

"Space is one. But it is held in diverse containers like the home, the pot, the building and the canvas. There is no truth in this divided existence; it is the one space that exists in all these 'receptacles' which are varied shapes and forms, with distinct names attached to them, and different modes of behaviour and use. So too, individual beings (jivas) have different names and forms, peculiarities, specialties and behaviours. But like the string that holds the beads, passing in and through each one, the Super Consciousness in all individuals is ONE. That is the Self, Atma, which is mistaken as the ego through ignorance. Only when this truth is acquired, can man release himself from the hold of this transient world" - Sri Sathya Sai Baba



Calling health professionals.

Conference on Sai Ideal Healthcare on Saturday 17th September 2011

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Sathya Sai School celebrates 10th Anniversary - What happened in the Land of Oz ?

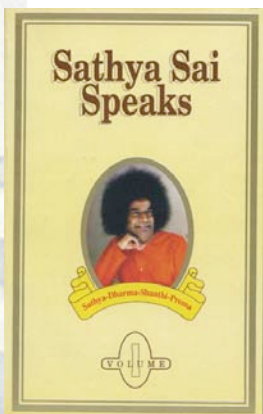
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Report of World Youth Conference 13th & 14th July 2011 Prashanti Nilayam

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National Guru Purnima Celebrations

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Dear Sai Brothers & Sisters,

Sai Ram!

Thank you to everyone who attended the National Gurupoornima celebrations that took place in Coventry last month. It was a pleasure to be able to introduce Leonardo Gutter to everyone. Leonardo delivered an inspiring and motivating speech which left everyone wanting to hear more. Thankfully Leonardo will be returning back to UK this November. Leonardo Gutter is now overseeing United Kingdom along with Latin America and we had four very productive meetings with him and the: Sathya Sai School, Institute of Sathya Sai Education (ISSE), UK Trust and UK Central Council.



Attending the National Gurupoornima celebration brought back many lovely memories of similar events that took place annually back in the 1980's at Heath Clark School in Croydon which was organised by Mrs Rajes Sivayogan. These events along with the National Eashwaramma Day Celebrations were always well attended by devotees up and down the country. I hope and pray that one day we will also be able to bring back the very successful National Eashwaramma Day Celebrations that so many devotees looked forward to.

After the success of the last event, we have received many requests by devotees to continue organising such events. Therefore, going forward the National Guru Poornima celebration will be organised annually and rotated around UK. Furthermore, we also plan to organise a National Birthday and National Christmas celebration for all devotees and their families. (More information on this in due course.)

I am also pleased to invite and inform you of our next National event which will take place next month in September. We will be hosting a National Conference on "Sai Ideal Healthcare". The flyer and additional information can be found in this newsletter. The Conference will take place on 17th September at the Henley Business School, University of Reading. Registration is required and the Conference is open to all Healthcare professionals whether Sai or Non-Sai devotees!

One last thing.....a question I keep being asked, after returning back from the Gurupoornima Celebrations in Prashanti, has been "so what is it like there now without Swami?" The only difference I can honestly say is that instead of waiting hours for Swami to emerge from the Mandir, Swami now waits for us to come to the hall for darshan. Nothing has changed, the Mahasamadhi is beautiful and very peaceful and the magical feeling you get being in Prashanti is still there. I do not think the magic will ever end, it will only get stronger, we merely have to have faith and believe. Swami is very much alive and can be felt in Prashanti. He can be felt through a particular bhajan, a particular Sai devotee we associate with Prashanti, or a special place where we once sat and had the good fortune to interact with him or even whilst walking around the Ashram or eating in the canteen. Swami can be felt everywhere and these memories continue to remind us that God once walked the earth and we were so very lucky, fortunate and blessed to have seen and experienced Him.



Lovingly

Shitu Chudasama
National Chair

National Gurupoornima Celebration

Saturday 23rd July, at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire

God is the Supreme Universal Teacher who is engaged constantly and patiently in teaching men and women during all ages that they too are divine! Not only this, God also protects and provides for all beings at all times silently and with no anticipation of any favour in return! To express gratitude every day and every moment to such Benevolence is not only natural, but is also considered a sacred duty by peoples of all faiths, all climes, and all ages. 'Gurupoornima' is one such special day in a year when one takes the opportunity to pray and meditate on God in love and gratitude.

This year the National Gurupoornima Celebrations in UK were held on the beautiful parkland and facilities of Stoneleigh Park. About 1400 devotees from all over the country gathered and joined their hands and hearts to offer sincere gratitude as a nation to our dear Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Our dear Bhagawan who continues to touch each of our hearts and transform each of our lives with His Love; our dear Bhagawan who has always reminded us of our divinity and of the divinity that exists in all beings around us! These celebrations, following on from the National Memorial and Remembrance Day in May, were also another opportunity for all devotees to derive joy and strength by sharing and being in each other's company.

The venue for this occasion was a large one, reminding one of the Poornachandra auditorium in Prasanthi Nilayam. The altar was impressive too and beautifully decorated. A large portrait of Bhagawan's Mahasamadhi adorned the stage, making one wonder if we were in fact in Sai Kulwanth Hall! The huge Sarvadharmasymbol on the stage greeting one and all. The day began with some uplifting bhajans, and these were followed by two talks.

Dr. Kiran Patel, National Secretary, in his welcome address shared his personal experiences that highlighted the divine nature of Swami as a Supreme Teacher. He exhorted everyone present to be ready to tread the path of love and service that the Master has shown us, now that He has left the physical mortal. Mrs Vidyulata Narayan, National SSE Coordinator, spoke next about the glory and power of the Name and its significance when chanted with love and devotion.

Then followed for the next two-and-a-half hours a most powerful and special session of Chanting. Bhagawan Baba says 'God is All Names and Forms'. And this was experienced in ample measure by one and all on the day during this chanting session. Whilst the venue reverberated with the Laksharchana Chanting of 'Om Sri Sathya Sai Krishnaya Namaha' conducted by our revered Mr. Vadgama, there were interludes during which representatives from various world religions offered their prayers too! Thus we had Islamic prayers from the Koran (Sura 14 and 15), Christian hymns and chants, Buddhist chants, and the Sikh prayers from the Guru Granth Sahib. Each sequence of Laksharchana, religious prayer, and a Sarvadharmasong were so seamlessly interwoven that the entire chanting session gently uplifted everyone into the higher realms of existence where every heart was filled with great joy, unity and spiritual bliss!





At the end of this chanting session, lunch was served to the accompaniment of devotional singing. The sumptuous feast continued with an icing on the cake: A most thoughtful, inspiring and captivating talk by Mr Leonardo Gutter, our Guest speaker on the day, an ardent devotee of Bhagwan and member of the Prasanthi Council. He enthralled the audience for over an hour with his wondrous experiences with Bhagawan through which Bhagawan moulded him and provided him with many important lessons to conduct Sai Organisation work in South America. He asked all devotees to remember that we are indeed very very fortunate (as Swami had reminded him at his first darshan) to be born as a human being, to respond to the call of Swami and to be aware of the presence of the Poorna Avatara. He then exhorted all devotees to practice the following key messages of Bhagawan:

1. Do not talk ill of others
2. Know that Swami is always with us! Despite leaving the physical frame, nothing has changed as Swami is very much alive and eternal.
3. Intensify our sadhana – “We have to intensify our Sadhana not by the increasing the hours of Bhajans but by wearing the glasses of Sai. When we wear those glasses, we will not criticise anyone. To be a devotee, we have to deserve His love. We have to ask ourselves if we are doing enough. Let me give you the simple answer: No! We are not doing enough. It will be enough the day we awake and realize our real Self. Until then we must do more”.
4. Take Swami’s message of Love to all corners of the globe - Narrating the experience when Bhagawan formed the Prasanthi Council, He called the members to His residence. Bhagawan said, “You have the good fortune of knowing My message. You have to share it with all.” We should do everything to spread His message. Our goal is not to bring more people to the Sai centers. We do not proselytize. We just want to share with all the people revelations given by Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba about the real purpose of our lives and how we can achieve it. Speaking about His message is like planting seeds of spirituality in the people that are listening. One day, in this lifetime or another, the seeds will sprout and will change them forever. This is the best service we can render to another human being.

