

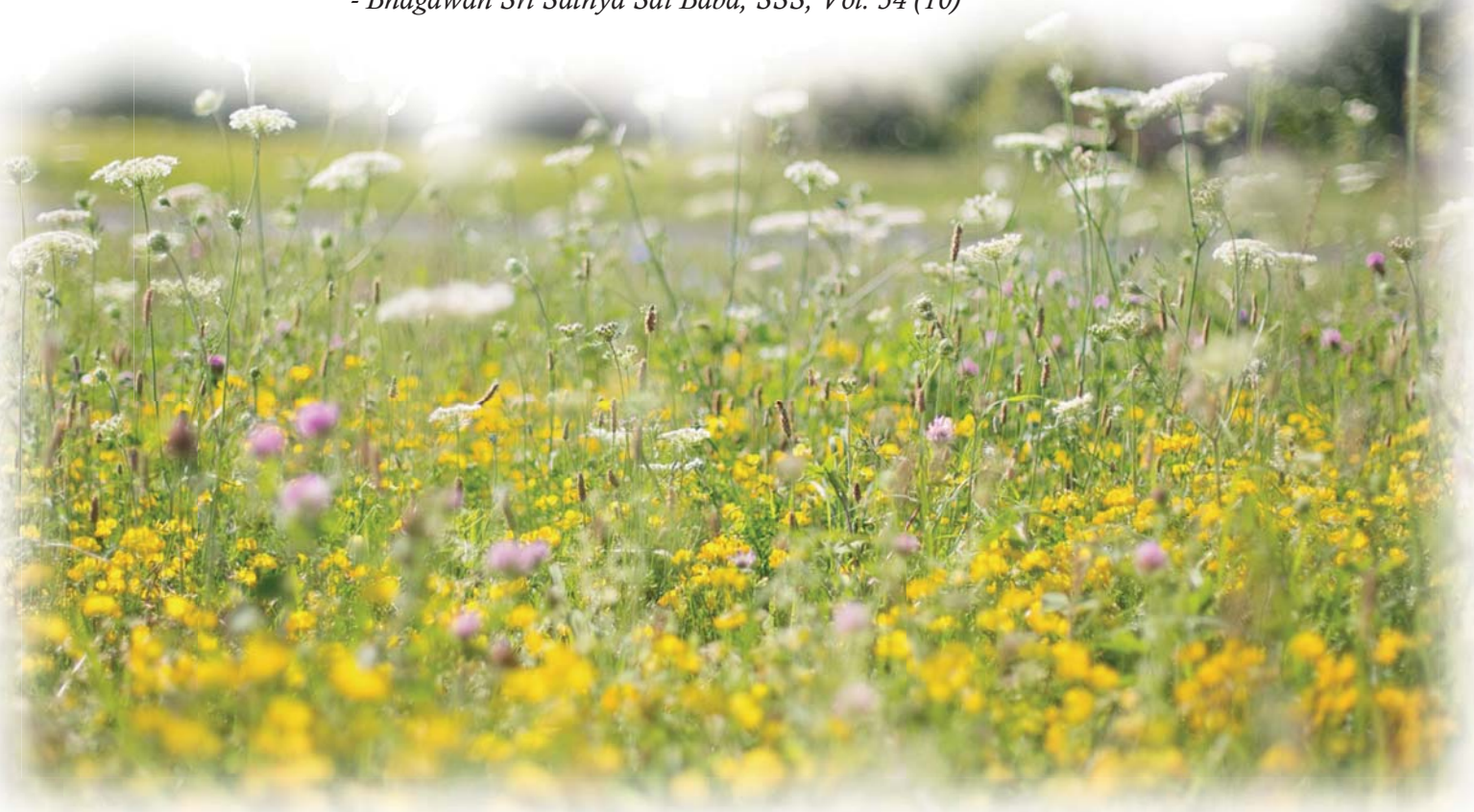
S U M M E R - F A L L 2 0 1 5

The Canadian

Sathya Sai Newsletter

You are the embodiment of love. Do not develop attachment to the body. Body is bound to perish one day or the other. Why are you deluding yourselves with this impermanent body? That which is permanent is the Atma. In order to experience Atmic bliss, love is essential. If you cultivate love, you become divine. Do not think that God is different from you. Have the courage to say "I am God". You are not man. You are God. Have the firm belief that you are God. You must first love your parents.

- Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, SSS, Vol. 34 (10)



The Canadian Sathya Sai Newsletter

Sathya Sai
International
Organization (SSIO)
Canada
www.sathyasai.ca

The Sathya Sai
International
Organization (SSIO)
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
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SAI'S MESSAGE

“Cultivate Love And Become Divine”

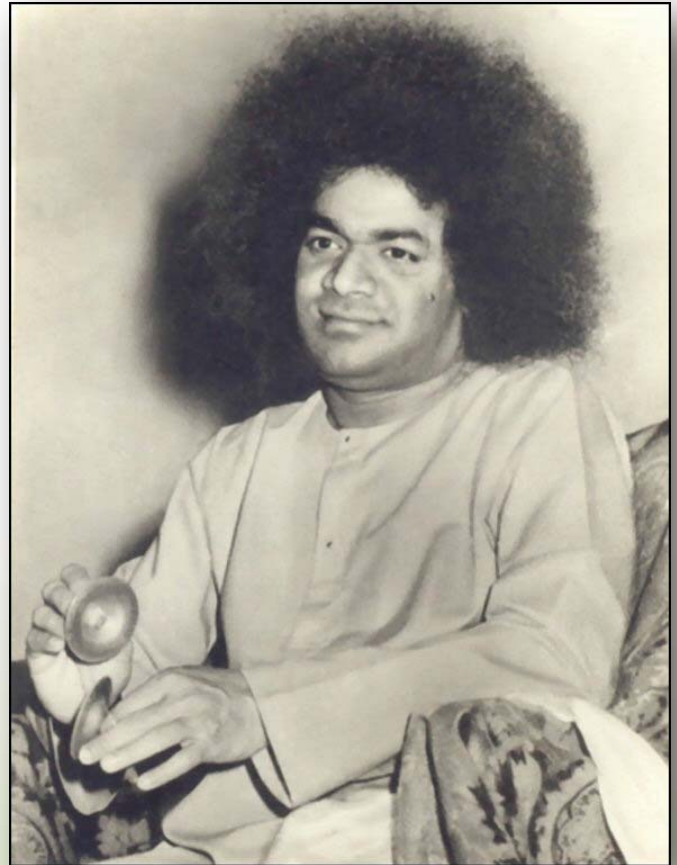
*Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 34, Chap. 10
Dharmakshetra, Mumbai
1 June, 2001*

Embodiments of Love!

THE All India President of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, Srinivasan, spoke about the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man. But he did not speak about motherhood of the mother. (cheers). In this creation all are born to a mother, however great they may be or whatever they might have achieved. The mother's womb is like *Bhumatha* (mother earth). The quality of the fruit will be the same as the quality of the seed sown in the earth.

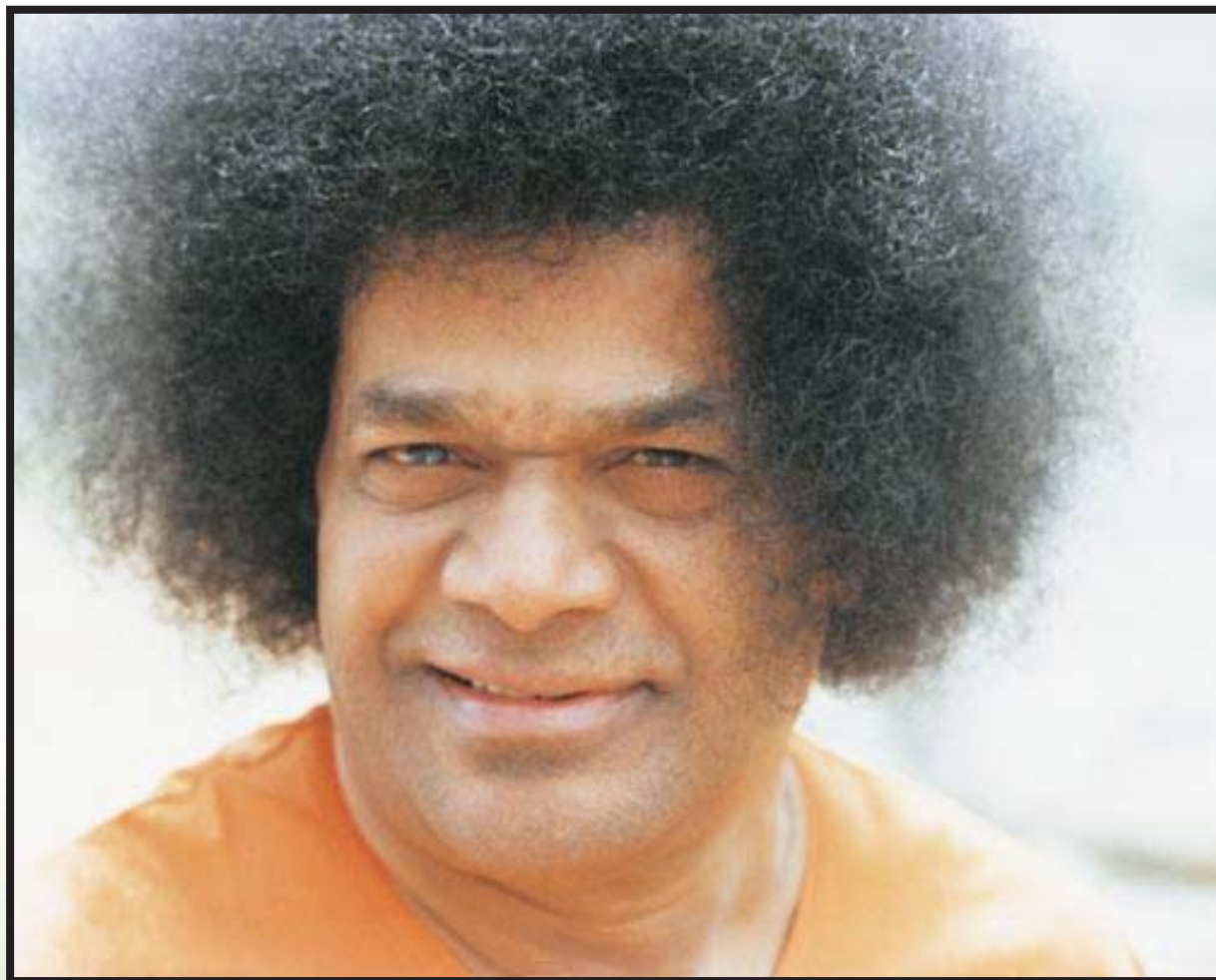
Revere The Mother As God

In today's world, people lack purity and sacrifice. What is the reason? It is the lack of purity of the mother's womb. If the mother's womb is pure, the children born to her will also be pure. If there is peace in the mother's heart, the whole world will be peaceful. So, first and foremost, we need women of purity in this world. It is because of such pure women that *Bharat* became a *Thyaga Bhumi* (land of sacrifice), a *Yoga Bhumi* (land of spiritually) and a *Karma Bhumi* (land of action) and could set an example to the rest of the world. People say motherland and not fatherland. In every



country, the mother is held in high esteem. The feeling of motherhood is far superior to all other feelings. The main flaw of today's children is that they are not concerned about the happiness and satisfaction of their parents. If you make your parents happy, the whole world will be happy. *Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava* (revere the mother and father as God). You must understand that parents are verily God.

You have to make your mother happy. Only then will there be peace and happiness in the



world. It is meaningless to worship God without revering one's own parents. First of all, offer worship to your mother as she is the one who has given you birth. Only if the mother's heart is nectarous will the whole world be nectarous. Rama's Divinity blossomed under the loving care of Kausalya. As He was born from the womb of Kausalya, He got the qualities of Kausalya. That is why He is worshipped as God. Shivaji could do so much sacrifice for the country because he was born to the pure lady, Jijabai. It is because of the nobility of the mother that the children attain good fortune. So, *Prema Swarupas!* (embodiments of love!) There is nothing beyond love. Only love is the mainspring of all your good fortune. A man without love is

lifeless. You should therefore adore and worship the mother who is the embodiment of love.

Fill Your Heart With Love And Peace

Where is peace in the world? When you do not make your mother happy, how can there be peace in the world? Peace cannot be bought in the bazaar. Every man's heart is the abode of peace. Only when you fill your heart with love will there be peace in the world. The world is in turmoil today as man lacks total love. Peace will reign supreme in this world only when man develops total love.

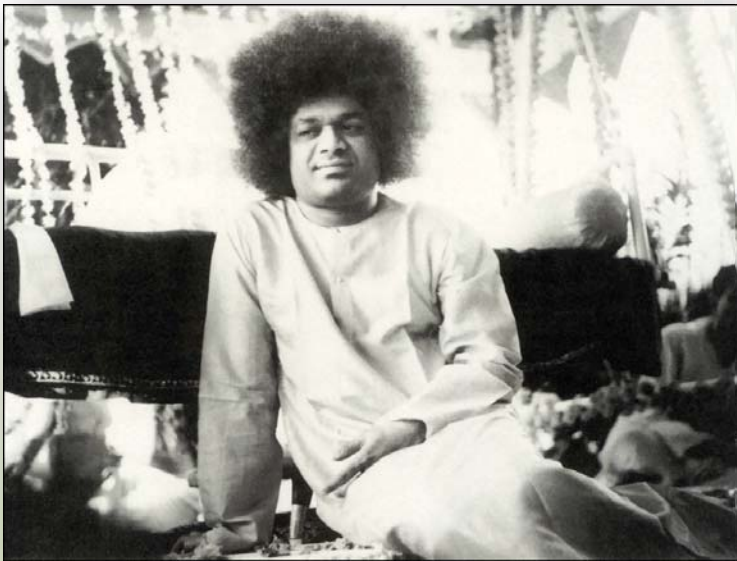
Embodiments of Love!

We have attained human birth. There is

nothing greater than this. *Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham* (out of all the living beings, the human birth is the rarest). You are born and brought up in society. Then why do you not work for the welfare of society? All the wealth that you have earned has come from society. You should show your gratitude to society. The world is facing problems because man does not show gratitude to society. You should never neglect society. Society's well-being is your well-being too. But, is anybody looking for the welfare of society? No. It is selfishness

heart with love. Whatever work you do, do it with total love. But now, wherever you go, there is only selfishness. Man has lost purity as his mind is polluted.

