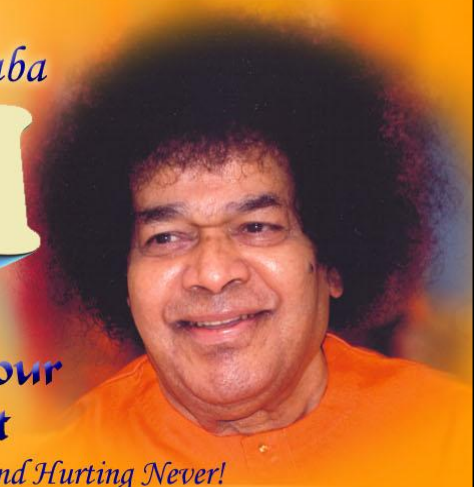


Aum Sri Sai Ram

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 Chicago Metro

February 2011

Upcoming Events!

Shivarathri Celebrations:
March 2nd, Wednesday 07.30 PM – 10.30 PM
Ramada Inn, 780 North Av.,
Glendale Heights, IL



Love All, Serve All

Date

Calendar of Events

02/05 – 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.)
02/06 – Sunday	09:30 am – 11:30 am: Sunday Center Program 11:30 am – 12:15 pm: Shiva Stotrams Practice Session
02/12 – 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.)
02/13 – Sunday	09:30 am – 11:30 am: Sunday Center Program 11:30 am – 12:30 pm: Shiva Stotrams Practice Session 10:00 am – 11:00 am: Service at the Woodbine Nursing Home
02/19 – Saturday	07:00 pm – 10:00 pm: Dinner Service Project at R.E.S.T Men's Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.) 07:00 pm – 10:00 pm: Dinner Service Project at Jesus People USA Men's Shelter (on Kenmore Ave.)
02/20 – Sunday	09:30 am – 11:30 am: Sunday Center Program 11:30 am – 12:30 pm: Selection Process of Center Office Bearers for 2011
02/26 – Saturday	06:00 am – 08:00 am: Breakfast Service at R.E.S.T Men's Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.)
02/27 – Sunday	09:30 am – 11:30 am: Sunday Center Program 11:30 am – 12:30 pm: Shiva Stotrams Practice Session

Sunday Center Schedule:

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

Ongoing service projects on Sundays:

- Grocery collection for the needy families (Delivered at the end of every month)
- Sandwich preparation and delivery for the residents of R.E.S.T Men's Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.)



“If you lack pure mind and good character, how do you expect Sai, the bestower of peace, love, happiness and prosperity, to appreciate you? How do you expect Prema Sai to treat you as His own?”

Human life is one of compassion, time is sacred; the heart is pure; and the mind is nectarous. Having been blessed with such a sacred human birth, what is man supposed to do? What is the foundation on which the mansion of life is to be built? Every man aspires for peace and happiness. How can one lead a peaceful life? It is possible only when he puts human values into practice. Human values need not be acquired from outside, they are latent in every man. If such values are forgotten how can man progress in life? In the first instance, man should enquire into the purpose of his birth. Human life is based on *Samata* (equality), *Samaikyata* (unity), *Saubhratrutvam* (fraternity) and *Saujanyam* (nobility). They constitute the very foundation of the mansion of life. Life will be meaningless even if one of them is absent. Everyone must cultivate and safeguard these four virtues. First of all, man should recognize the meaning of humanness. Truth fosters *Neeti* (morality); Righteousness confers *Khyati* (reputation); *Thyaga* (sacrifice) is the *Jyoti* (light) of life; *Manava Jathi* (human race) is the combination of these three — *Neeti*, *Khyati* and *Jyoti*. But man today is neglecting the principles of truth, righteousness and sacrifice. He has to adhere to these principles not for the sake of society but for his own redemption. If you expect to be respected by all, you have to develop self-respect, which is the basis of human life. One who lacks self-respect cannot command respect from others. First and foremost, man should respect others and share his love with others wholeheartedly. This is the primary duty of man. Man is not merely a *Vyashti Jeevi* (individual), he is a *Samashti Jeevi* (part and parcel of society). *Vyashti* relates to *Jeevudu* (individual), *Samashti* relates to *Devudu* (God). Man has to travel from the level of individual to the level of society. What is the path prescribed for this? Firstly, man has to recognize the common principle of *Jeevana Jyoti* (light of life) that is present in all. The principle of *Samatvam* (equality) can be experienced and practiced only when man understands the principle of *Ekatvam* (unity). The service activities that we undertake are meant to experience unity in society. It is a great mistake if you think that you are serving others. In fact, you should not consider anybody as ‘other’, for all are the embodiments of divinity. But man is not making efforts to realize this truth. Hence, he is subjected to difficulties. Once man realizes that God is all-pervasive, he will be free from suffering. In order to get rid of suffering, man has to practice the principle of unity in society. Once he understands the principle of unity, he can attain the Cosmic principle. Every individual is endowed with a physical body. Nature is like a mirror. What you see in this mirror is only your reflection and nothing else. Today, man is leading a life of selfishness and self interest. Selfishness is rampant in society. *Dehaabhimanam* (body attachment) is on the rise and *Dashaabhimanam* (love for one’s motherland) is on the decline. Even spiritual aspirants and noble souls with pure hearts are unable to give up body attachment. So long as there is *Dehaabhimanam*, man cannot develop *Daivaabhimanam* (love for God).

