



Shraddha. Saburi.



The message of Sai Baba

Truth. Right Conduct. Peace. Love. Non Violence.



Love All. Serve All.

The official monthly newsletter of
OM SAI MANDIR
A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

45 11 Smart Street * Flushing, NY 11355 * (718) 461-0454 * info@omsaimandir.org * www.omsaimandir.org

February 2007

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

MAHASHIVARATRI SPECIAL ISSUE

LIFE SIZE STATUES OF SAI BABA

Two life size, marble statues of Sai Baba will soon be adorning the temple's altar. Devotees interested in contributing toward this cause may contact the temple's management at 1.718.461.0454.

Checks could be made in the name of Om Sai Mandir and mailed to 45-11 Smart Street, Flushing, NY 11355.



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BE LIKE THE SQUIRREL

BY THE SAI SANDESH TEAM

In the legend of Ramayana one cannot but help notice the mighty contribution of the little squirrel, the same squirrel that was blessed thrice. First, for being able to make a contribution to the Lord's cause; second, for being blessed by Lord Rama; and third, for being sanctified by His holy touch, a mark of which is still borne by descendants of the squirrel race.

When in order to reach Lanka, Rama was getting a bridge built over the Indian Ocean, millions of members of the monkey army were gathering large stones and mountains for the construction. When the monkeys were busy constructing the bridge, a little squirrel busied itself in carrying small pebbles to the site of construction. It would run and carry small pebbles in its mouth and empty them at the place where huge stones were being assembled. The squirrel's small size was not a deterrent to its devotion. A band of monkeys noticed this unusual behavior and tossed the squirrel out in an act of mockery. Their apparent cruelty turned out to be an act of blessing, a blessing seldom secured by even the greatest of gods, for the squirrel landed straight into the hands of the Lord Himself. [What a beautiful lesson this is. When the world tosses us out, the Lord's ever-protecting hands are always ready to save us.]

The ever-merciful Lord asked the squirrel, "What is it that you were trying to accomplish, my child?" The meek creature humbly replied, "Lord, I am very small in size and I cannot carry big rocks, but I was very eager to contribute to your cause and was therefore carrying these small pebbles in my mouth. I did not want to lose this opportunity to serve you and so I tried performing service in a manner that befits my size, strength, and abilities."

When the squirrel fell into the hands of the Lord, three beautiful lines were imprinted on its back, and Lord Rama blessed the squirrel with the boon that all its descendants would bear the same three marks on their backs. This act was a beautiful lesson for mankind. The big works being performed by giant, able-bodied monkeys did not catch the Lord's attention, but this little act of service that was being performed with sincere devotion ultimately won grace.

This truth was also demonstrated by a little child of Swami. When Baba was constructing a super specialty hospital, huge project plans were being drawn out. The elite of elite were eagerly awaiting a chance to contribute to this project. All along a little student in Swami's university was wondering how he could do his bit.

During the construction of the hospital Swami would often spend hours behind closed doors conferencing with engineers and doctors. One afternoon, the doors opened suddenly and the Lord appeared holding a letter in His hand. There was a twinkle in His eye and an aura of satisfaction.

When the letter was read aloud, all were dumbfounded to hear the plea of a small child. When all other students were giving their clothes for professional laundering, this little boy was washing them with his own hands. This went on for months until the boy finally managed to save hundred rupees. This currency of love was enclosed with the letter where he had poured his heart out to Swami. The letter read as follows:

Dear Bhagavan:

You have given so much to me and to every one here. You have provided free education for me and all my brothers and now I hear that you are constructing a BIG Hospital what will provide the most modern health care facilities to every section of the society totally free of cost. Bhagavan! I also want to be a part of your glorious mission but I am just a small boy and I don't know how I can contribute. Bhagavan, my parents are extremely poor but in spite of that they send me a little extra pocket money every month. I know it's due to their love and concern for me.

