

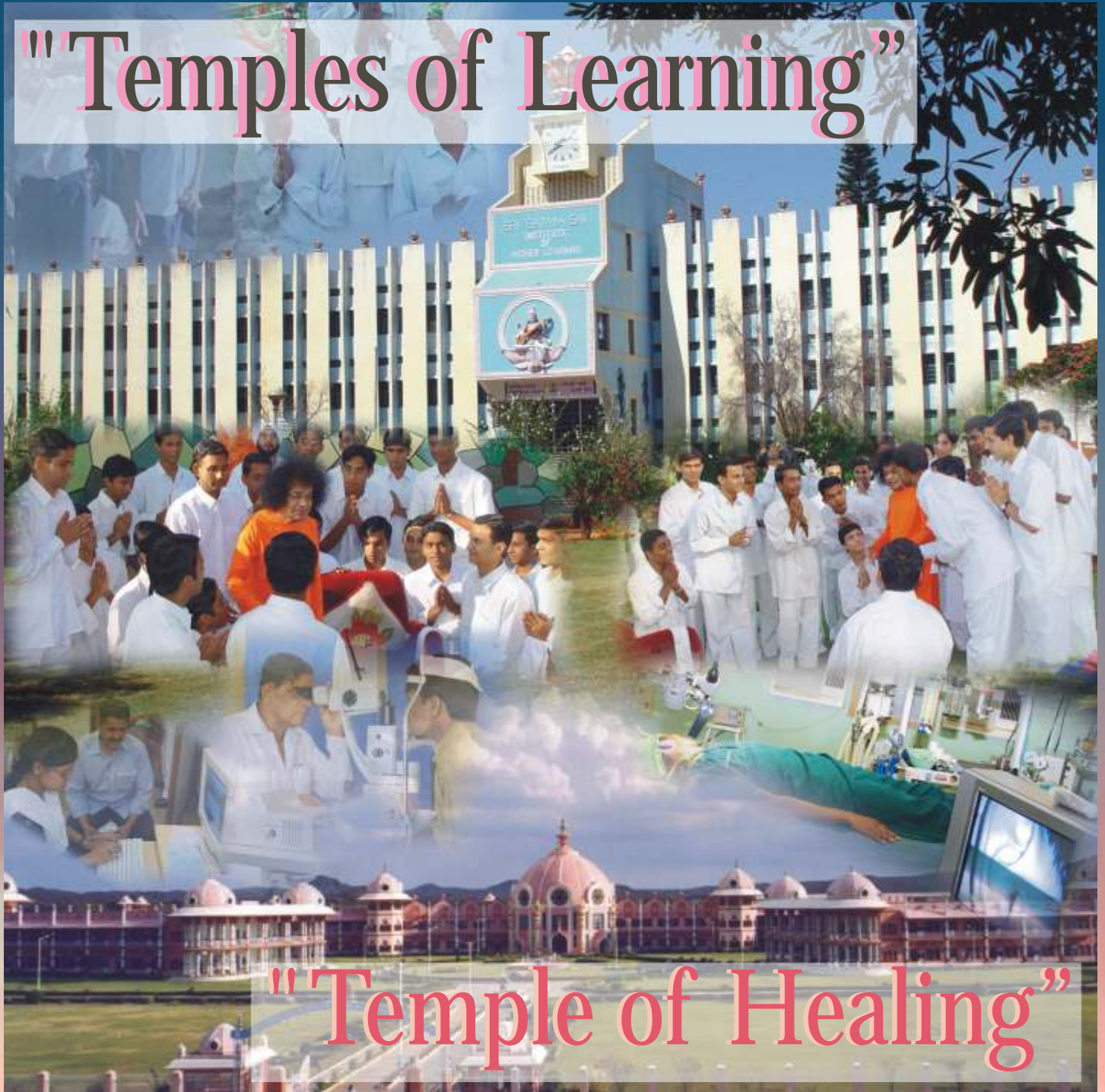


# HEART TO hEART



RADIO SAI LISTENER'S JOURNAL

"Temples of Learning"



"Temple of Healing"

COVER STORY

## Temples of Learning Temple of Healing

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PRANAMS AT THE LOTUS FEET

# Journal

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"Be like the flower which never complains  
the fragrance has to reach its goal."  
"An example of a person who is not afraid of death  
and who is not afraid of suffering and who is not afraid of  
any other thing is a person who is a devotee of God."

# Between You and Us

Dear Reader,

This issue is a special one in that; we feature prominently, Swami's University and the Puttaparthi Super Speciality Hospital, both of which celebrate their anniversary on 22<sup>nd</sup> November. We are featuring both these in the current issue, because we are reserving the 15<sup>th</sup> November issue for a Birthday Special. For the next two issues, the regular features will not appear in the journal for this reason.

Right from the beginning, Baba was dissatisfied with the present educational system. While in the early years He might have given the impression of being preoccupied with rituals, festivals, Vedic learning and the like, He certainly had, even then, a Master Plan for value-based education.

We now bring you through words and pictures, the story of Baba's contribution to the world of Education. We hope you like what we have put together. There is no doubt a lot of material to keep you busy. But behind all that, there are a few things we would like you to see. The first is the fact that Swami's University is a unique example of how tradition can be seamlessly blended with modernity. It is in fact a modern *Gurukulam*, with Swami, of course, being the *Guru*. By granting intimacy in various ways, Swami quietly moulds the character of students [as the *Gurus* of old did], which is actually the main purpose of the Institute founded by Him. The next is that in keeping with ancient tradition, education is offered free. The third is that all aspects of human personality are catered for. Thus, students are helped and encouraged to keep their body healthy, to sharpen their minds and keep it clean, and to develop purity of Heart. This is what is commonly referred to as Integral Education, something that is absolutely rare in this day and age.

The human being is a powerhouse of energy, the energy of the body and of the Mind. This power does not come from nowhere; it has a Source for sure and that Source is the Heart, the seat of God. Today, in the outside world, this energy of youth is not channelled properly. Parents have no time for this, while educational establishments could not care less. In fact, one leading educationist has gone to the extent of declaring that most universities produce merely clever devils. A leading American scientist adds, "Knowledge without compassion is inhuman." In Swami's Institute, Divine Energy latent in students is aligned to the Source [read Swami], so as to be in harmony with It. If the Institute is synonymous with Knowledge, the Hospital is the Source of Compassion. It is our privilege to feature these two together. If you keep in Mind all that has been said above, you will see how strikingly different Bhagavan's Institute is, and of course also the Hospital, where so many old students of Swami are serving.

We hope we have helped you in seeing all these subtle nuances through this special issue, lovingly offered at the Lotus Feet, and in celebration of two glorious creations by the Lord.

Please do write and tell us what you think of this special issue. God Bless. Jai Sai Ram.

SGH Team.



# Temples of Learning

Cloistered between a valley of ancient hills and the meandering latent flow of the river Chitravathi at Prasanthi Nilayam, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning announces its quiet presence as a forerunner of integral education, character building and academic excellence.

The chaotic turbulence of degenerated education systems does not echo in its vibrant corridors nor does the impersonality of excessive dependence on technology choke its gates. Basking ever in the spiritual aura of Prasanthi Nilayam, the abode of the highest peace, the chosen seat of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Established by Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November, 1981 and comprising of three campuses- Prasanthi Nilayam, Brindavan and Anantapur, the Institute draws its inspiration from the penetrative declaration of Bhagawan Baba, who is also its Revered Chancellor:

*"Students are the very foundation of the nation. To make the foundation strong, the people, the government, the parents, the teachers and the students - all have to coordinate their plans and their efforts. These five elements, these five vital forces have to work together towards this end. Students and teachers are the most valuable asset which can render the University an ideal one."*

Along with subjects related to worldly knowledge, the University imparts instruction in ethical, moral and spiritual codes and Sadhanas. It has as its goal, the cultivation of the students' mind along these lines. Virtues, purity of mind, adherence to truth, dedication to the supreme, discipline and devotion to duty- these qualities will be fostered in this university.

Heart to Heart takes you on a journey, revealing to you the facets of this brilliant Gem- the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning .....





# The Genesis

Temples of Learning

Today, the SriSathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning is known everywhere and almost taken for granted. Do you know how it all started? Here is that story, the story of three colleges that were started one after another, and were later fused into a University in a small village, when experts declared that such a thing was impossible! What a pity these learned people did not know about Sai Sankalpa and the fact the word IMPOSSIBLE occurs only in the dictionary of man!



The College at Anantapur

Interestingly, the first college that Swami started was for women. He did this in 1968, locating the college in the neighbouring town of Anantapur, the District Headquarters. Once Swami starts any activity, He must just 'get on with it'; He is not the one to sit around and mull, letting grass grow under one's feet, as they say. As Kasturi has noted, classes were started in rented halls and hurriedly erected sheds so as to avoid delay, even as the regular building was coming up. Finally, after the buildings were ready, there was a glittering formal inauguration on Gurupoornima Day, 1971 by the President of India, with all the speech-making. On that occasion, Baba said:

*India is being forged into Bhogabhoomi [land of luxury], a land of skyscrapers, tinned food, air-conditioning and television. Indians are being shaped into an imitative, insurgent, ill-disciplined mass. They are being transplanted on other soils and encouraged to grow without roots. This is an insult to the past and a dangerous defiance of history. It is a sacrilege on the history of Time, on the sole purpose of the human body. That is the reason I have decided that this College be inaugurated on Gurupoornima Day, as a reminder of the highest tradition, in which the highest ideals of life were instilled by personal example and guidance by the Guru, to pupils eager to imbibe.*

*The seed has been planted; it will sprout and spread, heavy with fruits, providing shade, security, and sustenance to all.*

Quickly on the heels of the college in Anantapur, came the college in Brindavan, Bangalore, which was for boys. After a modest inauguration ceremony, classes were started in improvised locations while the main building came up slowly. Over now to Kasturi for a brief description of the inauguration.

On the Inauguration Day, the College looked spic and span ..... On 9<sup>th</sup> June, 1969, the Chief Minister of Mysore State, Mr. Veerendra Patil had the honour of inaugurating the College. .... Speaking on that occasion, Dr. V.K.Gokak, Vice Chancellor of Bangalore University to which the College is affiliated welcomed the new addition as "a gem in the crown of the Bangalore University." [Later, Dr. Gokak became the Vice Chancellor of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.] He added:

*This College would set the pattern for College education, not only in the academic field but also in the ethical and spiritual fields. This is a College conceived, chiselled, and completed by Baba's Love, Grace, and Wisdom. Brick by brick, plank by plank, He attended to every detail. It is a lesson for all those who seek to do sincere service.*



The College at Brindavan

Since Swami usually spent several months in the year in Brindavan, it was now very convenient for Him to be with students a good part of the time, gently moulding them the way He wanted; Kasturi gives us a glimpse of the process:

*There is no activity of the College in which Baba does not evince interest, for He knows that it is the atmosphere in which education is imparted and imbibed that really counts. Since the College and the Hostel are situated within the compound [of Brindavan], Baba walks in during the Prayer Session, presides over Moral Instruction Lectures, and Himself supplements the Instructor. He writes and directs plays for the College Dramatic Society. Often, He pats a student on the back, pulls up a Lecturer who saunters in late, inquires from a sluggard the percentage of marks he secured at the monthly test, creates a fountain pen or a watch for some diligent, well-behaved boy about*

# The Genesis

Temples of Learning

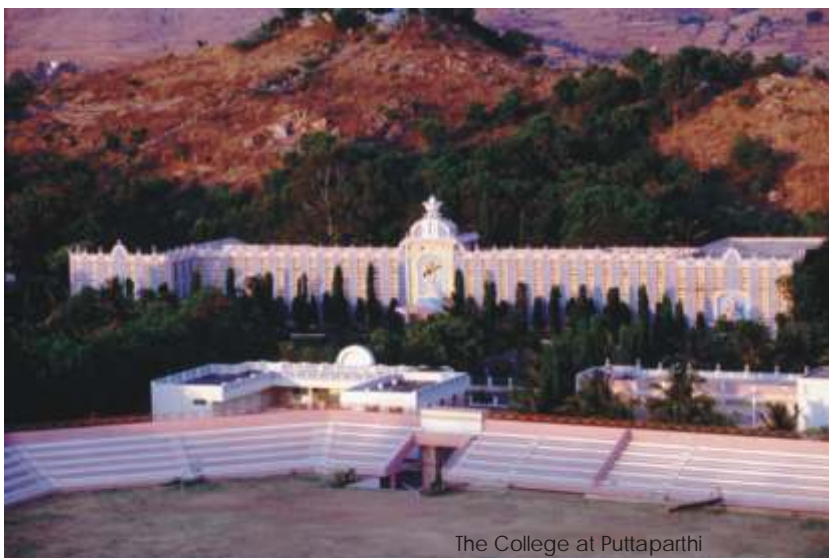
*whom the Principal gives a report that confirms His own opinion, advises the Librarian about classification, and generally moves about as the Guardian Deity of the Institution.*

It was time now to turn to Puttaparthi, and in 1978, Baba started the third College. By the beginning of the eighties, there were three colleges, in Anantapur, in Bangalore and in Puttaparthi respectively. Soon the time was ripe to fuse all these into a University, and that step was taken in 1981. And now, a Music College also has been added.

Swami compares His strategy for attracting students with what Yasoda the foster mother of Krishna once did. Yasoda was becoming a bit tired of Krishna's pranks and the complaints from the villagers. So one day she decided to catch Krishna and punish Him. But Krishna went into

hiding. To draw Him out, Yasoda said in a loud voice, "Krishna, come here and see what I have in my hand. I have something You like very much, butter. Come and get it!" Yasoda no doubt had butter in her outstretched hand but in her other hand, concealed behind her back, she held a stick! Swami says that Yasoda wanted to first attract Krishna with butter and then apply the stick! Baba adds that He first attracts students with the prospect of earning a University Degree. Once they are in, He leads them by the hand on the spiritual path!

Before the College at Parthi



The College at Puttaparthi

# Swami and his Students

Temples of Learning

Dear Reader,

We reproduce below an article written by Prof G.Venkataraman, Former Vice Chancellor of Swami's University, on the occasion of Bhagavan's seventy-fifth Birthday. We do this because the article captures the essence of Baba's unusual and most extra-ordinary relationship with His students, whom he always refers to as His property.