The food you eat is impure. The air you breathe is impure. Everything is impure. Then how can you escape disease? If you do not want disease, eat pure food, breathe pure air, drink pure water and be pure. But wherever one looks around, there is only impurity. When you are surrounded by impurity, how

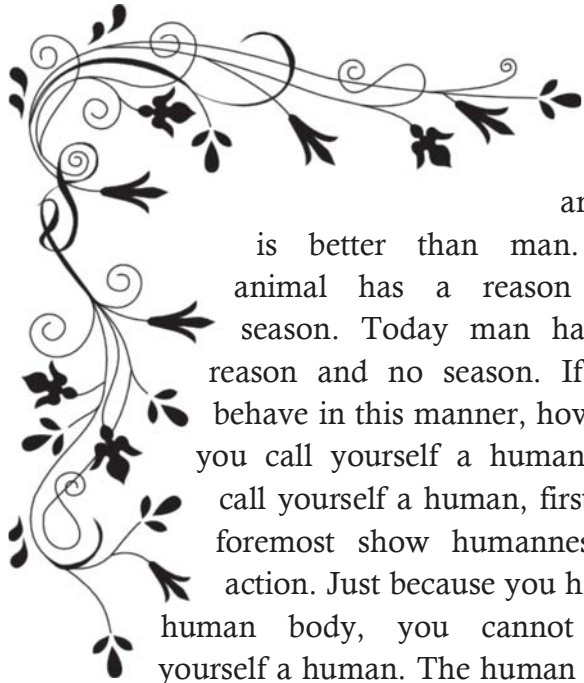


In order to Experience Atmic Bliss, Love is Essential.

all around. Give up selfishness and work for the welfare of society. The world will enjoy peace and security only when you serve society and have devotion towards God. If you want that peace should reign in the world, then you should first develop peace in yourself. Where is peace? It comes only from our heart. Our heart is the source of peace, truth, righteousness and love. You have forgotten the heart and are searching for peace in the external world. You don't get peace in the bazaar, you get only pieces. Peace is only in your heart. Fill your

can you get purity? When purity manifests from within, you can experience its reflection, reaction and resound in the external world. First and foremost, you have to infuse purity in society. To whomsoever you speak, speak sweetly, not with hatred, anger and jealousy. First you have to learn this. *You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly.* Speak with love.

From head to foot, man is filled with anger today. He has become like an animal. Even an



animal is better than man. An animal has a reason and season. Today man has no reason and no season. If you behave in this manner, how can you call yourself a human? To call yourself a human, first and foremost show humanness in action. Just because you have a human body, you cannot call yourself a human. The human body will have value only when you cultivate human values, namely, *sathya* (truth), *dharma* (righteousness), *santhi* (peace), *prema* (love) and *ahimsa* (non-violence). Of what use is human birth if human values are absent? First demonstrate humanness. Develop love. By doing so, all will become your friends. What kind of friends? Those who are full of love. Your real friend is only God. God is love personified. He is full of love.

“Poornamada Poornamidam Poornat Poornamudachyate Poornasya Poornamadaya Poornameva Avashishyate.”

(That is full, this is full. When full is taken out of the full, what remains is again full.)

God is the embodiment of love. If you want God, you should have total love for God. You should not love God for material benefits. Love Him for the sake of love. Only then can you attain Him.

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

The same *Atma*, the same love and the same

God is present in all beings. *Ek Prabhu Ke Anek Naam* (one God has many names). With such feelings of oneness, develop love for God. Then your heart will also be filled with love. The heart is like a tank and all the senses are like taps. When the ‘tank’ is full of love, all that comes out of the ‘taps’ will also be love only. Whatever you see in others is only a reflection of your inner being. First of all, understand this truth. If you see evil in others, it is actually the reflection of your own evil feelings. All are one. That is *Prema*, that is God, that is *Atma*. That is everything.

Earn The Wealth Of Merit

You have forgotten love and are hankering after all worldly things. Wherever you go it is only money, money, money. Money comes and goes but morality comes and grows. Everyone is interested in amassing wealth. But will the wealth accompany you when you leave this world? No. Only the results of your actions will go with you. Wealth is not going to protect you. Only the wealth of merit will protect you. *Paropakaraya Punyaya, Papaya Parapeedanam*, (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them). Earn the wealth of merit. Do not accumulate sin. Alexander ruled over a vast empire, but when he died what did he carry with him? He went empty-handed. You should carry with you only pure love when you leave this world. If you earn the wealth of pure love, you are the richest person in the world. He who has much satisfaction is the richest man in this world and he who has many desires is the poorest man in this world. Today man is filled with desires from top to toe. As long as you have desires, you will never be happy and peaceful.

Embodiments of Love!

Give up desires and see for yourself how much love and bliss you get. The bliss you experience will be far superior to all the happiness you have experienced before. All the bliss is within you. But you are imagining that it is outside. What is outside is only the reflection, reaction, and resound of what is within you. If you are a good person, you will see goodness all around. If you wear blue glasses, you see everything blue. If you wear red glasses, you see everything red. Good qualities are your greatest wealth. Cultivate them. Eschew hatred. Demonstrate *Ahimsa*. *Ahimsa Paramo Dharma* (*Ahimsa* is the greatest *dharma*). Kill anger. Cultivate love. There is nothing sweeter than love.

Man Is The Embodiment Of Cosmic Form

Sage Narada went all over the world but could not get peace. He realised that peace could not be found in wealth and material objects. It is within one's own self. Peace and bliss are within, but man is unable to experience them. How can man, who is unable to understand the divinity within, experience God outside? Everything is within you. Man is *Viswa Virat Swarupa* (embodiment of the Cosmic Form) but he is behaving like an ordinary person by developing attachment to the ephemeral body.

Embodiments of Love!

Give up body attachment. Cultivate the awareness of the Atma. Atmananda (bliss of the spirit) is Amritananda (the eternal bliss). That



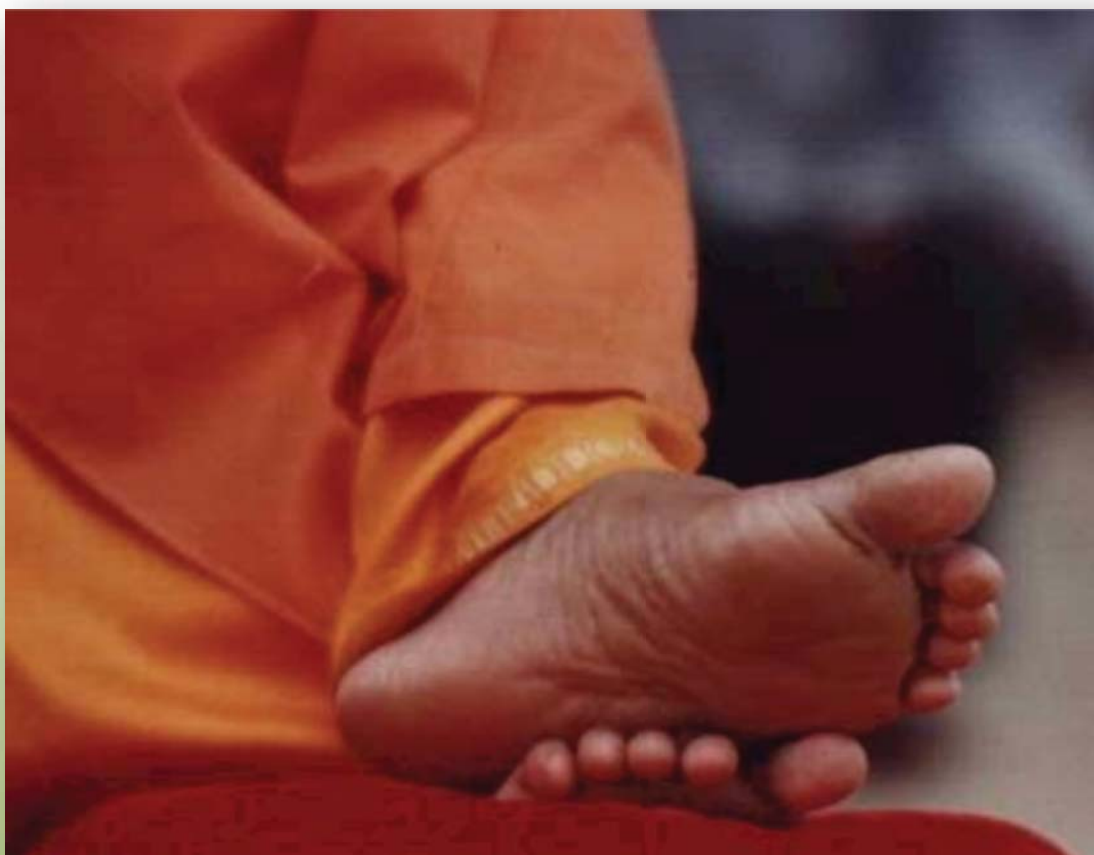
is within you. *Brahmanandam, Parama sukhadam, Kevalam Jnana-murtim, Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibutam, Bhavateetam, Tri-gunarahitam* (God is the embodiment of supreme bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the *Mahavakya 'Tattwamasi'*, the eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three Gunas of *Sattwa, Rajas* and *Thamas*). Everything is within. All qualities are within you. So, you should try to bring out the love that is within you. You will not get this love outside.

You are the embodiment of love. Do not develop attachment to the body. Body is bound to perish one day or the other. Why are you

deluding yourselves with this impermanent body? That which is permanent is the *Atma*. In order to experience *Atmic* bliss, love is essential. If you cultivate love, you become divine. Do not think that God is different from you. Have the courage to say "I am God". You are not man. You are God. Have the firm belief that you are God. You must first love your parents. They have given you their blood, their wealth and have brought you up with love and care, taking great pains. So, be grateful to them. That is real *Bhakti* (devotion). There is no greater *Bhakti* than this.

Embodiments of Love!

Swami has just come for a short while. I have not got the complete satisfaction of coming to Mumbai. I will come again. (loud applause)
Cultivate love. Revere your parents. Make them happy. Then I will be with you always.
Live a life of love.



“Swami on Adi Śaṅkarācārya”

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

SSS 31(22)

Adi Sankara got the blessings of Mother Parvathi as a young boy of seven years while doing worship to the goddess in the absence of his father. After getting the blessings of the goddess, he achieved great distinction in mastering all the Vedas and scriptures within a short period.

SSS19(1)

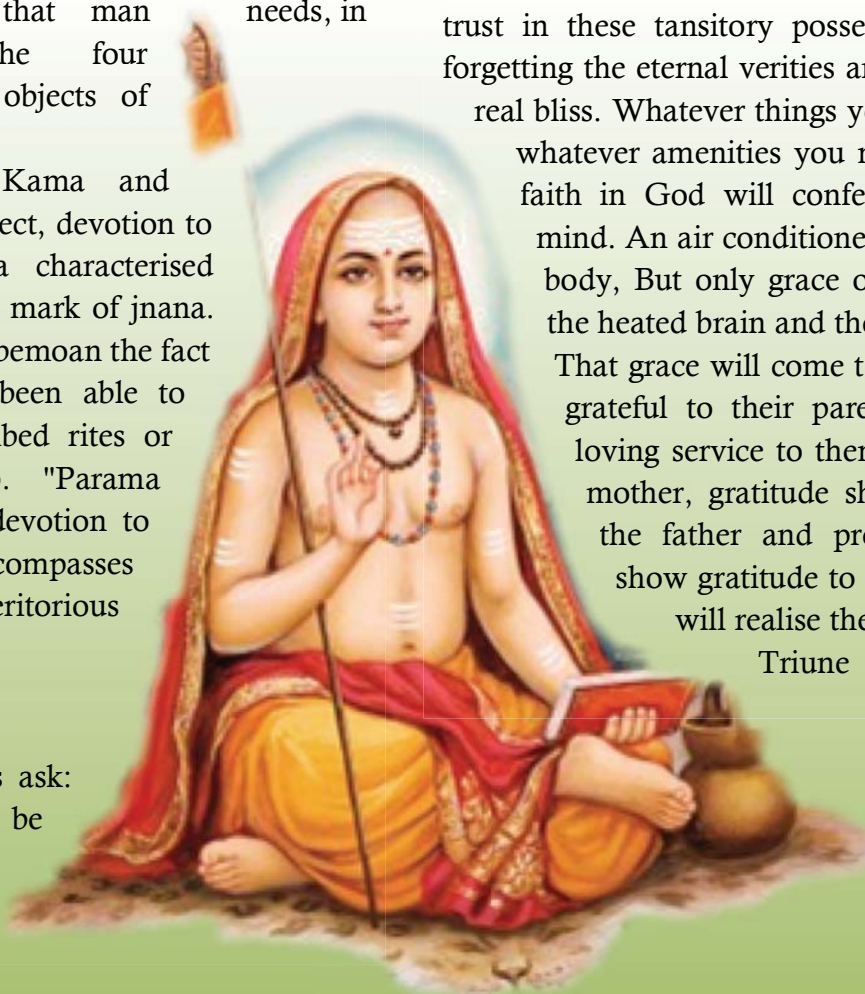
Bhakti indicates that man needs, in addition to the four Purusharthas (the objects of life--

Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha)--a fifth object, devotion to God. Adi Sankara characterised this devotion as the mark of jnana. There is no need to bemoan the fact that one has not been able to perform the prescribed rites or forms of worship. "Parama Bhakti" (Supreme devotion to the Divine) encompasses within itself all meritorious qualities.

SSS20(10)

Students these days ask: "why should we be grateful to our parents?" They

should remember that if they cause distress to their parents now by their behaviour, they should not be surprised if in the later years their own children cause similar distress. This is the law of action and reaction that is always at work. Do not get conceited because of your youth, your wealth or strength. All these are transient. Adi Sankaracharya warned in strident language: "Do not get proud because of companions, wealth or youth. Time will take away these in a moment. Placing their trust in these tansitory possessions men are forgetting the eternal verities and the source of real bliss. Whatever things you may possess, whatever amenities you may enjoy, only faith in God will confer real peace of mind. An air conditioner may cool your body, But only grace of God can cool the heated brain and the troubled heart. That grace will come to those who are grateful to their parents and render loving service to them. Starting with mother, gratitude should extend to the father and preceptor. If you show gratitude to these three, you will realise the presence of the Triune Lord in them





Adi Shankara with Disciples,
by Raja Ravi Varma (1904)

and you will reap the fruit of worshipping the Trinity (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva).

