



Sabka Maalik Ek

SAI SANDESH

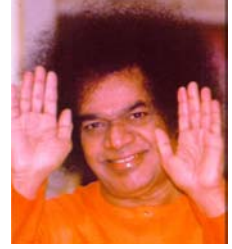
The Monthly Newsletter of Om Sai Mandir

January 2005; Volume 2, Issue 1

45-11 Smart Street ♦ Flushing, NY 11355 ♦ Tel: (718) 461-0454

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The newsletter is available online at: www.omsaimandir.org



Love All, Serve All

New Year's Special Issue

Happy New Year!

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is said that time has wings and passing time is often described by the phrase “time just flies.” The Year 2004 has been no exception to this metaphor. Indeed, 2004 just flew as if in an instant. The journey of this passing year, however, was a memorable one—a year that witnessed the occurrence of many divine blessings. In 2004, on the auspicious day of Vaikuntha Ekadashi (the day when the gates of heaven are opened), the gates of Om Sai Mandir were opened for all devotees.

Activities

Several initiatives were inaugurated during the year, including devotional programs, such as aratis, bhajans, regular pujas, naam smaranam, and annadan [food service]. To further the cause of spreading the Lord’s divine message, Sai Sandesh, the monthly newsletter of Om Sai Mandir, was started on Guru Poornima. The newsletter has grown from its modest beginnings and is now—through the medium of the Internet—read by thousands of devotees worldwide.

Since the humble beginnings of the temple, we have witnessed a consistent growth in both the number of devotees and in the divine vibrations that are experienced at the temple. Devotees from all walks of life, and from diverse backgrounds, now throng to the temple to seek Baba’s blessings and grace. Devotees’ prayers and a vibrant spiritual ambience have made this temple a veritable Shirdi and Parthi in New York.

A Divine Visit

It is said that the land that is touched by the holy feet of saints becomes a veritable pilgrimage center, a magnet charged by divine energy and grace. Swami’s grace manifested in the form of a divine visit by Sri Sri Viswaguru Viswamji on October 01, 2004. Sri Viswamji is revered by thousands of devotees as the 9th avatar [incarnation] of Lord Dattatreya. His presence at the temple has indeed been a divine blessing.

Called In The Lord’s Presence

Recently, I had the good fortune of being called in the Lord’s divine presence. He allowed me to visit both Shirdi and Parthi. While at Puttaparthi and Shirdi, my humble prayers for mankind and for the bright future of the temple were graciously accepted and blessed by none other than the Lord himself.

Installation of Idols

The temple now wishes to install life-sized statues of both Shirdi Sai Baba and Sathya Sai Baba. To the best of my knowledge this is the first time in the world that a life-sized marble statue of Shri Sathya Sai Baba is being installed. With the Lord’s grace, I was able to visit several sculptors in India and finally found a suitable sculptor in Jaipur, India. Lord willing, the temple’s altar will soon be adorned by both the idols.

An Appeal

A project of this magnitude, however, cannot be accomplished without the collective participation of devotees. At this juncture, I would like to make a humble appeal to all devotees to generously contribute toward this noble cause and render services in every possible way. Your contributions will go a long way in ensuring the success of this project. For your convenience, the temple has an online payment gateway. Devotees can also mail checks directly to the mandir.

The recent Tsunami tragedy has left all of us devastated and humbled. Om Sai Mandir is undertaking every effort possible to serve those affected. For more information on how you can help, please call the temple at: 1.718.461.0454.

As we march forward on this spiritual journey, I would like to once again thank everyone for their affection and seek Baba’s blessings to grant us strength and ensure the welfare of one and all.

I take this opportunity to wish all our devotees and their families a Very Happy New Year. Sai Ram.

*- Gangadhar Rao Chhalasani, M.D.
President*

IS SATHYA SAI BABA A REINCARNATION OF SHIRDI SAI BABA?

Kaliyuga [the iron age] is the most fortunate of all ages as it is in this age that the Lord has chosen to incarnate not once, but thrice. The first incarnation was Shirdi Sai Baba (1838 – 1918); the second, Sathya Sai Baba (1926 – 2022); and the third, Prema Sai Baba (2030 – 2126). The subject of reincarnation, however, is often a topic of great mystery, controversy, and disbelief. This article makes a humble attempt to present a few facts that prove beyond doubt that Sathya Sai Baba is a reincarnation of Shirdi Sai Baba.