“The body which is made up of five elements is weak and is bound to disintegrate. Though hundred years of life-span is prescribed, one cannot take it for granted. One may leave his mortal coil at any time, be it in childhood, youth or old age. Death is certain. Hence, before the body perishes, man should make efforts to know his true nature.”

Body is given to you to know your true Self. It is foolish to waste your time and energy in worldly pursuits. If you know your true Self, you would have known everything else.

Embodiments of Love!

All that you see in the external world, from microcosm to macrocosm, is present in you. The mountains, oceans, cities, villages, etc., are present in your heart. All beings are in you. You are the basis of everything. Such being the case, what is it that you want to see in the external world? How foolish it is on your part to get carried away by the reflection outside, ignoring the reality within! Know the human values in the first instance. The first among them is Truth. It is changeless and beyond time and space. There is nothing like American Truth, Russian Truth, Indian Truth or Pakistani Truth. Truth is one and the same for all countries at all times. You are the embodiment of Truth. Truth is God. So, make efforts to understand this Truth. *Sathyam Bruyaath*, *Priyam Bruyaath*, *Na Bruyaath Sathyamapriyam* (speak the Truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth). Having forgotten such eternal principle of Truth, man is in search of ephemeral things. Adherence to Truth is *Neeti* which is nothing but proper conduct. *Sathyannasti Paro Dharmah* (there is no Dharma greater than adherence to Truth). *Sathya* and *Dharma* together will confer peace. One who adheres to Truth and righteousness will always remain peaceful. One need not search for peace outside. Where there is Truth, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is nonviolence. We call the human values as *Sathya*, *Dharma*, *Santhi*, *Prema* and *Ahimsa* (Truth, righteousness, peace, love and nonviolence). In fact, love is the fundamental basis for Truth and righteousness. Love is God, Truth is God, righteousness is God. One bereft of these principles is verily a living corpse. The five human values can be compared to five life principles (*Prana*) present in us. If you do not speak truth, you would have lost one life principle. Unrighteous conduct amounts to losing the second life principle. Similarly, other life principles will be lost. Therefore, all your efforts should be directed to safeguard these life principles, which are divine in nature. There is divinity in humanity. Understand this. Today every field of human activity is polluted. Once man purifies his heart, he will find purity everywhere. The world outside is just a reflection of your heart. If you fill your heart with love, you will experience love everywhere. If there is hatred in your heart, the same is reflected outside. Whatever you see, hear and experience outside is only the reflection, reaction and resound of your inner being. All the good and bad that you come across in the external world are just your own reflections. So, do not point an accusing finger at others. The whole world depends on man’s behavior. If man is good, so too will the world be. You think that there is profanity all around you. It is a mistaken notion. In fact, the profanity in you is reflected outside. If your feelings are demonic, you will find the same all around you. If your feelings are divine, you will find divinity everywhere.

Embodiments of Love!