Bhagavan! For the last three months I have not given my clothes to the dhoby. While all the other boys were sleeping in the night I washed my clothes and thus I managed to save a little money. Bhagavan! I have also resisted the temptations of toffees, chocolates and all the other things and thus managed to save a little money. Bhagavan! I offer this 100 rupee note to you. I feel ashamed and small to give you so little but even if this money can be used to buy a small brick for the new hospital, I will be the happiest child in the world.

--Your Loving Son¹

Baba held this note close to His heart and declared with utmost joy that this single note was more than millions.

How many times do we stop from undertaking devotional or service activities with the fear that our little acts won't matter to God. Had the squirrel or the little boy paid heed to such thoughts could they have won God's grace?

1. <http://www.cosmicharmony.com/Av/SatyaSai/SatyaSai.htm>. Accessed on January 21, 2007.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 2007

Wed., February 14: Valentine's Day
Fri., February 16: Mahashivaratri

March 2007

Sat., March 03: Holika/Holi Poornima
Sun., March 04: Holika Poornima/Holi
Tue., March 20: Ugadi, Gudi Padwa, Cheti Chand (Telugu,
Kannada, Marathi, Konkani, Kashmiri, and Sindhi New Year)
Tue., March 27: Sri Ram Navami (Sita Ram Kalyan)

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DEVOTEES' EXPERIENCES

By A Sai Devotee, New York

When I remember my younger days I recall the naïve, child-like innocence with which I would often call on Baba, a call that was never -- and is still never -- ignored by the Lord. I was a regular visitor to Sunday bhajans at a local Sai Center, a habit that had become a part of my weekly routine.

During one of my visits to the center, I accidentally met some evil mongers who were talking ill of Baba. Ignoring their paltry remarks I proceeded for my bhajans as usual. The guilt of having heard the evil words, however, was eating me from inside, and I could not concentrate on the soulful bhajans that were being sung at the center. I chided myself for having feared the evil doers even for those few moments.

The feelings of remorse were disturbing my concentration and I could not enjoy the spiritual retreat that was at hand. I was earnestly praying to Baba seeking pardon for my irresponsible behavior. Wanting a sign from Baba, I requested the Lord to drop the big (very big) flower that was adorning His lotus feet.

With all the prayer strength that I could muster at the moment, I requested the Lord to drop the big flower if my mistake was pardoned. For a few moments nothing moved and I felt even more morose. The [imaginary] thought that the Lord had not forgiven me caused me to sink into further despair -- little did I know then that the Lord never gets angry for anything, let alone for such a silly cause.

Just at the moment the flower that was adorning Baba's feet jumped -- it did not fall, it jumped -- from the altar and fell a few feet away, as if Baba had physically forced it to do so. This wonder was noticed by all present. At the end of the bhajans, and much to my delight, the flower was distributed among all present.

I have seen many flowers fall at Sai bhajans but this was different. The flower had fallen in an unusual semi-circular fashion, guided, as if, by an invisible hand.

The Lord is indeed omnipresent and ever listening to our prayers. What is wanted is implicit trust and patience. The call WILL be answered when the time is right.

RECITE THE SACRED NAME

SOURCE: OKA CHINNA KATHA

Sri Krishna Chaitanya was the pioneer of the movement of Nagarsamkeertan. He used to get himself immersed in the contemplation of the Lord while singing His glory and used to be oblivious of the external world.

Once he was conducting Nagarsamkeertan in Navadweep. Several leaders of the town too joined him in his bhajan. They were all ecstatically singing bhajans and walking along the streets. A thief also joined this group. He thought it would be an opportunity for him to pick the pockets of rich devotees who would be lost in singing and dancing. But when he actually participated in it he began singing with more zeal than others. All of them had come to a temple and were seated. He sat near Chaitanya, while those sitting in front were listening to his discourse. Many had left the temple precincts by then. He held Chaitanya's both feet and said: "Swami, you are giving so much advice to so many people. Kindly impart to me some sacred "manthra". Chaitanya looked at him and said: "Tell me first of all who you are and what you do". The thief said: "Swami! How can I lie to you? I am a thief. I have been a thief all my life. My name is Rama, people call me 'Rama' - the thief."