The Shiva Shakti Revelation. Thousands of years ago, Sage Bharadwaja, with an intention to propitiate Mother Shakti [Lord Shiva's consort] for a Yagna [a sacred rite], visited Mount Kailasa. On reaching there he found Lord Shiva and Mother Shakti engrossed in a cosmic dance. Expectantly waiting for them to take notice, he stood still in snow-clad Kailasa for eight long days. Exhausted, the sage suffered paralytic stroke and broke down. The divine couple rushed to his rescue and cured him by sprinkling holy water. Pleased with his devotion, the Lord granted him a boon that He himself would incarnate in his lineage. First, Shiva as Shirdi Sai Baba; second, Shiva and Shakti as Sathya Sai Baba; and third, Shakti alone as Prema Sai Baba.



Mrs. V. Bala Tripura Sundari (age: 106). Mrs. Sundari has had the fortune of worshiping both Shirdi Sai Baba and Sathya Sai Baba. She first visited Shirdi Baba in 1908 when she was only

13. During one of her visits, Shirdi Baba gave her a Shivalingam. On her husband's death in 1954, she wanted to settle in Shirdi but chanced to visit Parthi instead. At first she did not believe Swami was the reincarnation of Shirdi Sai Baba. Once Swami asked her, "It seems you don't want to stay here." "Yes, Swami!" was her immediate response. "What will you do in Shirdi?" Swami asked, "When I am here?" Her immediate response was, "My Baba is there." "Is it?" Swami asked and said "Look!" Lo and behold, Shirdi Sai was standing in place of Swami in flesh and blood.

On another occasion, Swami asked her, "Where is my Shivalingam?" She was surprised and said, "You did not give me any lingam." Immediately Swami reminded her of the incidence when Shirdi Sai Baba had given her a silver lingam. She brought the lingam to Swami and it instantly disappeared in his presence.¹

The Divine Declaration. Sathya, a young lad, all of fourteen, was materializing sugar candy out of thin air and distributing it to the village folks. Not only sugar candy, this lad was known to have performed the most mind boggling miracles. This lad was performing supernatural feats and lecturing on sublime spiritual topics. The father, and his entire family, was perplexed at the exhibition of this strange behavior. On May 23, 1940, His father could no longer tolerate this behavior. He was convinced his son was possessed. He held a stick and demanded, addressing the so-called spirit: "Who are you? Are you God, ghost, or devil?" "I am Sai Baba," came the reply. He went on, "I am Sai Baba of Shirdi. I have taken birth in your family because of the prayers of your ancestor, Venkavadhoota." Everyone present was stunned. They hadn't heard anything, either of Shirdi or of Sai Baba. Someone challenged Sathya: "If you are really Sai Baba, show us some proof." Immediately, Sathya picked some jasmine flowers and threw them on the ground. When they fell on the ground, they neatly arranged themselves into the words "Sai Baba" in Telugu script.²



The Queen of Chincholi. The Chaitanya Jyothi museum, at Puttaparthi, showcases one of the greatest testimonials of the Lord's Shirdi Connection. When Swami visited it recently, He was shown a tonga [a horse driven cart]. What was so special about this tonga? Well, this tonga was from Chincholi, a former princely state in South India. When the Queen of Chincholi met Sathya Sai Baba for the first time, Swami described how He had visited Chincholi earlier, while in His previous body. Shirdi Baba had indeed made several extra



corporeal visits to Chincholi. Swami described the quarters of the palace that He stayed in, the personal moments He had spent with the Raja and the Queen, and the long drives He had, with the Raja, in the tonga. The accuracy of the details, known only to the Queen, was unbelievable. Here was the same Baba of Shirdi! The Queen was moved, and she presented to Swami, the tonga. This was the very same tonga, which was shown to Swami at Chaitanya Jyothi. When Swami saw it, He casually remarked, that there used to be a small lantern holder, on side of the tonga, which was now missing. It was, as though He rode in it, just yesterday.²

Years ago, the same queen went to Puttapparathi to see Bhagawan. Even as she was entering the gate, Bhagawan told one of the close devotees standing there: "Ask her to bring the brass lota that I left at her house years ago." The Rani Saheb herself did not know much about it. But, on a thorough search of heirlooms in the house, it turned out that the brass lota of Shirdi Baba, who had visited the house years ago, had been carefully preserved by elders among other things.