Jai Sai Ram.

SGH Team.

Three times thus far in the history of mankind, Lord God Almighty has come down in human form as a *Poorna Avatar*. The age we live in happens to be one of them, and blessed indeed are we to be able to have the *Darshan*, *Sparshan* and *Sambhashan* of the Lord. Drawn by His Divine Magnetic Power or *Aakarshana Shakti* as He calls it, people of all kinds and from all walks of life flock to Him. Swami loves all His devotees and showers His Divine Grace equally on everyone. Yet, there is something extra-ordinarily unique about Swami's involvement with His students. This relationship is not what meets the eye of a casual observer. Students should really appreciate what they are enjoying. Only those privileged to have a ring-side view, like I have had, can understand, even if it be rather feebly, how remarkable is the Love that Swami showers on students.

In a formal sense, Swami is the Chancellor of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, but the role He plays is anything but that of the run-of-the-mill Chancellor. The role may vary from moment to moment and over a wide spectrum, but the constant and unwavering under-current is *Prema*. Students often describe Swami's Love as equal to that of a thousand mothers but this, I feel, is a gross understatement. Swami's Love is equal only to Swami's Love; there is nothing else that can match it.



The Divine Chancellor

People normally try to measure Swami's Love for students in terms of the gifts that He constantly showers on them incidentally, there seems to be no limit to what He gives; I have seen Him distribute everything from T-shirts to cameras and films. However, material gifts form just the tip of an infinite iceberg. It is the constant concern that Swami feels about their welfare, both worldly and spiritual, that in some measure reflects His infinite Love. Like a mother, He worries whether they are eating enough and getting enough of nutritious food. At the same time, like a father, He wants to make sure they are studying well. He is also their *Guru*, which makes Him concerned about their spiritual development; so on it goes. He is at one stroke, mother, father, teacher, friend philosopher, guide, and everything else one can think of and much more. When cases of jaundice are reported in the village, He wants to be sure that boiled drinking water is available in the hostel. As exams approach, He constantly checks with the Warden whether students are getting enough rest and are not staying awake for unduly long periods. While the exams



# Swami and his Students

Temples of Learning

are in progress, He wants to know how the students have answered and whether the question papers were stiff. It is not just the students but also their families that receive attention and care, especially when there is a medical problem. As the Institute Convocation approaches, one sees Bhagavan in an entirely new role, which I doubt if He enacted in His earlier *Poorna Avatars*. Swami becomes very much interested and also involved in the drama that the Institute boys stage on the night of the Convocation. There are sessions galore in the Interview Room, every evening after *Darshan*. He begins by asking the boys what they are planning. When they hesitantly unfold the theme, He listens carefully and advises on how the play should be developed. The script is now prepared and He goes over it carefully, offering critical remarks and suggestions for improvement. Then come the songs. He first studies the lyrics and thereafter calls for the musical rendering. This is when one sees God as *Ganapriyudu* or the Lover of Music. Gently, but meticulously, He coaches the singers, instructing them how precisely the song must be sung, how proper feelings must be injected, how the action must be in harmony with the singing etc. For Swami, not only must the tune and the beat be right, but, more than anything else, the feeling or *Bhava* must be perfect. Until it comes out the way it should be, He would insist on rehearsing the song again and again. Meanwhile, He would get other people busy with the costumes. Especially when historical or mythological

characters are involved, Swami wants to have a preview of the dress and how it fits the actor concerned. Often, He would Himself do the adjustments so that the right look is achieved. All this might make it seem that Swami is the greatest taskmaster ever. Yes indeed. Swami undoubtedly demands perfection and will never compromise on quality or accept sub-standard performance; after all, is not God the acme of perfection? However, in the midst of all this grind, the Mother in Him surfaces; suddenly He would disappear inside for a couple of minutes, and when He returns, apples, snacks, fruit juice and such other goodies would follow! He knows how and when to inject relaxation and put the nervous actors and singers at ease. After weeks of such preliminaries come the full-scale rehearsals, which take place in the Institute Auditorium. For the boys it is often a tense affair because pleasing Swami is not an easy task.

From now on, it is rehearsals over and over again. The practice

sessions soon move to the Poornachandra Auditorium and whenever possible, Swami drops in to make sure that all loose ends are properly tied up. Comes then the great moment when the play is actually staged before a crowded audience. Swami is now like the proverbial mother, there He is in the 'pit' scanning the faces of those around to see if they are enjoying the play; and when they do, how proud He seems! And how He shows His satisfaction when He comes up the stage at the end, and how gloriously the Love-feast continues later in the backstage when dignitaries shower praise on the boys for their superb performance! But one must not get the impression that that is all there to it. For Bhagavan, the Convocation Drama is not just routine cultural entertainment. Rather, it is an expression of His Divine Message, communicated in drama form by His beloved students. Life itself is a drama in which the Lord coming down as an *Avatar*, plays as it were a cameo role. And, as a part of this play, He literally produces and directs a play - a play within a play! Altogether, it is absolutely fascinating.

After the Convocation comes the annual sports festival, and once again it is a glorious opportunity for delightful Divine intimacy, but of an altogether different kind. Swami wants the event to be a gala success, not for His sake but for the sake of the students. And so He fusses about all the various details, the band, the march past, the flag hoisting, and the various individual items. He makes sudden and



Staging His Play

# Swami and his Students

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unexpected visits to the sports field to inspect the arrangements and watch the rehearsals. When His car is sighted, the cry goes around, "Hey! Swami's car!" And what a change it brings about on the playground!

There is one particular visit of this nature that I must recall at this point. It was not during the usual sports season but a few days before that extra-ordinarily unique event, the Sri Sathya Sai Unity Cup Cricket Match. As the big day was nearing, we would often be in the cricket ground doing something or the other, missing the evening *Darshan* in the process. As if to recompense us, Swami came to the ground almost every evening for a round of inspection and supervision. One evening, as He was about to return, He decided to step into the Pavilion that had just been completed. He asked His car to be stopped in front of the Pavilion Block, got down, climbed up the few stairs, and went round the various rooms examining the fittings, the plumbing, the curtains, the chairs the whole works one might say. Only a handful of us went inside with Bhagavan. After doing the round, He came to the Pavilion verandah. Meanwhile, all the boys who were involved with various chores in and around the ground gathered on the road by the side of Swami's car. There were a few hundred students there. Swami just stood on the veranda giving *Darshan*, hands folded behind and gently rocking. He made no effort to go down and get into His car. I was behind Bhagavan and therefore could not see His face but from the looks and

the effulgent glow on the faces of the boys below, it was abundantly clear to me that Swami was simply pouring out His Divine Love in infinite measure. Truly, it was a sight for the gods! Time stood still for all of us. There was Swami in total Bliss, and there were the students lost and drenched in the downpour of *Prema*. For me, it was not only an unforgettable but also a unique experience; among other things, it taught me what Swami means when He says, "Students are My only property!"

If there are ups, then there also must be downs that is the law of life, and so it is between Bhagavan and students. Sometimes, Swami seems "upset" and the whole lot gets flung into the "workshop" as one says in Prasanthi. Swami is never really angry but pretends to be, so that the students realise their shortcomings and rectify their errors. When Swami seemingly distances Himself from the students, there is a tense drama of

sorts. The boys are in deep distress; they cannot give letters and give vocal vent to their feelings because 'Swami is not coming their side'. If students are in agony, the Mother in Swami too seems anxious for an early restoration of normalcy. But the Father in Swami seems to hold back! The fascinating drama continues till one day Swami walks past near the students during *Darshan*. They now cry out loud and in deep anguish. Swami appears to pause; a small dialogue begins. We are too far to hear the actual words, but it seems that Swami is gently reprimanding the students. Suddenly there are cries of "No, Swami", "Please Swami", and so on. Looks like there is going to be a thaw after all. Yes there is, and boys want to make sure; they burst into songs. Swami stands there listening; there is one song, then two, and then a third one as well. Hurrah! Swami has been 'won over'! Everyone heaves a sigh of relief, and, as if to make up for lost time, Swami now showers more Grace than even before!



At the Primary School

Students hardly realise to what extent Swami goes out of the way to confer favours upon them. They are the ones privileged to lead the *Bhajans* both in Prasanthinilayam and Brindavan. They are the ones who are permitted to present special musical programmes on festival mornings. They are the ones who chant the *Vedas* before the Divine Discourse, and also on other important occasions. For their sake Swami comes many times to the Institute to witness special programmes and also to speak to



# Swami and his Students

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them. He even answers specific questions. On occasions, on Sunday afternoons, He spends some time with them in the Poornachandra Auditorium, before coming out for the regular *Darshan*. It is for their spiritual advancement that He organises the Summer Courses. It is to encourage them that He takes them to Kodaikanal; and my word, what an experience that is! It is to give them the delectable taste of Divine intimacy that He holds the famous 'Trayee Sessions' while in Brindavan.

Students may forget Swami after they leave His portals but the Lord never does. When Swami went to Delhi and Mumbai last year, Bhagavan not only singled out the alumni from the crowd, but also made kind enquiries. And to those around Him, He lovingly recalled all particulars about the student concerned, even though the Student had graduated over a decade or so ago. The list of examples of Swami's *Prema* is endless. As if all this is not enough, on Sports Day, 1999, Swami, in an unparalleled act of extra-ordinary and infinite compassion, took upon Himself a serious injury in order to avert disaster to students who were to later perform dare-devil stunts. Barring just a handful, no one knew about this Divine act of sacrifice till several days later when Swami Himself revealed the details in a Discourse.

Is there any particular reason why Swami appears to single out students for showering His Love in

such abundance? Speaking in Trayee, an elderly devotee reported that he once asked Bhagavan to explain this mystery. According to this devotee, Swami replied that those who are today enrolled as students are really *Rishis* of the past, receiving their due in this *Kali Age*. Hearing this, Swami, in Whose Divine presence this talk was being given, laughed as if to say, "What! Are you suggesting that these fellows with whom I am struggling all the time are *Rishis*?" Swami may have made light of the devotee's remark but there surely must be some deeper meaning underlying Swami's most compassionate relationship with the students, particularly when one recalls Krishna's association with Gopals on the one hand and with Gopis on the other. Quite possibly it is all a part of the same drama and an extension of that glorious chapter of *Srimad Bhagavatham*, now being enacted in a different format and under the settings of the *Kali Age*. It is my personal belief that this indeed is the case.



At the Hostel

According to the *Bhagavatham*, not knowing who Krishna really was, Brahma the Creator once tried to embarrass Bala Krishna. But soon he learnt his bitter lesson, and as he was about to withdraw to his celestial abode, he saw Krishna playing merrily with the Gopals. Brahma then mused, "These little boys do not have any idea of how lucky they are to have the very Lord as their playmate." Quite possibly, Brahma is saying something similar even now. I hope our students do really appreciate, value, and treasure the priceless gift of Divine intimacy that they are receiving, which is exclusively reserved only for them. Although Swami does not expect anything in return, I believe students owe it to Bhagavan to be the best exemplars of those who seriously put into practice Swami's teachings. For Swami, *Aacharanam*, or observance of His teachings in daily life is far more important than being able to discourse on them. Students should unwaveringly aim at *Trikaranasuddhi*. And, under no circumstance, should they permit themselves to fall into the category of *Aarthi* [the seeker of wealth] or *Artharthee* [one who wants the Lord to solve his problems]; instead, they should constantly endeavour to be counted among those who have realised their intrinsic Divine nature. Having recognised this truth, they must gear up for the higher duty that

# Swami and his Students

Temples of Learning

beckons them. They should appreciate that if twelve Apostles of the Son of God could do so much to spread the Message of their master, how much they, in their hundreds and thousands, could do to spread the Message of the Lord Himself. Humanity looks up to them, and they should not disappoint humanity. To disappoint mankind would in a certain sense amount to disappointing Swami Himself.

Before I conclude, it is appropriate that I recall a touching prayer once addressed to Bhagavan by Prof. Sampath, an illustrious predecessor of mine. He said: "Swami, it is my prayer that when I am reborn, I would be blessed to be a student of Your School and Your Institute, and one day receive my degree directly from Your Divine Hands. It is only when I become a student of the Institute that my life would be complete." Those of us who have missed the opportunity of being a student of the Institute in this lifetime, might well consider addressing such a prayer ourselves.

Prof..G.Venkataraman



Bond of Love



Divine Intimacy



# Trayee: the Gift of Divine Intimacy

Temples of Learning

Few realise to what extent Swami goes out of the way to confer favours upon the students. One of the incomparable gifts of Divine intimacy that He confers is the famous 'Trayee Sessions' that take place while Swami is in Brindavan.

Trayee Brindavan or Trayee as it is more popularly known, is the *Mandir* of Bhagavan's *Ashram* in Brindavan [in Whitefield, Bangalore]. It is Swami's residence when He is in Whitefield.

The circular building called Trayee came into existence in 1984, replacing an earlier building [known as Bungalow] of more conventional design. The centre of Trayee is a circular hall with a high ceiling. On the periphery of this hall are several rooms, some of which are set apart for Interviews. There are similar rooms on the first floor too, and Bhagavan occupies one of these. Right behind the main entrance is a large, curving, 'veranda' that can seat about two hundred or so. At one end of this veranda is a sofa and at the other end is a small swing or jhoola. During the famous 'Trayee sessions', Swami is seated on the jhoola while the boys crowd all over, spilling into the adjoining circular hall. In front of the building are lawns and flowerbeds.



The Trayee sessions take place in the evenings, after Darshan and Bhajan are over. Typically, this is what happens: Swami first returns to Trayee while boys wait in the Sai Ramesh Hall [where Darshan is given], eagerly looking forward to the signal to go in. They then rush into the veranda of Trayee and take vantage seats. The teachers and a few elders also are permitted to attend these sessions but basically they are meant for the boys.

Innumerable are the variations to the Trayee session, and countless are the lessons and experiences they provide to those lucky to be present. Typically, the session would commence with Baba signalling to someone in the audience to speak. After the preliminary warm-up speeches are over, Swami slowly rises to speak to the boys. His 'speech' is a Discourse of course, often linked to one of the points made



Trayee Brindavan

by those who spoke earlier. Sometimes, He speaks sitting down in the jhoola.

