



Shraddha. Saburi.

SAI SANDESH

The official monthly newsletter of

OM SAI MANDIR

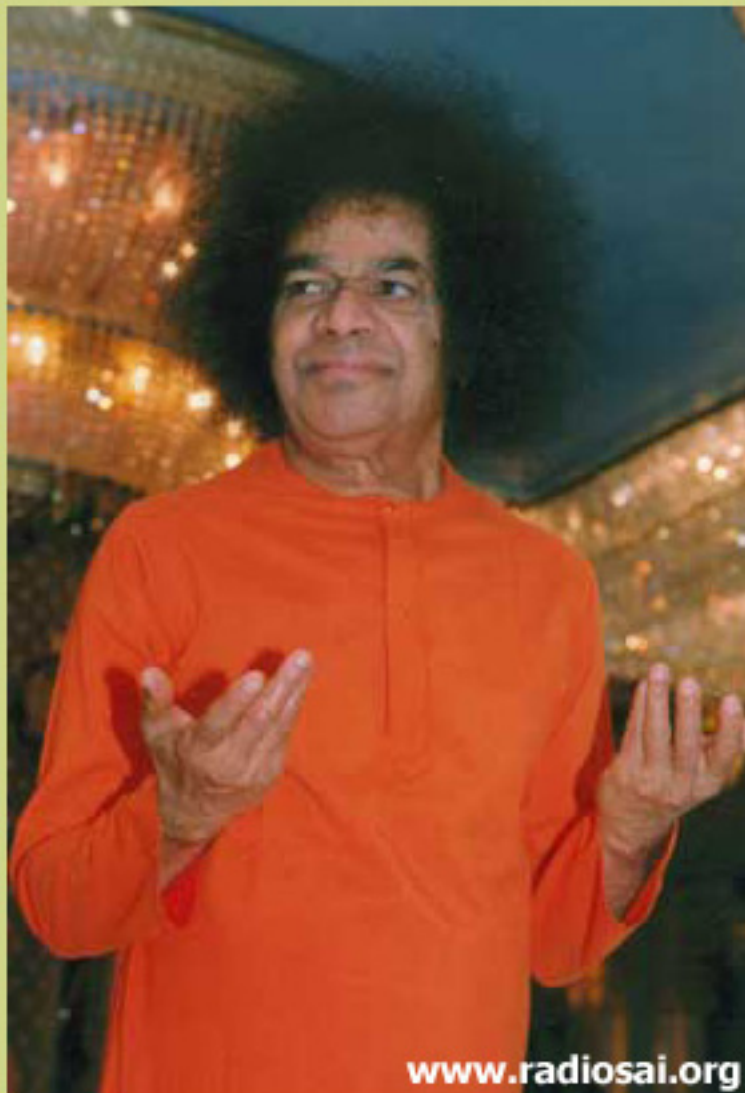
A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

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April 2007



Love All. Serve All.

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www.radiosai.org

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.



SAI IS SARVA DEVATA SWAROOPA

BY THE SAI SANDESH TEAM

"All divine principles, names, and attributes known to man are present in this body of mine," declared Sri Sai Baba during His divine discourse. Reverberating through the wall-less Sai Kulwant Hall, these emphatic words appeared to envelope the entire cosmos, filling with bliss the hearts of those who had experienced His divinity first-hand.

The Universal Absolute is originally nameless and formless, yet for the sake of saving His children, He assumes infinite names and forms. The uniqueness of the Sai avatar is that He encourages His followers to continue worshipping their chosen deities, in accordance with the religious practices known to them. "All names and forms are mine," He says - and proves.

Swami once invited an elderly devotee to the interview room. During the conversation, Baba reminded him of a childhood incidence when he had participated in a rigorous spiritual rite to invoke the vision of Lord Ganesh. This was their first meeting and yet Swami revealed an incidence that had taken place before many decades. "You didn't see him then, but I will fulfill that wish today," said Swami, and immediately a divine radiance filled the entire room. Lo! Before his very eyes, the form of Sai Baba immediately changed into that of Sri Ganesh.

Even the mother of Swami's physical body, Easwaramma, was blessed with the divine vision of her favorite deity. Once, Easwaramma was lying ill with very high fever. When she was fervently praying to God, Sai Baba entered her room. He manifested vibhuti for her. When she looked up, she saw Lord Rama, resplendent with His divine glory, standing in place of Baba. Before her very eyes, the form of Rama changed back into that of Sri Sai Baba.

