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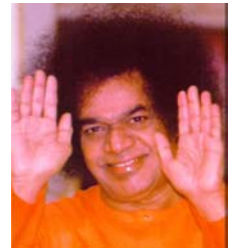
The Monthly Newsletter of Om Sai Mandir

May 2005; Volume 2, Issue 5

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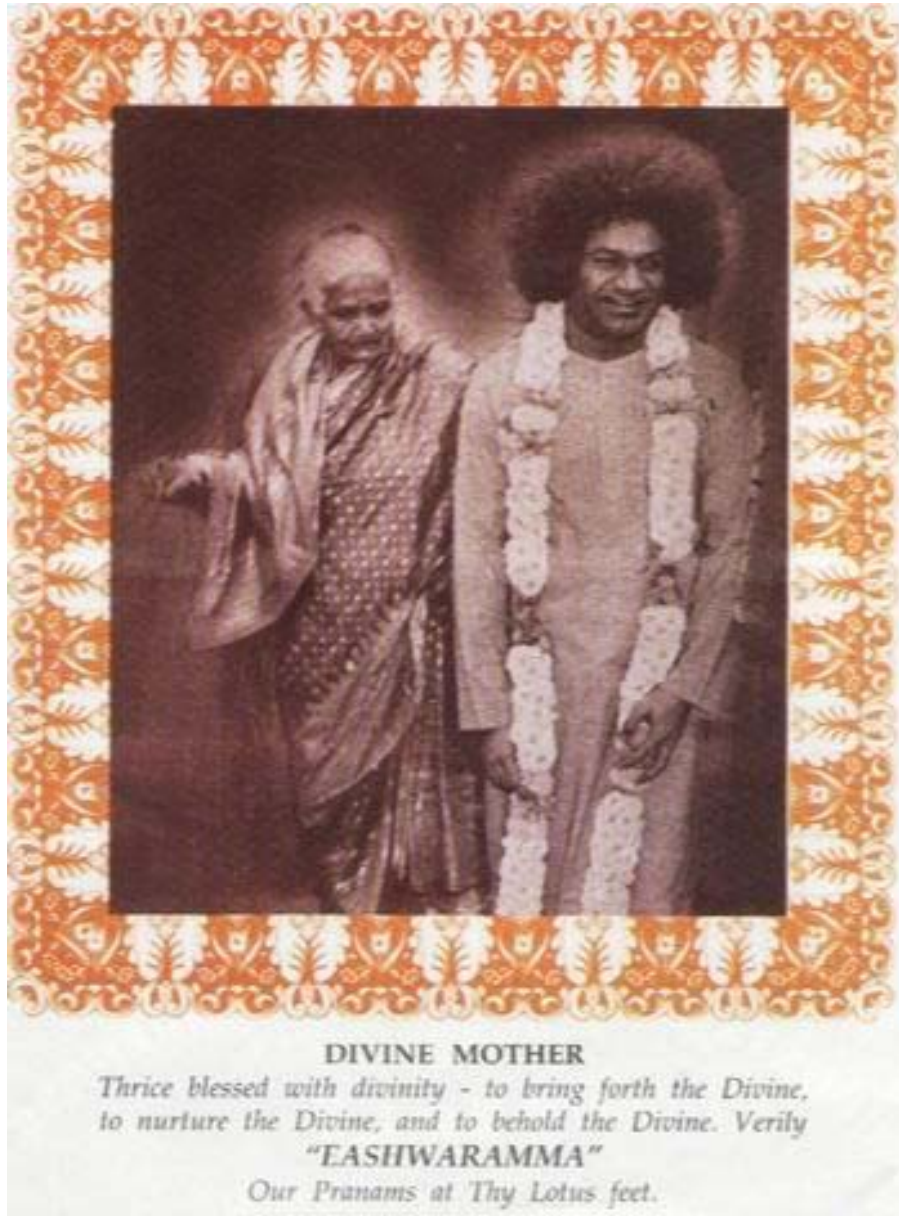
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Love All, Serve All

Easwaramma Day Special Issue



(Image Credit: saibabalinks.org)

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EASWARAMMA, THE DIVINE MOTHER



(Image Credit: saibabalinks.org) the mother of Easwara. This name was given to her by her father-in-law, Kondama Raju (Swami's grandfather).

