

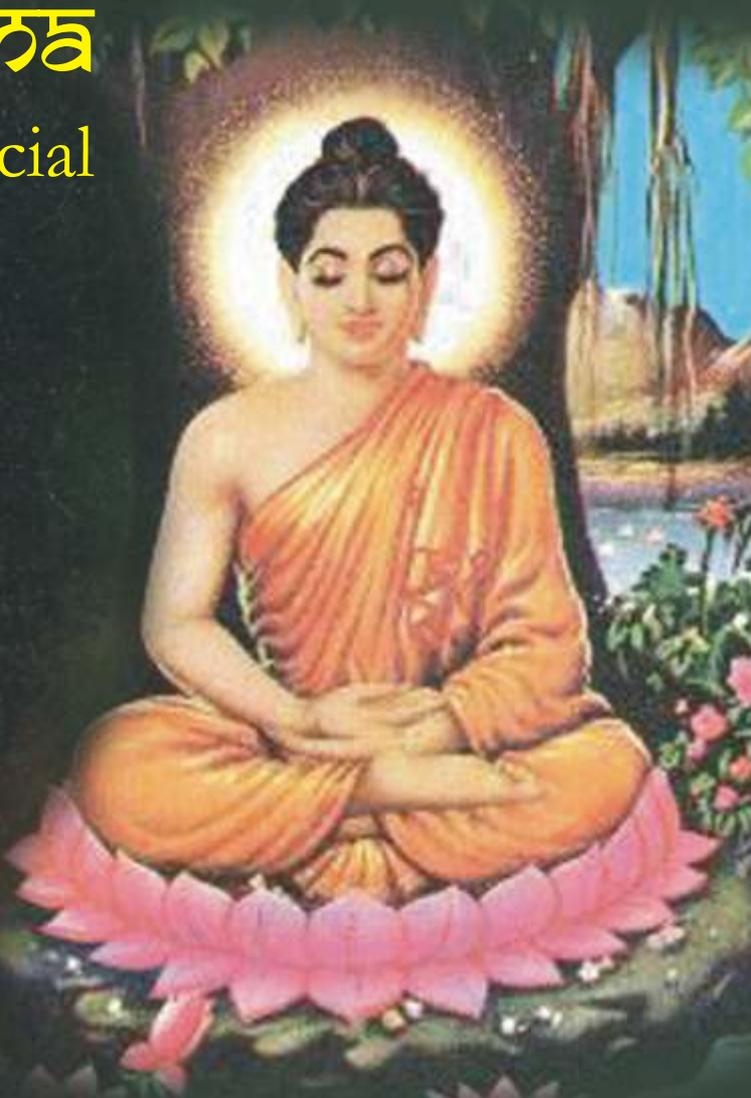


HEART TO HEART

RADIO SAI LISTENERS' JOURNAL

buddha purnima

Special



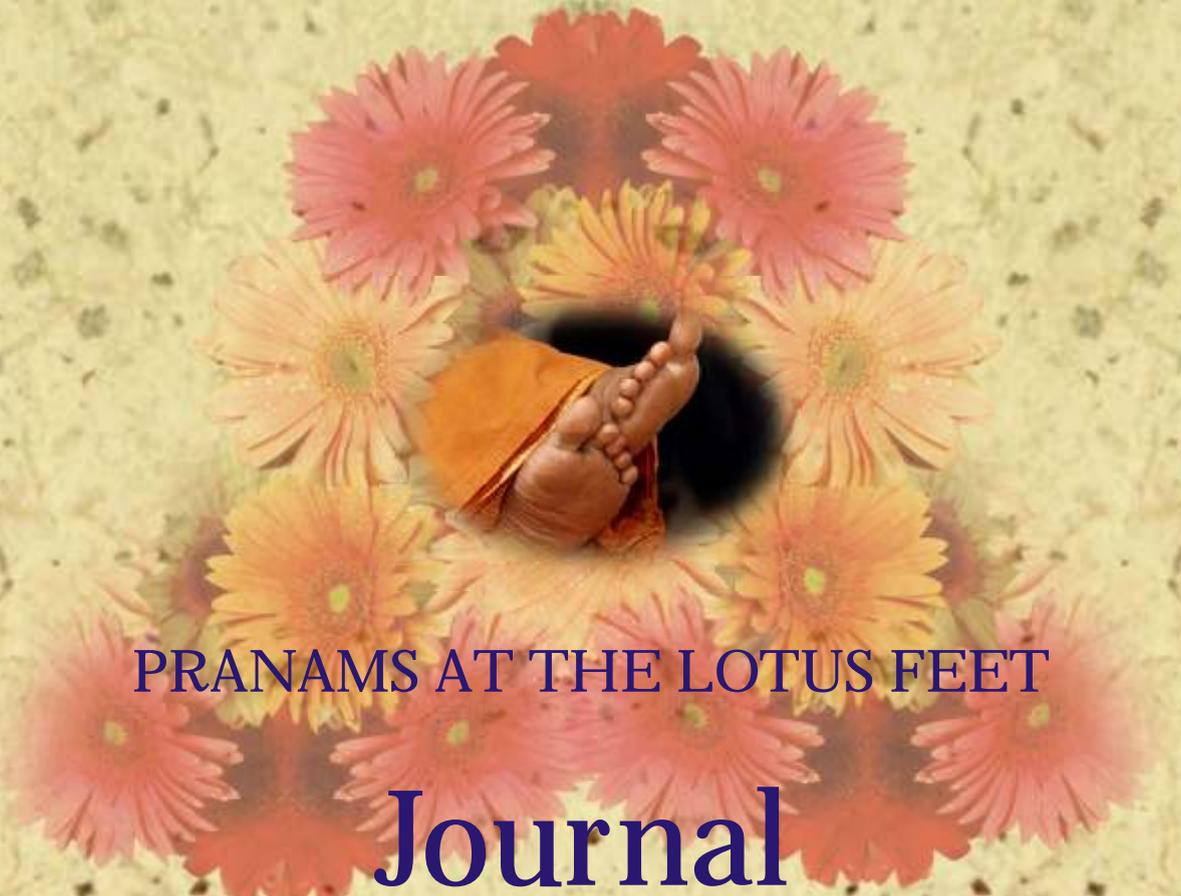
Cover Story

Buddha Purnima

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PRANAMS AT THE LOTUS FEET

Journal

developed by

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Between You and Us

Dear Reader,

Sai Ram and greetings from Prashanti Nilayam. Swami has left for Brindavan, and it is now the turn of Prashanti Nilayam to wear a rather deserted look. But Prashanti Nilayam was very lucky this year because we had a fabulously wonderful March with Swami staying back, most unusually. It was getting hot but every afternoon we were treated to wonderful programmes by students, all the way from the Primary School to the Post-graduate level. And what a variety it was, and how wonderfully and in simple language they conveyed Universal Truths! One surprising item was on Moharrum day when the boys chanted the Koran and then followed it up with meaning in Sanskrit! This was just unbelievable. The boys had learnt the chant from the Mullah in Puttapparthi by the way, we suppose that you are aware that the Mosque here was gifted by Baba many decades ago, to help the local Muslims and save them to long trek to the Bukkapatnam Mosque, the only one in the region then.

Recently, we had a REFLECTION article that dealt with the story of how UNESCO withdrew its Media Advisory on Swami after a strong representation by the Government of India. Little did we know that the matter would not end there. The people given to slander - and it is just a handful of them - appeared to have read the H2H article, and promptly dashed off an angry letter to UNESCO officials protesting the withdrawal and making all kinds of demands including reinstatement. We cannot go into all that they said but may be we can mention just one point. They say [in part], "A number of Vice Chancellors (e.g., University of Flinders and University of Adelaide) and other major institutional heads having given credence to the Media Advisory concerning Sathya Sai Baba" The rest of the sentence is not really relevant at this juncture because it merely says that it was on the basis of this support that the UNESCO issued the Advisory.

Two Vice Chancellors are referred to. Did they ever visit Prashantinilayam and see for themselves in person and in depth what is going on, before associating themselves with the sponsors of the negative propaganda? One wonders. As against this, about THIRTY Vice Chancellors from various Universities in India actually met here recently to deliberate on Value Based Education. The meeting was presided over by the Chairman of the University Grants Commission and one of the attendees was Mr. Ranganth Mishra, former Chief Justice of India, and also former Head of the Human Rights Commission in India. [The former Chief Justice has been active in promoting values in education, and that was why he was here.] The meeting lasted three days, and the delegates had plenty of opportunity to meet faculty and students in fact, all the hospitality work was managed entirely by our students. Then again, a few

years ago, the Parliamentary Standing Committee for Human Resource Development came here as a part of its study on educational institutions committed to the promotion of character and values, and in fact in the final report submitted by the Committee [and accepted by the Government, incidentally] they made the Institute's core values as the central point of their recommendations. Later, the Supreme Court, in a verdict given in a Public Interest Litigation, had the occasion to strongly endorse this view. We also can mention names, and many of them too [we shall not list all but only a few]. Professor David Gries, Professor of Computer Science in Cornell [a Ivy League university as they say in America] has been coming here regularly for over a decade to teach our students. Professor George Ordal, Professor of Bio Chemistry in the University of Illinois too has been coming here regularly. Every December will see him here teaching for nearly a month and some of you may remember we have broadcast a radio interview with him once. Then there is Dr. Samuel Sandweiss of the University of California, San Diego Campus, who has been coming for over thirty years, yes thirty years. Dear Reader, are all these people gullible and being taken for a ride?

What about Justice Bhagavathi, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, later Chairman of the Human Rights Commission and Member of the UN Human Rights Commission. Justice Bhagavathi is, as many know, also a Member of the Central Trust. He has been coming for over thirty years; has he been fooled all along? There is no need to belabour the point but we might mention that the Indian Prime Minister Mr. Vajpayee has been coming to Swami since 1977, when he first came for delivering lectures in the Summer School. We have pictures taken on that occasion. (See Down memory Lane). Since then he has come many, many times, the latest being 14th April, 2004, just very recently. Surely he is not being taken for a ride?

There is much that we can say but there really is no need to. Those who want to firmly adhere to the negative will go on doing so; that is their fate and we can only pray that instead of maligning they devote themselves to service as our students, for example, are doing. By the way, we hope you have read the article on student service in Kovalaguttapalli how inspiring that is! That is the transformation that studying in Swami's college brings about it, and just think of how many thousands of students have studied here.

People said the earth was flat but today who believes that? People said that it is the Sun that goes round the earth but today who believes that? Truth will always prevail, that is its power; be assured of that.

Jai Sai Ram
SGH Team.

Bhagavan on Buddha



Bhagavan on Buddha

Buddha The Enlightened one

Although all Avatars (divine advents) have been preaching only good things, men today are content to observe their birthdays without following their precepts. Buddha did not attach any importance to *yajnas* and *yagas* and other religious rituals. The reason is he felt that it was more important to ensure that the five sense organs were pure to begin with. Buddha sought to find out why the mind gets disturbed. He could not bear to see anyone suffering. He was deeply grieved at the sight of persons afflicted with old age. He was intrigued at the sight of a dead body. None of these natural happenings gave him peace of mind. Buddha considered the movements of the planets and the sun and the stars as natural phenomena. He undertook many spiritual exercises to find out what transcended these natural phenomena. Failing to find the answers by these exercises, he approached many great elders to find the answers. None could give him satisfactory answers. Ultimately he reached Gaya and sat under a banyan tree to meditate on the problems that worried him.