SSS 20(22)

Once a devotee approached me with a question regarding Adi Sankara's statement: "Brahma Sathyam Jaganmithya" (Brahman alone is true; the world is a deception). The devotee wanted to know how the world that was so real to him and in which he had all his experiences could be called Mithya (delusion). He asked me: "Swami! There is the pronouncement 'Brahma Sathyam Jaganmithya' I want to know what is real and what is unreal?" I told him: "Leave Brahman to Brahman and the world of delusion to itself. First of all try to find the truth about yourself. Why bother about Brahman and jagat when you do, not know

what you are. Find out whether you are real or not. You are real unto the moment of death. You need not go as far as that. Just consider what happens when you are fast asleep. In that state, are you real or unreal? You are not aware of your existence in sleep. In that state, are you real or unreal? You are not aware whether you are alive or dead. It is neither real nor unreal. Mithya applies to this state of Sat-Asat (Real-Unreal). When you know yourself and recognise the Mithya that you are, you will view the Jagat as Mithya (a myth)."

SSS 23(17)

A historic debate Adi Sankaracharya, during his victorious philosophical travels through Bharat met Sri Mandana Misra and had a debate with him on Medha Sakti (intellectual ability). Both of them agreed on Ubhaya Bharati, a high-souled scholar, pure-hearted and utterly selfless, as one most competent to decide who was the victor in the debate. Ubhaya Bharati was none other than the wife of Mandana Misra. The choice was unique in many respects. That Sankaracharya was willing to have as judge in the debate his opponent's wife was remarkable. It was the greatest testimony to his faith in the utter impartiality of Ubhaya Bharati. Sankaracharya knew that the discriminating power of the Buddhi (intelligence) was superior to the intellectual ability of the Medhas. Students should understand the power of the Buddhi. It is not Buddhi as commonly understood—mere intellectual ability. It is intelligence in which Rita and Sathya are combined with Aasakthi (zeal) and Sthiratvam (steadfastness). Ubhaya Bharati was endowed with such intelligence. Buddhi includes Yoga and Mahat-Tatwa also, which have a purifying influence on the

Vidyashankara (Adi Shankara) Temple
at Shringeri, India



Buddhi. Buddhi is, thus, not only the capacity to think. Nor is it only the power of deliberation or the discriminating faculty. Beyond all these, it is the power of deep enquiry and judgement. Endowed with this capacity, Ubhaya Bharati decided in favour of Sankaracharya and against her husband. She declared that Sankaracharya had the better of the argument in the debate. This decision is based on Sathya and Ritam. Sankaracharya was extremely pleased with Ubhaya Bharati's verdict. Ubhaya Bharati then declared that in accordance with the understanding between the two disputants before the debate started, Mandana Misra, as the vanquished, should take to Sanyasa and become a disciple of Sankaracharya. At the same time, as the devoted wife of Mandana Misra, acting upto the ideals of Indian womanhood, according to which the wife should follow the husband in weal and woe, Ubhaya Bharati decided to become a Sanyasini herself.

Although she was under no obligation to adopt

a monastic life, she decided to do so to set an example to the world. After that, she established an ashram in which she wanted to show to the arrogant scholars, who relied on mere intellectual acumen, that it was inferior to the intelligence that was associated with Sathya and Rita.

One day when she was going to the river for a bath with her women disciples, she saw an ascetic, who had renounced everything in life, sleeping on the wayside, resting his head on a hollow water jug, using it as a pillow and at the same time ensuring that nobody took it away. As long as you have attachment and ego, you can never understand the Atma or experience Atmic bliss. In order to convey a lesson to the ascetic, Ubhaya Bharati spoke within his hearing the following words to one of her disciples: "Look at that ascetic, who has ostensibly renounced every kind of attachment. But he has not given up his attachment to his water jug!" On hearing these words, the ascetic got enraged. He thought: "Is a mere woman entitled to teach me how I should behave?" While Ubhaya Bharati was returning from the river, the ascetic threw the jug at her feet and said: "Now, see what my renunciation is?" Ubhaya Bharati remarked: "Alas! You are not only filled with Abhimana (attachment) but you are also filled with Ahamkara (ego)." On hearing these words, the ascetic ran upto her, fell at her feet and pleaded for forgiveness of his faults.

SSS 23(27)

This growth of desires was described by Adi

Sankara as "trishna" (thirst). Drinking water quenches thirst for a time, but the thirst arises again. Likewise as long as life lasts, the thirst (for material pleasures) lasts, though it may be quenched from time to time. This thirst is a strong kind of fetters. Its strength does not diminish, but grows from day to day. Iron chains will rust in course of time but the chains of desire grow stronger every day. Therefore, Sankara declared: "The desire for more and more wealth is dangerous. Cultivate the good sense to give up your desires. Wealth is the result of past deeds. Therefore be content with

SSS 24(18)

Here is an illustration from the life of Adi Sankaracharya. When Sankaracharya was in Kasi (Varanasi), at the approach of an untouchable, he said: "You fellow! keep away, keep away!" The other man asked: "Whom do you want to keep away from you? Is it the body? The body is inert. What right has your inert body to ask my inert body to keep away from it? Both are inert. How can one inert object talk to another? Or, is it the case that you want the Atma in me to keep away from you? The Atma in me is the same as the Atma

***Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam,
Govindarn Bhaja Moodha Mathey,
Sampraapthe Sannihithe Kaale,
Nahi, Nahi Rakshathi Dhhukrun Karane***

“Your studies will not come to your rescue in the end, so chant the name of Govinda,” said Adi Shankara. God is the only refuge, and only He can come to your rescue in the end. So develop faith in God. He is the only Savior.

what you have." (Swami recited a Telugu poem). The Vedas have taught that immortality can be attained only through sacrifice and not through rituals, progeny or wealth. Great men who have made supreme sacrifices and taught to mankind thyaga (sacrifice) itself as yoga have been born in Bharat time and again over many yugas (aeons).

in you. What is it that you want to go away from you?" There was an argument between the two over the body and the Atma at the end of which Sankaracharya realised that the person who had recognised the Atma principle could be none other than the Lord Himself and prostrated before the man in front of him. At that moment Siva revealed Himself and told Sankaracharya-"It is to remove from your mind your mistaken notions that I had assumed the form of the untouchable."

SSS 31(14)

Adi Sankara was propagating Advaita Jnana (wisdom of nonduality) all through famous Bhaja Govindam verses. He said mere scholarship will not come to one's rescue at the time of death. One has to pray and worship God in order to get released from the bondage of birth and death. Devotion based on Prema Thathwa (Principal of Love) is essential for the emancipation of every human being. Advaita (Nonduality) is to see unity in diversity. [Swami held a silver tumbler in His hand.]

This is a silver tumbler. The silver in this will be retained even after it is melted and made into a plate. The forms vary but silver is constant.

SSS 31(28)

In this world, you may have many friends. But all of them can only say, "Hello, How are you, goodbye," nothing more! God is not like that. He is always with you, in you, around you, above you, and below you. Since man is distancing himself from God, who is the True and Eternal friend, he is subject to sorrow. Today, man is after money and power and does not think of God. How long do money and power last? They come and go. That's what Sankaracharya said, "Maa kuru dhana Jana yavvana garvam, harathi nimeshaat, kaalah sarvam," which means that money, power, and position are momentary and will not last long.

*Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam,
Govindarn Bhaja Moodha Mathey,
Sampraapthe Sannihithe Kaale,
Nahi, Nahi Rakshathi Dhhukrun Karane*

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the end, so chant the name of Govinda," said Adi Shankara. God is the only refuge, and only He can come to your rescue in the end. So develop faith in God. He is the only Savior.

SSS 31(31)

Once, Adi Sankara went to Kasi and prayed to Lord Viswanath thus, "O Lord! I have come here to redeem myself of the three sins I have committed." He had not harmed anyone; nor did he steal anything. Then why did he call himself a sinner? He explained the first sin in the following words. "It was I who declared, 'Yatho Vacho Nivartante Aprapya Manasa Sah.' Though I know that you are beyond the ken of thought and word, I tried to describe you in a string of words: Isha, Giresha, Naresha, Paresha. I have committed the sin of not practising what I preached. This is my first sin. "Though I declared that God is everywhere, I have come all the way to Kasi to have Your darshan, as if You are present only in Kasi. I have committed the sin of saying one thing and doing another. This is my second sin. "It was I who said, 'Na punyam, na papam, na sukham, na durkham,' which means there is no sin, no merit, no joy, and no sorrow. Yet, I am praying for the atonement of my sins. This is the third sin I have committed." The significance of Sankara's statement is that the disharmony of thought, word, and deed is in itself a sin. "Manasyanyath vachasyanyath karmanyanyath duratmanam," the evil one is he who does not observe the unity of thought, word, and deed. "Manasyekam vachasyekam karmanyekam mahatmanam," he is the noble one who has achieved the unity of thought, word, and deed. Every action of Sankara is a teaching to humanity. When he was returning from Kasi, he found a person who was trying

to memorise Panini's grammatical formula by constantly repeating, "Dukrun karane, dukrun karane." Sankara decided to give him a teaching. He went and asked him what benefit he would get by repeating Panini's grammar. That man said that he could become a great pandit, join the court of the king, and earn lots of money and lead a happy life. When Sankara asked him, what would happen to him after death, he said he did not know. Sankara told him, "O foolish man, understand that the body, money, and power are temporary. Attain eternal bliss, which you can enjoy even after your death."

SSS 33(20)

Adi Sankara has cautioned us about the truth of what we experience through the senses. Vagaries of the mind are many. In order to control them, Sankara introduced a practice in his ashram. The disciples would walk from one

end of the ashram to the other repeating, "Be careful! Be careful!" Once a feeling arose in Sankara's mind that he was the head of the ashram with a large income. At that moment he heard the sentinels cautioning, "Be careful! Be careful!" This alerted him and brought about a change in his feelings. Birth is a misery, old age is a misery, family is a misery, the last moments are full of sorrow, so Be careful! Be careful! (Telugu Poem)

One might consider oneself to be great. As of now, one might be enjoying name and fame. But what will happen when one is faced with misery towards the end of one's life? Sankara wondered who would come to one's rescue at the fag end of one's life. Neither mother, nor father, nor relatives nor brothers, not even wealth or possessions will come to your rescue in the last moments. Hence be careful ! (Telugu Poem)



SAI FAMILY NEWS

“Tribute to Dr. V.P. Singh, Central Coordinator, SSIO Canada”

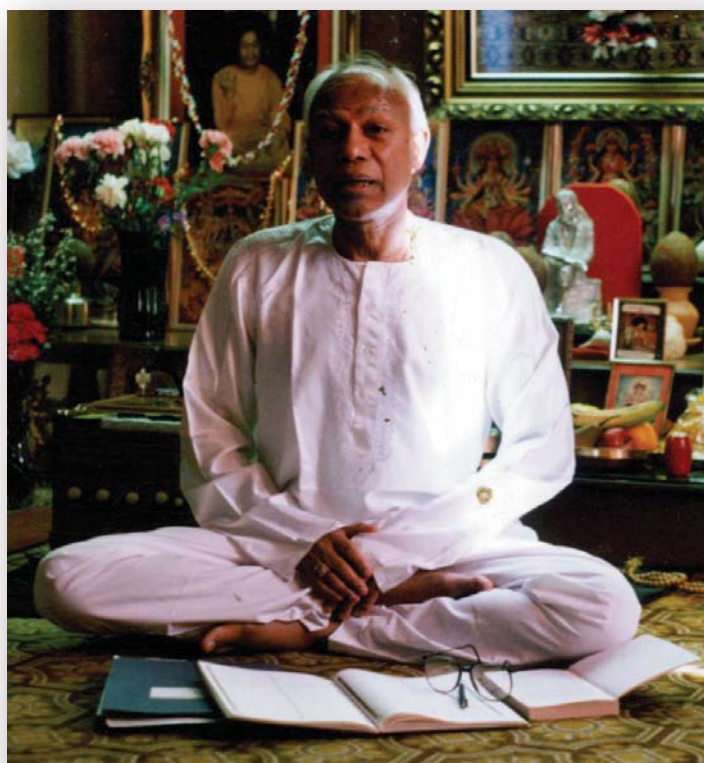
On behalf of Sathya Sai International Organization Canada, I would like to pay tribute to Dr. V.P. Singh for his selfless service to mankind. He was the embodiment of selfless love, and his life was a saga of selfless service for humanity. Dr Singh dedicated his entire life for this noble and worthy cause. The only reward that he always desired was a smile or happiness that he could see in other people's lives. In other words, he was a very humble person who solely sought happiness in serving only the people and his beloved Lord's Sai Organization. Dr. V. P. Singh worked tirelessly and selflessly for the Canadian Sai organization for the past 40 or so years.

Dr. Singh was appointed by Bhagawan as Head of Canadian Sai Organization, the First Central Coordinator, and he has had the good fortune to inaugurate the first centre in Canada at Bhagawan's directions. He travelled all over Canada searching for the first devotees who were ready to begin the holy work of spreading Bhagawan's message to the world. Dr. Singh has also written a book entitled Sathya Sai Education in Human Values.

Under Bhagawan's direct supervision and direct communication about the Sathya Sai School, Canada was graced with this precious gift and the Sathya Sai School, the only one in North America was inaugurated on Sept. 02, 2000.

At this time, it is perhaps better to let Dr. Singh speak to us in his own words, an excerpt of a talk he gave during one of our Council and Presidents meetings.





“Dear Devotees, We are so fortunate to be on the planet during this incarnation of the Avatar. We are especially blessed to be among those who are not only living at the same time as He, but are also aware of His Presence. He has offered us the blessings of knowledge of His Mission, and is giving us the wonderful opportunity to visit and observe Him as He walks among us.

I have had the rare good fortune of getting over 100 interviews over the last 35 years. Since I have enjoyed this closeness with the Avatar of the Age, it is therefore incumbent upon me to share with you the blessings which He has showered on me but mostly I must show that His teachings can become a guiding light in my life for all to see. There are countless ways in which Bhagawan reveals His love for us all. Therefore, dear devotees, let us take note that His Love can be

earned by One pointed Devotion, implicit Faith in Bhagawan and total Surrender. Bhagawan has made the impossible possible many times in my lifetime.

Dear Devotees, Bhagawan loves us dearly. His love for His devotees is immeasurable. We must have complete faith in our Lord. We must completely surrender to Him and we must make every effort to love everyone as Bhagawan loves us and to serve everyone as Bhagawan serves us. Then only can we make Him happy by practicing His maxim: “Your Life is My Message”.

The message, which I wish to convey, is not by any means original, it is one that Bhagawan has been continuously repeating for our benefit and enlightenment. This message is very significant for developing Unity, Purity and Divinity. The message is to practice Love, Forbearance and Truth in order to achieve our goal. If we really Love, and if we practice Truth and Forbearance, Unity will automatically evolve, Purity will grow and Divinity will be realized as a natural consequence.

At this point I would like to remind ourselves of the Mahamantra which Bhagawan has given to the world by quoting the entire Vedas in only three short phrases: “Love God, Fear Sin and Practice Morality in day to day living”. Bhagawan has also summarized all of the 18 Puranas in the following words:” Help Ever, Hurt Never”.

