



Shraddha. Saburi.

SAI SANDESH

The Official Monthly Newsletter of
OM SAI MANDIR

A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

45-11 Smart Street * Flushing, NY 11355 * Tel. (718) 461-0454

www.omsaimandir.org * info@omsaimandir.org

The newsletter can be read online at www.omsaimandir.org



Love All. Serve All.

Dec 2007

Volume 4, Issue 12



LIFE SIZE STATUES OF SAI BABA HAVE ARRIVED AT THE MANDIR!

Shri Shirdi Sai Baba and Shri Sathya Sai Baba's life-sized statues have arrived at the temple. Devotees are welcome to take darshan and blessings. The temple is open daily from 8.00 AM to 9.00 PM.



STATUES OF SHIRDI SAI BABA AND SATHYA SAI BABA HAVE BEEN INSTALLED

Baba's love and grace found abundant expression through two life-size color statues that were recently installed at Om Sai Mandir. The Prana Prathistha/Sthapna was performed on Friday, November 23, 2007, Swami's 82nd birthday. It was a historic day considering these are probably the world's first life-size color statues of Shirdi Sai Baba and Sathya Sai Baba to be installed at one place.

In October 2004, my father passed away and I had to visit India. My visit was sudden but after performing the ceremonies and after visiting Shirdi and Puttaparthi, I was divinely inspired to seek out a sculptor who would be capable of carving the first life-size, marble statue of Sri Sathya Sai Baba along with a statue of Sri Shirdi Sai Baba. During my visit to Puttaparthi, I was fortunate as the Lord of Parthi personally blessed Om Sai Mandir's card and also granted my prayer for creating His statue.

My search for a capable person took me to many sculptors across India. I visited sculptors from South to North and came across many skilled artisans who were confident of carving Sri Shirdi Sai Baba's statue but were not sure about carving the first-ever marble statue of Sathya Sai Baba.

Finally, with Swami's grace, a professional sculptor in Jaipur promised to make an attempt, and I felt as if Sai was prompting me to select him. Reluctant to make a hasty decision, however, I asked him to make a clay model for my approval. With Baba's blessings, he created a model that was close to what I had in mind. Pure Makrana marble was ordered in 2004 and during the next year or so the sculptors started chiseling the Lord's beautiful forms.

In 2005, I took the sculptors to Parthi. They were blessed as Swami not only gave them darshan, but also gave them an opportunity to sketch Him. In His presence, the sculptors felt energized and continued their work with enthusiasm.

I had to make several trips to India to monitor the progress of this project and spent days together at the workshop in Jaipur. It was decided to make the statues in full color to give them a live look and feel. To bring out sharp features and to achieve a high degree of naturalness and originality, we had to work very hard and also incur humungous expenses. Around 2006, the statues had taken fine shape. Once the statues were ready, I realized that we would need beautiful silver singhasans (thrones) as well, so, despite the additional expenses, I decided to order two Silver singhasans (thrones). A professional from Delhi was selected for the purpose and during a course of one year, he was able to create beautiful

Silver thrones.

The process culminated with a final trip to India around August-September 2007, when I completed the necessary transportation and customs formalities. With Baba's grace, Indian customs and Department of Homeland Security cleared the process without a hitch. The statues finally arrived in New York and on Monday, November 19, 2007, they were delivered at the temple's premises.

Sathya Sai Baba's statue was designed with Abhaya Mudra (blessing hand). The sculptors had feared that the hand may not be able to withstand the transportation process, but with Sai's blessings, both statues came to New York without a scratch-this was nothing short of a miracle. The process of bringing the statues inside the temple was another interesting journey that took around three days.

Day One

On Monday, November 19, 2007, the statues were delivered to the temple. A commercial forklift had been arranged to unload the truck. Due to various reasons the truckers had not made it on time making it very late for the forklift operator to complete the process that day. We were discussing alternate solutions, but Swami had pre-arranged everything. Just opposite the temple, a forklift was waiting unnoticed until it caught our attention. The operator acceded to our request and helped us unload the statues.

Day Two

Attempts were made to carry Baba inside but carrying them in physically was almost impossible. Rain and bad weather hindered our efforts and we decided to wait one more day.

Day Three

Finally, on Wednesday, November 21, 2007, Karthika Ekadashi, an auspicious day, we were able to bring the statues inside the temple. The front wall of the temple was torn down to facilitate the process and amidst chanting of Vedic hymns, the Lord's forms finally entered the temple.

The mission was accomplished but the saga continues and a lot remains to be achieved in Sai seva. Our journey so far was possible only because of Sai's blessings and good wishes and prayers of all devotees and well wishers.

I would urge all devotees to come and visit the temple and take darshan of the Lord's two beautiful forms.

