

### **December 2011 Edition**

#### Quote

There are in the world various rules of conduct which are related to conditions governing time and space. Such rules are liable to change from time to time and country to country, according to changing situations. But if Sanathana Dharma is changed, humanity will cease to be human. Just as burning charcoal, if it loses its heat, becomes mere charcoal, and a piece of jaggery, if it loses its sweetness, becomes a lump of clay, likewise man remains truly human only as long as he adheres to the eternal Dharma (which is represented by purity in thought, word and deed-- Trikarana Suddhi). Without this basic quality, man is only human in form and not his true nature.

~ Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

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Sathya Sai School Christmas Fayre

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#### **Editorial**

#### Dear Love and Light Readers, Jai Sai Ram

I was at a School Christmas service a few days ago when the children sang The 12 Days of Christmas. This took me back to my Bal-Vikas days when we had a lesson on the 12 Days of Christmas. The 12 Days of Christmas has many hidden religious and spiritual meanings. To many the 12 Days of Christmas is a delightful Children's nonsense song. However, according to many historians, the original meaning of The 12 Days of Christmas was very serious. One interpretation was that it helped children learn the doctrines of their faith for example the reference to "true love" refers to God Himself. Each of the 12 days of Christmas represents an aspect of Christianity that the ancients believed children should learn.

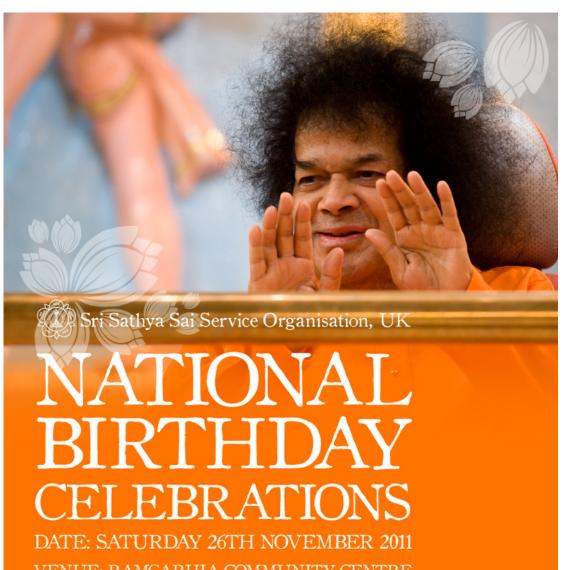
- »A Partridge in a pear tree represents Jesus Christ.
- »Two Turtle Doves The Old and New Testaments.
- »Three French Hens The Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit) as well as Faith, Hope and Charity.
- »Four Calling Birds The Four Gospels and/or the Four Evangelists who wrote the Gospels.
- »Five Golden Rings The first Five Books of the Old Testament.
- »Six Geese A laying The six days of creation.
- »Seven Swans A swimming The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and/ the seven sacraments of the Catholic faith and seven liberal arts.
- »Eight Maids A-milking The eight beatitudes or eight persons saved in the Ark.
- »Nine Ladies Dancing The nine Fruits of the Spirit and kinds of angels.
- »Ten Lords A leaping The Ten Commandments.
- »Eleven Pipers Piping: The remaining eleven faithful apostles.
- »Twelve Drummers Drumming--The twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles' Creed, and/or Apostles altogether, and/or heavenly gates and/or Jewish tribes.

I hope you have all recovered from last month and all the wonderful celebrations that took place from Akhand Bhajans to Ladies Day culminating with the celebrations to mark the advent of the Avatar, the Birthday of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The National Birthday celebrations turned out to be a big treat for the 3,000 devotees that attended both sessions on Saturday 26th November in Region 4. We were honoured to have with us Leonardo Gutter from Argentina and Vijaysai from Prashanti. The event was a huge success with the musical concerts at the end of each session the icing on the cake! You can find some of the clips of the speeches on our new website which was relaunched on 23rd November 2011.

We look forward to welcoming you to the National Christmas celebrations on Saturday 17th December. The planning team have put together a wonderful programme with special guest speaker Louise Illig, film maker and director of many wonderful Sai documentaries, one of which was the Miracle of Puttparthi. A sumptuous Christmas lunch will be served to all with Christmas carols and many other surprises. Please register via the UK website.

I pray that you have a wonderful Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

Lovingly, Shitu Chudasama



VENUE: RAMGARHIA COMMUNITY CENTRE ULVERSCROFT ROAD, LEICESTER, LE4 6BY

SPEAKERS: Leonardo Gutter, Member Prasanthi Council | B S Vijayasai, Former Student and Faculty Member, SSSIHL, Prasanthi Nilayam | And a Music Concert by Eminent Artists from UK

PROGRAMME: Session 1: 10.30am - 2.30pm (4 Hours) Session 2: 3.30pm - 7.30pm (4 Hours)

TO REGISTER VISIT: www.srisathyasai.org.uk/national-programmes

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

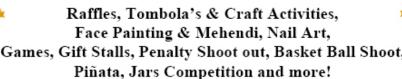
Kiran Patel - 07429 138 939 or Gayatri Bikoo - 07984 792 109 or email: national-programmes@srisathyasai.org.uk

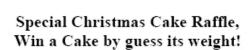




Saturday 17th December 2011, 1 to 4 p.m.