“Community Outreach Initiatives”

**Mohana Thirukesan and Seema Poddar,
Community Outreach Coordinators,
SSIO (Canada)**

Aum Sri Sai Ram,

The Sai Organization is in a transition phase. Now that Swami has re-assumed His formless form, current and new devotees will be looking to the Sai Organization worldwide to serve as a link to its Founder's message and teachings.

With this in mind, there were some attempts in the past few years to host public meetings to make the local communities in Canada aware of the great work that Swami accomplished while He walked among us in human form. We are attempting to revisit the idea of how the Sai Organization can connect with our local communities by ensuring that there is a Community Outreach focus within each of the streams of the organization. After the initial brainstorming session with Organisation leads, senior members and youths in September 2013 and following subsequent group meetings in 2014, the following initial framework was established.

1. Vision/Mission:

Our long-term goal, by the year 2020, is to create an awareness of Sri Sathya Sai Baba and His teachings amongst 80% of Canadians. The primary vehicle to achieve this goal will be each Devotee across the nation through their conduct in their personal, academic or

professional settings. In tandem, we hope to set-up a norm in the planning of all activities and programs conducted by the Sai Organization where all National Coordinators, Regional Presidents and Centre Presidents will keep the Community at large in mind as either co-participants or co-beneficiaries.

2. Roadmap:

To achieve this goal, the 3 primary wings of the Organisation have been designated as 3 streams with short and long term goals for each.

Stream 1 – Devotional

The focus of the Devotional stream is on Swami's message of "Unity of Faiths". The main focus for this stream is to promote Swami's message of Unity of Faiths by ensuring that the activities of the Sai Organisation in Canada are inclusive to members from all faiths.

Since the inception of the Outreach Team last year, several centres have made efforts to have visual representation of various faiths through more prominent display of the Sarva-Dharma symbol and/or posted quotes by different faith leaders regarding messages related to the universal values of Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-Violence.

In addition, devotional songs from other faiths have been sung and faith leaders have been

invited to centres to attend or present talks on universal topics. In some cases, devotees have also traveled to participate in the prayer services and activities of other faith groups with the intention of building positive partnerships.

Stream 2 - Education:

The focus in the education stream is to educate and provide opportunities for SSE students to experience and better understand the various religions as part of the Unity of Faiths curriculum. We are also focused on promoting the 5 Universal Human Values in the community through existing outreach projects, namely the national Walk for Values, DVP classes, CISSE courses and the Sathya Sai School of Canada.

The Education Wing has developed lesson plans that incorporate these Outreach initiatives and are also insisting on the mandatory participating of all SSE students in the Walk for Values by making it an integral part of the SSE program.

The members of the Sathya Sai School's promotion team have also worked very hard to encourage devotees to generously support one of our most important National Seva projects to have a new and permanent home.

CISSE is also working tirelessly to develop/update course materials and will be running both Course 1 and Course 2 in August 2015.

Walk for Values 2015 made an important milestone towards the outreach goal. The

Walk was held in 8 cities, the Walk for Values flag was hoisted in 10 cities, and 30 cities made proclamations of a "Human Values' Day". With the Grace and Blessings of our founder, Sri Sathya Sai Baba, 'Walk for Values' became an official community partner with the 2015 PanAm Games Ignite team.

A first, and major, step towards achieving our long-term goal was taken when the Walk for Values and Community Outreach teams made presentation to the Directors and Trustees of Canada's largest public school board, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). They were very impressed by our history and the fact that Walk's objectives are in line with the priorities of the TDSB. They were also impressed that the Walk is not a one time event but a continuous process of infusing values in our daily life by having participants make a pledge for personal self-betterment. They got so enthused and felt that beside TDSB, all school boards should participate. Continuous efforts are being made to bring more awareness and participation of community members through the school boards.

Stream 3 - Service:

For the Service stream, the primary focus is for the Sai Organization to be known in our local community as a supportive, dedicated group of volunteers who can be called upon at any time there is a need in the community.

The service wing of the SSIO, Canada with the support of the Centres is engaged in many service activities across the nation in partnership with the local communities: e.g.,

Blood Donation, Park Clean-up, Food Drive, Sandwich Distribution, Food distribution both at designated locations and on the streets, Donating Medical equipment to the local hospitals (carrying Swami's message "Love All, Serve All). These are just a few examples of how the SSIO, Canada serves in our local communities. While keeping the main focus on working with the local communities we demonstrate our willingness and dedication to support these local causes.

One of the long-term focuses of this group is to perform a needs analysis and narrow down to one or two projects where SSIO, Canada can make a positive and transformational difference. Based on this very principle the H.E.R.E.O.S project was launched by the Service wing this May 2015 to promote effective conservation of electricity and thereby "Serving our Planet Earth" through a simple yet effective way. This project will continue to be the push for the year 2015 & 2016. For information please visit www.heroes.sathyasai.ca.

This year, in August 2015, the SSIO created a Public Outreach Committee. There are 4 areas of focus for this committee: Interfaith Activities, Public Meetings, Community Engagement and Walk for Values. It is such a blessing for Canadians to note that the Walk for Values, which took its first steps out of Canada's national project, the Sathya Sai School, is now being recognized as an official International outreach initiative. In Canada, we will continue with our short and long term goals, and moving forward will also take our lead from the SSIO should there be any new directives put into place.

The Community Outreach team would be happy to have more new members join their team and bring forth new ideas and energy to serve the Community at large. For more information please approach the Outreach team through your Centre and Regional Presidents.

"Love All Serve All"

“An Inter-Faith Event in Alberta”

***Walter Raedeke,
The Sathya Sai Centre of
Edmonton***

The Edmonton Sai Center received an invitation to participate in an interfaith event on June 28th, 2015 in the town of Whitecourt, Alberta which is a smaller resource-based community about 2 hours northwest of Edmonton. The event was sponsored by the Ahamadiyya Muslim Jama'at and hosted by Reverend Alwin Maben, the local United Church minister. Four speakers were invited to speak on “Freedom of Expression and Respect for Religious Sanctities”, and the Sai Centre of Edmonton was invited to present from a Hindu perspective.

When we discussed this at the Sai Centre executive meeting, we felt it was important to bring Swami's Universal message to this event. We also felt it was important to distinguish the Sathya Sai International Organization from Hinduism in general. While it is true that the majority of our membership are practicing Hindus, I felt it was important to stress the Universal nature of Swami's Teachings.

We arrived at the event with a delegation of our SSIO Vice-President, our Regional President, our President of the Centre's Foundation Committee, our Education Coordinator and myself. Immediately we all seemed to be engaged in conversations with participants and organizers. This was perhaps



more important than the presentations, as we established a good rapport with several key people who were present.

The four presenters were given 20 minutes each and I started the presentations. The first order of business was to address the fact that the Sathya Sai International Organization is a Spiritual Organization. I described my experiences of first encountering Sathya Sai Baba in 1996 in Puttaparthi. It was right after the New Year and those reading this can appreciate the enormous crowds that were present from all over the world, naturally including many Hindus, but there were also Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and others all basking in His divine love. With such limited time to present an overview of Swami's teachings, there was quick mention of the Super Specialty Hospital providing free medical treatment to the poor, Swami's school system integrating Human Values into traditional subjects, the vast network of seva



and the requirement for members to perform selfless service.

Without reproducing the entire talk, there are a few paragraphs that represent the essence of the presentation. Swami said: “I have not come to start a new religion”. He stated on many occasions that all religions are facets of the same truth. He wanted us to be a better Christian, Buddhist, Hindu or whatever faith we follow. And most importantly is that we should repeat the name of our chosen Deity at all times and in all places. This is the most important way of developing that heart to heart connection with Divinity. In this dark world this is the lamp that will illumine the way forward. Swami has assured us that if we “take one step towards God, He will take a hundred steps towards you.” Sai Baba also said that He is not teaching something new, what He taught is the same truth that has existed for ages and in every faith. The five Human Values on His emblem exist in all faiths, Love, Truth, Right Conduct, Peace and Non-Violence. ‘Is there a

belief here that does not share these Values?’

Sai Baba commonly addressed those present during His Discourses as ‘Embodiments of Love’. These values, including Love, are all inter-related and exist in every religion and 2 in spirituality. The core of religion is beyond the intellectual understanding or mad monkey mind. All theology is but road signs and directions.

We are the ones who must come to the experience of love, and “the peace that surpasses all understanding” as Jesus said. We are the ones who must rise to a heart to heart connection with the Divine with love itself. The presentation ended noting how similar Swami’s words of “Love All – Serve All”, were to the Ahamadiyya Muslim slogan of, “Love for all – Hatred to none”.

Mr. Roderick Alexis spoke next on the revival of Aboriginal spiritual traditions and sensibilities. ‘Just take what you need from Nature’, sounded so similar to Ceiling on Desires that was quite universal. Dr. Henry Victor a retired Anglican Minister and Professor of Comparative Religions spoke on the Christian perspective of inclusion, tolerance and exclusion of other beliefs in the 28,000 denominations. Salman Khalid, an engineer and Vice-President of the Ahamadiyya Muslim Society spoke on the perception of Muslims as violent. He took the audience through Koran verses used as

justification from some of the extremism in some sects of Islam. It was truly refreshing to listen to his presentation of a peaceful Islamic perspective.

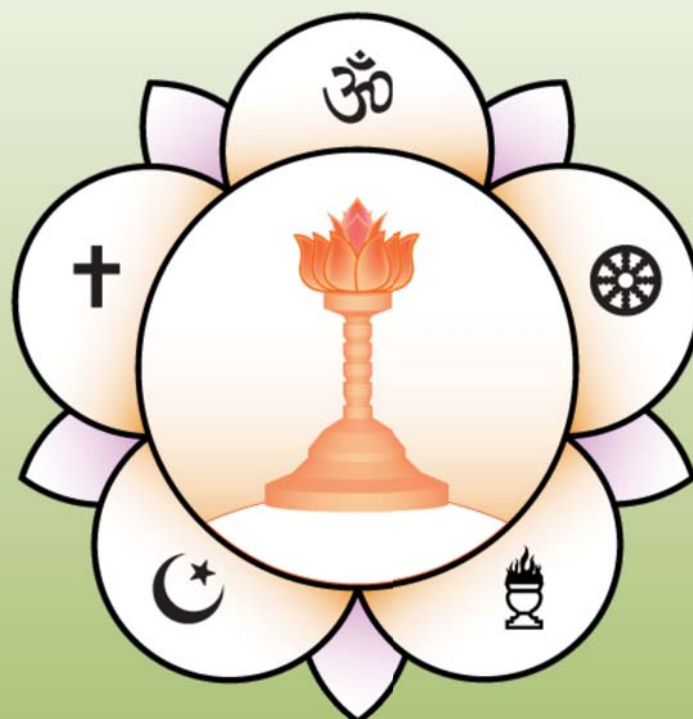
After the presentations there was an opportunity for everyone to share their thoughts during refreshments. Several members of the Ahamadiyya Muslim Jama'at expressed how similar their focus is on providing education and medical care where it is needed as a spiritual service. Mr. Khalid also added that he would have said so much more about their organization's service but the time was limited. We also spoke about the similarity of spiritually-inspired goodness in the various faiths.

One woman shared that her daughter was about to marry a Hindu man and this presentation gave her a better understanding of

how to bridge her Christianity with her future son-in-law.

The "Ceiling on Desires" reference seemed to stir one man as he talked about the fact that 40% of all food purchased in our society goes to waste. Being retired, he was quite passionate about starting a campaign to bring awareness to this abuse of resources. A few people spoke of the simplicity and clarity of the Human Values program which seemed to be their "take away".

These comments were typical of the short conversations we had with people present. We did not get into any in-depth discussions but we left feeling that we made some good connections within this gathering.



“Community Volunteer Income Tax Program”

***Mathulan Mangalamoorthy,
The Sathya Sai Centre of
Edmonton***

The Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Edmonton participated in a Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) for the 2015 tax season. The program encompassed preparing and filing income tax returns for low-income individuals and families in the Edmonton community. In the first year of participation in the program the Centre of Edmonton prepared and filed over twenty tax returns. This was possible with the help of six dedicated volunteers who attended training workshops and attended every Saturday throughout the tax-filing season (March to May) to help those in need in the community.

The volunteers at the Sai Baba Centre of Edmonton had a profound experience with this new initiative. One of the volunteers, Arathi Unnikrishnan an Accounting major at the University of Alberta described this as her very first experience engaging in a seva activity directly correlating to her field of study. She described the opportunity as “an incredible experience” as it combined her desire to serve with her academic path of choice. The CVITP program

was an experience that helped her see that opportunities for seva are readily available if one is willing to explore one’s options.

During this experience, the volunteers encountered a variety of individuals from all over the world with unique circumstances. The participants of the program were appreciative of the work done by the volunteers of the Sai Centre. This year, the program assisted primarily new comers to Canada who did not have the support network that they could approach for assistance. The Sai volunteers were able to serve that need to the members of the Edmonton community and volunteers went beyond the basic requirement of them. They listened with interest as their clients shared their experiences with immigration to Canada and their challenges in settling into the Edmonton community. The program was a success due to word of mouth referrals, flyers in the Sai Centre, and regular announcements at Satsangs. Other charitable

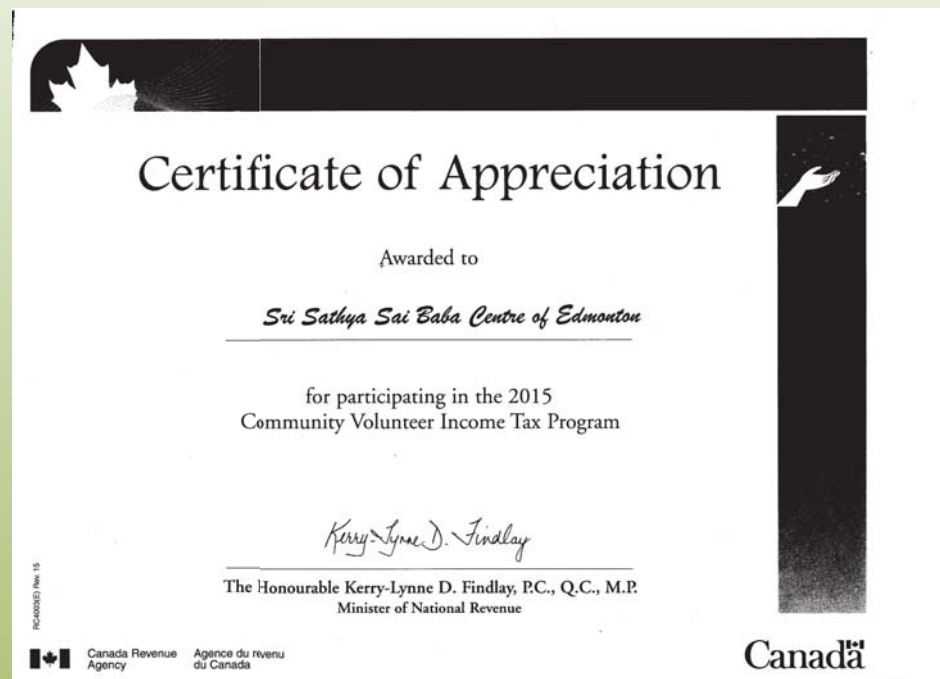


organizations that were not able to conduct the clinics themselves referred individuals to The Sai Baba Centre of Edmonton. The love and compassion showed by the volunteers made the participants feel part of the Sai Family and many of the participants left personal thank you messages such as:

Many thanks for your time today and it was a great help from your team today otherwise it was not possible for us to fill the tax return papers.