--Gangadhar Rao Chalasani, MD, President

PICTORIAL PRESENTATION OF BABA'S ARRIVAL



Om Sai Mandir's 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.
SAHASRANAM, BABA'S 108 NAMES, ETC.: Daily
ANNADAN (FOOD SERVICE): Daily at the Mandir
ANNADAN (FOOD SERVICE) FOR HOMELESS
BROTHERS AND SISTERS: Every Saturday at 1 P.M. Call
718-461-0454

PUJA SPONSORSHIP

Archana: \$11
Abhishekam: \$51
Satyanarayana Vrata: \$81
Vahana Puja: \$15
Annadan: \$251
To sponsor pujas, call (718) 461-0454.

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 2007

Thurs., Dec 20: Vaikuntha Ekadashi
Mon., Dec 24: Christmas Eve
Tues, Dec 25: Christmas
Mon., Dec 31: Christmas Eve

EKADASHA RUDRA ABHISHEKAM

Daily from 8.30 PM to 11.30 PM

Rudra Abhishekam - Daily

For the welfare of humanity, Ekadash Rudra Abhishekam is being performed daily (eleven times) from 8.00 AM to 11.30 AM. All are welcome to attend this landmark event.

Baba Performs Balloon Miracle Again!

Devotees may recall that last year there was a balloon miracle at Om Sai Mandir. 81 Helium balloons were adorning the ceiling to mark Swami's 81st birthday. When the temple was opened the following day (November 24, 2006), all balloons were neatly lined up at Baba's feet. Eight bunches of ten each were sitting in groups and one single balloon was resting at the center of the altar-as if forming the number 8+1. Many balloons had been taped to the ceiling and it was a surprise how they made their way to Baba's altar. (See pictures of last year's balloon miracle at http://www.omsaimandir.org/sai_sandesh_v3_i10.pdf)

A similar miracle happened this year as well. We had decorated the temple's main hall with 82 Helium balloons to mark Swami's 82nd birthday. When we were performing Ekadasa Rudra Abhishekam, a bunch of balloons started descending to the altar. After circling two individuals who were chanting Rudram, one bunch circled around Lord Shiva and other deities and rested at the corner of the altar in standing position for a very long period of time.

Rudram was followed by Prana Prathistha (installation ceremony for Baba's statues) puja. Around the end of the prayers, other balloons started descending in an orderly fashion. They all circled around the altar of Lord Shiva and slowly proceeded toward Baba to finally rest at His feet. Bunch after bunch, the balloons followed the same behavior, as if to pay obeisance to the Lord of the Universe. Some balloons proceeded to the second floor of the mandir while others were resting on of individual devotees. Two purple balloons descended on the kalasham through which the Prana Prathistha ceremony was performed. They stood in a vertical position without any support and without any movement for almost the entire day.

It was as if these inanimate objects had acquired a life of their own and were sharing the excitement of this historic occasion.

We are not limited, finite beings

By the Sai Sandesh Team

Very often we hear people saying, "After all, I am just an ordinary human being." Untrue! Just the way a lion cub growing in the company of meek lambs runs at the sight of another lion or wild animal, man runs from his own real nature until he is awakened to the truth about himself. Over so many births we have become so conditioned and accustomed to considering ourselves to be the finite body in which we reside, we completely forget our real identity.

The Bible says that God created man in His own image. The Vedas declare Aham Brahmasmi (I am the Supreme Spirit) and Tat Tvam Asi (Thou Art That). Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do." Swami, too, has said, "You and I are not different. We are one" and that "Man is God". Is there room to doubt when God Himself in the form of Sai, Jesus, and various incarnations declares that man is divine.

Even in his seventies, Late Sri Chinmoy, a spiritual giant, would perform Herculean feats such as lifting elephants, performing weight training exercises with thousands of pounds, running extended marathons, and doing many acts which would be considered impossible in the physical world. The purpose of these feats was to demonstrate what man is capable of achieving. It wasn't physical prowess, but rather his ability to connect with God, his inner self, that empowered this super saint to perform such extraordinary acts.

If we harness our will power, we can not only do great things, we can actually shape the outcome of future events. Divine beings like Krishna, Sai, and Buddha did exactly that. They utilized their sankalpa shakti (divine will power) to cast their will over entire mankind. All the spiritual awakening we are witnessing today is a small byproduct of their sankalpa.

Paramhansa Yogananda could tap into his will power even as a child. He was so accustomed to speaking the truth that there came a time when he developed enough power to make future events mirror his words to the T. Once, he jokingly told his sister that she would have a boil on her arm. True to his words, the next day his sister's forearm had a big boil. At the start of his mission, Vivekananda worshipped Lord Shiva with 108 Bilva leaves and confidently declared that one day a big spiritual institution would spring up at that place. This is exactly how it happened many years later.

