



Our Mother's Pride – A Toast to You!

Dear Readers, Sai Ram!

There is that famous saying about London buses: 'You wait for one for ages – then three come along at once!' Well, this month's packed issue is rather like that. I often have to cajole and entreat people to write articles for 'Love and Light' but this month we are somehow very pleasantly awash with them – a veritable 'omnibus' edition (excuse the pun!).

The position I hold gives me a very unique perspective upon our Organisation. Not only do I travel around and see the varying ways that Centres and Groups express themselves – both through their devotional/worship aspect and their service activities – but I am often 'collared' (in the nicest possible way) by people who really need an ear to listen to them. So, a big part of my job is to listen sincerely. This gives me the opportunity of understanding what devotees feel is lacking in our Organisation and also what is working well. My unprejudiced view is that there is far more that is working really well – on quiet well-oiled wheels – than there is functioning inadequately. Of course, we all endeavour to improve, as individuals, as Centres and Groups and as a national organisation.

Because we are surrounded by sincere attempts at exemplifying extreme goodness in all that we do, any small iota that is out of 'synch' with our collective high ideals and aims stands out like a London Bus in the Arctic wastes! On the spiritual path we have to accept that there will never be (at this time anyhow) total unconditional love or perfection of behaviour exhibited by every single one of us at any one particular time!

So, our transformation comes from seeing the delightful humour of that and bringing our loving understanding and complete acceptance to wherever there is temporary imbalance of the values in another. For we all have that on many an occasion – don't we?!

If we can all of us – each and every one of us – wake up each morning and truly offer this Organisation and ourselves to Swami for total guidance we might see imagined boulders melt away as obstacles and we might all see how good and effective we already really are. So often, I am deeply moved when I see the way members of this Organisation carry

themselves in this world and the high level of understanding of complicated spiritual knowledge that is contained within them, along with a dedicated persistent striving for improvement that is so characteristic of all Swami's devotees not only in this country but all around the world. Very often, my fellow Council members move me, too, and make me feel very honoured to be a part of them. One such occasion was recently, when we had an extra Council Meeting to address various matters in depth, we also arranged for a filming and interview session to increase our own presentation skills - not only with a view to the public but also so that we are more able to communicate with you better as well! Council Members have to field a whole range of questions (particularly Regional Chairs) that are thrown sometimes in quite challenging ways at them! Kishor Kumar, our National Secretary, prepared some very hard (extremely) and controversial questions and a delightful interviewer, Shivali, from Mill Hill Centre put these questions to the Council, one by one, whilst lovely volunteer, Ali, filmed them! They answered their questions with presence, thoughtfulness and a fresh originality without ever losing that wonderful sense of real connectedness to the moment. We should all value the Office Bearers and the 'Active Workers' that we have, in every post – past and present – because far from being about ego and personal elevation I constantly see highly-committed individuals who not only have time-consuming careers in their personal lives but give of themselves unstintingly in real dedication. This is something I have the real privilege of seeing often.

**Love and Light,
Rosemary Perry, National Chair**

National Sathya Sai Retreat: "You Are Me, I am You, We Are One" 22nd to the 24th of August

After a two-year gap, the national Sathya Sai Retreat will again take place this year. The planning group is putting the two days programme together. The invitation letter and the application forms will be sent via Regional Chairs to all Centre and Group chairs for distribution to all their members within the

next week. Centre/Group chairs please make sure this information is circulated to all members and please encourage them to attend. The programme will include workshops, talks by a guest speaker (to be confirmed) and many other activities. It is going to be a very spiritually uplifting weekend, so do book early as there are only limited spaces. Joining instructions will be communicated nearer the time. Any further developments will be published in L&L over the months leading up to the retreat.

**Ramesh Mistry for the
National Retreat Planning Team**

Youth

Pilgrimage for Peace in West London - Saturday June 7th 2008

The 23rd Annual Interfaith walk in Westminster will be taking place on Saturday 7th of June. You may have already seen circulars about this from the Spiritual Wing to all Centres and Groups. The walk is a pilgrimage to some of the many diverse places of worship that exist in London. It is a pilgrimage of peace, everyone united in the many names of the God we all love and adore. Participants will be from all over the country, all from different faiths.

The walk commences at 9am from St Mary of the Angels RC Church in Moorehouse Road, W2 5DJ. Parts of the pilgrim route are continued on the Underground so ensure you have a One-Day Travel Card unless you already have an 'Oyster' or 'Freedom' Pass.

Please do participate in this peaceful walk (bring your friends along too!) and help bring a little more harmony, understanding and togetherness into the world. Further details will be also available from the youth website.

National Youth Coordinating Committee
www.saiyouth.org.uk

SSE National Teachers' Day 2008 Important Notice

National Teachers' Day 2008 will now take place on **Saturday 30th August 2008** at **Winston Churchill Hall**, Manor Farm Site, Pinn Way, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 7QL. Please note this **revised date** in your diaries. It will be a wonderful opportunity for Teachers, Teaching assistants, office bearers and all those involved in Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) to come together to celebrate, learn, share ideas and be inspired for the next academic year. Further details and registration forms will be available via Regional SSE coordinators after 9th June.

Lakshmi Puvanendran,
National SSE Co-ordinator

Sathya Sai School Leicester Flowering Service

On Saturday 12th April, Ganesh Yoganathan organised a day for devotees to come and help to create a better environment at our Sathya Sai School by helping to sort out the garden. Rajni and Ranjini Morarji from Stevenage masterminded the whole project, down to the smallest detail.

The planning was completed during the Easter holidays and they arrived at 10am on the 12th April ready for action with the necessary resources, raw materials and food for the day. The volunteers included four devotees, four Sai Youth from London, six parents and 12 children (aged from 9 to 12 years) from the School itself. They worked from 10 am to 8 pm, through the sun, rain, wind and even hailstones!

