a thousand years of steady austerity or ardent inquiry even if all mankind joins in that effort. But, in a short time, you will become cognizant of the bliss showered by the divine Principle, which has taken upon itself this sacred body and this sacred name. Your good fortune which will provide you this chance is greater than what was available for anchorites, monks, sages, saints and even personalities embodying facets of divine Glory!

Excerpt from The Revelation Discourse

17 May 1968

(Sathya Sai Speaks VI, 210-213)

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The Canadian Sathya Sai Newsletter

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Love All Serve All



A Letter from Bhagawan to the Students at Brindavan

~ Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1973

Prasan̄hīnilayam 16-12-73

My Dear! Have you got any
spiritual hunger?
Spiritual hunger is the
ultimate meaning of every
activity in life. The dissatis-
faction and the restlessness
that remain even after obtain-
ing all the necessities of life
show that everyone conscious-
ly or unconsciously, does
suffer from spiritual hunger
and it is not appeased until
the spirit within is realised.
With out this divine discontent
there is no real progress.
World peace is possible when
all the people of the world trace
up to the facts governing
universal life and when
there is a heart-to heart
feeling of goodness, love and
oneness among the inhabitants
of the world. With Blessings
Sri Sathya Sai Baba



What is *Dharma*?

~ *Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba*
Dharma Vahini, Chapter 1

PEOPLE MUST DEDICATE themselves to dharma and always be engaged in dharma, so that they may live in peace and the world may enjoy peace. One cannot acquire real peace, nor can one win the grace of the Lord, through any means other than the dharmic life. Dharma is the foundation for the welfare of humanity; it is the truth that is stable for all time. When dharma fails to transmute human life, the world is afflicted by agony and fear, tormented by stormy revolutions. When the effulgence of dharma fails to illumine human relationships, humanity is shrouded in the night of sorrow.

God is the embodiment of dharma

God is the embodiment of dharma; His grace is won by dharma. He is ever fostering dharma, He is ever establishing dharma, He is dharma itself. The Vedas, scriptures (sastras), epics (Puranas), and traditional accounts (ithihasas) proclaim aloud the glory of dharma. In the scriptures of the various religions, dharma is elaborated in language familiar to the adherents. The duty of everyone, everywhere, and at all times, is to pay homage to the personification of dharma (Dharma-Narayana).

The stream of dharmic activity should never run dry; when its cool waters cease to flow, disaster is certain. Humanity has reached this stage only because dharma, like the river



The stream of *dharmic* activity should never run dry; when its cool waters cease to flow, disaster is certain.

Saraswathi, flows unseen, below the ground, feeding the roots and filling the springs. Not only humanity but even birds and beasts have to adhere to dharma, so that they may be happy and survive in comfort and joy.

Therefore, the waters of dharma have to be kept flowing perpetually and fully, so that the world might enjoy happiness. Disaster now dances madly on the world stage, because right is neglected and there is disbelief in the essentials of dharmic life. So, one has to understand clearly the very heart of dharma.

Dharma is misunderstood

What is meant by dharma? What is the essence of dharma? Can common people lead a happy life and survive if they stick to dharma? Naturally, these doubts confuse the mind in the course of life. Solving them is necessary, even urgent.

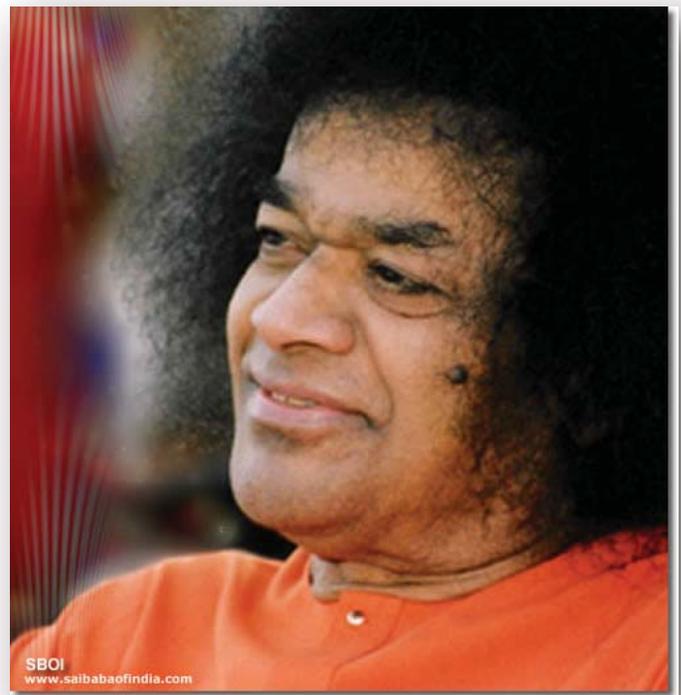
As soon as dharma is mentioned, the ordinary person takes it to mean: giving alms, feeding and providing lodging to pilgrims, adherence to one's traditional profession or craft, law-abiding nature, discrimination between right and wrong, the pursuit of one's innate nature over the freaks of one's own mind, the fruition of one's fondest desires, and so on.

Of course, it is a long, long time since the spotless countenance of dharma was tarnished beyond recognition. Beautiful fields and groves run wild with neglect and soon become unrecognizable bushland and thorny jungle; fine trees are hewn by greedy people, and the shape of the landscape is changed. With the passage of time, people get accustomed to the new state of things and don't notice the transformation, the decline. This has also happened to dharma.

Everyone has to acquaint himself with the outlines of dharma, expounded in the Vedas, scriptures (sastras), and Puranas. Misunderstood by incompetent intelligence, unbridled emotion, and impure reasoning, these works have been grossly diluted, and their glory has suffered grievously. Just as raindrops from the clear blue sky get coloured and contaminated when they fall on the soil, the unsullied message of the ancient sages (rishis), the example of their shining deeds, and the bright untarnished urges behind their actions are all turned into ugly caricatures of their original grandeur by uncultured interpreters and scholars.

Books written for children contain illustrations to clarify the text; but the children

spend their time with the pictures, forgetting what they are intended to clarify. In the same way, the unwary and the uneducated mistake the rituals, which are designed to illustrate the grand truths, as profoundly real in themselves and ignore the truth that they were meant to elucidate. Travellers moving along the road rest for a while in wayside shelters, but during



their stay, they damage by neglect or misuse the very structure that gives them rest. So too, the dull and perverse alter the very face of Vedic morality and deceive the world into believing that their handiwork is what the Vedas teach!

When such mauling of dharma took place, when the face of dharma suffered disfigurement at the hands of the enemies of God, the Lord responded to the call of the gods and the godly and saved the world from ruin, by restoring right and truth in the field of

The Lord was referred to as *dharma* by the Vedas and as highest wisdom (vijñana) by Buddha

dharma and karma, i.e. in both ideal and practice.

Now, who can cure the present blindness? Man has to slay the six-fold beast of inner enemies (arishadvarga) that lead him on to disaster: lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, and hate. Thus only can dharma be restored.

Buddha and Sankara adhered to Dharma

The Lord was referred to as dharma by the Vedas and as highest wisdom (vijñana) by Buddha. In those days, no one liked the word “Veda” in the times of the demon (asura) Somaka, those who followed the Vedas desisted from calling them “Veda”. While in mortal dread, such behaviour is passable. Yet the Buddha was full of reverence for the Vedas; he was ever infused with God. The Buddha is often spoken of as an atheist (nasthika)! Well, if the Buddha is an atheist, who then is the theist (asthika)? The entire life of the Buddha is a saga of dharma.

Sankara is criticized by some people as being opposed to the path of dharma and karma. But Sankara opposed only the dharma and karma that have fulfilment of desire in view. He was indeed the great teacher who taught the path of dharma and karma, of endeavour impelled by the understanding of the basic truth.

The adherence of Sankara to dharma and karma based on truth and the faith of the Buddha in the essentials of the Vedas can be appreciated only by one who has the higher vision. Without that, one will be led astray in the interpretation. In order to climb a great height, a ladder as tall as the height is needed, is it not?

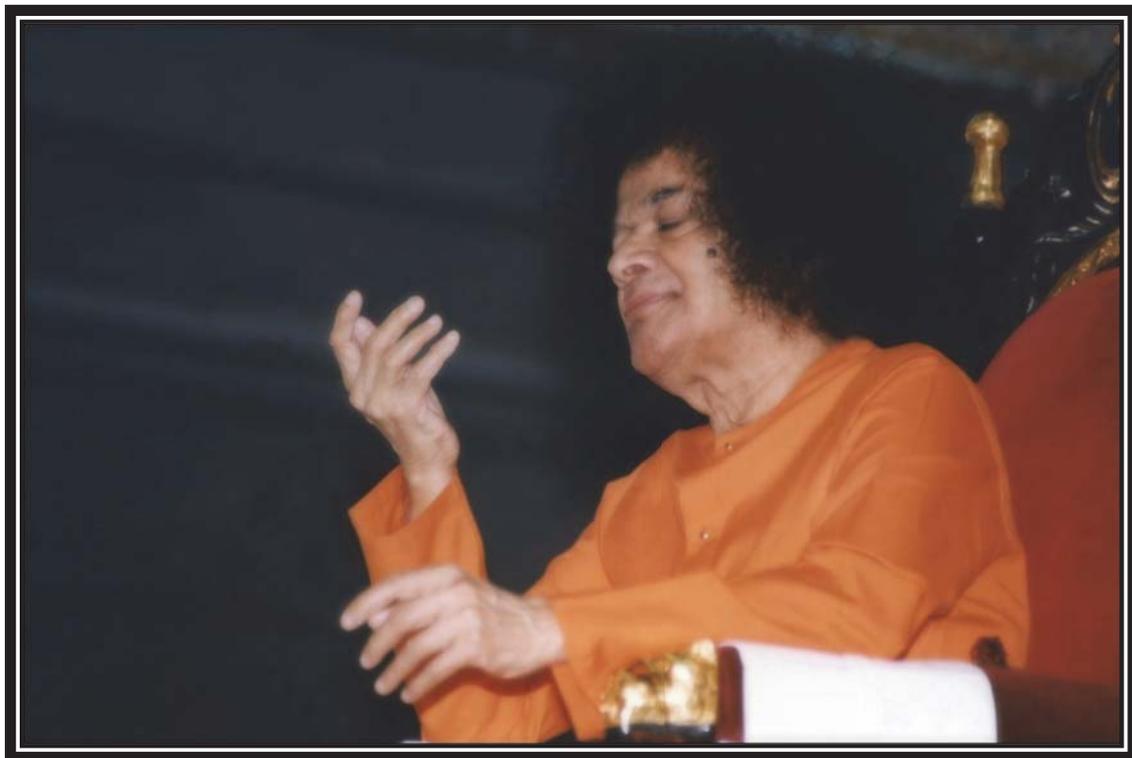
On the path of dharma

Whoever subdues egotism, conquers selfish desires, destroys bestial feelings and impulses, and gives up the natural tendency to regard the body as the self that person is surely on the path of dharma; that person knows that the goal of dharma is the merging of the wave in the sea, the merging of the self in the Over-self.

