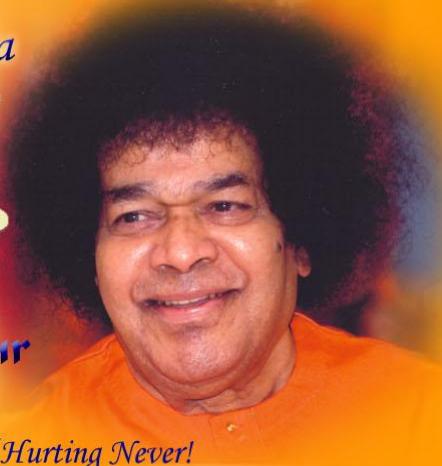


*Aum Sri Sai Ram*

*Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

# Chicago Sai WATCH



**Dear Swami, please help us to watch and control our Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character and Heart**

*So that we realize our inherent Divinity by Loving All, Serving All, Helping Ever, and Hurting Never!*

**Sathya Sai Baba Center of Metropolitan Chicago**

**April 2010**

**Upcoming Events!**

**Easter Celebrations:**

**April 4th, Sunday 10.30 AM – 1.00 PM**  
Oak Brook Park District  
1450 Forest Gate Rd., Oak Brook, IL

**Easwaramma and Mothers day Celebrations:**

**May 9th, Sunday 10.30 AM – 1.00 PM**  
Longfellow Center  
640 S Ridgeland Av., Oak Park, IL



**Love All, Serve All**

Date	Calendar of Events
04/03 – Saturday	07:00 pm – 10:00 pm: Dinner Service Project at R.E.S.T Men’s Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.) 08:00 pm – 10:00 pm: Dinner Service Project at R.E.S.T Women’s Shelter (on Wilson Ave.) 10:00 am – 02:00 pm: Bread Truck Project
04/04 – Sunday	NO PROGRAM AT LONGFELLOW CENTER
04/10 – Saturday	06:00 am – 08:00 am: Breakfast Service at R.E.S.T Men’s Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.) 06:00 am – 08:00 am: Breakfast Service at Jesus People USA Men’s Shelter (on Kenmore Ave.)
04/11 – Sunday	09:30 am – 01:00 pm: Sunday Center Program 10:00 am – 11:00 am: Service at the Woodbine Nursing Home
04/17 – Saturday	07:00 pm – 10:00 pm: Dinner Service Project at R.E.S.T Men’s Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.) 07:15 pm – 10:00 pm: Dinner Service Project at Jesus People USA Men’s Shelter (on Kenmore Ave.)
04/18 – Sunday	09:30 am – 01:00 pm: Sunday Center Program
04/24 – Saturday	06:00 am – 08:00 am: Breakfast Service at R.E.S.T Men’s Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.)
04/25 – Sunday	09:30 am – 12:30 pm: Sunday Center Program
<b>Sunday Center Schedule:</b>	09:00 am – 09:30 am: Center Setup 09:30 am – 10:25 am: Study Circle 10:00 am – 11:30 am Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) classes for children 10:30 am – 11:30 am: Devotional Singing
<b>Ongoing service projects on Sundays:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grocery collection for the needy families (Delivered at the end of every month)</li> <li>• Sandwich preparation and delivery for the residents of R.E.S.T Men’s Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.)</li> </ul>



## Consider yourself part of Divinity



**Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat. Of all the rituals, adherence to truth is the greatest penance. The nectarous feeling in this country is the feeling of love toward one's mother.**

**Character is valued far higher than the very life itself.**

**People have forgotten the basic principles of this great culture and are imitating Western culture. Alas!**

**The Bharatiyas are not aware of the greatness of their cultural heritage Just as a mighty elephant is not aware of its own strength.**

(Telugu poem)

### **Embodiments of Love!**

*Bharatiyas* (Indians) are very rich people. Bharat is a rich country. It is a great land of *punya* (merit), *thyaga* (sacrifice), and *karma* (action). Unfortunately, today, the people of Bharat do not realise the greatness of their country. Just as the elephant does not realize its innate strength, *Bharatiyas* do not recognize their inner strength. An elephant can knock down a man and throw him three yards away with swish of its tail. However, a *mahout* with his goad is able to keep the elephant in complete control. Since the elephant is unable to realise its own strength, it submits to the commands of the *mahout*. Similarly, *Bharatiyas* today misled by their vesture of the body are unable to realise their innate strength.