The Trayee Discourses have a unique character of their own, and are quite different from the public Discourses that one is generally used to. Swami's voice is soft, gentle, loving, and most affectionate. It is very much like a mother talking to her children; indeed, it is nothing but that. When Swami speaks to students in Trayee, there is only one purpose to mould their character. He does this in innumerable ways, illustrating His points with appropriate stories and historical anecdotes.



There are days when Swami takes it easy, leaving the proceedings entirely to teachers, students, and the elders present. Some evenings it is all music, with the boys displaying their skills in both singing and in playing various musical instruments. Occasionally, it is all jokes, with even Swami narrating a few amusing ones of His own! At times, Swami just sits in the jhoola and asks the boys to chant the Vedas in unison. And while they chant, He is in Pure Bliss. Occasionally, He chants along with the boys, though very softly.

# Trayee: the Gift of Divine Intimacy

Temples of Learning



In May, it is vacation for the boys, and most of them go home to be with their parents. Some, however, stay on. When the number of students is small, Swami permits ladies and parents of students also to be present in Trayee. The sessions now acquire yet another complexion.

One such day in the month of May, Swami spotted a small boy about seven years old seated near Him, and started teasing the boy in various ways. He then said, "Listen, get married". The boy said, "No Swami". "I have selected a nice girl for you". "No Swami". "Why are you saying 'No Swami'? The girl I have selected is very good looking and an ideal match". Again, "No Swami". "Why 'No Swami'?" Without a moment of hesitation the boy replied, "Too much problem Swami!" Everyone burst into laughter, including the mother of the boy, who was present. Joining the laughter, Baba said with a twinkle in His eyes, "See? He already knows!" More laughter! After some moments He added, "That is what the boy is saying now but wait till he grows up to twenty two or so; then he will change his mind." A small lesson there.

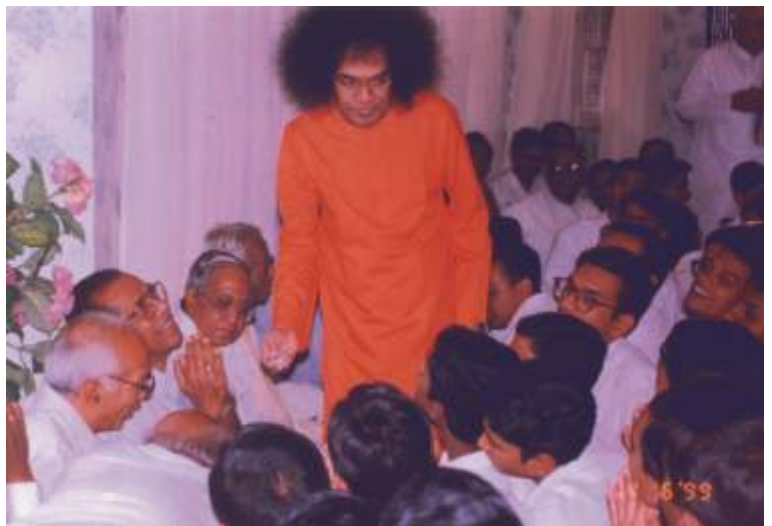
One year during the vacation period, Swami asked a Greek lady to address the gathering. This lady happens to be a doctor, actively involved in Sai service. One of her service campaigns was in Croatia, then torn by war and conflict. She organised a volunteer group and took it to Croatia for rendering assistance to the war victims. The members of the group distributed packets containing food, medicines, clothing, and along with these, a small photo of Swami. Recalling the service experience, the doctor said, "The people were very happy that we had come to help them. One of the people there held up Baba's photo and said, 'We know this person'. I was very

surprised and asked, 'How do you know Him? Have you heard about Him?' They replied, 'No, we have actually seen Him here.' I was astounded and asked, 'Seen Him? Here in Croatia? And what was He doing here?' They said 'Just what you are doing; distributing food, blankets, and medicines.' I was stunned."

After the electrifying narration was over, one of the devotees present remarked, "Swami this is absolutely extra-ordinary!" Swami replied, "For you it is extra-ordinary but for Me, this quite ordinary and routine." A hush descended on the audience naturally.

There are dramatic moments too. Once, after sitting down on the jhoola, Swami asked, "Where is the person from America?" The gentleman concerned was spotted and he rose to come forward. Swami asked the devotee to come near Him and while the devotee was doing so, with a wave of His hand Swami materialised a bottle. He held the bottle up so that everyone could see it. He then said, "This devotee has an eye problem, and has come all the way from America to seek Swami's advice. This bottle contains eye-drops." Meanwhile, the devotee, Dr. Ram Setty, had come close to Swami and knelt before Him. With much Love and Compassion, Swami poured a few drops of the liquid into the eyes of the devotee and then handed the bottle over to him with instructions about further doses. The event was not only etched permanently in the hearts of all those present but also touched everyone. The devotee had not even 'met' Swami after arrival and placed his problem before Bhagavan; but He was ready with the treatment, nonetheless. Swami was indirectly telling everyone present, "If you think of Me, I too shall think of you!"

The story does not quite end with Swami giving Dr. Ram Setty the bottle of eye-drops. A couple of days after this





# Trayee: the Gift of Divine Intimacy

Temples of Learning

incident, Dr. Setty was called for an Interview. A few boys also were present. Baba asked the boys, "Do you remember this person?" "Yes, Swami; You blessed him with eye-drops the other day." Swami then continued, "You have no idea how bad his condition was then". He then asked Dr. Setty to describe the condition of the eyes before Swami gave him medicine. Swami then added it was very red, red like this; so saying, He waved His hand and there appeared two strawberries! To the stunned audience He asked, "What are these?" Dazed, one of them replied, "Swami, strawberries." Swami said, "Not just strawberries but California strawberries! Dr. Setty lives in California!" Turning to Dr. Setty, Baba asked, "Are these not the type you get in your part of the world?" The astonished doctor nodded his head. Swami gave him the strawberries and said with a smile, "Eat it!"

There are tender moments too. Once, a casual conversation was in progress at the beginning of a Trayee session when a boy seated in the front offered some peanuts to Baba in a small bowl. Swami brushed it aside and continued the conversation. After a few minutes the boy tried again and once more Swami refused. A third try and a third refusal. The fourth time the boy was successful. Swami took the bowl from the boy's hands and after popping a couple of nuts into His mouth began distributing it to the boys nearby. Eagerly, boys thrust their hands forward. Swami dropped a few nuts into each palm stretched out to Him. He then asked the boy who originally gave the nuts to stretch out his hand; the boy did. Swami dipped into the bowl, picked a few nuts, and then made a gesture like dropping the nuts into the out-stretched palm. What fell into the palm were not peanuts but a shining diamond ring! The boy was stunned. Swami took the ring and slipped it on to one of the fingers. The boy now began to cry; he was too overwhelmed to utter any words. Baba then said, "This boy loves Swami very much. He did not want to come empty handed here. He did not do anything great. He just took a small bowl, went to the Hostel store, filled it with shelled peanuts and brought it here that is all. Swami is not bothered about what you offer but the feelings that accompany the offering. Any day, a teaspoon of cow's milk is better than a barrel of donkey's milk!"

For Swami's boys Trayee is a magic word that recreates scenes not witnessed since the boyhood-days of Krishna. In a manner of speaking, what happens is similar, though the settings and the time period are different. One of the Actors in the Drama is also the same; about the others, only He can say!

In the summer of 1995, Swami permanently cured a terrible eye infection I had been battling for a few years. I suffered from conjunctival haemorrhage [bruises under the eye membrane], that bled at least two or three times a year. During the Summer Course which I attended by His Grace, I had the worst eye-bleed. I could not even look at myself in the mirror. During a Trayee Session, I did not want to be seen; so I sat inconspicuously in a corner of the room. In spite of this, Swami saw my suffering and materialised eye drops that were cool, refreshing, and soothing. I was completely cured, and the problem has not recurred since. What a compassionate and loving God!

Dr.G.Venkataraman



# Kodai : The Lord's Mountain Top

Temples of Learning



Kodaikanal

Students often say that Prasanthinilayam is Swami's Office, Brindavan is His home, and Kodaikanal (Kodai) is His playground. In a manner of speaking this is so, particularly where Kodaikanal is concerned, for it is here that one gets a glimpse of the Sai of the forties, especially where Divine Leelas are concerned. It all lasts only for a short time but what extra-ordinary weeks they are for those blessed to enjoy Divine proximity then!

Kodaikanal is a hill station in South India. Located at an altitude of about 2500 metres, it is roughly three hundred and fifty kilometres to the south-west of Madras[Chennai], and close to the ancient temple cities of Madurai and Palani.

Typically, the Kodai trip starts soon

after the Institute closes for the summer. As soon as the party reaches Kodai, everyone is given a kit with all toilet necessities paste, brush, shaving

boys [despite their protests] for a stroll along the Lake Shore, to enjoy a boat ride, and to do some shopping; naturally, a generous pocket allowance

would also be most thoughtfully provided! Elders in Swami's party are not exempt. And so on it goes, day after day, till the dream suddenly ends! People may think that the Kodai trip is a picnic. But for God, it is a training session, with every incident packed with lessons. Here are glimpses of some of those lessons.



SAI SHRUTI - His Abode

cream, the whole works. Apart from this, a warm sweater. Everything is taken care of: food and bed. Arrangements are also made for laundry service. Every other day, there would be a distribution of gifts watches, cameras, films, T-shirts, after-shave lotions, pens, torches, calculators, just about anything one can imagine! One sunny morning, Swami would suddenly send all the

Rama Navami is the festival that marks the advent of the Lord as Rama. Many years, the festival occurs when Swami is in Kodai. On such occasions, the festival becomes a truly memorable day for the boys. On one such Rama Navami day, Swami materialised the pearl necklace that Sita gifted to Hanuman at the time of



# Kodai : The Lord's Mountain Top

Temples of Learning

Rama's Coronation. Rama was distributing various gifts to members in the assembly but somehow, He seemed to skip Hanuman. Sita was troubled by this apparent indifference; how could such a loyal one like Hanuman be overlooked on an occasion like this? So, she whispered to Rama that Hanuman should not be forgotten. Rama whispered back that Hanuman was way above material gifts. Sita was not quite satisfied by this reply; so she took out a pearl necklace that she was wearing and offered it to Hanuman. While receiving the necklace, Hanuman gave it a suspicious look. He then placed the necklace near one of his ears as if to check whether the individual pearls were emitting some sound. He appeared to examine every pearl in the

necklace, and once in a while, he would bite a pearl. Sita was shocked by this behaviour. Was Hanuman proving that, after all, he was a

everyone present there had had a look, Swami made the necklace disappear!

Swami does not need security after all, He is the One who protects the whole world. Yet, as a matter of courtesy and protocol, He is provided security by the Government of the State He is in. So it is in Kodai also. One year, the Police Officers in charge of Swami's security in Kodai requested Bhagavan Baba to visit a particular spot as it was very beautiful. They said that there was

a nice lookout there, and Swami and His boys could have a good picnic. To please the police, Swami agreed to the outing. A bus was arranged and on a day when the weather was good, the party headed for the lookout. The road was bad and the bus not exactly in the best of condition. So the ride to the picnic spot was quite rough and bumpy. When after a long and tiring journey the spot was reached, it was anything but spectacular. The boys were visibly disappointed but before they could give expression to their feelings, Swami began lavishly praising the view. He complimented the Police officers for their idea of this outing, expressed appreciation about the arrangements made etc. Promptly, the boys got the cue and they pitched in with their own expression of thanks and gratitude. On return to the residence, Swami gave the finishing touch by distributing gifts to the Officers. Later, He privately told the boys, "These people Love Swami very



monkey? She demanded an explanation from Hanuman for what he was doing. With great humility Hanuman replied, "Mother, for me the Name of Rama is supreme. An object is worthless if it does not resound with the Name of Rama. Some of these pearls are not emitting the proper sound and so I am chewing them up." Sita was neither convinced nor amused and tersely remarked, "Pearls do not emit sound." Hanuman replied, "Everything that is saturated with the Rama Principle will always chant the Name of Rama. Let me demonstrate." So saying, Hanuman plucked a hair from his body and offered it to Rama. When Sita took it near her ear, she could clearly hear the chant of Rama's Name! This was the way Hanuman proved to the world how intense true devotion really is.

After narrating the story and materialising the necklace, Swami passed it around and asked the boys to carefully examine it. Sure enough many pearls had teeth marks! After

# Kodai : The Lord's Mountain Top

Temples of Learning



With the Policemen

off, no one knew to where. A couple of hours later He returned, His face now beaming with joy. Students gathered around Swami, curiosity writ large on their faces. Swami noticed it, smiled, and said, "You all want to know where Swami suddenly disappeared? I shall tell you. This morning while people were receiving food and blankets, My mind was all the time on people too

much. May be they did not choose the right spot for the visit but Swami is not concerned with such details. He only looks at the Love. If you take a worldly view, you will see mistakes, but if you have a sacred view, then you will see only the Love part the rest would get eclipsed." One more lesson!

Narayana Seva is a regular feature of every Sai visit to Kodai. One such Seva was organised on 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1999, to coincide with Easwaramma Day. On that day, hundreds of poor people trekked to Sai Sruthi to receive the blessings of the Lord in the shape of His Divine *Darshan*, food, and blankets. At the end of the service, everyone was very happy but somehow, Swami alone seemed lost and pensive. Suddenly He called for His car, softly whispered some instruction to aides, and took

old and sick to come here. They needed food, clothes, and blankets, even more than those who came here. So I arranged for a jeep to be loaded with all these things, and went out looking for such people. Sure enough they were there in remote places, sick, shivering, and starving. I located many such people, and distributed blankets, etc. They were so happy and seeing them happy, I too am filled with joy". Yes, the Lord is truly our shepherd; why should we want?