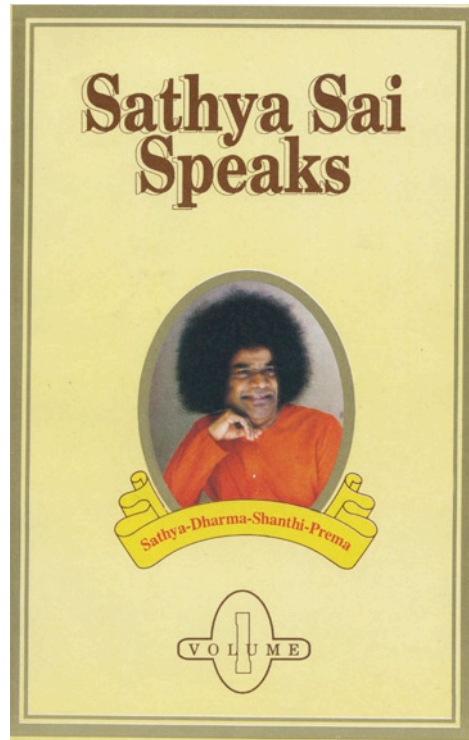


The programme concluded with an hour long musical offering by renowned musicians and ardent devotees of Bhagawan- Ms. Roopa Panesar on the Sitar, Mr. Rai on Tabla, and the duo brothers Gnanasundara Desikar on Violin and Somu Desikar on the Mrudangam. They kept the congregation enraptured by their virtuoso solo performances, and then their combined ‘Jugalbandi’ playing of Bhagawan’s favourite bhajans such as ‘Premamuditha man se kaho Ram Ram Ram’. Arathi and a short vote of thanks concluded the day. And a truly memorable day indeed it was! A day of ‘Guruvandana’ (prayer to God) and ‘Gurudakshina’ (gratitude to God) when all eyes and minds were focused on Bhagawan’s Maha Samadhi adorning centre stage.

Region 1 (London - South East & West)

Key Messages from Sathya Sai Speaks

Vol.1 Chapter 1



'Every being has to reach God some day or other by the long route or by the short route!'

'Sai is Sarvajanapriya (beloved to all people)' and so any name which gives you joy, you can take up. Tastes differ according to temperament and the character one has earned by generations of activity as a living being in this world. The Jnani says, "Sarvam Brahma mayam: 'In God is All'. Another, a Yogi, says 'All is energy'; a third, who is a Bhaktha, says 'All is the play of Bhagawan' (the Lord). Each according to his taste and according to his progress in saadhana (spiritual practice). Do not hurry or ridicule them, for they are all pilgrims trudging along the same road.

'Maanasa Bhajare'- Worship in the Mind!

- That was the very first Message of Mine to Humanity. I called on all those suffering in the endless round of birth and death to worship the Feet of the Guru (spiritual preceptor), the Guru that was announcing Himself, who had come again for taking upon Himself the burden of those who find refuge in Him. Install the Lord in your heart and offer Him the fruits of your actions and the flowers of your inner thoughts and feelings. That is the worship I like most, the devotion I appreciate most.
- **Saadhana** is most required to control the mind and the desires after which it runs. If you find that you are not able to succeed, do not give up the Saadhana but do it more vigorously, for it is the subject in which you did not get passing marks that requires special study, is it not? Saadhana means inner cleanliness as well as external cleanliness.

Re-education of Man persists in all eras

- I am addressing a gathering today; but even though it may be new to you, for Me it is not new. I have given advice to large gatherings before, though not in this Appearance. Whenever Niraakaara (formless) becomes Sakaara (one with form), it has to fulfil the Mission and it does so in various ways. But the one purpose, the re-education of Man persists, whatever the yuga (the era).
- All creatures have to reach God some day or other by the long route or by the short route. This I will tell you, there is no escaping it! As children, you were full of faith and fortitude! But having grown old and stuffed your heads with all kinds of doctrines and dogmas and theories and arguments, you have now to use your viveka (discrimination) and discover God the hard way.

The World is a very essential part of the curriculum of man!

- God draws the Individual towards itself; it is the nature of both to have this affinity, for they are the same. They are like the iron and the magnet. But if the iron is rusty covered with layers of dirt, the magnet is unable to attract. Remove the impediment; that is all you have to do. Shine forth in your real nature and the Lord will draw you into His Bosom. Trials and tribulations are the means by which this cleansing is done. That is why Kunthi prayed to Krishna, "Give us always grief, so that we may never forget Thee." They are like the dietary and other restrictions that the doctor prescribes to supplement the effect of the drug of Naamasmarana (remembrance of God)
- 'Cold' and 'heat' are both in the Plan of God and yours is only to know this and treat both as valuable.
- Activity can save, as well as kill; it is like the cat which bites; it bites the kitten in order to carry it in its mouth to a place of safety; it bites the rat in order to kill and eat. Become the kitten; and work will rescue you like a loving Mother. Become a rat; and you are lost.
- You proceed from 'death' to 'life' and from 'illness' to 'health' by the experience of the buffetings of the world. Through the agony of search is born the infant, wisdom! The pains are worthwhile; they indicate the birth of new life. From Ashaanthi (restlessness) you get Prashaanthi (absolute peace), from Prashaanthi to Prakaanthi (bright spiritual illumination); and from Prakaanthi, Paramjyothi (Supreme Divine radiance). It is like the alternating of night and day, this recurrence of joy and grief. Night and day are twin sisters, both are necessary to increase the fertility of the soil, to activate and refresh Life.

Secret of Spiritual Success

- Do not be led away by doubt and vain argument; do not question how and whether I can do all this. The cowherds of Brindhaavan also doubted whether the little boy who grew in their midst could lift Govardhanagiri and hold it aloft! The thing needed is Faith, and yet more Faith.
- The Lord loves, not the Bhaktha (devotee) but his Bhakthi, remember. The Lord's Grace is like rain, pure water, falling equally everywhere; but its taste gets changed according to the soil through which it flows. So also the Lord's words are sweet to some, bitter to others. The Lord's ways are mysterious; You do not know the real reasons behind the actions of the Lord. You cannot understand the motives of other men who are almost like you in everything, actuated by the same motives and having the same likes and dislikes! But yet, how easily you discover the motives of One who is far, far above the level of Man! How glibly you talk and judge of something that is as strange to you as atmosphere to a fish!

Compiled by Dr. Rakendu Suren
Region 1 Spiritual Coordinator

Region 3 (London - East & Central)

Region 3 SSE School Sports day – 3rd July 2011

Our Region 3 SSE school sports day started with great flair and enthusiasm as our Olympic themed teams cheered and carried their patriotic banners, starting the day with a torch procession toward Swami's altar.

After pranams, the teams (each in their representative colours; yellow for Africa, green for Americas, black for Asia, red for Europe and blue for Oceania) made their way back to their gazebos, proudly and loudly chanting their respective slogans in wait for the races to begin.

Within minutes the races began, including the 100m, long jump, obstacle race and relay, in which all the children participated with brilliant teamwork and determination. Of course the parents and teachers also joined in with equal gusto and sporting spirit, some of which were just as or even more so competitive than the children themselves!

The team spirit could be heard miles off, through loud cheering and chants, which incorporated Swami's values and teaching of teamwork and friendship.

