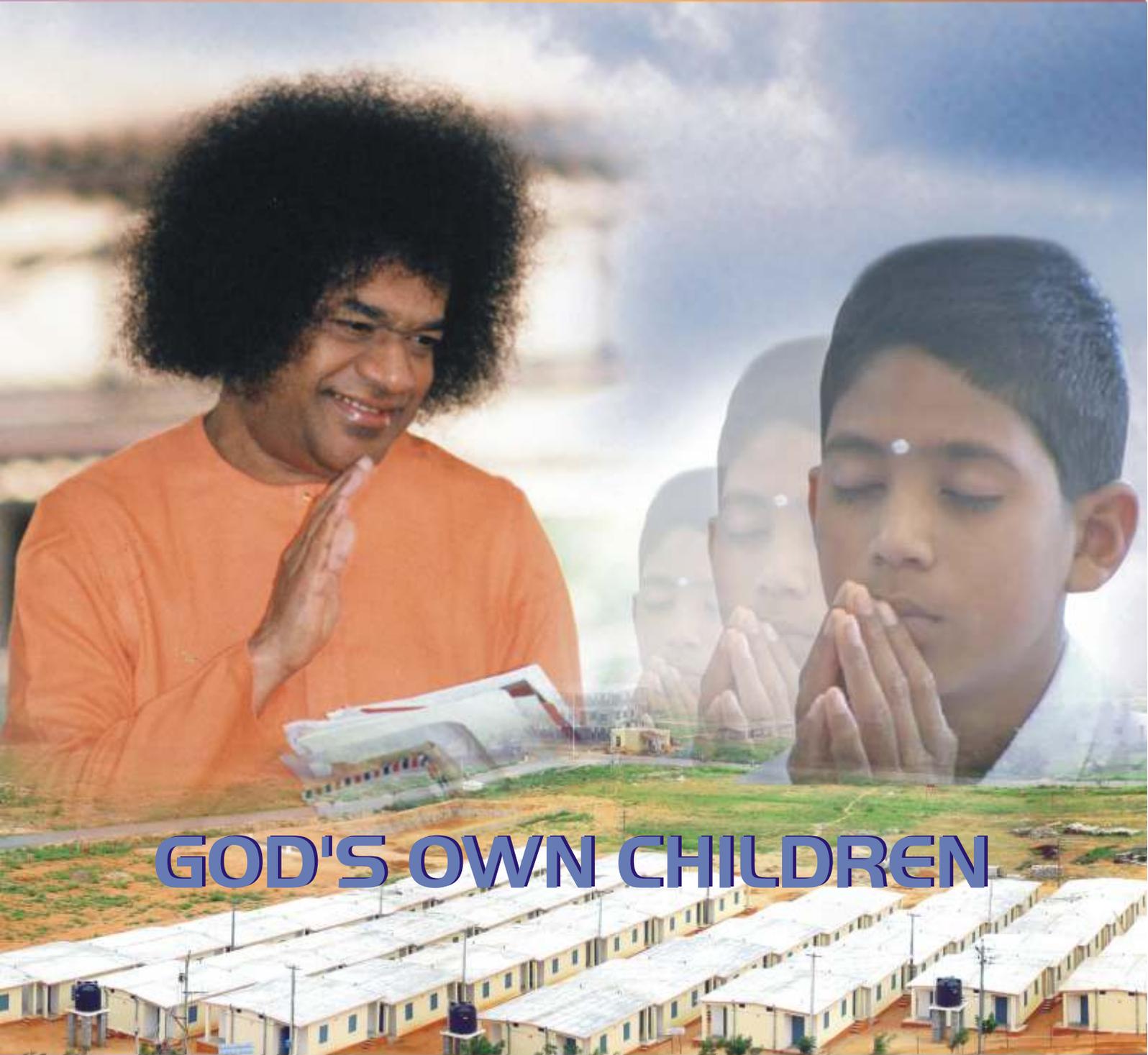




# HEART TO HEART



RADIO SAI LISTENERS' JOURNAL



## GOD'S OWN CHILDREN

Cover Story

SRI SATHYA SAI DEENA JANODDHARANA  
PROJECT

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PRANAMS AT THE LOTUS FEET

# Journal

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# Between You and Us

Dear Readers,

There is a saying "Give a man a fish and you satisfy his hunger for a day. Teach him how to fish and you satisfy his hunger for life." The cover story of this issue 'God's own children' is about the above saying. It is a story on the Sathya Sai Deenajanoddharana programme for destitute children, started by Swami.

Many times we come across people not so privileged as us and we are compassionate enough to throw a dime at them or give them some food. We then go ahead not bothering to think what will happen to them the next day. In effect, the value of our 'help' is just that dime or loaf of bread.