May God bless you

The volunteers from the Sai Centre have been recognized by the Honorable Kerry-Lynne Findlay, Minister of National Revenue for their commitment and dedication in helping to make a difference in the Edmonton community. With the grace of our beloved Swami, the program is poised to be even larger and will reach out to more in need in the community in the coming year.



“Bust a Move”

*Eswari Selvaraj,
The Sathya Sai Centre of
Saskatoon*

This Year SSSB Center of Saskatoon had the unique opportunity to participate in “Bust a Move” Service activity conducted by the Saskatchewan Health Region.

Foundation for a Healthy Saskatchewan ‘Bust a Move’ for Breast Health is an upbeat, entertaining, energizing, pledge-based event, like no other in Canada. Bust a Move for Breast Health (BaM) is more than a cause, more than a fundraiser, more than a one-day fitness extravaganza. It’s a movement! Imagine a cause that brings hundreds of people together in support of the same goal: breast health. Imagine an event that is emotionally uplifting, personally rewarding and distinctly unique.

Bust a Move is a unique event because it focuses on educating people on the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and motivating them to make wellness a significant part of their daily routine. The relationship between physical activity and breast cancer incidence has been extensively studied.. The Royal University Hospital Foundation and the Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation invited volunteers to be part of Bust a Move to get Saskatoon active and help increase the overall wellness of people in our province.

Royal University Hospital Foundation and Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation are working together to advance breast health in



Saskatchewan. Funds raised by Bust a Move Saskatoon will support the Breast Health Centre at Saskatoon City Hospital and fund molecular imaging research to aid advanced cancer care for patients at Royal University Hospital.

- See more at: <http://bamsaskatoon.kintera.org>

Bust A Move volunteers are the true movers and shakers behind the scenes. Four volunteers from our centre volunteered the whole day as assigned by the Health Region and assisted in caring for the participant’s belongings as they arrived to register. The organisation raised about \$200 K through the event for the breast health research. Hundreds of helping hands are required for an event of this magnitude, so rally a pack of peeps together and register on April 18, 2015.

“Watch Our Circle Grow: Human Values: The Heart of Dynamic Parenting – Saskatoon Experiences and Lessons”

***Dynamic Parenting Facilitators,
The Sathya Sai Centre of Saskatoon
Dynamic Value Parenting, Canadian
Institute of Sathya Sai Education***

When thinking of *Human Values: The Heart of Dynamic Parenting*, we can't help but remember the lyrics to the English song, "Love, love, love. Watch our circle grow." The *Human Values: The Heart of Dynamic Parenting* ("DP") Program has brought these lyrics to life. As facilitators, we are constantly learning from DP participants and discussions, loving our roles, and we watch that Sathya Sai Baba's DP Program touching so many lives in the community with its nectar of LOVE.

Coordinator for Canada) deliver additional workshops for all members of Sathya Sai Baba Centre.

Under the umbrella of Canadian Sathya Sai Education (CISSE) which became responsible for Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) and Dynamic Parenting (DP) programs, we have been reaching out to community schools and organizations in Saskatoon with the DP Program. Our first partner in expanding the reach of DP was Pleasant Hill School, a community school in Saskatoon with mostly First Nations children. At this school, Mrs. Kumudini Lakshman has been volunteering and sharing "SSEHV" as a volunteer at the school for over 12 years as a part of their culture classes. Her work was well received and the school deeply respects her

***The home and the family is the basic social institution
everywhere in the world. When the home improves, the whole
world will be better.***

~ Sathya Sai Baba, Nov 19, 1996

By way of background, the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Saskatoon started the DP workshops for its members in 2002 with G. Lakshman and R. Ranganathan taking the DP facilitator training given by Mr. T.R. Pillay and Dr. T.V. Kumar in Edmonton. In addition, we were fortunate in Saskatoon for having Dr. Pal Dhall, Dr. Tehseen Dhall (originators of the DP Program) and Mr. Dev Taneja (DP

work. Based on this link, a DP presentation was made to the Pleasant Hill School Parent Council. The Council approved the 15-week DP Program and widely advertised it to the school community. Classes were scheduled once a week for 1.5 hours. Each class started with coffee and donuts.

One initial observation was that attendance numbers were not steady from week to week. The fluctuating attendance could be attributed to the difficulty in working parents' schedules and babysitting needs. There was a consensus among those who did attend that they enjoyed the course. After talking with the parents and the school, it was decided to advertise a 1-day DP workshop to accommodate the schedules of the parents. It was advertised that free lunch and babysitting services would be provided to all attendees. In total, 5 students registered and they all attended with interest. Mrs. Anshu Gupta joined with other facilitators for the workshop. A First Nations Business Coordinator opened the workshop with his life story. The 1-day workshop went very well with interaction on First Nations stories and traditions. This was only made possible with the generous assistance of a Sai Devotee who provided free babysitting services which helped two single parents attend the workshop.

After the workshop, we organized a follow up session to get feedback from the parents on the DP Program, as well as have another guest speaker from the First Nations community: a grandmother with 18 great grandchildren who works at the Pleasant Hill School, to share her story, experiences, and lessons learned along the way. The Principal and Vice Principal of Pleasant Hill School joined the session to distribute Canadian Institute for Sathya Sai Education ("CISSE") DP Certificates to the 5 parents for their participation in the DP workshop. The participants provided invaluable written feedback on the workshop. Some comments included:

- *"Good to have a different perspective on family dynamics. Listening to the speakers and hearing their stories was also beneficial."*
- *"As a parent/child care supporter, I already knew-understood this information. But it was still nice/informative/refreshing to attend this information session."*
- *"I really enjoyed the workshop; I loved the breakdown of the discipline and networking."*

In terms of suggestions for improvement, attendees shared the following:

- *"More speakers would help and be good for other participants. More time in the day would help."*
- *"Would be nice if it were more days... for next session ... add more information such as teenage youth's behaviour/problems/help them understand values, morals etc."*
- *"Talk more about child behaviour and what should you do about it"*
- *"More parent meetings. But other than that it was awesome, thank you."*

Based on the feedback, we as the DP facilitators realized that we needed to tailor the parenting workshop questions for First Nations communities with First Nations Traditions and stories. We included guest speakers from First Nations Communities. Also follow up DP Sharing circles seemed valuable. They definitely appreciated the CISSE Certificates and felt that the certificates would show the development of their skills.

We also had a two-day workshop in November 2013 with a First Nations Elder and an Aboriginal Business Coordinator as guest

speakers. In total, 4 participants attended the workshop. A First Nations Parent who is also on the Pleasant Hill School Parent Council took two of the DP workshops and actively promoted the DP Program within the School. Ms. Carolynn Arcand, Community Coordinator at Pleasant Hill School has been a constant source of support and very active in promoting the DP Program at the school.

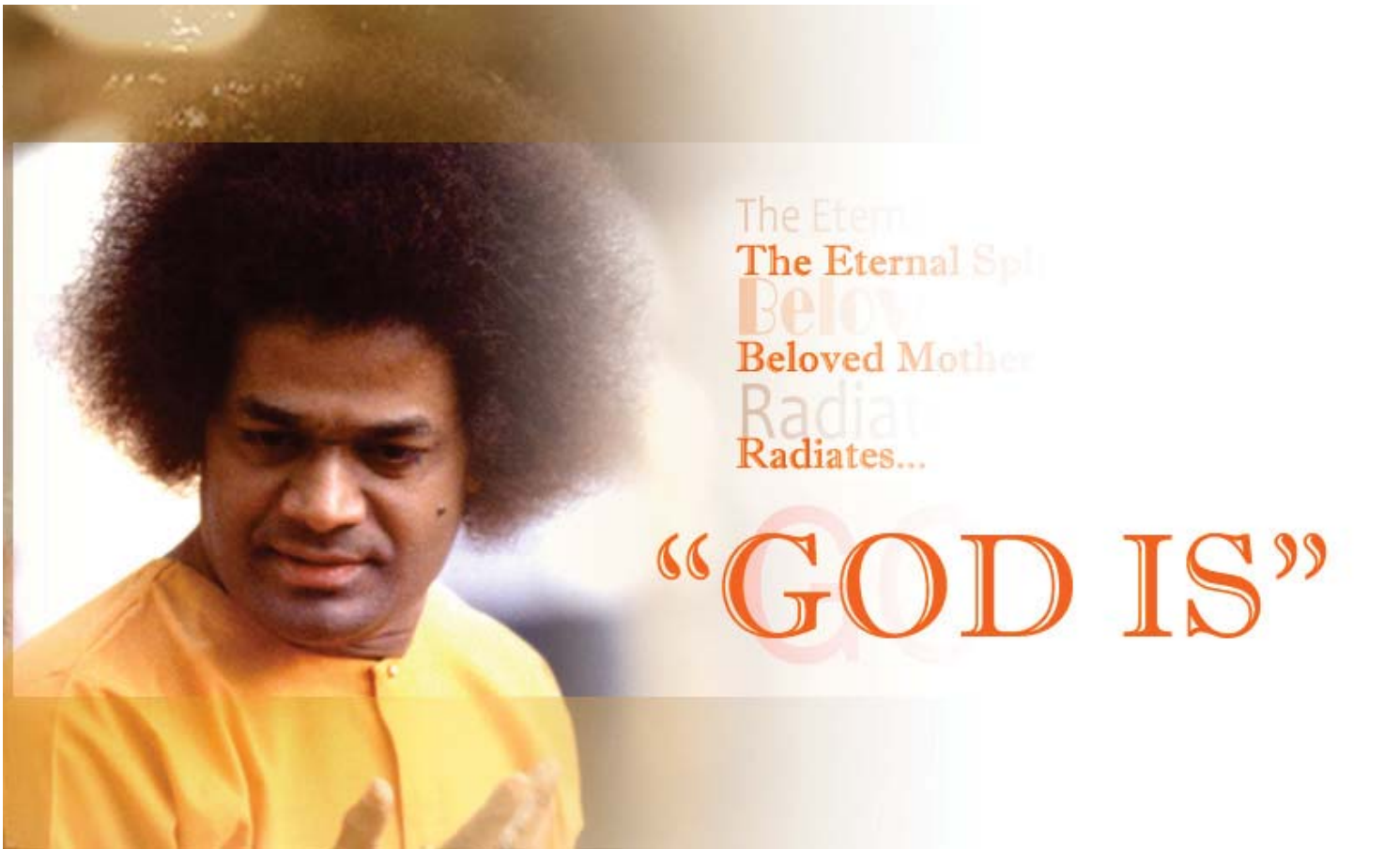
Following the success of this two-day workshop format, we delivered another two-day workshop in November 2014. This time, there were a total of 11 participants with three participants attending from the Open Door Society. During this workshop, six guest speakers presented with three of the speakers coming from various First Nations communities (including a representative from the First Nations Treaty Commission, a retired police officer of First Nations origin, and the First Nations culture teacher at the school), one City Councillor, one parenting facilitator from the Saskatoon Health District, and a Physical Education instructor. Everyone enjoyed the sessions and 2 follow up requests were made by participants: 1) deliver an introductory session to Pre-K parents and 2) start a DP Program for new immigrants through the Open Door Society.

In May 2015, an introductory session was given to Pre-K parents at Pleasant Hill School and a total of five participants attended including three Pre-K Parents. The School parents were interested in the DP workshop in the fall of 2015. Another DP introductory session was also given to First Nations grandparents at the Friendship Inn which had four participants, three CISSE DP Facilitators,

and a First Nations Elder. Friendship Inn is Saskatoon's soup kitchen for the needy which serves breakfast and lunch daily for over 500 people. The Friendship Inn asked us to deliver five sessions of DP starting in September 2015. The Open Door Society also invited us to deliver another five sessions starting in September for new immigrant parents.

All three DP workshops are now complete from 11th September to 13th October 2015 with different outcomes. The Friendship Inn Sessions were the most successful with five parents, one Community Coordinator and two social studies practicum students. The open door society workshop included an active community coordinator with only one new immigrant parent in addition to two other parents of the Sai Centre. Even though it was a small group, it resulted in positive discussions and in the final two sessions, the Sai Centre parent and Community Coordinator jointly helped the immigrant parent to complete her Immigrant Card application. The third workshop at the Pleasant Hill School was postponed after one session as only two parents registered and everyone felt that April to June in 2016 will attract better attendance. The feedback from the parents and the Community Coordinators for the completed workshops have been extremely positive. So, we plan to give the next series of DP workshops from April to June 2016.

This year, one of the DP Facilitators also attended and helped in two workshops given for First Nations parents: 1) "Parenting Just for Dads" given by the Saskatoon Health District and 2) "Parenting for Grandparents" given by the Friendship Inn. The 2nd workshop was



filmed by CBC and was featured on the National News as part of its coverage of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission releasing its report. It is noteworthy that Recommendation 5 of the Report requested the federal and provincial governments to develop a new parenting workshop manual with aboriginal culture and values. This recommendation is very timely, not only as it articulates the needs of the community but also for the last three years, this work has been the major focus of DP facilitators who have added more information on First Nations culture and values in DP Manual, adapting it for use by and facilitation of workshops for First Nations communities. This manual was presented at the Canada table at the *Ideal Sathya Sai Education Conference* in Prasanthi Nilayam in July 2014. The DP Program complements other "parenting workshops" given by different groups in Saskatoon, as SSEHV and DP programs focus on human values, a truly

universal approach. The DP Program provides participants with a strong sense of self-worth, self-esteem, self-confidence and self-satisfaction, leading to self-transformation.

Just as the English song we referenced at the start of this article states, the *Circle of Love* is growing through the DP workshops. The need for these workshops is strong in the community. Increasingly, parents are facing ongoing struggles and are finding comfort, support, and ideas for growth through the study of human values in DP Program. Every workshop has generated positive feedback and the circle is growing. As facilitators, we are feeling the love of this transformational values program and are learning from the participants through their active participation what it means to live these lessons every single day. We wish to thank our beloved Sathya Sai Baba for this opportunity, to be of service through the DP Program and also help our self-transformation.