Easwamma day is celebrated as children's day, in honor of her immense compassion and love for children. Easwamma Day is also celebrated to propagate the glory of motherhood. Swami in one of his divine discourses narrated an incident to describe her love for children.¹ In summer, students used to attend summer classes from various states and countries. Gokak, who used to conduct the classes, was a strict disciplinarian. One day, the students were having lunch in the dining hall. One of the boys got up and went outside before others could finish their meals. Gokak, who watched this through the window, called him and chided him for his act of indiscipline. "When your fellow students are having their food, you should not get up in the middle even though you have completed your meals. It is equal to insulting them." Saying so, Gokak suspended him from the classes. The boy was in tears, but Gokak was not moved.

The boy came to mother Easwamma's room, fell at her feet and started crying. He told her about the harsh punishment meted out to him by Gokak. He pleaded with her to come to his rescue. Easwamma consoled him and sent him away. Later, she sat on the steps where Gokak would pass by. After a while Gokak came there. She offered her Namaskar to him and he reciprocated the same most reverentially. Then she said, "When I did Namaskar to you, you reciprocated the same. In the same manner, if you punish others, you will be punished in return. The boy out of his innocence has done a mistake. Please forgive him and allow him to attend the classes." Then Gokak replied, "Mother, if I forgive him, it would set a bad precedent for others. Anyway, I will forgive him only for your sake." In this manner, she would go out of her way to help and provide comfort and solace to others. Although Easwamma did not have formal education, she conducted herself in an exemplary manner.

Easwamma would tell everybody not to criticize others or hurt or make fun of others. Easwamma would say if you talk to others in a harsh manner, it will come back to you as a resound.

Mother Easwamma had noble desires. She requested Swami to build school, hospital, and provide drinking water to everyone in the village. Before Easwamma passed away, Swami fulfilled all her three wishes.

Here's how Swami describes the last few hours before Easwamma passed away. "The summer classes were on at Bangalore. In the morning at 7 am, breakfast had to be served to the students. They went round with Nagara Sankeerthan (street singing of spirituals) and returned at 6 am. I gave them darshan (audience) at its close. Then, I went for my bath. Meanwhile, Eswamma had finished her bath; she drank her coffee as usual quite happily and took her seat on the inner verandah. All of a sudden proceeding to the bathroom, she cried out, "Swami, Swami, Swami," thrice. At this, I responded, "Coming, coming." Within that period, she breathed her last. What greater sign of goodness is needed? She had no need to be served and nursed." "From the ground floor, she called, "Swami! Swami!". I replied, "Coming, coming" and she was gone. It was like the elephant's calling and the Lord proceeding to bless; the two wires achieving connection, the release happening instantaneously."

Even after about 30 years of her passing away, Swami says that Easwamma continues to express her motherly concern in numerous ways. At times, Easwamma makes appearances in Swami's room. One day Swami asked the boys for a belt to hold the silk dhoti around His waist. But the belt had a shining buckle and Swami did not want to use it. A few days later, Easwamma came to Swami's room early in the morning and gave a belt without a buckle. The boys who sleep in Swami's room heard some conversation and woke up and wondered how anybody could enter Swami's room when everything was locked. This is one such incident.

Swami says that there are many noble mothers in this world, but Easwamma was the chosen one. "I chose her to be my mother. That is the intimate relationship between Mother Easwamma and myself."

1. Love and Respect your Parents and Sanctify Your Life. Text of the Divine Discourse delivered by Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on May 6, 2003 in Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan, Bangalore.

TRUE DEVOTION CAN ACCOMPLISH THE IMPOSSIBLE

Swami says: "My palm holds the power to transform earth into sky, and sky into earth." Swami's devotees, the world over, accept this statement as an undisputed truth, nay a gospel. Yet, when faced with difficulties, we become fearful and anxious. Swami's palm holds that much power, but who holds Swami in the heart? We devotees, don't we? Swami is the resident of our hearts, so if Swami can do anything, we devotees too can accomplish the impossible with His grace.