But suppose we stay back and have a few words with them, ask where they stay and what forces them to beg. May be we will find a way to change their life. If it is a child may be we can help him/her join a local charity school or if it is an adult, may be we can ask some friend of ours in a high position to consider giving him/her a small job. Yes, it is always not possible to do this for everyone we come across. But may be a few people in a lifetime? It is also difficult to do this for someone we absolutely do not know. But we can always take our time and get to know his/her background and see what we can do. As individuals we may not be able to do much (there are exceptions like, for example, Mother Theresa!) but if four or five of us get together, things become much easier.

The idea is not just to help them for a day, but for a lifetime. This is not to say that temporary relief is not worth it. But can we think of going beyond it, in our own capacity? Can we make our 'help' worth more than a dime?

The Deenajanoddharana programme launched by Swami, where destitute children have been given a new meaning in their Life, has taught them 'how to fish' instead of just giving them 'fish'. Several others have taken inspiration from it and started similar projects, though on a smaller scale.

Can you teach someone 'to fish'?

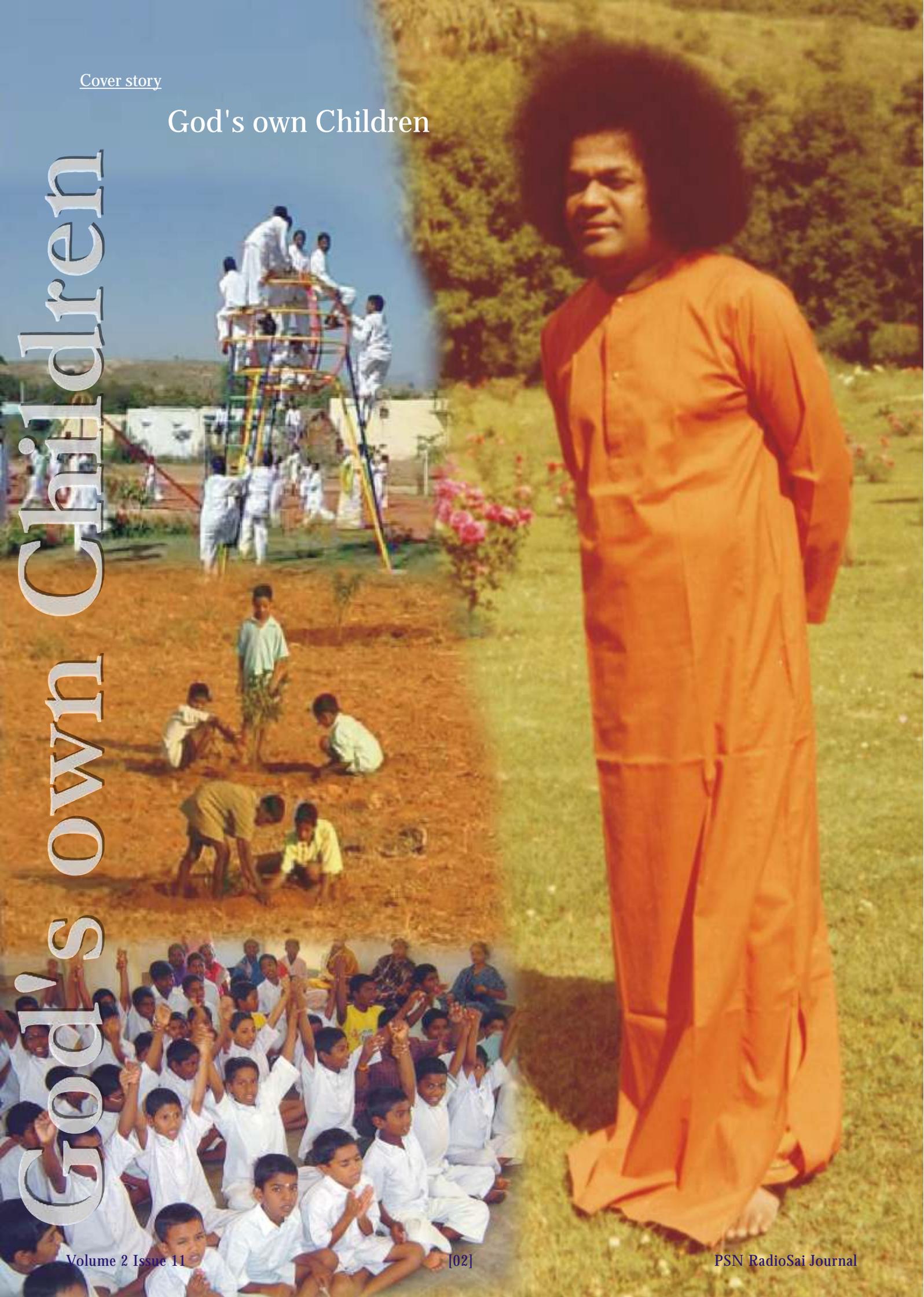
Jai Sai Ram  
SGH TEAM

\* If you are already involved in such a service, why don't you send us your story?  
The address is [h2h@radiosai.org](mailto:h2h@radiosai.org)