Sri Dixit. Sri Dixit, the nephew of Kakasaheb Dixit, who was a close disciple of Shirdi Baba, went to Puttapparathi to put an acid test to the identity of Sathya Sai Baba. He always carried, in his pocket, a small photo of his uncle. The first thing that Bhagawan asked Dixit to do was to take out the photograph of "My Kaka" from the pocket.

Pedda Venkama Raju's Sister. There is a miraculous incident related by Pedda Venkama Raju's sister. She was troubling Baba with a request to grant her some vision, to instill faith in her heart, for, she did not want to dismiss the story of Sai Avatar as an invention, an attitude that many in the family found easy to assume. Baba had a liking for this lady because she was a simple soul, steeped in suffering; so, He told her, "I shall show you My previous Body this evening." As soon as dusk fell, Baba led her across a number of doors, into one of the innermost rooms of the house, and on reaching the farthest, He took off His palm which was all the while covering her eyes and asked her to look at a corner, which He pointed out with His Finger. The lady looked and there sat Shirdi Sai Baba, on the floor, in His characteristic pose, but, she says, with eyes closed and Vibhuti marks on the forehead and arms. The incense sticks before Him were burning and the smoke was rising straight into the air. His Body was glowing with a strange effulgence and there was a beautiful fragrance around.³

The Chairman of Shirdi Samasthan. When the Chairman of the Shirdi Samasthan, charged with the duty of administering the properties and the ceremonials of worship at Shirdi, where the "previous body" is laid to rest, hesitated to swallow the "Vibhuthi" materialized by the "present body", (Sri Sathya Sai Baba) because he feared it might be a sacrilege, Baba gave him a sign to convince him that the two are the same. His picture on the wall of that room in Bombay gave forth a flash of brilliant light, and the dark doubt in his heart was gone.⁴

Whenever Swami refers to the Shirdi Avatar, he says "Purva Sariramulo" [when I was in the previous body]. He often describes to his devotees how He, in his previous body dealt with people and situations, what illustrations He gave to amplify certain points, what questions were asked, etc. He quotes what He told Dasganu or Mahalaspasi in the last birth. While telling people about Shirdi Baba, he may be saying, just as you have seen me do now or just as I do while in trance, to make the point clear. Sometimes he replies a question with a remark, the same doubt was raised by a man who had come to Shirdi and He would continue the conversation with the reply He gave the other man long ago in Maharashtra. He recognizes all the devotees of Shirdi Baba as His own. In fact, He tells them, I have known you since ten years or Though this is the first time you see this, Sairam, I have seen you twenty years ago when you came to Shirdi and the person will find that he had been to Shirdi exactly twenty years ago.²

The statements awaken us to the fact that He is the one who was in Shirdi and that He has now reincarnated in Parthi. It also points to a subtler and more profound truth: He transcends both the places. He transcends time. He transcends bodies, for He is the Spirit, the immortal Spirit that incarnates from time to time for the redemption of humanity.²

The purpose of both the Sai avatars is the same. Only the need to transform the modern wisdom has now become more critical. Then, the emphasis was more on community, now it is on the individual; then the message was given to comparatively few, now all are welcome. It is even taken to the doors of the needy. The same love of the unity of religions indicated on the Sarva Dharma Symbol; the same overwhelming love for devotees coupled with utmost detachment; miracles intensely dramatic in a similar fashion, revealing omniscience and omnipresence; the same utter disregard for personal safety, comfort or fame; to know the identity that persists in these matters is to add a new dimension to one's understanding of Shirdi Sai and Sathya Sai. The Lord Shirdi Sai Baba has indeed reincarnated in the form of Sathya Sai Baba.