Don't just take my word; history is replete with examples of devotees being able to perform the most difficult of feats due to God's grace. During the Ramayana era, monkeys, by invoking the Lord's name, could make rocks float on water and build a bridge of floating rocks across an entire ocean. If apes had that much faith in God's name, can't we humans do much better?

Mother Mirabai was, once, under the guise of consecrated food, served poisoned pudding. With firm faith in God's name and an intense devotional fervor, she devoured the pudding. Lo and behold, the pudding was instantly transformed into divine ambrosia, much to the disappointment of her enemies.

One may contend that great saints are different and they are beyond the ordinary. Very true. Great saints are indeed a different genre, but true devotion transcends the illusory barrier of being a saint or sinner. Ask any Sai devotee about her/his experiences and each devotee will have their own book of experiences to narrate. These experiences demonstrate beyond doubt that Swami's love transcends the labels of saints and sinners.

The author, during his student days in India, was once walking past a locked door. The day being a national holiday, the commercial business hosted in the premise was observing a holiday. From within, however, distinct cries of a trapped kitten could be heard. Unable to bear the moaning, and yet utterly helpless, the author stood at the gate, not knowing the way to save the kitten. Swami was very new in the author's life, and faith in Swami's divinity was not yet firmly rooted. The helplessness of an innocent soul, however, stirred a cry from the depths of the heart and Swami's grace was fervently invoked. Chanting Swami's name, the author touched the big lock that bolted the door. To his surprise, the lock opened in a snap and the door was made accessible to facilitate the rescue of the suffering soul.

God can do the impossible and He can work out a miracle if necessary. What is needed on our part is faith and patience.

Most of us believe in the power and glory of God, but lack the patience to await His response. We often give up hope half way or lose faith if there is a delay in His response. God answers every prayer, but His response manifests when He thinks the time is appropriate. Living in the day and age of fast foods and instant dinners, we have lost a very important virtue: patience. Patience is such a great virtue and if we back faith with patience, we can transcend the illusion of mortality and enter the gates of immortality. With Swami's grace we can do the impossible. With such a powerful Lord on our side what is there to fear. The impossible will become possible in a moment.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

"A tree has a trunk covered with bark and myriad roots to feed it and hold it firm. It has branches spreading in all directions, tapering into twigs. It has millions of leaves which breathe and borrow energy from the Sun. It fulfills itself by attracting bees to fertilize its flowers into seeds. All this variety of color, fragrance, taste, smell and softness, of strength, toughness and tenderness has emanated from one single seed. All creation has emanated similarly from God. This is the Reality inherent in all. That Thou Art. Be firm in that faith." - Baba

UPCOMING EVENTS

May

Friday, May 06: Easwaramma Day

Sunday, May 08: Mother's day

June

Wednesday, June 01: Hanuman Jayanti

Sunday, June 19: Father's Day

July

Monday, July 04: America's Independence Day

Thursday, July 21: Guru Poornima/Vyasa Poornima

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. – 8.30 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.

PUJA SPONSORSHIP

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Abishekam.....	\$51
Satyanarayana Vrata.....	\$81
Vahana Puja.....	\$15
Annadan.....	\$251

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To sign-up, simply visit the temple's website at:

<http://www.omsaimandir.org>

Once there, submit your email address. It takes less than a minute to sign-up.

THE DEVOTEE WAS EVEN GREATER

Once, Sage Narada came into the presence of the Lord. The Lord asked him, "Narada, in all your travels have you been able to discover the secret of the universe? Have you been able to understand the mystery behind this world? Everywhere you look you see the five great elements: earth, water, fire, air and ether. Which do you think occupies the first place? Of everything that is to be found in the universe what is the most important of all?"

Narada answered, "Lord, of the five elements the densest, biggest and most important is surely the earth element." The Lord answered, "How can the earth element be biggest when three-fourths of the earth is covered by water? Such a big earth is being swallowed by the water. What is bigger, the thing that is being swallowed or that which is swallowing it?" Narada acknowledged that water must be bigger.