Because Buddha did not interest himself in the study of the Vedas or in the performance of Yagas and Yajnas, he was dubbed an atheist. This is utterly wrong. Buddha was a pure hearted person. When he was born, a renowned astrologer had predicted that he would be either a great king or a great renunciant. On knowing this, Buddha's father, Shuddhodhana arranged to keep from his son's sight all unseemly sights of happenings in this world. From his childhood, Buddha could not bear the sight of anyone in pain. He was saddened at the sight of the old ill-treating the young, of men in authority harassing the people and the big fish swallowing the small ones. He realized that it was wrong for anyone to cause harm to others. Hence he declared, "*Ahimsa Paramodharmah*" (Non-hurting is the Supreme Dharma). No one should cause hurt to others by speech, action or in any other way. According to him true Dharma (Righteousness) consists in refraining from causing harm to anyone in thought, word or deed. Truth is God. Buddha taught that people should adhere to truth and uphold it.

Among Buddha's teachings the

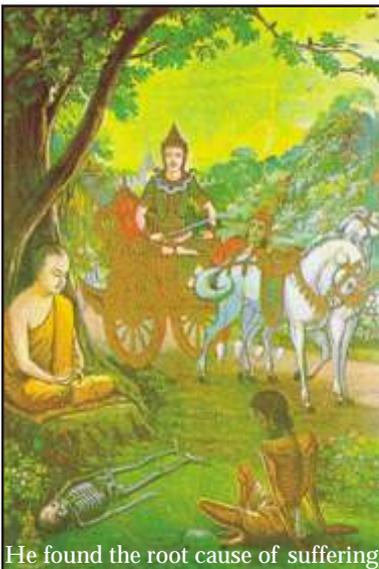
foremost were Sathya (Truth) and Dharma (Righteousness). These two are the teachings of the Vedas, "*Sathyam vada, Dharmam chara*" (Speak the Truth, practice righteousness).

The name given to Buddha at the time of birth was Sarvaartha Siddha. Shuddhodhana got his son married to Yashodhara, daughter of his brother-in-law, Shuddhabuddha. He apprehended that his son may become a recluse and turn away from the world if he was left to himself. But Buddha did not feel that a married life was the proper thing for him. Buddha felt that man was bound by various attachments in worldly life. Friends and relations were the cause of this bondage. Various human relationships were the cause of sorrow in the world. So he declared, "*Sarvam dukkham, dukkham*" (All is sorrow). He also declared, "*Sarvam Kshanikam, Kshanikam*" (everything is momentary). "*Sarvam nashyam, nashyam*" (everything is perishable).

Buddha felt that nothing was truly lasting. Parents were subjecting their children to various kinds of bonds

Bhagavan on Buddha

and making their lives miserable. As soon as the children come of age the parents are keen to get them married. They do not know what kind of happiness the child can get from married life. What happiness have they derived from their own married life physically, mentally or otherwise? No person, however intelligent, thinks about this matter. Even eminent scholars do not care to examine whether it is worthwhile pursuing sensuous pleasures instead of seeking what is beyond the senses. Buddha felt intensely unhappy that his parents and others combined to commit him to the bondage of married life. One day, at midnight, Buddha left the palace, giving up his wife and young son, Rahul.



He found the root cause of suffering

He abandoned everything out of the conviction: "There is no mother or father, no kinsman or friend, no home or wealth. Awaken yourself!" He resolved to find out something which transcends all worldly relationships and pleasures. Buddha asked himself: "What is this life? Birth is misery. Old age is misery. Wife is a cause of sorrow. There is misery at the end of life. Therefore, be alert and awake."

Happiness is not to be found in any of the things of the world. Everything is fleeting. Man is wasting his life in the pursuit of petty

ephemeral pleasures. Nirvana is the only truth. It is the sense of oneness with all life. To turn the mind towards that which is permanent is Nirvana.

Before he attained Nirvana, Buddha summoned his stepbrother Anandabuddha. Buddha's mother Maaya Dhevi passed away on the seventh day after his birth. Shuddhodhana's second wife Gauthami, brought up the child. Because he was brought up by Gauthami, he was named Gautama Buddha. At the age of twenty-eight, he gave up everything and became a renunciant.

When the Buddha sat under the Bodhi Tree in Bodhgaya, after the Illumination that revealed to him the Four Noble Truths, gangs of disbelievers gathered around him and poured ridicule and abuse on him. His disciples were enraged; they prayed to the Buddha, "Lord! Give us leave; we shall beat this insolence and ignorance out of these fools" But, Buddha only smiled at their anger. He said, "Dear Ones! Know you not how much joy they derive from this exercise? You derive joy worshipping me! They derive joy pelting me with abuse. You pour reverence; they pour ridicule, and receive equal satisfaction. Control yourselves: do not hate anyone. This is the teaching. This is the ancient ordinance".

In a life filled with desires, the pleasures one seeks are inevitably followed by grief and disappointments. All unrighteous actions lead to sorrow. It was for this reason that Buddha emphasised the need for discrimination. The first prayer, "*Buddham Saranam Gachchaami*" is a call for cultivating wisdom and discrimination the Buddhi. But unless the power of discrimination is used for doing right action for the good of society it is of no use. Hence the second prayer, "*Sangham Saranam Gachchaami*" (I surrender myself to society). What is this right action that must be done?

That is indicated by the third prayer: "*Dharmam Saranam Gachchaami*" (I take refuge in Dharma). To reach your goal, the royal road is Dharma Righteousness. It is only when these three are combined Wisdom, social service and Righteousness that there is fulfillment in life.

Once Buddha entered a village along with his disciples. A lady approached him and requested him to have food in her house. Buddha blessed her and accepted her invitation. Seeing this many villagers, including the village headman, warned Buddha, saying, "O Buddha, you are one of wisdom and have renounced everything. She is not a woman of good character. It is not proper for you to have food in her house." Buddha smiled and asked the village headman to come forward. Buddha, holding the right hand of the headman, asked him to clap. The headman said, it was not possible for him to clap as one of his hands was in Buddha's hold. Then Buddha said, "True, it is possible to clap only when two hands come together. Likewise, this lady cannot turn bad by herself unless there are men of bad character in this village. The men of this village are the root cause of her bad character." On hearing this, the villagers realised their folly, fell at Buddha's feet and sought his forgiveness. Through his teachings, Buddha instilled sacredness and wisdom in people. Buddha's teachings are highly sacred with profound inner meaning.

Buddha's mother, Mayadevi, passed away when he was just 8 days old. His stepmother Gautami brought him up. That is how he got the name Gautama. He was christened as Siddhartha at the time of his birth. He came to be known as Buddha because he developed Buddhi (intellect) and discrimination power. Discrimination is of two types: individual discrimination and fundamental discrimination. Individual discrimination arises out

Bhagavan on Buddha

of selfishness, whereas fundamental discrimination is concerned with the welfare of one and all. One should discard individual discrimination and have only fundamental discrimination. This was the teaching of Buddha to Ananda, son of Gautami, before he attained Nirvana. When Buddha was on the verge of attaining Nirvana, Ananda started shedding tears of sorrow. Then Buddha consoled him, saying, "Ananda, why are you unhappy over my attaining Nirvana? I have been craving for this state of Nirvana for the past many years. Why do you shed tears of sorrow when I am experiencing supreme bliss?" Ananda understood the truth and followed the teachings of Buddha. Ultimately, he too attained Nirvana. True ideal is to give practical knowledge of Dharma to others. One should be a hero in practice, not merely in preaching. This was the ideal of Buddha. All the Avatars and noble souls led their lives in the most exemplary manner and helped people experience divinity. Buddha said, "O man, you don't need to search for God anywhere. You are God yourself"

The true meaning of Buddhist prayer

No one can live for himself. He is involved with parents, kinsmen, friends, foes, society, countrymen, etc., in ever-widening circles. Buddhists declare, "I take refuge in the Buddha. I take refuge in the *Sangha*. I take refuge in *Dharma* (virtue)." The first is the involvement with the reality in one's own individual self. One must examine oneself whether he lives according to a mind, free from polluting thoughts and feelings. Buddha is the symbol of the awakened intellect. Is the intellect sharp enough for clear discrimination? This must be one's question to oneself. For, even an insane person asks for food when hungry. His intellect is alert for limited purposes. But it has to serve far higher purposes for man.

The second stage is refuge in the *Sangha*. Just as one yearns for and works towards securing property, welfare and happiness for oneself, one must also yearn for and work towards securing these very things for the *sangha* (society) to which one belongs. Without society to guard and guide, the individual is lost, like a drop of oil on an expanse of water. One's welfare is based on the welfare of society. The welfare of a particular society is based on the welfare of the country.

The third stage is refuge in the *Dharma*. *Dharma* means the vesture of the Cosmos, that which is its very nature, namely, *Prema* or Divine Love. When one seeks refuge in Love that sustains and promotes progress, the individual, the society and world become a sublime Trinity.

Buddha teaches True Sacrifice

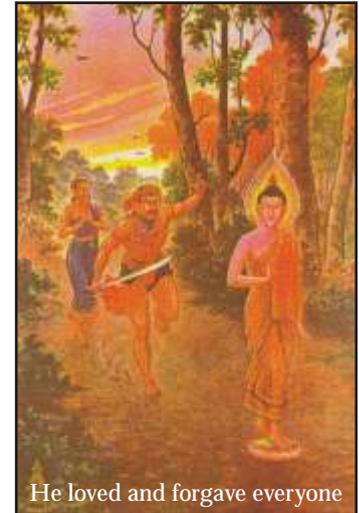
Buddha was once asked: "Who is the richest man in the world?" Buddha replied: "He who has much satisfaction (with what he has) is the richest man." To the question, "Who is the poorest man?" Buddha replied: "He who has many desires."

A Maharaja, who was listening to Buddha's sermons on contentment and renunciation, wished to earn the approbation of Buddha.

Buddha used to keep with him always a rattle-drum. His disciples once asked him: "Master! Why are you always keeping this rattle-drum by your side?" Buddha replied: "I shall play on this drum the day a person who has made the greatest sacrifice approaches me." Everyone was eager to know who this person would be. Such persons are often the forgotten men of history.

Wishing to attain this distinction, a Maharaja loaded his elephants with considerable treasure and went to Buddha. He hoped to offer the treasure to Buddha and earn his praise.

On the way, an old woman greeted the Maharaja and pleaded: "I am



He loved and forgave everyone

hungry. Will you give me some food?" The Maharaja took out a pomegranate fruit from his palanquin and gave it to the old woman. The old woman came to Buddha with the fruit.

By then, the Maharaja had also come to Buddha and was eagerly waiting to see when Buddha would sound the rattle-drum. For a long time Buddha did not use it. The Maharaja stayed on.

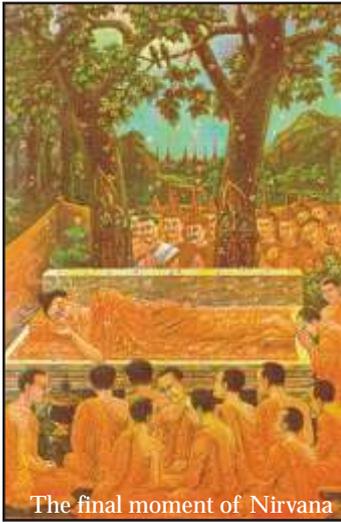
The old woman approached Buddha staggering on her legs, and offered him the pomegranate fruit. Buddha took it immediately and sounded the little drum.

The Maharaja asked Buddha: "I offered so much wealth to you. You did not sound the drum. But you rattled it after receiving a small fruit. Is this a great sacrifice?"

Buddha replied: "Maharaja! In sacrifice, it is not quantity that counts. It is the quality of sacrifice that matters. It is natural for a Maharaja to offer gold. But what great sacrifice is made when a hungry old woman offers the pomegranate fruit to the *Guru* despite her hunger. She did not care even for her life and gave the fruit. What greater sacrifice can there be? It is not sacrifice to offer what is superfluous for you. True sacrifice means giving up that which is most dear to you, that which you value most."