Chocolate Fountain!

Fancy Dress Competition- Christmas Character

Don't miss the various hamper raffles- Ladies hamper Men's hamper, Boys and girls hampers (3 to 5) years And (5 to 10) years, Baking and Chocolate hampers

Refreshments: Cakes, Mince pies, Samosas, Bhel, Mr Lim's Special Indo Chinese- made to order

Drinks: Tea, Coffee, Juice, Soft drinks, etc

And lots more.....

SANTA WILL BE VISITING TOO!























# Xmas Thank You from the UK Central Council

## National Wing News

"On behalf of the UK Central Council, We would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Thank you to everyone for all your support this year. We pray that you will continue the wonderful work that you are doing across all levels of the Sai Organisation. We appreciate and acknowledge the magnificent contributions that each one of you have made this year"

Jai Sai Ram

## Region 1 - Farnborough Sai Centre & Basingstoke Centre Birthday Celebrations

### Farnborough Sai Centre

Sai Baba's 86th Birthday was celebrated by Farnborough Sai Centre at Cody Sports School, Farnborough. More than 200 devotees from different places attended the celebration. The first phase of the programme started with 3 Aums and 3 Gayatri Mantras followed by devotional songs. Our guest speaker, a former SSE teacher, Mr. Nagachun, acted out a conversation between Bhagawan and a Bhakta which was full of messages and lessons for us to learn and accompanied this with a song. He also elaborated on Sai Baba's love, service and dedication and it's implication in our lives. He mentioned the holy four words "Help Ever Hurt Never" and expanded on it. He also mentioned the impact of Sai Spiritual Education on the children and youth and how it helps them to concentrate on good things and improve their life styles. He reminded us how blessed we were to be born at the time of the Avatar and in the Kaliyuga when the opportunity to realise our divinity is greater than in any other yuga. The divine can be realised through meditation, service, love and dedication. The video drama "Mother is Mine, Mother Divine", which was presented in front of Swami by the Australian Youth Group on 25th February 2010, was then shown. A Happy Birthday Song was sung followed by a cake cutting ceremony by a group of small children. The programme was concluded with Aarati and Vibhuthi mantras.

## Region 1 - Global Akhanda Bhajan

Like every year this year also we had our regional akhanda bhajan. Like other regional events, Akanda Bhajan, brought the region together, unified, singing HIS glory. Preparation for the Akhanda Bhajan started very early, with spiritual coordinators in the region meeting to devise a Bhajan rota. Each centre was allocated a one and half hour slot. SSE children and the Youth had separate slot.

The Bhajan started at 6 pm on November 12th and ended at 6 pm on November 13th. Sai Mandir was packed all through out. At the allocated time, in a very disciplined way each centre, with their accompanying singers and instrumentalist, came forward and lead the bajans. Swami has assured his devotees that wherever his glory is sung, He will manifest. Young and old, parents and children, all joined the congregation to sing the Lords name with full devotion. As the midnight passed youth took over the singing. Vibrations were felt very strongly. The bhajans ended at 6 pm with Mangala Arathi. After that prasadam were distributed. Several people felt Swami's presence during the bhajans. Even after finishing akhanda bhajans, the singing was reverberating in the ears, even days after this was over.



Region 2 - Global Akhanda Bhajans: November 2011

Global Akhanda Bhajan, the timeless intonation promoting Universal Peace and Harmony is one of the most significant and far-reaching annual spiritual exercises initiated by Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba way back in the mid forties. Swami has said that "When thousands of people join in singing bhajans, they should be fully absorbed in the devotion and the ecstasy of that experience".

Region 2 Akhanda Bhajan commenced on Sunday 13th November, morning at 5.45 am. The programme began with Ganapathy Prathana and Gayatri Mantra followed by the invocatory Ganesh bhajan which purified and sanctified the atmosphere for the whole of the twelve hours. It was spiritually uplifting to see all the region 2 Sai family together and celebrating the Global Akhanada Bhajans with devotion and dedication. Many members from centres beyond Region 2 also joined to make this a very special spiritual day.



From the early hours of Sunday morning the bhajan hall started to fill up with loving vibrations and this was further charged by the chanting of the vedams and the singing of devotional songs by all participating Sai centres in Region 2.

The main Altar was exquisitely decorated with Swami's very radiant and Majestic life -like photo. A beautiful chair for Swami was also placed upon the stage for the Gracious

Lord to take His seat and preside over the event.

This truly magical event was possible because of the loving seva, devotion, dedication of the entire twelve Sai Centres and Group Chairs, Office Bearers and Devotees within our Region that took part.