Once in Kodai, the boys and the guests had sat down for lunch. There was no dining table, and in true South Indian style, everyone was seated on the floor. Baba was moving around, making kind enquiries as usual, and supervising the serving. *Brahmaarpanam* had not yet been

chanted, and people had not started eating. As Swami was gliding along, a small boy leaned across and wiped the ground in front of him with his hands. Swami came to that boy and asked, "Boy, what did you do just now?" The boy replied, "Swami, there was some dust on the floor, and I wiped it with my hands so that the place would be clean when you walked." Swami smiled and said, "Good boy! While doing this service for Swami, your hands have become dirty. Go and wash your hands before you eat."

Bhagavan did not stop there. Temporarily setting aside His "luncheon *Darshan*", [if one might call it that!], He personally took the boy with Him to a spot where there was a bucket containing water, and assisted the boy in washing His hands. That is how loving the Lord is!

Once, Swami was returning from Kodaikanal to Bangalore. Up there in the mountains it is always cool but down in the plains the heat is scorching at midday, especially in the month of May, when Swami was returning. In many places along the route, devotees had gathered in groups to have a glimpse of Swami's car as it whizzed by. Seeing a particularly large group in one spot, Swami asked the driver to stop the car, and prepared to get down to give



Before the Narayan Seva



# Kodai : The Lord's Mountain Top

Temples of Learning

**Darshan.** It was so hot that the asphalt on the road was literally bubbling in many spots. A devotee in Baba's party hurriedly produced a pair of sandals. Bhagavan waved the slippers aside and said, "If these people can wait for Me in the hot Sun for hours, can I not walk for a few minutes without bothering about the heat?"

Swami softly glided to the place where the devotees were gathered, ignoring also the carpet laid out for Him to walk on. Behind Him walked a couple of senior devotees, barefoot of course. They were obviously finding the road unbearably hot, for they were almost dancing as they went behind Baba. On reaching the spot where the devotees were gathered, He went through the full routine. He took letters, talked to a few, materialised *Vibhuti* for some, sat on the chair provided for a couple of minutes, and then received *Aarathi*. After that, He gently glided back to His car, with the devotees escorting once more doing their dance! As Swami was about to board the car, one of those who walked behind Him said, "Swami, why did You not walk on the carpet? The road was so hot." Swami asked, "Was the road very hot?" "Yes Swami, so hot that we could not walk; in fact I have got blisters as result." So saying, the devotee showed the blisters. Swami just smiled and replied, "Poor thing! You found the road hot because you were immersed in body-consciousness. I did not feel the heat because I was in Bliss seeing the devotion of these people. I did not get any blisters. See?" He raised His foot for the devotee to see, and there were no blisters!

The stories are endless and so are lessons taught. All of them are only expressions of His limitless Love for students in particular and humanity in general. On the whole, Kodai will always be an 'elevating' experience for one and all!



Loving Lord



In His Playground



The Return Journey



# Summer Showers

Temples of Learning

From time to time, Baba organises for the benefit of students, a Summer Course in Indian Culture and Spirituality. Typically, it is in the latter half of May, and, except for one occasion, Brindavan has always been the venue. The main objective of the Course is to give students a strong dose of spirituality, which is achieved in part through lectures delivered by elderly devotees, men of esteem and reputation in public life, etc. The highlight is of course the Daily Discourse by Swami, delivered typically in the evening



The Inaugural Address

For every Summer Course, Swami chooses a particular theme; for example, in 1993, it was the Mind. In 1976, the venue was shifted to Ooty, where there used to be a Sai School, later shifted to Prasanti Nilayam] because the Hostel in Brindavan was then under construction. That year, Baba's Discourse revolved mostly around the human aspects of the Krishna Avatar.

The Summer Courses were started in the early seventies. At that time, the student strength in Baba's College was relatively small. Therefore, participation in the Summer Course was open to students from all over India; at times, there were even some overseas participants. However, once the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning came to be established, participation in the Summer Course has been restricted mainly to the students of the Institute and some select guests.

As in other such activities, Swami takes complete charge. For the entire duration of the Course, food is served free for all students, teachers, guests, supporting staff, etc. Further, Baba makes sure that sweets and the fruit of the season, namely mango, are regularly distributed to one and all. Evening entertainment and cultural programmes are not overlooked, and one year there was even a play by youth from New York.

Without fail, the Summer Course is always a memorable experience for all involved with it in one manner or the other. Especially for the new comers to the Institute, it is an eye-opener to Swami's Infinite Love. The camaraderie, support and co-operation they receive from their seniors stands in marked contrast to the crude, cruel, uncivilised, and vulgar 'initiation' customs practised elsewhere.

For the benefit of posterity, the Divine Discourses are

compiled and published under the generic title: *Summer Showers in Brindavan*. The 1976 volume of course bears a different title; it is called, *Summer Roses in the Blue Mountains*.

The Summer Course always concludes with a farewell lunch, personally planned and supervised by Bhagavan Baba. He arrives even as honoured guests and students are taking their seats. To start with, He goes on a round of inspection the general arrangements, the kitchen, the items to be served, etc. The scrutiny over, Swami now moves around playing the gracious host. Here and there He stops to exchange a few words, and occasionally, He even accepts a letter or two people never miss a chance to slip a letter into His hands! Finally, He moves to the table set apart for Him and takes His seat there. From there, He glances over the entire gathering. After this a beautiful smile and a gentle, barely perceptible nod this is the signal for chanting the *Brahmaarpanam* prayer [drawn from the *Bhagavad Gita* and specially selected by Baba for chanting before eating; basically, the food is first offered to God and then eaten as a sacrament]. After the chant is



Summer Showers- In the 70s



# Summer Showers

Temples of Learning

completed, all eyes are on Swami. When He takes His first morsel, others start eating.

Swami hardly ever stays back to eat a proper lunch. Having tasted a little bit of the fare (for the sake of the students), He rises, moves around for a brief while, receives *Aarathi* at the exit and leaves the dining hall. This is the standard routine.

One year, there was a dramatic difference. While food was being served, Swami slowly moved to the Head Table where important guests are seated. Bhagavan stopped by to talk to an old-time devotee seated there. As He was conversing, food was being served, including to the guest with whom Baba was talking. Quite casually, Swami occasionally took a small bit of some of the items on the plate and popped it into His mouth. It was a gesture of extra-ordinary intimacy, but it all happened so delicately that hardly anyone was aware of what was going on. Even the devotee concerned hardly noticed so absorbed was he in the conversation. Suddenly, Swami said aloud, "All of you; what are you waiting for? Start eating. People have planes, trains, and buses to catch. It is getting late. Start eating." Of course, no one made any attempt to start eating; how could they, when Swami had not taken His seat and *Brahmaarpanam* had not been chanted? Baba repeated His instruction once again.



When He Comes to the Hostel

This time, the devotee with whom Swami was conversing till then said, "Swami, but *Brahmaarpanam*....?" Swami smiled and replied, "*Bangaru* [an endearing term in Telugu that literally means gold] what are you talking about? I have already taken the food even before it was formally offered to Me with a chant! What more do you want when I have taken the food?" So, for once, no *Brahmaarpanam* was chanted. One more reminder of who exactly He is!



A Luncheon with the Lord

# The Big Day

Temples of Learning



Unquestionably, 22<sup>nd</sup> November when the Institute Convocation is held [without fail, one might add], is a big day for students, teachers, and also Swami. The day is marked by two important events: While in the afternoon one witnesses a solemn convocation ceremony embellished with great dignity, in the later part of the evening one has a cultural show, usually a drama enacted by students or else a musical programme offered by the students. Every year, some eminent personality is invited to be the chief guest for this event. The list of chief guests is replete with the names of Prime Ministers, Presidents and other great educationalists. For the students, it is an occasion to make a commitment and pledge to lead their lives according to the ideals taught to them by Bhagawan through the Institute. The students who have topped in their respective academic courses are awarded gold medals and certificates by Swami Himself. Every student who is blessed with this rare opportunity cherishes this moment for the rest of his/her life. In keeping with the Institute's policy of integral

education, there is also an award for all round excellence in academics, sports, cultural and spiritual fields. Bhagawan himself decides who the recipient of this rare blessing shall be. To top it all, Bhagawan gives a Divine Benedictory message to the graduating students, which places before them the noble and ideal path that they ought to follow henceforth.

If the main proceedings are marked by seriousness, the cultural programme is when everyone relaxes. Yet, there is a purpose behind the programme, as it conveys, always and in highly original ways, the essence of Swami's teachings. For Swami, it is a showcase of the talents of His students. How happy He becomes when He goes up on the stage after the show is over, and later calls the boys to spend time with Him behind the stage! Fleeting the moments are for the students, but the taste lingers for eternity! That is God, and that is how He grants experiences; short they seem but they last for ever.





# The Sports Meet

Temples of Learning



*The 11<sup>th</sup> of January every year witnesses a unique event at the Vidyagiri stadium, Prasanthi Nilayam. Hundreds of Swami's students, both boys and girls, from kindergarten to post graduation come together to present to the world and more importantly to*

*Swami, a dazzling and amazing display of sports and cultural events. This is one event, the memories of which, every student cherishes for a lifetime. In the January 2004 issue, Heart to Heart shall bring an exclusive feature on the sports meet. For now, here is an appetizer...in the form of the reminiscences of a student who participated in this great show....*

Another sports meet has come and gone; another display of colour, skill, confidence and courage. But this is just from the onlooker's point of view. Actually, it goes much deeper than that - beyond what the eye sees and deep down to what the heart feels. The annual sports & cultural meet is more than just a visual display but it is an expression of love - the students' love for Bhagavan.

This student-God relationship of love is only one facet, a mere drop in the vast deluge of love that flows from Bhagavan and it is only because we, as students, have experienced this aspect of His love that we can speak of it with conviction.

Bhagavan is the only source of inspiration as well as the zenith of all our aspirations. All our endeavours are towards making Him happy. We are indeed fortunate to be at His Lotus Feet. And, especially today, on this auspicious occasion of Sankranti - today is the harvest festival, a day of life, energy, joy and colour - the day when the farmers offer their gratitude to the Lord for the crops harvested. The valedictory function of our annual sports and cultural meet coincides with the celebration of Sankranti. On this day we also reap the fruits of our labours, but of a different kind for us - it is the harvest of love for Bhagavan and a day

when we express our most profound sense of gratitude to Him.

Swami has gifted us with a unique educational system - one which aims, primarily, at the blossoming of the human personality. The integrated education gives equal importance to scholastic as well as to non-scholastic aspects for the all-round development of the character, on the physical, emotional, intellectual and moral levels. This, still, is a formal definition. Words really cannot contain the beauty of this learning experience - heart to heart, one-to-one relationship - which holds the key to transformation.



Bhagavan often says: BEND THE BODY, MEND THE SENSES, END THE MIND.

As we participate in the sports and cultural activities we can perceive all these three stages as we undergo them. The values that we learn, on and off the field, cannot be learned in any classroom.

Let's take the first stage - BEND THE BODY.

Swami says that body is the temple of God. But a temple is not merely a room with four walls and a roof- it gains importance and sanctity from the fact that God resides therein. Similarly, the body without God is nothing. The movements of the body, the synchrony of steps in a mass item, the beauty comes only because of the presence of the Lord. The focusing of all energies in learning physical skills is actually a celebration of this fact, that the body is a temple - so we bend the body with a smile. If we take this literally, every action, every effort is sacred and so, no task is considered low or high. Whether it is the background work behind the scenes or performing in the forefront, all the students and the teachers put in their best and wholeheartedly work with a single goal in mind - to please Bhagavan.

Apart from taking care of our physical well-being, many other values are learned on the ground - unity, cooperation,

# The Sports Meet

Temples of Learning

team-spirit, discipline and perseverance. These help towards the second step of 'mending the senses'.

Despite all the physical discomforts - like practising in the scorching heat- even the smallest children disregard them and are happy to practice throughout the day.

In the words of Tagore - 'Tireless striving stretches it's arms towards perfection' - each individual is important in the group. If one student is out of line or falls, the mass effect is spoilt, and, so each bears a tremendous responsibility - one that can only be fulfilled through concentration, constant practice and devotion. This is true about life too. Each individual has a role to play in society and hence experiences a joy of belongingness.

The last stage is 'End the mind'. This is, in a sense, achieved by the single-mindedness - the dedication of heart and soul to one purpose - to please the Lord.

There is an incident that happened during one sports meet a few years ago, when the structure on which a small girl was dancing caught fire. Despite all the commotion and panic that broke out around her, the girl kept on dancing, focusing her attention only on the Lord. There is this assurance in the heart of every student that the Lord is there to save them and hence, fear, which is one of the most primitive instincts of man, is conquered. It is this same assurance with which the students can climb 40 feet, 60 feet high and still not hesitate or look down in terror because they believe and they know that the Lord's ever-loving, ever-protective Hand is always there beneath them.

In our sports meet, sport is not an exhibition of personal achievement of glory - there is no cut-throat competition seen elsewhere. And all the students consider, whatever they do - whether a daring feat, a dance or a drill - as an offering of love to Bhagavan.

The sports meet can be seen as a miniature picture of what happens in real life. There are two gifts that we discover in the course of our sports events - one is 'possibility' and the other is 'capability'. First, we see what is possible and then in the process of trying to achieve it, the impossible is made possible. Many of us would never imagine that we could break a brick or a tile, ride a unicycle or attempt stunts on a roaring bike; they just aren't a reality to us but things we would see only on the screen. But the

possibility is there and our capability is harnessed to achieve the reality. As I said, sports is only a miniature picture of life. In life too, Bhagavan gives us 2 gifts - possibility and capability. Possibility is that broadest definition of self-man is what he dreams of, what he aspires for. Through discourses, dreams, and other means of contact, Bhagavan restores our belief that values do exist and they are real; they constantly remind us that we are all divine. And through this, the process of transformation is set in motion. This process is slow and steady, painful yet pleasing - like the metamorphosis of the caterpillar into the butterfly. This process, sustained by love, leads to the cultivation of courage and confidence.

Today is our prize-distribution ceremony. Bhagavan may give us many prizes but he has already given us the greatest prize - this prize He has given to each one of us, His students, and that is the prize of being called 'His own', 'His property'. It is this feeling of belonging to Him - of being 'His' - that gives us the conviction to believe in the highest, when we are going through our lowest

moments.