Chaitanya said: "Oh what a pity. I shall give you a name or a message but what will you give me as guru dakshina?" The thief at once said without any hesitation: "I shall give you a share in the booty I get from my theft." Chaitanya said: "I have no need for any money. All that I insist is that you should give up stealing." The thief said: "Swami, that is my profession, how else can I earn a living, when I do not have any other skill?" "Well," said Chaitanya, "I shall give you a sacred name on one condition, when you go for thieving, you must first recite the sacred name I give you 1008 times." Chaitanya whispered into his ear: "Om Namo Bhagavathe Vasudevaya". Transformation even by then had taken place in the thief because of the touch of the holy person. He was also freed from the sin of his past deeds because of the conversation with Chaitanya. The thief went back a refined person.

One day many wealthy house-holders had locked their houses and had gone for the darshan of Sri Krishna Chaitanya. The thief did not want to lose this opportunity to break into a house. He went to the house of the richest man of the town. He broke into the house and entered the room where the iron safe was kept. He opened it and saw valuable gems and jewels of gold. He resolved not to touch anything until he had finished reciting 1008 times the manthra given to him. Before he completed the number, the

master of the house arrived along with the family. The lady of the house wanted to remove all the jewels she had worn before she left the house and keep them back in the safe. She saw a stranger lost in the recitation of the sacred manthra "Om Namo Bhagavathe Vasudevaya." She thought he must be a great sage who had come to their house to bless them. She called her husband. The thief was lost in his meditation. The entire family sat round him with folded hands. They thought he must be a saintly soul like Chaitanya.

The thief opened his eyes after the completion of 1008 times the manthra. He was surprised to find a group of people sitting reverentially before him. The master of the house asked him, "Oh Sir! May we know who you are and may we request you to honour us by accepting to take food with us today so that we shall be redeemed of our sins." The thief said to himself: "If the mere recitation of the Lord's name, now and then can bring me such honour, what greater things cannot happen to me if I sincerely make it my daily habit of reciting the name continuously. I may certainly win the grace of the Lord." He decided to give up thieving. He prostrated before the master of the house and his wife and said, "Mother, let me tell you the truth. I am a thief. Let me go to the forest. I shall spend the rest of my life in the contemplation of God." All were surprised at his words but were very happy.

He stayed with them as their guest that night. The news of this event spread fast around in the morning. As a result, the whole neighbourhood came to see him. They took him in a palanquin round the town and left him in the forest where he wanted to do his tapas. Later, once again, he came to Chaitanya and received his blessings so that he may blossom into a real sage.

Vivekananda's famous quotes

"Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy - by one, or more, or all of these - and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details."

"It may be that I shall find it good to get outside of my body -- to cast it off like a disused garment. But I shall not cease to work! I shall inspire men everywhere, until the world shall know that it is one with God."

"This is the gist of all worship - to be pure and to do good to others. He who sees Siva (God) in the poor, in the weak, and in the diseased, really worships Siva, and if he sees Siva only in the image, his worship is but preliminary. He who has served and helped one poor man seeing Siva in him, without thinking of his caste, creed, or race, or anything, with him Siva is more pleased than with the man who sees Him only in temples."

" All power is within you, you can do anything and everything. Believe in that, do not believe that you are weak... You can do anything and everything, without even the guidance of any one. All power is there. Stand up and express the divinity with you... Arise, awake, sleep no more. With each of you there is the power to remove all wants and all miseries. Believe in this, that power will be manifested. "

"He alone lives who lives for others. The rest are more dead than alive."

"Aye, who ever saw money make the man? It is man that always make money. The whole world has been made by the energy of man, by the power of enthusiasm, by the power of faith."