It was truly 'Love in Action' and Swami's presence was felt throughout the day as devotees from all the Centres flocked in to sing in their allotted 45 minute slots, the Glory of God.

The SSE sections of the akhanda bhajans sent emotions of all those present into another plane, some members were moved to tears of joy. It was a sight to behold and a musical treat to hear the children sing in unison with such confidence and devotion. Their hard work and dedication in practicing months before the event really showed, as the congregation were lifted to new spiritual heights.

The program concluded with vibrant and uplifting bhajans to follow that of the SSE children. Devotees from centres across Region 2 came forward and were selected to sing these final 45 minutes of bhajans, up until 6:00pm, which truly made it a united offering.

Finally Swami's Aarti was offered to our Beloved Lord reminding all to share his Divine Light and Warmth of his pure Unconditional Love and hence bringing alive the mantra 'Samastha Lokha , Sukhino Bhavantu'.

Article submitted by T.Sivalingam (Siva) - Region 2 Service Wing Co-ordinator on behalf of the R2 Team

## Region 2 - Youth Retreat - i am I from Ego Self to Divine Self

Llandudno, North Wales - November 4th - 6th 2011

No words can justify the sacred opportunity our dearest Lord Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba gave to the youth of Region 2. A weekend retreat at the beautiful beach location Llandudno organised by the youth for the youth with the inner motivator being our Swami.

The retreat theme 'i am I from Ego Self to DIVINE SELF' enabled all youth to self introspect in order for self transformation and self realisation. There were a variety of activities designed to allow all youth to explore the theme in various ways such as: A Beach Walk, Martial Arts, Drama, Devotional Singing, Creative Art, Meditation and Study Groups. Some of the highlights to the weekend were:

### "Crush the Ego Self" Activity



Session

This Activity, was based on a discourse given by Swami on the occasion of Mahashivaratri in February 2007. The discourse was entitled 'Give up Ego and Attachment and Become Great'. Swami said, "...Every human being in this world must analyse for themself what is to be changed and corrected and what is to be accomplished. Accordingly, one should conduct oneself..." hence in this session that is exactly what all youth had an opportunity to do. By asking a series of questions and requesting individuals to answer the questions truthfully, everyone had a chance to examine what it is they would like to change and correct about themselves, and what they would like to accomplish. The title of this

activity was called 'Crush Your Ego Self. This was because the questions were to be answered truthfully in front of everyone and, by reading a quote of Swami's after answering the question, we sometimes would realise, that it was our Ego that had an influence on the answer! For example: Are you at Peace with yourself? Yes or No?. Swami says "Without being at peace with yourselves, you cannot be at peace with others. And, is not peace the greatest of gifts, the most precious of possessions?" So ... are you at peace with others? Now, that is something to think about.

### Choi Kwang Do



Choi Kwang Do Session

A Korean Martial Art called Choi Kwang Do was another means for youth to get to explore the retreat theme. Many associate Martial Arts to merely just kicking and punching. However, we were taught Martial Arts with a difference. Martial Arts infused with Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings on Human Values. We looked at how to handle situations peacefully, how to use your Divine Self to feel if a potential attacker is approaching and how to stop a fight before it begins. Through out our Martial Art sessions we explored how the Ego Self is the cause of conflict. "His Divine Work"

This was an interactive session where youth expressed their future visions for the service wing of our Sacred Organisation. We discussed what kinds of new service projects the youth feel are needed and what help would be required to get these projects started. We also viewed current service activities taking place within our Organisation and how the youth could support these and get more involved. The Youth also shared amongst each other, projects they are themselves already involved in and what help is required. The outcome of this Interactive session was very positive

and the Youth expressed a lot of enthusiasm in talking less and doing more, for the Service Wing.

#### Interview



"Inter View" (Self-Reflection) Session

This Activity was truly Divine. It started with everyone being told that the activity is designed "to take you, on a sacred journey...a journey to your true self, a journey to your inner light, your inner truth . . . a sacred and sweet journey back home, back to God . . . back to You!" The Instrument or device that was to aid us on this sacred journey was a mirror. We were invited to look into the mirror and express what we saw and felt on paper in whatever form we wished, for example a picture, poem, word or symbol. We were then guided into a meditation and then invited again to express what we saw in the mirror. What sounds like such a simple activity was actually truly remarkable. The

experiences the youth shared were phenomenal. It is said the 'eyes are the windows to the soul' and with this activity the youth were certainly given the opportunity to look deep within.



heatrical Performance

Spirituality with humour was expressed one evening through Theatrical Performances based on the Retreat theme. Just imagine expressing the theme 'i am I from Ego Self to DIVINE SELF' in a form of a rap or with an underlying theme of Star Wars! Also, A Heart to Heart session entitled 'When Swami Carried Me' allowed youth to unwind in a relaxed atmosphere and share their experiences with Swami to the rest of the youth. Some amazing experiences were shared leaving youth feeling blessed, happy and thankful to Swami.