Cover story

# God's own Children

# God's own Children



## God's own Children



Sathya Sai Nagar

Dikkuleni variki Devude dikku.  
For those who have no other refuge, God alone is the refuge.  
- Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

**T**hirty year old ChinnaNagamma of Jagrajpalli had darkness staring into her. Future seemed bleak. Her husband had recently passed away. She had four young children. No land of her own. No house to stay in. And like a majority of the rural women in India, she was illiterate. To provide her children with one square meal a day was a daunting challenge. With none of her so called kith and kin coming forward to bail her out of this pathetic situation, she silently, cried out for help in her heart in the hope that if there was a God somewhere, may be He would respond.

Her prayers were not in vain. After a few months of her suffering, she heard from someone that Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba was starting a project that would rehabilitate destitutes like her and that anyone deserving could come and register themselves. Immediately, she came with her children to Puttaparthi and met the people concerned with the project. When she told them her story, they melted. They registered her and sent her back to her village

with the assurance that she would be called soon after verification. Chinna Nagamma spent about a week full of anticipation. Yet, no word came from Puttaparthi. Was this project too one of those nonstarters, as with the many government schemes? Or was she found not deserving? Whose life could be more disastrous than hers? she thought. A few days later, when she was returning from the forest after taking the cattle for grazing, a policeman accosted her. Upon enquiring her name, the policeman broke the news to a trembling Nagamma : You have been called by Bhagavan to stay in Puttaparthi, along with your children. Nagamma could not believe her ears. She was convinced that if at all there was a God, it had to be *Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba*.

Today, Nagamma, along with eighty others is a happy resident, of Sathya Sai Nagar at Kammavaripalli behind the ashram complex. Each of them has a story to tell about how compassionate Swami has been to them. The Sathya Sai Nagar is the result of The Sathya Sai

Deenajanoddharana project taken up by the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust in the year 2001. The project had its genesis in 2001, when Bhagavan, made a declaration that He would take up the cause of as many destitutes as possible and rehabilitate them. He recounted how he was moved by the news of a mother who committed suicide by consuming poison after poisoning her three children as she could not combat the abject poverty they found themselves in. He declared that he would provide food, shelter and clothing to as many destitute children as possible, besides educating them to be self-reliant.

*Sai Sankalpa* (resolve) is *Vajra sankalpa*. Action followed with lightning speed. To begin with, construction began for two room tenements to house the first come orphans and destitutes, converting His own orchard into a housing colony. Swami himself laid the foundation stone for the project. Sixty boys from such families were selected from Bukkapatnam, Kothacheruvu and Puttaparthi mandals. Some among them had no

## God's own Children



mother. Some had no father. Some had none. But as soon as they came to Prasanthi Nilayam, they found a loving mother in Swami. Swami would give them clothes, suitcases, blankets and would bless them with His kind words. During the period of construction of Sai Nagar, the boys and their widowed mothers were housed in specially allocated sheds and given some orientation. Volunteers started taking informal classes according to the age of the boys, until they were formally accepted in the upcoming school at Sai Nagar. There were in total 58 boys, the age ranging from 4 to 14 years. The mothers were ten in number.

Meanwhile, the construction was progressing fast under the able execution of Nagarjuna Construction Company, a reputed firm in Andhra Pradesh. Bhagavan was involved at every stage of the project, offering practical advice on all aspects. On June 19<sup>th</sup> 2002, the festival of Gurupurnima, Swami inaugurated the fully completed Sathya Sai Nagar. The grateful boys sang songs of gratitude while the mothers watched them from a distance with tears in their eyes. Bhagwan himself was totally lost in the innocent love of those young children. He listened to their songs with rapt attention, patted them and blessed them profusely. Later in the year, on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2002, the annual convocation of SSSIHL, Bhagwan handed over a cheque of sixty lakhs to Sri Paramahansa, the

project in charge, in the presence of the president of India Shri A P J Abdul Kalam. The money was to be used, Bhagavan declared, for making a fixed deposit of one lakh rupees in the name of each boy!