A devotee of Lord Buddha got the chance to experience the oneness of all divine forms in a very strange way. Her newborn child was on the verge of death. Unable to withstand the loss, she took the child to her shrine and placed it at Lord Buddha's feet. Much to everyone's amazement, the child recovered instantaneously. He grew up to be a fine young man who pursued a doctorate degree and went on to work with NASA. Years later when the mother and son visited Swami, Baba gently reminded them of the time when He had come to their rescue. The young man was not aware of the incidence but the mother immediately recognized

that it was the compassionate Sai who had responded to their plea for mercy. A prayer that was apparently addressed to Buddha had been answered by Sai.

Pedda Botu was another fortunate devotee who could catch a glimpse of the Lord's divine sport. She was originally a devotee of Shirdi Sai Baba and had resided in Shirdi for many years during the Shirdi Sai avatar. On hearing of the reincarnation of Shirdi Sai Baba, she visited Puttaparthi out of curiosity. Unable to see the familiar form of Shirdi Sai, she decided to leave the place and visit Shirdi instead. When she went to bid farewell to Swami at the Chittravathi river, Swami granted her the vision of Himself as Shirdi Sai Baba. She immediately fell at His feet and begged for forgiveness for being unable to recognize Him.

The number of instances when Sainath has blessed devotees with the vision of their chosen deities is innumerable. Appearing at times as Datta, at times as Krishna or Rama, He bathes His devotees in divine bliss. All names and forms are His. One can choose any name or form, the response comes from the same Supreme One.

SAI WISDOM

God has no distinctions or differences. No one can stipulate do's and don'ts for Him. He can do anything, as He is in everything and is everything. He has no master above Him. If man wants to visualise God, he will see Him only in the form of a human being who is far superior to him in all respects. It is also said, Daivam Manusha Rupena (God is in the form of man). All the sacred texts have described God as having human form. It does not mean that God is confined to a human form. All forms are His. No one can say that God has a particular form. He is present everywhere.

Source: Thought for the day, Prashanti Nilayam, March 28, 2007

MIND BOGGLING MIRACLES OF SAI BABA: HOW SWAMI SAVED THE SNAKE

A student was once driving Swami from Puttaparthi to Bangalore. They had covered a significant distance when the student noticed a long snake crossing the road. As the car was moving at a very high speed, the student faced a dilemma. He would have to apply sudden breaks to save the snake, an act he thought would disturb Swami who was seated with His eyes closed.

Thinking Swami to be asleep, the student continued driving. He felt guilty for having run over the snake, but kept quiet.

When Swami alighted from the car at Bangalore, the youth-driver noticed distinct tire marks on His robe. He was perplexed because the robe was very clean when they had started from Puttaparthi. Failing to understand this mystery, he mustered courage and asked Swami how the tire marks had appeared on His robe.

Wearing a mischievous smile Swami said, "I had to go under the car to save the snake you were planning to run over."

DEVOTEES' EXPERIENCES: SAVED FROM HEPATIC COMMA

"I will pull my devotees out from the jaws of death," declared Sai Baba in the Satcharita. I was fortunate enough to witness the fulfillment of this promise.

In 1997, my cousin, Rupesh, suddenly slipped into Hepatic Comma. He was just 22 then and the whole family was shocked at the development. We all gathered at the ICU unit of Kothari Hospital in Mumbai. The patient did not show any signs of recovery despite being comatose for over 72 hours. The helpless parents could not control their grief when a panel of doctors declared the patient had "no chance of recovery".

Fortunately, I had just returned from Shirdi at the time and was carrying some vibhuti with me. After touching the patient's forehead with a ring that had been blessed at Shirdi Sai Baba's Samadhi, I applied some sacred vibhuti. During the hours that followed, me and a doctor-devotee of Baba offered fervent prayers to Sai Baba. Next morning, we heard the wonderful news that the patient had made a miraculous recovery, much to the surprise of medical experts who had seen no hope of such a possibility.

Rupesh is now married and leads a healthy and happy life.