Overall the Region 2 Youth Retreat was a fantastic opportunity our Swami gave his children to have fun, enjoy good company and to establish how we can continue his

teaching of 'Service to Man is Service to God'. We the Youth of Region 2 are ever so grateful to our Lord Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for these treasured moments we shared together as One Sai Family.

Thank you for Reading!

Article submitted by Suresh Sajnani - R2 Youth Coordinator on behalf of the R2 Youth Retreat Team.

### Region 3 - Akhand Bhajans

Saturday 12th November from 6pm to Sunday 13th November 6pm

We held Akhanda Bhajans in four locations in the region. Milton Keynes and East London organised Multi-faith programmes. Milton Keynes organised a Sai Exhibition in a room adjacent to the main temple which was attended by the visitors.



Region 3 - Ilford Sai Centre Birthday Celebrations: Saturday 26th November

Ilford Sai Centre celebrated Baba's Birthday on the 26th November at St Peters and Paul's church. Over 150 devotees attended the function. The evening started as usual with Gayathry mantras, multifaith prayers, vedas chanting and devotional songs. This was followed by a power point presentation and video of Swami's life and his message of selfless service by the youth convenor of Ilford Sai centre and team. Emphasis was placed on 'Peace' and 'Love' which should be established in the hearts of each and every person God created. It is possible to have peace and joy in all the beings that Swami has created.

Devotees were inspired by the children variety programme called 'A Garland of Love' which consisted of dramas, uplifting bhajans, bharatanatyam dance and showers of powerful quotes from Baba read by each and every child. The children were showered with blessings from one of our respected elders of Ilford Sai centre. They were also presented with a gift after their blessing from Swami.

The evening continued with vibrant music and songs by the Ilford Sai Centre musicians and choir group. Devotional singing and a medley followed which proved to be the food of love for all the devotees. The evening was energised by prayers and Aarathi.

Vibhuti and prasadam were distributed to all devotees who also enjoyed the most delicious Baba's Birthday cake. All participants were uplifted by the programme and took away the message of Love and Faith. Faith in Divinity is the key to develop Love and Love can transform man and hence the world.



Region 3 - Ladies Day: Saturday 19th November

With November being such a busy time of year the world over for Sai devotees everywhere, it was a particular challenge to organise something special and heartfelt for Ladies Day in Region 3. Indeed, Swami had Himself given Ladies Day to women everywhere but how did HE want it celebrated this year? A dream in late October indicated that the focus should be on a seva project which the ladies could get actively involved in whilst keeping up with their daily duties. The answer came in the form of a workshop, SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL FOR GOD - the charity which gets children's clothes hand- made by women within their own time and then organises collection and despatch to under-privileged countries where the garments are distributed to the poor. Needless to say, the workshop was a huge success with women attending from all over the Region, eager to learn new dress-making skills and put them to good use. The atmosphere was lively and filled with enthusiasm, sustained by the workshop co-ordinator, Brother Kumar Kathiramalai who was especially pleased that dates for monthly workshops were quickly arranged and organised from January 2012 onwards to continue the good work.

After a delicious lunch, the afternoon programme of cultural offerings began. Firstly, a beautifully humorous and engaging talk by Sister Gayathri Nadella, former Sai Student and R5 SSE co-ordinator. Sister Gayathri took time reminisce over old student memories and lessons that had been lovingly taught by Swami. The vivid descriptions and transported everyone back to those magical times. The talk was followed by two dramas beautifully enacted by the ladies of Walthamstow and Thurrock Sai centres, both carrying messages of His teachings and His love. In particular, the trouble taken in costumery, scenes and special effects - was quite remarkable and a testimony to the dedication and devotion behind these offerings. The afternoon ended with a vibrant selection of group devotional songs by the ladies of Edmonton which brought smiles to everyone's faces as we all watch our Beloved Swami on a huge screen in front of us. A round of heartfelt bhajans and aarti to Swami was the perfect and fitting end to a wonderful day, Everyone agreed that Swami's presence and blessings were clearly felt by all who attended.



Sutopa Sen - Region 3 Ladies Co-ordinator

## Region 3 - Regional Birthday Celebrations: Sunday 27th November

This year's R3 birthday celebrations at Nagrecha Hall did not disappoint the hundreds of devotees who attended. The programme started with SSE children from the Sai School performing exquisitely as part of a choir and orchestra. This was quickly followed by a meaningful play by the Mill Hill Lotus Youth, "Nachiketa" which illustrated the secret of life and death. Then, the first guest speaker, Brother Krishna Subramaniam, former Sai student and spiritual co-ordinator for Mill Hill Sai Centre delivered a very comprehensive talk around the 4 definitions of death and immortality - which was much appreciated by the listening audience.