It was a beautiful sight to see the children rising to the occasion. Some of these children have been with the school for more than five years and Mr and Mrs Lim felt proud of the 'flowers of the seedlings' that Swami had sown at the school as well as being very pleased at the way devotees come to the school to give selflessly. The adults were clearly amazed and inspired by the children's enthusiasm and willpower. They all focussed on the tasks and talked very little even during the break and mealtime!

This day marked the formation of the service team of the school that will be called the 'Love All Serve All Team'. The team met again on the 26th April and will meet regularly from now on. Initially, the children will focus on helping their school environment, before planning to go out into the wider community to serve.

(Article written by Usha Lim, Head teacher)

The Director of ESSE visits the Sathya Sai School in Leicester

Dr Thorbjørn and Mrs Marianne Meyer, from the European Sathya Sai Education Institute (ESSE) visited the Sathya Sai School, Leicester, on Friday 18th April 2008. The visit was hosted by the founders of the school, Mr and Mrs Lim, and was accompanied by Dr Prabodh Mistry, the Sathya Sai Schools Co-ordinator.

The visit began early - at around 7.30am, as the children were coming into the school. The Meyers were asked to take the school's Morning Assembly that started at 8am. The children were sitting lined up on mats and they began with the singing of multi-faith prayers (each group taking their turn to sing). During the Assembly, the Dr and Mrs Meyer engaged everyone during their narration (and enacting in parts) of several stories. The

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atmosphere was filled with love and it was a wonderful sight to see all the children joining in and answering the questions posed to them by the Meyers as well as having questions to put to the Meyers!

Following the Assembly the Dr and Mrs Meyer took time looking at the whole school as well as visiting each of the classes. Lunchtime was quite special to watch as each class entered the lunchroom silently, took their food, settled into their seats and ate their food in almost complete silence. When finished, each pupil helped to clear up the dining area.

As part of the day, Carole Alderman (the director of BISSE) and Dipak Kumar (a teacher, the founder of the Leicester 'Good Values Club' and inventor of several Human Values-based board games) had helped to arrange a visit for the Meyers to a nearby State school, the Abbey Park Primary School. This school has introduced Sathya Sai EHV throughout the school. The Head Teacher, Tim Foster, welcomed Thorbjørn, Marianne and Prabodh to the school and personally showed them round it. The children were very familiar and conversant with the five human values. During the visit, there were several instances where the head teacher would ask pupils questions about human values and all of the pupils were enthusiastically responding with the correct interpretation of the values. This visit also served to establish a link between the Abbey Park Primary School and the Sathya Sai School Leicester – a link that is expected to flourish with time.

The Meyers were very pleased with the visit and thank everyone who brought about the visits to both the schools. They left Leicester on the morning of Saturday 19th April, just as many from all over the country were gathering at the Sathya Sai School again for the National Pre-Conference on Sathya Sai Education, which was planned as a precursor to the Sri Sathya Sai World Education Conference that will be held at Prashanti Nilayam, India, from 20th – 22nd July 2008, in the presence of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

'Sindhi Nari Sabha' Visit

Five representatives of the Sindhi Nari Sabha (the ladies wing of the Sindhi Association of the United Kingdom) visited the Sathya Sai School in Leicester on Wednesday 30th April 2008. Mrs Bharati Chanrai, the President of the Sabha led the group, which included Mrs Jayshree Daryanani, Mrs Rekha Jethwani, Mrs Georgina Hirdaramani and Mrs Maya Aswani. The Sindhi Nari Sabha has helped the Sathya Sai School Leicester in recent years and was invited to visit the school. During the visit

Mrs Usha Lim and Mr Cheng Hoe Lim, as well as other members of staff and children, welcomed them. Subsequently, they saw the whole school at first hand and spent time talking to the Sathya Sai Schools Co-ordinator, Prabodh Mistry, to understand how the school is progressing, its current needs and how it intends to expand.

Prabodh Mistry, Sathya Sai Schools Co-ordinator

Sathya Sai Education

United Kingdom National Pre-World Sathya Sai Education Conference

The United Kingdom 'Pre-Conference' was held on Saturday 19th April at Sathya Sai School Leicester in Region 4. The good and kind devotees of Region 4 gave the event their full support by providing the catering and volunteers who made the day run smoothly. 106 delegates registered to attend this conference and prepared for the event by reading the 'Global Overview of Sri Sathya Sai Education' and by giving prior feedback to questionnaires sent out during the registration process. The conference was organised by a planning group chaired by the Central Coordinator for the UK and Ireland, and was composed of the lead representatives from the three areas of Sathya Sai Education in the United Kingdom (SSE, Sathya Sai School Leicester and BISSE) along with the National Chairperson of the SSSSO UK. The participants came from these same three areas of Sathya Sai Education and from the United Kingdom Central Council. For many, it was the first time that they had had the opportunity to visit and have first-hand experience of the Sathya Sai School in Leicester, which provided the perfect backdrop for the conference by being steeped in values-based imagery and inspiring sayings placed all around the classrooms.

The inaugural lighting of the lamp was performed by Mrs Carole Alderman the Director of BISSE with Mrs Lakshmi Puvanendran the National SSE Coordinator and Mrs Usha Lim the Head Teacher at SS School Leicester.

The SSSSO UK National Chairperson, Rev. Rosemary Perry, opened the conference and set out the aims and purposes of the day. She said that the United Kingdom wants its delegates to the Sathya Sai World Education Conference to be familiar with the Agenda and well versed in all areas of SSEd in their country. The Pre-Conference is also an opportunity for those who are involved in Sathya Sai Education but are not going to Prashanti in July, to offer their views and participate in contributory discussions. She

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touched on the need for Young Adults to become involved in Sathya Sai Education and suggested that this can only be successfully done by so inspiring them that they automatically want to take part!

The National Youth Co-ordinator, Mathan Arulvel, had prepared a meditative and inspiring film on Educare with relaxing music that was then shown in order to draw everyone into a focused cohesive state and it beautifully embodied the Spiritual Principles that comprise Sathya Sai Education.

