



Shraddha. Saburi.

SAI SANDESH

The Official Monthly Newsletter of

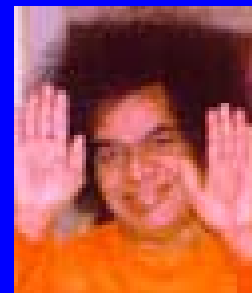
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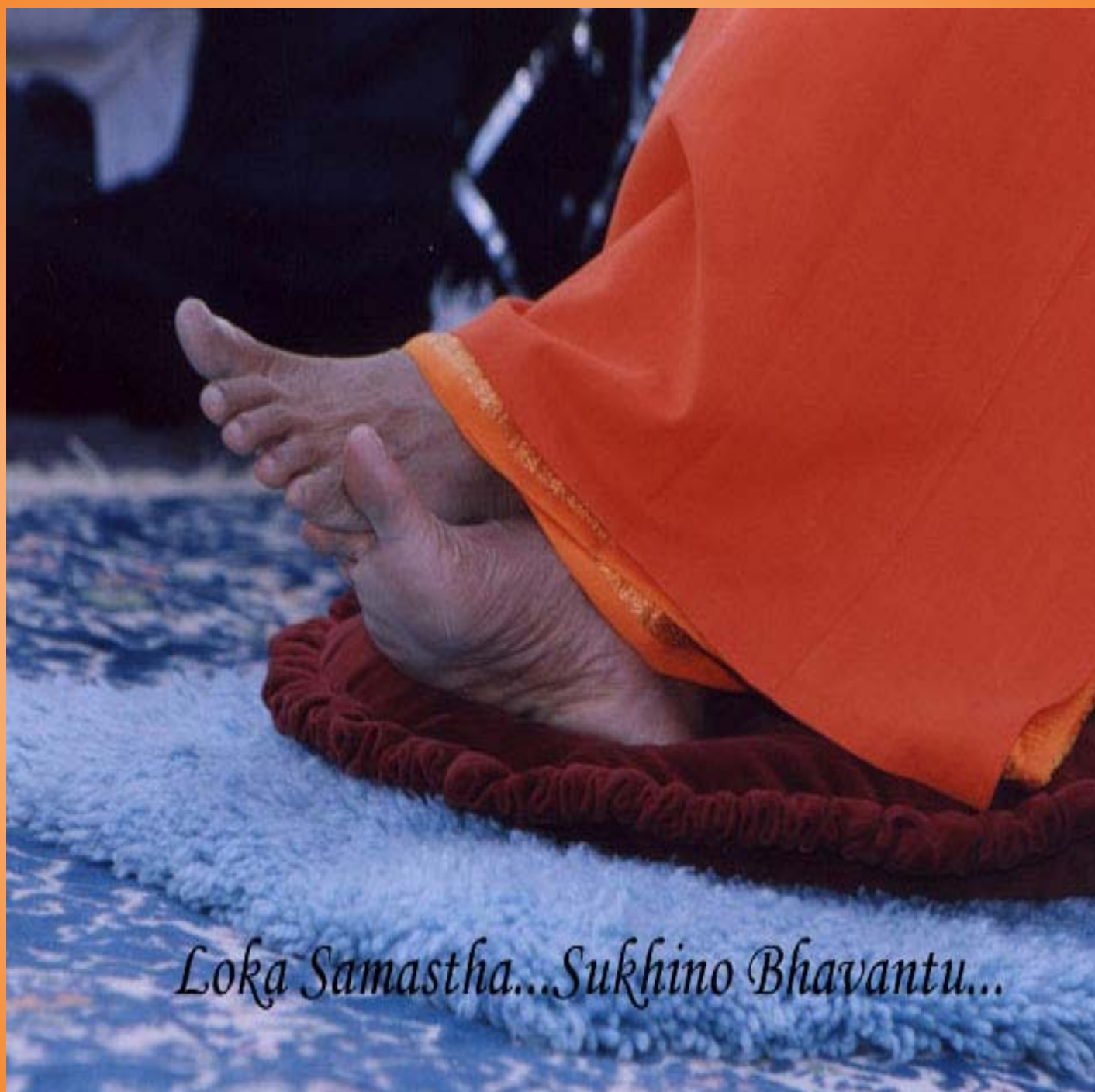
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Love All. Serve All.