After a short break with some light refreshments distributed, the next guest speaker was Brother B. S Vijayasai, former sai student and faculty member of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning - visiting from Bangalore in India. Brother Vijayasai shared delightful stories with everyone for highlighting Swami's intense and unending love for His students. He emphasised Swami's role as the Eternal Witness - loving yet still bound by universal laws. The talk was both moving and humorous and ended with everyone feeling closer to Swami within their hearts. The session ended with a full hour of enthralling bhajans which once again, topped off the evening as Swami's darshan video played on a huge screen - for the benefit of all present. It really was like old times as the DVD gradually began to synchronise with the live programme as the video showed Swami leaving the Sai Kulwant Hall "on cue" as Aarti concluded. The looks on devotees' faces as they left the hall said it all. And the very best part was the wonderful feeling of joint working and co-operation between all the R3 centres involved, as everyone went home with meal boxes of prasadam which had been lovingly prepared for them.

It was a perfect end to a lovely weekend.



Sutopa Sen

Region 3 - Sai Centre Birthday Celebrations



The Thurrock Sai Group organized packing of hampers after their Birthday Celebrations. All the members including children took part and they made 120 hampers for the Salvation Army. These will be distributed to the needy.



Swami's Birthday Celebrations on 23rd November at Moat Hall, Darsham, Suffolk. Twenty people were at the noon reading of the Sri Sathya Sai Sathya Narayana Katha and Bhajans and eleven people were at the 6.30pm reading of the Shirdi Katha and Bhajans.

Both events were followed by prasad food. Tea and birthday cake was served in the afternoon by the big log fire. A lovely family from Cambridge came for the first time.

## Region 3 - SSE School



Brother Ishver Patel visited the school on 5th November 2011 and met the teachers and the children. He spoke on the theme of our role in Swami's mission, touching on points such as what the difference is between ethical and moral living - ethical living being "having the knowledge about what is right and wrong" but moral living being "living our day to day lives by those values". He also reminded us that "we are not humans living a spiritual life, but we are spiritual beings living a human experience".

Teaching the values through the various techniques prescribed in Sai Spiritual Education ie, telling stories from the epics and about good and noble people, group activities such

as role plays, devotional singing, prayers and silent sitting was not enough - Ishver emphasised that LOVE is the underlying value of all these techniques and that without this important component, it would be very difficult to inspire the children in divinity. One of the biggest challenges for SSE teachers is to inspire the children in selfless love, this task can be made easier if the children and parents are encouraged to attend their Sai Centres where they can get involved in service activities and experience and release the divine love within them.

## Region 4 - An Evening with Vijaysai



On October 27, devotees from region 4, Leicester Sai Centre had the privilege of welcoming brother Vijaysai, an alumnus and former lecturer at Bhagawan's institutions. The hour and a half session was met with enthusiasm by the congregation of adults, youth and the S.S.E. as brother Vijay recalled a few of his very personal experiences. Having spent the years from 1987-1997 with Bhagawan, brother Vijay had many heartwarming moments showing how the Lord Himself prepared him to fulfill his many dharmic roles. He demonstrated how unique Bhagawan's Relationship is with every individual and narrated experiences of a very loving, teaching and patient Lord. Overall, the theme to

emerge from each experience was the importance of role-play in life.

An interactive forum followed, where brother Vijaysai responded to questions on a wide range of topics including youth involvement in organizational activities, individual responsibility in ushering in the Golden Age and the nature of the divine. He encouraged all to take the initiative to be leaders in all aspects of life, serving our Lord by imparting joy to others as Bhagawan did for us.



He reminded us that Bhagawan's Life was an example of how to achieve excellence in the multiple roles we play in life. Brother Vijaysai reaffirmed our commitment, emphasizing that every one of us has a divine role to play and when we do so with confidence and commitment we begin to embody Bhagawan's Beautiful Words, "Your Life is My Message."

The afternoon was concluded with a joyful rendition of "When Dark Clouds Fill Your Skies" in which everyone joined in.

### Region 4 - Babas Birthday Celebrations in Coventry



I arrived at Baba's birthday celebrations in Coventry on 23 November with no expectations, as I have only recently become involved in the Sai Organisation and all it has to teach humanity about good conduct and values.

The venue was decorated and buzzing in readiness for Baba's devotees to arrive. The SSE children were excited about their forthcoming performance and doing last minute rehearsals.

The stage was set for a great night, and I was not disappointed. Baba's Chalisa was sung beautifully, and was totally uplifting. The SSE play went off without a hitch, and I felt blessed to place a flower and candle before Baba with the children on such an auspicious day. We all enjoyed participating in the bhajans and music, as they were sung wonderfully and methodically without unnecessary gaps to break your concentration or spiritual energy. My physical body left the venue to enjoy Baba's

birthday cake, but my soul was flying high in the sky wanting to merge with the Almighty and did not wish to return to the monotonous obligations of daily life!

May the New Year bring lots of peace, happiness and joy into all our lives. May Baba continue to light our path and keep

us strong to face life's challenges.