Then followed five key speakers each with PowerPoint presentations: Mr Ishver Patel, Central Coordinator for the UK and Ireland guided us on the recent journey of Sathya Sai Education in the UK: from national preparations towards the Regional Education Consultation held in England in January 2007, through the developments and collaborations leading to a National Sathya Sai Education Conference held in September 2007 (with two key speakers from the international Sathya Sai Education arena); right up to the current lead-in to the World Sathya Sai Education Conference to be held at Prashanti Nilayam in July 2008.

Mrs Carole Alderman followed this with an outline on BISSE and an update of recent changes in its administrative structure. Dr Prabodh Mistry, the representative for Sathya Sai Schools to the UKCC, gave an update and overview of the Sathya Sai School Leicester. Mrs Lakshmi Puvanendran brought together a succinct and comprehensive account of every aspect of SSE in the UK and Mr Jiten Patel, Head of Training in BISSE, summarised SSEHV in both the community and in wider society, and described resource development and training.

A great deal of effort had been put into creating a 'carousel' system that allowed rotation of four groups through the four workshop subjects in four separate sessions. This enabled every delegate to participate in discussions on each of the four important theme subjects based upon the SSS World Education Conference theme: 'Principles', 'Authenticity', 'Accountability' and 'Service' Each session saw a complete change in the group personnel to create new dynamics and ensure that it was not just the same groups of people moving from one workshop to another.

Each workshop had a lead facilitator and two co-facilitators who captured feedback and discussions. Each team of facilitators had been primed to elicit fresh individual responses from the participants and guide them away from simply offering well-known

stock phrases but to encourage them to go deeper within for their unique thoughts, comments and suggestions.

Emphasis was placed upon mixing people up from the various strands of Sathya Sai Education in order to promote the cross-pollination of ideas, knowledge and information and also upon giving generous break times to allow for people to really get to know each other and build better bonds for future teamwork.

The programme closed with a Human Values song from one of BISSE's repertoire and sung in unison, 'Happy are they who in friendship, willingly work together.'

The whole day was characterised by a marvellous air of enthusiasm, excitement and a sincere and deep commitment to Sathya Sai Education – and indeed, a real willingness to work together in friendship!

Rosemary Perry, National Chair, on behalf of the Planning Group

Service

The search is on to save the life of a little baby...

Some of you may have received an e-mail from a Gujarati family looking for a Bone Marrow Donor to save the life of a 9 month-old baby boy who has been diagnosed with a rare blood disorder known as familial hemaphogocytic lymphiohistiocytosis (HLH) which affects one in about 2 million children. HLH is treated initially with chemotherapy, steroids and immunosuppressant to try and get the disease into remission. However the only cure for familial or inherited HLH is a bone marrow transplant.

Sad Facts:

Every year, hundreds of patients in the UK and abroad need bone marrow transplants to treat life-threatening disorders, such as leukaemia. Fewer than 30% of these patients will find a family member with compatible blood stem cells to donate. For the rest, an unrelated donor is the only chance.

Did you know?

- That there are only 12,686 Asian Donors (at 31st January 2008) on the register maintained by The Anthony Nolan Trust out of some 3 Million Asians living in the UK.
- That Leukaemia can happen to anyone from 1 month to 80 years old and all races.
- That ethnic origin is vital when looking for matches. It is *more likely* to find a match for a patient from a donor of a similar ethnic origin. Thus only an Asian donor can

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- save a life of an Asian patient, a Chinese donor can save Chinese patient etc;
- That once accepted you could stay on the Donors' register to age 60.
- That you could save someone's life not just once but many times until you reach age 60, provided of course you stay in good health.
- That you can reproduce the Bone marrow donated within 30 days without any loss to you.
- That you can be back at work within 7 or 10 days rest after donating the Bone Marrow at Royal Free Hospital London.
- That a patient requiring Bone Marrow donation could be living anywhere in the world.

Can you answer a 'Yes' to all the following questions?

- Are you aged between 18-40 years?
- Are you in good health?
- Do you weigh at least 7.7 stone?
- Do you want to save a life?

More donors from all groups, especially ethnic minority, are urgently needed as matching is performed on tissue type which is inherited from parents, so ethnic origin is vital when looking for matches. With more donors from ethnic minority groups on our register we will be able to give more patients an equal chance of life.

Joining the Donors' Register:

We are therefore urgently looking for more eligible Donors from the Asian community to come forward and join the Donors' Registers run by The Anthony Nolan Trust and the National Blood Service. The Anthony Nolan Trust, which is a registered charity and maintains an International Register of Bone Marrow Donors and the National Blood Service also maintains another Register in the UK. There are many patients of all Asian backgrounds for whom we cannot find matches due to the lack of Asian bone marrow donors. These patients have no family match and are relying on a stranger to save their lives.

Do something amazing today... Register as a bone marrow donor and become a lifesaver.

Procedure:

Should a donor ever match to donate stem cells, a short hospital stay is required and the stem cells can be donated in two ways. Either direct from the bone marrow via the pelvis under a general anaesthetic (cells will regenerate in the body within 7 days) or after a series of injections to increase stem cell production, the extra cells are withdrawn

from veins in the arms. Donors have the choice of donation method but must be willing and able to donate via the bone marrow. All donations take place in London. Donors have a full medical prior to donating.

Forthcoming Clinics will be held on:

~ **12th May 2008** A donors' clinic has been organised by **The Anthony Nolan Trust** on 12th May 2008 between 5 pm and 8 pm at the following address:

Harrow Arts Centre, Uxbridge Road
Hatch End
Middlesex HA5 4EA

~ **25th May 2008, 22nd June 2008, 14th September 2008, 19th October 2008 and 16th November 2008**

National Blood Service - Blood and Bone Marrow Donors Sessions - have been organised between 9.30 am to 3 pm at the following address:

'Sai Mandir', 133 Effra Road, London SW19

We will be taking blood samples on the day.

Please note: It is a requirement for these NBS sessions for a person to become both a blood and bone marrow donor.