Today, the Sathya Sai Nagar is an ideal of community living. It is more or less an example of a self-sustained, self-sufficient village. When the idea of making a cover story came to H2H, we contacted Sathya Sai Nagar over the telephone, saying we wanted to come there. Within minutes, there was a car in front our office with Sri Prakash, the



Inaugurating Sathya Sai Nagar June 19th 2002

caretaker of the village and a young driver who must be no more than 14 years of age. When asked about it, Sri Prakash replied that they train their boys in all skills, including driving! Believe us, He was a pretty good driver!

As we enter the colony, there is a beautiful garden full of flowers. A little further there is a play ground with swings, parallel bars and other facilities. We hear the joyous cries of children having a good time in the ground. Along the path that leads to the houses are Swami's quotes etched on stone slabs: God is love, Live in love, Always keep good company etc. As we near the houses, we hear the sound of drums, keeping beat to a devotional song. A group of 50 boys is singing full throated, full of feeling. The whole atmosphere is charged. The head master of the school, where

these children study comes forward and welcomes us. He says the boys are practicing for a performance before Swami. All the boys, he says, are excellent. They are humble, obedient and are extremely fast in grasping things. This is in contrast with his experience as a teacher in other villages, where he would struggle with the boys to make them learn a few alphabets. The key, He says, is the Love of Swami. Each boy is so full of gratitude that He wants to please Swami in all that he does. That includes studying well and behaving well. In fact, the love of Swami has worked such wonders that these boys, who earlier found it difficult to speak a few coherent sentences, are now experts at reciting Vedas with perfect intonation and pronunciation!

The boys now surround us and take us to their school. It is a small but beautiful building of eight rooms. In front of the building they have a volleyball court and a basketball court. But it is not only play and study that they are good at. They take active part, along with the mothers, in the maintenance of the place. They also work on a vegetable farm in the colony, where they grow a variety of fruits and vegetables that are used in the cooking. They sometimes send vegetables they grow in the farm to Swami too! The group of ten mothers, along with the cook, prepare the food and manage the dining hall. Washing utensils, clothes, cleaning the place are just a few other things that they do apart from cooking.

We shall overcome



## God's own Children



The family

As one lady put it, they are family of ten sisters and sixty children: Each living for the other and all living for Swami.

The story will not be complete without mentioning how Swami, through his personal interactions with these boys, moulds their character and gives them confidence to face life. Every Thursday and Sunday when the boys come for darshan, Swami lovingly asks them what they had for breakfast. They would reply in unison "idli" or "dosa". The younger ones aged 5 or 6 would be sometimes dozing during darshan. When others would try to wake them up, Swami would say, like a loving mother, "Shhh! Let him sleep."

Every time prasadam is distributed Swami makes sure that they receive it. On one occasion, Swami was overseeing apples being distributed to these boys. One of the boys had already got an apple and not knowing this, the volunteer tried to give one more apple to him. The boy politely

Women help in the kitchen



refused it, saying "Sir, I have already got one!" This did not escape the discerning eye of Swami and immediately he called the boy near him. He said "Good Boy! Always speak the truth!" He waved his hand, materialized a gold chain and put it around the boy's neck. "Speak the truth always, and I shall give you everything you want!" He assured him. Imagine what an impact it would have made on the boy and the others watching the whole scene. Needless to say, only the Divine mother Sai can do this in such a beautiful and loving way!

The most recent incident is yet another proof of Swami's love for these boys. A group of seven boys were selected for writing the tenth class examination. This exam is conducted by the State board and the papers go for external evaluation. These boys were faced with such a situation for the first time. If they passed the examination, they would cross a major milestone in their life. On the day of the examination, the boys had come for darshan to seek Swami's blessings. Swami went to them and asked them if they had prepared well for the exam. One of the boys blurted out that he was afraid and tense. Swami assured them that they would all do well and that there was no need to fear. Swami went into the interview room and the boys left to their colony, from where they would go to Kothacheruvu, a near by town, for writing the exams.

But the Divine mother in Swami was not satisfied. After a few minutes He came out and called for the car. He got into it and went straight to Sai Nagar. One of the H2H members also had the privilege of following Swami's car, all the while wondering what was happening. As soon as Swami reached Sai Nagar, he got out of the car, called for the boys who were going for the exam, created vibhuthi, gave them padanamskar, and assured them of



Working on the vegetable farm

His Grace. The boys were overwhelmed by this unexpected gesture of compassion and were literally in tears for the trouble that Swami had taken for their sake.

(A few days back, the results have been declared. Six out of the seven who appeared for the exam secured first division and one passed in the second division!)