Written by: Neelam Sharma, SSE Parent, Coventry

## Region 4 - Exhibition & Singing at the Multi Faith Annual Event in Coventry



It was a lovely and mild November afternoon, when temperatures were in their double figures, almost mistaking it to be early September! As per each year, the Coventry Multi Faith Forum organised their annual event for launching Interfaith Week in Coventry by putting together an evening of exhibition & entertainment for building relations with people from different cultures and backgrounds and of course people-networking.

This year, the venue was the new site for Sri Sri Radha Krishna Temple and it was beautifully set up with scrumptious food at the back of the hall, which was so lovingly made and served by the devotees of the temple. I felt at home and really excited for the

children taking part as we caught glimpse of some of the other items following ours. There was an Irish folk dance group, a Sikh kirten group and right at the end of the evening, was the highlight - something the Hare Krishna temple had put together - a drama based on the story of the 'learned Pundit and the boatman' - a very familiar story to the SSE children!

Coventry centre put up their exhibition pieces along with other faith groups, each with their own space allocation. Such interesting information on Swami and His beautiful Organisation. Many people came over to read some of the quotes and asked a question or two.



This year, some key dignitaries were invited, namely the Coventry Lord Mayor, the Chairman of Interfaith group, the Chairman of Multi Faith Forum in Coventry, along with members of the Multi Faith Forum and Interfaith group.

After everyone had had a bite to eat and had the chance to network, the evening began with Coventry SSE children opening the programme. This year, I felt the need to make it an interactive item rather than a performance, thereby involving everyone in the hall. After a few glitches with the PA system, it all flowed very nicely and as always, Swami made sure that everything went the way it was meant to. The words for all the songs were ready to be projected onto the screen to make it easy for everyone to follow, but

the multi media projector decided it wasn't going to work. The SSE boys that took part, adjusted and adapted to the flow. How beautifully Swami looks after everything. All lights on us, it was time...

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the 'universal' singing and found the words 'beautiful' as commented by the chair of the Hare Krishna temple Sri Haridasji. The songs brought in the different values, names of different faiths and all felt part of the singing. With the lively music, everyone joined in with clapping and singing and we truly felt that we had begun the evening with Swami's blessings! He showered His love on all as the atmosphere was charged with vibrant energy!

My heartfelt thanks to my beloved Guru - Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for giving us this opportunity to share His love through music and singing.

Vina Mistry - Coventry

### Region 5 - Free Walk-in Health Awareness Day: Nov 2011

Over 300 people visited the Free Walk-in Health Awareness Day held on Saturday 5th November at the Oldham Library. The event was organised by Region 5 SSSSO UK in partnership with NHS Oldham, Pennine Care NHS, and the Oldham Council. It proved to be great success.



Declaring the day open the Mayor of Oldham Councillor Richard Knowles said "Taking care of our health is most important. We should take up regular exercises and be very careful with what we eat".

Mr Riaz Ahmed, Chairman of NHS Oldham said "I am aware of the wonderful service projects being done by the Sai organisation throughout the country. We are thankful to



the Sai Organisation for selecting Oldham as their first event in this region. Even saving just one life as a result of today's event, all the efforts put in by so many people would be well worth it".



The whole day was packed with exhibitions, health talks, practical demonstrations, together with health professionals on hand to provide the visitors with health checks and advice. A separate hall was totally dedicated to complementary therapies offering homeopathy, back care, massage, meditation, aromatherapy and yoga.

Feedback from the event was highly positive (see examples below), so much so that the partnership organisations are already working with us to plan a bigger and better event next year!



"For most of my life I have witnessed the reluctance of many 'healthy' males to have check ups, it was a delight to see how many men from all age groups and cultures happily having these checks done" Visitor Feedback

"I found the event to be very well organised, everyone was really helpful and friendly and the food and drinks were fantastic" Exhibitor Feedback

Dr Harish Thampy R5 Chair

Region 5 - Greater Manchester Sai Centre Birthday Celebrations

Wednesday 23rd November 2011



Approximately 80 people gathered at the Jain Community Hall in Manchester to celebrate Swami's birthday. Rather than have a 2 hour bhajan program, it was decided to have a satsang-style event. The evening started with 1 hour of bhajans, followed by a satsang based on friendship with Swami, and also on 'being God'. The satsang started with a slide show of quotes and images to the song 'anytime you need a friend' by Mariah Carey and then a video from Hari Subramanium's workshop on the 9 forms of devotion. We watched the chapter on friendship - beautiful examples, experiences, and bhajans to delve into what kind of friend Swami is to us, and whether we really can say we are his friend...

sometimes we very casually say 'oh Swami is my friend!'



We then watched extracts from an interview with Dr Srikanth Sola talking about 'being God' and 'living in God consciousness' and how that has transformed his life. Very inspiring with tips on how to be God.

We programme ended with aarti, followed by cutting a birthday cake. It was a very moving event that touched hearts and souls of everyone present. It was also a 'warm up' for our regional program which was on the theme 'I am with you always' (see separate article).