Will power is not restricted to saints and avatars. All human beings are born with it. The author, for example, is an

insignificant person but he was able to exert his will power and Sai's grace to open a bolted door. When he was in his teens, the author was passing through a commercial studio. Helpless meowing of a trapped kitten was rippling through the stillness of an otherwise quiet environment and it was very clear that the kitten was writhing with pain and hunger. As it was a Sunday, the owners of the property were not available to facilitate the newborn's rescue. To make matters worse, a big lock was securing a two-piece wooden door and there appeared to be no way to get past it physically. Unable to bear the cries, however, the author invoked Sai's grace and while chanting His name, touched the lock with his index finger. Lo! The lock broke open as if hit by a thunderbolt.

On another occasion, he was diagnosed with a severe non-union Scaphoid fracture that necessitated a complex bone graft surgery. Through constant prayer, the author was able to fuse and heal the fracture. A leading surgeon remarked: "Even I could not have done a better job than this. You don't need any surgery, young man."

It is only when man turns inward, that he realizes the divine glory that constitutes man's true essence. We are not finite beings. We are made in the image of the infinite Lord, All-Powerful who pervades the entire cosmos. Can the image of such a powerful Lord be weak and limited?

SAI WISDOM

Truth is one. It is beyond mind and speech. It transcends the limitations of time and space. Innumerable seekers have pursued different paths to recognise this Truth. There are notable differences among the seekers of Truth. These differences do not affect the nature of Reality. On the contrary, it is the existence of these differences that has spurred the continuous search for a unifying principle. -- Baba

Source: Thought for the day, Prashanti Nilayam, December 04, 2007

BEACON LIGHTS

HANUMAN'S EXEMPLARY CONDUCT

By The Sai Sandesh Team

After the annihilation of demonic forces, Lord Rama returned to his kingdom. After His coronation ceremony, He expressed His appreciation for the services of all those who had participated in His divine mission by granting gifts, favors, and boons. All to the exception of Hanuman were granted precious gifts in abundance.

Through all this Hanuman remained unaffected and enraptured, basking in the glory of Rama's feet. Mother Sita was witnessing this entire ceremony and could not understand why Hanuman who had played the most important role in Rama's mission was singled out for receiving nothing. She wanted to make amends for the oversight and immediately threw a precious necklace toward him. Lord Hanuman, however, took the necklace and started biting each pearl as if looking to find something within those pearls. After breaking the pearls he would discard them away as waste. Everyone in the court was shocked at Hanuman's behavior and questioned the appropriateness of the act.

Hanuman then explained that he was looking for his Rama within those pearls and without Rama those pearls meant nothing to him. While saying this, he dug his sharp claws into his chest and tore it open for all to see. The heart was a veritable temple within which were imprinted clear images of Rama, Lakshman, and Sita.

Rama then explained that He did not grant anything in the physical sense to Hanuman because He was well aware of the fact that nothing was as precious to Hanuman as his Lord Rama and so Rama had granted Himself to this beloved devotee of His.

Hanuman's conduct is a true beacon light for us. While others were satisfied with a few trinkets, Hanuman did not crave for them. His eyes were set only on one goal: Rama. Even when Maya (Mother Sita) tried to tempt him with precious pearls, he discarded them away and continued searching for his Rama. Life often tempts us with what we consider as precious pearls in the form of wealth, fame, attachment, power, and other perishable objects. If we run after them, we will lose sight of the real goal, but if we act like Hanuman and seek only the Lord, then He will surely enshrine Himself in our hearts and lead us to the ultimate goal, the true treasure. expedite our growth and evolution.

PRANA PRATHISTHA & SWAMI'S B'DAY:

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2007



Om Sai Mandir
A Non Profit Organization

Om Sai Mandir is organized exclusively for charitable, religious purposes and is a non profit organization, exempt under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Contributions made to Om Sai Mandir are tax deductible and can be mailed to:

Om Sai Mandir
45-11 Smart Street
Flushing, NY 11355

or online: www.omsaimandir.org

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Have a suggestion, article, or idea for *Sai Sandesh*? Please e-mail our editorial team at saisandesh@omsaimandir.org

ADDRESS FORM (HELP US UPDATE OUR RECORDS)

First Name:

Phone:

Last Name:

Mobile:

Address 1:

Fax:

Address2:

Email:

City, State, Zip:

Please mail the address form to:

Om Sai Mandir

45-11 Smart Street
Flushing, NY 11355

Tel: (718) 461-0454

Email: info@omsaimandir.org

Website: www.omsaimandir.org