Non-hurting is the
Supreme Dharma

Bhagavan on Buddha



The final moment of Nirvana

Buddha teaches Equanimity

There used to be a village-chief who did not like Buddha's way of life. He used to look upon him as a lazy person who was gathering round him young men and making them lead an idle life. Buddha who was aware of the man's attitude, went to his house one day with his disciples and begged for alms "*Bhavathi! Bhikshaam Dehi*" (Oh blessed one! offer me alms). The headman, who had espied Buddha approaching the house and begging for alms, shouted: "You lazy fellow! You don't deserve any alms. Get out! You have been wasting your time." The headman went on abusing Buddha, calling him all kinds of names. Buddha was amused and was smiling.

After exhausting his abuses, the headman calmed down and asked Buddha, "Sire! I have a doubt. Will you clear it?" Buddha said, "What is your doubt? Speak out." The headman asked how Buddha had remained unaffected by all the abuse he had levelled against the latter. Buddha said, "I came to you begging for food. Supposing you had brought the food and I had refused to take it, what would you have done with the food?" The man replied, "I would have taken it back." Buddha then said, "Now, instead of food, you gave me all your abuse. I refused to receive it. What happens to it? It goes back to

you. I have no connection with it." The headman learnt a good lesson.

Wider meaning of Ahimsa

Buddha attached great importance to Ahimsa. He considered it the foremost *Dharma* (duty). "*Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah*," declared Buddha. What does Ahimsa signify? It is not merely refraining from causing harm or injury to others. It implies also refraining from causing harm to oneself. One who harms himself cannot avoid harming others? Whoever desires to observe Ahimsa must see that he does not do violence to himself. How is this to be ensured? By constantly examining whether his conduct is right or wrong. For instance, in the matter of speech, he must examine whether his words are causing pain to others or not. He must see that his looks are not tainted by evil intentions or thoughts. He should not listen to evil talk. All these cause harm to the individual.

How can a man who is not aware of his humanness recognize the Divinity within him? Hence the first requisite is the recognition by everyone of his human essence. Basing on this truth, Buddha declared that everyone should cultivate at the outset *Samyag-dhrishti* (a pure vision). It is only when man has a pure vision that he can get rid of impurities in the body, speech and mind. It is this purity that can protect man from invasion of impurities through the eyes and the ears. Hence the first requirement for every man is *Samyag-dhrishti*.

The second quality that is needed is *Samyag-sankalpa* (pure thoughts). Everyone should have pure thoughts. Only the person who has developed purity in vision can have purity in thoughts.

The third requirement for every man, along with purity in vision and thought, is *Samyag-karma* (pure deeds). Everyone should do pure deeds. Through pure deeds man is able to recognize his human essence. Man is not merely an embodied

being. By his capacity for developing good vision, entertaining good thoughts and performing good deeds, he has the power to transform humanness into Divinity.

A fourth requirement for man is *Samyag-shruthi* (listening to sacred words). When one listens to unsacred words he can have only unsacred thoughts.

The fifth quality prescribed by Buddha is *Samyag-jeevanam* (living a pure life). What is meant by "living"? It is not leading a worldly life attached to worldly pursuits. True living means making one's life meaningful by ideal actions. Man's life must be governed by idealism in action.

It is not enough to read the lives of Avatars and messiahs. Their teachings should be put into practice as much as possible. People must gradually outgrow their material attachments and develop divine love.

Shuddhodhana tried to protect his son from all external worldly influences by keeping him in the palace and not even sending him to school. What happened ultimately? Buddha decided to renounce everything in quest of the truth about human existence and he declared Ahimsa (non-harming) as the supreme good.

Embodiments of Love! We are celebrating today Buddha Pournima. What does Pournima (full moon) signify? It signifies wholeness. When the mind is filled with love, it achieves fullness. As long as the mind is filled with darkness (evil thoughts) there is no meaning in celebrating Buddha Pournima. Get rid of this darkness. Without the light of love in the heart, what use is there in having illuminations outside? Light the lamp of the Divine in your minds. Banish hatred and envy from your hearts. Man is the victim of two evil planets: attachment and hatred. To escape from their grip, the only way is to cultivate love.



The Teachings of Plato on Education

A Parallelism with Swami's Teachings on Educare

(Continued from the previous issue)

"Education is not putting knowledge into a soul which doesn't have it, just as giving sight into eyes that are blind. The capacity of knowledge is present in everyone's soul. And just as an eye turns from darkness to light, the soul has to turn away from the world of becoming towards the Being Itself, until it becomes capable to see the Brightest Reality, which we call Goodness. That is what Education should be, the art of orientation. Educators should devise the simplest and most effective methods to turn the mind towards the Light. Not to implant sight in it, because it already has the capacity, but to correct its orientation, because it is now improperly aligned and is not facing the right way."

(Rep. 518 - d)

Goodness

After the virtues of the true philosopher have been mentioned, Plato leads us to the highest point, the knowledge of Goodness (Sivam). Righteousness, bravery, self control and all the other virtues are indeed very important, but still there is something higher. This is the idea of Goodness, God Himself, who is like the Sun whose rays are the virtues.

"There is absolutely no point in having expert knowledge of everything else, but lacking knowledge of Goodness. There is absolutely no advantage in owning everything else in the world, but not Goodness" (505a-b).

That is what every soul yearns and makes every effort to own. Many people are in the dark about it, but we cannot allow the best members of our community, the ones to whom we are going to entrust everything, to be equally in the dark. But what is Goodness?

Socrates professes himself incapable of defining Goodness and proposes

a simile instead, the simile of the Sun. Just as the sun is the source of light and growth and is responsible for sight and seeing and is the acme of the visible realm, so Goodness is the source of Truth and reality and is responsible for knowledge of all ideas in the invisible world of higher intellect. To give a clear image of Goodness, Plato introduces here the famous allegory of the cave (514a 518b):

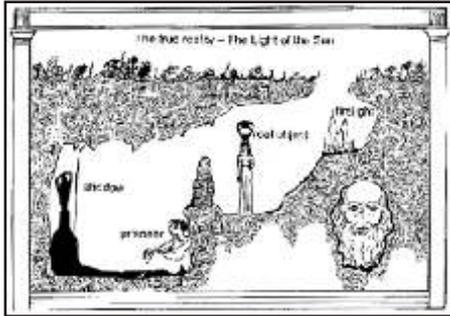
"Imagine people living in a cave down under the ground; at the far end of the cave there's an entrance open to the outside world. They've been there since childhood, with their legs and necks tied up in a way that keeps them in one place and allows them to look only straight ahead, but not to turn their heads. There is firelight burning a long way further up the cave behind them, and up the slope between the fire and the prisoner there's a road and beside it a low wall. Imagine also that there are people on the other side of this wall, who are carrying all sorts of objects, that stick out over the wall; and some of these people talk and others are

silent. Do you think these prisoners would see anything of themselves, of one another or of the objects except the shadows cast by the fire on to the cave wall directly opposite them, since they are forced to live without moving their heads? And if they were able to talk to one another, don't you think they would assume that their words applied to what they saw passing by in front of them? And if sound echoed off the prison wall opposite them, when any of the passers-by spoke, they would assume that the sound came from a passing shadow. All in all then, the shadows of the objects would constitute the only reality people inside would recognize.

What would happen if they were set free from their bonds and cured of their ignorance? Imagine that one of them is suddenly made to stand up, to turn his head and walk and to look towards the firelight. It hurts him to do all this and he is too dazzled to be capable of making out the objects whose shadows he had formerly been looking at. And if someone tells him that what he's been seeing all this time has no substance and now he is seeing more accurately, what do you think his reaction

The Teachings of Plato on Education A Parallelism with Swami's Teachings on Educare

(Continued from the previous issue)



would be? And if he were shown any of the passing objects and he were asked what it was, he would be bewildered. He would think that there was more reality in what he had been seeing before than in what he is seeing now. And if he were forced to look at the firelight it would hurt his eyes and he would turn away and run back to the shadows. He would think that the shadows are clearer than the real objects. And if someone drugged him forcibly and pulled him out into the sunlight he would not be able to see a single one of the real things, because his eyes would be overwhelmed by the sun's beams. He wouldn't be able to see things up on the surface of the earth until he had got used to the sunlight. At first, it would be shadows that he could most easily make out, then he would move on to the reflections in water and later he would be able to see the actual things themselves. Next, he would turn his eyes on the heavens, easier at night and he would look at the light of the stars and the moon. And at last he would be able to discern and turn his eyes on the sun during daytime. After that he would realize that the sun is the source of the seasons and the yearly cycle; that the whole of the visible realm is its domain and that everything that he used to see is caused by the Sun. And if he recalled the cave where he had originally lived and his former fellow prisoners, he would feel happy about his new situation and sorry for them. And if he went back underground and sat down again in the same spot, his eyes would be overwhelmed by darkness, because of the sudden transition from the sunlight. And if he had to compete against those same old

prisoners at identifying those shadows, they would call him a fool.. They would say that he had come back from his upward journey with his eyes ruined and that it wasn't even worth trying to go up there. And if anyone tried to set them free and take them up there, they would grab hold of him if they could- and kill him.

You should apply this allegory, to what we were talking about before. The region that is accessible to sight should be equated with the prison cave and the firelight there with the light of the sun. You should think of the upward journey and the sight of things up on the surface of the earth as the mind's ascent to the spiritual realm. The last thing to be seen in the spiritual realm is Goodness; and the sight of Goodness leads one to realize that This is responsible for everything that is right and fine. In the visible realm Goodness is the progenitor of light and the source of light and in the spiritual realm, Goodness is the source and provider of Truth and Knowledge. The sight of It is a prerequisite for Righteousness either in one's private affairs or in public business".

(Republic, 514a 517c)

Education is the turning of the Soul towards the Light of Goodness

After this wonderful allegory of the cave and the description of the upward journey of the Soul towards Goodness, Plato defines that this is exactly the goal of education. He says: "Education is not putting knowledge into a soul which doesn't have it, just as giving sight into eyes that are blind. The capacity of knowledge is present in

everyone's soul. And just as an eye turns from darkness to light, the soul has to turn away from the world of becoming towards the Being Itself until it becomes capable to see the Brightest Reality, which we call Goodness. That's what Education should be, the art of orientation. Educators should devise the simplest and most effective methods to turn the mind towards the Light. Not to implant sight in it, because it already has the capacity, but to correct its orientation, because it is now improperly aligned and is not facing the right way"

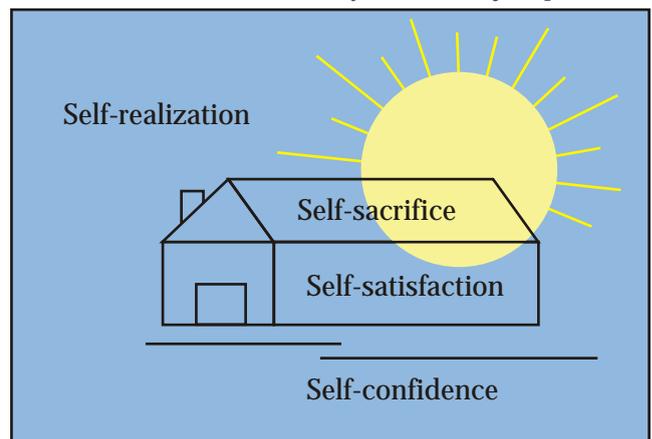
(Republic, 518c d)

As Swami very simply says:

*"Education should not be information
Education should be transformation"*

The ascent of the soul towards the Being starts with music and gymnastics as we saw earlier. But for the completion of the journey to Goodness higher education is needed. The philosophers must study arithmetic, geometry, solid geometry, astronomy and harmony. Finally after the mind has been sharpened through them, it is ready for the highest subject, that is dialectic. Maybe we could ask here how these subjects that deal with the world of becoming, can help in the spiritual ascent of the Soul towards Being?

"The study of these subjects purifies the



The Teachings of Plato on Education A Parallelism with Swami's Teachings on Educare

(Continued from the previous issue)

organ of higher intellect that everyone has, while other occupations ruin it and blind it. This organ is a thousand times more precious than any eye, since this is the only organ that can see Truth” (527e).