Work on this done by Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation (SSSSO):

The Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation UK (SSSSO UK) has been working in conjunction with The Anthony Nolan Trust since February 2000 and with the National Blood Service since 2006. This is an ongoing link between our respective organisations for the purpose of raising awareness of Bone Marrow related illnesses amongst wider audiences from all communities at large in the U.K.

The Sri Sathya Sai Leukaemia Awareness Programme (SSSLAP) is one of the many Health Awareness Programmes initiated by the SSSSO UK to raise the awareness of main health conditions.

We have assisted many patents around the world in the USA, India, Sri Lanka, Mauritius and the UK. I receive calls and e-mails from relatives and via Mother Theresa's institution. We try our best to direct them to correct channels silently. With our guidance given to them, the family of a girl in the USA has started to hold Donors Clinics in different States there. We have been working within the NHS framework on other initiatives in conjunction with many National and International Organisations.

For more information about becoming a bone marrow donor, please visit The Anthony Nolan Trust website at www.anthonynolan.org.uk

Or contact:

Bharat Handa,
National Service Co-ordinator

Region 1

'Values Alive Event' in Croydon

Fifty children between the ages of 4 to 12 years attended a 'Values Alive Event' in a Croydon school, which ran from the 7th to the 10th of April last month. A team of 16 volunteers worked very well together to make the event a memorable one for everyone.

Each day began with a PowerPoint presentation, followed by a Silent Sitting exercise, a focus on the theme for the day and then the main lessons. Lessons included 'Storytelling', 'Role play', 'Martial Arts', 'Sport', 'Singing' and 'Art and Craft work'. At the end of each day we had circle time to recap the day's activities, and the response from the children revealed that they had taken the values to their hearts.

Another wonderful creative activity was an orienteering game, which was based on the value of Truth. The children worked as a team competing with each other and won a basket of breakfast bars and boxes of raisins. They lovingly shared it with all the other children, to practice the value of Love.

A group of older children were so impressed by the SSEHV Programme, that they asked each one of the volunteers to write a note on the Human Values so that they can write an article for their school magazine.

On the afternoon of the last day, the children gave a performance on the Values they had learned, in the form of singing, acting and drawing.

All the children were awarded certificates and 'Value Activity' folders to take home to help them share their knowledge with their families. A parent encouraged her child saying, "You have learned peace and harmony, bring the harmony and peace home to all of us to be a happy family."

The event was very successful and everyone really enjoyed it, as expressed below by some of the volunteers:

...The children were excellent. My main focus on this occasion was on some of the children I met last time and in particular to see their responses this time - as compared to last time we were there - which was some 18 months ago now.'

...The changes in these children were very apparent. For example, I saw some children who were (seemingly) very disruptive last time, were on this occasion much more calm. Though these children did not always involve themselves in all the sessions, they did show in the dealings I had with them i.e. on a one-to-one basis that they had understood well what was being delivered to them. For example, their willingness to

help others when they were in need was truly humbling to see.'

...A wonderful learning experience! I have been inspired and felt a huge amount of love from everyone. The children seemed to soak up all of the values-based lessons and games like sponges and you could see many of them growing in confidence throughout the event.'

'...The memory of one particular 4-year old sticks in my mind. He was very bright and quite demanding. On the first day he seemed to take a shine to me and tried to get my attention by using kicks to the shin and head-butts in the stomach. I showed him lots and lots of love and an equal measure of patience. By day three, his tactic for getting attention had completely changed. You can imagine how happy I was when he asked if he could help me to sweep the hall before lessons began! It seemed as though whatever veil had hidden his sweeter nature had been lifted.'

...It was worrying to see a child, who wasn't happy at all because of the other children who seemed to him to be selfish, violent and not caring around him which made his life miserable. After the peace lectures, activity programmes and positive talks by the team, he gained the courage to stand up and exhibit his work on peace and explain to all the class what it meant to him.'

Finally, just to mention, even Nature joined us to make the event a truly successful one. Two days before the event started, we had 2 or 3 inches of snow! What were we going to do with the children? From experience, children, especially when in a large group, love to run about outside and burn off energy. Well, as if by magic, the first day of the event arrived and out came the sun. After four days of perfect weather, the day after the event brought heavy rain showers, hail and a significant drop in temperature - a miracle or coincidence?

Raj Rajasingam, Chair Region 1

Regions 2 and 3 SSE

Curriculum Training

Held on 27th April 2008 at Compton School, North Finchley, London, the day was designed to offer in-depth understanding of the SSE Curriculum. Some clear points were made:

~ The main purpose of the SSE Curriculum is to assist and facilitate the delivery of the SSE Syllabus to the SSE children of the UK.

~ SSE Curriculum objectives will enable SSE teachers to enhance their subject knowledge and understanding of the SSE syllabus content.

~ Guidance and support will be provided for SSE teachers on how to deal with modern-day social issues that are increasingly becoming part of the lives of UK children.

~ There are clear and concise lesson plan objectives.

~ SSE links with 'Educare'.

Starting at 10.0am with 3 OMs, the day finished promptly at 4.30pm. This was a Training Day for the 33 SSE teachers from both Region 2 and Region 3 who attended. We had a very successful and interactive training day. The teachers were divided into the groups/years they teach, and attended workshops accordingly.

Workshops were conducted using the teaching techniques: Silent sitting, prayers, group devotional singing. Ideas and materials were available for teachers to use.

The Session was introduced and conducted by Jagruti Patel and Amanta Goodur. Divya and Devi Patel helped with the workshops. The National SSE Coordinator, Mrs Lakshimi Puvanendran, made a guest appearance breaking from her SSSSO UK Council Meeting to come and address us at the end. The following were addressed:

- SSE Curriculum – What? Why? How?
- SSE Curriculum – Assessment
- SSE Curriculum Framework
- SSE Curriculum Learning / Progression
- Summary – SSE Curriculum Pilot
- Questions & Answers

The SSE Groupings have been mapped against the UK National Curriculum (NC) Key Stage year groups. This will enable SSE teachers to align UK SSE teaching to UK mainstream education and also will assist in facilitating NC material (where applicable and relevant) to be used as part of lesson planning.