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

April 2007

Mon., April 02: Hanuman Jayanti

Sat., April 14: Baisakhi

Sat., April 14: Tamil New Year, Vishu (Malayali New Year)

Sun., April 15: Bengali New Year/Bohag Bihu

May 2007

Sun., May 06: Easwaramma Day

Sat., May 12: Hanuman Jayanti

Sun., May 13: Mother's Day

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CHINNA KATHA (SHORT STORY)

RECITE THE SACRED NAME

ADAPTED FROM CHINNA KATHA

Sri Krishna Chaitanya was the pioneer of the movement of *Nagarsamkeertan*¹. Completely oblivious to the external world, he would immerse himself in the contemplation of the Lord while singing His glory.

Once he was conducting *Nagarsamkeertan* in Navadweep. Several leaders of the town joined him. 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 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 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 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."

Even by then transformation had taken place in the thief because of the touch of a 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 and broke into 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 place all the jewels she had worn back in the safe. She saw a stranger lost in the recitation of the sacred mantra "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 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 the mantra. 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 can happen to me if I sincerely make it a daily habit. 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.

1. A group of devotees make rounds of the community while singing devotional songs. The practice purifies and spiritually uplifts the entire community.

YES, WHAT YOU SAID IS TRUE

ADAPTED FROM CHINNA KATHA

One day, in the midst of a conversation, Lakshmi, the divine consort and goddess of wealth, addressed Naryana, "Lord! The entire world is adoring Me; not even one in a hundred, nay, not even one in a million, is worshipping you." She teased the Lord by this statement and put forward a plan to test the sincerity of man. She said, "Lord! It is best to discover for ourselves how true the facts are. Come, we shall both go into the world and find out."

Naryana agreed. He changed into a great pandit, wearing golden bracelets on his wrists as evidence of the appreciation and admiration of famous academic bodies. He wore a garland of rudraksha beads round the neck and thick streaks of vibhuthi on the forehead. He manifested himself on earth as a redoubtable scholar. He moved from village to village and began enchanting the people through his enrapturing discourses. His splendid personality and deep scholarship attracted the people; thousands gathered to hear him and followed him from place to place. Brahmins invited him to their settlements and honoured him. His arrival was celebrated as a festival, with rich feasting.

While Naryana was being feted thus, Lakshmi too appeared on earth as a great yogini (female ascetic). She too proceeded from village to village enlightening people on the *atma* (soul) through her discourses. Women assembled to hear her fascinating speeches in wave after wave, in massive numbers. They prayed she should honour their homes with a visit and partake of the feast they were most eager to offer. In reply, she informed them that she was bound by some vows which made it difficult for her to accept their request. She would not eat out of plates already in use in the homes. She said that she should be allowed to bring her own cups and plates with her. The women were yearning so deeply for hosting her that they accepted the condition. Whatever her vow, they were ready to respect it. Invitations came from every woman from every place.

The yogini reached the house where she was to take food the first day and took out from the bag she had with her a gold plate, a few gold cups and a gold tumbler to hold drinking water. These she spread before herself for the various items of the menu. When the meal was over, she left the place, leaving the precious golden articles to be taken by the host. She had a new set for each day, she said.

The news spread. The villages where Naryana was holding

his delightful discourses also heard the wonderful happenings of the yogini's gifts. The brahmins who were staunch admirers of the far-famed scholar also rushed to invite the yogini to their homes for lunch! The yogini told them that they ought to drive the pandit out before she could enter their settlement. She would not set foot there so long as the person continued to stay there! She was adamant on that point. Their greed for gold was so strong that they forced the pandit, whom they had adored so long and with so much pomp, to go out of their village.

Thereafter, the yogini entered the brahmin settlement, gave discourses, partook of feasts arranged in her honour and presented the golden plates and cups to each of her hosts. Thus, the yogini managed to get the pandit driven out of every place where he sought recognition and attention. Instead, she secured the worship of people everywhere. Unable to bear the universal insult, the Pandit cast off the role and Naryana disappeared from the earth. The yogini came to know of this. She too gave up the cast she had assumed and, resuming her real form, she joined Lord Naryana. While talking among themselves, she told the Lord, "Now, tell me! What did you discover? Who between us is honoured and worshipped more on earth?" Naryana smiled at her question. He replied, "Yes, What you said is true."

Devotees are requested
to share articles, stories,
experiences, and sugges-
tions for publication in
forthcoming issues of
Sai Sandesh.

UGADI AND SRI RAM NAVAMI CELEBRATIONS, 2007



Om Sai Mandir

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

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