The real science is not the science of the mundane world but spirituality, the science of the Being beyond time and space. How can the previous subjects help in this science? Plato says about astronomy: “There is

nothing in the visible realm that is more beautiful than these decorations in the sky. But since they are within the visible realm, they should be regarded as considerably inferior to true decorations, to true Beauty... Therefore, we should use the heavenly decorations merely as illustrations to help us study the

invisible realm of the Divine... If we don't ignore the heavenly bodies, we'll never be engaged in true astronomy and we'll never develop our soul's innate intelligence”

(Rep. 529c 530b).

We see that for Plato the real benefit of the study of the material world is not to remain trapped in the external vision, but to be awakened to the Divine Reality that lies beyond the worldly phenomena. The aim is to see with the inner eye of wisdom the Divine Beauty that lies behind the

external beauty. To reach at the highest top and to see Goodness Itself, the last subject is dialectic.

Dialectic is the highest faculty of discrimination between what is real and what is unreal, what is permanent and what is transient. (Dialectic = Viveka)

“He who uses dialectic with absolutely no

program.” (534e)

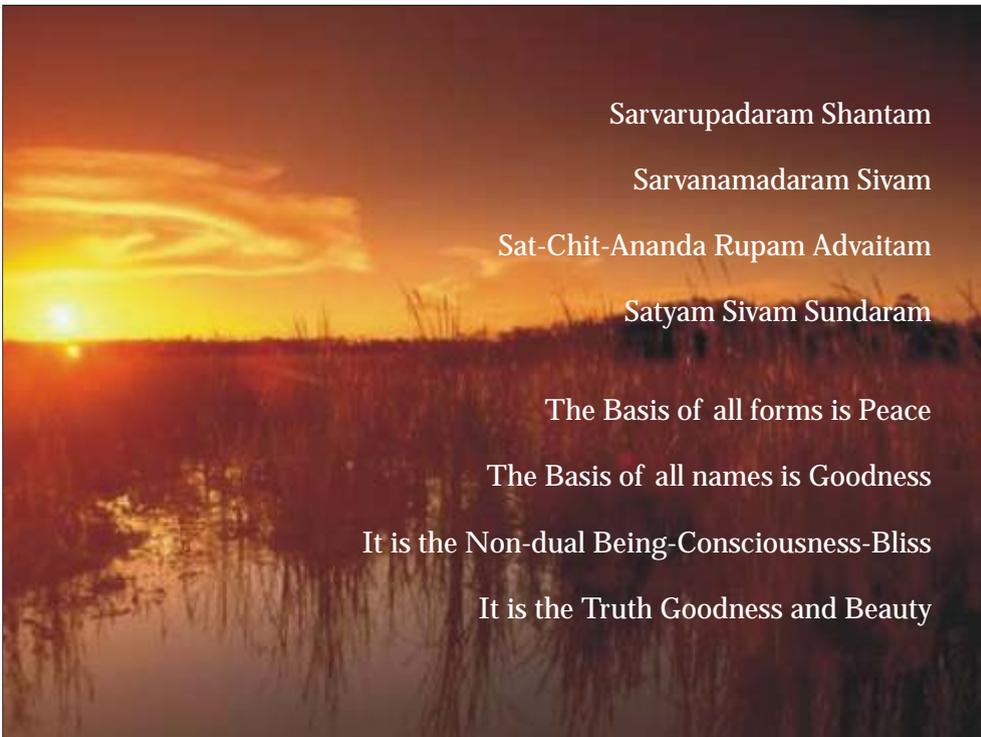
Until now we saw in brief the educational program that Plato establishes in an ideal community. This is exactly the same with the one that Bhagavan Baba has established all over the world with the program of Education in Human Values.

The foundation of this program is Self-confidence, that is the strong

faith in the spiritual nature of man, the faith that his real self is the Divine Self, Atma, who indwells in the vehicle of body and mind. The purpose of the ideal education is to remind to man this Divine Nature of his.

To reach this Divine End, man has to

build the mansion of his life with the walls of Self-satisfaction, that means to learn to draw happiness from his inner Self. Then he has to build the roof of self-sacrifice; when he is established in his real spiritual Self, then he can sacrifice outer things for the welfare of his fellow beings. Finally, in this mansion the Light of Self-realization, the Light of Goodness, will shine.



Sarvarupadaram Shantam

Sarvanamadaram Sivam

Sat-Chit-Ananda Rupam Advaitam

Satyam Sivam Sundaram

The Basis of all forms is Peace

The Basis of all names is Goodness

It is the Non-dual Being-Consciousness-Bliss

It is the Truth Goodness and Beauty

use of the senses, reaches the summit of the spiritual realm. He grasps with his intellect the Idea of Goodness Itself, just as the prisoner of the cave ends up at the supreme point of the visible realm, that is the Sun” (532a b)

“Dialectic uproots the things that now are taken for granted and leads towards the Primary Cause. It gently extracts the mind's eye from the mud in which it is now buried and guides it upwards.” (533d)

“So dialectic occupies the highest position and is the keystone of the curriculum. There is no subject higher than this and therefore dialectic completes our educational

The Teachings of Plato on Education A Parallelism with Swami's Teachings on Educare

(Continued from the previous issue)

Many times Swami in His discourses speaks about Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Here is an extract from a discourse delivered by Bhagavan Sri Satya Sai Baba to the faculty and students of Sri Satya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prashanti Nilayam.

“Socrates used to follow the path of *Pariprasna* asking questions and answering them. This encouraged the whole youth. What are the characteristics of a ruler? What good qualities and habits should he have? What morals should he follow? What type of devotion should he have? He used to inquire in all these things. He made the youth think about these things and finally it was decided that the person without these qualities was not fit to be a ruler. He should have love for God. It was decided that the youth should fight for the country. The rulers of his time were very annoyed about this, hence decided to sentence Socrates to death. Good always faces obstacles like this. The decision was final. Nobody could change it. Socrates decided it was better to die in the hands of his devotees rather than in the hands of the rulers.

The first disciple of Socrates was Plato. Plato was a very mighty person. Plato tried to spread the teachings of Socrates all over the world. He preached that for this world three things are important and necessary: Truth, Goodness and Beauty. What is Beauty? Beauty is not related to the body. Selflessness is beauty. A person who works selflessly is the most beautiful one. These three are also called *Nischala* (steadiness), *Nirmala* (purity) *Nisvartha* (selflessness).

Aristotle, the disciple of Plato had good acquaintance with Indian culture. He took those three words of Plato and reformed them as Satyam Sivam and Sundaram. He taught to the world that *Satyam* (Truth), *Sivam* (Goodness) and *Sundaram* (Beauty) are very important. These three are the teachings of Satya Sai also. *Satyam*: speak truth, *Sivam*: *mangalam* (auspiciousness). What is auspiciousness? Selflessness is auspiciousness. If anything is selfish, it becomes *amangalam* (inauspicious). Then comes *Sundaram*: Beauty. When will anything be beautiful? Anything will be beautiful when there is no trace of attachment. Plato developed all these things. When a country is developed like this, then people can enjoy the fruits of this. The culture that Plato and others followed is also *Bharathiya* culture.”



Controlling the Senses is the Highest Sadhana



Once a Pundit challenged Buddha to enter into a debate with him. The terms were that if he was the loser, he would follow Buddhism along with his 3000 disciples and serve Buddha lifelong. But, if Buddha was the loser, it would be obligatory on his part to become a follower of the Pundit. Buddha smilingly said, "*Pundita Samadarshina*" (a true Pundit is one who has equal-mindedness). A true Pundit makes no distinction between the dualities of life, such as pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow. A person with anger and ego is unfit to be called a Pundit. In pilgrim centres such as Haridwar, Rishikesh, Badrinath, Kedarnath and Amarnath, you find *Pandas* who give Mantras that would grant liberation to the departed souls. These *Pandas* cannot be called Pundits. In this world, there are many who have gone through sacred texts. The knowledge of the Self cannot be acquired by mere scholarship or by sitting at the feet of a guru. There are many who go through voluminous books, but is there a person who practises at least one teaching? When you spend all your life in reading, when are you going to practise it? Scholarship bereft of practice is futile.

Explaining thus, Buddha silenced the Pundit and advised him to shun the pride and ego of his scholarship. He told the Pundit not to get carried away by the worldly knowledge. He exhorted him to acquire and practise divine knowledge and surrender to God. Buddha said, "I

undertook spiritual practice for a long time and went through various sacred texts in quest of knowledge of the Self. Ultimately, I realised that mastering the senses is essential for acquiring knowledge of the Self. The five senses are the gift of God. Make proper use of them. Only then you can realise the Self. What is the use of going through sacred texts and undertaking spiritual practices without proper utilisation of the five senses? I have controlled the five senses and put them on the right path, as a result of which I am experiencing bliss."

Buddha attained *Nirvana* by controlling his five senses and making proper use of them. What is *Nirvana*? It is nothing but merger in bliss. Water bubble is born in water, is sustained in water and ultimately merges in it; likewise, human being is born in bliss, is sustained in bliss and ultimately merges in it. Bliss can be experienced by controlling the five senses. This is the true Sadhana. Mere chanting of Lord's name will not suffice. First and foremost, the senses have to be controlled. At the time of attaining *Nirvana*, Buddha saw his cousin, Ananda, shedding tears. He called him near and said, "Ananda, true to your name, you should experience Ananda (bliss). You should never shed tears of sorrow. You are the embodiment of Ananda. All of us are embodiments of Brahma." Saying so, Buddha put his hand on Ananda and attained *Nirvana*.



On Educare

Recently, some organisational work got me a bit involved in matters relating to what is usually called Educare; and in the process, I had to do a lot of thinking. In this and some of the articles to follow in this series, I shall share with you a few of the thoughts on the subject that occurred to me during this exercise.

A natural starting point is of course the origin and the meaning of the word Educare. Most of us were totally ignorant about this word until a few years ago when Swami used it for the first time in one of His Discourses on education. Immediately many jumped to the conclusion that this was a new word and that Swami had actually coined it. That is not so. The fact of the matter is that Educare is an old word derived from Latin. Actually, there are two Latin root words that are somewhat similar. The first is word EDUCARE, pronounced EDOO KAARE while the second is EDUCERE pronounced EDOO KERE. The Latin word EDUCARE means to support and nurture the growth of, while the other Latin word EDUCERE means to draw out or to cause to come out. Scholars have pointed out the first word has in due course given birth to the word education in the English language. The second word, on the other hand, is really what Bhagavan Baba has been referring to, but with the modified spelling EDUCARE. So much for what might be called etymology.

Fine, but what exactly does it mean in our context and how are we to understand and possibly apply what Educare is supposed to mean? Also, whatever happened to Educare till now? How come no one seems to have mentioned it earlier? And what made Swami to pick this word and resurrect it? May be I should deal with some of these questions first.

In olden days, morals and values were paramount in all facets of Society in the house, in the school, and in the community. Thus, when children from different families met, there was a general homogeneity of views and all were aligned to the same basic principles and moral values. True, the various temptations of life were present no doubt, but societal forces on the one hand and restricted avenues of communication generally helped children to be respectful, obedient and principled. To put it differently, the absence of large-scale disturbing forces greatly aided the process of sustaining Morality in Society. In Swami's words, there was Love for God, fear of sin, and hence also Morality in Society. Thus, Educare was implicit and there was no special need to invoke it explicitly.

The one single major factor disrupting this process severely in recent time to the extent of almost damaging entirely the age-old fabric of Society has been the emergence of the Media as a towering and totally independent force. It started with print, then moved on to the radio, then to the audio, then on to TV, and now to the internet. As of all this was not enough, we also have the so-called blessing of the mobile phone.