...EDUCARE is the 'unfolding' of human values within. The purpose of human life is to know the divine within and to discover the path of how we can realise this divinity in all activity. For each one of us there is a 'path of realisation' that we must journey along in order for us to realise the divine.

The new curriculum has been trialled since January 2008 and the plan is to roll it out nationally in September 2008.

We offer our thanks to the training team for a very effective training. The feedback from the teachers was very positive and all are very enthusiastic to carry forward the new format.

All material is accessible via the link below:

http://web.mac.com/anathwan/SSE_Manual/SSE_Manual.html

Bharti Thakrar, R2 SSE Co-ordinator & Durga Selvarajah R3 SSE Co-ordinator

Region 3

Easter and Saint Patrick's Day

Manor Park Sai Centre, celebrated Easter and St Patrick's Day at the Froud Centre, in a packed hall that included special guests and invitees on Saturday 15th March 2008.

The scene for the day's programme was beautifully set with Gregorian Chants in the true Christian Monastic tradition, followed by Inter-Faith prayers.

The altar was tastefully decorated to depict the meaning of Easter and St Patrick's Day. The picture of Jesus Christ adorned with thorny crown on the head, was placed in the centre of the pictures of all Faiths, which also includes Swami's picture. A red cloth, in the shape of a cross, was the backdrop of the altar, which represented the blood of Christ. The backdrop of the wall was strewn with green decorations to represent the colours of Ireland and St Patrick.

Manor Park, as always, sang their mix of Sanskrit and other language devotional songs. This time, however, the emphasis of the songs was on those from the Christian faith.

The main aspect of the programme was the beautifully produced PowerPoint presentation of 'The Stations of the Cross,' which were read by children, youth and elders coupled with appropriate sayings by Swami.

Lastly, the guest speaker was Brother Julian, a Franciscan brother and Director of 'Helping hands', a Christian Charity. He is a long time friend of Manor Park Sai Centre. Brother Julian spoke on the relevancy of the Stations of the Cross in our own lives. He talked about religious people putting a good religious man to death. He said this was because Jesus did good work of healing, helping the unclean and sinners sometimes on the Sabbath day (a sacred day of quiet to the Jews) thus angering them. Additionally, Brother Julian spoke about how Jesus rode on a donkey on Palm Sunday, to the Holy Temple and drove out moneychangers thus clearing the temple from the place of business it had become. Brother Julian then asked an appropriate question, whether we wanted life to go on as it was or should we initiate a new direction when it is for the good. This is exactly what Jesus did and paid a price for it. He also mentioned Swami's explanation of the cross, the crossing out of the Ego – the 'I'.

Brother Julian in conclusion gave an account of how St Patrick Day came into being. He said approximately 400 years ago St Patrick was born in the northwest of England and was a good religious person but was captured by Irish invaders and travelled to Ireland as a

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slave. He escaped to Wales and resettled in England. He had a call from God and went back to Ireland to preach. This, Brother Julian said was St Patrick stepping out of his comfort zone to help others. He founded a monastery and was appointed as a Bishop but the very Church he loved eventually disowned him. After 200 years, devotion to St Patrick grew and he is now a celebrated Saint. The programme ended with the serving of Hot Cross Buns, Tea and Coffee.

Brother Julian's visit has helped to promote ongoing links in the community, thus developing friendships. It is only after this forging of friendship that discussion can progress at the table of brotherhood.

'Milad Du Nabi'

It was with enthusiasm and the hope of gaining insight into the Prophet Muhammad, (peace be upon him), that Manor Park Sai Centre, celebrated 'Milad du Nabi' on Saturday 29th March 2008. This festival is marked to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

The theme for the day was beautifully set around a green altar the design of which consisted of a prayer mat, the holy Qur'an and a striking model of the Kabba placed centrally on the altar. This was offset by matching green material, which was arranged tastefully to complement a repeated Mosque silhouette along the side of the curtain backdrop, on the wall. Above, on the wall to the side, was Swami's saying, 'Be like the star which never wavers from the crescent but remains fixed in steady faith'. This was bounded on each side with stars and crescents.

The programme commenced with a Sufi meditation in praise of Allah that thus set a serene mood for the evening. The group devotional songs reflected the festival and many were Islamic in nature with four English, some Sanskrit and some multifaith songs also included.

Following this was a ten-minute DVD presentation, which succinctly conveyed the life of Prophet Muhammad. This short DVD clearly highlighted the main events of the Prophet Muhammad's life, how the prophecies revealed through him brought about the religion of Islam and it also explained the details of where he was born. It told us, too, about the Prophet Muhammad's experiences on Mount Hira while meditating and how the Angel Jibreel commanded him to recite thus revealing the Qur'an.

Brother Rafique Ahmed from the Minhaj-ul-Qur'an Mosque in East London, who has done much interfaith work, gave us a talk entitled,

'The Advent of the Prophet Muhammad.' This talk included descriptions of the Prophet Muhammad's upbringing, his humility, his love for his fellow man, his fairness and a number of stories, which clearly illustrated that his characteristics were deeply infused with human values. He explained that green is a prominent colour within Islam, as it symbolises the middle path that the Prophet Muhammad advocated and this is characterised by the fact that green is the middle colour in a rainbow. Additionally, Brother Rafique informed us that many modern day terms have their origin in Islam and Arabic. He surprised many members of the audience when he spoke about 'algorithm' and 'arsenal' being two such words. Ending his talk, Brother Rafique thanked Manor Park Sai Centre, for not only inviting him to come and give a talk, but also for organising such multifaith events, as he felt it promoted peace and understanding as well as bringing local communities together. He kindly then extended an invitation to us all to visit the Minhaj-ul-Qur'an Mosque.

As the celebration drew to an end, a melodious English song, which heralded the qualities of Prophet Muhammad, (pbuh), was played while a visually striking PowerPoint was displayed for all to see. The PowerPoint depicted Islamic symbology and also Swami. The programme ended with Vermicelli in milk, dates and soft drinks to conclude another festival, which helped to extend more links into the community.