The Lord continued. He said, "But Narada, we have the ancient tale that when the demons hid in the waters, then in order to find them, a great sage came and swallowed up the whole ocean in one gulp. Do you think the sage is greater or the ocean is greater?" Narada had to agree that without doubt the sage was certainly greater than the water he had swallowed. "But," continued the Lord, "it is said that when he left his earthly body, this same sage became a star. Such a great sage is now appearing only as a small star in the vast sky. Then what do you think is bigger; is it the sage or is it the sky that is bigger?" Narada answered, "Swami, the sky is surely bigger." Then the Lord asked, "Yet we know that one time when the Lord came as avatar and incarnated in a dwarf-body, he expanded himself so hugely that he was able to cover both the earth and the sky with his one foot. Do you think God's foot is bigger or the sky?" "O, God's foot is certainly bigger," Narada replied. But, the Lord asked, "If God's foot is so big, then what about his infinite form?"

Now, Narada felt that he had come to the final conclusion. "Yes," he said exultantly, "the Lord is the biggest. He is infinite. There is nothing greater than He." But the Lord had still one more question. "What about the devotee who has been able to imprison this infinite Lord within his own heart? Now tell me, Narada, who is greater, the devotee who has the Lord locked up or the Lord who is locked up by the devotee?" Narada had to admit that the devotee was greater than the Lord, and therefore, the devotee must rank first in importance over everything, surpassing even the Lord.

- Adapted from Oka Chinna Katha by N. Kasturi

DEVOTEES' EXPERIENCES

Dr. T. Vytautas (39), Doctor of Human Sciences from Lithuania, relates a few of his experiences of the Divinity of Bhagavan in his own words.

I came to Prasanthi Nilayam in June 1995 for the first time. Swami called a group of Russians and a few others for interview on July 11. I was also included in the group by Swami's grace.

At the entrance to the interview room, Swami stood and received each of us with a smile and waving His hand showed us in as a model host. As I was entering, Swami caught hold of my hand and asked, 'what is it?' 'A ring, Swami', I replied. 'A ring!' Swami grimaced out of dissatisfaction and let me go. After all of us were seated, Swami materialised vibhuti with a wave of His hand and gave to all ladies present.

He opened His palm and put it on His chest and drew it down. An idol of Lord Vinayaka appeared in His palm. Vinayaka seemed to be amidst flames but untouched by them. 'It is good to worship Vinayaka to ward off obstacles', Swami said and gave the idol to an Indian lady, adding, 'worship it'. Next, He drew His palm again on His gown and produced a silver casket full of vibhuti. He presented it to the group of gentlemen from India.

Earlier, he waved His hand curiously and caught hold of something in the air. Down came a golden chain with a pendant studded with a large pearl and several diamonds in a particular design hanging from His fist. He gave it to a lady from our country. Later, some Japanese saw it and remarked, 'This is the symbol of Japan'. Swami came to me and said, 'change the ring?' 'Sure, I want your ring, Swami!' I replied happily. Was it a wrong answer?

'All rings in the world are mine', Swami said and laughed. He, however, made no attempt to change my ring. As Swami was talking to some in the group in the antechamber, I was doing namasmarana of Jesus Christ intensely. Just then, Swami parted the door curtains of the antechamber with His hand, emerged out of the antechamber and came straight to me. I was flabbergasted at the way Swami answered my prayer to Jesus Christ.

He took out my ring. It was a cheap ring with the photograph of Swami on it. It was loose on my finger. 'See, see, see.' Swami showed it to some in the group. It was sent round and then collected by Swami. 'What type

of ring do you want?' Swami asked me. 'You know better, Swami!' was all I thought. I made no reply.

Then Swami held my ring in His hand a little away from His mouth and blew at it once. It turned into a golden ring with a precious stone studded in it. He then tried to fix it on my finger, but it did not pass the joint. After trying it a couple of times He left it to me to put it on my finger. The ring fitted well as if it was made to order after I slowly passed it over the joint.

He then asked one Russian gentleman, 'what is your profession?' 'I am a scientist in Electronics', he replied. 'What, what, what?' Swami asked. 'Physics', he said. 'Physics deals with phenomenal world. It is only half knowledge. Veda is full knowledge. It includes all. I can do everything. I am Veda Purusha' Swami said. He then turned to a Russian young man.

'You have a doubt', Swami told him, 'if it was I that came into your dream. Yes. It is I that came into your dream. Be sure it is Me. Are you married, by the way? Or, shall I find you a wife?' 'No, Swami!' the young man replied, 'I am married'. All of us had a hearty laugh. 'Next time you bring your wife also', Swami told him.