Sanjay Vaja Regional Spiritual Coordinator

Region 5 - Regional Birthday Celebrations: Sunday 27th November 2011



The Region 5 celebrations for Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's birthday took place on the 27th of November 2011 at the Indian Association Hall in Oldham. The programme started at 10:30am and went on till 2:30pm.

The day started off with uplifting vedam chanting and bhajans. Dr. Harish Thampy, Region 5 Chair, gave a warm welcome with a short introductory speech concerning

the day's program. He set the day's proceedings with the theme 'I am with you always'. This really fitted in to the occasion as this is the first birthday of Swami after he left his physical body.



Nishal Govindji compered the day's events which started with the Greater Manchester SSE children's play. The Greater Manchester play was one of the two skits that day. Their play was about Sage Bharadhwaj and how he got Shiva and Parvathi to agree on coming to earth in three avatars. The play started with the story of how Swami cured his paralytic stroke by sprinkling some water on the left side of his body. From this play, we should take on board that if we do something



as great as what Sage Bharadhwaj did, God will do something back. Sage Bharadhwaj waited for 8 days for Shiva and Parvathi to take notice of him as he was waiting to ask them to come to a Mahayagna. There was an excellently executed dance by Shiva and Parvathi. Shiva and Parvathi decided to come in three avatars (Shiridi Sai, Sathya Sai and Prema Sai) on earth. It had a touching end as it showed the picture of Swami saluting us on his final darshan.

The next item was an informal conversation between Kailash and Praveena from Newcastle Sai Centre. They come from quite varied

backgrounds with regards to their relationship with Swami. They started with a short birthday song for Bhagawan sung melodiously by Praveena. This was followed by questions asked to each other such as, how life in Ananthapur was, how they got into Swami's fold, how Swami stood by them always guiding them. There were interesting answers and hints of humour which livened the crowd.



This was followed by a Musical tribute to Baba by Renu Gidoomal, Nandkumar and Jagdish Patel from London. Renu is well known in the UK Sai circle as a beautiful bhajan singer and she now travels all around the world giving devotional song concerts. Jagdish is a gifted singer and Nand is an exponent in playing tabla. The three of them have formed a group called RNJ and they have sung devotional songs in various European countries.



They sang a few Bhajans (both Sai and other devotional songs), and also involved the audience in some of the songs. This was a popular performance of the day and everyone seemed to enjoy it.

Lidget Green Sai Centre and Halifax SSE group then presented a play about a devotee called Mr Sahu who was a former student at Puttapurthi. He had a dilemma, whether to help at an orphanage or to give a crucial presentation at work. He chooses to help at the orphanage and Swami comes in as Sahu to do the presentation for him. The average age of the actors was 7, so it was a young group. The play ended with a song sung by Gayathri Nadella, the SSE teacher of Halifax, and the children.

The guest speaker of the day was Gunaranjan Bose. This was a very well thought out speech as he mentioned very rare experiences with Swami, such as bringing his grandfather back to life. He mentioned many teachings of Swami that suited the day well. Another experience he mentioned was when he was asked to do a play before Swami. His role was small, but Swami appreciated his acting after the play and commended him. He also shared an experience which highlighted the humility of the almighty Lord when He actually asked Gunaranjan's mother's permission to involve his father in the construction of the super speciality hospital.





The day ended with another 15 minutes of bhajans which were uplifting. Region 5 Spiritual coordinator, Sanjay Vaja summarised the day's programme and thanked every one who helped to make the day a success. This was followed by Maha Prasadam.

It was an eventful day filled with meaningful programmes and everyone had lots of messages to take home and practice. Nobody felt the absence of Swami indeed and He proved to be with us always, once again.

Prahalad Nadella (aged 12)

Halifax SSE student

### Region 6 - Southampton and Portsmouth Group: 24hr Akhanda Bhajans

"Singing with intense yearning for God and enjoying the experience of adoring Him helps purify the atmosphere. Man is forced to breathe the air polluted by sounds that denote violence, hatred, cruelty and wickedness. Therefore, he is fast losing the high attainments that are in store for him. The vibrations of Namasankirtans can cleanse then atmosphere and render it pure, calm and ennobling. It is with this high purpose in view that this programme of global Sankirtan was designed."

~ Sri Sathya Sai Baba, SSS. Vol. X, p. 67

With much love and fervour, the lamps were lit in 5 River Walk at 12:30 on Saturday, coinciding with the time in Prasanthi Nilayam, marking the start of 24hr Akhanda Bhajans. 3 OMs, Ganapathi Prarthana, Rudram and other Vedic chants led us into a series of Bhajans singing the glory of our Beloved Lord. As the day progressed, the presence of Swami was strongly felt by all devotees. Baba's presence was also visually brought to our attention with videos clips of His darshans, blessing each and everyone of us with every look of His, right from His childhood. A feeling of global unity was created with direct links with Prasanthi.