In all worldly activities, you should be careful not to offend propriety or the canons of good nature; you should not play false to the promptings of the inner voice; you should be prepared at all times to respect the appropriate dictates of conscience; you should watch your steps to see whether you are in someone else’s way; you must be ever vigilant to discover the truth behind all this scintillating variety. This is your entire duty, your dharma. The blazing fire of wisdom (jnana), which convinces you that all this is Brahman (sarvam khalvidam Brahman), will consume into ashes all traces of your egotism and worldly attachment. You must become intoxicated with the nectar of union with Brahman; that is the ultimate goal of dharma and of action (karma) inspired by dharma.

“Sacrifice ignorance (a-jnana) and ego (ahamkara) at the altar of wisdom (jnana) and install dharma therein”; this is the message of

the Vedas. Every single unselfish act that prepares the ground for the merging of the soul with the Over-Soul, that broadens the vision toward the basic Brahman immanent everywhere, is a dharmic act. Each such act is a tiny stream that swells the river of holiness rushing towards the sea of knowledge of Brahman. Your acts and activities are all rituals in the worship of the highest Atma, which pervades the universe. Whatever is done in an attitude of dedication and surrender is a component of the dharma that leads to realization. The strategy of the Indian (Bharathiya) way of life is directed toward the sanctification of every movement and every thought, word, and deed into a step towards that realization.



Walk for Values: A Transformative Catalyst

“One should acquire that knowledge which makes one immortal. It is the knowledge of five human values, namely, Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema and Ahimsa....Knowledge and practice of these five principles is real education....These are the five main human values, which should be propagated in the world.They are eternal and immortal.”

*-Sathya Sai Baba
Divine Discourse,
Prasanthi Nilayam,
November 22, 2006*

By: Canadian W4V Team

THE FIRST WALK FOR VALUES was initiated by the Sathya Sai School, Canada, in 2003 for two purposes: (1) to encourage participants to pledge a value that they would practise for the following year in order to transform their character, and (2) to spread awareness of the human values to others as a means to bring peace and love into communities where *adharma* was prevalent. The walk-a-thon has since spread to 10 cities across Canada and to four continents around the world, involving nearly 40 cities. As Bhagavan has said, “*We should develop these five human values which will promote harmony and unity in the world. We should develop those qualities which will bring us closer to each other.*”

A wonderful show of unity was displayed at the 2013 11th Annual Walk for

Values, which was celebrated across the nation with much enthusiasm and vigour. In the months of May and June, the event was commemorated with great numbers of participants spanning across the great nation of Canada in Cornwall, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Edmonton, Yellowknife, and Vancouver. The venues

prominently displayed banners-balloons-signs on human values and were charged with



excitement through music. In Toronto, a stage adorned with colourful flags of countries around the world displayed an intrinsic sense of unity of various cultures; world faiths and ideologies. The event was held in front of city hall and took the several thousand strong



processions through the busy arteries of the city. Edmonton, Vancouver, and Toronto, featured mobile floats attractively decorated with the five human values. Edmonton's Walk was held at McIntyre Park, a local hub of the city, next to a bustling Farmers Market with a huge gathering of curious shoppers and families who took note of the march. Not even the rains could dampen the enthusiasm of the Sai Youths who lead the Walk in Vancouver. In Winnipeg, participants marched along the Manitoba Legislature and the beautiful Assiniboine River. The Yellowknife Sathya Sai devotional group partnered with the local Rotary Club and

joined the Canada Day Parade, infusing it with banners on human values and quotes from Sai Baba.

Through the years since the first Walk for Values in 2003, the event has become a *Catalyst*. The Oxford dictionary's definition of the word is, "a substance that increases the rate of a chemical reaction without itself undergoing any permanent chemical change." True to the word, Walk for Values has become a *Catalyst* over the last several years; keeping its primary objective of spreading awareness of the human values intact, while spawning new initiatives. It has attracted members of the government, various organizations and has grown to include complementary events that have promoted service activities and cultural programs. In selected cities, local government officials have graced Walk for Values often inaugurating the event itself. This has brought a tremendous amount of recognition to the Walk and the Sathya Sai Organization of Canada. In Toronto, the Honourable Member of Parliament Jim Karygiannis sent a Certificate from the Government of Canada, commending the Sathya Sai School Parent Council for hosting the Toronto Walk for Values "for your commitment to fostering a sense of community among Canadians of all backgrounds...to ensure our bright and sustainable future.... I know that you will continue to help better the lives of all Canadians, and strive to do the same worldwide." Saskatoon's Walk was inaugurated by City Councillor Mr. Randy Donaeur, who spoke a few words on the

I know that you will continue to help better the lives of all Canadians, and strive to do the same worldwide

importance of human values in our day-to-day lives.

The transformative aspect of the event is not the Walk itself but the many untold experiences and activities leading to the special day. Students at the Sathya Sai school selected a human value and practiced it in the weeks ahead of the Walk as well as practiced Ceiling on Desires by sacrificing birthday parties in order to donate money to the less fortunate. The Sathya Sai organization in Toronto partnered with the Ontario Electronic Stewardship on a service project, titled “eWaste”, that collected electronic items for recycling and safe disposal, to inspire everyone to become more caring members of the community and protectors of the environment. In Vancouver, members of the Sai family pledged to live their lives with total awareness of the values and marked each day of the summer to wake up and dust the rust on unused values and nudged others to do the same.

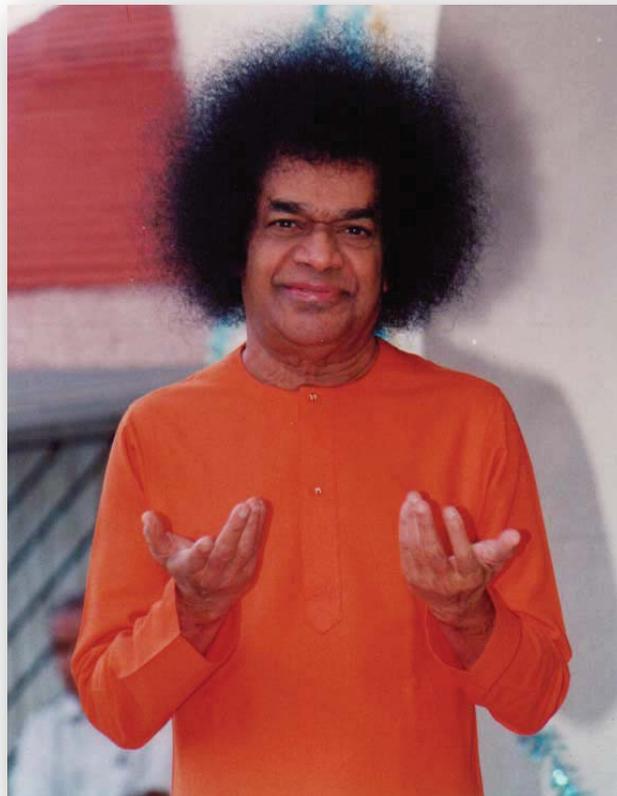
As the Walk matured over the years, celebrations and cultural programs were introduced to bring a greater awareness to the five human values and have cultivated an atmosphere of unity and active citizenship. At this year’s Walk, the theme ‘Unity of Faiths’ allowed the Sathya Sai Organization to invite members from various faith groups. A Catholic priest gave thanks to Sathya Sai Baba, Jesus,



Buddha, Mohammed and other prophets and shared his joy through song and thanked everyone for bringing their joy and spirit to the heart of the City of Toronto. Sathya Sai School students from Grade 5 gave a presentation honouring six major world religions, while the Grade 4 girls performed a lively dance to the song “Game of Love and Unity.” Grade 6 students came forward to speak, commending each of the organizations for the special services they offer to the suffering and needy. Continuing the thread, members of the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Scarborough danced and sang on the theme of unity of faiths. A Community Awards Ceremony followed, honouring organizations that have gone above and beyond to serve the community. Five

organizations were selected, each representing one of the five human values. Certificates were awarded to the Food Bank, Canadian Blood Services, Ontario Electronic Stewardship, Pan American Games, and Distress Centre of Ontario. In Saskatoon, a spokesperson from a Multifaith group thanked the Sai Centre for the invitation and spoke about the importance of such an event. Edmonton's Walk attracted the local TV station and interviewed two Sathya Sai youth members [Video]. A Chinese Lion Dance team gave a high-spirited performance titled "The Five Elements", followed by a musical presentation by the Sai Centre's Sathya Sai Spiritual Education (Bal Vikas) students. In Vancouver, as part of a service project to bring awareness to the Environment, tree saplings were collected and distributed to the onlookers who, despite the rain, lined the streets to cheer.