“Bhagawan’s Dhyana Vahini book reading Satsang”

Ladies from Cooksville Sai Centre, The Sathya Sai Centre of Cooksville, Ontario Region 1

Our Lord, Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is the provider of millions of great gifts to humanity. One beautiful gift among them is HIS own hand written “Vahinis”. Dhayana Vahini is one of the fourteen Vahinis, which means the stream of Meditation.

The ladies from Cooksville Sai Centre have started the Satsang of reading Vahinis since January 2015. In this Satsang, the ladies take turn to read the chapters. At the end of each chapter, we discuss the contents of the reading, share our thoughts and try to bring change in our lives.

This book is written in a very simple way that anyone can easily understand. This book gives the outlook of the importance of repetition of name and form and meditation, the method of Meditation, the body posture of meditation, the place of meditation, and best time to do the meditation. Swami clearly says that *“If in this manner the Dhyanam path is rigorously followed, it is possible for one to win the Grace of the Lord very quickly (page 7-8)”*. One of the ladies shared how she struggles to get up early in the morning to do meditation. Another lady came up with an idea, which was to pray to Swami before going to sleep and surely He will help to wake her up. Later on she shared how this idea was helping her to wake up early.



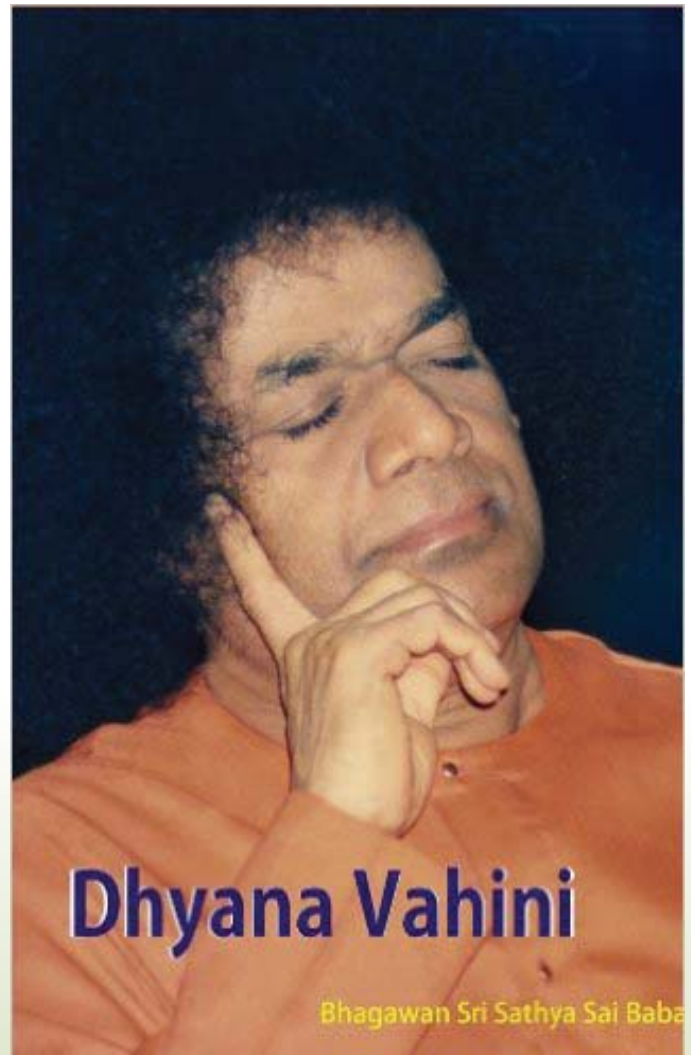
Swami beautifully explains that concentration and one-pointedness are the key. The wandering of the mind is just like a fly. Swami says, *“The fly dwells in the sweetmeat shop and runs after the rubbish carts; the fly that has such a mind has to be taught to understand the sweetness of the first place and the impurity of the second place, so that it may not desert the sweetmeat shop and pursue the rubbish cart. When such teaching is imparted to the mind, it is called meditation (page 5)”*.

Now the discussion was how to concentrate on one thing, as concentration is required in every task to achieve success. The ladies discussed that the right thing would be to do just only one thing at a time; for example, if you are cooking, then just focus only on the cooking and try not to think of anything else except cooking.

A lady shared an experience of a Chinese girl, a high school student, who achieved hundred percent marks in Math, Science, Music and Physical Education. We all were wondering how could it be possible. This is possible only when this girl is doing Math, she is focusing only on Math and not paying attention to anything else.

Through Meditation, the devotees can experience the Atma within them and are able to cast off their ignorance layer after layer. Swami says, *“Only Meditation has the capacity to make one transcend the vicissitudes of time and space and make one ever the same equanimous individual, as if one is another Creator himself (page 17)”*. He further says, *“ If full results are wanted then one must be equipped with good habits, discipline and high ideals. You must cultivate such a character that lasts the body, the quality of always being joyful, with a smile on your face”*.

One lady shared the experience of doing meditation and some breathing exercises everyday and how this is helping her to keep active and healthy in everyday life. Another lady shared that Namasmarana is very powerful, as it has enabled her to keep balance, have more patience, control anger and improvise on her speech. Swami says that only Namasmarana and Meditation can give you that power and nothing else. One should fasten the mind on the Lord and keep off all other thoughts from the mental plane. That is the full fruition of meditation. For devotees who want to lead a God-centric life, the careful reading and practicing of this Vahini will help them to reach that goal.



“Melody of Divine Love”

**“Melody of Divine Love” Group,
The Sathya Sai Centre of
Cooksville, Toronto.**

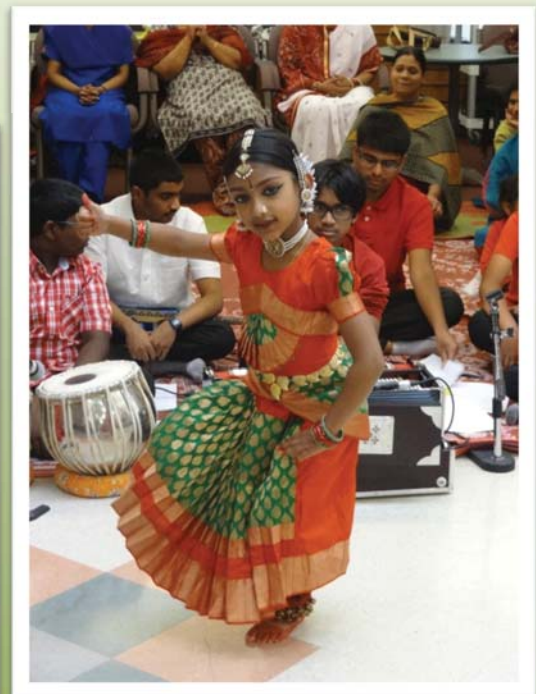
By the divine grace of our dear Lord Sai, a group of children at the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Cooksville in Mississauga, Ontario have been singing for our local senior citizens at The Erin Meadow Senior home for over one and a half years. **We call our program as ‘The Melody of Divine Love’.** SSE students from group 1 to 4 and Youth participate in this program once a month, **with assistance from active adult members of the Centre.** We begin with Omkar, Gayatri mantra followed by the Lord’s Prayer and the program lasts around 40 minutes consisting of multi-faith prayers and songs, Sai English bhajans, moralistic stories, beautiful Christian songs, and instrumental performances

Our prayer session reminds one of Swami’s quotes” Let the different faiths exist, let them

flourish, let the glory of God be sung in all languages in a variety of tunes. That should be the ideal. Respect the difference between the faiths and recognize them as valid so far as they do not extinguish the flame of unity.”

The rehearsals are fun and interesting as we try and learn new multi-faith songs with the children. They have incredible creative skills and with love and enjoyment they come up with a lovely music session for our seniors! Through their experiences volunteering at the senior home, especially our Group 4 boys have had the opportunity to stretch their creative abilities and apply their musical and artistic knowledge to a multi-faceted program. It’s a wonderful privilege to serve in this project and we spend time serving God in a meaningful way on a Sunday afternoon.

Every month, these group 4 boys take on leadership roles within their groups and collaborate in a way that allows them to





showcase their individual talents. It's a joy to work with our young boys! Above all, they are able to bring joy to the seniors reminding them of their children and grandchildren and in the process they are rewarded too. As Sai says, "any happiness that you can give to others will result in happiness for yourself in the end. Man must realize that he cannot get anything without sharing it with humanity around him. So, you must believe that happiness of the people around you will lead to your own happiness in due course".

During our first session, we were quite anxious about how the seniors would receive our mix of Namavali Sai bhajans and English Sai bhajans. We were so surprised by their excitement for the melody of music with such exotic musical instruments such as the Harmonium, Tabla and Dhol. The seniors especially liked the sound of the harmonium, which they inspected very carefully.

As Sathya Sai Baba reminds us, "it is music that melts human heart and literally moves

everyone". The seniors, some who could barely move or lift their heads, were trying to mouth the words and even stamp their feet on the floor! This really warmed my heart to see their happiness. Their happiness was our happiness.

As months passed, we had noticed that the seniors would light up as soon as the children entered their home in anticipation for the divine music. To keep up with their excitement, we tried to bring the colors of the world into seniors home and in each session we introduced new instruments and over couple of sessions our seniors got the opportunity to listen to the Violin, the flute, the tabla and the harmonium. We also introduced new Tamil classical songs and south Indian dances and Veena performance for Mother's day and Father's day! A group 1 girl performed veena for our seniors, displaying her stupendous talent for the instrument by playing songs that required a certain degree of skill. The seniors loved the performance and were so

curious to see the size of the instrument and remember it to this day. A group 1 girl brought the colors and beauty of a South-Indian dance called Bharatanatyam, danced to traditional South Asian songs for the seniors. All seniors thoroughly enjoyed the performance. The girl was thanked and appreciated by all the seniors after the program. "Bharatanatyam" was left as the challenging word of the day for all staff and seniors to try to pronounce!

This entire experience reminds one of Swami's words. "The Best way to love God is to Love All and Serve All." "Service to man will help your divinity to blossom, for, it will gladden your heart and make you feel that life has been worthwhile. Service to man is service to God, for He is in every man and living being, in every stone and stump" Aum Sri Sai Ram!



“Terry Fox Run”

The Sathya Sai Centre of Middlefield, Toronto.

Love All, Serve All – Sathya Sai Baba

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 tenth annual Terry Fox Run.

Terry Fox had lost one leg after a devastating diagnosis of Osteosarcoma. With one prosthetic leg, Terry Fox embarked on a journey to run across Canada to raise funds for cancer research. Due to the spread of his cancer, he was unable to complete his journey.

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 27th, 2015 when a group of dedicated Sai children, youth, parents and grandparents carried out a legend's mission, creating a beautiful Sai family. It was the tenth annual “Terry Fox Run” that took place around the general surrounding area of the Middlefield Sai Centre located at Markham and Nashdene. It was a great honour to have the regional MPP Bas Balkissoon and Toronto District School Board trustee Parthi Kandeval present for the Terry Fox Run this year. The Region II Coordinator, Vasanthi Vimalasan was also in attendance. This organized walk reinforced awareness and inspiration to all participants of Swami’s mission to cultivate love for God and service to



“Blood Donor Clinic”

The Sathya Sai Centre of Scarborough, Toronto.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Scarborough, Toronto, Canada conducted the blood donor clinic on Saturday, October 17th to mark Swami’s 90th Birthday. It was attended by 99 donors and 90 units of blood were collected. Each unit of blood collected at this clinic has the potential to impact the health



and welfare of 270 patients in need. According to the appreciation letter received from the Canadian Blood Services, new donors are vital to the success and growth of the blood program and 27 donors that attended the clinic at Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre were first time which is an outstanding number. A One match session was held alongside the blood clinic. Volunteers from the community were able to register 12 new donors on the registry providing Leukemia patients an opportunity to find a match and hopefully a cure.



1300 Harmony Road North
Oshawa, ON L1K 2B1
www.blood.ca www.sang.ca

2015-10-21

To Whom It May Concern

I am pleased to write this letter of appreciation of Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Scarborough.

The blood donor clinic on Saturday, October 17th was attended by 99 donors and 90 units of blood were collected. Each unit of blood collected at this clinic has the potential to impact the health and welfare of 270 patients in need.

New donors are vital to the success and growth of the blood program and 27 donors that attended the clinic at Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre were first time which is an outstanding number.

An Onematch session was held for the first time alongside the blood clinic. Volunteers from the community were able to register 12 new donors on the registry providing Leukemia patients an opportunity to find a match and hopefully a cure.

Thank you Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Scarborough and a special thanks to Sabaratnam Balachandran and Sinnathurai Balasubramaniam for engaging the community about the need for blood donation and your unwavering support of the blood program and the patient’s serves.

Sincerely,

Janine Smith, Territory Manager

Canadian Blood Services

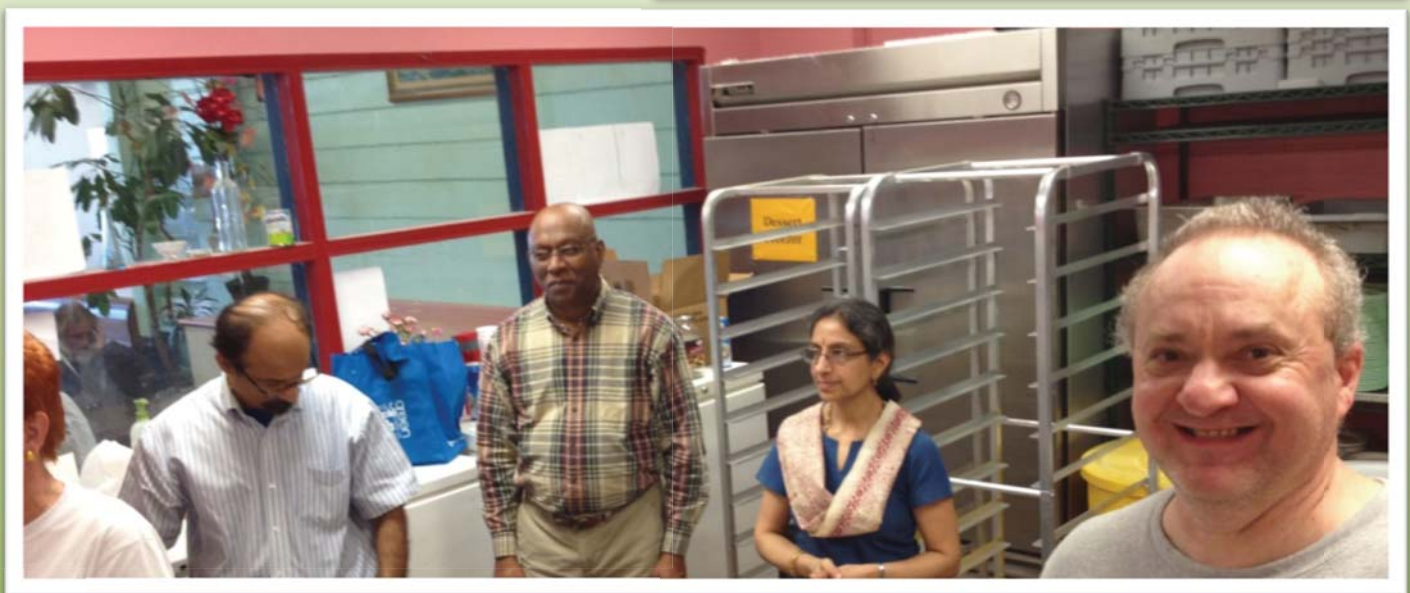
Cell, 905-242-2081



“Door is Open”

The Sathya Sai Community Centre of Vancouver.