**The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish sooner or later,**

**But the indweller has neither birth nor death.**

**The indweller has no attachment whatsoever and is the eternal witness.**

(Telugu poem)

There is tremendous divine power in the physical body of a human being. The power of Truth that is present in this physical body can bind the indescribable and incomprehensible Divinity. None can assess this power of Truth. It is *Sathyasya Sathyam* (Truth of truths), which no one can visualise by the mind. It can only be experienced, not described. Truth is God, verily. That is why it is said *Sathyam jnanam anantham Brahma* (Brahman is the embodiment of truth, wisdom and eternity).

**Creation emerges from truth and merges into truth, Is there a place in the cosmos where truth does not exist?**

**Visualise this pure and unsullied truth.**

(Telugu poem)

Wherever you look in this universe, only Truth manifests. That there is something called *mithya* (illusion) is itself an illusion! However, man relies on the unreal body and considers it as real. First and foremost, man has to realise this Truth. He has to pray to Truth. He has to uphold Truth. It is said, *Sathyannasti paro dharma* (There is no *dharma* greater than adherence to truth). De-void of Truth, there is no *dharma* at all! It is only on the foundation of Truth that the mansion of *dharma* rests.

### **Embodiments of Love!**

You have to make efforts to realise this Truth. Unable to control our senses, unable to give up body attachment, we are neglecting the Eternal Truth. This is the effect of our so-called secular education. What is the nature of Truth? It is *nirgunam*, *niranjanam*, *sanathanam*, *niketanam*, *nitya*, *shuddha*, *buddha*, *mukta*, and *nirmala swarupinam* (God is attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, free, and embodiment of sacredness) Forgetting such an indwelling Truth, we are following the senses of action, senses of perception and the mind, which are unreal. Do you know the nature of mind? It runs after worldly objects, indiscriminately. It is like a fly. One moment, it rests on a fragrant flower. The next moment it sits on the garbage being carried in a cart. How can you trust such a fickle mind? "Mind is like a mad monkey, body is like a water bubble." Unfortunately,