After a relaxing lunch in the sun, there was free time with something for everyone! From participating in friendly matches of cricket, rounders or football to playing on the bouncy castle, getting pretty henna designs done and face painting fun. Shortly after, it all came down to the much-anticipated 'tug of love'.

With much energy, strength and after many rope burns each team was tested to the limit, particularly in the continents vs continents, in which the winning team's power of unity and perseverance led them to victory! After all the fun and competition, it was time for ice-cream and we all settled down as the winners were announced. The day drew to a close with arthi to Bhagawan where we offered our heartfelt thanks to our beloved Swami for making such an exciting and energising day possible.

Region 3 SSE School - 'Music for Sai'

On Saturday 9th July 2011, the annual 'Music for Sai' programme concluded another eventful year at the Region 3 SSE School. The morning was filled with a selection of melodious vocal and instrumental offerings dedicated to the Divine Lotus Feet of our Beloved Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

The programme commenced with Veda chanting, multi-faith prayers and a variety of bhajans led by the SSE students. The Senior Choir girls began the first half of the programme with a song dedicated to Lord Ganesha. The Orchestra and Choir then collaborated to perform the well-known piece Humko Tumse Pyaar Kitna; a love song incorporating three languages (Hindi, English and Telugu) composed by Bhagawan's students in the 1980s. This was followed by an instrumental rendition by the Orchestra entitled Raghupate Raghava Raja Rama.

We were honoured to welcome Sister Vina Mistry from Region 4, as our guest for the morning once again this year. She conducted an interactive session actively involving all the parents and children. Everyone responded enthusiastically to her wonderful dynamism and the congregation enjoyed singing uplifting songs that she herself had composed for Bhagawan.

The final recital of the morning was entitled I am the Doctor. This Western classical piece was arranged and performed by the Orchestra girls; it





was appreciated by the audience and added great musical variety to the programme.

We were also grateful to have the Sri Sathya Sai Bookshop with us on the day. The event concluded with Aarti and Prasadam for the children. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who was able to attend and we look forward to welcoming many more of you next year.

Veekash Parmar (Region 3 SSE School Co-ordinator)

Region 3 Family Sports Day

Milton Keynes Sai Centre hosted this year's 'Region 3 Family Sports Day' on Sunday 10th July. There were over 200 people including children, parents and grandparents.



The day commenced with the chanting of 3 Aums and Bhajans. During registration the families were divided into groups which were named after the 9 planets and all were issued with armbands to indicate which planet they belong to! All the groups took part in a range of activities such as Football, Blindfolded Golf, Skipping, Musical Chairs, Races and many many more! After each activity was completed, children who were involved were asked to state the values that they gained from each activity.

With the Grace of Swami, the weather was great, with the sun shining. After a well-earned picnic lunch, the final activities were completed. The day ended with Bhajans and Arthi.

A big thank you to the organisers of this event; without whom the day would not have been such a success!

Ramani Jeganathan (Region 3 SSE Co-ordinator)

Region 5 (North England)

Sai Always Inside: Form to Formless



As the hazy early morning sun smiled down through the trees, gently warming the devotees gathered, the purifying sound of 21 Omkars filled the Lake District, resounding off the surrounding hilltops, and penetrating down into the nearby waters... We were all ready and charged to begin the spiritual journey from the **Form to the Formless**.

Purpose of the retreat

Following on from the success of last year's regional retreat, Region 5 were keen to continue holding its annual summer retreat in the Lake District. Back in November, we had decided to hold Swami's 85th Region 5 Birthday Celebrations on the theme 'Form and Formless'. At that time it was decided that this would be an ideal theme to continue developing for the 2011 summer retreat. Little were we to know what was to unfold over the coming months. It was clear however to us all that now, more than ever, how fitting and important this topic was.

After months of planning, the various centres and groups of the region came together for a truly memorable, charged and uplifting weekend. Worries about the forecasted heavy rains were quickly dispelled as Swami had once again provided us with sunny blue skies throughout the weekend! 120 devotees attended – not only from region 5 but also from London, Leicester, Norwich, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

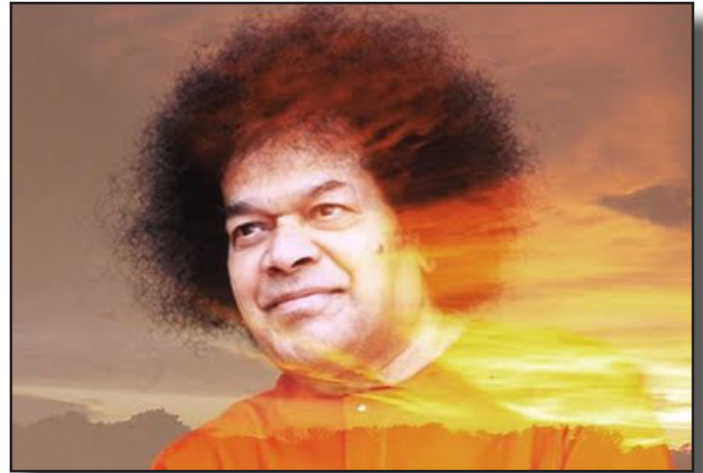
A set of six workshops spread across the weekend took us all on a journey that started with the 'Form of God' exploring the importance and symbolism behind God's many incarnations. Participants were then encouraged to think about the 'Form of Man' this time exploring our own physical and spiritual attributes. Leading from this, our focus turned to allow us to see the divinity in the Lord's beautiful creation of nature that surrounded us all in the breathtaking and serene location of Langdale. On Sunday we started to concentrate on moving towards the Formless – initially exploring how we can see Sai within ourselves, then seeing Sai in everyone and everything and ultimately moving beyond that to truly formless worship through the techniques of light meditation and maypole meditation. Throughout the weekend, inspiring bhajan sessions enhanced and heightened the vibrations, creating a spiritually charged atmosphere. We were also honoured to have as our guest speaker Patrick Kettle from Glasgow Sai Centre who shared with us in his humorous style his personal experiences of how he came to know Swami.

We have provided below a brief summary of our workshops so that you too can share in our journey from 'Form to Formless'...

FORM

Why is the Form important? What can we LEARN from the FORM OF GOD? The form of God is there to guide us and be an example to us. Greater Manchester Sai Centre organised this workshop that explored images showing the Form of Ganesh, Shiva, Vishnu, Laxmi, Durga, Saraswati, Jesus and Krishna. We discussed what we can learn from the images of these Forms and the attributes it symbolizes.

Swami says, 'Images illustrate, amplify and make clear. Joy comes to man, not through the form itself, but through the relationship established with the form. The best way to improve in spiritual practise is to acquire Knowledge. While doing form worship, enquire about the form and its significance. Why that form? What does it teach? Then use the Knowledge to enhance Bhakthi and contemplate on God more'.



We went deeper to discuss how the LIVES of the Forms we discussed are an EXAMPLE to us on how to conduct ourselves on our life journey. Importantly, many of us have had the unique and golden opportunity of having the Darshan, Sparshan and Sambhashan (vision, touch and discourse) of a LIVING God – Sathya Sai Baba. So this aspect of the Retreat on the Form was important to share these special and personal experiences with one another and also to understand what we have learnt from this privileged opportunity that has had an impact on our lives which we can pass on to future generations.

***The Formless God assumes ALL forms...use the Form to realise the Formless.
- Sathya Sai Baba***

FORM OF MAN

To the common man, the Form of Man is limited by his physical, spiritual and intellectual vision, and the emotional experiences which formulate his judgement of the Human Form. However, in many of Swami's teachings we are guided by His infinite wisdom, and He tells us that we are much more than that.

Isle of Man Sai Group delivered a thought provoking workshop that highlighted that there are greater more subtle and stronger aspects to the Form that for most remains hidden and unseen. Although most will travel through this life, in this human form, we will very rarely have the opportunity to enquire into the true aspect of this being.

