

Om Sri Sai Ram



# SAI DHARMAM

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Cooksville**

## **SPIRITUAL JOURNEY**

Spiritual journey encompasses yourself, and who we are as a person. Many people tend to go in the spiritual path in order for them to acquire profound questions which answers their life decisions. Others may go in the spiritual path to have a better understanding of God. As a matter fact, in any circumstance, spiritual journey is the entitlement of finding peace with yourself and connecting with the world. Our dear lord, Sri Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has always brought His teachings to practice that involved the five human values namely Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-Violence. Through practicing Swami's teaching, we are able to purify our heart and

transform ourselves from attaining peace. In his teachings, it addresses three spiritual practices (sadhanas) that involve paths of Devotion (Bhakthi), Service (Karma) and Wisdom (jnana). Showing love and affection on a daily basis will change the way of how we think and practice our daily activities. Helping the elderly and bringing a smile on ones' face is one way of bringing happiness in your life. Those activities that change from love and affection into thought, word and deed can be put into practice.

## SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Being brought up in the SSE program was one of the greatest things I can ever ask for. Learning about Swami's teachings and his life journey was always something I admired. Although I was not a frequent visitor of Puttaparthi, I felt Swami's presence every moment of my life. At times, where I forgot to take His name, his presence has helped me through his actions. In my spiritual journey, Swami has been my mother, father, mentor and guide.

In general, we all have a bucket of desires, such as, buying clothes, an iPhone, Apple TV, and so on. Other than all these things, we usually have one big desire that is always in our minds. That is our education and career. Ever since the 3rd grade, I always wanted to pursue my career in medicine. I've always asked Swami to lead me on the

right path and give me the guidance throughout my undergraduate and post-graduate degree. One aspect I've learned is that, no matter what religion we believe in, we should have faith in our self and God. Once we have that faith we can achieve many things that will lead us to our goal in the future.

As Swami says, "Whatever studies you may pursue, do not give up your faith in God. To give up God is to give up life itself. Life is God. Truth is God. All that you do as an offering to God will be an expression of human values." My mom always told me that, it's always easy to juggle one ball at a time, however once we start to get multiple balls thrown to us at once, we tend to fall under the trap of maintaining the balance and speed. Just like that, we should relate it back to how Swami gives us many



obstacles and challenges to fight back so that we know the difficulties in life, and the ability to surpass those obstacles is the key to success.

## IMPORTANCE OF SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Starting from the 1700s, practicing a particular religion was known to contribute to a person's well behavior and better society. Olden day religious theorists such as Plato and Aristotle believed that religion could prescribe practices about a sacred reality where one can be transformed to follow moral practices. However, in the modern age, the idea of secularity leading to personal change has become rather popular. Notably, I believe many people confuse spirituality with religion. Many people assume that once can only be spiritual by following the traditional religious practices in

the Hindu religion. However, ultimately spirituality is regarded as a connection with God and here is no right way in achieving this, except for following Swami's teachings. Our dear Lord says, "it may not be possible to undertake rigorous spiritual practices like meditation, penance and yoga, it is however enough to chant the Divine name." Through this quote, Swami preaches how one can achieve divinity and connection with God with the powerful practice of *Namasmarana*. It is important to realize how Swami's teachings perfectly resonate with what the modern generation can improve on



now. I truly admire how Swami understands the free-thinking mentality of this generation and preaches (Continued on page 3)

## IMPORTANCE OF SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

(Continued from page 2) teachings that can be inculcated at any age. With this in mind, I believe I practice spirituality in my own way. Although, I tend to be discrete about such matter, I still try my best to chant the Lord's name with a form I am comfortable with. I believe that my spiritual life has grown more over the past few years, from chanting the Lord's name in times when I am thankful, to times of forgiveness or anytime in general. Also, in terms of developing a stronger connection with God, I believe by thanking him at the beginning or

end of the day for all that he has given me is truly an important habit. In fact, I believe this can be considered a spiritual practice and one that I would like to continue throughout my life. Furthermore, I also practice *Namasmarana* by writing *likithajapam* once a day. From doing this, I believe that it not only allows one to emerge themselves in *Namasmarana* in the medium of writing, but also cultivates positivity and confidence. Hence, in terms of my spiritual path, I want to continue my practice of *Namasmarana* and aim on following Swami's



two other practices in reaching divinity, which include undertaking services such as trying to employ small acts of love and kindness and improve on practicing one quote from Swami everyday.

