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# Sai Dharmam

SRI SATHYA SAI BABA CENTRE OF COOKSVILLE



"Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins." John 15:12. This is a beautiful statement found in the Gospel of John. Love, love, love! This is all that Swami has been trying to drill into our heads over the years as well. If you see someone walking behind you on the sidewalk – love them! If you find yourself quarrelling with someone – love them! Jesus Christ was an embodiment of love. Swami says, "Christ was determined to make the giving and sharing of love His main objective in life. Such love was met with many obstacles and losses. Christ

considered a true man to be one who could face obstacles and move forward in love." This is how highly Swami spoke of the Son of God. It is okay to praise God and His ways, but in this hour of glad Christmas vibrations, how many of us actually carry out what Jesus taught? How many of us truly seek to reform our own lives through this giving and receiving of love. We wait for Santa to visit us with gifts. We may even buy gifts for our children or other loved ones. Do we even think about those on the streets, devoid of warmth? Do we consider pooling our resources together to buy a gift for a

random child in the hospital? Are we not all under the same umbrella of Sai brother/sisterhood? Here is my humble challenge to you for this beautiful Christmas season: do something for someone (at least one person) such that they feel the warmth that Christ delivered to all those that were fortunate to be with Him. We are prophets and messiahs ourselves. Let us not let that honour go to waste. This Christmas season, grab some of your friends together and do something nice! Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night!\*

# Service to Man is Service to God

'Service to man is service to God', is a phrase from Sri Sathya Sai Baba. This phrase means that helping anyone is like helping God. This sentence inspires people worldwide. It motivates people to help others who are in need. The following story exemplifies this quote. There was once a man who had recently lost his son. The man was depressed but still had to continue with his life. He always prayed to God and followed His teachings. He asked God to help him and to guide him. However, he did not get any sign from God whatsoever. Day by day passed and the man continued with his life. On one specific day, the man saw a homeless man. He wanted to help, so he bought the man a meal and went on with his day. Later, he saw an old lady who needed help crossing the street. Being the kind man he was, he helped the lady cross the street and continued. At the end of the day, the man went to sleep and dreamt about God. He asked God why He had not visited him. God replied that He was in fact with him. God explained that He was the homeless man asking for food and the old lady trying to cross the road. This story shows how God is omnipresent. He can be anywhere at any time. Thus the quote 'Service to man is service to God' by Swami, expounds us to help anyone regardless of who they are. ✿



# Manava Seva is Madhava Seva



The opportunity to serve is a gift. Society is often caught up in its busy lifestyle, consisting of work, school, family and friends. Most people are worried and concerned for their own well-being and comfort. They spend every waking moment of the day working tirelessly to provide for themselves and those around them. Although it is one's duty to provide for one's family, we should be just as willing and driven to help others.

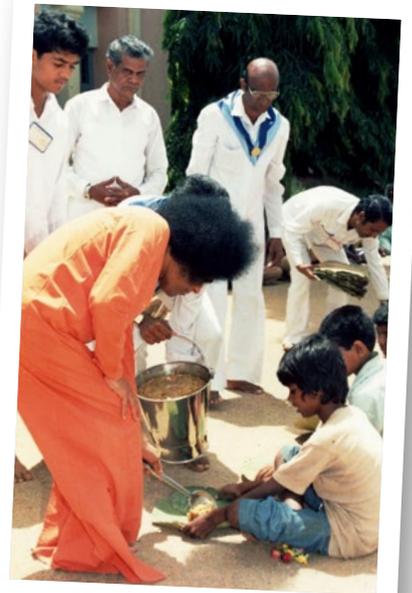
Serving man is equivalent to serving God.

Swami says, that service has the ability to remove the ego. Service promotes love and affection. It has the power to take one away from worldly attachments and put one on the path of the Divine. Serving selflessly is a simple yet powerful practice to please the

Lord. When the Lord is pleased, His grace will flow endlessly and limitlessly towards you.

Selfless service has no boundaries, guidelines nor limitations. Seva does not have to be in the form of a financial donation or a material good. The act of helping another is the only requirement.

As the holiday season approaches, let us not overlook that we all share a familial bond. We are all brothers and sisters, and our dear mother and father, Swami, resides in all of us. Treat everyone with love and compassion, and when the opportunity to serve arises, do not hesitate! ✿



# Devotee Speaks

My wife and I went to Thiruvannamalai, the abode of Lord Arunachala Siva around July/August 2017, to attend an Ati Rudra Maha Yagnam arranged by Sai devotees. The importance of Sri Arunachala Siva can be understood from the fact that in His first bhajan (Manasa Bajare Guru Charanam), Swami chose to sing about Lord Arunachala Siva in the verses. It is said that even thinking of that place (sthalam) grants Mukthi, Liberation.