1. www.vedamu.org/forum/ExperienceoftheDivinityofBhagawan/MrsVBalaTripuraSundari.asp
2. www.radiosai.org
3. http://www.srisathyasai.org.in/pages/bhagawan/Reincar/Re_Incar.htm
4. <http://www.indolink.com/Forum/Arts-Culture/messages/5994.html>

OM SAI MANDIR'S DAILY ACTIVITIES

DAILY ARATIS:

Kakad Arati	8.00 A.M.
Madhyana Arati	12.00 P.M.
Dhoop Arati	6.00 P.M.
Sheja Arati	8.00 P.M.

SPECIAL BHAJANS:

Every Thursday	7.00 P.M. – 8.00 P.M.
Every Sunday	2.00 P.M. – 3.00 P.M.

SAI NAAM JAP (CHANTING BABA'S HOLY NAME):

Last Saturday of Every Month 8.30 A.M. – 8.30 P.M.

STOTRAS (CHANTING SAHASRANAM, BABA'S 108 NAMES, ETC.):

Daily 12.30 P.M. and 6.30 P.M.

ANNADAN [FOOD SERVICE]:

Daily at the Temple

ANNADAN [FOOD SERVICE] FOR HOMELESS

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: Every Saturday at 29th

Street & 1st Avenue: 1 p.m. For more information, call the temple at: (718) 461-0454.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

“Everyone expects the new year to confer peace, happiness, and prosperity. But, this day too is like any other. The experience of pleasure or pain depends upon one's actions. Meritorious deeds will not confer misery and sinful deeds cannot give happiness. One is bound to face the consequences of one's actions. But one treats pleasure and pain alike when one becomes the recipient of God's grace. God's grace destroys mountains of sins and confers peace.”

- Baba

**Sai Sandesh can be read online
at:**

<http://www.omsaimandir.org>

**Devotees can send articles,
experiences, etc. to
saisandesh@omsaimandir.org**

SHORT STORIES BY BABA:

RECEIVE THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUPREME

Once a disciple went to a preceptor and requested him to impart to him the Supreme knowledge of God. The Guru gave him a mantra and asked him to chant it continually without any selfish desire. The Guru told him that after he had done this for one year, he could come to receive the knowledge of the Supreme.

The disciple approached his Guru after one year and said, “Oh revered one! I have recited the mantra for one year.” He was eagerly awaiting the preceptor's answer. He thought that his Guru would certainly impart to him the knowledge of the Supreme. Just then, unaware of the presence of the disciple, the maid servant was sweeping the ashram premises and the dust from the ground fell on the young man. The disciple flew into a rage, because he had come to the ashram after a sacred bath and the dust had sullied his body. He looked at her with anger and the maid was filled with fear. The Preceptor was watching the entire scene.

The Guru said, “You are not competent to receive the knowledge. You got angry with the maid servant who unwittingly caused some dust to fall on you. How can Brahma Jnana be imparted to one who does not have endurance? Go and practice Sadhana for one year.”

At the end of the second year the disciple was about to enter the ashram. According to the instructions of the Guru, the maid once again let dust fall on the disciple in full measure. The disciple grew indignant and wanted to beat her but somehow refrained. The disciple approached the Guru and paid his respect. The Guru told him: “You are still not competent to receive knowledge. Last year you exhibited the qualities of a snake and now those of a dog. Come back after ridding yourself of these animal qualities.”

At the end of the third year, the disciple entered the ashram premises after taking a sacred bath. As per the instructions of the Guru, the maid servant poured dirty water on the disciple. The disciple calmly offered his salutations and said, “Mother, I offer my salutation to you. You have helped me to acquire the greatest virtue, forbearance. Now I am worthy enough to receive the grace of my Guru. I shall always be grateful to you.” As soon as the disciple prostrated before the Guru, the Guru endearingly said: “Son, Now you are quite competent to receive the knowledge of the Supreme.”

- Adapted from *Oka Chinna Katha* by N. Kasturi

DEVOTEES' EXPERIENCES

"I have been brought up in an environment of devotion to Sri Sathya Sai as my father, Mr. K.V.R. Rao, was a longstanding devotee of Bhagavan. He wrote many books for Balvikas children. I too was a member of Balvikas.