Feb 2008

Volume 5, Issue 2



Loka Samastha... Sukhino Bhavantu...

HOLD ON TO BABA'S FEET--HE WILL SURELY SAVE YOU!

BY THE SAI SANDESH TEAM

A devotee of Baba, Das Ganu, wanted to visit Prayag, a sacred place where holy rivers meet. When Ganu visited Baba to seek His permission and blessings, Baba explained that all holy spots were at His feet and that there was no need to go elsewhere. No sooner had Sai said this, streams of holy water started emanating miraculously from Baba's lotus feet. Ganu was astounded to see this miracle, but was convinced that resorting to Sai's feet was equivalent to bathing in the holiest of rivers.

Resorting to His feet removes countless sins

In an earlier age, to rescue earth from the rule of demonic forces, God assumed the form of a saintly lad, Vamana, and accosted the king of demons, Bali. On seeing a tender lad at his doorstep, Bali asked the boy to seek a boon. Vamana asked for land that could be measured by His three steps. Seeing the small physical frame of the lad, Bali humored the child for asking such a trivial boon from a great king, but promised to fulfill his desire nevertheless. Almost immediately, Vamana started growing in size. He grew to such gigantic proportions that with one foot he covered the entire earth and with the other, the heavens and nether regions.

When God's foot reached heavenly regions, Lord Brahma, the creator, rushed to worship the divine foot with holy water. It was this water that later descended to earth in the form of the river Ganges. The reason the holy river is able to purify millions of sinners is because it had come in contact with God's foot.

Contact with God's feet is transformational

When Lord Rama was in the forests, He happened to visit a hermitage where Ahalya had been cursed to assume the form of a stone for 10,000 years. While at the ashram, Rama placed His foot on the stone and, lo, it was miraculously transformed into the divine mother Ahalya.

She was not only rescued from her inert condition, she was granted liberation from the cycle of birth and death--all for a moment's contact with God's feet. If a stone can be transformed into a woman by contacting God's feet, imagine what could happen to humans. Is it any surprise that the Goddess of Wealth, Mother Lakshmi, is always serving God's feet?

His feet can fulfill desires and remove miseries

When Saptanekar, a devotee who was dejected due to the death of his son, held Baba's feet very firmly, Sai compassionately uttered the following words: "These feet are old and holy, you are carefree now. Place faith in me and you will soon get your object." On saying this Baba placed the departed soul back into the very womb (of Saptanekar's wife) from which it had died. Saptanekar was overjoyed to have his son back.

The Satcharita describes a wonderful dream that Anandrao had:

"I was standing in waist-deep water. There I saw Sai baba all of a sudden. He was sitting on a beautiful throne studded with diamonds. His feet were in water. I was most pleased and satisfied with the form of Baba. The vision was so realistic that I never thought it was a dream. Curiously enough Madhavrao was also standing there. He said to me feelingly, "Anandrao, fall at His feet." I rejoined, "I also wish to do so, but His feet are in water, how can I place my head on them? I am helpless." Hearing this he said to Baba "Oh Deva, take out your feet which are under water." Then Baba immediately took out His feet. I caught them without delay and bowed to them. On seeing this Baba blessed me saying, "Go now you will attain your welfare, there is no cause for fear or anxiety."

Why worship the feet

The act of reverently worshipping God's feet is an ancient practice. It is said that the feet hold the entire weight of man's body and help him progress from one place to another. Further, circulation of blood reaches from the feet to the heart and the feet are thus said to be connected to the heart in a very special way.

Bowing to someone's feet is also considered an act of humility, reverence, and surrender. In the case of God, He carries the burden of the entire universe on his divine body and since God's cosmic body rests on His feet, they are the holiest. Surrendering to His feet is the surest and easiest way to reach His heart and secure divine blessings.