Approximately 10-20 volunteers from the Vancouver Sai Center reach the “Door is Open” on the assigned day around 12:00noon. These representatives belong to the Chinese devotional Group, Japanese Devotional Group, Richmond Devotional Group, SSE Youth, and the fifth Sunday group. Each group performs this Seva as per their respective pre-determined dates in the year. Generally, they bring nutritious food material to make the meal. The hot meal combo generally comprises a vegetarian fare that may be a combination of buttered bun, high protein hot chili, potato salad and some fruit. Approximately 100-150 homeless people from the Downtown Eastside are fed. The kitchen is cleaned thereafter and a generous amount of chili (food) is left behind for their use later in the week.





“Doors Open Ottawa”

The Sathya Sai Centre of Ottawa-Carleton, Ottawa.

Since 2009, Sri Sathya Sai Spiritual Centre of Ottawa Carleton, Canada, has been participating in a yearly summer event in June, organised by the City, called Doors Open Ottawa, where we open our centre doors for a whole day for visitors to come in and for the centre to showcase the universal message of our Beloved Bhagawan “LOVE ALL SERVE ALL HELP EVER HURT NEVER”

It has provided an excellent opportunity as an outreach program for our Sai centre: It gives an opportunity for the Sai volunteers to have very fulfilling discussions with the Ottawa Community at large of all walks of life and religions, on Swami’s teachings of the simple but profound five basic human values.

We have received truly wonderful people who took time to visit a spiritual centre over other attractions. They were very impressed at our Sai Mission and Swami’s guiding principles, and what our centre has to offer. One 9-10 yr old wrote in the visitors book: Very interesting

and beautiful place. His words inspire me. Shows how Swami simplifies spirituality for our understanding that it caught a child’s attention. Another person wrote “Wonderful to be in a beautiful surrounding, where faith is expressed and valid.” Another commented: “A positive Force in the world.”

It just shows how blessed we are to be given such a beautiful spiritual place and fold to make a difference in the world.

“Bags- to-Mats”

The Sathya Sai Centre of Ottawa-Carleton, Ottawa.

A seed sown at the Kingston Sri Sathya Sai Centre, sprouted into a very beautiful and gratifying undertaking for Sai devotees from the Ottawa, Canada, Centre. The seniors at the centre lent their helping hands to cut the colourful milk bags into long strips to be later crocheted into sleeping mats for needy families. A devotee enhanced this program at work where different departments collaboratively joined and supported the cause. Local churches shipped them to their missionary locations around the world. This service project has helped families with basic needs to sleep on a safe material that would not allow insects to penetrate. A worthy cause to serve one and all in need.

This project is also environmentally friendly as milk bags instead of trashing is been collected and made to mats for basic needs in the country where it is served as sleeping mats. Serving done with zero cost but yet serves to bring comfort and happiness to many in Africa.



Statistics as of 2015:

Here’s the impact that the Bags-to-Mats volunteers had over a period of 6 years of existence: Total numbers of bags that are donated and helped save from going to landfill: approx. 55,400

Items created:

105 Sleeping mats (child and adult sizes):	52,500 bags
20 Sitting mats for Malawi School Children:	1,500 bags
20 Tote bags for needy families:	1,400 bags

SAI YOUTH

“Value-based Camp Summer Stars”

*Amar Lad, Canadian Youth,
Toronto, Region 1*

On Tuesday July 14th and Wednesday July 15th, 2015, the Canadian Institute of Sathya Sai Education (CISSE) conducted its 2nd Annual Camp Summer Stars at the Sathya Sai School of Canada, located in Toronto. Camp Summer Stars is a value-based 2 day summer camp for children, integrating the values of respect, tolerance, team-work and compassion into popular and fun camp games and activities. The camp is open to students from

the Sathya Sai School of Canada, as well as children from the wider community.

This year's camp provided 16 boys and girls aged 7 to 11 a vibrant, energetic, and intellectually stimulating summer escape. Seven Sai Youth from Sai Centres across Canada's Regions 1 and 2 volunteered their time to facilitate the camp activities for both days as Camp Councilors. Games such as Spot the Change, 36 Squares, and a Memory Game put the campers' brilliant minds to work, teaching them the importance of concentration, discipline and teamwork.

Sports such as soccer and volleyball, and running games like Octopus and Coco kept the campers physically active, dynamic and full of life, while teaching them cooperation,



An arts and crafts activity encouraged children to illustrate the values they learned and practiced during the camp.

friendship, and teamwork skills. In all games the children demonstrated knowledge and familiarity with the 5 Human Values of Love, Peace, Truth, Right Conduct, and Non-Violence. They actively practiced inclusivity, while demonstrating perseverance, courage, consideration, trust, and intuition.

This 2nd Annual Camp Summer Stars ended with wishes from children and parents alike for a longer camp next year with more children. With the Sathya Sai School's new and permanent building project set to be completed next year, the Camp Summer Stars team has set their sights on expanding to 50 children in 2016! With Swami's grace, this will undoubtedly become a reality.



A candy-filled piñata united the children in their quest to release the treats inside, teaching them perseverance, inclusivity and discipline as they ensured everyone had a turn to try and knock the camp icon down.



A Hula Hoop race taught the campers the value of teamwork, unity, and generated boundless enthusiasm and excitement.

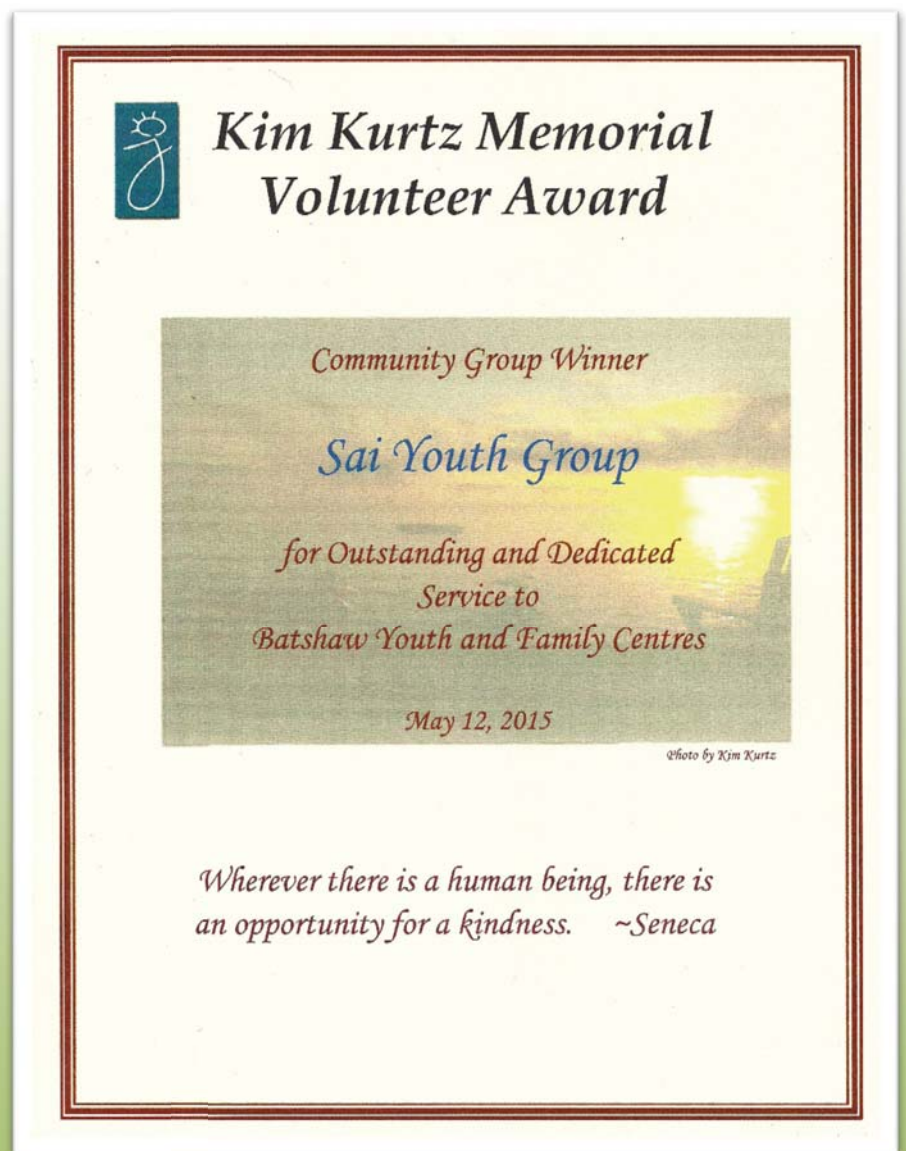
“The Circle of Courage”

Montreal Sai Youth Group

Since 2003, the Montreal Sai Youth have been involved with the Batshaw Youth & Family Centers by planning and carrying out value based activities for teens and pre-teens placed in foster homes. Batshaw Youth and Family Centres (Batshaw Centres) is a non-profit organization that is part of the Quebec Government Health and Social Services network. These bi-weekly one hour activities were intended to share the human values (and sub-values) through fun games while developing problem solving skills in children from delicate social backgrounds. For the past two years, they’ve been working on a pilot project with Batshaw called The Circle of Courage. They were given the opportunity to work with the children at their Crossroads home on the quadrant of generosity where the “Character is cultivated by concern for others so that the child can say : I have a purpose for my life”. The activities that were done mostly consisted of making arts and crafts destined for homeless shelters & old folks home. On May 12th 2015, the Montreal Sai Youth were awarded the Kim Kurtz Memorial Volunteer

Award for a Community Volunteer Group. This was a monumental milestone for the group, as their active involvement for ten years within the community was recognised by the Montreal Batshaw Youth & Family Centres. At the awards ceremony, Batshaw Crossroads Educator announced the award (see attached image) with the following statement,

“The Sai Youth Group has demonstrated outstanding patience and commitment in creating activities for Crossroads kids. We nicknamed them the “milk bag” group because of their first project



was an activity where the children cut up and braided plastic milk bags to fashion mats for people in Third World countries. The children were quite interested in doing this and participated well. This activity helped the Sai volunteers establish positive relationships with the children so when they returned to do other arts and crafts activities, the kids were more than happy to participate. All the activities

they have done with the children have emphasized kindness, generosity and belonging – concepts of which the children are well aware due to our emphasis on the Circle of Courage. The staff and children are truly appreciative of the Sai Youth Group’s efforts and the positive energy they bring to the Crossroads unit.”

12 May, 2015

Dear Sai Youth Group Members,

Today, we honor you for your volunteer efforts at Batshaw Youth & Family Centres by awarding you the Kim Kurtz Memorial Volunteer Award for a Community Volunteer Group.

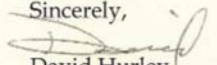
Hilda Braithwaite, Crossroads educator had this to say about your work with the children at Crossroads:

“The Sai Youth Group has demonstrated outstanding patience and commitment in creating activities for Crossroads’ kids. We nicknamed them the ‘milk bag’ group because their first project was an activity where the children cut up and braided plastic milk bags to fashion mats for people in Third World countries. The children were quite interested in doing this and participated well. This activity helped the Sai volunteers establish positive relationships with the children so when they returned to do other arts and crafts activities, the kids were more than happy to participate. All the activities they have done with the children have emphasized kindness, generosity and belonging - concepts of which the children are well aware due to our emphasis on the Circle of Courage. The staff and children are truly appreciative of the Sai Youth Group’s efforts and the positive energy they bring to the Crossroads unit.”

Thank you for your commitment and creative efforts in making a difference in the lives of Batshaw youth. We applaud your volunteer service and appreciate the invaluable contribution you have made to Batshaw Youth & Family Centres and the community we serve.

Congratulations!

Sincerely,


David Hurley
Volunteer Services

*The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size,
but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others.
Too often we underestimate the power of a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, a compliment,
or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.
- Leo Buscaglia*

“SAI90 - Canada”

Canadian Sai Youth

SAI90 is a humble offering from Zone 1 Sai Youth for Swami in honor of His 90th Birthday. As part of this offering, the young adults in Canada, USA, and the West Indies are taking part in 9 initiatives over the course of 9 months encompassing Service, Adoration, and Inspiration. All initiatives and activities tie into the theme of *"Love is the Source. Love is the Path. Love is the Goal."*

The 9 aspects of SAI90 are all encompassing and provide something for everyone to be involved in. Whether a youth is musically talented, a strong speaker or a talented athlete, SAI90 provides a platform for all youth to step forth and shine in their own unique ways while offering their love to Swami.

The 9 components of SAI90 are as follows:

Service Projects

The first aspect of SAI90 is service, flowing under the theme of Serve the Planet 2015 - *"Human Values for Nation Building."* The young adults of Zone 1 have committed to carrying out unique service projects across the Zone leading to the 90th Birthday.

In Canada, for example, youth are working to further supplement and enhance many existing service projects being done in Sai Centers across the country. Sai youth are actively engaging in narayana seva, nursing home



visits, sandwich drives, non-perishable food drives, and tree planting projects. In addition, unique and new initiatives such as providing sports therapy for autistic children, holding a seniors appreciation day, mentorship for troubled kids, and arranging a textbook drive collecting post-secondary textbooks for African Universities have also been organized. Furthermore, youth jumped into action following the Nepal Earthquake, organizing car washes and collecting much needed medical supplies for the victims. Finally, on the weekend of July 18th and 19th, all youth groups across Canada participated in environmental park clean-ups, as a national youth service project. To read about some of the above mentioned projects and more from Canada, please visit saiyouth.ca.