When we at H2H met all these boys and the mothers, we realized what a difference Bhagawan has made in their lives. It was a heart warming sight to watch them at Bhajans, singing and clapping their hands with gusto. "So what will you be when you grow up?" we asked. "A policeman", piped up one. "An engineer" said another. "I will become a doctor, and serve in Swami's hospital", affirmed another. As we walked away, we thought to ourselves: would even these dreams be possible for them without Bhagawan? ♦

Singing the Lord's praises



# God's own Children



Practising for a performance before Swami



The dining session



The school



Learning is fun



In the play ground



Planting saplings



Chanting vedam



The Successful tenth standard boys



With His Loving Children

## The Teacher and Tomorrow

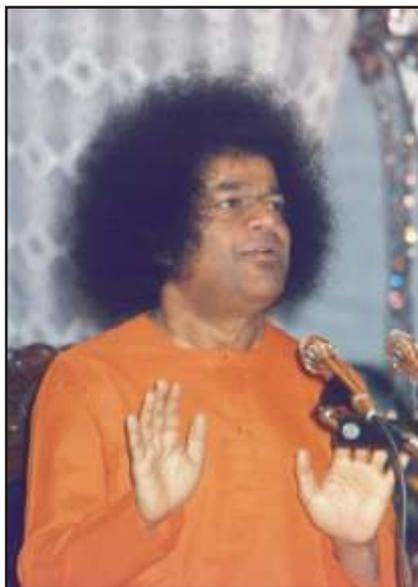
**T**he human body is the most wondrous machine in the world. It has a bewildering multiplicity of limbs, organs, veins, nerves and cells which co-operate to maintain it under varied conditions. If anyone of these rebel or refuse to rescue another, the body is bound to suffer. So too, a society, community, or nation can be safe, secure and happy only when the individuals comprising it are mutually helpful and bound together in skilful and sincere service. Every generation has to receive education and training in such intelligent cooperation and service. Or else, the world has to face confusion and chaos.

The educational process has not received proper attention from thoughtful persons. The institutions which ought to have been temples of Saraswati (the Goddess of Transformation through Learning) have become in all lands temples of Lakshmi (the Goddess of Wealth). The ideal held before the tender, innocent, unselfish children is a lucrative job, rather than a life of peace, contentment and love. Narrow loyalties, contest and competition are polluting the minds of children. Parents, teachers, and all interested in the progress of mankind have to take note of this situation.

Teaching and learning have both become mechanical routines. They have lost the freshness and joy which vitality alone can give. The value of the teaching process lies in raising the level of consciousness of the learner, in heightening the sense of wonder and awe and in emphasising the unity of one with all. The destiny of a country is decided by the ideals implanted by the teachers in the minds of the boys and girls entrusted to their care. Educators must pay attention not merely to the material and Intellectual progress of the pupils but, even more, to their moral and spiritual progress. Education should help man to live a meaningful life. It should not direct all efforts to provide a livelihood.

Education can claim success only when it results in the student gaining awareness of the Divinity inherent in him and others. No academic degree can confer as much self-confidence and self-satisfaction and lead man as quickly and gladly to self-sacrifice and self-realisation as awareness does. It has to be transmitted by teachers who have attained it through a sense of duty and in a spirit of love. It has to be accepted by students who have cultivated faith in the

teacher and reverence for his role. The pot that pours and the pot that receives have to be steady and straight, eager to give and gain. If the teacher has the responsibility to inspire and illumine, the student has the responsibility to respond to the Love and Light, discarding all contrary thoughts. Thoughts that arise from the region of the pleasant (Preyas) cannot co-exist with those which arise from the tough challenges of higher life (Sreyas). The student must be equipped to prefer the latter to the former.



The higher life, which makes man human and a fit candidate for unfoldment of the Divinity that is his Reality, depends on the cultivation of the Five Cardinal virtues Truth, Right Conduct, Love, Peace and Non-Violence. These virtues elevate the individual as well as the society of which he is a part. The teacher has to watch every word and gesture of his, every action and reaction of his, in order to avoid any infringement of

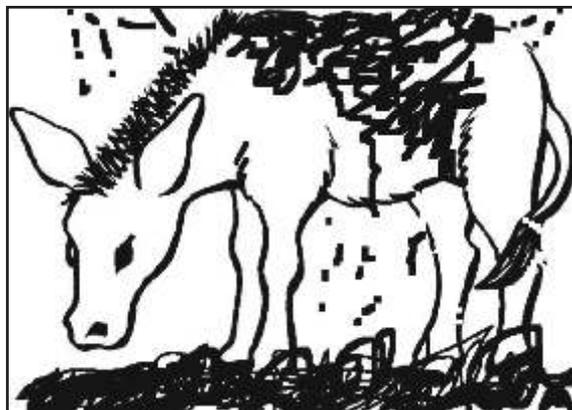
these virtues. For, the teacher is, for the pupils, the ideal, the example, to whom the parents have entrusted them. Women teachers can discharge this responsibility better than men. Children can be moulded more easily through sweetness and softness which maternal affection implies, rather than by fatherly advice and admonition.