My son, Sai Prashanth, was born on November 9, 1984, with congenital hypothyroidism. Luckily, it was detected very early and we could start treatment. One day when he was about 3 months old, the maid was giving him bath when he suddenly turned blue. I thought that he had some attack and cried, 'Father, come immediately. Babu is seriously ill.' My father was doing pooja. My mother, on hearing my cries, ran to the family doctor. My father came immediately to the baby, put vibhuti on his forehead loudly chanting, 'Sai Ram! Sai Ram.' Next moment, a miracle happened. The baby who had turned black and whose tongue had come out as if he was passing out opened his eyes. Soon he became normal and active. His complexion regained the normal hue. My mother returned without the doctor. There was no need of him anymore.

Later, Swami came to Dharmakshetra (Mumbai). My father and we all went for Darshan. When Swami came near my father, my father wanted to thank Swami for saving my son. But before he uttered 'Swami' completely, Swami said, 'naaku telusu' [I know], and did not allow him to speak. Then Swami turned towards some VIPs sitting there and said in English, 'He (my father) called me and I went and revived his grandson who had passed out.' Then Swami explained to them all that had happened on that day with all details. He then walked to the place where I sat with my son and told me, 'Don't worry. I will take care of him.' He materialized vibhuti and gave it to my son.

In 1985, one of our relatives went to Bhagavan for Darshan and broached about the health of my son. Swami told him, 'Tell her (me) not to worry.' He materialized a pendant and gave it to my relative to hand it over to me for my son. My son is now studying Engineering.

Sometime back, I took the prediction about me from Agastya Nadi. It said, 'You will get something from your Master when you attain the age of 48.' On February 8, 2004, I went to Sri Sathya Sai Mandiram in Malkajiri. There I was given some powder of turmeric. In it I found a coin on one side of which there are

Pictures of Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, and Hanuman. On the other side, there is Aum (Devanagari script). They told me, 'Swami gave you that. You take it.' Is this what was mentioned in Agastya Nadi.' When this happened, my age was 48."

-- Mrs. B. Lakshmi .

Source:

<http://www.vedamu.org/forum/ExperienceoftheDivinityofBhagavan/MrsBLakshmi.asp>

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<http://www.omsaimandir.org>

Once there, submit your email
address. It takes less than a minute
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TEMPLE JOURNAL

CHRISTMAS (DECEMBER 25, 2004)



DATTA JAYANTI (DECEMBER 26, 2004)



TSUNAMI DISASTER RELIEF



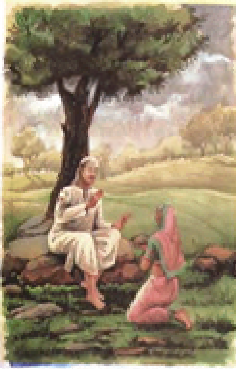
The recent Tsunami tragedy that struck the Asian region has left over 1.5 million homeless and hundreds of thousands of individuals and families dead and injured. The devastation has been the largest in several decades. It is our duty to help our suffering brothers and sisters in times such as these. We would like to make a humble appeal to all devotees to pray for these individuals and

help them to the best extent possible. There are several organizations involved in relief work. Om Sai Mandir is also trying to help in this process; for more information, please call us at: 1.718.461.0454.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Sai Ram Children,

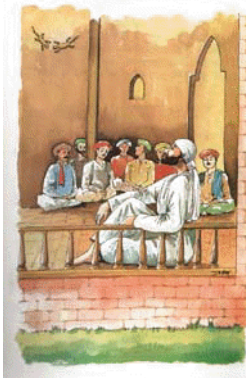
Did you know that Baba lives in all creatures? Here are some of the examples through which Baba has taught us that He is present everywhere. In Shirdi, there was a lady who used to bake



bread for Baba everyday. One day while she was taking the bread to Baba, a dog started following her. She offered a portion of the bread to the dog. Later, a pig followed the lady and she offered bread to the pig too. She then realized that there was no bread left for Baba. She felt

disappointed and prayed for forgiveness. Finally, when she went to see Baba, He immediately said, "Ma, today you offered me bread twice, it was really satisfying." The lady was confused and thought Baba was teasing her and said "Baba, today I have nothing to give you." Baba replied, "The bread that you gave to the dog and pig reached me. I am one with them."