Your heart is full of love. The yearning for God that emanates from your heart is love. Let truth and righteousness be reflected in your word and deed, respectively. The harmony of truth, righteousness and love will lead to peace. Your breathing process — *Soham* is reminding you of your reality 21,600 times a day. Of what use is your education if you are unable to remember the truth that is taught to you so many times day in and day out. You may listen to any number of sermons, you may study any number of sacred texts, you may visit any number of noble souls, but all these will prove futile if you forget the principle of truth that your inner voice teaches. Buddha renounced all the palatial comforts and took to *Sanyasa* (renunciation). He wandered in the forests, listened to the teachings of noble souls and studied holy texts. But none of these could give him satisfaction. Ultimately, he realized that his heart is the true holy text given by God and God is his true friend. He discarded all books and stopped visiting noble souls. He turned inward and enquired into the truth. Ignoring the holy text (heart) and forgetting the true friend (God), man is going hither and thither in search of peace.



Firstly, make sacred use of the eyes given by God. Only then will your life be sanctified. He alone is a true human being who has a good mind and whose behavior is exemplary. All your spiritual pursuits will be of little consequence if your vision is sullied. Your *Nethra* (eye) is the *Sastra* (scripture) given by God. Understand this *Sastra* and conduct yourself accordingly. Once you have control over your vision, you will have control over your speech. Speak only Truth, there is nothing greater than Truth. *Samyak Drishti* (pure vision) and *Samyak Vak* (pure speech) will lead to *Samyak Sravanam* (pure hearing) and *Samyak Bhaavam* (pure feeling). The youth in particular should exercise control over their vision. *Maanava* (human being) becomes *Maadhava* (God), once he understands the importance of human values and puts them into practice. The youth of today are the future emancipators of the country. So, they should develop steadiness of mind and self-confidence.

Where there is confidence, there is love;

Where there is love, there is Truth;

Where there is Truth, there is peace;

Where there is peace, there is bliss;

Where there is bliss, there is God.

Without confidence, you can never attain Divinity. Your confidence is your God. So, develop unwavering confidence in the Self. Self-confidence and self-respect will

lead to *Atmic* bliss and the vision of the Self. You are all seated in this magnificent hall with so many pillars supporting it. You are enjoying its beauty. Without a strong foundation this hall would not have come into existence. Likewise, selfconfidence is the foundation for the mansion of life. Once you have selfconfidence, you can raise the walls of selfsatisfaction over which you can lay the roof of self-sacrifice and lead a life of selfrealization. Hence, lay the foundation of self-confidence strong and sturdy. The culture of Bharat proclaims *Sathyam Vada - Dharmam Chara* (speak Truth, follow righteousness). Not only Indian culture, the culture of all countries proclaims the same truth. Truth is the basis of every culture. Do not give scope for any differences based on culture. The whole world is like a mansion and various countries are like different rooms in it. So, do not divide humanity based on nationality. It is because of such division that humanness is on the decline. Sai devotees should not entertain any such differences. All should stand united. Names, forms and complexions may be different but humanity is one race. God is one. All human beings belong to one family.

Cows are many, but milk is one.

Beings are many, but indweller is one.

Castes are many, but humanity is one.

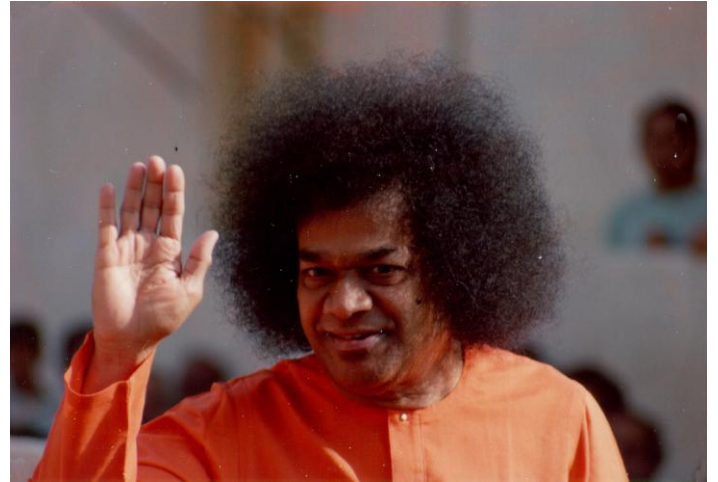
Flowers are many, but worship is one.

Paths are many, but God is one.