It is well recognised that the Living "entity" is NOT the body itself, but that which is beyond the body, yet within. This knowledge has been given to us by Swami. This entity is the true Self, the SOUL, the SPIRIT, a Reflection of GOD or The ATMA. It is the one that transcends birth and death.

The FORM exists on THREE major planes: Physical, Subtle and Causal. These levels are revealed as spiritual awareness matures, through practise and time. As each layer is peeled away, a more pure, stronger and subtle inner is revealed. Removal of all the Veils of Maya associated with this physical and material world, reveals the beautiful and peaceful truth, of the ATMA.

We are truly fortunate to be able to think and enquire beyond our mundane existence and research into the truth of our heritage. The taking of Human Birth is but one step of many before, that leads us to this stage of enquiry. It is a sacred mission, one open to everyone, without exception.

Through personal one pointed Sadhana (spiritual practices), this search for the Truth of the FORM is confirmed to be achieved, Swami has given His word. Through the practise of the various Forms of Yoga, Self-realisation (knowing the Self) or even a glimpse, is possible.

GOD IN NATURE AND CREATION

In the most beautiful setting at Langdale, a very apt location for the Region 5 retreat, Newcastle Sai Centre took the opportunity to take everybody outdoors but at the same time enjoy Swami's teachings in the greenery around the youth hostel. We called it "the nature walk" and it turned out to be the most natural workshop as it was very informal and interactive. Moving from "Form to Formless" is not very easy but with Swami's guidance anything is possible. Integrating the forms of bhakthi with Nature, which is pregnant with the Divine all around, was the purpose of the workshop. It began with a very entertaining role-play by the youth (Mukunda and Vijay) during which they introduced the forms of devotion to everyone. We set out in four groups and the facilitators led the groups to their respective stations to experience the forms of devotion. They talked about the significance, a few stories and



examples from everyday life related to each form of bhakthi. It was a very enjoyable experience for everyone as we could experience the glory of His creation and His teachings.

The nine forms of bhakthi are **1. Sravanam** – Listening to the glories of the Lord **2. Kirthanam** – Singing His glories **3. Vishnusmaranam** – Chanting His name and remembering Him **4. Padasevanam** – Serving His lotus feet **5. Archanam** – Worshipping Him **6. Vandanam** – Paying obeisance to Him **7. Dasyam** – Considering oneself His servant **8. Sakhyam** – Considering Him as the best friend **9. Atmanivedanam** – Total Surrender. During the Sravanam exercise we decided to listen to the creation of God by shutting all other senses which enabled us to appreciate subtle things like rustling of leaves, chirping of birds etc. Kirtanam was really enjoyable as we could experience Nagarsankeertan in the woods. For Vishnusmaranam, Padasevanam, and Archanam, we set up a little altar under a tree and practised each of them. For Vandanam we placed a cross on a nearby hill and paid obeisance to it by prostrating from the garden. By doing this we realised the importance of cutting the ego (as the cross signifies). For the last three forms of bhakthi, we thought of examples of revered devotees such as Meerabai, and we shared our own spiritual experiences. The best thing about this workshop was the interest and enthusiasm of the members in the groups, demonstrated by their active participation and contribution.

FORMLESS

On Sunday the focus was on the Formless aspect of Swami. Workshop organisers from Lidget Green, Leeds and Halifax Sai Centres/ Groups created an inspiring session that allowed us to visualise Swami inside us through **concentration** and **contemplation**.

Why visualise Swami's Form when we are trying to achieve the Formless? Swami has said that it is difficult to visualise the Formless without visualising the Form first. There are four stages to achieving the Formless: i) see Sai inside ourselves, ii) see Sai in everyone (living beings), iii) see Sai in everything (non-living beings), and finally iv) see Sai as light, love, energy i.e as something formless and omnipresent. This session was trying to achieve the first stage: seeing Sai inside ourselves.

A visualisation exercise was conducted using different pictures and videos of Swami to focus and feel Swami, not just to see His form. Everyone was asked to focus and concentrate on a photo of Swami for a minute, then close their eyes and contemplate the image in their minds. Video clips were also used and comparisons were made between the pictures and videos as to which medium helped the individuals to really 'feel' Swami. This exercise was further facilitated by the use of darkness, music, incense, Swami's perfume, and candles.

The purpose of this workshop was to ensure that the devotees always had a way of feeling Swami inside them, as at a time where Swami is no longer with us physically we need to feel Him more than ever within us as a source of constant divine support. All we needed to do was look within our hearts and there Swami was!

Sanjay Vaja from Manchester organized the next workshop on Samadrishti (seeing Swami in everyone and everything). Through an open discussion, he took us through exercises to see Swami in everyone else in the marquee. He then discussed ways to see Swami in everything else as well like the chair etc. This was followed by an interactive discussion about the challenges we face while trying to see Sai in everyone and everything. The workshop developed themes and ideas that had been generated at last year's retreat that had specifically been themed on Samadrishti.

Lastly the retreat ended with concurrent workshops – participants were given the option of experiencing the formless Divine as light through light meditation led by Patrick Kettle from Glasgow Sai Centre or as higher consciousness using techniques from Phyllis Krystal workshops such as maypole meditation led by Neil Bisarya from Ormskirk Sai Group.

We truly thank our beloved Swami for all that we learned throughout the weekend and for working through us as His instruments in creating a weekend that proved invaluable for all present. We pray that He continues to guide each of us on our spiritual journeys until we meet again at the Region 5 Retreat 2012!

Region 6 (South England)



A Regional Multifaith Chanting Day was held at Park Barn Community Centre in Guildford on Saturday, 25th of June. Despite our little association in the past with other spiritual and religious groups in these parts of the community, it was a pleasant surprise to find our brothers and sisters from various faiths- Jewish, Bahai, Muslim, Sufi, Buddhism- participating enthusiastically on the day.

The day was filled with prayers, songs and music in various languages and traditions as loving offerings to the Almighty Lord. There were also a few talks and interactive sessions aimed at deepening the understanding of each others' religions and practices. Maurice Allen, an ardent devotee of Bhagawan Baba, summarised the day by reminding us to carry the spirit of love and unity that we all felt during this event out into the world and act in accordance with it in our daily lives when irritations with others who are different can make themselves felt.

All in all, it was a joyful event for everyone, and a lovely atmosphere reigned throughout. As devotees of Bhagawan Baba, through such an interaction and experience, all who participated felt closer to and appreciated better His Universal Message of human brotherhood based on the principle of Love. The pleasing thing also was that the guests who attended very much enjoyed the event and would like to come again. Even those who could not come on this occasion, expressed great enthusiasm about an event such as this, and the principle underlying it, and would very much like to be invited next time.

Mercini Sheratt
R6 Spiritual Coordinator

MULTI FAITH CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SRI SATYA SAI BABA

On Sunday 22nd May a crowd gathered in Odstock, a small village on the outskirts of Salisbury to celebrate Baba's life and teachings and to reflect on His spiritual legacy.

For a few hours people of different faiths were united under the same roof in love and harmony as was Swami's wish. Hindus, Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Jains, and Muslims gathered in a barn to practise Baba's teaching.

The ceremony started with chanting of the Rudram followed by a prayer and reading from members of different faiths. A film about Baba's life and projects was then shown. Afterwards a few devotees spoke of their personal experience with Swami. The ceremony ended with bhajans and aarti.

We were honoured by the presence of Dr Mahendra Patel who presided over the gathering. For those who don't know, Dr Patel has already spent over 11 years in Puttapathi at Prasanthi Nilayam close to Swami. Our thanks go to Southampton, Portsmouth and devotees from other regions who supported this wonderful event and for making it a blissful occasion of being with the Lord.



We should continue to live by Swami's life and message "Inner view not Interview" as he is always with us.