(Based on the speech given by Sonia Aggarwal, Student, Anantapur Campus, in the Divine Presence on 14 January 2003)





# Living with God: The Hostel

Temples of Learning



*Welcome to our home, our hostel. It is Bhagawan's gift to us. Here, each of us lives for the other and all live for God. This is the place where we live, learn and grow together.*

*Here you will see photos of our daily activities in the hostel. Right from the morning prayers to the night prayers- Bhagawan has designed every little detail of our hostel life, for our benefit.*

*You will watch us work, play and, of course, study. We take part in all the activities concerned with the running of our hostel. Be it serving food or regular maintenance of the hostel, or be it providing medicines or special food for the sick. Everything is done by the students, for the students. Truly, we live the dictum - the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Come. See. And live a day with us, through these pictures. We are sure you will love it. Just as we do!*

*-His Students*



CHANTING THE VEDAS



BENDING THE BODY



IN LINE FOR LEARNING



BRAHMAARPANAM



WITH THE LORD IN THE MANDIR



PLAYING AFTER CLASSES

# Living with God: The Hostel

Temples of Learning



A GAME OF TABLE TENNIS



ON THE BEAT



SOME LIGHT READING



SERVING THE SICK



HELLO DOCTOR



AT THE GENERAL STORES



STEADY IN STUDY



THANK YOU LORD FOR A GOOD DAY



Prema Swaroopa that He is, Bhagawan touches the hearts of students with His Infinite Love and constant care. The relationship between Bhagawan Baba and the students is unique and eludes description. The students' spontaneous response to this Divine call and their thirst for God, mark this sublime relation.

Here is a letter from Bhagawan to His students. It gives us a glimpse of the sweet bond between Bhagawan and His students. Words of wisdom, suffused with Love.....



**Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

Chancellor

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning

Prasanthi Nilayam - 515 134, Anantapur Dist., A.P.

Dear students!

Be like the star which never wavers from the crescent but is fixed in steady faith. When the sun is over your head, there will be no shadow; so too when faith is steady in your heart, it should not cast any shadow of doubt.

Do not take ill of others; take only of the good in them; all are good; if you see bad in them, it is because there is bad in you; if you do not like someone, do not mix with him. Grace is the sunlight which will ripen the fruit; sadhana is the sap which rises from earth. Both are needed by the tree in order that it may yield fruit.

With Blessings  
Baba.

# When they Leave

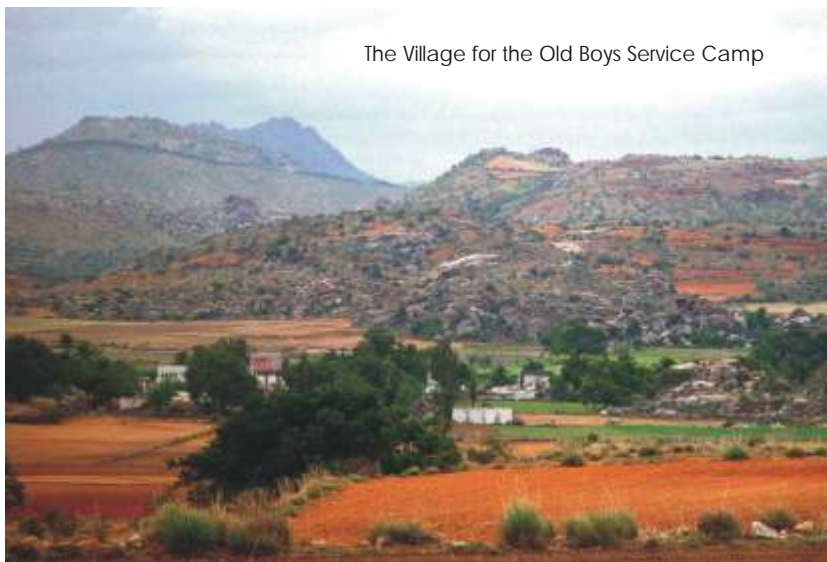
Temples of Learning

Devotees often say: "Swami's students are wonderful. But then, they are close to Swami throughout their stay in the Institute. What happens to them when they go out? Do they still cherish the values they are exposed to in the Institute?" Of course they do, and many are the stories that testify to this fact. As the Bible declares, it is only a house built on sand that collapses when facing a storm; a house built on rock does not. The character of Sai Students is built on the firm rock of Faith, Faith in Bhagavan Baba.

Reproduced below, is an article written by Gene Massey of United States of America. Gene's home is in Hollywood. He comes often to Prashanti Nilayam for Swami's Darshan, and while he is here, he invariably helps us out in various ways with his expertise. To him belongs the credit for the wonderful film on Creation that one sees in the Chaitanya Jyothi. Swami blessed Gene by seeing the entire film [in English] on the inauguration day. One year later, Swami again came to Chaitanya Jyothi to see the Telugu version that Gene had produced in the meantime.

Gene's article speaks for itself, describing as it does the Seva that he witnessed. Old students, both the boys and the girls, keep doing such Seva all the time, wherever they are. They leave the portals of the institute, but do not leave the path He has shown.....

The Village for the Old Boys Service Camp



Speaking once to Sathya Sai Baba, Jack Hislop used the phrase "dry Western heart" to describe himself. I had often thought that those words also applied to me. Imagine for a moment, if you will, a selfless person who chooses a career as a teacher, a doctor, a nurse, a social worker or any number of occupations that deal with helping other souls become wiser, or healthier, or better off in some way. Now imagine a fellow like me who chose the path of fame and fortune, seeking a career as a movie star, and failing that, a career as a Hollywood film director. The years I spent in search of such a career in the

spotlight left me a lost and greatly troubled soul who thought he wanted and needed the admiration of others to be whole and happy.

The Mission of Sai is to change hearts, even the hardest and driest of hearts, and it is to those souls that He has often given the most of His much-needed Grace. A Mother sees her child playing happily in the back

yard and knowing he is fine, she lets him run free. But when the child falls, or is hurt, or is troubled, she will bring that child in, and hold him close, and comfort him.

Such was the Grace of Sai with me. A lost and troubled soul, with a dust-dry heart, He has brought me in, held me close, and has given me a glimpse of His most wonderful Divine Love. I say, "glimpse" because His Love is fathomless, infinite, and cannot be described in words. It must be experienced.

My recent experience of His Wondrous Love actually began with a



# When they Leave

Temples of Learning

Gene and Sai Prakash- In Action



prayer. Don't all good things begin with a prayer? One evening, I was sitting in my room at Prashanti and actually said out loud, "Swami, I just want to experience Your Love. I want to really feel You in my Heart."

Swami was quick in his answer. The next morning, Dr. Venkataraman ("GV") called me in and asked me if I would like to film an "Old Boys Seva." Though I did not know what exactly it meant, I immediately accepted, as I have learned that the Sai Army is one army where you won't be sorry if you volunteer. The plan called for me to accompany GV's colleague, young Sai

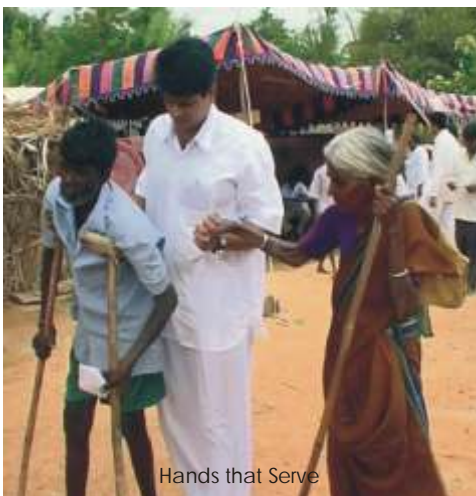
Learning. We were to film a Seva (selfless service) project in a village about an hour from Puttaparthi, organised by Swami's "Old Boys," as former students of Swami's University are called. They had all left College many years ago but had come back to do Seva to the less fortunate villagers. Apparently, they do this regularly.

Swami's Divine Plan for Changing Hearts usually includes putting you together with those souls who can do you the most good in progressing along the Divine path, and this partnership was no exception. Sai Prakash is truly a fine fellow and I was assigned the task of teaching him what I knew about filmmaking. However, when one works for Swami, one soon finds out Swami's real purpose, which is to make one understand that it is not the apparent task that is important, but one with a deeper, even greater goal behind it. This task assigned to me was no exception. Superficially it appeared to be a filming expedition, but I would soon discover just how important my partnership with Sai Prakash was, and how important the

filming of this Seva project would be in my own transformation. I would also soon learn that, even at his young age, Sai Prakash had such a fine character and Devotion to Sai that he could teach me a lot more than I could teach him.

You see, the graduates of Swami's schools are not ordinary human beings. They are truly Divine Instruments. Swami's students are pearls, whereas the rest of us are plastic beads. You have to know them to come to realize this, because on the outside they look just like you and me. They walk around, wear the same clothes, talk, eat the same food, and look like you and me, but they are different. They are selfless. They are living examples of Swami's teachings.

Swami has often spoken of the "Golden Age" and how it will soon be upon us. He has also said that selfless people, who want to work for the good of all mankind, is what the world needs now. To effect this great change in all mankind, Swami is "seeding the world" with these great young souls and the future of our world is literally in their hands. My Great Blessing was the opportunity to see these souls in action and to work closely with Sai Prakash.



Hands that Serve

Prakash, a former student of Swami's School at Puttaparthi and a graduate from the Masters Program at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher



Medical Camp in the Village

So that morning after Darshan, Sai Prakash and I packed our cameras and joined the expedition to the



# When they Leave

Temples of Learning



Health n Hygiene Class by an Old Student Doctor

distant village. We travelled by car through several small villages along the way, any one of which could have used much help, as these people have nothing. We travelled so far into the backcountry that at one point near the end of our journey we had to get out and walk, as the road was so rough.

Arriving at the village, we could see that many preparations had been made for this Seva project and the "Old Boys" had been working for several days. In addition to the students, a large group of doctors had come from Hyderabad and one aspect of this Seva Project was a medical camp where all the villagers would get to see a doctor. A fully stocked pharmacy had been set up to dispense medicines as prescribed by the doctors. A veterinary clinic had been set up to treat the animals. There was

also a noon meal planned for the whole village, and the day was to be capped off with a procession and Bhajans singing praise to the Lord.



In Action at the Pharmacy

The first thing that struck me was the simplicity of these beautiful villagers. They were so loving and so innocent. I marvelled at their humility and

tremendous gratitude for what was being done in their village. The wide-eyed children surrounded us and looked at us with such innocence, such humility and such Love in their eyes His Love.

The boys were scurrying around preparing lunch, preparing to treat the people, and assisting the doctors. Many of the Old Boys were now even doctors themselves. Tents had been set up to provide for privacy as the doctors gave each villager a personal consultation before they were sent off to the makeshift "pharmacy" with their prescription. The doctors tried to give each villager a prescription, even if they were just vitamins, so no one would feel left out. Sai Prakash and I did our best to film the most pertinent activities and we interviewed some of the doctors. I



# When they Leave

Temples of Learning

was particularly impressed with these great Devotees who spoke on camera. They spoke so lovingly about Swami's Mission of selfless service to the less fortunate people in the world that at times I felt that Swami must have selected them personally for these interviews. They knew His teachings by heart, and could recite so many of them without a second thought! These Devotees were such wonderful, loving examples of His teachings that I will forever remember what they said that day on camera.

One young lady who spoke on camera will be forever embedded in my mind. She was the village schoolteacher. This highly educated young lady lived here in the village and taught over three hundred young children, and without her they would not have the opportunity for an education. For a moment, I imagined the primitive conditions she was enduring to be teaching here in this remote village, and thought about the much more comfortable life in some nearby city she had given up to be here with these children. As she spoke, I could see a deep love, a Divine Love shining forth from her heart. She was His Instrument, a pure and loving instrument, and a selfless soul, His Divine Will acting through her.

In addition to the medical treatment for the villagers, several Devotees had come who were veterinarians. They had set up an area to treat the village animals and inoculate them against certain diseases. They also provided the villagers with certain medicines to



Veterinary Camp

be added to the animals' food. This was a particularly interesting thing to film, as the animals did not especially like to get an injection. They moved around a lot and would not hold still, so to film them we had a heck of a time finding a good angle without getting kicked!



Lunch at the Camp

At noon, a hot meal was served, and as we filmed we could see the villagers were extremely grateful. Living in the western world, where so many of us have too much to eat, we often forget this great need of many of our less fortunate brothers and sisters. Many people in the west just don't know

what it is to be truly hungry. One of the doctors explained to me why many of the villagers are malnourished. When they do have a little money to buy food they buy rice, because they can buy more rice with their money than they can buy vegetables. The greater volume of rice is more filling, and they are so hungry that they just want to fill their stomachs. However, in doing so they are missing many of the important nutrients they need to be healthy, so the vitamins provided to the villagers are a much-needed supplement to their diets.

The day wound down and we prepared to leave. I had packed up my camera and was waiting in the small car to depart. A group of beautiful young children completely surrounded this car I was seated in, and they all began to look at me. After a moment, one child said "Sai Ram." I smiled and said "Sai Ram." I smiled again and said "Sai Ram." Soon all the children joined in this Sai game. "Sai Ram" each child would say. "Sai Ram" I would say back to them. Again "Sai Ram" they would say. "Sai Ram" I would say back to them again. Over and over they would say "Sai Ram" and I would say "Sai Ram" back to each child. I looked into

their eyes. They were so innocent, so humble, and so pure. I could see that they wanted nothing but His Love. For a moment, perhaps just a split second, I felt it come through me. I'll never forget it.

GENE MASSEY

In conclusion, one can only say that blessed are those who are fortunate to be HIS students. As Swami himself once put it ..

*You are flowers in God's Garden,  
You are stars in God's Sky;  
You must love flowers and stars,  
You are wonderful beings in God's world!*

*You must be wise like Sankara,  
You must be compassionate like Buddha,  
You must serve like Janaka,  
Then you would become perfect men!*

*Never give up Sai! Make the best use of the opportunity given to you. Once you lose this chance to serve at the Lotus Feet, you will never get it back. Sai grants you devotion, strength, and Liberation.*

Jai Sai Ram





## BROTHERS

Swami often asks young boys, "How many brothers do you have?" Boys invariably reply along expected lines by saying two, or three, etc., as is the case. Swami then smiles and softly whispers, "All are your brothers!" After this He asks of another boy, "How many friends do you have?" Taking the cue from the earlier conversation, this second boy would say, "Swami, all are my friends." Swami would again smile, and gently say, "No, all are not your friends; God alone is your friend!"