today, we are leading our lives reposing our faith in such a body and mind. The day you give up attachment to the body, forget the senses and contemplate on the *Atma Tattwa* (Atmic Principle), you will yourself become an embodiment of the Divine Self. You are not merely a human being; you are God, verily! Though you are God yourself, you are unfortunately deluded to consider yourself a human being. You have donned the garb of a human being for being in this world. This human form is a garb. As long as you are in this world, you will wear that garb. The moment you return to the dressing room, you will leave that dress. You are enacting a role, wearing this dress. Once you leave this dress, you are your normal self again. Humanness is sacred and divine. But man today is wasting such a sacred and divine nature by consigning to earth such a sacred and divine humanness. This is utter folly. Instead, one has to sanctify one's humanness. Your education, your intelligence, your physical strength and power—all these are short-lived. You have to strive to realise the eternal *Atma Tattwa* instead. You are not the body. Suppose somebody comes and enquires, "Who are you?" You reply, "I am so and so." Thus, you introduce yourself. Taking into account your physical body, your occupation, the place where you live, etc., you say, "I am Ramadas." This is a name given to you by your parents. Whenever someone asks, "Who is Ramadas?", you reply "I". The name "Ramadas" pertains to your body. "I" is your real name. That "I" is real and eternal. Who is Ramadas? He is the servant of Rama, the son of King Dasaratha. The name Dasaratha in this context does not pertain to the King of Ayodhya. Ayodhya means the place where no armed foe can enter. The human body with the ten senses (five senses of action and five senses of perception) represents Dasaratha. King Dasaratha had three wives: Kausalya, Sumitra, and Kaikeyi. These three queens represent the three *gunas*: *sathwa* (pure, calm, serene), *rajas* (passion, activity, restlessness), and *thamas* (dullness, ignorance, inertia). Kausalya is an embodiment of *sathwaguna*. Kaikeyi represents *rajoguna*, and Sumitra, *thamoguna*. One has to recognise the inner meaning of these terms in relation to one's own body/mind complex. The great sages and seers realised this Truth. They were not deluded like the present-day human beings. They realised Truth, lived for Truth and propagated Truth. Forbearance is the natural quality of *Bharatiyas* (Indians). In fact, the one who is devoid of this quality is not a human being at all! The mother has been given the first and foremost place in Indian culture. The *Vedas* declared, *Matrudevo bhava*, *pitrudevo bhava* (mother is God, father is God). You are all familiar with the *Suprabhata sloka* (verse) sung to Rama, "Kausalya Supraja Rama (Oh! Rama! Son of Kausalya! It is the time of dawn! Get up and perform Your morning oblations)." Even in this *Suprabhata* verse, Rama is referred to as the son of Kausalya. Her name comes first, since mother is verily the God for a human being. When Rama prostrated at the feet of his mother Kausalya before accompanying sage Viswamitra to the forest to protect the *yajna* to be performed by him, she blessed Him, "Son! May the supreme Lord who protected Prahlada, may the Dweller of Vaikuntha who took the child Dhruva into His fold, may the one extolled by the *Amaras* (immortal Gods), may the Lord who is the refuge for the forlorn—may all these confer victory on You!" It is only on account of the blessings of His mother that Rama could vanquish the demons and protect the *yajna* performed by sage Viswamitra. Again it was the mother's words of blessing that was at the back of His success in the *swayamvara* (festival for the choice of a bridegroom) in King Janaka's court, where He broke the divine bow of Lord Siva. King Janaka, who was a *karma yogi* (one who performs all actions as offerings to the divine, with no attachment or desire for the fruit thereof) and a *maha jnani* (a realised soul) himself, held Rama's feet in full view of the court and said, "Son! There is none greater than You. This is Sita, my daughter. I wish to give her in marriage to you. Please accept her." But, Rama politely declined his request, saying that he could



## Consider yourself part of Divinity



not do so without the permission of His parents. In contrast, today's youth make a big show of a marriage proposal. They arrange to print expensive invitation cards with costly designs and colours and distribute to all. That was not the way of Rama. He thought, "We are four brothers born at the same time. Hence, whether it is *upanayana* (thread ceremony) or *vivaha* (marriage), it should be for all of us together." Till then, Rama did not even look at Sita. Today's youth are different. The moment an engagement function between a boy and a girl is over, they go to a cinema together. This is not good. Sita did not come out into the open till the *muhurtham* (auspicious moment) when the marriage was near. Rama also did not look at her till that time. It is only after His parents came to Mithila and Viswamitra informed them of King Janaka's proposal to give his daughter Sita in marriage to Him that Rama consented to marry her. Even then, He did not look at Sita till the marriage ceremony was over. The couples were to exchange garlands as part of the wedding ceremony. Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Satrughna were standing in a line, ready to garland their brides. Rama was the eldest among the brothers. Hence, His bride Sita was to garland Him first. Later, the other brides were to put garlands around their respective bridegrooms. Sita stood in front of Rama holding a garland. But, Rama did not look at her, since the marriage ceremony was not yet complete. Till then, she was a stranger to Him. It is a great sin to look at a "Parasthree", a woman who has not yet become His wife—that was Rama's view and ideal. Poor Sita! She waited for long. But, Rama did not bow His head to enable Sita to garland Him. Lakshmana then thought of a plan by which Sita could garland Rama. Suddenly, he fell at the feet of Rama and Rama bent down to lift him up. Exactly at that moment, Sita put the garland round the neck of Rama! Look! How sacred and noble were the intentions of people of those times! How pure and truthful were their hearts! Thus, people gave a lot of importance to character during the *Treta Yuga* and *Dwapara Yuga*. That is why those *yugas* (eras; there is a cycle of 4 of them) became very famous. You should also respect and worship elders like Rama. You must obey the commands of the elders. It is only when you pay heed to their words and follow them diligently that you will be able to experience peace in life. In accordance with the promise given by King Dasaratha to his wife Kaikeyi, Rama had to spend fourteen years in exile in the forest. Though Kaikeyi was a great queen, she listened to the words of her servant, Manthara, and sent Rama to the forest due to her promptings. There is a lesson to be learnt in this context: we should give weight to the words of the master and not of the servant. Since Kaikeyi succumbed to the advice of her servant, she underwent great suffering and sorrow. During the journey to the forest, Sita also followed Rama. She firmly informed her decision to Rama, "Oh! Lord! The husband is God to a wife. Wherever he is, she should also be there." Lakshmana also accompanied Rama to the forest, saying, "Dear elder brother! I cannot live for a moment without you." Lakshmana and Satrughna were born to Sumitra. True to her name, Sumitra was a woman of noble qualities. She dedicated both her sons to Rama's *seva* (service). As per her wish, Lakshmana was serving Rama and Satrughna was serving Bharata. Lakshmana's qualities were highly noble. Sita, Rama, and Lakshmana encountered several difficulties during their exile in the forest. All this is a well known. Once, while Rama and Lakshmana were walking in the forest, suddenly Lakshmana told Rama in a dejected mood, "Dear elder brother! Why this exile in the forest for us! It is very difficult for us to protect Sita from the demons in this forest. Why should we undergo so many ordeals here? Why should Mother Sita, who was never exposed to the sun and rain so far, encounter so many difficulties in this forest? Come! Let us go back to Ayodhya and lead a comfortable life."