The atmosphere of Love should not be disturbed by any uncharitable remark against any one's faith. Nor should any one be ridiculed or slandered.

Children's minds should not be polluted by fear, hatred or disgust. The doors of their hearts must be open to all. Later on as the impact of society and the state grows, pupils can be led to an understanding of the political and religious forces that will affect their lives.

Students have to be encouraged to "Follow the Master", (the inner voice of Conscience), Face the Devil (the down-dragging antisocial urges), Fight to the End (until one is able to overcome the inner foes of lust, anger, greed, undue attachment, pride and hatred) and Finish the Game (of life on earth). This duty is referred to in the Gita as Swadharma (one's genuine obligation to oneself); the duties that one gets involved in, while dealing with others is defined as Paradharma. Of these two, Swadharma is more vital and valuable. ◆

## Shake It Off and Step Up



**A** parable is told of a farmer who owned an old mule. The mule fell into the farmer's well. The farmer heard the mule 'braying' - or - whatever mules do when they fall into wells. After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the mule, but decided that neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of saving. Instead, he called his neighbors together and told them what had happened...and enlisted them to help haul dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put him out of his misery.

Initially, the old mule was hysterical! But as the farmer and his neighbors continued shoveling and the dirt hit his back...a thought struck him. It suddenly dawned on him that every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back...HE SHOULD SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP! This he did, blow after blow.

"Shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up!" he repeated to encourage himself. No matter how painful the blows, or distressing the situation seemed the old mule fought "panic" and just kept right on SHAKING IT OFF AND STEPPING UP!

You're right! It wasn't long before the old mule, battered and exhausted, STEPPED TRIUMPHANTLY OVER THE WALL OF THAT WELL! What seemed like it would bury him, actually blessed him...all because of the manner in which he handled his adversity.

THAT'S LIFE! If we face our problems and respond to them positively, and refuse to give in to panic, bitterness, or self-pity...THE ADVERSITIES THAT COME ALONG TO BURY US USUALLY HAVE WITHIN THEM THE POTENTIAL TO BENEFIT AND BLESS US! Remember that FORGIVENESS-- FAITH--PRAYER-- PRAISE and HOPE...all are excellent ways to "SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP" out of the wells in which we find ourselves!

- Author Unknown

## The Glimpse He Granted



**I**t was a bright sunny morning. We had all just settled on the portico for Swami's Darshan. The rustle of His robe and the sweet fragrance announced His Divine Presence. To my delight I was called for an interview with my parents.

I was a most badly behaved boy indulging in 'Modern' behavioral attitudes. I would like to admit that the entire family believed in Swami, except me. When we came to Prasanthi Nilayam in 1980, my brother got admission in the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning and we got Swami's grace for the first time. Swami poured his love on us. Even then, my natural instincts turned lovingly towards the enchanting Person but my weaknesses and worldly habits turned me away from Him. I lacked the moral fibre to transform myself. I was scared that He would reveal my nefarious doings. In fact, I loved and dreaded Swami's Interview. In fact I wanted to get away from Puttaparthi and I wanted to avoid joining Swami's School. But Swami's infinite mercy and grace did not throw me into the jaws of the world.

I went inside with bated breath and beating heart. As usual groups of devotees were taken in by Bhagavan, into the inner interview room. I was relieved when our turn was over and Swami moved to distribute Vibhuti packets.

Suddenly He halted. The expression on His countenance changed from motherly Love to fatherly sternness. He beckoned me back into the inner interview room, alone!

My hands would not stop shaking and my heartbeat raced beyond the range of my E.C.G. scale. He was already seated and commanded me to sit at His Feet. I sweated profusely. Then He asked me a question, "Tell me! Do you believe in Swami or not?" (By now it had become a choice between wanting to believe in Swami or not). He then gave me an undeniable and incredible proof of His omnipresence, of which even my own mother did not know. He told me how, utilizing my pocket money, I had gone to a Hindi movie, instead of attending school. He even told me the name of the film I had gone to, the name of the friend with whom I had gone, a Sarabjit Singh and even the amount of money I spent on 'Samosas' during the interval, which was incidentally Rs. 10/-. This revelation jolted me into the realization of my aimless derogatory living and opened new vistas of a happy, joyful life, in which I have made and am making sincere efforts to transform myself.