## HUNDRED RUPEES

For Bhagavan Baba, quality is always more important than quantity; and to stress it, He often says: "One ounce of cow's milk is much better than a barrel of donkey's milk!" There is an incident that graphically illustrates the point:

During the period the Super Speciality Hospital in Puttaparthi was under construction, Bhagavan was quite busy and could not spend as much time with His students as He normally did. In the afternoons, after Darshan and a few Interviews, He would be closeted with doctors.

One day, after giving Darshan and receiving letters from the public as well as students, He adjourned as usual to the Interview room. Suddenly He came out holding a letter in His hand. Waving the letter He went towards the students and asked, "Which of you wrote this?" Hesitantly, one boy got up. Swami asked, "You wrote this?" Meekly the boy nodded his head, fearing the worst. Swami then turned towards the elders in the veranda and said, "This boy is a student here. He is very keen to contribute to the Hospital Project. In this letter, he says that he is not a doctor and therefore cannot contribute service. He is not a rich man and therefore cannot make a donation. He is only a mere student. Yet, he is keen to do his bit. So, what does he do? He saves his pocket money, collects hundred rupees and gives it Swami." So saying, Baba pulled out a hundred rupee currency note from the envelope in His hand and displayed it to the devotees there. Bhagavan then slowly added, "For Swami, these hundred rupees represent pure Love emanating from the heart. They are therefore far more valuable than a big donation made perfunctorily." God always cares only for quality and not quantity.

## "I AM SWAMI"

Once in Brindavan, as Bhagavan Baba was coming out for Darshan, He saw four boys standing. Swami stopped and asked one of the boys, "What is your name?" The boy told Baba his name. Swami then asked the same question to the other three boys.

Two of them gave their names but the third one said, "I am Swami." Baba then told that boy, "In that case, go and give Darshan!" and moved away.

Man certainly is an aspect of God. In fact, as Swami says, man is God. But this fact must be realised in the heart and not merely understood in the head. And having realised this basic truth, man must always have that Godly feeling. Merely declaring, "I am God!" will not do.

## YOU ALSO ARE GOD

Swami loves children and can be frequently seen talking to them [especially the Birthday boys] in the veranda in Sai Kulwant Hall in Prasanthinilayam. A favourite question of His is: "Boy, how old are you?" When the boy concerned replies, Swami's next question would be: "How do you know?" Invariably the answer would be, "My mother told me." Swami would then smile and remark, "Yes, it is always the mother who is the first teacher." Changing the subject, Baba would then ask, "Where do you come from?" Quick would come the reply: "Swami, I have come from You!" Swami would laugh and then say, "I just want to know where you were born." After a bit of light banter like this, Swami would then ask, "Who am I?" Without any hesitation, the boy answers, "Swami, You are God!" Swami would smile, pat the boy and slowly say, "You also are God!"



# Thoughts



Mere bookish learning and the acquisition of information cannot by themselves earn respect and esteem for you in Society. For that, Culture and the associated refinement are also needed. Routine scholarship is negative whereas Culture is positive; both are required. Whereas bookish knowledge equips you with facts, Culture refines and transforms your inner-being. Education bereft of Culture is like a field without water, a wire without current, a house without a lamp, and a temple without a deity. Pursuit of such education makes you totally rudderless.

Bhagavan Baba

Living with God is True Education!

Bhagavan Baba

You are a part of Society, and your individual welfare is intimately tied up with the welfare of Society as a whole. Hence, you must study not for making money but for the sake of serving Society. Unfortunately, these days, education has been reduced to a business, greedy business in fact. What you have received from Society must be returned back to Society, and in greater measure too. You are able to study because of the infra-structure provided by Society. Having benefited thus, is it proper to forget what you have received and focus on making money? To do so is immoral, indecent, and totally against man's basic nature.

Bhagavan Baba

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.

Bhagavan Baba

Education must not be for making a living but for guiding your life along the right path. However, these days, people think of education as a passport to jobs and comfort. The unholy connection between learning and employment must be totally eliminated.

Bhagavan Baba

True education can be summed up in one word: LOVE, all-encompassing LOVE! A life without Love is worse than death. There is no use in acquiring all kinds of knowledge if there is no Love in the heart. It is Love alone that can save the world.

Bhagavan Baba



# Temple of Healing

*Sri Sathya Sai  
Institute of Higher Medical Sciences*

# His Word, took a Form

Temple of Healing

*"There are countless people in this country, who cannot afford the huge costs of going abroad, and seeking a heart surgery. The poor have no proper place to go to, for such expensive operations, even in this country. Next year, we are going to establish a fully equipped, modern hospital at Puttaparthi, at the cost of hundred crores of rupees, where all cardiac patients will be given treatment, totally free of cost. Besides this, patients and their attendants will be provided facilities for their food and stay, totally free of charge. The first operation will be performed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November, next year."*



The Declaration on 23rd Nov, 1990

He said it, without much ado. As though, He was merely stating a fact. But, to the millions, who were gathered in His Presence, on that 23<sup>rd</sup> of November, in 1990, it was a 'Historic Declaration'. Aye...these Words, and the Action there from, would alter the course of medical history of thousands of forsaken lives! It would also give a new meaning to the lives of many men and women, who would be Blessed to be chosen as Instruments, to build, and serve the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences.

He was an American philanthropist. For years, He had been coming to Swami, and praying to Him to accept the resources in his command, for any project that Swami wished to launch. He thought that it was a noble idea, and his generosity would surely make Swami happy. Much to his chagrin, ever time Swami said, "I want your love not your money".

Issac Tigrett started searching his heart to find out where he had gone wrong. He was perplexed; after all, his offer was generous, yet it was turned down. Slowly, his doubts cleared like the morning mists that vanish with the sunrise. In Swami's own unique way, he was made to realize that he had made this offer with the feeling that he was the giver and that he was

going to be the benefactor of countless beings.

Tigrett was no one to linger around once he had understood this error. He went back to Swami and said, "Swami! There are thousands who yearn for a little part in Your Avataric Mission, but are unable to do so for various reasons. So please allow me to return unto You, what You have given me, on behalf of those thirsting thousands." This was precisely the change of heart that Swami wanted. Still, Tigrett's offer was not 'accepted'. Swami told him, "I don't want your money. You can build the Hospital, which is going to come up in Puttaparthi. It should be ready in one year."

The aspirant's path is not a bed of roses. Tigrett was stunned. He pleaded with Swami that he was not a doctor, not even an administrator, but a restaurateur. But Swami was unrelenting. He simply said, "Go and start at once. I am with You."

Tigrett stepped out in a daze. The first person he ran into was an eminent doctor. He told him of his Divine dilemma. The two together gathered an enthusiastic group of medical

experts. In less than a week, they presented to Swami the first project report on the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, delineating its objective, the scope and range of its activities, and the mechanics of implementation. Swami approved of the report and urged speedy action.

Tigrett wanted to return to the USA. Now, it was his responsibility to get an architect and make the plans. Nothing but the best is acceptable to Swami. He was carrying his concern into his flight, from Bombay to London. Whom does he find in the neighboring seat? It was Mr. Keith Critchlow, a world-renowned expert in spiritual architecture. Tigrett lost not time in briefing Critchlow of the Divine (Task) Master who wanted a Super Specialty Hospital built from scratch and be fully operational in less than a year. Critchlow was unwilling to take up the project. Tigrett kept using his persuasive eloquence on the flight. From sheer skepticism to full-blown enthusiasm, was the transition Critchlow underwent, before the flight landed in London. Finding this remarkable change, Tigrett decided to break his journey in London. They recruited a team of draughtsmen and put them up in a temporary office. Under Critchlow's



Isacc Tigrett



# His Word, took a Form

Temple of Healing



Bhumi Pooja

inspiring guidance, the plans for the hospital took shape within 4 weeks, blending ancient Indian architectonics with modern functionality. Critchlow's trained intellect could feel the hidden hand of the Divine Master, who was sitting in a remote village in India, orchestrating this complex project. He decided that he should go and meet the Master face-to-face and hand over the plans to Swami.

They both came to Swami. Swami provided them with many 'suggestions', from room reconfiguration and re-dimensioning to repositioning of some facilities; and it appeared to them that Swami already knew about the plans! Critchlow was, the least to say astounded at the appropriateness and perspicacity behind these suggestions. He gladly implemented all the changes.

In an aside, Critchlow was telling Tigrett that the site of such a glorious venture should be sanctified with a *Mandala Puja* (worship of the site), before the groundbreaking ceremony. Swami asked them at that instant to go and perform the *Puja* on the same day. Critchlow was familiar with the

rituals and was describing the *puja* to Tigrett, as they were driving to the site to perform it. He added rather apprehensively, "However well we may do the *puja*, the scriptures say that unless a Garuda, the 'eagle vehicle' of Lord Vishnu, the *puja* would not be complete." Tigrett refused to be drawn into this new worry.



Six Months before Countdown

They reached the site. Critchlow surveyed the bare expanse and chose a particular spot for the *Mandala*. When, they reached that spot, they saw not one Garuda, but five of them, standing, all in a row. Like silent sentinels, the birds were watching the entire *puja*. When the two men withdrew to a distance, they saw the birds take off and fly over the

Mandala in a perfect formation. Never had Critchlow seen such a resounding confirmation of what the scriptures describe as a rare sign of Grace.

Back in Prashanti Nilayam, Swami greeted them with a knowing smile, "You had asked for one Garuda; I sent five. Satisfied?" Thus the first Bhumi Puja was done.

There was a lull in visible activity after the initial announcement and the Bhoomi Puja. When Swami went to Kodaikanal in April of 1991, He took a few students and a few members of the Central Trust with Him. One could see the concern of some of the trust members about how such a huge project was going to be completed in the remaining time. But Swami always made light of it in His usual manner. While it was amusing to watch Swami make fun of their discomfiture, it was also a great lesson for all concerned - doing everything and yet not being part of it.

A very revealing incident took place during one of those days in Kodai. One of the trust members was very concerned that adequate funds may not be available for a gigantic project

# His Word, took a Form

Temple of Healing



Machines...Machines...All to be fixed

There was a meeting in Brindavan, where many doctors from India and abroad, discussed the plans for the hospital project in Swami's presence. Dr.A.N.Safaya, the Medical Director of All India Institute of Medical Sciences was nominated as the Chairman of this Committee. He was to become the Director of the Hospital. Slowly, the

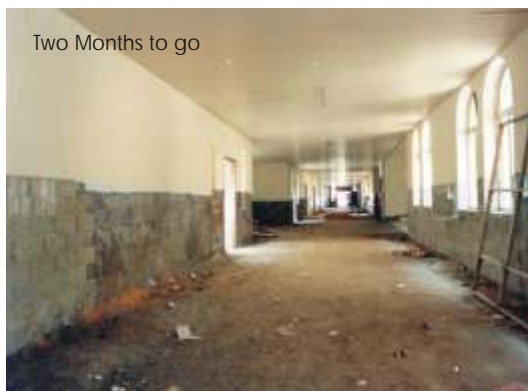
contours of the hospital were drawn. In the first phase the departments of Cardiology and Cardio-Thoracic surgery were to be established. A major international effort was mounted to source and install the most modern equipment for the

disposable surgical items, drugs, chemicals, fluids, linen, medical gases, etc., had to be identified and adequate quantities stocked. Everything had to be done within a very tight deadline.

Swami also chose a few of His students to work in the new hospital. He made all arrangements to get them trained in All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi and. Those four months in AIIMS got the students prepared for working in a professional and highly specialized environment. Writing to them from Puttaparthi, Bhagawan remarked, Take care of your health by taking fruits and milk regularly do not bother about money, when the '*kalpavriksha*' is with you why worry." In the midst of all the Work, He was still a Loving Mother to His children.

like the Super Speciality hospital and asked Swami about this. Swami became silent for a moment and picking out a letter from among those He receives everyday asked this person to open it. To everyone's amazement, there was a cheque for a half a million dollars, offered by a devotee at the Lotus feet. Swami looked at us and said, "Whenever any good work is to be done, do not worry about the funds; they will be available." Swami has taught this lesson over and over again during the next few years, as He took up several noble, and often, gigantic projects for the benefit of the suffering humanity.

Swami came back to Bangalore in May 1991 and the building plans were finalized only then. Later on, the chief architect Mr. Keith Critchlow, Director of the Prince of Wales School of Architecture in London, confessed that, while he had thought of many designs for a hospital, the inspiration for this particular design came from Swami Himself. The hospital building is an imposing structure that radiates warmth and peace. It resembles two arms offering comfort to all those who come into its fold. Swami had changed the initial 24ft high ceiling to a 14 ft one (and thus from a single floor building to one with a ground floor and the first floor) with a very practical suggestion. He asked, "Isn't it going to be difficult to clean the ceiling, if it is so high?"



Two Months to go

departments of Cardiology and Cardio-Thoracic Surgery. These included equipment like Cathlabs, Echo machines, Heart Lung machines, Cardio-Pulmonary resuscitation equipment, monitors, X- ray units and many more. The building construction started in late May 1991; and the functional areas, were to be handed over by the second week of November. Highly trained and skilled personnel, who were going to man the hospital, were to be recruited; and trained, if necessary. Puttaparthi, being in a remote area, suppliers for all the necessary items like

In the mean time, the hospital was shaping up, at its own pace. There were many obstacles to be overcome. The given timeframe was a major constraint. The building was a massive structure and nobody would have expected it to be completed in five months flat. Close co-ordination among the various agencies like the construction company- Larsen and Tubro, the architects, the doctors, the equipment manufacturers was achieved by their commitment to honor Swami's word whether a heart- lung machine had to be purchased and transported from USA, or the majestic chandelier brought from Italy and hoisted up the



The Operating Room- A month before the stated Inauguration



# His Word, took a Form

Temple of Healing

central dome of the hospital, or a design flaw detected and had to be fixed they were all done with the spirit of "prayer in heart and song on lips." Sai was always there, whether in physical form or otherwise, to solve any problem. While everyone had their doubts, Swami was inspiring all concerned by visiting the site daily and holding meetings with the planners, consultants and administrators who came from different walks of life and from different parts of the globe. Everyone contributed their mite to make sure that a noble project like this with such lofty intentions succeeded - that too in the given timeframe. In the midst of all this activity, Bhagawan still had the time to enquire if His students had their breakfast or lunch, 'whether the items were cooked properly - a beautiful activity which He indulges in even today. To maintain this kind of equipoise, in the midst of what was unarguably a very tense situation, is possible only by the Divine.