The press, the movies, and television are all associated with corporations there are owners, investors, and those seeking profit. In the name of making money, and by a clever projection of the so-called right to freedom of speech and expression, the Media, which is almost invariably controlled by giant and most powerful interests, has and continues to wreck havoc, making parents and teachers almost powerless. This large-scale [external] disturbing force did not exist earlier.

The question may be asked why the Media is acting in such a socially corrosive manner. The answer is simple: The Media is in the business

of making money and not protecting Society's interests those days when it acted with concern for public good and with responsibility are more or less gone. The Media is extremely powerful and its influence is very strong. By ourselves we might not succeed in meeting the challenge of today's disruptive forces but if we step forward with the Lord's Name on our lips, even the seemingly impossible would definitely become possible that is what faith is all about. Swami has for years been talking about the need for a firm and committed return to the Moral path, and it is by way of countering the present disruptive forces that He reminded us of what was once regarded as one's normal duty, not only ourselves observing *Dharma* but also helping children to do the same. That, in brief, is the context in which we have to understand how the term Educare came to be placed before us by Bhagavan Baba. We have to make a special and renewed attempt to bring forth from within, especially in the modern context, the treasures already bequeathed to us by God.

Let us now try to understand all this in context of Swami's basic Message to humanity. God as Sri Sathya Sai Avatar has been exceptionally considerate in spelling out His Message in considerable detail, not just once or twice but any number of times, at various places and on various occasions. Although the details of the exposition and the analogies used for illustration might have varied, the essentials have always remained the same; indeed they are precisely what the Lord in an earlier incarnation as Krishna had stated. In brief God's Message is:

- Man must first realise that he is Divine in origin.
- Next, having realised his intrinsic Divine nature, man must act in accordance with that nature.
- When man follows the above two steps, he would automatically

On Educare

experience Bliss, which is the Form of the Divine.

Three key words often used by Swami in this context are:

- *Atma Viswaasam.*
- *Atma Dharma.*
- *Atma Trupthi.*

The first word means faith in the *Atma*; the second essentially means acting in accordance with the nature of the *Atma*; and the third means achieving Self-satisfaction - true Self-satisfaction is synonymous with Bliss.

To the uninitiated all this might sound rather vague and abstract but there is deep meaning behind it. The first step, namely realising one's true nature, involves looking deep within oneself i.e., going into the Inner World. Having discovered one's true nature, namely that one is nothing but a Spark of the Divine, one is then called upon to act in the external world in accordance with one's true nature this is the second step. And when one follows steps one and two, Bliss is the automatic result. In short, the above three-point formula that captures the essence of God's teaching to man involves both the so-called Inner as well as the external worlds.

To put it differently, the word EDUCARE as Swami uses it really means to draw forth from the Heart; and in this sense, it subsumes steps one and two mentioned earlier. [Swami also once told students that the commonly used word education in fact came from EDUCARE, and in a restrictive context. As we all know education is for just making a living while educare is the Compass for life.] In other words, EDUCARE is a one-word summary of the first two points of God's Message to man spelt out earlier.

Seen in the above light many things

become immediately obvious, the most important of which is that Educare as a concept is not only all-inclusive and comprehensive but also applicable to one and all, and in all situations in life. Nobody or anything is excluded from its purview.

In this and some of the subsequent articles in the series entitled Reflections, I shall try and elaborate on many different aspects of life, linking them to the basic point made by Swami. Swami has always stressed individual transformation and Educare is a word that focuses explicit attention on that. We shall now examine in some depth the implications of the word transformation.

Transformation implies change and in our context it means a change for the better. In turn this means giving up the bad and embracing the good. But there is more to transformation than just this. Now when relating to Swami, we must clearly understand that Swami's focus is always on Spirituality and that He wants us also to have the same focus. This means that transformation must be seen as a process originating Inside. Unless we seriously look Inwards, we would never be able to relate even feebly to the *Atma* or the Universal and Eternal Spirit/Soul. Any transformation that a Sai devotee seeks, must involve such introspection, if the seeker is serious.

Swami wants man to look into his Heart and start from there that really is what Educare is all about. Some years ago, while speaking to students of the Business School in His University, Swami related the processes associated with Educare to Import-Export. He said we must first import LOVE from the Heart into the Head and then, after processing it, export it to the world outside through LOVING WORDS and LOVING ACTIONS [via the Body of course]. This is typical of Swami,

translating a seemingly complex concept into not only simple language but also a practical recipe.

OK, agreed as I said earlier that human actions must generally reflect Divine attributes. What are the attributes that one expects? The most important of these is the harmony of feeling, thought, word and deed, a harmony that Swami often refers to via the word *Trikaranasuddhi*. In practical terms, it means the harmonious functioning of the Heart [the seat of feelings], the Head [the seat of thought] and the Body [the source for words and action]. When these three components, namely the Heart, the Head and the Body function coherently and in unison, it automatically implies that the feeling that underlies the word/action is Divine, so is the thought that formulates the word/action and so is final word spoken or the action performed. In other words, if *Trikaranasuddhi* or Purity of Thought, Word and Deed is achieved, then it automatically implies that Educare has been given practical expression to. It is pertinent to note that *Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema* and *Ahimsa* that are normally referred to as the Human Values manifest only when there is *Trikaranasuddhi*; no Triple Purity, no Human Values Swami has made this abundantly clear on more than one occasion. The last mentioned point is important, especially in the context of the various efforts being mounted to spread Human Values. As Swami has pointed out take care of *Trikaranasuddhi* and the Human Values take care of themselves automatically.

I think I have said enough for an opener. The bottom line for the present is: The first step in identifying oneself with the *Atma* is to make *Trikaranasuddhi* an essential and non-negotiable part of one's life. Without this virtue, any Love that one claims to show, even to God, would be tainted this we must never

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forget. This last point is non-trivial and yet forgotten frequently. For example, when one is in dire difficulties one often prays intensely to God, promising all kinds of things, including in terms of good behaviour etc. But soon after God responds and removes the difficulties He is quickly forgotten as also the many promises made, till of course the next crisis.

We all would do well to introspect carefully and honestly and check how often we have defaulted on our promises, not only to God but also to fellow human beings. [Incidentally, in the Atmic language, if we are untrue

to a fellow human being we are in fact untrue to God.] Failure to keep promises and following up this failure with excuses is far more common that we care to admit. Whether we like it or not, and no matter what we think are the extenuating circumstances, every single failure is a loud announcement of a lapse in *Trikaranasuddhi*. Without this Inner Harmony, all *Sadhanas* become totally bereft of meaning, although we might not be willing to admit it.

In future articles, I shall take up specific matters related to today's existence and discuss how these are

to be viewed in the context to *Atma Viswasam* and *Atma Dharma*. Hopefully, all this would help you to appreciate that Swami's teachings are actually meant to be applied in day to day life though on the face of it they might appear far removed from the reality of mundane existence.

Perhaps this Reflection is a bit "heavy"! Feel so? Why don't you write back and let us know? Jai Sai Ram.

G.VENKATARAMAN



Kindle Your Spirit

The Cocoon

A man found a cocoon of an emperor moth. He took it home so he could observe the moth come out of the cocoon. On the day a small opening appeared, he watched for several hours as it struggled to force its body through a little hole. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could go. The man, in his kindness, decided to help the moth. With a pair of scissors he snipped off the remaining cocoon. The moth then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. The man continued to watch. He expected the wings to enlarge and expand to support the body, which would contract in time. Neither happened! In fact, the little moth spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings.



What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the moth to get through the tiny opening were a way of forcing fluid from the body of the moth into its wings, so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon. Freedom and flight would only come after the struggle. By depriving the moth of a struggle, he

deprived it of health. Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need. If we go through life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we really are. ♦

Rendezvous with Dr. Safaya

(part 1 of 2)

Radio Sai interview with Dr. Safaya, Director, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical sciences, Prasanthi gram campus and the Whitefield campus.

Interviewer: Prof. G. Venkataraman, (GV) Former Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher learning



Dr.Safaya

GV: Sai Ram Dr. Safaya, and welcome to the Studios of Radio Sai. We all know you very well, including the listeners; so may be, there is no real introduction necessary. But there is one thing most people do not know - I, for example, do not know and that is: What brought you to Swami? Different people have different experiences that bring them to Swami. What brought you to Swami?

Dr. Safaya: What brought me to Swami was my spiritual quest. I have always wanted to get the answer to two questions. 1) Is there God and Divinity? 2) If there is, then how to find it?

GV: These questions were with you always?

Dr. Safaya: Since my childhood, I should say.

GV: What were you doing to find the answers?

Dr. Safaya: I tried to meet a large number of people, religious people and saints, not only Hindus but

belonging to all religions, and the only thing that clicked with me was Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

GV: How did you come to hear about Him?

Dr. Safaya: I read a book entitled, The Man of Miracles.

GV: Murphet's Book?

Dr. Safaya: Yes, Murphet's book. This book was in Hindi and I do not know much of Hindi, myself. So I had to read it practically like a school boy.

GV: You were not aware that the book was originally published in English?

Dr. Safaya: Not at that time. It was given to me by a friend. He said, "You give it to your wife. She will read it out for you and you can finish in a week or two and then return it". It was in the morning breakfast time, when I started reading it. I then forgot myself completely. Where I was? And what I was reading? I forgot

every thing completely. I had to go to the hospital - I was teaching those days. But I forgot!

GV: It was that gripping?

Dr. Safaya: It was gripping and most interesting. Not only that; I fell in love with Swami as I went on reading the book.

GV: Your time had come!

Dr. Safaya: Yes, my time had come. Just like a key and the lock - it just opened like that. By the time I finished the book, I knew finally that I had found the PERSON for whom I was waiting.

GV: You wanted to see Him?

Dr. Safaya: Yes, I wanted to see Him.

SSSIHMS Today



Rendezvous with Dr. Safaya

(part 1 of 2)

GV: So you came here.

Dr. Safaya: First I started attending Bhajans locally and later I started coming here. Here, in 1984, I said to Bhagavan: "Why don't I work in the General Hospital here for a few days? I have enough time in between Darshans". He said, "No no, not now. That time will come and I will then tell you what to do".

GV: 1984? Seven years before the Puttaparthi Super Speciality Hospital was started?

Dr. Safaya: That's right. And He told me that He would call a meeting of all the doctors of the world and decide there what is to be done. Wait for that time, He added.

GV: Fantastic! What did you think of it when was this told to you?

Dr. Safaya: It was my first Interview and I was a little confused, I must say.

GV: No wonder!

Dr. Safaya: Quite overfilled, I was brimming with joy and Love and all sorts of feelings that I did not understand. Later on I was concentrating on this sentence. What was to be my role, and what does He have in store for me? When will this meeting of doctors take place? I didn't have any idea that a big hospital was going to be established.

GV: Who had? No body!

Dr. Safaya: One day while I was in my hospital in Delhi, I got a sudden telephone call. The message was: "You must come at once to Whitefield".

GV: Which year was that?

Dr. Safaya: Early 1990. The Message said: "Bhagavan has formed an International Committee for establishing a Super Speciality

Hospital at Prasanthi Nilayam and you are the Chairman of the Committee." I was completely bowled over.

GV: You had forgotten, but HE remembered!

Dr. Safaya: Absolutely! I then took the next plane and landed in Whitefield, where Swami was at that time. Col. Joga Rao met me at Bangalore Airport and I was driven straight to Ashram and things got started. There I met a large number of doctors, Indian as well as overseas doctors. A good many of the names were quite familiar but there were also others whom I had not met before.

GV: So in 1991 you finally made a shift to this place. How was it to come from a big hospital in big city to what was then still a village, and to work in a very different kind of hospital?