B. Dutt, II B.Sc. (1987)  
Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning



# Life is a Game, Play it!

Dear Young readers,

Here is a simple yet profound game that we found in SAI WORLD, winter 2002 issue which illustrates the importance of good qualities and a selfless nature. Bad qualities take us away from God and good ones near GOD. They help us to FINISH THE GAME.

The game was prepared by Sona Rao of Central San Jose, CA. Congratulations Sona, it is a wonderful job!

Stole a pencil Go back 2		Shouted at parents Go to Start	Rescued a cat from tree Go ahead 3 spaces	Helped make sandwiches Go ahead 2 spaces	Cheated on a test Go back 4 spaces
Made Tea for guests Go ahead 2					Watch Your Character as you play the Game of Life!
				Helped a younger child sing Go ahead 1	Peace, Love, Right Action, Truth and Nonviolence are the hallmarks of Good Character
Took care of a sick mom Go ahead 1					
Start enter the world with Swami's grace	 Finish	Cleaned up class after school Go to Finish	Kicked a classmate Go back 3 spaces	Pushed a dog into a well Go back 4 spaces	Used Bad Language Go back 1

Gameboard created by:  
Sona Rao, Group II  
SSBC of  
Central San Jose, CA

## Easwamma Day Celebrations at Brindavan: 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2004

**M**ay 6<sup>th</sup> every year, is celebrated as Easwamma Day, in honour of the saintly lady who was blessed to be the mother to the Avatar of the Kali age. Easwamma was very fond of children and was one of the pioneers of the Bal Vikas movement. Hence this day is also celebrated as Bal Vikas Day.

This year, the celebrations were organised in the picturesque lawns of Trayee Brindavan, Bhagawan's residence at Bangalore. The cool and pleasant morning and the beautiful surroundings made for a wonderful setting for the Bal Vikas students and teachers from the city of Bangalore and devotees assembled there.

Bhagawan first granted Darshan from the balcony of His residence at around 8.15 a.m. A little while later, Bhagawan emerged from the main door, to the singing of Bhajans by Bal Vikas students. The day's programme commenced with a Vedic invocation. Bhagawan then graciously permitted two students of the MBA course at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning to address the gathering.

The first speaker, Sri Jaipreet Singh, chose to speak on the motherly aspect of Bhagawan that melts at the suffering of His devotees. Next to speak was Sri Sanjay Mahalingam. He narrated various incidents from the life of Mother Easwamma that demonstrate the qualities of simplicity, compassion and love that she embodied. Her glorious earthly career culminated in an equally glorious manner on 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1972. The Mother had just partaken of her breakfast and was resting. Suddenly, she called out to Swami and Swami responded, *Vosthunnu, Vosthunnu* (I am coming, I am coming), and thus she breathed her last with name of the Lord on her lips. It is only a fortunate few who remember the Lord's name in their last moments and this, Sri Mahalingam said, was the fruit of a life of piety and devotion.

Then Bhagawan delivered His Discourse in which he recounted how three small wishes of Easwamma had today taken the form of the magnificent Super-speciality hospitals, the educational institutions and the mammoth water supply project. He praised the devotion of the students and the spirit of service which they exhibited wherever they went. He said that the bond of love between them was so intimate that the students cannot live without Swami, and Swami too cannot keep Himself away from them. He concluded His Discourse by saying that it is the primary duty of children to respect their parents and obey their commands.

The programme concluded with arati being offered to Bhagawan and later prasadam was distributed to all the devotees.

Jai Sai Ram.



The Balcony Darshan



Sri Jaipreet Singh speaks



The Divine Message

## Looking Beyond Disabilities

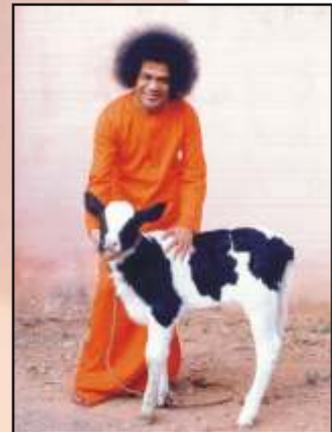
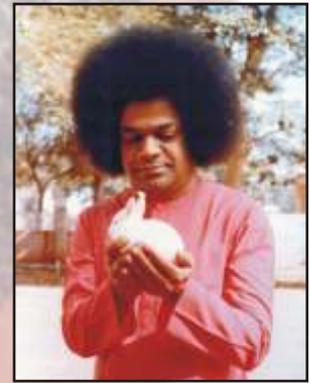
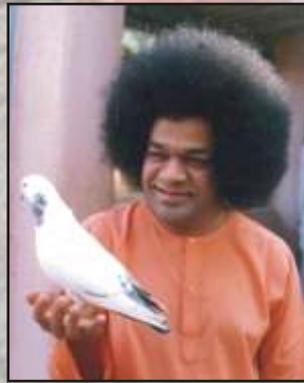
**O**n 6 September 2003, many Sai centres along with Sai youth organised a 'Day at the Beach', in Southern California, for over 50 physically and mentally disabled children and adults. Nearly 125 volunteers participated in this project, bringing joyful smiles to the faces of these children. Owing to their disabilities, these children do not enjoy a normal childhood; some of them had never been to the beach before. Swami often reminds that 'self-confidence' is the very foundation on which the mansion of human life is built. Inspired by the vision of "looking beyond disabilities, focusing on capabilities, expanding possibilities", the entire day comprised of therapeutic projects involving music, dance, human values songs and games aimed at helping the children express their innate God-given abilities. Here are some photographs.....