(Both articles written by Yogesh Patel, Chair Manor Park Centre)

Sunthar Uthayanan, Chair Region 3

Region 4

Easwamma Day Celebration.

On the 4th May 2008, Region 4 celebrated Easwamma Day. It was hosted by Wolverhampton, and celebrated at the Darlaston Krishna Temple. The stage, altar, and foyer were beautifully decorated the night before to set the scene and create an atmosphere for the programme.

The Youth started the programme with powerful Vedic chanting which set vibrancy for the occasion. This was followed by the SSE children's rally. They marched from the back of the hall to the front and saluted Swami, each carrying a colourful banner. After the rally the youth continued with some very inspirational bhajans.

Pravina Patel the Regional SSE coordinator opened the programme by welcoming everyone to the Easwamma Day Celebrations. The first item was a drama called 'The Universal Mother' which was

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performed by the SSE children from Wolverhampton. The colourful costumes took us all back to Mount Kailash. The message that Ganesha conveyed in the play was that the mother is the creator of the universe and so we should not harm any living creature or being. It emphasised Swami's message of "Help Ever, Hurt Never"

This was followed by a speech by Bharathi Sanghani, an ex-Anantapur College student, who shared with us her personal experiences with Swami, and highlighted how Swami really loves and cares for his Bal Vikas children and Students. After that, the children from the Rugby Centre sang a song 'Children of Sai', with signs representing unity of all faiths. Then Ashok Jethwa demonstrated 5 different breathing techniques for yoga, and explained the health benefits.

During the two-hour lunch break, each Centre conducted workshops for both adults and children.

The workshops were on 'Yoga', 'Antakshree', a DVD: '108 Magical Moments' was shown, 'Art and Crafts', 'Badge Making', 'Decision Making' (Shipwreck), 'Fun and Quiz', 'Origami', 'Pictionary' and 'EHV games'.

After lunch the day continued with a play by Narborough Centre entitled, 'The Precious Gift of Being a Mother'. Based on an excerpt from Swami's discourse, it emphasised that parents must aspire to make their children good people and that the Lord places great trust on the mother to take care of his precious children. Coventry Centre then presented a quiz on 'Who can be a Sai Devotee' based on the TV programme theme 'Who wants to be a millionaire'. Some of the questions involved audience participation, which was enjoyable. Then some children from the Good Values Club in Leicester gave inspirational talks on Easwaramma.

The Birmingham Centre children presented a song 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' followed by Leicester Central Centre performing various short plays under the title 'Mother Reflections' which showed several people who were inspired by their mothers to do great things, and finished with a song, 'A drop in the Ocean'. Once again the costumes were bright and colourful. It was obvious that the teachers and children had put in a tremendous amount of time and effort to prepare their items. Finally, our Regional Chair, Ramesh Mistry gave the vote of thanks and conclusion. The Group Devotional Singing included a song in unison and Aarathi followed this. The service team ensured that everything ran smoothly like clockwork. They all conducted their duties and responsibilities

with enthusiasm, humility, and love. This certainly contributed to making the whole event a great success. In summary the messages conveyed by each centre, made Easwaramma Day Celebration, a very special, and inspirational event which everyone thoroughly enjoyed.

(Written by Deepak Patel, SSE Coordinator Wolverhampton Centre)

**Article from the
'Coventry Telegraph' published on
Monday March 3rd 2008:**

'For some, helping others is not just a conscientious pastime; it's part of their beliefs.

Eighteen year old Ritesh Patel is a follower of the Indian spiritual leader Sai Baba whose motto is that "service to man is service to God."

And Ritesh certainly lives by that motto. The teenager is of a voluntary project organised by the Sathya Sai Baba Centre, where by a group of helpers prepare and serve a vegetarian Indian meals to those in need. The project is run in conjunction with the Grub 'n' Gab, an organisation that aims to provide food, shelter, and friendship to the homeless and lonely. This takes place at Norton House, Hillfields every six weeks where Ritesh lends a helping hand. Ritesh is in old hand at the project, he has been giving up his time since he was 12. Initially going along with his mum. The A level student at Caludon Castle School said: "There's a whole team of us who prepare and serve food to the needy. We are strictly vegetarian so it's always a veggie curry, plus rice or bread and a pudding. My role could be anything from peeling and chopping vegetables to serving the tea, or doing the washing up after everyone has eaten." Usually 40 to 45 people turn up for the meal, which could be the only decent food they eat for days. Ritesh says he gets enormous satisfaction from his volunteer stints. "Being able to put a smile on someone's face and playing a part in making someone's day -it really makes you feel you are making a difference to people's lives," he said. "From this experience I have realised how lucky I am with the lifestyle I lead. I have learned to be more content with my life and I'm not so demanding on my parents. "It curbed my materialism; I don't care about the latest gaming console or mobile phone." Sai Baba followers believe that by helping others they are helping themselves to become better people. They are taught to treat others as they wish to be treated themselves, with respect and honour. Ritesh said: "I started by helping at home, instead of mum asking me

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to do the chores I'd offer to do them myself. "At Christmas time we also make up Christmas boxes for the destitute filled with food. Officers from social Services come and collect them and allocate them to families in need of them."

Ramesh Mistry, Chair Region 4

Youth Article for Discussion

As mentioned in last month's 'Love and Light' the following piece submitted by Neil Bisaraya, the Region 5 Youth Co-ordinator, is the first in a series of articles by Youth on Swami's teachings and how they apply to our world. If you are a Youth and passionate about a topic and want to share your thoughts with others please send your thoughtful and provocative articles to: admin@saiyouth.org.uk

'Our Change is Climate Change: Educare, the power of conscience and the key to transforming ourselves and the world around us.'