From the Form to the Formless.

Sathya Sai School – 10th Anniversary Concert



Sathya Sai School in Leicester celebrated its 10th Anniversary on 9th July 2011 with a concert titled "Walking the values through Oz". The whole show was hosted and conducted by the students: GCSE students hosted, managed back stage, sound, lighting and props. Live Music was provided by a number of talented music students.



Nursery, Primary and Junior Secondary children performed during the concert, reminding us of what our dear founder, Sathya Sai Baba has taught us that Role play, music & drama are a wonderful way for children to embrace and emulate the human values that they see in action from inspirational leaders and stories.

For a starter, the older girls recollected incidents from their lives at the school over the last ten years and the lessons learnt, especially during all the previous concerts: Nature is the best teacher, The four friends, The Selfish Giant, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King and Florence Nightingale, The rainbow children and so much more.

"Walking the values through Oz" was main course, where the children performed "The Wizard of Oz" integrated with the values, reminding

Dorothy to reflect upon her actions and others around her too, with Toto being her conscience not her dog!

The finale: two songs dedicated to our Founder, Sathya Sai Baba was the cherry on the top! The whole school, staff and children sang: " Oh Happy Days, when Baba walked upon this Earth...and he taught me how to Watch, Fight and Pray! " and "I will follow Him".

The school hall was full to the brim with more than 400 in the audience, made up of devotees, friends, parents and children.

Here is feedback from some parents:

"I was most impressed with the quality and standard delivered by all the pupils. There was not a moment where I was not engaged and captivated by their performances. The professionalism projected by such young individuals was outstanding. They are a credit to you and your team's dedication! Little Millie was a star in the making!

School concert was amazing and well executed. We do feel that Mr Lim's dedication to the school is unique and we wish you and your management team very good luck in shaping Sathya Sai School to become a centre of excellence in education.



Fabulous, outstanding and superb! The concert was a huge success and a true reflection on the school. It was only at the end that the audience realised that no teacher was actually rolling with the show, so well done to all the pupils of Sathya Sai School, the hard work, practice and preparation which was clearly put in, was evident on the night. Equally congratulations to all teachers, support staff for pulling off a great evening's entertainment.

The concert was fantastic, excellent effort from all children and teachers! Fabulous, 'Dorothy' was amazing and her singing was excellent.

Astounding and truly amazing!! Everything came together so perfectly in the end. You could see a lot of time and effort went into the costumes the props and the overall planning and organising of the whole concert. The 'presenters' were also fantastic. Really nice song choice at the end for everyone to join in."

Usha Lim
Headteacher

'The End of Education is Character'

... Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

These eternal words of light, echo through the walls of the Sathya Sai school, Leicester. The light of these words shine brightly through the smiles of all the children of the school, and the love of His message, beams through the hearts of all the teachers, volunteers, parents, and of the Head Teacher!

I was extremely fortunate to bear witness to a showcase of talent, to be overwhelmed in positive energy, to be transported to a period of innocence, to swim in my imagination and at the same time reflect on the thoughts, words and actions of our Divine Master, Sri Sathya Sai Baba... this was for me, the splendour and journey, of the ten year anniversary concert of the Sri Sathya Sai school, Leicester which took place on the 10th July 2011.

The achievements, activities and All seeing light of the school was beautifully reflected through music, drama, inspirational messages and human value stories. Thus, every memory, every message and every moment of the last ten years was reflected, remembered and skilfully portrayed by the children of the school.

There are a few memories of the ten year celebration, that stood out boldly, and spoke directly to my heart.

Firstly, the children delivered speeches spoken by a few inspirational people through history. These people included, Mother Theresa, Mahatma Gandhi, Reverend Martin Luther King and Florence Nightingale. These words of light, upliftment and strength were delivered by the children of the Sathya Sai school, with confidence, conviction and a strong sense of belief. Hence the message of these inspirational beacons of light was clear for all to understand.

The next piece of this celebration that dances in my heart, is the story of the rainbow, entitled, 'The Rainbow Play'. Here through beautiful acting, sweet poetry and colourful costumes, the audience came to understand how the different colours unite and work in harmony to form the wonder and beauty that is a rainbow.

For me this play sang the message that when people of different colour, caste and creed unite in word, thought and deed, when we celebrate our differences and when we embrace our oneness, we can shine hope and colour on the landscape of this world!

And the final performance that shines like bright stars on a beautiful night is the grand finale play, called 'Walking the values through Oz'. So this was the classic Wizard of Oz story, infused with human value messages, messages of courage, hope and love!

In the story, the scarecrow lacked a brain, the Tin man lacked a heart and the lion lacked courage. The message for me, was that a heart closed to love, is no heart at all, a brain not engaged in goodness, discrimination and love is no brain at all and if I lack courage to be my true self, this is no courage at all!

The children's acting, dancing, singing and confident speaking allowed the messages of human values and the wonder and enchantment of this beautiful and colourful story to be enjoyed and embraced by the audience.

The girl who played the part of Dorothy, ended with an amazing and phenomenal performance of the classic song, 'Somewhere over the rainbow'.

The beauty of her voice, the softly played piano accompaniment and the warm energy of the entire evening, transported me to land where dreams do come true, where love and hope sit side by side and . . . to a place of light harmony!

Swami said, 'My life is my message' and for me, His message is about love, light and the human values. I feel that at the Sathya Sai school, Leicester, over the last ten years, His message, His love and the understanding of the five human values has been elegantly and effectively delivered and embraced. And at the ten year anniversary, this was seen, felt and enjoyed!

Thus my experience of the ten year celebration of the Sathya Sai school, Leicester, is one of love! The Beatles sang 'All you need is love' . . . and now with Swami's Samadhi and as we journey from the form to the formless, I realise that love was, love is and all love is His, as . . . He is love!

Manivasagan Moodley (Harrow, United Kingdom)

World Youth Conference 13th & 14th July 2011 Prashanti Nilayam

"Ideal Sai Leadership"



With Swami's Grace the Sai Youth of the United Kingdom organised a nine-day National Youth Pilgrimage to Prashanthi Nilayam which coincided with the World Youth Conference and the historic unveiling of the Lord's Mahasamadhi on the auspicious day of Gurupoornima.

Many of us anticipated a difference in this pilgrimage, compared to previous visits to Prashanthi Nilayam; after all, the last year has seen the disappearance of the Lord's physical body – a body which had, until so recently, given us all so much delight during darshan sessions and previous conferences. However, after just a few days in the Ashram it was clear to all of us that nothing had changed in the spiritual experience of the place and Swami's guidance, care and attention to every detail was evident throughout the conference.

On the day of the conference, for example, the Western Canteen sent a message saying they had baked cakes enough to feed five hundred people. Thus, all the delegates of the conference where unexpectedly served delicious chocolate cake on the first day – we were all deeply moved by this, believing it to be a definite sign of Swami's grace. One brother even commented that the sudden appearance of twenty-five yummy chocolate cakes was infinitely preferable to vibhuthi appearing on pictures or falling flowers!

The Conference itself was on the topic of "Ideal Sai Leadership" and was attended by delegates from all over the world; the time spent with international Sai Brothers and Sisters was, for many of us, the most inspiring and enjoyable experience. It was comforting to discover how much we all had in common and there was a genuine feeling of love and unity, transcending the barriers of language, race and culture – the Divine maxim, "there is only one religion, the religion of Love" was made true in the conduct of all the delegates.

Swami Himself had blessed the conference earlier this year and thus, over 440 youth leaders from seventy countries convened at the Supreme Abode, Prashanthi Nilayam for the two-day World Youth Conference. The Poornachandra Auditorium, the conference venue, was beautifully decorated in classic "Prashanthi festival" style - garlands of flowers and sprays of orchids framed an intricately carved chair (which had been previously used by Swami Himself in his physical body); coloured rice grains were used to depict the conference logo in exquisite detail on the floor in front of the Divine throne; behind was a large banner which read "World Youth Conference 2011: Ideal Sai Leadership" which was naturally designed, printed and erected by willing international youth volunteers. All this made for an exceptionally holy and festive environment for the conference proceedings.