Walk for Values began with a small group of committed members of the Sathya Sai school eleven years ago and today has brought thousands of members of the organization, government dignitaries, various community groups; business representatives, and active citizens from across the nation to bring awareness to the five human values and celebrate humanity's ability to transform. Walk for Values has become a transformative *Catalyst* and will continue to be an instrument of the Canadian Sathya Sai Organization in years to come.



*Resplendent poetry, spontaneous, sublime,
Painting pictures of transcendent Truth,
Parable, proverb, scintillating bright,
Tinkling, twinkling, tintinnabulating lilt,
Every hour a minute,
Every minute a second;
Every word a manthra,
Every phrase, Suuthra,
A Gaayathri a sentence, Upanishath a speech!
For He is no well or tank or river!
His is the ocean of Wisdom Divine!*

*An excerpt from Prof. N. Kasturi's poem
(Poem read in the Holy Presence on 16-10-58)
(See foreword of Sathya Sai Speaks Volume 1)*

The Canadian Institute for Sathya Sai Education (CISSE)

*By: TR Pillay, Director of CISSE
Sathya Sai Baba Centre of
Edmonton*

Education is not for mere living, it is for life; a fuller, more meaningful, a more worthwhile life. There is no harm if it is for a gainful employment but education must realize that existence is not all, that gainful employment is not all. What is needed today is that we should live a life of good quality. The fostering of sterling character and good conduct is the need of the world.

- Sathya Sai Baba, November 12, 1963

Introduction

A KEY PART of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's rich legacy was his educational philosophy that stressed that the good character of students is as important as fostering the development of skills that will help them earn a good living. His mission was to impress upon mankind the crucial importance of leading moral lives by the practice of universal human values: Truth; Right Conduct; Peace; Love & Nonviolence. This philosophy gave rise to two important programs.

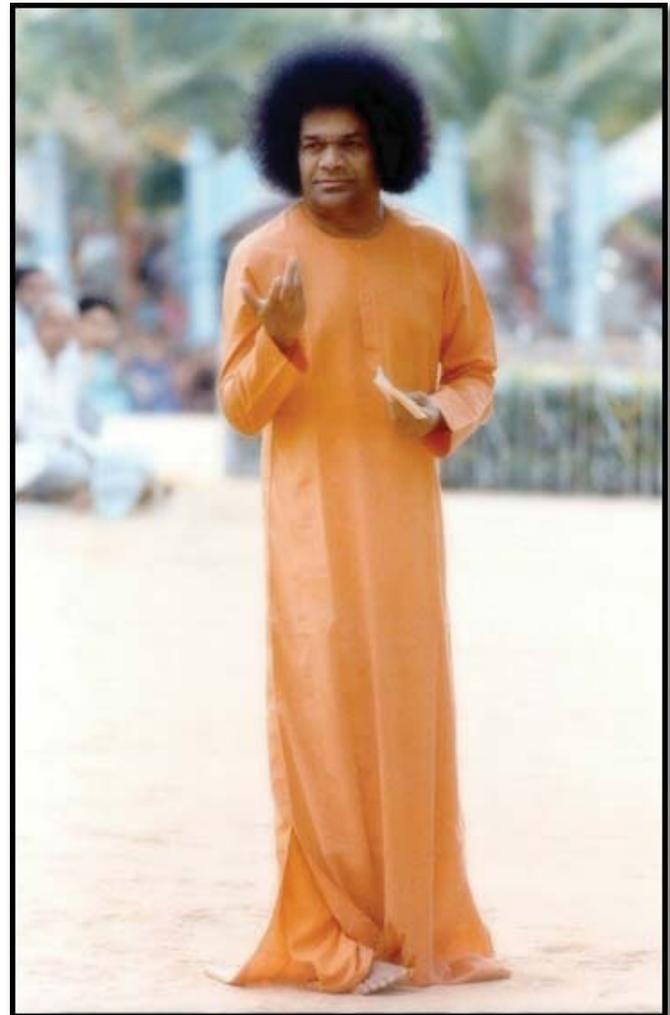
Two Programs: SSE and SSEHV

The first was the Bal Vikas movement. In 1969, inspired by the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba and under his guidance, a program was established in India to teach children of Sathya Sai devotees about the country's

ancient scriptures through story telling, enacting plays with morality themes, and through singing of devotional songs. The name "Bal Vikas" (a Sanskrit term meaning "Blossoming of the Child") was later chosen in order to better clarify the objectives of the program. This program was gradually adopted by overseas countries with some adaptations and is called SSE (Sai Spiritual Education) and is delivered to children of members of Sai Centres with oversight from the National Education Coordinator of the country.

The second was the SSEHV program. It was developed in the early 1980's as a character education program for children of non-members. This program does not teach about Sri Sathya Sai Baba nor about any specific spiritual or religious figure. Rather, it is

a secular program that promotes character development through the practice of time-honored universal values. The Sathya Sai Education in Human Values program (SSEHV) is a tried and tested model of education based on the belief that the universal human values of **Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love** and **Non-violence** are innate within everyone and can be drawn out, cultivated and manifested in our daily lives through self-effort in a nurturing environment.



The Establishment of the Canadian Institute of Sathya Sai Education (CISSE)

In 2010 the Sathya Sai World Foundation (SSWF) which oversees the standards of about 40 Sathya Sai Schools outside India inaugurated the **Canadian Institute of Sathya Sai Education (CISSE)**. As a result, CISSE became part of a world-wide network of about 25 Institutes dedicated to the mission of promoting the principles and programs of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of education.

A non-profit, non-political and non-religious organization, CISSE's primary goal is to foster a holistic system of integral education in schools to promote both academic excellence and character development. CISSE believes that North American teaching practices can be enriched by nurturing all dimensions of a student's personality: physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual. The Institute is comprised of trained and experienced educationists who volunteer their services for promoting these principles.

(Dear Reader: You are strongly advised to go to CISSE's website; www.cisse.ca for details on the Philosophy of Sathya Sai Educare and Integral

Education ; SSEHV Pedagogy; Programs and Courses, Dynamic Value Parenting, Partnership Schools, Resources, Latest news and contact information. Note: CISSE's courses are not for teachers only. Individuals interested in self-development / self-transformation may also apply).

- Establish **partnerships** and provide professional support to public and private schools in the implementation of SSEHV;
- Establish **professional links** with teacher training colleges, universities, ministries of education and international organizations;
- Build partnerships with professionals in

Education is for life.

Life is for man.

Man is there for society.

Society is meant for spirituality.

The spirituality is there for the nation.

The nation is part of the world, and the world is for peace.

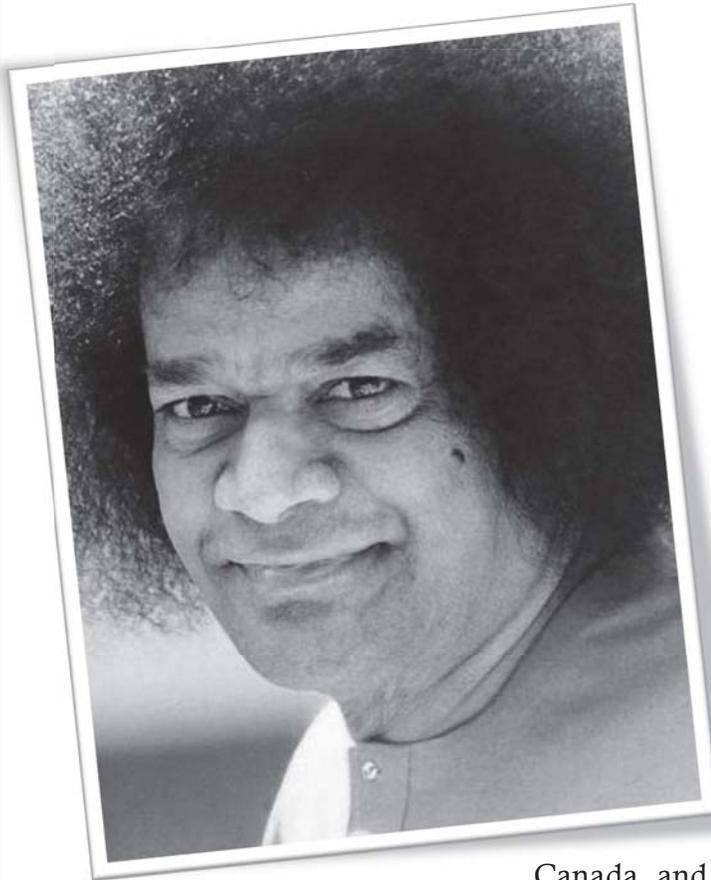
- Sathya Sai Baba, Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 31, Chapter 25

Mission

The mission of the Canadian Institute of Sathya Sai Education (CISSE) is to aid all members of society in the pursuit of human excellence.

CISSE's role is to:

- Foster a holistic system of education that promotes academic excellence, **character development and the practice of human values**;
- Train teachers and educationists in **Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) and the philosophy of Sathya Sai Educare** through diploma courses, and workshops, seminars, conferences, exhibitions and curriculum refinements;
- Establish **partnerships** and provide professional support to public and private schools in the implementation of SSEHV;
- Establish **professional links** with teacher training colleges, universities, ministries of education and international organizations;
- Build partnerships with professionals in fields such as healthcare, social services, engineering, IT, and business to provide workshops and conferences on **value-based leadership and corporate ethics**;
- Create **teaching and learning resources**, manuals, workbooks and lesson plans on values education that meet the needs of the local culture and are meaningful to children and adults in the community;
- Provide education in Sathya Sai Education in Human Values for young adults to **address youth issues**;
- Offer training for parents to **address parenting challenges** and promote harmonious family life; and
- Provide oversight and professional support for SSEHV at the Sathya Sai School of



Canada and in partnership schools according to the guidelines of the Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation and local school boards.

The current Director of CISSE (T.R. Pillay) was appointed in August 2009 by the Sathya Sai World Foundation (SSWF). Its By-laws were approved in Feb 2010 by the World Education Committee (WEC), a Committee of the SSWF dedicated to the oversight of Sathya Sai Education globally. CISSE is accountable to the SSWF/WEC.