As the Sri Sathya Sai World Education Conference is fast approaching, I have been pondering what Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values means to me and how it can specifically address the greatest threat to humanity: the gathering clouds of the effects of climate change and increasing alienation of society. Educare, the process of eliciting the five human values of Love (*Sathya*), Right Conduct (*Dharma*), Love (*Prema*), Peace (*Shanti*) and Non-violence (*Ahimsa*) is something which is much more than a programme to help develop character through morality, thereby bringing about a more loving society. The biggest issue facing humanity is the need for transformation of the mind. There is no point in trying to help 'fix' the problems of the world such as climate change, war, injustice and poverty without first transforming the mind and its egotistic desires which have warped man's outlook with anger and hatred and kept him bound to the physical body to experience the results of his actions. Educare is the path that leads to a complete transformation of the mind and a shift from identification with form to that of consciousness. It is the most beautiful path to Self-Realisation that the Lord Himself, out of His infinite mercy has shared with us. If we really listen carefully and put into practise diligently this Veda for the époque of the Sai Yuga, we will experience the truth of ourselves as Divine Love.

For eons, mankind has worked his way up the evolutionary ladder from mineral to vegetable to animal and then to the human level. However, at the human level, we have become the slaves of our body and mind, and

our true reality – pure consciousness – has remained hidden beneath the moss of impulses and tendencies and the threads of the three gunas, *Thamas*, *Rajas* and *Satwa*. Humans have lived bound to karma, reaping the fruits of their labour, good or bad, ensnared in the cocoon of the body that we have spun around ourselves in order to experience these fruits. Educare is the path that releases us from karma; that helps the butterfly that we are to break the bonds of body consciousness. It completely transforms the mind and through this transformation, the world itself gets transformed. For the world, the five elements of space, air, fire, water and earth are nothing other than a manifestation of mind. Educare marks the next leap in evolution through which the divinity that we are recognises itself as the consciousness of all that is. It is the revelation of the truth of the one light reflecting through the prism of the mind into the manifest colours of creation.

How will the butterfly of the spirit fly free from the cocoon of the body? Through practising the five human values in our thought, word and deed, and only taking in good impressions through our five senses, we identify more and more with our conscience. As our conscience gets cleansed of the impurities of the mind that cover it, it reflects more clearly the pure light of the Atma, the heart of whom we are. As our conscience is cleansed of all impurities, like a mirror being cleansed of all dust, our true reality as the light of *Sath-chit-ananda* (being, awareness, bliss) is revealed and this is reflected in the mirror of nature. We see God as both our soul and as our surroundings. Our conscience has expanded to become one with the cosmic pure consciousness that is simultaneously above us, below us, and all around us. Swami and we become One.

Sai Baba has told us that we become free from the bonds of Karma when we offer every act of ours to God, then the fruits are not borne by us. When we truly realise that our conscience is the voice of Swami within us, then one can see how offering every thought, word and deed to Him in the form of our conscience frees us from the bondage of Karma. In other words, the dedication of our deeds to God is really listening to our conscience and following our inner directions rather than the whims of the mind and senses.

So what does the practise of Educare mean for the world and more specifically, for the issue of global warming? Swami has said to a devotee regarding the condition of His

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physical body that He has taken on the negativity of the world because it has reached breaking point. Time and time again in His Divine Discourses, He has said that it is only Divinity that is protecting the world. When the devotee asked what we, as His devotees, can do to Help our Beloved Bhagawan, Swami replied that we must do all we can to remove the negativity from within us. It is through Educare that we can achieve this purification. In the context of global warming, if we pollute our body, heart and mind with impure thoughts, words and deeds we are actually manifesting this pollution in creation. How? Our senses become impure and this reflects in the 5 elements themselves becoming impure and unbalanced. As Swami says, creation is a reaction, reflection and resound of our own inner thoughts and feelings. Angry, jealous, lustful, greedy thoughts and feelings in our heart and mind are manifested in creation as a polluted environment and fragmented society.

When our thoughts, words and deeds are not in harmony, the balance of the five elements is upset. Our five senses are extremely powerful and have an intimate relationship with the five elements. In other words, when our mind is restless with the inner enemies of anger, greed jealousy, delusion, lust, pride and hatred, this restlessness is reflected in creation in the tempests of nature and violence of society that we perceive. Swami has said that war exists in our mind. How? It is the restless of the mind that reflects as the experience of the war. Swami has said that there is not one iota of evil anywhere in creation. It is only our vision that needs to be corrected to reveal the truth that all is God and all is Bliss.

Thus if we feed our five senses, body, mind and heart with pure and sacred thoughts, feelings, words and deeds, we will manifest this in a vision of a pure and sacred world. Love, peace and joy will be reflected everywhere.

So how do we improve the situation? As Swami always says, inner transformation is the key to outer transformation. We must purify ourselves to purify the environment and heal the world. One leads to the other. Creation is a reflection of the purity or otherwise of man. In order to transform the negativity in the world – the violence that we see on our streets, we must first realise that this merely a reflection of the anger and fear within us. Rather than focusing on the negative, we simply focus and replace it with positive thoughts and feelings. As is the

thought, so is the feeling. As we feel, so we become.

Thus when we remember to constantly refer to our conscience and live in accordance with the five human values in our thought, word and deed, our heart becomes purified and this cleansing is reflected in the environment automatically becoming purified. God is not any particular form; God is manifest as the creation all around us. We need to act with the understanding that the man in front of us is God; the tree in front of us is God as is the river and as are the birds. Most important of all is the need to love ourselves - our real Self, which is our conscience, which is divine. When we love and recognise the God that we are, then we are able to love and respect the same God in each other.

We need to also apply Swami's 'Ceiling on Desires Programme' to transform ourselves and through this, transform our environment. We need to re-educate ourselves on what 'Reduce, Recycle and Reuse' means in the context of Swami's teachings. We must 'Reduce' our desires through Swami's Ceiling on Desires programme. This means not wasting time, money, energy and food but also reducing our negative thoughts and feelings of anger, fear and jealousy. Ultimately it is reducing our body attachment. We achieve this by 'Recycling' the negative in exchange for the positive. Thus we should recycle with good thoughts, good feelings, good sights, good deeds and good behaviour through all the five senses - this is the way to realise the Divine through recycling the negative. On a physical level, by breathing deeply from our heart rather than from our mind, when we encounter negative thoughts such as anger, we are able to recycle and transform anger into love.