# Down Memory Lane

**W**hen God incarnates on earth, His Love is not limited to human beings alone, But is given to all living beings. (non living things too crave for His Love! Ever heard of the crying sarees incident?)

Here are some photographs taken over the years, of Swami with some animals.....



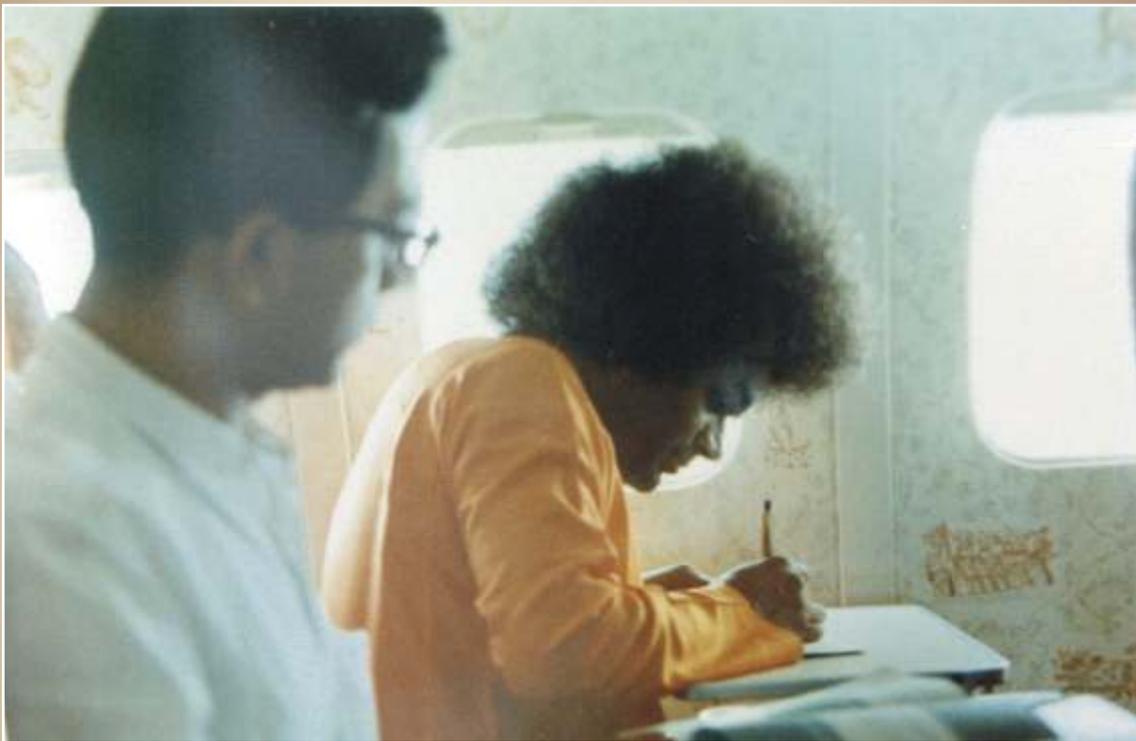


## Glory of God

**G**od's creation is full of wonders and beauty. One need not travel long distances to snow capped mountains to get a glimpse of it. Just one look in your own garden at a few flowers can reveal the greatness of the Divine artist. That is what Prof. Venkataraman did when he clicked the following photographs of the flowers at Trayee Brindavan last summer. The colours, the contrast and the symmetry are really stunning! Enjoy!

Coming Next..... In H2H!

The story of Bhagavan's only trip abroad.  
(In the physical form, that is!)



# H2H



The study of the Vedas is the highest type of learning, since it leads to the conquest of death, while all other studies deal with the means of deriving little pleasures of the world. The Vedas show the path to the realms of eternal bliss, where there is neither birth nor death. People strive to know all about the world, but they seldom try to know even an iota of their own inner realms.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba



**LOVE ALL SERVE ALL**