Relationship between CISSE, The Education Trust of Canada, and The Sathya Sai School.

The Sri Sathya Education Trust of Canada has been in existence since April 1999. It was created by the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Organization in Canada to help establish the

Sathya Sai School. Inaugurated in September 2000 to mark the 75th birthday of its Founder, Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the school's mission is to balance academic excellence with character education. It is envisioned as a model SSEHV school for values and character education worthy of emulation by all schools. (www.sathyasaischool.ca).

The Trust is active in all school operations including hiring of staff and the Principal, staff salaries, providing resources, leasing and maintaining the leased premises. It is currently spearheading the construction of a permanent building slated to open in September 2014.

As a result of guidelines issued by the SSWF, the Trust revised its charter in Sept 2011 to allow CISSE to collaborate with the Trust to provide professional guidance and support services to the school such as assisting in selecting the staff and principal, and providing oversight for SSEHV delivery. This includes training new and current teachers by offering a Diploma in Sathya Sai Education, which is compulsory for all teachers who wish to teach at the Sathya Sai School. It also involves visiting classes to observe and evaluate the teaching of SSEHV, and facilitating Dynamic Value Parenting classes, which are mandatory for all parents registering their children at the school. The Director of CISSE also serves on the Governing Council, the school's policy-making body.

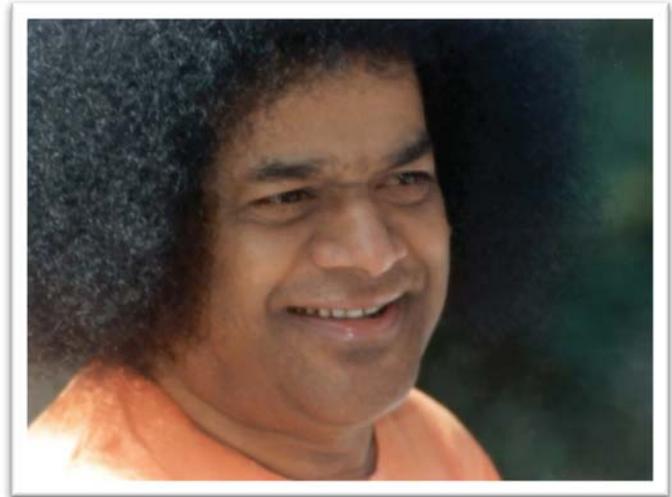
Activities of CISSE to Date

As the following shows, CISSE's Committee's have been busy:

- Course 1 of the SSEHV Diploma course

was developed and delivered at the Sathya Sai School on two occasions: Feb-April, 2011 with 45 graduates; Aug 16-23, 2012 with 20 graduates inclusive of staff and Principal of the Sathya Sai School (*The web site has testimonials from those who have taken the course*)

- Course 2 is currently being developed and will be offered in August 2014.
- A pilot Community EHV program was implemented in Aug 2012 with pleasing feedback. 20 children participated.
- The Research Committee is finalizing protocols to conduct research on the impact of SSEHV on the Sathya Sai School students and parents
- Dynamic Value Parenting (DVP) is offered in many Centres across the country by facilitators trained by CISSE (216 parents have benefited from the DVP program).
- DVP sessions are held regularly for new parents of the school
- Adapted to suit their special needs, DVP was delivered to immigrant parents and refugees in a Vancouver public school and to parents in an aboriginal school in Saskatoon
- CISSE is supporting the Sai Organization's building plans for a permanent site for the school
- In April 2012, CISSE visited Eammer's Corner Public school where Mr. & Mrs. Kapoor taught SSEHV as volunteers for more than 6 years. CISSE made a presentation on a possible partnership with the school.
- New teachers of the Sathya Sai school attended a two-day SSEHV orientation



Seminar organized by CISSE in Aug 2013

- To raise awareness of CISSE and its programs, CISSE is planning competitions (art, drama, essay,) for public and private school students. An Art Competition for Grades 1-12 called "Art from the Heart-Nurturing Positive Values" will be launched in January 2014
- The Resource Committee has begun work in establishing a library of resources in character education and posting materials online

A successful Round Table Conference called *Educare in Canada- Building a Shared Vision* was held at the Sathya Sai School on Oct 19th, 2013 involving the Principal and teachers of the Sathya Sai School, the School Trustees, the Sathya Sai Council, the Outreach Committee of the Sai Organization and CISSE members. 55 participants were registered. The goal is to make SSEHV *the model* for character education in Canada and the Sathya Sai School a Centre for Teaching Excellence and Character Education Resources.

Director of CISSE

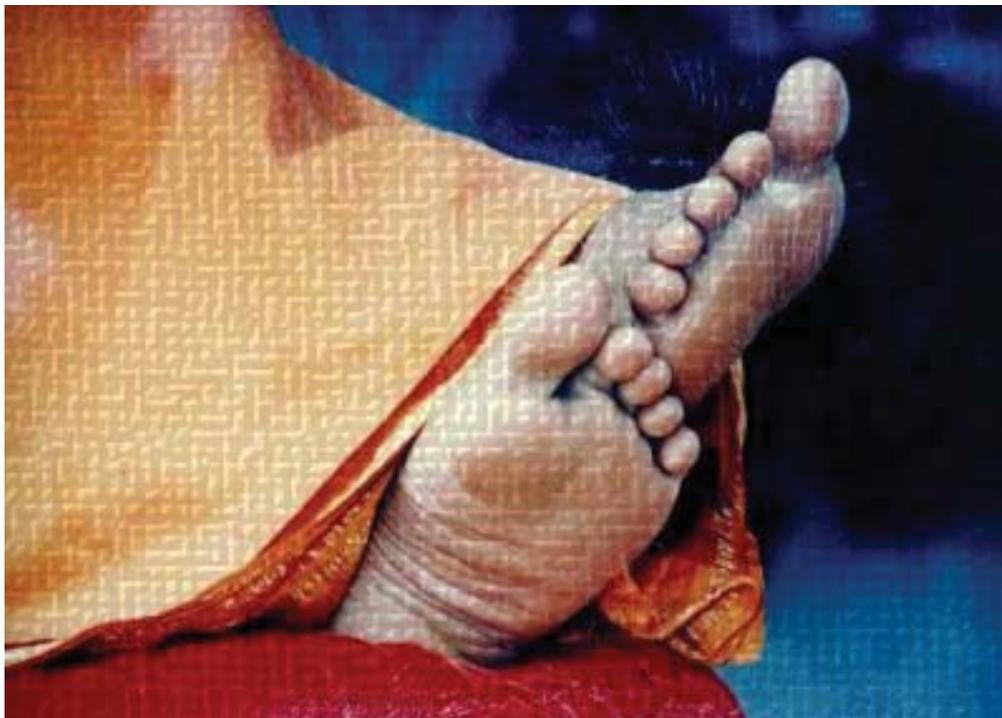
The current director of CISSE, T. R. Pillay has been a teacher for most of his life. He taught in his native South Africa as an elementary and high school teacher for 12 years before immigrating to Canada in 1970 where he taught at several high schools in Alberta. He retired from the public educational system in July 1997 while serving as Assistant Principal of Salisbury Composite High School in Sherwood Park. The highlight of his long teaching career was helping to establish the Sathya Sai School of Canada serving as its Founding Principal from 2000-2006.

In spite of his extensive teaching background, “TR” as he is popularly known, confesses that it was only when he was trained as a SSEHV teacher in 1983 that he began to have a greater appreciation for the transformational power of education. From a subject-centred teacher primarily focused on

student achievement he became a kinder, gentler and patient student-centred teacher, school administrator and SSE teacher helping to shape the personality of his students while finding more meaning and purpose in his own life.

Conclusion

CISSE represents the public face of Sathya Sai Education in Canada. Unlike the program called SSE (Sai Spiritual Education) which is for children of Centre members, CISSE is committed to promoting SSEHV to all sectors of our Canadian community. In order to fulfill its mission, CISSE needs the involvement of more committed people. If you wish to take its courses or volunteer in any way, please contact the Director by email: Director@cisse.ca or trpillay@gmail.com.



Reflections from SSE

“Aham Brahmasmi”

*By: Smiriti Shankar, Group 4
Sathya Sai Baba Centre of
Scarborough*

A TERM WHICH IS thrown freely within the centre. We have heard it at least a dozen times in SSE. But what does it really mean? What is it's significance, its true meaning? Aham Brahmasmi is a Sanskrit term meaning” I am Brahma” It suggests that a mere human being is the same as the almighty Lord. It suggests that God is no different than us, and that he is inherent in us.

God is formless. He is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient. When he takes human form, he is called an avatar. The main purpose of the formless God, taking a human form is to make us realize that we are the divine spark. We are three, not one. We are what we think we are, what others think we are, and who we truly are. We are not the body, we are the athma. The term Aham Brahmasmi makes us realize the true “we” . The fire has the characteristics of giving light, when one touches it will burn. The characteristics of the fire are the same when it is big or small. For

*We are not the body, we are the
athma. The term Aham
Brahmasmi makes us realize the
true “we”.*



example, the lamp fire, the match box fire, or the wild fire will destroy and burn when touched. God is the fire or the light and we are the sparks of the fire. So both of us have the same characteristics. But how do we realize this truth?

There is a story of a sculptor. He lived in a poor village, but was well known form his work. One day a sculptor made a beautiful Krishna from a rock. All the villagers admired the beauty of Krishna and offered compliments to the sculptor, but one of the villagers was sceptical. He asked the sculptor, how you imagined Lord Krishna, who is the most compassionate God, in this hard rock. The sculptor smiled and replied, God is everywhere and I just



removed whatever I thought was not “God-like” from the rock, and Krishna formed. Similarly, if we remove whatever is not “God-like” in us, we ourselves will become God.