Rama then realised that, what Lakshmana was talking was due to the effect of *sthala* (place). He took the hand of Lakshmana into His smilingly and brought him out of that place by walking some distance. Then He asked Lakshmana, "Lakshmana! Now you tell Me. Shall we go back to Ayodhya?" Lakshmana then realised his mistake and felt sorry. He pleaded with Rama, "Dear brother! We need not go back to Ayodhya now. We have to live here in the forest for fourteen years as per the command of our father. I never went against Your wishes nor disobeyed Your command. I do not know why I spoke like that then. I am just not able to understand why my mind had changed like that." Rama explained, "Lakshmana! I know this is not your nature. This is the effect of the place through which we passed just now. Several demons are moving about in this place. Since you entered a place inhabited by the demons, the demonic qualities entered into you." So saying, Rama helped him regain his poise. Hence, we have to take into consideration the time and place as also the *sthala prabhava* (effect of the place) and conduct ourselves accordingly. No text had ever taught so much about good character, as the *Ramayana* did. Unfortunately, today, several people are not in a position to realise the greatness of the *Ramayana*. *Ramayana* is verily the heart of *Bharatiyas* (Indians). Not to realise this truth and act accordingly is the reason for all the difficulties faced by *Bharatiyas* today. Wherever you reside, you cannot escape from difficulties and suffering. Nevertheless, one has to boldly face them reposing one's faith in God.

**God is your sole refuge wherever you may be, In a forest, in the sky, in a city or a village, On top of a mountain or middle of deep sea.**

(Telugu poem)

Only those who are able to realise the nature of Divinity can understand this truth. Today, all the youth have to cultivate good qualities. You are all the children of God! Lord Krishna declared in the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Mamaivamsho Jivaloke Jivabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal *Atma* in all beings is a part of My Being). Hence, we have to emulate the qualities of God and lead our lives accordingly. It is only when you consider yourself as the *amsa* (part) of Divinity that you will become good citizens. On the other hand, if you take pride on yourself as I am the son of so and so, I am the brother of so and so, and I am the brother-in-law of so and so, etc., you will remain as such. You have to realise the truth that you are the *amsa* of God, verily. Then only will you be able to understand *Atma Tattwa* (Atmic Principle).

**Embodiments of Love!**

You are all good children! You are all golden children! But the environment in which you live is spoiling you to a certain extent. There is also the factor of the food you eat. If the friends with whom you associate yourself are good, they will speak good words with you. Otherwise, they will talk bad things and create bad thoughts in your mind. "Tell me your company, and I shall tell you what you are." Hence, you should associate yourself with good friends.