Once when Baba was sitting in Dwarakamai, one of the devotees noticed a lizard



on the wall. Lizard is considered to bring bad luck. One of the devotees asked Baba, "Is something bad going to happen?" Baba replied, "The lizard's sister is coming from the neighboring town, so she is happy and singing with joy." Everyone thought that Baba was joking but soon a devotee arrived to

seek Baba's blessing. As he opened his bag, a lizard jumped out and went straight towards the other lizard on the wall. Their movements appeared as if they were happy to meet. Everyone present was amazed to see how Baba knew all this before hand.

One day a group of men came to Baba with a tiger.



They used the tiger to show tricks and thus earned money. But as the tiger grew old, he could not perform the tricks. They tried different things to make the tiger stronger but nothing worked. So they finally bought the tiger to Baba. Baba asked them to release the tiger from the

cage. As soon as the tiger saw Baba, he prostrated before Baba. Baba stroked the tiger and he died before Baba. Baba then said "This tiger was a devotee of Lord Shiva, bury him in front of Lord Shiva."

Moral: *Baba is present everywhere. He knows everything and has unlimited powers. We should treat every creature with respect because God is present in all the creatures.*

Source:

http://www.shirdibaba.org/children/story3_c.htm

Children are requested to send stories, articles, drawings, pictures etc. for publishing in the Children's Corner section of the newsletter.

For more information, please write to: saisandesh@omsaimandir.org

TEMPLE'S 2005 FESTIVAL CALENDAR

January

Saturday, Jan. 01: New Year's Day Celebrations
 Thursday, Jan. 13: Lodhi
 Friday, Jan. 14: Makara Sankranti
 Wednesday, Jan. 26: India's Republic Day

February

Monday, Feb. 14: Valentine's Day

March

Tuesday, Mar. 08: Mahashivarathri
 Friday, Mar. 25: Holi Festival

April

Saturday, Apr. 09: Ugadi/Gudi Padva
 Wednesday, Apr. 13: Baisakhi
 Thursday, Apr. 14:
 1. Tamil New Year
 2. Vishu (Malayali New Year)
 Monday, Apr. 18: Sri Rama Navami

May

Friday, May. 06: Eshwaramma Day
 Sunday, May. 08: Mother's day

June

Wednesday, Jun. 01: Hanuman Jayanti
 Sunday, Jun. 19: Father's Day

July

Monday, Jul. 04: American Independence Day
 Thursday, Jul. 21: Guru Poornima/Vyasa Poornima

August

Monday, Aug. 15: India Independence Day
 Saturday, Aug. 27: Sri Krishna Janmashtami

September

Wednesday, Sept. 07: Ganesh Chaturthi/Vinayaka
 Chowthi
 Sunday, Sept. 18: Onam
 Tuesday, Sept. 27: Shirdi Sai Baba Jayanthi

October

Monday, Oct. 03: Devi Navarathri begins
 Tuesday, Oct. 11: Durgashtami
 Wednesday, Oct. 12: Vijaya Dashami/Dussera
 Thursday, Oct. 20: Karva Chowth

November

Tuesday, Nov. 01: Deepavali
 Saturday, Nov. 12, 6pm to Sunday, Nov.13, 6pm:
 Akhanda Bhajans
 Tuesday, Nov. 15: Guru Nanakji's Jayanthi
 Saturday, Nov. 19: Ladies' Day Celebrations
 Wednesday, Nov. 23: Sathya Sai Baba's Birthday

December

Thursday, Dec. 15: Datta Jayanthi
 Saturday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve
 Sunday, Dec. 25: Christmas Day Celebrations
 Saturday, Dec. 31: New Year's Eve Celebrations

Despite our best attempts, events may sometimes not proceed as planned. It is advisable to reconfirm with the temple before scheduling your plans.

AN APPEAL

Devotees are requested to generously contribute toward the development of the temple. Devotees can make their checks payable to: **Om Sai Mandir**

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