## THE LEGEND BEHIND THE KUMBH MELA

The Kumbh Mela in India is as mesmerizing as it is spiritual. This ancient northern Indian festival is a meeting of mystical minds. The largest religious gathering in the world, the Kumbh Mela brings Hindu holy men together to discuss their faith and disseminate information about their religion. It's attended by millions of people each day during Kumbh Mela. In recognition of the festival's importance, UNESCO included the Kumbh Mela on its Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list.

Kumbh means pot or pitcher. Mela means festival or fair. Hence, the Kumbh Mela means festival of the pot. It specifically relates to the pot of nectar in Hindu mythology. Legend has it that the gods once lost their strength. In order to regain it, they agreed with the demons to churn the primordial ocean of milk for amrit (the nectar of immortality). This was to be shared equally between them. However, a fight broke out, which went on for 12 human years. During the battle, the celestial bird, Garuda, flew away with the Kumbh that held the nectar. Drops of nectar are believed to have fallen in the places that the Kumbh Mela is held in India at Prayag (Allahabad), Haridwar, Nashik, and Ujjain between late January to end of February every 6 to 12 years. Various types of sadhus (Nagas, Urdhwavahurs, Pariajakas, Shirshasinse and Kalpvisis) and other holy men are an integral part of the Mela. The main ritual is the ritual bath. Hindus believe that submerging themselves in the sacred waters on the most auspicious day of the new moon will absolve them and their ancestors of sin, thus ending the cycle of rebirth. Pilgrims who come to see and listen to these men, start lining up to bathe from around 3a.m. to gain spiritual enlightenment. As the sun comes up, the different groups of sadhus move in procession towards the river to bathe. The Nagas usually lead, while each group tries to outdo the others with more grandeur and fanfare. The moment is magical, and everyone is absorbed in it. Snahi Snan (Royal Bath) is the biggest spectacle of sadhus, happens on certain auspicious days during kumbh mela. After bathing, the pilgrims wear fresh clothes and proceed to worship by the river bank. They then walk around listening to discourses from the various sadhus.

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## THE LEGEND BEHIND THE KUMBH MELA

Among the number of exhibitions in the vast kumbh mela area of Sangam, we are blessed to see the one, depicting the life and teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, numerous articles, photos related to the selfless service rendered by our dear Swami to the world in the field of education, health and drinking water, spreading the message that every human being has a duty towards the society by one of Swami's devotees.

During this auspicious month, our devotional coordinators here at Cooksville Sai Centre organizing a Spiritual Workshop with four eminent panelists to speak on; benefit, challenges and tools of "Getting closer to the God" between 10a.m. to 3p.m. on Saturday, February 16th, 2019 in the long weekend of Family Day. We request all of you to attend.



### ...on Namasmarana

Constant remembrance of God by repetition of His Name is itself meditation. Meditation stills the wandering mind. When the mind becomes still the veil between you and the Reality is removed, and you know that you are the Reality. Continuous remembrance is possible only when your devotion is intense. Repeat the Name, constantly, it will take hold of you and at certain stage it will possess you. Then you cannot forget the Name even if you try to. The body will become Divine. All this is achieved by the "Little Name" Ram. It is no more the ordinary human body. It becomes a holy body. The place on which he treads becomes sanctified.

*- Sri Sathya Sai*

## BHAJAN

Allah Naam Bhajo Bhajorey Bhajo  
Maula Naam Bhajo Bhajorey Bhajo  
Nanak Yesu Mahaavir Naam Bhajo  
Shree Buddha Deva Bhajo Bhajorey Bhajo  
Shirdi Sai Baba Bhajo Bhajorey Bhajo  
Shree Raghuraama Bhajo Govinda Krishna Bhajo  
Shree Sathya Sai Bhajo Bhajorey Bhajo

## MEANING

Pray to Allah, Nanak, Jesus, Mahavir, Buddha, Rama, Krishna, Shirdi Sai and Sathya Sai