Swami told us all, 'understand that I am not this body. I do not belong to the physical world. I am a spiritual being. I am all pervading presence. I will be with you, beside you, behind you and in front of you, and protecting you.' Swami gave us all vibhuti packets as we left the room.

Long before I saw Swami in July 1995 in His physical form, I had a taste of His miracle back home. Our teacher in Vilnius gave me one day in 1984 a photograph of Bhagavan. He pasted it on a small wooden piece and presented it to me after briefing me on Sri Sathya Sai Baba, His life, message and miracles. I held it nearer my face when I felt a fine fragrance emanating from it. It was a mixture of sandal and floral essences. 'Did you put any scent on the photograph?' I asked my teacher. 'Oh! No!' He replied, 'I don't know how the perfume came there'.

In 1984, I put that photograph before me and was talking to it as if Baba was in front of me. Suddenly I felt a warm and loving hug as if some lady like mother hugged me with intense affection and love. *(to be continued)*

Source:

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

TEMPLE JOURNAL

MAHASHIVARATRI, MARCH 08, 2005



SRI RAMA NAVAMI, APRIL 18, 2005

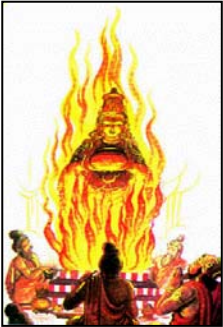


CHILDREN'S CORNER

Sai Ram Children,

April 18th was Ram Navami, the day when Lord Rama was born. In the next few issues of the newsletter we will cover stories about Lord Rama.

Long time ago there was a king named Dasharatha who was loved by everyone. All the people in his kingdom were very happy and prosperous. But the king was unhappy as he did not have children.



The family priest advised the king to perform a fire sacrifice to seek blessings from God for children. While performing the fire ceremony, a majestic figure rose from the fire and gave the King a bowl of rice

pudding and said "God is pleased with you, please distribute this rice pudding to your wives, and you will have children soon." The king happily distributed the rice pudding to his three wives Kausalya, Kaikeyi, and Sumitra.

During the same period, there lived a mean king named Ravana. He abused his people and did not allow them to pray. So Lord Vishnu, the preserver of the universe, chose to be born as King Dasharatha's son to destroy Ravana.

After sometime the three wives gave birth to four boys. Kausalya gave birth to Lord Rama, Bharatha was born to Kaikeyi, and Sumtira gave birth to twins, Lakshmana and Shatrugna. Lord Rama's birthday is celebrated as Ram Navami because Lord Rama is none other than Lord Vishnu.

One day a well respected and learned rishi (teacher) named Vishwamitra came to the kingdom. He asked the king if he could take Lord Rama with him to kill the devils that were not letting him perform a fire sacrifice. Lord Rama was only 14 years old so the king was hesitant. But Vishwamitra insisted on taking Lord Rama. Finally, the king agreed and sent Lord Rama and Lakshmana.

Vishwamitra taught Lord Rama several mantras (powerful prayers) that enabled Lord Rama to fight against the devils. Once they reached the forest, Vishwamitra asked Lord Rama to challenge one of the devils named Tadaka with his bow and arrow. All the wild animals in the forest ran helter-skelter. Tadaka heard the noise too and ran towards Lord Rama to attack. Lord Rama and Tadaka fought a fierce battle but finally Lord Rama killed the devil. Vishwamitra was very pleased with Lord Rama. When they finally reached Vishwamitra's ashram (home), the rishi started his fire sacrifice, a prayer that he wanted to perform. Soon Maricha, Tadaka's son appeared with a troop. Lord Rama with the help of the mantra that Vishwamitra had taught him invoked a powerful weapon and killed all the devils. Thus Lord Rama helped Vishwamitra to perform fire sacrifice.

Courtesy:

<http://www.indolink.com/Kidz/Stories/ramayan a1.html>

**DEVOTEES ARE REQUESTED TO
CONTRIBUTE ARTICLES,
EXPERIENCES, STORIES, ETC.
FOR PUBLICATION IN THE
UPCOMING ISSUES OF SAI
SANDESH**

AN APPEAL

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