BEACON LIGHTS: THE DEVOTION OF A LITTLE CHILD

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 one 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 (washerwoman). 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 hundred 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 Son

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 little boy paid heed to such thoughts could he have won God's grace?

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

SAI WISDOM

Matham (religion) is a matter of Mathi (mind). Based on the teachings of the different faiths, having regard to the requirements of the time and circumstances of different countries, and keeping in view the specific needs of the people concerned, certain rules and regulations were laid down. On this account, one faith should not be considered superior to another. Man's primary duty is to bear in mind the sacred truths enshrined in every religion and practise them in his life.

- BABA

Source: Thought for the day, Prashanti Nilayam, January 29, 2008

Share your experiences, feelings, poems, and articles with the readers of Sai Sandesh. If selected, your submissions will be published in the forthcoming issues of Sai Sandesh.

Please send an e-mail to saisandesh@omsaimandir.org

THE POWER OF BABA'S WORDS BY THE SAI SANDESH TEAM

Nature is nothing but the manifestation of a minute fraction of God's infinite glory, and billions of ever-expanding universes are mere atoms when compared to the all-powerful Lord. When such a powerful Lord commands His creation on a course of action, it cannot but fulfill that order with all humility and reverence.

The might and majesty of an avatar cannot be comprehended by human intelligence; it can only be experienced. During their physical incarnations, avatars perform countless deeds that are considered miracles in the mortal realm, but in reality they are visible manifestations of divine sankalpa (will). This will is not an ordinary one, though. It is so powerful it can alter even the writ of providence and, when necessary, overrule otherwise unalterable cosmic laws. The warmth of sincere devotion can melt God's butter-soft heart in an instant, and in response to a devotee's plea the Lord becomes like a servitor, willing to extend any service possible. When the call is sincere, He will alter even destiny and rescue devotees from sorrow. This has been the experience of innumerable devotees.

Once, a mother-in-law was fortunate enough to experience this grace. She was a pious lady who had a big family with many sons and daughter-in-laws. Despite experiencing all forms of happiness, she was not at peace, for none of her children were able to become parents. She visited Puttaparthi with utmost reverence and placed her sorrow at the feet of the Lord of Parthi. He heard her request with compassion but explained that none of her family members were destined to become parents--that was their fate. She was disheartened but she firmly held Sai's feet and with tear-filled eyes begged Him to intercede. Swami was moved and asked if she believed in Him. She calmly said that His will was supreme and that He could alter destiny itself, if He so willed. Swami was touched by her faith and blessed her. The following year, she came with beautiful grand children.

During the Shirdi Sai Avatar, a devotee brought several seeds to Shirdi. It was his intense desire to plant trees near Dwarakamai. Baba was reluctant, however, and refused to accede to the request. As time passed, the seeds dried and became incapable of germinating. The devotee was unable to bear his beloved Sai's refusal and could not rest in peace. Day and night, he was suffering in anguish. Sainath was unable to see His devotee suffer in this manner and called

him to His presence. Baba asked him to quit worrying and also ordered him to plant the dried seeds with faith. He declared that even though the seeds had dried, they would germinate into beautiful plants--and they did. Such is the power of Sai's words.

During another instance, Baba's devotee, Shama, was bitten by a snake. Frightened by the imminent danger, Shama immediately rushed to His beloved Sai who uttered the following words: "Oh vile bhaturdy (priest), do not climb up. Beware if you do so. Go get away, come down." Shama was disheartened to think that the words were uttered at him, but in reality they were Sai's antidote to the poison. It was a direct command ordering the poison to stop rising. Shama recovered completely.

On another occasion, Shirdi witnessed a terrifying storm that threatened to devour the entire village. All its inhabitants rushed to their beloved Lord Sai, who in His utmost mercy came to their rescue. His simple words, "Oh, stop; calm your fury," were sufficient to quell the furious storm in moments.

God is so merciful, He cannot but run for His devotees. He is like the hard-working mother who is always busy performing routine household--in His case, cosmic--duties. Despite her burdens, the mother always provides for the children's needs and keeps a watchful eye on them. The children may not know or realize this. When they are safe or at play, she continues performing her chores, but if a child starts crying inconsolably, she will leave everything and run to console and caress her darling. In the same manner, God, who bears the love of a thousand mothers, rushes to respond to His children's calls. His simple words will allay all fears and fulfill devotees' sincere wishes.