When we get up early in the morning, we see ourselves in the mirror, put makeup on and try to make ourselves presentable for the day ahead. Image and appearance mean so much to society as we think the way we look identifies on who we are. What we don't realize is that the face staring back at us in the mirror is not who we really are. One day when we leave our body, the people closest to us will gather and cry, on how we no longer exist in this world. The body is still there, but why are people crying? What is missing from the body? Isn't that the true “we”? In spirituality, we call this as *athma*. We have to realize the existence of this *athma*, during our lifetime. We should develop *athmic* consciousness and shed body

consciousness. All the evils, such as anger, ego, jealousy and hatred are body related. Once we realise our true self, *aham Brahmasmi*, all these evils will disappear. We are not the perishable body, we are the immortal soul, but we don't realize this truth. This is the reason why we chant “*Mrythyo Ma, Amrithum Gamaya*” at the end of each *bhajan*, to pray to God to remind us that we are not the body.

So *Aham* the breathing technique meaning I am God. These are the mantras that we should chant non-stop and remind us the fact that we are God. Let the *maya* or the worldly desires not affect us and make us feel that we are the perishable.

In conclusion, God is the doer and we are merely his instruments. Our first step is to get rid of all our evils. The second step is to realize that we are God. And lastly we need to acknowledge that the same God that resides in us, resides in others as well. This is the path to self-realization, transformation, and finally divinity.

“My Expression of Love”

*By: Ashvika Baskaran, Group 3
Sathya Sai Baba Centre of
Middlefield*

LOVE IS SOMETHING INDESCRIBABLE. Love means something to everyone, but it means something different to each one of us. When I think of love, I think of something that won't run out, a feeling that can be expressed to everyone. Even in our darkest times, love and hope are what keep us together and keep us going. Love is interconnected with everything. Our world relies on love to prosper and to succeed.

Without love, our world would be a horrible place. No one would know values or morals; the world would be full of greed and theft. Love is everything and we all need to realize that.

Imagine a world of death and destruction, of hatred and greed, betrayal and sin. It's a world where everyone hated each other, where the slightest thought of love isn't present. It's a take what you need, fight for it if you have to, to get what you need kind of world. Now imagine a small child, who is different from everyone else, who believes in love. She is confused by why everyone is angry and full of hatred, but she isn't part of it. She is

bubbly and enthusiastic and filled with love. Imagine she shows some of this love to someone. This person becomes happy and happiness fills their bodies. This person decides to spread the love and soon the world is filled with happiness and love. The change can start with one little person, but see the effect that love has on the world. Of course, in real life, the change and spreading of love isn't this immediate, and it takes time but it shows how love can be linked in with happiness.



Now, while love can cause happiness, it can also cause pain. Why do we feel sad when someone close to us passes away? Because we love them. Of course, pain as well as other feelings don't really exist, they're things

we make up on our pathway to God, but as humans, these feelings are ones that we must express and feel. Although love never diminishes, although we cannot give away all our love because love is infinite, when you love, it is like you give away a part of yourself. In this way, love is also pain.

Everything that you do in life can be linked to love. You love so many different things and people, thoughts and dreams. Some of us have lost the true meaning of love and choose to love material objects like money or clothes more than people. Others have gotten in touch with themselves and devote all of their love to god. God is Swami but it is also a lot

more than that. Swami cannot be with us in the mortal form today but he is omnipresent and omnipotent. He is always there with us and has the same amount of endless love to everyone on Earth. The greatest form of Swami's love to us in this world is our parents, especially our mothers. They have always been there for us and their love for us

can never be compared to the love of anyone else. They are the embodiment of love. Our mothers are the embodiment of dharma. The impact of a mother is astonishing on so many levels. To us, she gives us protection, she teaches us, and she takes care of us. But as a community, mothers are also important to us. They are our selfless leaders. Our mothers aren't only there for our needs; their selflessness has helped develop our community, our nation, and our world. What we don't understand is that we can never repay our mothers for everything that they have done for us. We can swim across oceans and win state championships but all of that only repays a little part of everything that our mother has given us. Our mothers are our Gods, our Gurus, and our worlds. Without our mothers, we wouldn't all be where we are today; we shouldn't have this wonderful life that we have now.

Mothers are everywhere. There are our physical mothers, our Gods. There is Mother Nature, Mother Land, and so many more. Mother is a title given to many different ideas and objects because of the deep respect that we have. This is when we look beyond what

comes to our minds; it is what is beyond that. A mother's love is pure; she wants nothing in return from us. When we refer to someone as the mother of our country, it is different. A father's love and a mother's love cannot be compared because each is endless but a mother

of our country is someone who has everlasting love to the country and to

the people inside the country. The mother is their protection and is the soul of the country. She is the figure and works to bind the country together. Everyone is dependent on this mother.

We will never fully be able to grasp the concept of our mothers as God because they were once exactly like us. They were once children, sitting in the same spot as we were and looking up to their mothers as God. I guess we realize this as we are also God; we are all the embodiment of the endless love our mothers provide. We represent the thought of unity between people, unity between mothers around the world. We should aspire to be great mothers like ours. We should aspire to give the same love and prosperity to our children that are given to us now. We are lucky to have loving mothers, a mother for each one of us that represents the true embodiment of endless and sufficient love. We should all try to show this love to everyone in the world. When we show the true meaning of love and mother's love through our words and actions, and when we fully realize the potential of mother's love will we finally become one with God.

Our Mothers are the Embodiments of Dharma

“The Starting Point to Making the World a Better Place is You”

**By: Ramana Rajasekaran, Group 4
Sathya Sai Baba Centre of
Scarborough**

IMAGINE YOU ARE ALIENS from another planet. Your teacher asks you to write about a planet for homework and you decide to write about Earth. You're looking at earth through a telescope. However, the only view you get of this planet is filtered through the lens. The small lens is unable to capture the fine details of this planet.

Wanting to learn more about this planet you travel closer and find out that there are many issues globally. There is global warming, high crime rates, and poverty. Disturbed by these issues you continue travelling closer to find more problems – racism, sexism, and homophobia to name a few. You continue to get closer and closer until you come across people who live on this planet. There are individuals dealing with bullying, backstabbers and depression.

Today, worldwide, though we are faced with many issues we cannot come up with a solution till we find a solution for the root of

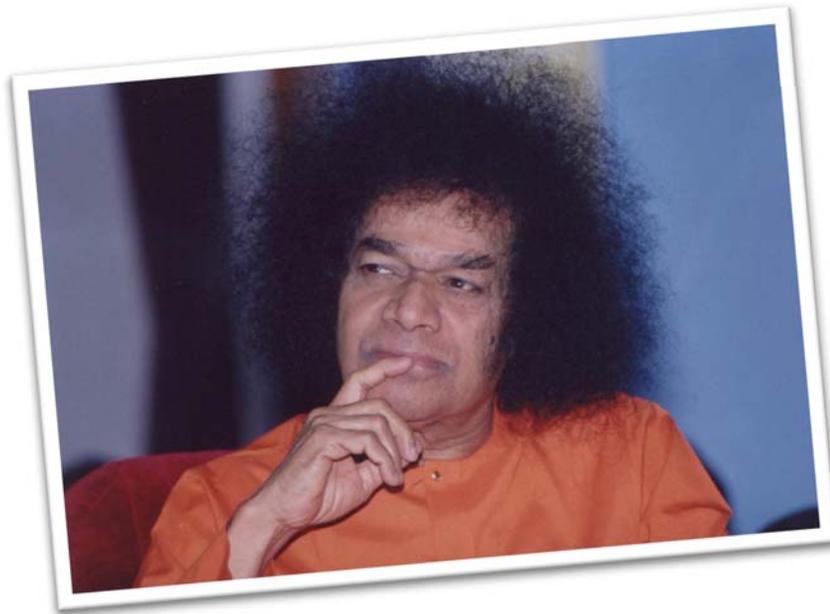
our problems – the people who are facing many problems on a daily basis. If we can resolve these problems, the bigger problems will disappear on their own.

It doesn't take a lot to fix these problems. You, as individuals can make a difference. As Swami says “Your duty is to pray for the welfare of the world and to work for it as far as it lies in your power”. If every person decided they wanted to make a change for the better, the world would be a better place. I believe all it takes is a smile to make a difference. Imagine you had a piggy bank that only needs ten coins to be full and worth a fortune. Each coin represents a smile you've put on someone's face. It isn't a lot to ask, is it? You only have to put a smile on *ten* people's faces.

It's the small things that impact a person and make a difference in their lives. It could be something as simple as a good morning to the janitor, holding the door open for the person behind you, offering someone a pen if they need one, giving a person someone to talk to when they're down, standing up for a friend or waving at someone you know in the hall. Actions like these will fill your piggy bank.

Every action has a reaction. For every smile you put on someone's face, that smile will be reflected on another person's face. The ten people you make smile will each in turn





make another ten people smile, and they will do the same. The good deed will be carried on exponentially as it is passed from one to another throughout the day.

The power of a smile is worth a fortune, and to make ten people smile, you will be richer than a billionaire. You will have that inner satisfaction that will keep you happy and not allow any evil to enter your mind. This inner satisfaction is what will keep the world a peaceful place to live.

As Swami has said “fostering of sterling character and good conduct is the need of the world. Once we have greater numbers of such people of good quality, the country and the world will become prosperous and peaceful.” Now I encourage you all to go out and fill your piggy bank with those ten coins.

....fostering of sterling character and good conduct is the need of the world.....

- Sathya Sai Baba

“Child Today, Soldier Tomorrow”

**By: Vaishnavan Srikumaraguru,
Group 4
Sathya Sai Baba Centre of
Scarborough**

THE RECOGNITION AND ENFORCEMENT of human rights have been one of the reasons why global citizens live the way they do today; free, safe and secure. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was written after the end of the Second World War. The countries that signed this document were expected to respect and abide by the articles prescribed in this act. These articles include: Race, Colour, Ancestry, Religion, Place of Origin, Ethnic Origin, Citizenship, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Age, Marital Status, Family Status and Disability. Although conditions in individual countries may have appeared to be better, there was still The Holocaust, the Rwandan Genocide and

the Tamil Genocide which took place.