Unlike previous conferences, right from the start, the WYC was planned by the youth themselves and this was noted by Dr Michael Goldstein and Mr Leonardo Gutter during their speeches, when they also expressed their complete confidence in the ability of the Youth to take Swami's message forward.

Brother Shitu Chudasama, our International Youth Co-ordinator, succinctly summarised the purpose of the conference: to guide the Sai Youth of the world towards the cultivation of ideal leadership through the diligent application of Sai principles. Brother Shitu also gave an overview of the current tasks facing the youth force – many of which had increased in magnitude since the last World Youth Conference at Prashanthi Nilayam in 2007. Finally, he touched upon the development of youth wings throughout the globe and the successful formation and development of the International Youth Council.

Dr. Michael Goldstein, (Chairman of the Prashanthi Council and Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation), followed next with his key note address, introduced the fundamentals of this year's conference, namely the spiritual principles that should prevail in the lives of every Sai Youth and the Organisation as a whole.

Some of the youth leaders, who are members of International Youth Council, shared their experiences in implementing various programmes that effectively helped in the transformation of hearts and promoted human consciousness. All spoke with great humility and sincerity, effectively conveying the ways in which the Lord had lead them towards great achievements in their home countries - many speakers noted that, regardless of our ideas and ambitions for the growth of the Youth Wing, we merely needed to surrender to the Lord and perform all our duties to the very best of our ability and with complete devotion. It was their shared personal experience that this was the most assured pathway towards spiritual success.

Later in the day we had the opportunity to split into smaller groups for closer discussion: Take an ordinary youth study circle, add a few new members from such distant parts of the world as Kenya, America, Russia, and China and the holy environs of the Poornachandra Auditorium (and the background veda chanting from the Sai Kulwant hall next-door) – that's what makes a 'World' Youth Conference in Prashanthi Nilayam!

The themes for the workshops were, "Divine Inspiration: Sai Ideal Leader – spiritual exemplar", "Divine Instruction" and "Sai Young Adults – Sai Ideal Leaders of the future".

The first workshop explored how Swami's teachings helped in discovering our Divine Self, and the importance of spiritual programs as recommended by Swami. The workshop provided an opportunity to reflect on the impact of these spiritual programs, and how the Sai Organisation could facilitate and enhance these to promote spiritual transformation.

The second workshop, entitled "Divine Instructions", encouraged us to suggest how new guidelines for the Sai Organisation should be implemented and the challenges or opportunities that could be faced. A key discussion point from this workshop was regarding the introduction of a 'Young Adult Apprenticeship Programme'. The idea has already been approved by Swami - delegates discussed what they thought the core components of this program should be and how it could enhance the leadership qualities of Sai Youth; individually, within the organisation and society as a whole.

The last workshop addressed how the youth wing served the needs of its youth members and the overall Organisation. We considered how Sai activities should be underpinned by the five Human Values and improve spiritual development. We also felt it important to consider how to prepare Sai leaders for the future - there was widespread recognition that young leaders are necessary for the continuation and growth of the Organisation which bears the Lord's name.

As well as attending the conference as delegates, many of us were also fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to do some small service, be it in the registration, setting up of the venue, serving sumptuous meals, making conference packs and packing prasadam – which was done in less than 90 minutes by over 60 sisters at 6am packing a total of 10000 prasadam packets.

Many of the activities we took part in have been briefly mentioned but, of course, the individual experiences, lessons learned and spiritual leaps taken cannot be easily recounted in the pages of any book. Suffice to say that the "Prashanthi M.O.T" has been successfully completed in the internal engines of each of us – what we have taken away from this trip is not only a new motivation to redouble our efforts as Sai Youth, but a renewed connection to our Dear Lord, born out of those few simple Prashanthi experiences – the sudden rain that fell when a favourite bhajan was sung, a touching story related by a fellow Sai Brother or Sister, the sweet prasadam that was handed out three days in a row as soon as one thought "Swami, how come there hasn't been any prasadam on this trip?"

It is only left to offer our most sincere gratitude to Swami for another Prashanthi Pilgrimage completed in a sacred and joyful manner. As we return to our own countries, carrying with us the energy of Prashanthi Nilayam, we pray to the Lord for His continued guidance and loving care:

You have called out to us and we have responded, Oh Lord! We have come running to Parthi on Guru Poornima Day to seek your blessings as our Guru! Now, you have sent Your disciples back with a mission – we will not fail under any account, we will work harder than ever to spread your Love and Light across the UK, from one end to the other!

Jai Sai Ram!

Region 4 (Midlands) Global Service Day – Sunday 10 July 2011



Nottingham & Leicester Sai Centres celebrated their Global Service Day on Sunday 10th July and this year we took our guests to Rutland Water for the day.

Rutland Water is the largest man-made lake in Europe. Built in the 1970s to supply water to the East Midlands, Rutland Water is now Rutland's most popular tourist attraction, offering activities for all ages. There are sports such as windsurfing, canoeing, cycling, nature reserves, or just relax by the water and watch the action around the 25 mile shoreline. Our theme for the day was to 'just relax by the water and watch the action'!

Our Guests are members of society who we serve on a regular basis – recipients of meals on wheels service, residents of elderly homes where we conduct regular bhajan sessions, voluntary work with local adult groups, and elderly guests from our Centre.

The planning for this event started a few weeks earlier. The management team at Rutland Water were contacted and we discussed the plan for the day. 'Leisure Request Form' was completed, which covered Risk and Health & Safety assessment of our planned activities on the day, including the Public Liability Insurance cover – lots of necessary paperwork to complete!

Transport was arranged for all our guests to be collected from their homes and returned home at the end of the day. A special minibus with a lift was arranged for wheelchair bound guests.



The refreshments were prepared on Saturday and early Sunday morning - pasta salad, pizzas, cheese & potato pasties, and potato 'shak'. For pudding we had cakes – and strawberry & cream! On arrival the guests were served with freshly brewed tea and hot coffee, together with homemade cookies and scones with jam/butter. A good selection of food items were prepared to meet the varied dietary requirements of our guests.

Some volunteers came early to the venue to set up the site, with gazebos, tables, chairs, serving tables and registration desk.

As the guests arrived, they were warmly welcomed and 'registered', and were all given named badge. Volunteers were pre-allocated guests to 'care' for throughout the day, and they were soon on their way to experience the walks and activities around the lake.



Everyone got together for lunch – which was served by enthusiastic volunteers with lots of love, patience and lots of smiles!

And as they say on TV to the winners, we had laid on 'a very special treat' for our guests - a boat ride, round the lake on Rutland Belle! Most of the guests went on the ride, and enjoyed the boat ride. For some it was an experience of a lifetime!

'Arts & Craft' tables were prepared for those who wanted to do something different. There was also a place to just sit and just enjoy the wonderful weather, and experience the wonderful sounds of nature under the trees! Some guests participated in the ever popular 'Antakshri' sing along game. Garden games were played by some of the more 'energetic' guests! Yes, there was something for everyone!

Everyone then joined in the ever popular Bingo game. This is a game that everyone loves to play, as everyone can join in. Volunteers were at hand to help out where necessary. Prizes were handed out for complete lines and for 'full house' - 'BINGO' shouted joyously by many of our guests!

But sadly, all good things come to an end and it was time to go home. Tea and scones with cream were served as we all prepared to pack up and got ready to head home. The day was concluded by wishing happy birthdays to all those celebrating their birthdays on this special day - they made their wishes on cakes with lighted candles, and everyone joined in singing the happy birthday song!