Hence, you should give up all the differences based on caste, religion and nationality and develop the spirit of love. Young men and women should work for the progress of the country. The country will prosper only when the youth develop sound character. Human life is based on character. Today there are many who are heroes in precept and zeroes in practice. Your actions should be in harmony with your words. Develop sacred feelings. Only then can you perform sacred activities. Devotion does not mean merely performing rituals like worship. Any work done with pure and selfless love is devotion.

Embodiments of Love!

Right from this day, let your lives be suffused with love. Let your hands undertake deeds that are beneficial to society at large. Let your thoughts be centered on the principle of love. You should rise from the level of *Vyashti* (individual) to *Samashti* (society) and ultimately merge in *Parameshti* (God). In this physical and ephemeral world, wherever you see there is only restlessness. At times your physical body may be subjected to diseases. You should not be unduly perturbed. Body comes and goes.



“This body is a storehouse of dirt, and prone to diseases; it cannot cross the ocean of Samsara. Oh mind! Do not be under the delusion that body is permanent. Instead take refuge at the Divine Lotus Feet.”

One should not be unduly attached to the physical body, but it has to be taken care of properly. Sometimes you are afflicted with diseases because of negligence on your part. I take the sufferings of devotees because of My love for them. It disappears in the same way as it appears. Here is a small example. A young boy was suffering a great deal because of mumps (swollen cheek). The doctor said that it would take a minimum of 20 to 25 days to get cured. He was crying bitterly unable to bear the severe pain. I called him inside and consoled him saying, “When Swami is with you, why do you cry?” I materialized a sweet for him and made him eat. I took his pain upon Myself. For any other person, the pain would have been unbearable. Srinivasan was very much worried as to how to conduct this conference, when Swami was undergoing so much pain. As the swelling was between the two jaws, it was not possible to eat or speak. How does it matter if the body is not given food for a few days? Hence, I did not care for it. I told the organizers to go ahead with the Conference. He asked, “Swami, how are you going to deliver the inaugural address?” I said, “I feel the pain if I think that this is My body. But this is not My body, it is yours.” All your bodies are Mine. Hence, I take your suffering upon Myself. That is My duty. This is not My body, so I do not care for it. Not only now, at any point of time, I do not care for any suffering. I practice whatever I preach. That is why I say, My life is My message. It is not possible for all to understand and realize My Divinity. I do not want to say it in public. I do not indulge in advertisement. All that is Mine is yours and vice-versa. I have no desires at all. All My desires are meant to give you happiness. Greatness does not lie in preaching, it lies in practice. A true *acharya* (preceptor) is one who practices and then preaches. That is what I am doing.

Youngsters – Men and Women!

Understand your true nature. Follow the path of Truth. *Sathyam* (Truth) is the name of this body. Develop this Truth in you. Truth is God, Love is God; live in love. When you follow the path of truth and love, you will certainly attain bliss. Some people put the blame on Me ignoring their own defects. It is a great mistake. There are no defects in Me whatsoever. I am like a pure mirror. There is no scope for even a trace of impurity in Me. You see the reflection of your own feelings in Me. Purify your hearts. Only then can you understand the truth.

-Divine Discourse By Baba on the occasion of Inauguration of International Seva Conference – July 21, 2002



Value



A well known speaker started off his seminar by holding up a \$20 bill. In the room of 200, he asked, "Who would like this \$20 bill?"

Hands started going up. He said, "I am going to give this \$20 to one of you but first, let me do this."

He proceeded to crumple the dollar bill up. He then asked, "Who still wants it?"

Still the hands were up in the air. "Well," he replied, "What if I do this?" And he dropped it on the ground and started to grind it into the floor with his shoe.

He picked it up, now all crumpled and dirty. "Now who still wants it?" Still the hands went into the air.

"My friends, you have all learned a very valuable lesson. No matter what I did to the money, you still wanted it because it did not decrease in value. It was still worth \$20.

Many times in our lives, we are dropped, crumpled, and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way.

We feel as though we are worthless. But no matter what has happened or what will happen, you will never lose your value. You are special - Don't ever forget it!

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, February 19 – Padhuka Puja	02:30 pm to 04:00 pm	Bolingbrook	630-819-9081
Wednesday, February 23 - Bhajans	07:30 pm to 08:30 pm	Hoffman Estates	847-519-1631

For more information, please contact any of the Center Officers

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