Dr. Safaya: It was a great challenge in many ways. Number one, we had to establish a hospital at a rural location 160 Kms. from a metropolitan city where every thing was easily available while here nothing was available. We had to have to have a team of people drawing up the lists of various requirements, not missing anything, not even a needle. It therefore took us some time to get adjusted in establishing a hospital in rural service. Even now, the hospital's next door neighbour is a thatched hut. I remember, we who were engaged in planning and advising the engineers, we would take tea along with the labourers in an L&T [Larson and Toubro] canteen. Gradually things started taking shape and my people, my workers and colleagues also started used to these rural facilities in the surroundings. But one thing was there - there was tremendous amount of dedication in every body. Not only in the people associated with the hospital, who knew all about what



the hospital was meant for and what it was supposed to do. Even the L & T construction labourer who was carrying a crowbar, cement, bricks and all that, went to the same canteen. The culture of the hospital developed, I think, right from the day the foundation stone was laid.

GV: Needless to say you got the inspiration from Swami, otherwise it would have been very frustrating.

Dr. Safaya: Not only I, but everybody got their inspiration from the same Source.

GV: Did Swami pay visits in those days?

Dr. Safaya: Yes He did, daily. Sometimes He would come twice during the day.

GV: He is so meticulous; I am sure He went all round.

Dr. Safaya: Yes He did, instructing, encouraging and inspiring. Next morning we would have to show some improvement or some achievement.

GV: Nevertheless, you came through it all and you have sailed through ten years. How does it appear now, when you look back?

Dr. Safaya: It seems like a miracle. The hospital was to be inaugurated on 22nd. Two days before that date, I gave up. I fell down on my bed at 12 O' clock in the night, telling myself, "I

Rendezvous with Dr. Safaya

(part 1 of 2)

cannot go any further, because the hospital will not be ready to be inaugurated on the due date. Surgical operations have to be done. The conditions are not sterile. Scientifically we are not ready." I told my wife that I had failed my Master and started weeping, which I never did, at least in presence of my wife. She got alarmed and encouraged me saying, "Swami is a GOD. He will do something, don't worry. Bhagavan's SANKALPA has to be realised and it will be for sure." Lo and behold, so it was; everything got completed miraculously just before the inauguration. Thus on 22nd November, 1991, when the inauguration was scheduled, exactly at 9 o' clock, precisely as HE had predicted, the surgeon's knife did touch the skin of the patient That is what exactly happened.

GV: In a small way, I went through a similar sort of experience. We had to start the Radio service on 23rd November this year(2001) and we got very little notice. I never thought it was going to happen, But in spite of

my doubts it did happen because HE willed it. I couldn't believe that it happened. It is just marvellous, being swept along by that magic.

Dr. Safaya: Swami's physical presence makes its own impact.

GV: Yes that is true; it does make a big contribution.

Dr. Safaya: But over and above that is the Supernatural Aspect that is entirely Divine.

GV: Yes, somehow difficulties dissolve in the very last minute and suddenly things start to hang together.

Dr. Safaya: You know before I came

here, the Government of India was not ready to relieve me. There are documents to prove it. My ultimate relief order by the President of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, the type of which has never been given to anybody, says 'I reluctantly accept Dr. Safya's request for premature retirement'. The word 'reluctantly' is very significant because the President of the Institute who is also the Union Health Minister tried his best to stop me from leaving. The Health Minister was simply not ready to relieve me. Ultimately I went to Bhagavan. Just

that very day and he was my Deputy. He was going and I was staying. So it seemed at 6 P.M. But suddenly circumstances changed that night. The Health Minister suddenly called me and said, "Are you sure you want to go?" I replied, "Yes, my Guru's Adesh. Whatever you say about my staying back is correct in its own way. But there is also the Guru - Shishya parampara, you know. He is my Guru and I have to get HIS adesh fulfilled. Therefore you have to let me go." The Minister reluctantly picked up the pen put wrote the words, "I reluctantly accept Dr. Safaya's request". This happened at 7 P. M. I the told the Health Minister, "Kindly ring up the Institute, tell them not to relieve the Deputy Director, and that you have given him one year extension. That is the only way, I can be relieved!"

GV: What a drama!

Dr. Safaya: At 8 P.M. Dr. Verma got the news that he had been given one year's extension. He gladly accepted.

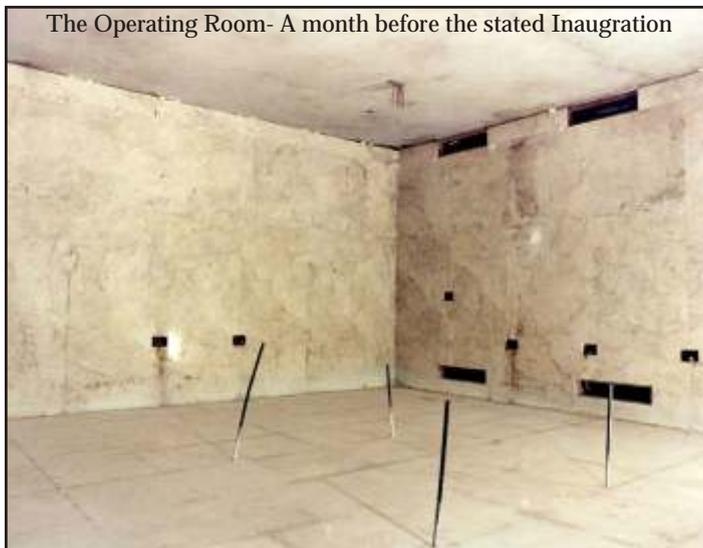
GV: I hope he didn't have to give back his farewell party!

Dr. Safaya: Next morning, I went to the Institute and handed over charge.

GV: Absolutely unbelievable!

Dr. Safaya: The point I wanted to make in the whole story is the DIVINE SANKALPA. I surrendered totally at HIS feet. The big recommendations had failed. The big intervention at the worldly level had failed. Only He could do something. And HE did!

(To be continued.....)



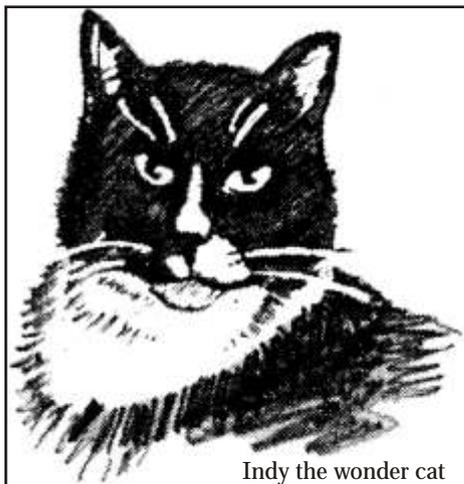
before this trip, the Minister told me, "No further leave; you can't go and you have to stay in Delhi". Reporting all this I told Bhagavan, "Swami all has failed. Even the appeals of the President of India and the Prime Minister of India on my behalf have failed to produce any effect. Everything has failed. My personal efforts have come to an end. Bhagavan, if you want me here, then YOU have to intervene at the Divine level".

GV: Did He?

Dr. Safaya: Bhagavan said, "Don't worry." He smiled and added "You will be relieved on first of February". On 31st January at 6 P.M., I was giving farewell to a person who was retiring

Meeting Lord Buddha

Indy, The Wonder Cat
- A Cats View



Indy the wonder cat

A long time ago in Northern India, I had an unusual adventure. I met a prince who didn't live in a palace, didn't have big feasts and didn't have fancy clothes. In fact, when I *met* him, he was sitting under a tree dressed in rags.

When I saw the prince sitting very still under a tree, I sat down and watched him for a while, but he didn't do anything but sat. When the wind blew, he sat. When it rained, he sat. When the sun beat down on him, he sat. Days went by and although I rarely ever left the area, (I only took a little *time* off to eat, drink, sleep and occasionally chase my tail it is fun!!!), I never, ever saw him move.

After many days, some really strange things started to happen. Strange sounds started coming out of nowhere. These sounds were so loud I had to cover my ears, but still the prince just sat. The earth moved as if someone had grabbed and shook it, but he just sat. Weird beings that looked like demons and beautiful female humans appeared out of nowhere and seemed to be talking to him or yelling at him. Honestly, although I am a very brave cat, I was getting a little scared. But he just sat.



Strange things started to happen!

Mounds of gold and jewels appeared and then disappeared. The man just sat. Nothing could make him budge an inch. Then something really weird happened.

A strange, soft, gentle glow seemed to come from him. Still he sat. The glow grew brighter and brighter until it completely covered him. He just sat and sat. The light became brighter than the sun itself and he just sat. What was going on here??!! I didn't move either even chasing my tail wasn't as interesting as whatever this was.

When the glow couldn't get any brighter, a beautiful smile spread across his face. He slowly opened his eyes (which also had a glow in them) and said, "Hello, Indy cat. I am Buddha."

What????????!!!!!! I was pretty sure that the entire time I was watching him, nobody had said hello to me and we'd never been properly introduced, so how did he know my name? But... being a

polite cat, I said "Hello, Mr. Buddha, pleased to meet you."

"Indy, you can simply call me Buddha, not Mr. Buddha," laughed Buddha. "Of course I know your name. I have awakened from the dream we call life to the deeper truth that

we are all one. How can I not know you? We are all God, all one."

Now, two things were bothering me. First, what did he mean, "we are all one, all God?" I Truthfully, I was thinking that this guy had sat in the sun for a bit too long. Secondly, since I knew that I hadn't said anything except hello, how did he know what I was thinking?

Again, he seemed to respond to my thoughts.

"Indy," he chuckled, "I haven't lost *my mind*, just the part of my ego that kept me separate from God, from

everything. You are God, I am God, everything is God. I know this and you know this but you've forgotten your true identity. As to the second thing that is bothering you, your thoughts are as clear to me as your words would be."

Wow!!! This Buddha guy could read my mind. (I had better be careful of my thoughts!) If this guy can *really* read my mind, which seemed to be true, maybe he wasn't nuts. Perhaps he knows something I don't know.

"Not exactly, Indy," Buddha responded before I could say anything. "Like I said, you've forgotten your true Self, while I have just now awakened to truly knowing my Self. This experience gives me a deep sense of peace and tranquility. I feel God in me and around me. Everywhere I look I see nothing but God. By the way Indy cat, you are right, that is why I seem to be glowing."

It was weird to have him answer a question before I even knew I had thought it. Quickly I said, "Buddha, this sounds like a truly wonderful experience. Is it possible that I, I mean could I...."

With a twinkle in his eyes, Buddha said, "Of course you can have this experience, Indy. All are destined to have it sooner or later. All it takes is right practice, perseverance and patience as well as the grace of God." Practice, practice what??? I had



Indy meets The Buddha

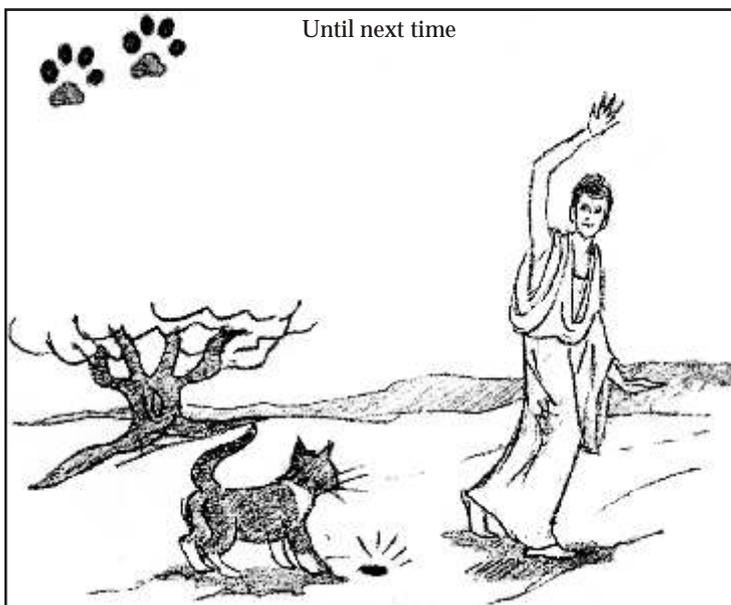
Meeting Lord Buddha

Indy, The Wonder Cat
- A Cats View

separate as if it were really all one and the same - as if it were the bearing of one heart. There were no words to describe the sensation or the feelings that were arising in me. All I can say is that it felt GREAT!!