In some countries that did not respect the Declaration of Human Rights, children were treated harshly and often were treated similar to adults. They were expected to oblige to the unreasonable requests of their elders, and were not given a say in the jobs they had to perform. The individuals committing the violations were not respecting the human rights, and were discriminating based on **age**. This violation resulted in exploitation of these children and exposing them to severely harsh conditions.

*What have I done to deserve this great pain?
And now I am stuck with using this cane,
I had only escaped some time ago,
And in all our battles was constant blood flow,*

*I had just become of legal age,
The horrific battle was worth no wage,
The guns, the battle, the army and more,
All was eating away at my core,*

*In fear of our lives, we fought as one,
We hid our fears and confusion behind our guns,
There once were many but now there are none,
All over a strip of soil and all but no fun,*

*Childhoods spoiled, parenthoods taken,
Children are crying and people are dying,
Because I was taken as a soldier,
At thirteen, no family and simply just colder.*

- Vaishnavan Srikumaraguru

An example of this mistreatment is the Rwandan genocide. Many young boys were taken away from their families and brainwashed. These children were deprived of their childhood and did not know what was right or wrong. The individuals that controlled these children used them to conduct genocide. Children under the age of consent

were taken against their will and exposed to brutal conditions, and licensed to kill others. This violation of human rights is very wrong

because the kids were deprived of their childhoods, and they were not allowed to decide what they wanted to do. The grounds on which these violations occurred, affected the most vulnerable members of society- children. When these young boys return back to society, they are still going to have those mindsets that were established at such a young age.



The concept of Human Rights serves the purpose of protecting people and giving them rights to be free of any discrimination or harm. In the example of child soldiers, these young children are being abused and exploited because of their age. Going forward, organizations such as *Child Soldiers International* and *Unicef* have established standards and provisions in which they punish offenders. These organizations actively prevent the exploitation of children and they work to help rehabilitate them after coming back from these conditions. Thus, it should be stressed that instances of which children are deprived of their fundamental human rights; they should have easy access to rehabilitation.

As Swami has taught us to “Help ever, hurt never”, one must realize that as a global citizen, it is our responsibility to inform our fellow citizens. The exploitation of child soldiers deteriorates the potential of the upcoming generation, and as SSE students we should strive to aid and help rehabilitate the affected individuals. Swami focuses on

individual and global peace. Thus, He teaches us that by achieving inner peace, one can act peacefully and lovingly. It is important to practice right conduct and by doing so, we can impact another person’s reaction or decision. “Take one step towards Me and I will take ten towards you” (Sathya Sai Baba), expresses that each individual has a God within them, but often fails to recognize so. Swami stresses that leading by example can cause a positive effect on the community around us. If each person recognizes their spiritual potential, there will be a large change in society. Since we have the benefit of acknowledging Swami’s teachings, it is our responsibility to emphasize the human values’ importance for others. Since the Declaration of Human Rights is not enforced by the legal court system, it is our responsibility to act within our defined morality and judgement to help others and follow Swami’s teachings. As a community, practicing the teachings of Swami can help generate the positive influence that will make Child soldiers an issue of the past.

Sai Youth

“United Nations Internship Inspires Hope in Young Devotee”

Krutika Patil
***Sathya Sai Baba Centre
of London, Ontario***

OF THE MANY POIGNANT teachings of our lord, Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the one that resonated with me the most, was that of seva. The early teachings I received while in my SSSE classes instilled in me the importance of service to others. This principle of service to our fellow man has steered me to my current studies in social work and law.

During my undergraduate studies in English and Criminology, I participated in Intercordia Canada. Intercordia Canada is a university-accredited program that supports students in an experiential learning opportunity overseas. During the summer of 2008 I spent three months living with a host family. The first month I attended daily language classes and for the next two months I volunteered with L'Arche. While there I worked with mentally and physically disabled adults in daily workshops.

My interest in social justice issues sprang from the three months I spent in



Ukraine volunteering with Intercordia Canada. Upon my return, I wanted to participate more fully in justice reform from a policy perspective. Thus, continued my pursuit of further education in social work and law. I have chosen these fields of study so that I can expand further as an individual and learn more about the unique struggles of those living amongst the injustices of this world. In an attempt to remedy these injustices, it is my humble hope that my experiences and educational background will allow me to serve others in a meaningful way.

I am most blessed by our lord, Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Through his love I am able to pursue my dreams of enlightenment and be a small instrument in his grand mission. I

applied for the Social Justice Fellowship in mid-November and was selected as the recipient of the Stitt Feld Handy Social Justice Fellowship in Africa. After being awarded the fellowship from Windsor Law, I began a rigorous application process. This involved transcripts from my undergraduate and graduate studies, reference letters, cover letter, and a resume to the “United Nations Internship Program.” I was thrilled to hear from the International Criminal Tribunal for



the Tribunal. At the ICTR compound I share an office with three other interns. Under the backdrop of mighty Mount Meru this surprisingly sleepy, tourist town became home for the ten weeks I spent in Tanzania. Much of

Hope in the children at the orphanage.

Hope amongst the families at the school.

And finally, a hope in me that good will triumph over evil.

That love is greater than hate.

Rwanda (ICTR) that I had been accepted as an intern in the Judicial and Legal Affairs Section.

My internship at the ICTR was from June 3- August 15, 2013. The ICTR is the first international criminal court to hear a case of genocide and the first to convict an individual of genocide. My interest in the historical context of the violence in Rwanda and the subsequent prosecutions of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide developed during my undergraduate studies.

My typical workday involved waking up early, and taking a quick ten-minute walk to

my internship involved legal research and writing. In particular, I prepared legal memoranda. Through my interaction with the ICTR’s policies and programs I have been able to develop a better understanding of the future opportunities for international efforts to establish truth, justice, and reconciliation in the aftermath of genocide and mass violence.

While living in Arusha, Tanzania I was able to participate in various seva activities. On Saturdays, Interns and staff members at the ICTR volunteer at Seeway Tanzania, a children's orphanage. Tanzania, one of the poorest countries in the world, has a



predominantly young population with an estimated 45% of the population less than 15 years of age. Due to factors including AIDS, it is estimated there are over one million orphans, and this figure rises daily. My visits to the orphanage were full of laughter and joy. We usually played games with the children, did arts and crafts, or assisted with their homework. The children appreciated the interaction and it was a rewarding experience for the volunteers.

I also made a visit to a remote school. The school catered to not only the children but to the entire family. Here, the children's parents were supported through the schools microcredit program. Mothers made handmade jewelry and crafts to help support their families. Members of the community performed the traditional welcome dance to

greet us. This inter-generational facility is a beacon of hope to this small community.

It is this hope that keeps me motivated to serve others. Despite the atrocities of mass genocide, poverty, and the many other ills of the world there is hope. Hope in the children at the orphanage. Hope amongst the families at the school. And finally, a hope in me that good will triumph over evil. That love is greater than hate.

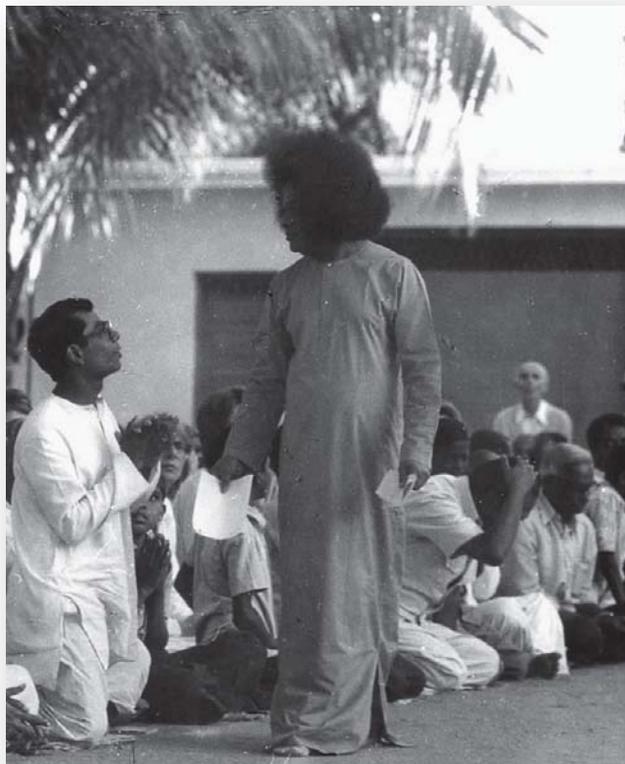
In closing, I am most thankful for the support I received from the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Center of London. Their love and prayers enabled me to do the good work of Sai Baba. Interning at the ICTR has been an invaluable experience. The two and a half months that I spent in Tanzania allowed me to expand further as an individual and learn more about the unique struggles of those living in poverty. This experience has further allowed me to increase my cultural sensitivity and moral responsiveness while gaining a more compassionate worldview.

“God’s Will VS. Free Will”

***Arathi Unnikrishnan
Sathya Sai Baba Centre of
Edmonton***

MY HUMBLE PRANAMS at the lotus feet of our beloved Bhagwan. Baba once said, “Leaving everything to God's will is the highest form of devotion. Whether we lose or gain, have pain or pleasure, our faith must be unshaken. Whatever happens, accept it as His gift.”