We all felt Swami's presence throughout the day. Swami had graced us with wonderful, warm sunshine, and of course, lots of love!

Some of the guests came forward and commented on the day - 'thank you for a wonderful day', 'thank you looking after us and for the lovely refreshments', 'we have all enjoyed our day out'. And most said they couldn't wait to be



Global Service Day - Sunday 10th July in Coventry

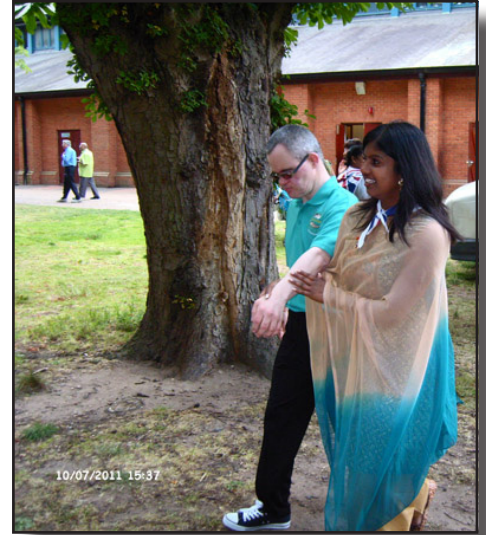
On the glorious day of Sunday 10th July, the Sathya Sai Baba Centres of Coventry and Rugby co-ordinated Global Service Day in the beautiful surroundings of Coombe Abbey Country Park in Coventry. The weather was perfect for most of the day and luckily it only rained after the event!

The day began with volunteers arriving around 11.30am to help set up chairs, PA system, banners, food, etc. At around 1:20pm, our guests from various care homes around Coventry and Rugby began to arrive in their coaches, with some of our volunteers serving tea and coffee as they were seated. Most of our guests had arrived by 2pm, and our compere for the day, Pravin Gaikwad, welcomed everyone on behalf of SSSO-UK.



The event began with two Bharat Natyam (Indian classical dance) performances, by a total of six young girls, dressed in colourful costumes, from the Coventry Tamil Society. These dances brought some great culture to our event and it was clear that it was enjoyed by all, even some spectators from the public!

Next up was Iain King from Rugby, who got the mood lifted with everyone singing to various songs from Roy Orbison's 'Oh, Pretty Woman' to Neil Diamond's 'I'm A Believer'. It was great to see our guests clapping, singing along and also getting up to dance with the volunteers!



During all the dancing, Coventry's current Lady Godiva, Pru Poretta, arrived and joined in with greeting the guests, dancing with them and enjoying the sunshine before saying a few words to everyone.

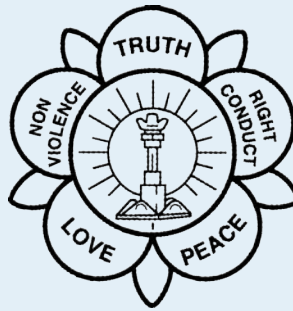
After a great hour of entertainment, everyone enjoyed a delicious tea which was lovingly prepared and served by some of our volunteers. Our programme continued with a classic game of bingo! Guests who struggled were assisted by our volunteers, including some of our youngest who were under the age of 10.



The final activity was the Gujarati raas and garba (traditional folk dance from North India), lead by Kishor Mistry with guests keen to take part and experience something different.

Finally, everybody enjoyed some well-deserved ice-cream and ice-lollies as a perfect end to a perfect day with the vote of thanks and final farewell to our guests. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon in the sun and returned with smiles on their faces. 30 minutes later, the heavens opened! Swami letting us know that He is the Master!

**Article by Bhavika Patel & Saisha Mistry
Coventry Sai Centre**



Dear Healthcare Professionals,

On behalf of the Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation (UK), it gives me great pleasure to invite you to attend a Conference on **Sai Ideal Healthcare** on Saturday 17th September 2011, , 10am to 4pm, Henley Business School, University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading RG6 6UD, For Sat Nav – please use the postcode RG6 6UR.

The principles of Sai Ideal Healthcare can be summarised as follows:

- Healthcare should be available to all people.
- Economic considerations should not prevent anyone from receiving the highest benefits of healthcare.
- Healthcare should be delivered with love and compassion.
- Healthcare should include treatment of the body, mind and spirit.
- Prevention should be a primary focus.

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has inspired millions around the world to participate in humanitarian work based on love and compassion. The Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation (UK) has been at the forefront of conducting these activities both nationally and internationally in the field of healthcare over many decades. Through this conference, we are hoping to raise awareness and inspire delegates to support and participate in these service activities to enhance and provide optimal medical care with love, compassion and empathy. I hope you will attend and participate in this conference.

Principles of Sai Healthcare:

Healthcare should be available to all people and delivered with love and compassion and should include treatment of the body, mind and spirit. Economic considerations should not prevent anyone from receiving the highest benefits of healthcare. Prevention should be a primary focus.

Who Should Attend:

If you are a doctor, nurse, dentist, optometrist, allied health professional and a medical or nursing student and want to be part of a health care community striving to deliver better health care and looking to gain valuable experiences both at national and international level, then this conference is a must-attend event for you.

**Please complete your on line registration by Friday 9th September 2011 .
To register, click on the following link**

<http://www.srisathyasai.org.uk/saihealthcare/>

For further enquiries please contact: Gayatri Bikoo, National Service Coordinator on 07984 792 109 or saihealthcareuk@srisathyasai.org.uk

We look forward to welcoming you on the day.

Lovingly, In Sai Service

**Shitu Chudasama
National Chairperson**



Free Walk-in Health Awareness Day

You deserve to look after yourself - so come along to our **free** Health Awareness Day.

Sunday 21st August 2011
10.00am - 4.00pm

Health professionals will be available to check your general health including:

Dental check
Sugar levels
Eye check
Blood pressure
Dancing to music Keep-fit sessions

Advice on Healthier Lifestyle - by NHS Health Trainer

Presentations will be made on health topics.

The Community Centre
Meudon Avenue
Farnborough
Hampshire GU14 7LE
(behind Farnborough Recreation Centre & Library)

For further information
call Sushma Gurung on 07939 066797

Organised by
Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation UK
www.srisathyasai.org.uk



Southern Health **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

A TRIBUTE TO PETER ROBERTS AND COMPASSION IN WORLD FARMING

"The last of the jagnas is the BHUUTHAJNA – Steps to Comfort and Keep Happy the animal collaborators and companions one has around him – bullocks, cows, goats, horses, which help you by their toil, and dogs, cats and other pets which make your home pleasant and full of joy. You should not keep them hungry or overwork them. If any animals depending on you for love and care sheds one tear in your home or farm, remember you will suffer greatly therefore." Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 9



I would like to introduce an organisation called COMPASSION IN WORLD FARMING. This organisation has won the Observer's Ethical Campaigner Award of the Year for 2011, thanks in part to its campaign called "Cows belong in fields" to combat the drive to build enormous mega dairies where thousands of cows live all their lives incarcerated indoors in crowded and unnatural conditions.

It is particularly important for Sai devotees to know about COMPASSION IN WORLD FARMING because its founder, inspirer and director for 24 years was a Sai Baba devotee called Peter Roberts. CIWF campaigns indefatigably to bring an end to the horrors and cruel practices of factory farming and to introduce humane, compassionate and environmentally-friendly farming methods. As you can imagine, it has a huge job on its hands when everything is seen in terms of economics above all else and meat consumption is growing at an enormous rate and the pressure is on for farmers to produce very cheap meat and dairy products – that is, the price in the shops does not at all reflect the cost of production – this fact causing many dairy farmers to go out of business. Apart from the farmers themselves, it is the animals who pay for this not just with their lives but in terms of real suffering.