All too soon, this experience came to an end and things returned to the way they were before I sat down. Yet somehow everything was different. I knew that everything was *one*, yet I no longer had the direct perception of it. I was both happy and sad. I still felt wonderful but missed what seemed to be lost.

"Indy cat," Buddha explained, "In your past lives you have been blessed by being with many wonderful teachers like Krishna, Rama, and King Janaka. In your future lives you will be with many other divine teachers. You and I will have further adventures together in this life. Now as a result of all your past deeds and



by the grace of God, you have been granted a taste of the true reality of existence. You have directly experienced oneness; you know now absolutely that we are all God, all are divine."

I thought to ask if I would ever have the experience again, but before I could even get the thought clear in my head I got the answer from within myself "practice, perseverance and

patience will take you to the goal." I knew I would eventually be able to live in that state of oneness once I was ready. I knew that all are destined to experience this, sooner or later.

I smiled at Buddha. Buddha smiled at me. Then with a little fur rub, a couple of pats and a laugh, he turned and started walking away slowly while I sat under the tree.

"Oh Indy, one last thing," Buddha said. With a wave of his hand he tossed something to me. I caught it and....it was a golden, glowing cat treat.

"Thanks Buddha," I said.

"I look forward to seeing you soon." With that, I looked again at the cat treat. Time to become one with it, I thought, as I gently munched it. It was delicious, almost as delicious as my time with Buddha, the Awakened One.

From Sai World, Summer 2003



Dear Readers,

We would like to inform you that the feature 'GETTING SPIRITUALLY BETTER' shall be discontinued temporarily for the next few issues. We are working on more topics and shall restart it once the material is ready. We are extremely grateful to you for the deep appreciation that you have shown for this feature over the last eight months.

H2H team

Tamil New Year Day and Vishu Celebrations

At Brindavan , 11-14 April, 2004.



Interacting with the Kerala youth

India is a land of rich and diverse cultures. The varied traditions and forms of dance and music, drama and literature from different regions of the country all form part of the proud heritage of this land. And the uniqueness of the festivities at the Lotus Feet of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is that one gets to see different facets of Indian culture and also those from all over the world.

Devotees from the states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala celebrated their New Year Day with their Lord at the Brindavan Ashram in Bangalore. The celebrations, held between 11-14th of April, coincided with a state level conference of the youth wing of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Kerala. About 3000 youth delegates, both men and women, attended the conference and were addressed by some of the students and staff members of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning as well as senior members of the Seva Organization.

The inaugural session of the conference was held on the morning of 11th April in the Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall. After the delegates welcomed Bhagawan into their midst with songs, Prof. Mukundan, the President of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation,

Kerala addressed the gathering. He reminded the youth of the reason that they had all gathered at the Lotus Feet of Bhagawan to taste His Love

and to have a glimpse of His glory so that they may undergo a transformation in their attitudes and outlook. He was followed by Sri Sanjay Mahalingam, a student of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, who spoke on the importance of holding on to the Lord's Feet. He said that when the fisherman casts his net into the sea, it is the fish that swim close to his feet that never get caught in the net. Similarly, when the Lord casts His net of Maya (Illusion), there can be no safer place than at His Lotus Feet.

Bhagawan then began His Divine Discourse by saying that it is foolish to search for God when He is present

everywhere. He said that it is most important to understand and develop the confidence that God is always working for our welfare. He said that it is He who grants us the devotion and the strength, and when God is sparing no effort to work for our good, we must also perform actions that please God. He also said that everyone must aspire for darshan, sparshan and sambhashan with God and also elaborated on the benefits of these three types of blessings.

After the Discourse, the delegates adjourned to the Sai Krishan Kalyana Mantapam for the subsequent sessions of the conference. In the evening, the youth of Thiruvananthapuram, the capital city of Kerala, presented a drama titled, "The Ultimate Solution". The drama depicted how the practice of the human values enunciated by Bhagawan is the only answer to the various ills that beset modern day society.

On the morning of 12th April, Bhagawan graciously granted darshan and also sat for a few bhajans. The evening session witnessed a music programme by renowned artistes from Kerala.

The following morning, on the occasion of the Tamil New Year Day, singers from the Sundaram Bhajan group (Sundaram is Bhagawan's residence at Chennai) led Bhajans in the Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall. The evening began with a sweet welcome speech in Sanskrit by a young boy which was simultaneously



With the drama boys from Kerala

Tamil New Year Day and Vishu Celebrations

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translated into English. This was followed by a music programme by the Sundaram Bhajan singers, in which they exhibited their virtuosity in different styles of music ranging from Carnatic and light classical music to qawaali and even western classical.

The following day, 14th April was 'Vishu', the Kerala New Year Day, and in the evening there was a concert by a music troupe from Kerala. They began with the melodious Navaragamalika varnam "Valachi Vachi", with the violin and the flute as the lead instruments. They followed it up with the famous piece, "Vatapi Ganapathim" and a detailed exposition of the Thyagaraja kirthana, "Nagumomu". The highlight of the programme was the

taniavartanam (exposition of the *taala* or rhythm by the percussionists) involving nine instruments which included even the *panchavadyam* instruments unique to the state of Kerala. Bhagawan joined the audience in applauding the artistes at the end of this thrilling performance. The concert concluded with the Bhajan, "Deva Devottama Deena Samrakshaka".

Bhagawan descended the stage and feted the musicians by presenting them with clothes. Then there followed some enchanting moments when Bhagawan commanded one of the musicians to sing a kirtana, while He stood smiling in front of him and even joined him in singing "Jagadodharana", a composition by Saint Purandaradasa.

At the end of the festivities, which left everyone with so many pleasant memories, if there was one thing that stood out as one looked back, it was the exemplary discipline exhibited by the Kerala youth. They chanted the Sai Gayathri as they waited for Bhagawan's darshan in the Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, and also before every workshop session in the Kalyana Mantapam. The orderly manner in which the three thousand strong contingent queued for darshan and also filed out of the hall after the programmes was indeed worthy of praise and a measure of how well the youth have absorbed Bhagawan's message of duty, devotion and discipline.

Jai Sai Ram!



Darshan on Tamil New Years Day



Devotees throng Sai Ramesh Hall on Vishu



Traditional percussion display on Vishu evening

Home of Love

Kenya



A Nairobi street child

Sai Spirit of Love Children's Home Trust is a project which started from Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Dwaraka Maayi, Nairobi Kenya affiliated to Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation in Prasanthi Nilayam, India since 3rd July 1999.

Several devotees founded the Trust on 10th March 1997 with the aim of helping children in need in Kenya. The Trust has currently five trustees representing the three main ethnic races of Kenya (African, Asian and European).

The main project supported by the Trust is a home for destitute children in Uthiru, on the outskirts of Nairobi, called Sathya Sai Home. Started in 1995 by a Kenyan teacher who was moved to give food and shelter to a few children who had nowhere else to go and were in desperate circumstances, the home now gives shelter, food, clothing and education both spiritual and academic to fifty resident children.

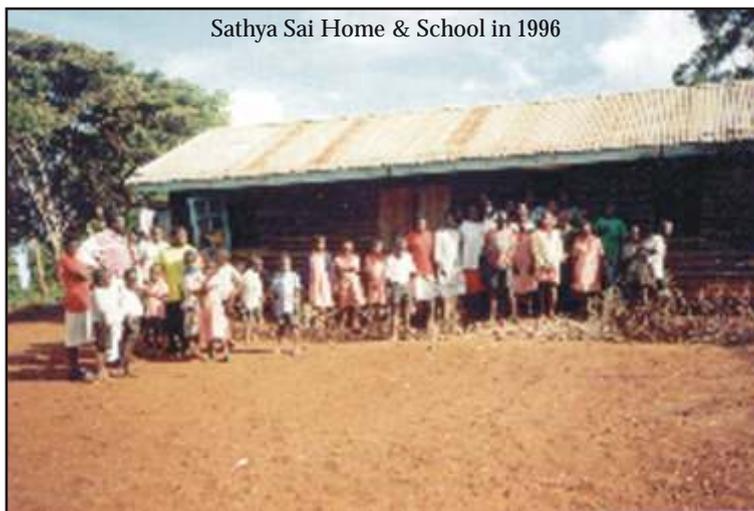
Rehabilitation of these children was mainly achieved by singing Sai Bhajans and Sathya Sai Education in Human Values. The fifty six resident children who benefit from this project range in age from 7 years to 18 years and are all now receiving formal education. Eighteen are attending the local Government Primary School; three are studying under scholarship at a Nairobi Secondary School. In addition, there are two boys who have graduated from the home and live outside but attend Secondary School under scholarship.

A Sathya Sai primary school was started in January 1998 to cater for the younger ones. Since then a class has been

added every year and the school now offers education up to standard VI.

Of the children who have already outgrown the home, one is now married with a child and another four are working, one of them in a shop belonging to a devotee. Twenty children have already left the Home and are now integrated into society.

Education is relatively expensive in Kenya, given the high level of poverty. As well as catering for the education of the resident children, Sathya Sai School offers day school facilities to poor children from the neighborhood who would otherwise have no schooling at all. Currently about 150 such children are given this opportunity. This helps to create a bond between the home and the community.

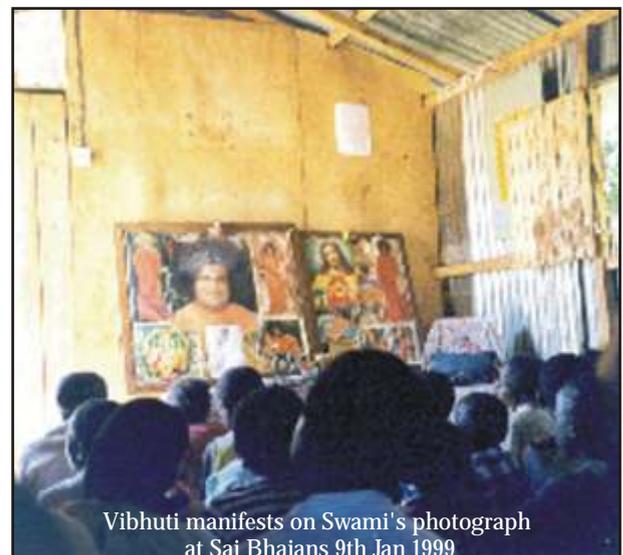


Sathya Sai Home & School in 1996

The Sathya Sai School follows the official Kenya curriculum but Sathya Sai Education in Human Values is interwoven into all academic subjects and is a vital part of all activities.

There are two doctors, who are giving free service to anyone involved with the project. A child with Leukemia and another with Tuberculosis were given the best hospital care

available by one of these doctors, who is in charge of one of the wings at the main Government hospital in Nairobi. During this time other devotees visited and attended to the



Vibhuti manifests on Swami's photograph at Sai Bhajans 9th Jan 1999

Home of Love

Kenya

children regularly.