Prior to this pilgrimage, we did rigorous sadhana for 121 days, which included prayers, chants, and change in food and life style habits (ex. observing spiritual silence). After my prayers, I used to sing the first verse of Arunachala Aksharamana Malai, which was composed by Sri Ramana Maharishi. This Tamil song praises Sri Arunachala Siva and seeks to unite the devotee with Him. This was not prescribed, but my own sadhana. About a month after this sadhana, a sister from our centre, whose grandfather was close to the Maharishi, gave us a photo of Sri Ramana Maharishi with a verse printed on it. Incidentally, this was the same first verse from the Aksharamana Malai. The translation is "O, Arunachala, you root out the ego of those who meditate on you in their heart". I was surprised, as she did not know about my sadhana.

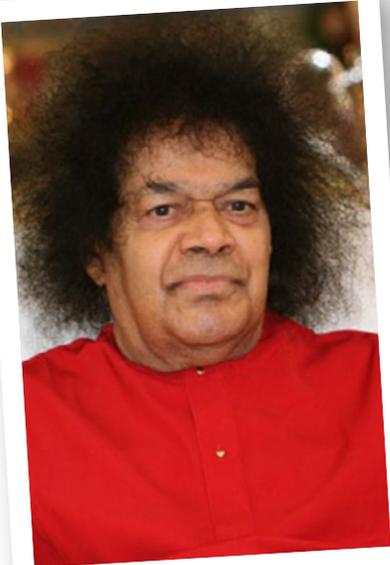
On the first day of the event at Thiruvannamalai, all the participants, of the Yagna, performed a Giri Valam. In Thiruvannamalai, the mountain itself is considered as Lord Siva and devotees go around the mountain on 14 km path. This is called Giri Valam and it takes about 4-5

hours. My wife and I started with the group at 4.30 am after prayers at the Shirdi Sai Temple on the path. When it was dawn after crossing Sri Ramanashram, my wife and I started singing the Aksharamana Malai in our minds using a small book in our hands. After some time, a person dressed like a priest came in front of us and asked whether we were reading the Aksharamana Malai? and said that it is very good. We just nodded our heads and continued with our singing and walking. After a minute or two, I turned around but did not find that priest. Importantly, there were no side roads, where he could have gone.

At the end of the day, I was wondering who this person was. He would not have heard what we were singing, so how did he ask us that question? I knew, he must have been someone special. Then it occurred to me that the Aksharamana Malai was composed by the Maharishi at His devotees' request to sing during the Giri Valam. And, His devotees have had experiences of Sri Ramana appearing before them, when they sang the song with great devotion, even after His samadhi. I then wondered whether it was Sri Ramana or Lord Arunachala who came in disguise. I do not know for sure. But, we had Divine Darshan on that day and we repent for not talking to Him and taking His Pada Namaskar, as we were focused on the singing in our minds. Swami says, when the heart is filled with devotion, you can feel His presence. How true it is! ❀



# Love in Service



There lived an old lady in Paris. Though she was not very rich, she used to buy blankets with whatever money she had, go in the streets at night and cover with blankets the people sleeping there with their bodies huddled with cold. Even when she did not have enough money, she continued this act of service. Her charity continued day by day without any break with the grace of God. Her spirit of sacrifice also grew more and more. Whenever it was possible for her, she would take a bundle of blankets in a vehicle and cover with blankets all those who were sleeping in the streets in cold weather. In this manner, she continued to do this service without anyone coming to know of it. However, after some time, the people of the locality came to know of her spirit of sacrifice and charity. She always used to walk with her

head bent down. Some people were puzzled why she always walked in this manner.

One day, some people asked her, "Oh grandmother! Aren't you doing a very good service with a great spirit of sacrifice? Then, why are you so modest and meek? Why can't you walk with your head raised high?" Then, the old lady replied, "Oh dear ones! I feel ashamed to keep my head high because God gives me with thousands of hands but I am giving with only one hand. Is it not a matter of shame for me?"

One should perform charity, but this should be done without anybody's knowledge. It is said that your left hand should not know what you are giving with your right hand. Money has its worth if you give it in charity. ❀

# Games Corner



## BHAJAN

Jagathpathe Hari Sai Gopala  
Jagadoddhara Sai Nandalala  
Madhuradhipathe Krishna Gopala  
Madhura Madhura Hey Gaanaviola  
Jagadoddhara Sai Nandalala  
Sai Nandalala Jai Jai Gopala

*O Sai Gopala, The Master Of The Universe  
O Sai Nandalala, The Redeemer Of This World  
O Krishna, The Ruler Of Mathura  
Who Revels In Love Filled Sweet Music  
O Sai Nandalala, The Redeemer Of This World!  
Victory To Sai , To Krishna!*