Peter Roberts visited Baba in the late 1980's and I have been told by reliable sources who were present at the time that Baba gave Peter three interviews on that visit. During the course of those interviews, Baba made it clear that he recognised and highly applauded the wonderful work that Peter was doing. He also commended him for his great compassion. He told Peter, **"What you do for the animals, you do for Me"**. Peter was absolutely overwhelmed and felt very blessed on emerging from his last interview with Baba.

Peter became a dairy farmer after the war. A very caring farmer, he would always accompany his old barren cows to the slaughterhouse and stay with them until the very end. When intensive factory farming methods started to come in, Peter was very disturbed and decided to start his own campaign to oppose them. He himself became a vegetarian and stopped farming in 1967 when Compassion in World Farming was born. In all his years as director of CIWF, that is from 1967 to 1991, he managed never to draw a salary. Little by little, support for his cause grew among the general public even though in those days many people, including Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, looked at him with amused disdain for his concern over what were considered mere agricultural goods.

By all accounts, Peter was a truly wonderful person; a pioneer and a visionary; extremely compassionate and with great integrity and humility. **He saw his deep concern for animals as a natural extension of his love for humanity. He saw a common union between all sentient beings.** A powerful orator, he brought intellectual discipline to his cause. **He was guided and motivated by his deep spiritual beliefs** and although he took the whole farming fraternity on singlehanded initially, he never resorted to vilification of farmers – just condemned their methods and always sought to work in cooperation with his opponents. He campaigned by reasoning and never by ranting! Although he died in 2006, Compassion in World Farming is still guided and deeply inspired by his legacy. **He saw that there must be a way in which people were fed, the environment protected and the animals treated with compassion.** In 2002, he was awarded the MBE for his work and although not interested in awards, he also received other awards for his work.

In 1984 he challenged the Monks of Storrington Priory who kept a veal farm in which they kept 650 calves, chained by the neck, in narrow and barren crates which they could not stand or turn around in. He took the

canons to court alleging cruelty. He wrote at the time "The monks in Storrington Friary do not keep a fatted calf; they keep 650 which they rear for white veal in narrow and barren crates. It may be argued that God blessed the calves giving them four legs and the good earth to walk upon, but the wooden crates that imprison them now do not permit the cows to walk or exercise, nor even so much as turn round.....on their all milk diet the only fibre they find is hair plucked from their own bodies, or splinters from their wooden crates**the monks say that the Scriptures allow them to do these things and that anyway, animals cannot really suffer.....**" Although Peter lost the case, the battle was won because shortly afterwards, as a result of this, the government decided to ban veal crates and did so a few years later. The whole case also had a knock-on effect when Catholics started to go elsewhere to Mass and wrote letters of complaint to the Pope (who incidentally made a formal pronouncement in 1990 to say that animals had souls **after all** – the Catholic Church having previously taught the opposite, justifying, in that way, any kind of animal abuse or exploitation).



Peter fought a one-man battle over ten years to get the EU to give farm animals the status of **Sentient beings** and this was granted in 1997. Until then, they had been regarded as insentient agricultural products, undeserving of even the smallest consideration. Although many human beings still regard them like that now, it is finally being acknowledged by some, at least, that farm animals are also very sentient beings, capable of feeling joy, affection, fear, and many other feelings and not only that, they are capable of forming deep bonds with each other.

CIWF, which started out as a lone voice in the wilderness, has become a highly respected organisation and a source of inspiration worldwide. With every victory, there is usually one step back; even so, it is certainly making a difference, **not least through its educational and awareness-raising activities**. It has trained School Speakers and really excellent, free educational materials,

from primary to tertiary level, available to anyone who is interested. There are now also branches in several other countries including South Africa, Holland and **China** – not known at all for its humane treatment of animals. Besides campaigning in the usual way, CIWF's approach is to try and work in cooperation with 'the other side' by, for example, befriending and educating TV chefs, supermarkets, councils, universities and other large institutions to choose free-range, cruelty-free suppliers or insist that their suppliers adopt those methods. They do not ask people to become vegetarian as that would be a very tall order, seeing how deeply entrenched meat eating is worldwide and how fast it is growing. However, they really do encourage people to reduce meat consumption – not just for the sake of the animals but also because the intensive rearing of animals for food creates huge ecological problems and is so costly.

How can we help? If one eats dairy food, it is at least kinder to buy organic. This way, one knows that the creature concerned has had a much happier and more natural life, at least. Also, organic dairy produce, for example, is much healthier in that it has much less saturated fat, much more omega 3 and is devoid of hormone or antibiotic residues and the multitudes of pus cells which are allowed into non-organic milk – the result of disease due to intensive dairy farming.

Mercini Sheratt
R6 Spiritual Coordinator

A Humble Prayer and Yearning

We never know how long we may live in this world in this physical form and when we leave this world and have an opportunity to come back or be born again – do we know in what form we will be back – as all depends on the karmic debt we owe this world. In that sense of uncertainty – this prayer came up in my heart prompted by uncontrollable love for our beloved Swami – which I want to share with my dearest Sai Family.

The humble Prayer & Yearning: – Dear Swami – my humble pranams at your divine lotus feet

Swami –

If I am destined to be born again as **the soil of the land or the sand on the earth** – my Lord – please allow me to be the sand or the soil on which **You will be walking on.**

If I am destined to be a mere **stone on this earth** – please my Lord – allow me to be a stone that borders the pathway **Your lotus feet will be walking** along

If my destiny is that I should be born as **grass on earth** – let me be the grass on the lawn where **Your divine lotus feet will rest and move on.**

If my destiny allows me to be a **flower in a garden**, then I beg of you my Lord to allow me to be part of **a garland** that will adorn your divine physical form or be used by devotees to be placed on your divine lotus feet as an expression of their love and devotion to You.

If my future is that I will be **a fruit** on a tree, please my Lord – let the taste be **like the pure love** that naturally emanates from You and be used by devotees for prayers and expression of their love for You.

If my fate is that I am born in the depths of this earth **as gold** – please my Lord give me the humble privilege to become **your golden padugha** (golden slippers) that adorns your divine lotus feet (and then given by You to devotees to pray to You forever).

If my fate is such that You have destined me to be the **rain or snow drops** – let me be like You my Lord – **life giving drops of water** that will give life and rejuvenate the parched and dry lands on this earth so that the plant life may resume their own journey on this earth to reach You.

If by my good deeds – I am given the humble privilege to **the words** that give life and meaning to the sound – then my Lord I humbly yearn to be the words that say **Love All, Serve All; Help ever Hurt never and Aum Sri Sai Ram.**

If by a better merit You gave me the life of the **Language** that allows your creations to communicate with each other – then my Lord my humble yearnings is to be the language of this Universe You created – **the language of Love** and Love only.

If my fate beckons me to be born **a mad person** – please my Lord, I beg of you to make me one who is **madly in love with You** and be mad only for your dharshan, parshan and sambashan.

If my destiny is such that I be born **a human-being** but deaf and dumb who can communicate only through gestures – then please give me the rare boon to be **Your gesture** of expression of love, compassion and blessings.

If my fate destines me to be a **piece of wood** on the forest – then my Lord I cry for your mercy to allow me to be carved in to the **chair you sit on or the foot stool** on which you place your divine lotus feet.

If my karmic debt to this world allows me only to be a **piece of cloth** – my heart cries out in absolute devotion to You dear loving Lord to accept me as the cloth that will make **Your robe** you wear daily.

If out of this birth as a cloth – I am such **a small piece** that Your robe cannot be made out of that – then kindly give me the humble privilege to be made in to the **handkerchief** that You wipe your face and mouth with.

And beyond all these my Lord – please give me the humble privilege to there with You **in any form You choose me to be** – but allow me be part of Your divine mission, be Your divine instrument and be Your humble servant.

Raj Selvakumar



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