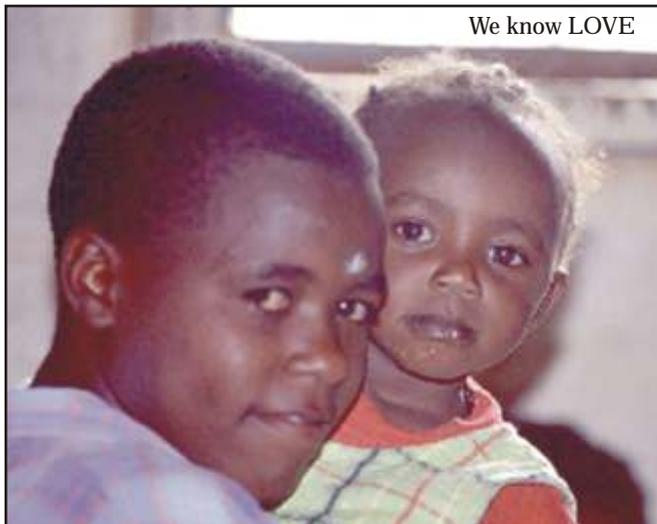
Devotees visit the home/school at least once a week and render various services. Among these services the following are given: Sai bhajan teaching, Sathya Sai Education in Human Values teaching, Balvikas and Youth activities. A child from the Sathya Sai Home who is in secondary school is currently giving extra tuition in Maths and English on a voluntary basis to the other children.

The headmaster of the Sathya Sai School is a Kenyan University Graduate who was sponsored by the Trust to the African Institute of Sathya Sai Education in Ndola, Zambia for the three month Diploma Course in Education

in Human Values. The Trust also sponsored him to receive his diploma from Swami's hands in Puttaparthi in 2001.

The children at the Sathya Sai Home sing Sai bhajans every Saturday. They are asked quite often to sing Sai bhajans in different functions in Nairobi. They also act as Seva Dals whenever there is a seminar, workshop or other Sai activity. The children also take part in many plays organised by the Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Dwaraka Maayi.

The home and the school give the chance to many devotees to give their Love in the form of voluntary service to this project



We know LOVE



It is good to be happy



Ready to march ahead with confidence

Home of Love

Kenya

EAST AFRICAN STANDARD, Wednesday, November 17, 1999

MIDWEEK MAGAZINE

From home of love, girl recalls her drug ordeal

SHE is a child by age but talks, walks, and associates with adults.

At the age of five, Margaret Nyambura had learnt to peddle drugs. She was also conversant with the tactics of luring customers into drug deals in the city.

Her speciality, curved out of poverty that had engulfed her family, had to bear fruits as the proceeds brought in "substantial" money for food and clothes.

Nyambura's handicapped mother had been involved in the drugs trade for many years and her disability compelled her to involve her daughter.

She could not walk up and down alone searching for the illegal substances. She needed someone to support her.

Nyambura ensured her mother ate and dressed. They both played seek-and-hide games with the law for the sake of survival.

Nyambura, now eight, and who has been enlisted in a rehabilitation centre, speaks eloquently about the drugs and her past.

When she joined the Spirit of Love Home in Uthiru in 1996, Nyambura mesmerised other children with her talents. She used to tear papers, create small rolls resembling those of bhang, and then she would call other children.

"*Kijeni naiza bhangi, nauza bhangi.*" (Come, I'm selling bhang! Toher, this was a game born out of experience.

As other children went out to play, Nyambura would go to her pieces of paper, sit on the floor and act like a trader trying to attract customers.

All she would say was, '*Nauza bhangi! Nauza glue! Nauza pombe! Shillingi kumi kumi!*' (I am selling bhang, glue, liquor at only ten shillings).

She, however, knows that during the actual trading, there are special means of selling the hard stuff, particularly bhang, to avoid being seen by "enemies".

Contrary to what is expected of other children her age, Nyambura is not shy to talk about her life with her mother.

"*Mama yangu kana mguu moja na havezi kufanya kazi wana, lazimo nimsaidie.* (My

When Nyambura was asked where her mother worked, she said, "My mother sells bhang, glue and *kinara*," writes Joyce Tesot.

mother has only one leg and she cannot work alone. I have to help her). Her mother's disability forced her to involve Nyambura in the trade and to teach her how to lure customers.

Nyambura's mother sells mainly to street children. Other customers buy liquor and bhang.

"While my mother sold, she would send me to beg from white men. I used to look for as much as 100 shillings to buy food, gum and liquor."

Every morning, Nyambura and her mother would prepare themselves in their small house in Kaniwa slum village to go to "work".

They would go to Mathare North to buy liquor and to the city centre for glue. This is how Nyambura got used to drugs.

This was a daily routine which became part of Nyambura's life until she joined the Spirit of Love Home. She also got used to the language of begging.

When asked how street children earned money to buy glue every time, Nyambura said: "*Chokara lazima waduru. Wanasema wakihosa chakula watekufa* (street boys must beg for money. They say if they don't eat, they will die).

Nyambura says her father is a garbage collector, turned footballer. He used to collect and sell waste from the streets. She however says her father got a "new job" recently as a footballer, but she doesn't know where he works.

She was the only child staying with her parents. Her elder sister disappeared one day after she was sent to buy paraffin in town.

Their original home is Limuru. She says her uncle disappeared from home and their whereabouts are unknown.

Nyambura says her grandfather is a trader in Kisumu, selling slippers and second-hand shoes. She joined the Spirit of Love Home in 1996.

After going through counselling at the home, Nyambura now wants to become a nurse when she grows up. She would

like to support her mother so that she can stop selling bhang.

The Spirit of Love Home has 95 children from disadvantaged families. Most of them are orphans and children from broken families. About 50 of them live in the home.

The home was started in 1996, with only eight children. Within the home is a school which has a nursery and primary unit. It has three hired teachers who are paid by volunteers.

The teacher in charge, Philip Aburaka, said apart from nor-

mal studies, the children are taught human values based on teachings known as the Sathya Sai Baba principles.

"They have been rehabilitated and have improved their character. These are children who would otherwise be out of school," Aburaka said.

The children undertake the Sathya Sai education in human values which teaches character formation, positive thinking, praying, story-telling, singing and other group activities. They are taught how to help and to love one another.

The Spirit of Love school also organises seminars on education and human values for pupils and teachers. It is organising a two-day seminar for teachers December 2, at the Ford Hall, National Museum.



REHABILITATED: Nyambura is still recovering from the experience as a drug-runner. — Pictures by Jennifer Wachiu

The Local press recognizes the services of the Sathya Sai Home



Daniel Otieno receiving a SSEHV Diploma certificate from Swami in Nov 2001

Photos referred to in the editorial.....



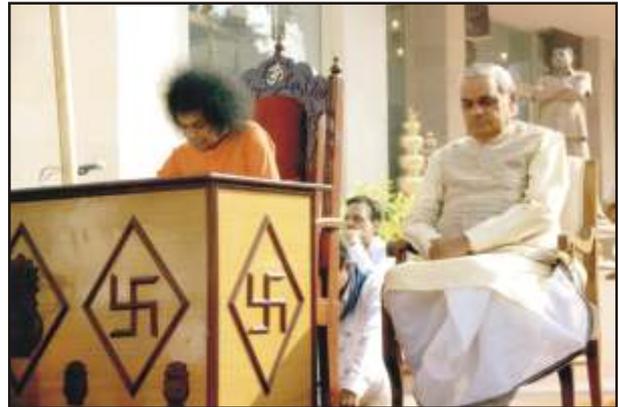
The Puttaparthi Mosque gifted by Baba



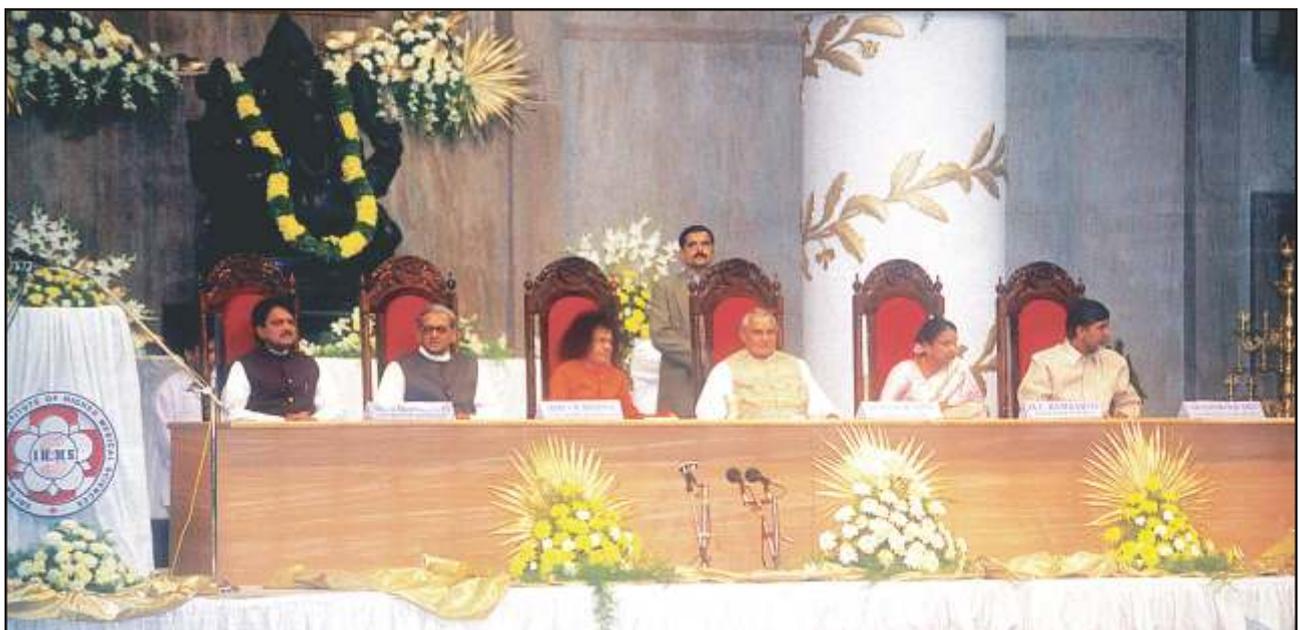
Inside the Mosque



With Vajpayee in the 1977 summercourse



Delhi 1998



SSSIHMS INUAGURAION 2001

Photos referred to in the editorial.....



At Brindavan in April 2004



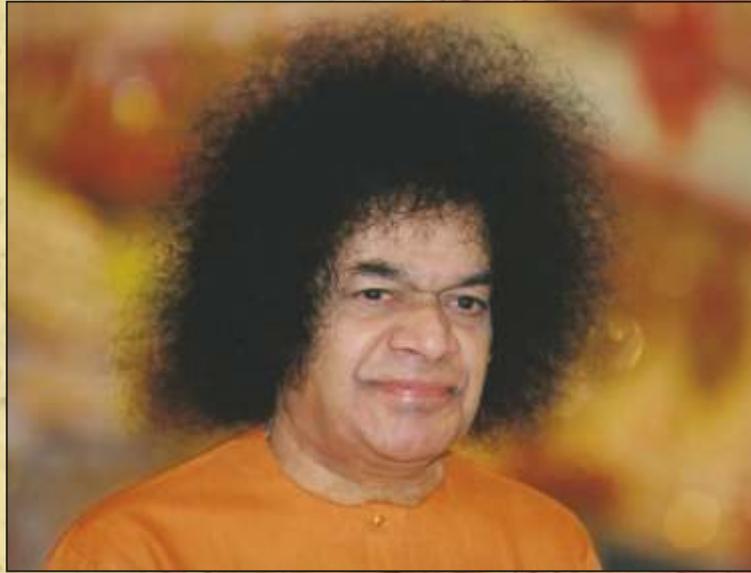
The Vice Chancellors conference October 2003

Coming Next..... In H2H !

They are the ideals of womanhood. They are examples of selfless service. They are the foundation for a Golden Age. They are His chosen instruments. They are the MESSENGERS OF SATHYA SAI! Watch out for an exclusive feature!



Heart²Heart



Education must transform you into an embodiment of compassion. Gandhi was once feeling very depressed. When an Englishman enquired about the reason for his gloom, Gandhi replied, "I am disturbed by the fact that education today is making people hard-hearted." That is the problem; instead of breeding compassion, education these days is making people stone-hearted. True education must touch the heart, release a torrent of selfless Love, make a person compassionate, and foster Divine feelings. Such education alone is the need of the hour.

– Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



LOVE ALL SERVE ALL