New service projects are being organized each month in countries across Zone 1. For more information, please visit sai90.org.

SAIx

SAIx is a platform for Youth to inspire other Youth through the sharing of experiences and stories through a series of videos to be shared online. Youth are encouraged to share their thoughts on one of Swami's quotes, a lesson from a life experience, or any other message in the form of short 5-7 minute *heart-to-heart* talks.

Following the model of TEDx Talks, *Ideas Worth Spreading*, SAIx aims to spread ideas and love to inspire youth to live and be beacons of Swami's message and mission.

SAIx videos will be released on a weekly basis starting on August 10th, 2015. To view a SAIx talk, please visit sai90.org.

SAI90
Service, Adoration, Inspiration

Sai90 is an offering from by Zone 1 Sai Youth for Swami's 90th Birthday.

As a part of this offering, the young adults will take part in 9 initiatives over the course of 9 months encompassing Service, Adoration, and Inspiration.

23 NOV

9 Initiatives

Service Projects	SAIx	Musical Offering
#SAI90	Sai Olympics	Art, Poetry, and Short Story Competition
Self-Transformation	Capture The Love	Journey Forward

www.sai90.org

Musical Offering

For this aspect of SAI90, youth from across the Zone are coming together to create devotional and spiritual music tracks which will be made available free digitally on iTunes on November 23rd, 2015. Youth will be writing and recording original compositions for our beloved Swami in any and all styles and languages that represent Zone 1. Songs are encouraged to reflect the message of the World Conference theme *"Love is the Source. Love is the Path. Love is the Goal."* Each song can involve youth from anywhere in the Zone, meaning that distributed teams are encouraged. The final list of songs will be arranged by October 31st and offered to Swami in Prashanti Nilayam in November.

#SAI90

Today the world is in an era of social media. #SAI90 aims to spread beautiful, motivational messages of our beloved Swami across the web. Youth and all devotees are encouraged to use the #SAI90 hashtag to share positive, inspirational messages along with any quotes of Swami across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. To see all of the beautiful messages being shared, please visit sai90.org.

Sai Olympics

Sai Olympics promotes physical activity to keep the body happy by challenging youth to compete in various sports and activities. Youth across the zone are planning sports day in their respective countries and regions to promote healthy living.

Art, Poetry, and Short Story Competition

With the World Youth Festival just a year away, the Art, Poetry, and Short Story competition engages youth to tune themselves to their various talents in the arts. This is a friendly competition to inspire each other, express Love for Swami through different mediums, and explore what the theme means to each one of us. All entries are due on September 30th, 2015 and should reflect the theme of *"Love is the Source. Love is the Path. Love is the Goal."*

SAI 90
Love is the Source. Love is the Path. Love is the Goal.
9 Initiatives over 9 Months

- Service Projects**
90 service projects completed across the zone.
- SAIX**
Series of videos with youths inspiring youths through web presentations.
- Musical Offering**
The musical offering includes devotional songs from across the zone. Tracks will be made available digitally on November 23, 2015.
- #sai90**
Use the #sai90 hashtag to share positive, inspirational messages along with any quotes and messages of Swami.
- Sai Olympics**
The Sai Olympics will be held to promote healthy competition amongst the Youth within each Region.
- Art, Poetry, and Short Story Competition**
Aimed at bringing out the various talents youth have in the arts, there are prizes to be announced.
- Self Transformation**
Change a habit, or build a new one! Over the 9 months, dedicate your transformation to Sai's 99 virtues.
- Capture The Love**
With all of the amazing initiatives taking place, we aim to document thoroughly!
- Journey Forward**
Thinking ahead, setting new goals, and objectives.

www.sai90.org

Self Transformation

Self Transformation encourages youth to choose just one thing about themselves that they would like to change or improve to live according to Swami's ideal. Youth can change a habit or build a new one, and dedicate their entire progress and transformation to the Lord for His 90th Birthday.

Experiences are being shared in the Self Transformation journal online, where youth can be inspired by their brothers and sisters and offer each other support in each other's journeys. Entries include stories about youth's bond with Baba, fostering a positive mindset, partaking in more service, and a youth's path towards becoming vegetarian. To read all these stories and more, please visit sai90.org.

Capture the Love

Capture the Love simply encourages all youth to document (take pictures, videos, record personal experiences, etc.) all of their Sai90 initiatives and events to be shared on the SAI90 website and with the wider Sai community.

Journey Forward

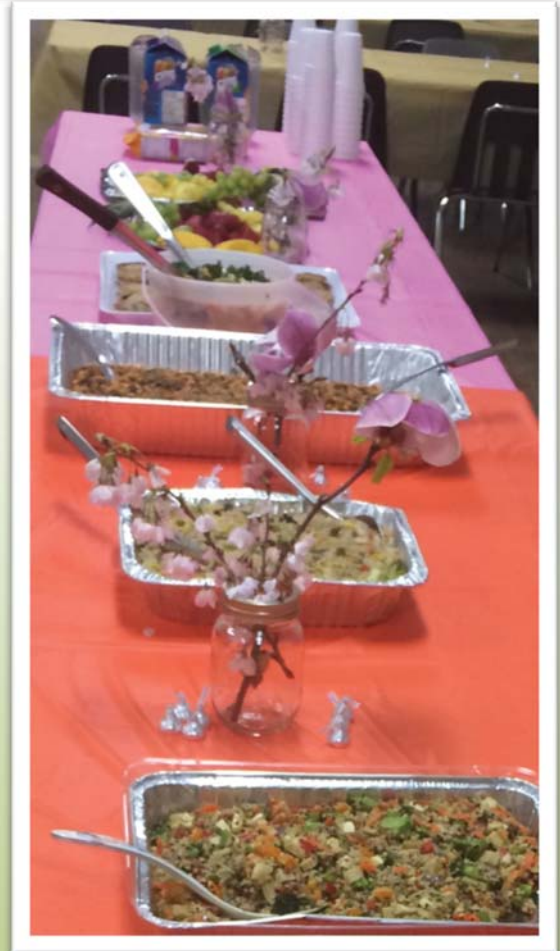
The Journey Forward challenges all youth to think ahead, set new goals and objectives, and continue to develop all the good practices and service projects brought forth through SAI90 into 2016 and beyond.

For more information regarding SAI90, please visit www.sai90.org

“Senior’s Appreciation Night”

Vancouver Sai Youth Group

The youth from the Vancouver Sai Center planned the event on 21 March 2015 and selected the evening of Mar 21 2015 from 5-7:30 for this event, They invited all the seniors, made posters and sent emails, personally invited by making phone calls. They organised procuring all the materials needed such as cups, plates, napkins, food (potluck), thank you cards, game items, music, etc. They identified and delegated roles to each other to conduct the games, organize the menu and get food, etc. They planned snack and tea, introductions, icebreaker games, dinner, one large scale game (jeopardy), conclusion and thank you cards for distribution. They prepared dishes to be served (include 2 of each dish): Appetizers, Main dish-Pasta, Rice, etc., Deserts, Fruits and Veggies, Tea/Coffee material, etc. They organised games such as Pictionary, password with the quotes, Jeopardy, and then had dinner. They also used the opportunity to share experiences. They ended the evening with 3 samastha lokas and 3 shanti’s



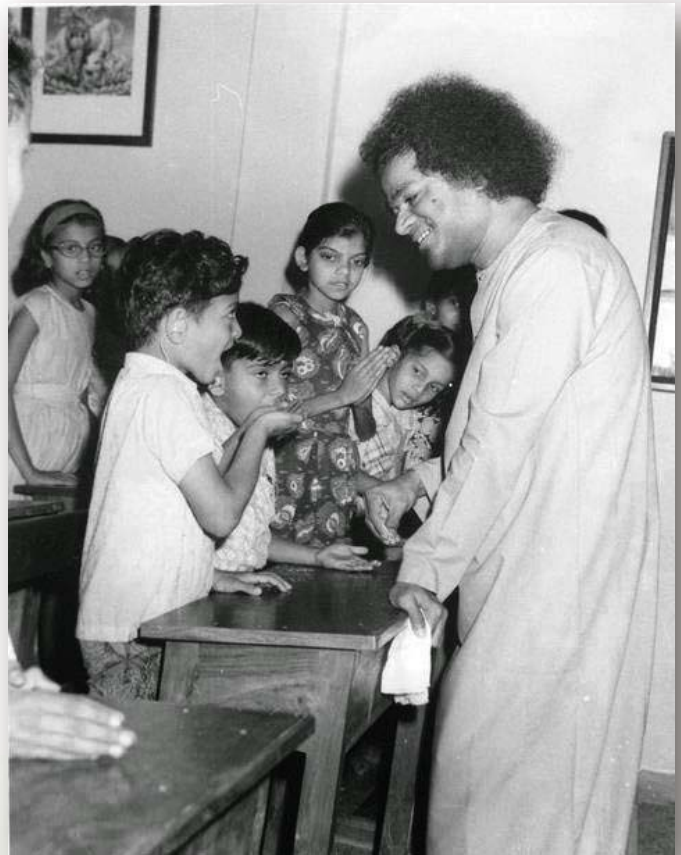
REFLECTIONS FROM SSE

BAL VIKAS – A GIFT

Namrata Das
Group 4
Sathya Sai Baba Centre of
Saskatoon

This upcoming week marks the end of another year for our SSE program. I, having being a student for about 9 years, would just like to share with all of you the “gifts”, so to say, which I have received through my years in SSE. These gifts which I speak of are not tangible objects, but are rather, fragments of knowledge and experiences which I may utilize to build my values, principles, and on the whole, who I am as a person today and in the future. As per my observations, this program strives to equip children with the sensitivity, discipline, accountability and integrity necessary for a child to blossom into respectable citizens and leaders of tomorrow.

The most prominent “gift” which I have received through this program is present in my knowledge of the underlying principles of Sai Educare: truth, right-conduct, peace, love, and non-violence. We are taught how these values are essential ingredients for good character and how these human values shall undermine barriers erected by ego, ignorance, greed, as well as other perpetrators of internal and external misconduct. My knowledge of these values has significantly affected my world view



as I construct a sound moral compass and has advised me as I administer adjustments to my lifestyle.

The values largely promote the idea of celling on one’s own desires in order to radiate selflessness. SSE has allowed me countless opportunities to participate in volunteer work and inspires me to further, become active in service to my global and local community. Service is quite fundamental for summoning our innate humanity, inconspicuously demanding the extinction of any ego and exercising the application of the five human values. The failure to serve our fellow men has thrown the world into a ceaseless cacophony and service is an obvious remedy for the world’s seemingly insoluble maladies, allowing individuals to simultaneously conduct inner



transformation while operating on our broken world.

SSE consistently pursues the concept of “unity” on various different levels. It encourages an affinity between truth, right-conduct, peace, and non-violence and harmony between thought, word, and deed in order for genuine, selfless love to become prominent. SSE draws attention to the need for unity in the community through service activities to benefit the collective and for individuals to internalize the notions of “I” and “we” in a spiritual sense and this development of oneness with the society is integral to invoking societal transformation. Unity between mankind is further stressed through another focus in the SSE program: the acceptance and respect for all religions.

Though it is not centralized on religion, SSE also manages to swiftly approach the concept to enable children to utilize it as a tool towards spiritual progress. This is achieved through

introducing and educating children of the core messages presented by the various religions and emphasizing Swami’s message on religion. All religions are simply multiple channels which gather in a single reservoir and all are imbued with the intention of acting as a catalyst in one’s spiritual journey by strengthening the relationship between oneself and god. Having been allowed the experience to explore the different religions that govern today’s world, I have become more aware and welcoming towards those of other faiths. I feel as though the fact that I have been able to embrace such different ideas makes me a more informed member within the community and is another “gift” which I have at my disposal.

In SSE, children are given the opportunity to explore various religions, attributes of good character, and most importantly, explore themselves, by looking into themselves with eyes which penetrate the illusory skin and seek out the ultimate divinity within. These concepts regarding self-regulation, religion,



and spirituality are quite complex realms. As a SSE student, I have come to realize them and am committed to the eternal task of accepting, applying, perfecting, and assimilating the ideas. The teachers are able to successfully create a learning atmosphere in which these complex topics are broken down and imparted with simplicity such that a child is able grasp the concepts and this is undoubtedly the most admirable charm of SSE.

At first, the Sai fold had simply been a vibrant community to grow in. Soon, I came to love our weekly bhajan sessions which allowed me to dispel all of my accumulating stress and cluttered thoughts, and enabled me to surrender my mind to an unexpected stillness amidst an enrapturing aura of exuberance and passion. There was a feeling of being free, bodiless –ungrounded. And SSE allowed me the faculties to venture to suggest that this was a temporary glimpse of “bliss” and this acknowledgement of such a force was the first time I garnered genuine commitment towards

spirituality and since then, Swami has been a constant force in my life.

Swami declared in his mission that:

“I have My definition of ‘Devotion’: I expect all those devoted to Me to treat joy and grief, gain and loss, with equal fortitude.”

An SSE teacher once introduced me to this concept of “equanimity” and it has really resonated with me. Pondering upon this, I came to the conclusion that this single attribute is at the crux of spirituality, being characteristic of detachment, absolute reign over one’s senses and mind, and acceptance of reality.

For a few years now I have contemplated on this and see a vast area for improvement within myself, but nonetheless, see this goal as guiding light.

Swami’s teachings are emphatic on “love” and with through internalizing this newfound perspective, I can feel enormous changes within me as I make a conscious effort to employ his teachings in daily life. I find peace through trivial lifestyle changes like that in the act of forgiving, trying to align my actions with my conscience, recognizing ego, and emanating positivity. These are little packets of my promise to one day, radiate and become *love*. Although I am lacking in many ways, I will continue persevering because I know that spirituality is a rough and wondrous road of sacrifice, doubts, and bliss.

SSE, aside from being a preparatory course for my spiritual and moral pathway in life, has provided me with an opportunity that has allowed me to become more aware of myself

and those around me and has honed my ability to a better leader and group member through participating in the activities such as group discussions, dramas and role play, group singing, games, and storytelling. SSE is a platform which utilizes unique tools to create an ideal atmosphere for children to undertake guided introspection and discussion. I, having been exposed to the program at a tender age, am able to apply the knowledge I have gained from my involvement, as I sculpt a path for my future. To me, the future is a precious platform to further imbibe and implement the articles of knowledge which I have received in order to tame my mind, work towards attaining purity of character and to become a better leader, group member, person, and pawn in achieving the world and future I believe in. As I reflect upon my years as I SSE student, I can say that I am gratified to have been able to receive so many “gifts” which may act as beacons of light in my future as I further observe, scrutinize, contemplate, and *live* this empirical puzzle called “life”

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.

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