**Satsangatwe nissangatwam,**

**Nissangatwe nirmohatwam,**

**Nirmohatwe nischalatattwam,**

**Nischalatattwe jivanmukti.**

(Sanskrit verse)

**Good company leads to detachment;**

**Detachment makes one free from delusion;**

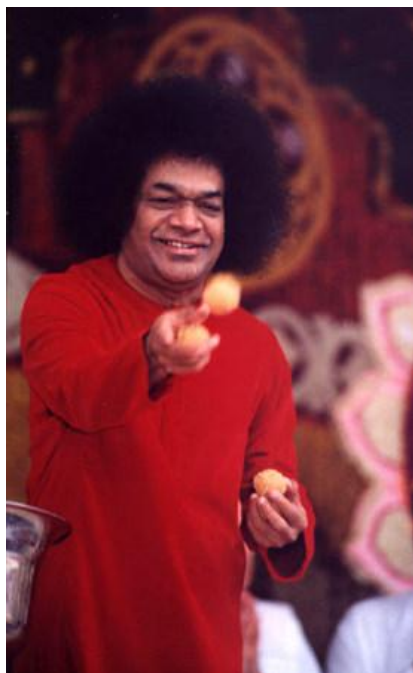
**Freedom from delusion leads to steadiness of mind;**

**Steadiness of mind confers liberation.**

You should not make your life a "nuisance", listening to the nuisance" words of others. Join good company and get a good name. "Be good, do good, see good." Then only will you be able to realise Divinity.



## Why Not Me



One day, Mrs. Murphet was in the interview room with Bhagavan and there was an elderly woman, a senior devotee, with her daughter. It so happened that this daughter was suffering from a disease called leukoderma, which triggers the skin to lose pigmentation and one has white patches all over the body. The mother was in deep agony and was crying out to Swami to cure her. She started narrating how difficult it was for her to even attend school because her friends would tease her, and in the future, this disease will only prove too costly for her.

***Bhagavan listened to all her pleas and then as Mrs. Murphet says, Swami looked deep into her eyes and said, "You want me to cure your daughter? Yes, I can. But remember, she is going through this suffering on account of her past karmas. If not now, she will have to go through this in some future birth. But now, I am with her. I will take care of her. So, it is for you to decide if you still want Me to cure her, if you insist, I will."***

There was total silence, and we can imagine what a tough decision it was for the mother to make. After a few seconds, the mother cried out, "Your grace and love is more important than anything. Let my daughter go through this suffering and wash away her *karmas!*"

The moment Swami heard this statement, He was overjoyed. He was ecstatic because the mother had allowed her wisdom to overpower her emotions.

Needless to say, the girl grew up to be a very happy woman with a good family basking under the grace and the love of the Lord. Therefore at this stage, people learn to accept difficulties that come their way and say "why not me".

## Devotional Activities in Chicago and Suburbs

Activity	Time	Venue	Contact
Every Monday – Bhajans	07:00 pm to 08:00 pm	Aurora (Shirdi Mandir)	630-854-2004
Every Wednesday – Bhajans	07:30 pm to 08:30 pm	Hoffman Estates	847-519-1631
Every Thursday – Bhajans	08:00 pm to 09:00 pm	Aurora	630-761-2968
Every Friday – Bhajans	08:00 pm to 09:00 pm	Oak Brook	630-655-1718
1st Thursday of the Month – Bhajans	07:30 pm to 08:30 pm	Hoffman Estates	847-695-7110
1st Saturday of the Month – Bhajans	03:30 pm to 04:30 pm	Glenview	847-729-2779 / 773-510-5936
Saturday, April 17 – Padhuka Puja	02:30 pm to 04:00 pm	Bolingbrook	630-819-9081
Friday, April 23 Bhajans	07:30 pm to 08:30 pm	Aurora	630-819-9081
Saturday, April 28 – 85 Bhajans	02:00 pm to 07:00 pm		630-340-0943

### For more information, please contact any of the Center Officers

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