For a few days, the work was interrupted due to incessant rain. Mr.

Ramakrishna, the Head of M/s Larsen and Tubro, was asked by elderly devotee, "Will you be able to



finish the construction of the Hospital, by November?" His reply was an insight to the immense faith everyone working on the Project had, in Swami. "We do become anxious when our work is hampered by rain, or by delay in supply of building material, or by the occasional unrest and anxiety among workers. But, when Swami comes to the site and talks to us with a smile, in a reassuring manner, all our fears are laid to rest, and we get the belief that, we can do it!" said Mr. Ramakrishna.

As Birthday approached, it looked as

if the hospital might not be ready for operations on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov 1991. Never one to fail in His Mission, Bhagawan was a picture of confidence, instilling the much-required courage to everyone by His timely counseling, cajoling and occasional commanding. Such was the infectious zeal He had filled us with, that every one felt like the small squirrel, that did its part in helping Lord Rama build the bridge across the ocean. Everyone connected with the Sri Sathya Sai Organization, did his or her bit. While the students and staff of the Brindavan and Prasanthi Nilayam campuses cleared the front end of the compound of nearly thirty truckloads of cement bricks, the students and teachers of the Anantapur campus helped in cleaning the operation theatres, Intensive Care Units, Wards and corridors in the hospital. Professors and senior consultants from AIIMS, who had come to operate for the first few days, were seen carrying chairs and cupboards on the days prior to the inauguration! The Sevadal, one of the most dedicated wings of the Sri Sathya Sai Organization, worked



The Morn of Nov 22nd

# His Word, took a Form

Temple of Healing

round the clock, side by side with the hospital staff, in setting up the new departments, and in maintaining the cleanliness of the premises.

Still, on 18<sup>th</sup> Nov, a day before the operating theatres were supposed to be cleaned, fumigated and sealed, it looked as if the whole project would be a non-starter. The monitors were not installed in the Operation Theatres and ICU. There was some problem with the Oxygen and medical gas supply and even the Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) was getting interrupted regularly! Even to this day, Dr.A.N.Safaya, the Director of SSSIHMS, vividly recounts, those days, that tried and tested his competence, resolve and faith!

*"The target time and date of commissioning of Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery wings of the hospital was 9:00 AM on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1991. Work was going on at the hospital site at a hectic pace, throughout the day. All the men, the engineers and the newly recruited staff were busy with work, driven by the motive to get the project done, by D-day. I too was working with the crowd, doing my part, unmindful of my time or position. On 18<sup>th</sup>, midnight, I returned to my room in Prasanthi Nilayam, tired, crestfallen, and slumped down on my bed. Suddenly, tears started rolling down from my eyes and I was sobbing softly, something I had never done before, in my professional life! I was unaware of this breakdown, till my wife shook me back to reality. I just told her that I had failed my Master, my Swami, because there was no earthly way by which we could open the hospital on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November, as Swami had declared.*

*Operation theaters, Catheterization laboratories and the Intensive care area had to be readied before the scheduled date, and more importantly, made sterile. Environmental sterility had to be tested, before the surgeons could operate. Laboratories had to be geared up. We had to have the Blood Bank functional with at least 30 bags of properly grouped and matched blood, ready for use on the 'opening day'. "Nothing is ready, and I have utterly failed!" I told my wife. I appealed to her to pack the bags, so that we could run away to Delhi, rather than lose face. My wife simply chided me, for behaving so, and encouraged me to have total faith in Swami. She told me to pray and then rush back to the hospital, to fight the odds. She reminded me that this was Bhagwan's work, and it would never fail; with His Grace, all will be completed, as per Divine Decree. The next morning, when I rushed back to the hospital site, Col.R greeted me joyously and said that he had already sent the swabs for testing the sterility of the Surgical Theaters! "Wonderful!" I exclaimed, "What had happened during the six hours of the night, when I was away?" A miracle. He informed me that everything went on swiftly and smoothly. All the areas were now in the desired shape, and were completely ready!*

*A miracle indeed, it was, when, on 22nd November 1991, the surgeon's scalpel touched the skin of the first patient, at 9:00 AM, sharp, as predicted a year ago by Bhagawan, in His public Declaration! On that day, when the Prime Minister of India cut the ribbon and entered the magnificent central dome, accompanied by Bhagawan, several Governors, Chief Ministers and Union Ministers; it turned out to be the best setup, with the state-of-art equipment, most modern fittings and fixtures, and was fully functional. The set-up was one of the finest in the country. Nay. Comparable to the best in the world. Who turned the tides, between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 22<sup>nd</sup> November? Swami did it; our prayers and faith in Him, did it. I, along with thousands who worked and witnessed the Inauguration that day, will testify it!"*

His Word had come true! Needless to say, all the four open-heart surgeries performed on that Opening day were a great success. This was just the beginning ... the best, was to come...



*In Prasanthi Gram did the Lord a Healing Dome Decree  
Ailing Hearts and failing eyes, to cure, without a fee.  
Soon the rose a stately temple on this ground  
To spread health and wellness all around.*

*Amidst hill and dale and verdant grove,  
Stands this beacon of Healing Love,  
Our Lord's Message beaming to all,  
Love All, Serve All.*

*K. Vishwanathan,  
(Chief Engineer, SSSIHMS)*



Ever since that historic day in November 1991 the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences has made purposeful strides towards fulfilling its destiny under the Divine Guidance of our Beloved Swami.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1992, the Department of Uro-Nephrology was commissioned, and a unit for kidney transplantation was inaugurated a year after that. In November 1994, the Department of Ophthalmology was started and the Institute began offering post-graduate

programs for training of specialists in Cardio thoracic Surgery, Cardiology, Urology, Anesthesiology and Ophthalmology. With passing years, the existing services in each department also expanded. Computerized Tomography (CT) scanning facility was introduced in November 1996; and the Lithotripsy Center was added to the Department of Urology in June 1999. The SSSIHMS also made advancements in surgeries, other interventions and diagnostics, in keeping with the best practices in centers of excellence, world over.

### Who Needs the Pump Anyway?

Its been two years since Dr. Neelam Desai, Senior Cardiac Surgeon -SSSIHMS, has used a heart-lung machine for a routine Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery. She has totally gone 'off-pump'! A bypass surgery is performed, when the blood vessels that supply blood to the heart (the coronary arteries), are blocked. In a coronary artery bypass surgery, surgeons sew a blood vessel into a coronary artery to reroute blood around a region where it is blocked. There was a time when this surgery, was performed only 'on-pump'. In an on-pump procedure, the heart is stopped and blood is detoured around both the heart and the lungs, but circulated through the rest of the body. However, the use of heart-lung machines can cause potentially fatal complications. Off-pump surgery reduces these problems and has a faster recovery. In the off-pump operation, using a device called the "Octopus", surgeons limit the motion of a portion of the heart, and perform the bypass on a beating heart. Dr. Neelam Desai, who performs 90% of the bypass surgeries 'off-pump', agrees that this procedure is more demanding than the on-pump procedure, but adds, "The patient definitely benefits from the off-pump surgery. Their post-operative stay in the hospital is both, shorter and healthier!"

## Shocking the Stone!

For the doctors in the Department of Urology, SSSIHMS, it's an odd coincidence the place they work at, is in the *Rayalaseema* area of Andhra Pradesh; simply translated as the *Land of Stones*. The incidence of kidney stones (Renal Calculus) in this area is amongst the highest in the country. In the past, all kidney stones were removed surgically. In June 1999, Swami gave the Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripter to the SSSIHMS, at a cost of a few cores of rupees, revolutionizing the removal of kidney stones in the hospital. With this machine, stones below the size of 3 cm, in the kidney and the ureter, are now removed without any surgery! The stones are first localized using ultrasound or fluoroscopy, and then pulverized into tiny fragments with the application of shock waves. Dr. Ram Gopal, Head of the Department of Urology, opines, "With this method, patients are spared of surgery, consequent hospitalization and post-operative pain. The actual treatment takes about an hour and the patient is discharged within a day. It is really a boon to many of our poor patients, who live on daily wages. They can get back to work soon and the loss of man-hours of work is reduced." To date, over 1500 patients have been treated with the ESWL, and the number grows by the day...

As one enters the soothing premises of the central dome, one clearly sees the most important Message of Bhagawan inscribed on a plaque - "*Paropakartham Idam Sareeram*," meaning, the body is given to serve others. That is the guiding principle in whatever Swami does and what He expects the staff to do in this temple of healing. Cutting edge technology, backed by a dedicated team of medical and paramedical personnel, and above all the Divine Grace of Sai, have enabled the hospital in notching up an impressive record. More than five lakh patients have been treated in all the out patient departments over the past nine years. More than ten thousand heart surgeries have alleviated the sufferings of as many families and given new life to them. Thousands more have benefited directly from Urological procedures, some of which were quite complex. Almost ten thousand ophthalmic surgeries have given vision to those with eye defects. Thousands more, admitted in hopeless conditions, have walked back home, healed in body and spirit. When one sits back and contemplates on the enormity of work done, one cannot but wonder at the Divine Love of Sai, who has set an example for all of us to emulate.



Off-pump Bypass Surgery



Lithotripter at SSSIHMS



# Take A Tour!

Temple of Healing

*Welcome!*

*Ready to take a photographic tour of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences?*

*Here's some pleasant news...joining you in this tour is none other than His Excellency Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, President of India! So, have an enjoyable and enlightening experience...*



The Central Dome is Cathedral like, with its ornate designs, the magnificent altar, the dazzling chandelier and the Venetian glasses. It is here, that all patients, staff and even visitors, say a little prayer, before they enter the hospital.



Let us move on, to the Cardiology Outpatient Department. Of course, this OPD, like all other OPDs in this Hospital, is packed with patients. The cardiology OPD sees about 125 patients everyday.



Welcoming you at the Central Dome of the Hospital is the Director Dr. A. N. Safaya, himself. Formerly, the Medical Director of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Dr. Safaya has been the Director of SSSIHMS since inception.



A miniature model of the hospital is right outside the dome, for you to behold. They say that the artist took more time for making the model, than Swami did, for building the entire Hospital!

# Take A Tour!

Temple of Healing



The patient first gets registered in the OPD, where he is given a unique Hospital ID Number. The records of all patients are computerized and kept in the indigenously developed Hospital Information System.



The 2D-Echo machines are the workhorses of the Cardiac OPD. They give a dynamic two-dimensional image of the heart and are extremely useful in diagnosing a majority of heart diseases, including complex congenital diseases.



Time to move on to the nearby Imaging Department...Dr.Reddy, Consultant Radiologist, explains the working of the 1000 MA X-Ray machine and fluoroscope. These machines are vital for diagnosis. The X-Ray is the surgeon's favorite 'guidebook' to the patient, on the operating table.



A much more 'detailed guidebook' is the Computerized Tomographic (CT) Scan of the patient, which gives the Doctor a slice-by-slice view of the diseased area. The CT Scan is extremely useful diagnostic tool for aneurysms, tumors and bone injuries.



# Take A Tour!

Temple of Healing



Using the Gamma Camera, doctors obtain very clear images of various parts of the body, such as the heart, kidney and thyroid gland. To obtain these images, tiny amounts of radioactive materials (called "tracers") are introduced into the patient, which emit radioactive gamma rays that are detected by the machine.



Dr. Iyer, Consultant Cardiologist, tells that both the Cathlabs are equipped with digital image converters that can store patient information. The Cathlab immensely interests the President, who as a scientist had previously designed an indigenously made stent, and here after plans to design indigenous and economical Cathlabs, for the ailing and indigent in his country.



Now...to the Cathlab, in the first floor where the Cardiologists are busy performing an Angioplasty. There are two Cath labs (a Monoplane and a Biplane), where various diagnostic and interventional Caths are performed.



The broad corridor from the Cath lab leads to the adjacent operating rooms, facilitating quick surgical interventions in case of an emergency. The two operating rooms are utilized to the maximum and are equipped with heart lung machines, online gas monitoring facilities, cellsavers, centrifugal pumps; and of course, exceptionally skilled surgeons!

# Take A Tour!

Temple of Healing



The Intensive Care Unit, adjacent to the operating rooms, is geared to give the best post-operative care to the patient. There are even infant warmers for the babies. The President (who has put on the gown before entering the sterile area) is obviously impressed with the level of care Dr. Neelam Desai, Surgeon Incharge, gives to her patients.



The radiance of His Grace is visible on the faces of the patients.... The pain has vanished and smiles say it all.



Once the patients are stabilized, they are moved to the wards, where care, and love along with, accelerates their recovery. The patients are all praise for the nurses, here.



A quick detour, to the Department of Urology. Here, the President is stunned by the display, Dr.Bhat, the Department Chairman, has upon the shelves. Huge stones (some of them rocks!), deadly tumors, and totally diseased kidneys that once threatened patients' lives...lie harmless on the shelves. The patients are long gone...happily leading the lives that they now owe to Bhagawan.



# Take A Tour!

Temple of Healing



Finally, to the Department of Ophthalmology, which offers a complete spectrum of comprehensive and advanced diagnostic and treatment facilities for all disorders of the eye. The investigative tools here, are state-of-art, and are complemented only by the expertise of the doctors.



The President keenly listens to Dr.Sasirekha explain the way the FFA machine locates the tiny blood vessels that are damaged in a patient's retina. The damage is then quickly remedied using a laser, before the patient is plunged into a world of total darkness. Yes...the Hospital indeed is a beacon...for lives lost in the hopelessness of disease.