God is the Almighty. God is the supreme, upon whom lays the power of creation, sustenance, and destruction. However, in order to fully grasp this concept of God, one must develop a concrete understanding of the Maya, or form of ‘illusion’ that surrounds every aspect of one’s life. In Hinduism, the concept of Maya is fixated upon the ultimate truth which states that everything, this world; its various creations, diversity of creatures including human beings and all other living things, is a form of God’s divine play. We delude ourselves in this Maya of life, and begin to identify our souls with our body, mind and ego. This, my friends, is the source of diversion from the path of the divine, to a path lead by imperfections and downfalls. We’ve all been taught that the purpose in life is to recognize the potential of divinity within ourselves, and to find unity with the Supreme Being, or Brahma. According to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Brahma and Maya work in concurrence with each other. Paramahansa explains that Brahma and Maya share a



relationship similar to one that exists between fire and its property of burning. He goes on to assert that as we begin to associate ourselves with the Maya that surrounds us, we detach ourselves from God, and eventually lead ourselves to believe that we have the free will, or power of decision to do as we wish.

The concept of free will vs. God’s will is one that confused me, and continues to confuse me to an extent. The understanding that I have developed of these concepts may vary from the way someone else has chosen to look at them. To me, God’s will is a lot like destiny as I believe in destiny. Free will, on the other hand, is the extent to which one has the control over his or her life. As I stated before, the ultimate power of creation, sustenance and destruction lies in the hands of that Superior Being. So regardless of how one choses to live

their life, God's will will always direct them towards a particular path. Whether this path be good or bad is simply a reflection of how one chooses to look at them. As the quote I previously presented states, "Whatever happens, accept it as His gift".

I would like to provide an example as given by Ramakrishna Paramahansa of these two concepts. An individual decides one day that he will take a trip to Varanasi, which is a holy place of pilgrimage in Hinduism. He plans for his trip in every way that he can; he collects some extra money, packs all his belongings days ahead for his journey, and arranges transportation. However, as the day came and the man was about to take his leave, he was approached by a messenger who tells him that his brother has died in the village. The man cancels all his plans, and rushes to see his brother.

In this example, we see both Free Will and God's Will at work. The man makes the decision to travel to Varanasi which is an example of free will. However, the arrival of the messenger with the news of his brother's death indicates God's will. We see in this scenario how God's will dominates in our lives, and as Baba has stated, we must learn to leave everything to God's will. Now I would like to provide an example from my own experience with God's will and free will. I joined SSSE when I was in 5th grade, which is around the same time that my family moved to Canada. At that time, I wasn't sure of who Baba was. Growing up, I was never exposed to Baba's great love as neither of my parents were familiar with Baba. So coming into Sai Centre, I knew he was a spiritual leader, but I was

completely clueless in regards to what his teachings were. I continued attending the SSSE classes for another year or so, but did not feel Baba's teachings really having an impact in my life. In those years, I saw Baba as a kind human being. I thought greatly of him for sure, but I did not view him as a God-like divine figure. I looked up to him just like someone might look up to, say, Mahatma Gandhi.

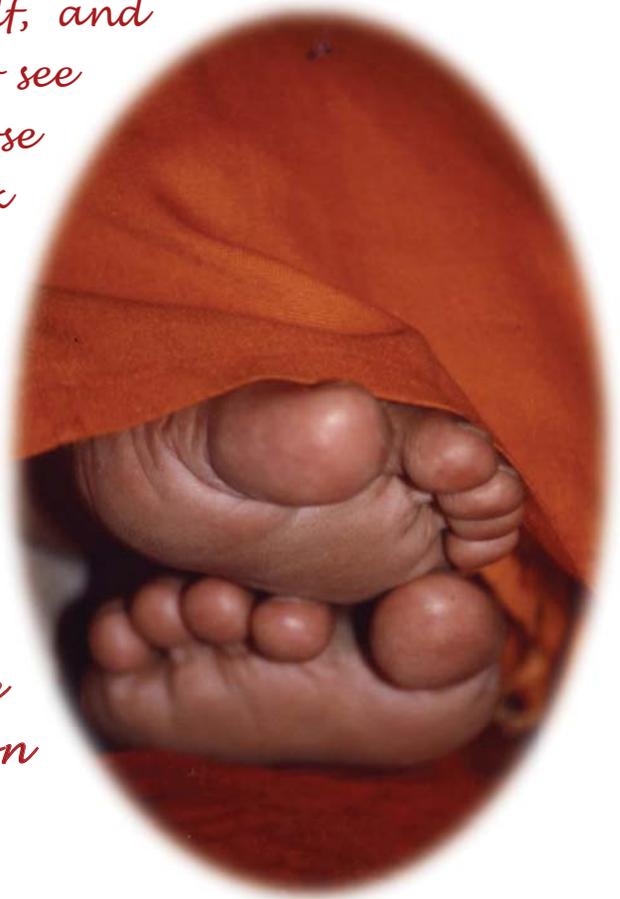
Over the next year, Sundays became very busy for both of my parents, and we, as a family, were not as committed to Sai Centre as we should have been. I was not consistent in attending SSSE classes, and eventually, I just stopped coming. This is where free will comes into play in my example. We made that choice to stop attending Sai Centre.

So, after I was taken out of the program, I didn't really expect to be re-enrolled into the classes ever again. However, in the summer of 2010, on a random day, Sai Centre became a topic of discussion at the dinner table. At this point, my parents were way more aware of who Baba is, and what his teachings are. They said that they wanted to enroll both my sister and I in to the program again. I wasn't too thrilled with the idea, but I didn't refuse either. So I began attending SSSE, once again, only a year ago. This, I believe is an act of God's will. I had never imagined I would be coming back to attend SSSE, but here I am today. I am so grateful to Baba for granting me with the blessing of attending SSSE, and directing me towards the path of love and seva. I hope I was able to well demonstrate the concepts of God's will and Free will in this article today. I would like to conclude with a small thank-you note to Baba.

Dear Swami,

I have felt myself grow both spiritually and emotionally after You rewarded me with a second chance to attend this Centre. I have felt that gradual change taking over me as I began to notice that my views and perspectives on life were taking on a new face. My outlook on myself had changed. Today, I'm an individual who has been changed down to the smallest of entities by Your great love. I'm God, You're God, we're all God. We've all got that goodness within ourselves that must be praised. Thank You Baba for helping me discover the potential within myself, and for giving me the ability to see the good within all those who surround me. Thank You Baba for teaching me the value of kindness. And finally, thank You Baba for leading me to the path of love.

- Arathi Unnikrishnan
Sathya Sai Baba Centre
of Edmonton



Sai Family News

“Annual Terry Fox Run”

Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Middlefield

A SINGLE DREAM, A World of Hope – The Terry Fox Foundation

Who says a simple man with a big dream can't make it happen? Terry Fox did it and even though he may not be here to see it, his presence was felt with every step the Middlefield Sai Centre took in his honour as they completed their seventh annual Terry Fox Run.

With one prosthetic leg, Terry Fox ran across Canada to raise funds for cancer research. Unable to fully complete his marathon, September 1980 marked the month when he inspired many to continue his pursuit for hope. Annually, on the second Sunday after Labor Day, community runs are organized

across Canada in support of the single dream of one man which in turn had inspired millions around the world.

It was a bright and sunny morning on Sunday September 15th, 2013 when a group of dedicated Sai children, parents carried out a legend's mission, creating a beautiful Sai family. It was the seventh annual “Terry Fox Run” that took place around the general surrounding area of the Middlefield Sai Centre located at Markham and Nashdene Roads. This organized walk reinforced awareness and inspiration to all participants of Swami’s mission to motivate love for God and service to all mankind – Love All, Serve All. The walk aspired to involve children and parents in the community while bringing Swami’s message through the ideals of Terry Fox.

A wave of service, if it sweeps over the land catching everyone in its enthusiasm, will be able to wipe off mounds of hatred, malice and greed that infest the world – Sathya Sai Baba. The “Sathya Sai Centre of Middlefield hoped that the run raised the consciousness of children and adults of the importance of



rendering selfless service to mankind and by recognizing that this value is a fundamental unity of the entire world. Inspired by the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba, the walk encompassed a personal commitment that positive change is possible in the world through the involvement within the community for the benefit of all.

The participants of the walk shone as examples of divine love and selfless service. This walk has shown that through one person's dream, many hearts have been touched, while encompassing the power to transform the welfare of humanity through the unity of love and selfless service.



“Global Akhanda Bhajan 2013”

- Ontario Region II

WITH BHAGAWAN’S BLESSINGS, Ontario Region II organized the Global Akhanda Bhajan (GAB) from 5:30PM on Saturday Nov 09th to 6PM on Sunday Nov 10th, 2013 at Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre Scarborough. Over 2000 people have participated and enjoyed the 24 hour continuous Akhanda Bhajan.

GAB 2013 was off to a joyous start by SSE children of Region 2 singing lovingly and melodiously the multi-faith songs in six religions. (Some in their respective languages). They started off with invocation prayers from Hindu religion and invoked the presence of Swami by chanting Sai Rudram and Sai Chamakam. They continued with chants and songs from Christianity, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Islam. Devotees felt Swami’s presence with a strong fragrance of Vibhuthi throughout the hall. This is a new outreach initiative by Region 2 devotional group in spreading Swami’s message to the community at large. Usually in the past GAB would start off with Veda chanting by SSE children.

The Multi faith chants were followed by combined melodious bhajans by Region 2 youth and SSE children from 6PM to 8PM.

The devotees could experience and enjoy the love and devotion the young children had for Swami through their Bhajans. Countless hours of practices and time spent for preparation by the singers, Bhajan coordinators and Parents could be felt by the bhavam and vibrations expressed by the Bhajan singers. All the centres of Region 2 took turns and sang the Glory of our Lord from 8PM (Saturday) to 5:00 AM (Sunday).



At 5:00 AM, twenty-one Aumkarams chanted by the devotees created good vibrations. This was followed by Sai Suprabatham by couple of talented youth girls from Region 2. Region 2 adult and youth singers (combined) offered their Bhajans at the lotus feet of our Beloved Bhagawan from 5:10AM to 6:00AM.

All the centres from Region 2 continued to sing the Glory of Swami from 6AM to 2:30 PM. The Region 2 combined Bhajans started at 2:30 PM with SSE children from various centres in Region 2 offering their love for Swami through their innocent and melodious singing. The adults and youth from Region sang soulful,

melodious and vibrating Bhajans from 4PM to 5:45PM.