Finally 'Reusing' is the ability to find contentment in the basic necessities of life: friendship with God, devotion to God and the constant love of God. This exchange of love between God and us is the happiness that our desires really seek. It is the realisation of the Oneness of all life the constant exchange and flow of love that guides both the automatic pumping of our heart and the birth of galaxies.

If we therefore on an individual level WATCH our Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character and Heart to see where negative feelings arise and then immediately ask Swami as our conscience to send His love to recycle and transform that energy into positive unconditional love for ourselves and Him, then we can begin to reduce our toxic emissions. On a community level, if a Sai

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Centre or Group identifies an area of pollution/litter/deprivation in their local neighbourhood and then organises a group of devotees to help clear it up, then this would be the physical aspect of healing the area. But more importantly is the manner in which the task is performed. The task needs to be done whilst constantly singing and remembering the glory of God. Thus this brings about a spiritual healing of the person and the environment. This is what Swami did when He was a child and He went around the villages with His friends singing Bhajans and driving away the diseases. It is exactly what *Nagaarsankirtan* (singing whilst following the bounds of an area) does.

When we reduce our desires by not wasting time, money, energy and food - this leads to a physical saving to people in developing countries because we are not exploiting the world's resources for our own consumer satisfaction. We can then rededicate the savings made to sacred activities, such as humanitarian work. Savings could be used to help fund Educare projects to help poor, disadvantaged families, mentally ill and sick in our local communities as well as educating young people move away from crime towards a more loving life.

We need to positively reduce our own toxic thoughts and feelings. This will lead to a purification of our hearts to reveal God's love. This Divine love can then finally flow unhindered into the world to bring about a transformation of the environment and the earth.

Ultimately, what this will lead to is a manifestation of the human values across all of creation. Even inanimate objects have feelings as demonstrated when the saris wept when they were rejected by Swami. The inherent Divinity of all the five elements is revealed when our own senses are regulated by the five human values and the mind is transformed from reflecting our inner restlessness to the reflecting the one light of Divine Love within all our hearts.

At the present moment, the increasingly alarming effects of climate change, such as devastating cyclones, is mirrored by the increasing level of violence that we perceive in society. Man is a limb of society. Society is a limb of nature. Nature is a limb in the body of God. In other words, the solution to climate change is intrinsically tied to the solution to society's feelings of alienation and the consequential lack of love that is manifested in the increasing violence that we see around us.

Thus, when we work individually and collectively to remove the negativity within our own nature through the practise of the human values in harmony of our thought, word and deed, sense control and ceiling on desires, we will not only see a transformation in the effects of climate change but also in society. As we become more unconditionally loving, this is reflected, reacted and resounded in love being experienced all around us.

With our own two hands we can selflessly serve society by transforming our negativity into positivity through unconditional love for ourselves, for each other and for the environment. When we love God with all our heart by loving and serving all, helping ever and hurting never, then we can bring about Global Harmony on an individual, societal and environmental level. Through the sacrifice of selflessly serving each other and by adhering to the truth of our conscience, we realise the Divinity at the heart of creation - which is our own heart - and we can heal ourselves and through this, the world. Thus we can bring about the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God and the creation of heaven on earth becomes a reality.

As Swami says, the proper study of mankind is man. When the mind is healed, so is the world.

Sathya Sai Bookshop

The bookshop has a regularly updated website.

Please visit it at:

www.srisathysaibookcentre.org.uk

DVDs are often being compiled and released along with new interesting books.

The SSSSO UK Website

is to be found on:

www.srisathyasai.org.uk

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BISSE

British Institute of Sathya Sai Education

Information on the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme can be found on:

www.sathysaiehv.org.uk

Love and Light SSSSO UK
 Significant Diary Dates 2008 please ask
 your Centre or Regional Chair for details

"...with meat the body will get proteins, but the mental proteins will not be there. If you are keen on the spiritual life, eating meat is not worthwhile; but if you are keen on the worldly life, it is alright. There is another spiritual reason. When you kill an animal you give him suffering, pain, harm. God is in every creature, so how can you give such pain? Sometimes when someone beats a dog he cries, he feels so much pain. How much more pain then in killing. Animals did not come for the purpose of supplying food to human beings. They came to work out their own life in the world. When a human being is dead, the foxes and other animals may eat, but we have not come to provide food for those that eat the human body; we have not come for that purpose. Similarly, man eats the animal, but the animal has not come to provide man with food."
Sathya Sai Baba

"It is the practice of noble teachings that lends joy to mankind. It is not hearing nor even reflecting but only the practicing which contributes to the joy of man. The ancient adage is, 'Do at least one instead of saying a hundred'. This is the philosophy that everyone should learn today. The tongue should utter the Divine name. The ear should rejoice in hearing the Divine, the eyes should enjoy the Divine form, the heart should be filled with the love for the Lord. Strive sincerely to harvest this Divine joy"
Sathya Sai Baba

"For spiritual discipline one must cultivate the quality of always being joyful, with a smile on the face. This contributes to contentment and gives one progress on the path with a minimum of inner discord."
Sathya Sai Baba

Month	Date	Event
May	23 rd - 26 th	SSLTP Outward Bound weekend in Hampshire
May	31 st	UKCC Quarterly Meeting
June	7 th	NWC Meetings
July	5 th or 6 th	(SSE) Regional Family Values Days
July	12 th	Additional UKCC meeting
August	22 nd - 24 th	National Retreat Stourbridge
August	30 th	National SSE Teachers' Day
August	31 st	UKCC Quarterly Meeting
September	6 th	NWC Meetings
September	27 th	Spiritual Organisations Conference on Human Values
October	11 th - 12 th	UKCC Vision Weekend
October	18 th	National Spiritual Day
November	19 th	Ladies' Day
November	23 rd	Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Birthday
December	6 th	UKCC Quarterly Meeting
December	13 th	NWC Meetings