It is time now to say good-bye...

*As you drive on, look back, at this Edifice of Love and Hope...and carry its memories with you... discover the joy in giving...and celebrate the joy of living!*

Talk a while to her, and you will realize that, 18-year-old Noor is a bright girl. She never had much of schooling, though. After her fifth class, she labored as a farmhand, to support the family, to get her older sisters married. Work in the village fields was never easy for her. The slightest bit of exertion would lead to bouts of gasping and palpitations. Fatigue would wear her down, and even eating became arduous. The doctor in the nearby town sounded the death knell for Noor, when he said that, she had a serious heart problem- an obstruction to blood outflow from the heart. How could a family that earned barely Rs.50 a day, afford a heart surgery that cost over a lakh? But the very same doctor asked the family to rush to Baba's Hospital in Puttaparthi (The doctor was a Sai Devotee, himself!). Today after her surgery in the SSSIHMS, Noor smiles and says that she is all set to support her family again. "We owe it all to Bhagawan. If not for His Hospital, our daughter would have had no future. I can think of her *Nikah* now, and get her to start a family of her own!" says Noor's mother, with a newfound hope in her eyes. This devout Muslim lady loves Prasanthi Nilayam, and even attended the Vijay Dashami celebrations, to have the Darshan of the Lord, who gave her love and hope, though His Hospital.

Tulasi's pain was almost unbearable. But even more, was the fact that she could not cook for her husband and three sons. Tulasi's oldest boy did the cooking, while she watched and writhed. Her blood pressure rocketed and she often became breathless. Her husband, a farmer, spent a fortune to get her angiogram done in the district hospital, only to find out that her heart was normal. The CT scan that followed shocked the couple. Tulasi was found to have a potentially malignant tumor in her kidney- a Pheochromocytoma. The cost of the operation, in the cancer center at Hyderabad, was far from affordable. They returned home in despair, to wait for the possibly life-threatening tumor to take its toll. Tulasi's younger brother had heard from the "Sai Bhajan Group" in his village, about a Sai Hospital, where all were treated for free. He came to Puttaparthi with his sister. Two days of consultation and tests in the Department of Urology were followed by immediate surgery. The tumor was excised. Her brother can't hide his joy. "I now know why they call Him, God! It is like a temple here. The doctors, sisters and volunteers are so wonderful." The housewife is now happy on the road to recovery. She just can't wait to get back to her village in West Godavari and do some cooking!

A kerosene lamp tipped over on the bed of an 18 day old baby.... "That was the fateful moment that charred me for a lifetime. I don't even remember what my face was like, before that!", says Binoy. Binoy's village in Orrisa did not have even a dispensary, where his parents could take him, to treat the second-degree burns, on his face. "Growing up was never easy. I had a very few friends; a burnt face, without a nose, is unsightly to look at!" Binoy decided to wait till he was old enough, to undergo a reconstruction surgery for his nose. He taught students, to earn money for his college education and also save up for the expensive plastic surgery that he planned to have. "I went to various hospital's in my state and saw that the results of reconstruction surgeries there, were far from good. I had lost all hope of finding a good surgeon. It was then that I met Sri.Naik, the Convener of the Sathya Sai Organization in my town. He told me to go to the plastic surgeon in Baba's Hospital. The word is around that he is excellent!", Binoy recounts. Today the young software engineer is grateful to Dr. Reddy, for his skilled hands, and Swami, for His miraculous Hospital! He smiles with a confidence he has never known before, and says, "Baba has given me this nose...and a lot more!"

Chiran is a cherubic boy from Madhya Pradesh. This smart and active 11-year-old had trouble catching up with his friends at play. He would sit down breathless and exhausted when he tired to do so. Father was devastated to learn that little Chiran had a hole in his heart, made worse by leak of the adjoining valve. Yadav could not even dream of earning the exorbitant sum he would have to pay for his son's operation. At work in the field, the next day, he told his fellow labourer and friend, Hari Lal, about his son's condition. Hari Lal revealed that there was a Hospital in South India that treated totally free, and confessed that he had himself been operated for kidney stones, in that Hospital! He asked Yadav to take his son there immediately. Yadav had to save for three months before finally making it to the 'Free Hospital', with his son. Today, after his operation, Chiran is all excited and ready to beat his friends at play. He softly whispers into his father's ears, "*Papa*, I want to become a doctor!" ...  
With tears in his eyes, the father can only exclaim, "This place is Heaven!"

*(Names have been changed to protect the patients' confidentiality)*



# SSSIHMS - Best Among The Best

Temple of Healing

Dear Reader,

*This article was written by Dr. Valluvan Jeevanandam, for 'Sai Spandan' - an offering to Bhagawan on His 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday.*

*Dr Valluvan Jeevanandam graduated medical school from Columbia University in NY at the top of the class. Had surgical training also at Columbia University. Became director of the heart transplant program at Temple University in 1992 and stayed there until 1998. The program was the largest in the US for three of those years. He has since moved to University of Chicago where he is the Chief of Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery and Director of Heart Transplant and Mechanical Assist Device. Has the distinction of being the youngest CT surgery chief in the US of any major institution.*

In this article, Dr. Jeevanandam recounts his experiences of working in SSSIHMS.



Dr. Jeevanandam

I often get asked what type of hospital is the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences (SSSIHMS)? Can the equipment match those in advanced centers around the world? What is the quality of the personnel working there? Are they actually doing that many cases? Is the medical care truly free? After being given the privilege and honor of working at the SSSIHMS many times, my answer to all those questions is unequivocal - not only is patient care absolutely superb, but the institution is unmatched by any other in the world.

It has the most advanced equipment available - there is barely any difference between working in the operating rooms at Puttaparthi or in any one in the United States. The health care professionals are also unique - most do not have specialized training in their particular field of work. They are a few chosen, very intelligent, devoted students Swami had assigned particular tasks to - and then they received "on the job training." For example, an economics student becomes a perfusionist. Incredibly, they are the best support staff I have ever worked with. They are extremely knowledgeable and devoted to their jobs. They are there for

the love of Swami - and it is clearly reflected by their actions and work ethic.

Ultimately, SSSIHMS has the biggest advantage over all other institutions - the chief administrator is God himself. How can other institutions match up to that type of

compassionate leadership? In the US, we often have to justify what we do for patients. Between the insurance companies and hospitals, financial considerations can often take precedent over patient care. At SSSIHMS, Swami asks that we do our best - He takes care of all the other details. Patient care

is paramount as each person is given the most advanced care possible. We have done homograft valves (human valves that are transplanted to replace a patient's diseased valve), multiple valves and coronary artery bypass using complete arterial grafts. These are procedures done in only one or two centres in India and in fewer than 10% of all hospitals around the world. With Swami's grace, we are able to extend His helping hand and deliver the best care to some of the poorest people in the country. Not only is the care



Where He is the Administrator

# SSSIHMS - Best Among The Best

Temple of Healing

advanced, it is delivered with compassion and understanding. Swami's grace and love is always present. Melodious Bhajans permeate the air. The patients can sense the peaceful bliss. They recover remarkably fast and with few complications. For instance, intravenous lines that are usually required for at least a week are removed within 2 days.

On a personal note, being permitted to work at SSSIHMS has changed my outlook on life tremendously. Swami has a great way of using us to help humanity, but equally using His guiding Hand to shape our character. For instance, early in my career, before I was acquainted with Swami's teachings, I considered myself intelligent, technically gifted, and able to save patients who were practically dead.

My ego swelled as I began to think that my actions were saving patients lives. One can develop quite a "power" complex. After discovering and being in the presence of Swami, I have realized that this is merely an illusion. An incident during my second visit to SSIHMS really brought this to light. There was one case remaining for the day. It was getting late and the staff wanted to have an educational meeting. Being full of ego, I claimed that the case would be done in 2 hours as I was going to take over. It was a relatively simple case and I could not foresee any difficulties. Needless to say, I was taught a very valuable lesson. The patient developed complications and a short case became a 5-hour exhausting ordeal. The patient ultimately did well but after a struggle. The next day during Darshan, my mind was obsessed with all the difficulties of that case. Swami came over and did not say a word. He just looked at me with a twinkle in his eye and smiled. From that moment, I realised that it was not my ability or talent or intellect. Each one of us put on earth by Swami has a role He has determined for us - we are just instruments of God. With that one episode, Swami sucked out a large amount of my bloated ego. Everything we accomplish is because Swami, in His infinite compassion, wills it so. We have to do our best; the rest is in His hands. That experience humbled me



Truely, World Class

and made me grow up in a hurry. I realize it is not my abilities but rather His Will. Everyday now, I spiritually give Him my patients and He takes care of them - I am an extension of His Hands and just do the duty that Swami has put me on this earth for.

If my experiences are any indication, SSSIHMS is truly a Temple of Healing. Not only is there treatment for the patient, but there is also the 'Presence' of the Caregiver as well. Not only is there the repairing of the body, but also that of the mind and spirit. SSSIHMS supplies the best care because it is Swami's care - His selfless love and compassion for humanity. This makes SSSIHMS unrivalled in the entire world.



The Caregiver



# People Who Make the Difference

Temple of Healing

**T**he scarf on the neck and “Sai Ram” on the lips, are their hallmark. Every fortnight they come, from states all over the country, to render a period of relentless service in the holy hospital. They are the Seva Dal force- the people who make the difference, in the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences.

You can find them almost everywhere in the Hospital. As a patient enters the Hospital, the Seva Dal volunteers greet him at the gates and guide the patient to the Department he wishes to go to. Their kind words and caring demeanor, restore the patient's spirit, right away. For the feeble and ailing, the volunteers are ready with wheelchairs.

At the registration counter, the multilingual volunteers serve as translators. They take the utmost care of the patient's security and comfort. Infants, the old, and the very sick, are attended to immediately, thanks to the efficient triaging done by the volunteers. The volunteers are a big support to the OPD staff and doctors, as it is they who regulate and control patient flow into the consultation rooms. Some skilled Seva Dal volunteers even actively participate in direct patient care.

The volunteers are the 'messengers' and 'couriers' who ply between departments. They bring in the essential surgical and medical supplies. They transfer samples between various laboratories. Some of them support nurses in escorting patients to the various departments; others assist in arranging patient files and ordering medical records. No matter what the job is, the volunteers execute it with an effective enthusiasm and efficiency.

In the Department of Dietetics, the volunteers help the dietitians in every step of preparing food for the patients. At mealtime, they take the food in to the ward, personally serve it to every patient there, and ensure that all patients have had their fill. It's only after completing the task, that they go and have their meal. Meanwhile, other volunteers are busy in the canteen, serving food to the staff of the hospital; taking care of the caregivers themselves.

Finally, they clean and spruce up the place, for the next day. They softly sing Bhajans and go about sweeping and mopping almost the entire floor area of the hospital. They wipe the windows, dust the furniture and make the place spotlessly clean.

Yes, some of these volunteers are professionals, highly qualified and immensely regarded. Yet, they have no qualms in doing any task, high or low. They take it all as a rare

opportunity to serve and be a part of their Lord's grand Mission. Through this, they not only alleviate suffering, but they also experience a deep sense of spiritual fulfillment and elevate their lives to nobler heights.



Can We Help You



At the Registration Counter



Order in the OPD



Love in Action

# People Who Make the Difference

Temple of Healing



A Vital Part of the Supply Chain



Catering with Care



Chop Chop... for the Patient's Meal



Meal-o-mobile in the Ward



Sai Ram...The food's served



Cleaning up the Kitchen



We even take care of the Docs



Now you know why these floors sparkle



# They Came, They Saw...

Temple of Healing

(Jottings from the SSSIHMS Visitor's Diary)

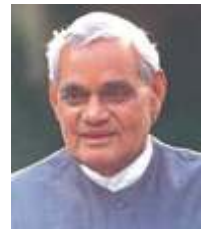


*"Delighted to visit Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences. I am inspired after coming here, as I can see God's Mission carried out in every aspect. The doctors and staff in this Hospital, look to me like Angels."*

His Excellency Sri. A.P.J Abdul Kalam, President of India

*"This Hospital is an example of what devotion and dedication can do to bring about human transformation. This is a unique institution, working for the poor and the needy. Of course, the entire credit goes to Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and His disciples for this miracle."*

Hon. Sri. Atal Behari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India



*"It is very rare in life, you get uplifted and reenergized by not only a magical building but, by the Total Divine Love that is in every corner, every stone, every smiling patient's face. I love this place, and what excellence it has achieved."*

Sarah Ferguson, Duchess of York

*"Unbelievable! The greatest triumph of Human Spirit."*

Nani Palkhiwala, Eminent Jurist, India



*"It is impressive beyond words. Remarkable in its concept. Even more remarkable in execution and daily working. An illustration of God in the service of humanity"*

Yashwant Sinha, Minister of External Affairs

*"It is breath-taking to see the Power of Love transform nothing, into the creations that are manifest in this Place. Truly remarkable, truly awe-inspiring, and truly marvelous. I pray that the Spirit that made all this possible will make me contribute to the growth of this Spirit and Place."*

Noah Samara, CEO World Space



Coming Next.....

23<sup>rd</sup> of November, the Birthday of Bhagawan Sri Satya Sai Baba, when millions congregate at Prasanthi Nilayam to offer their obeisance to the Avatar of the Age. Radio Sai is privileged to share its birthday with the Avatar, and gratefully offers at His lotus feet a *special* birthday issue exclusively on the Glory of His Avatar....watch out!



Coming soon.....

The story of a million thirsty souls- *the people of Rayalseema*. The story of One compassionate heart- *Bhagawan Sri Satya Sai Baba*. The story of the *largest* service project ever undertaken by a private charitable organization. The Sri Sathya Sai Drinking Water Project.....

Don't miss it!







*Education must transform you into an embodiment of compassion. Once, Gandhi was 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.*

*Education must not be for making a living but for guiding your life along the right path. However, these days, people think of education as a passport to jobs and comfort. The unholy connection between learning and employment must be totally eliminated.*

*True education can be summed up in one word: LOVE, all-encompassing LOVE! A life without Love is worse than death.*

*-Baba*



Love All Serve All