The highlight of the evening closing session was “Divine Singing” by our beloved Bhagawan Shri Sathya Sai Baba. Words can’t express the joy and the bliss the devotees experienced by singing along and giving chorus to Swami’s singing “Govindha Krishna Jai”, “Govindha Gopala Prabha Giri Dhari” and “Subrahmanyam Subrahmanyam”. Most of devotees couldn’t control their joy as the tears rolled over their cheeks. It was indeed a perfect finish to the 24 hours of Sai Contemplation and Nama Smarana.

It was a great effort by Sai youth from Region 2 to have arranged the live- audio stream that also helped many devotees who were unable to be present in person to join/listen from their home.

Thank you Bhagawan for making this GAB 2013 memorable by being present in every being inside and outside and directing, guiding and performing this spiritual sadhana through your devotees.

The GAB 2013 was concluded with Aarathi and closing remarks by Ontario Region II Regional Coordinator



“Serve The Planet”

*Avatar Declaration Day
October 20th, 2013*

*Sri Sathya Sai Baba Community
Centre, Vancouver, British Columbia*

SERVE THE PLANET was a global service initiative that took place this year to celebrate Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Avatar Declaration Day on October 20th. All Sathya Sai Organizations worldwide devoted to carry out this project under the direction of Prasanthi Council, as a sacred offering on this auspicious day.

The project "Serve the Planet" is an effort to focus the attention all over the world on the importance and significance of Service with Love. Serving food to the poor and hungry (Narayana Seva) was suggested as one of the main focus areas for this project.

The Sri Sathya Sai Baba Community



Centre in Vancouver also took part in this global seva project, by organizing a seva event which fed over 300 individuals at the Oppenheimer Park in the Downtown Eastside.

“Service is the first step along the spiritual path”

- Sathya Sai Baba



Over 30 volunteers came together to help prepare and distribute all of the food. The menu consisted of vegetable fried rice, potato salad, cookies, granola bars and coffee. We all gathered at the center to prepare the meals from (9am-11am) Sunday morning. Once that was done we all headed down to the Park and began to distribute the food. We set up tents and tables and served meals and drinks from about 12pm to 3pm.



None of this would have been possible without our generous sponsors. Starbucks donated 500 cups of coffee including enough condiments and coffee cups. No Frills donated 40 loaves of bread, 150 granola bars, 50 bottles of water and 300 bottles of green tea. We are thankful for our sponsors who helped in making the event so powerful and so enjoyable.

The event was a great success and it would not have been possible without the constant love and divine guidance from our beloved Bhagawan. He reminds us that it is amongst the most noble and sacred of charitable actions.

Sai Q&A

Sadhaka: Who was the person who grouped them (*Vedas*) in these collections?

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba: It was Vyasa, who was a partial manifestation of Narayana (God, Vishnu) Himself. He was the son of Sage Paraasara. He had mastered the scriptures and spiritual treatises. He was a great sage himself. He was a skilful coordinator. In order to promote the welfare of mankind, he compiled the Veda in four parts and facilitated righteous living by all. He divided the Vedas into four and prepared five samhithas.

Leela Kaivalya Vahini, pg. 6

Q: Swami! Is God transcending the Universe or immanent in the Universe?

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba: He fills the Universe and is also beyond it. So there is no place outside Him. All places are inside Him. All Names are His, no Name is alien to Him.

Prasnottara Vahini, pg. 24

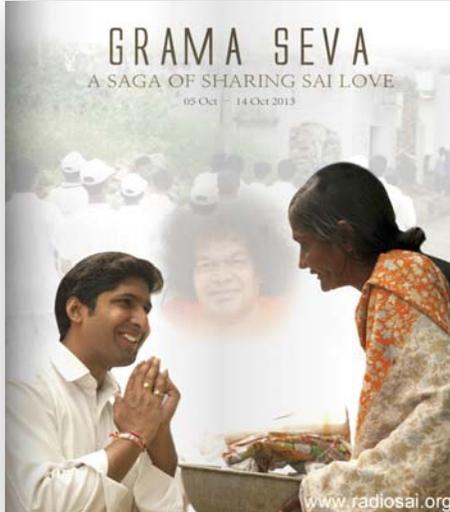
Anil Kumar: Swami! You said that divinity is in everyone. Then, before we were born where had it been? Does divinity exist even after our death?

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba: The Divine exists. Divinity is imperishable, pure and unsullied. It has neither birth nor death. It is eternal and stable. It is beyond time and space. Divinity transcends all physical laws.

Now, your question is: where did divinity exist prior to your birth and where will it be after your death while it is in you during this lifetime? You see, there is an electrical wire on the wall, and also holders here and there to which bulbs are fixed. You get light only if a bulb is fixed to a holder and not otherwise. Why? The current passes through the wire that enters the bulb fixed to the holder. If you hold the bulb in your hand, it does not illumine, as there is no power supply. What you have to understand is this. The current has not been newly produced to get into the bulb. It was already there in the wire. If you remove the bulb, what will happen to the current? It will be there in the wire only. The only difference is that you will not experience its presence as illumination. Similarly, the bulb is the body, the current of divinity flows into it as the illumination of life. When this bulb of the body is removed, even then, the current of divinity persists hidden or latent, so much so divinity has all along been there before you were born, during your lifetime and will even be there after your death like the current of electricity.

Satyopanishad, Part 2

What's New on Radio Sai



Gramma Seva at Prashanthi Nilayam

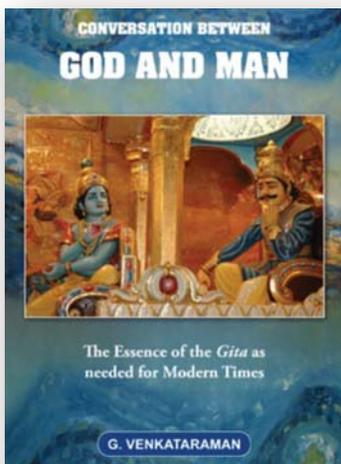
Gramma Seva is a beautifully prepared photo-story of one of Bhagawan's first Seva projects of helping the poor in neighboring villages. The Radio-Sai prepared articles chronicles the Seva project over the last fourteen years filled with breathtaking pictures of devotees working tirelessly to serve in Bhagawan's name. [Read More](#)

<http://media.radiosai.org/journals/vol_11/01OCT13/grama-seva-preparation-2013/grama-seva-preparation-2013.html>

My Sai, My Love, My Puttaparthi

Ms. Nooshin Mehrabani was born in Iran and worked as a reporter for Iranian National Radio and Television. This ardent devotee continued her career with an Iranian TV station after moving to Los Angeles, USA. Since 1991, when she first heard about Sai Baba, she has made many trips to India and has been blessed with several chances of interaction with Bhagawan. [Read More](#)

<http://media.radiosai.org/journals/vol_11/01OCT13/Nooshin-Mehrabani-My-Sai-My-Love-My-Puttaparthi.htm>



Musings on the Gita – Part 6

This multi-part series has appeared on Radio Sai since Fall 2011. Its based on Prof. G. Venkataraman very popular book on the Gita titled, *Conversation between God and man*. The Radio-Sai series is the author's further discussion on the Gita through a series of questions and answers. In part 6, the author emphasizes on the path to God through meditation and begins by delving into the depths of what is meant by meditation. [Read More](#)

<http://media.radiosai.org/journals/vol_11/01OCT13/gita-06-by-prof-venkataraman-radiosai.htm>



The Ganesha Principle as I have Seen and Witnessed

A familiar face in Prasanthi Nilayam, Mr. Veda Narayan has been leading the Vedic Chants in the Prasanthi Mandir since the inception of this practice in 2004. He has also taught Sanskrit in the Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School for nearly three decades now. In this article Mr. Veda Narayan discourses on Swami's fondness for the Ganesha form. [Read More](#)

<http://media.radiosai.org/journals/Archives/article_archive_201

Radio Sai Photography Contest

At the beginning of the year Radio Sai launched a unique photo contest for three categories: Mother, Prayer, and Stillness. The categories are a reflection of important characteristics of spirituality. The outcome is simply phenomenal. The picture on the right is the winner for the Prayer category. [Visit](#) the site to view the wonderous works of pure love.

<http://media.radiosai.org/journals/vol_11/01NOV13/photography-contest.htm>



Eternal Day – Short Documentary on Sri Sathya Sai Super Speciality Hospital

Commemorating the occasion of the 22nd anniversary of this miraculous hospital is a 23 minute video illustrating a typical day at Bhagawan's temple of healing. [View Here](#)

<http://media.radiosai.org/journals/vol_11/01NOV13/ETERNAL-DAY-Short-Documentary-on-SRI-SATHYA-SAI-SUPER-SPECIALITY-HOSPITAL.htm>

Guidelines for Contributions

The objective of this Newsletter is to encourage Sai devotees and their families to understand Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings and His emphasis on transformation. Through your participation, we can share in the process of putting His teachings into practice and realise not only our inner divinity, but the divinity in our fellow beings and the Oneness of all.

Thus, we become Swami's instruments in living the message of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence where ever we are. Articles may include, personal experiences, reports on Sai retreats, workshops, special events such as guest speakers, book reviews, service activities, children's stories and most importantly, stories of transformation. Devotees skilled in art work, photography and graphic design may also contribute. Cartoons are an excellent way of delivering Swami's message visually.

General guidelines: Please communicate by e-mail your own story ideas, or thoughts about what would make this Digital newsletter more interesting for you and all our Sai Brothers and Sisters everywhere. Articles should not exceed 2-1/2 typewritten pages or 900 words. Please include your name, age (for children), gender, email address, phone # and references for all quotes. An MS Word file, emailed to the editor, is preferred. Send relevant high-resolution pictures in jpeg format. EDITOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SELECT & EDIT THE MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION.

Deadline for Winter Issue February 14, 2014