"It is a tremendous error to feel helpless. Do not seek help from anyone. We are our own help. If we cannot help ourselves, there is none to help us."

MIND BOGGLING MIRACLES OF SAI BABA: TRANSPORTED TO AUSTRALIA IN A TRICE

ADAPTED FROM "THE WONDERFUL LEELAS OF BHAGAVAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA" BY ANIL KUMAR MALHOTRA, PRASHANTI NILAYAM

Once a devoted group of eleven Australian devotees were taken to the interview room. A member of this group was utterly depressed at the thought of leaving his ill wife in Australia. When Swami inquired about the cause of his anxiety, the devotee cried uncontrollably and sought Swami's help.

Seeing his helpless state and innocent plea, the Lord was moved and asked if he would like to be transported to her bedside instantly. The devotee replied in the affirmative. Baba immediately hit the adjacent wall with His fist three times. Lo and behold the devotee could now see Australia on the wall. At the fourth knock the devotee could see his town and at the fifth, his house in Australia.

Baba commanded the devotee to meet his wife. The devotee obeyed and immediately went near his sick wife. At the end of the interview only ten people came out. Some curious devotees investigated this matter only to find that the concerned person had actually reached his home in a trice.

SAI WISDOM

Man's life is bound by Kala, Karma, Karana and Kartavya (time, action, cause, duty). Due to the effect of the Kali age, man does not work hard; he has become lethargic. You have to sanctify your life by performing righteous action. Action is the cause for everything. It is very unfortunate that man has not understood the importance of action. He wants to lead an easy life. It is said, "Kashte Phali" (hard work alone yields rich rewards). The rewards that one gets will be commensurate with the efforts one puts in. One should recognise this truth and work hard accordingly. It is said in the Gita, "Karmanubandheeni Manushya Loke" (human society is bound by action). Nobody should waste time. Right from the time he wakes up in the morning, man should utilise his time and energy for the welfare of society. This is the main duty. He should realize this his welfare lies in the welfare of the society.

Source: Thought for the day, Prashanti Nilayam, January 29, 2007



Shraddha Saburi

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MAHASHIVATRI 2007



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**MAHASHIVARATRI CELEBRATIONS WILL BE HELD FROM
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 6.00 P.M. TO SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 6.00 A.M.
ALL-NIGHT BHAJANS, VIGIL, AND FOUR PHASES OF SHIVA ABHISHEKAM**

PHASE 1 ABHISHEKAM: 6 P.M. TO 8.30 P.M.

1. GANESH ABHISHEKAM: 6 P.M. TO 6.15 P.M.
 2. SHRI SAI BABA MAHA ABHISHEKAM: 6.15 P.M. TO 6.45 P.M.
 3. SHIVA MAHA ABHISHEKAM: 6.45 P.M. TO 8.30 P.M.
- (FOLLOWED BY ALANKARAM, RUDRAM CHAMAKAM, ARATI, AND MAHAPRASADAM)
COFFEE, TEA, SNACKS, AND PRASADAM WILL BE SERVED THROUGHOUT

PHASE 2 ABHISHEKAM: 9 P.M. TO 11.30 P.M.

SHIVA MAHA ABHISHEKAM FOLLOWED BY
ALANKARAM, ARATI, AND PRASAD VINIYOGA

PHASE 3 ABHISHEKAM: 12 A.M. TO 2.30 A.M.

SHIVA MAHA ABHISHEKAM FOLLOWED BY
ALANKARAM, ARATI, AND PRASAD VINIYOGA

PHASE 4 ABHISHEKAM: 3 A.M. TO 5.30 A.M.

SHIVA MAHA ABHISHEKAM FOLLOWED BY
ALANKARAM, ARATI, AND PRASAD VINIYOGA

TO SPONSOR PUJAS OR FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 1.718.461.0454

OM SAI MANDIR

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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:

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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

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