True love and devotion poured out of everyone as we undertook this spiritual exercise. Some of the Bhajans sung took the devotees back to the 70s reminding them of the moments they had with Swami. Our determination and intense love for



Swami, along with His blessings, kept us going all night. Some Tamil Bhajans were also sung during this period leading us into Suprabhatham and Rudram, followed by bhajans. As the day was coming to an end, devotees were charged fervently with energy. The constant thought of God and chanting of His name unified us with our true selves.

The 24hr session concluded with chanting of Om Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Babaya Namaha for 10 minutes followed by Araathi and SAMASTA LOKA SUKHINO

BHAVANTU. Mahaprasad was then served. When this event was being planned the week before, many were sceptical about the ability of a small group to hold a 24 hour session. But the devoted and unified hearts of everyone made this possible. Devotees made their way home in a state of peaceful bliss after this unforgettable spiritual experience.

Jai Sai Ram

## Region 8 - Baba's Birthday Celebrations



With the blessings of our beloved Lord, Swami's birthday was celebrated by region 8 at Perth Station Hotel. The programme commenced with Vedam Chanting(Ganapathi Atharva Sirsham, Narayana Upanishad). All centres participated in the chanting.

This was followed by welcome speech by Dr. Ram, region 8 co-ordinator who spoke on the progress made by the region over the last year, addressed importance of self reflection on personal Sadhana and highlighted that when we install Swami permanently in our hearts that day is our Swami's real birthday. He urged all to achieve this through practice, perseverance, purity and ultimately aim to

see divinity in all and at all times.

The next programme was hosted by Aberdeen centre. The message of the Lord (RADIOSAI) episodes 1-8 were presented as a powerpoint presentation. The key messages were to have FAITH THAT THERE IS GOD, HE IS WITHIN US, HE CAN BE CONTACTED 24/7, THE TELEPHONE NUMBER IS OM, THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTROL OF THE MIND, FOLLOWING THE INTELECT AND ACHIEVING CIA (constant integrated awareness)

Next Brother Vinesh from Dundee presented the message of the Lord episodes 9-16. He stressed THE IMPORTANCE OF GRAMA SEVA, COMMUNITY SEVA and shared experiences of devotees /doctors who had built Swami's Hospital.

Next presentation was from EDINBURGH. Bal vikas /SSE children put in a very beautiful play entitled 'CHOPPINATTU CHESTHARA' a very touching play and conveyed the message very aptly and succinctly.

The Last presentation was from Glasgow ending with meditation and a beautiful song

The programme concluded with Aarathi and prasadham.



Sai Ram

Sathya Sai School: November 2011 Update

#### Children In Need - Friday 18th November 2011

We also joined in "Children in Need" Appeal on Friday 18th November 2011 by having a non-uniform day on that day. Staff and children dressed up and donated a voluntary minimum contribution of £1.00 in order to participate. We raised £139.56 towards this appeal. Well Done Everyone!

### Operation Christmas Child - Shoeboxes bursting with joy



This year again the whole school participated in the Samaritan's Purse-'Operation Christmas Child': this is the world's largest children's Christmas project - devoted to spreading love, joy and smiles to children in parts of the world who really need them. Children, Parents & teachers filled an empty shoebox with gifts for a child abroad. These shoeboxes will be given to children in need, regardless of their background and beliefs. This year the school collected over 80 boxes and these were collected from the school on Tuesday 22nd November 2011.

### Founders Day

It was the 23rd of November, Founders Day. This is a day we honour our founder Sathya Sai Baba. It is the day of His birthday. We had a whole school assembly filled with music & joy.

Celebrations began with light meditation, followed with a beautiful video about Sathya Sai Baba- "Tu pyar ka sagar hai".

Two year 3 pupils: Ishani & Pari Lakshmi started the performance with a dance-prayer to Lord Ganesha. Next Jesal & Shivam played "Gauri Ganesh Uma Ganesh" together on Guitar accompanied by Dev on tabla. This was followed by Rishi playing "Tripura Sundari Maa, Amba Daya Sagari Maa" on the keyboard accompanied by Karan on tabla.

Next a mixed group of year 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 11 students performed "Hum ko tumse pyar kitna" with Parisha & Mikoto on Violin, Keshav on flute, Saiganesh on Guitar accompanied by Vyom & Sagar on tabla.

Ishani, a year 3 pupil inspired us all by playing the Sitar.

Finally we watched a musical sensation, Ms Roopa Panesar who played the sitar beautifully accompanied by a great tabla player, Raviraj.

A student's feedback; Vyom, year 7: "I took part in playing a song called 'hum ko tum se pyar kitana' we had a lot of fun. It was very hard to get the right tune but we finally got there. It was very enjoyable to work with the crew. Finally the day came, the moment we were all waiting for, the performance. We all were very nervous backstage. Eventually we were called up..... When we finished playing our piece of music, not one of us could stop smiling."

Jesal, Shivam & Vyom (year 7 students)

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