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

January 2008

Tuesday, Jan. 01: New Year's Day Celebrations
Sunday, Jan. 13: Lodhi/Lohri
Tuesday, Jan. 15: Makara Sankranti/Pongal
Saturday, Jan. 26: India's Republic Day

February

Thursday, Feb. 14: Valentine's Day

EKADASHA RUDRA ABHISHEKAM

Daily from 8.30 AM to 11.30 AM

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 historic event.

Devotees' Experiences: Baba Makes the Room Warm By A Sai Devotee, New York

In 1999, me and a friend were serving in the temple one night. The weather authorities had declared that night to be the coldest for the year and it was freezing beyond description. We were patrolling the temple's premises as part of our allotted duty but couldn't withstand the biting cold. To make matters worse, the internal heating system was not working that night.

To keep ourselves warm, we shared a blanket. It wasn't the best solution but we didn't have another option. Suddenly, a thought crossed my mind that Baba might be feeling cold as well, so we took off the blanket we were sharing and wrapped it around Baba.

Lo, the whole room became warm beyond description--instantly! We didn't need the blanket anymore. In fact, we had to take off our shirts.

Mind-Boggling Miracles of Sai Baba: Ocean worships Baba

During Swami's visit to Kanyakumari a miracle of the most astounding nature took place. One evening, Baba proceeded to the seashore and with His Bhakthas around Him, played with the waves of the seas that mingle there. Each succeeding wave seemed to be more eager than the previous one to touch His lotus Feet, and to offer Him its own special homage. Suddenly, as if aware of the yearning of the seas, Baba stood facing the waters and said to those beside Him, 'See! The Ocean is welcoming Me, with a Garland.'

At the very moment one could discern a stately wave a few yards away, advancing majestically towards the shore and, soon it swept Baba's Feet and receded. Imagine the wonder and amazement of every one when they found, round Baba's Feet a bewitching pearl garland, swaying and swinging with every surge of the waters around Them! One hundred and eight translucent pearls each a priceless gem, strung on a thread of gold! O, how charming Baba looked! The Avathar receiving the homage of Varuna again!

Source: Prof. N. Kasturi, Sathyam Sivam Sundaram, The Life Story of Sathya Sai Baba

A PROFESSIONAL PICKPOCKET

SOURCE: OKA CHINNA KATHA

One day goddess Parvathi asked Shiva: "Lord! I have heard that there is a sacred shrine for your worship by name Kasi and that those who visit Kasi and offer worship to you after a holy bath in the Ganges will earn the merit of coming to Kailas and stay there for ever. Is it true?"

Lord Shiva replied: "All the people cannot earn that merit. Mere visiting Kasi and offering worship to my image are not enough. Presently, I shall make the point clear to you. Let us go to Kasi as an aged couple. I shall make you enact a drama!"

Lord Shiva and Parvathi appeared before the entrance of the temple of Shiva, Parvathi as an old hag of eighty years and Lord Shiva a rickety old man of ninety. Shiva laid his head on the lap of Parvathi and started groaning in severe pain.

The old woman was crying helplessly. She begged every pilgrim saying: "Oh ye devotees! look here, this is my husband.

He is terribly thirsty and may die any moment. Will you please fetch some water for him to drink? I cannot leave him alone and go to fetch water". The pilgrims were coming from the ghats after their ceremonial bath in the Ganges. Their clothes were wet and they were carrying water in small bright vessels. They saw and heard the woman's lament. Some said: "Wait, we shall attend to your husband after offering the sacred Ganges water to Lord Viswanath."

Some said: "Oh what a nuisance! Why can't these beggars allow us at least to offer worship in peace." Some others said: "These beggars should not be allowed to sit here".

There was a big crowd near the temple entrance. A professional pickpocket walked along with some of these pilgrims.

He also heard the old woman's lament. He could not bear the sight of the suffering old man and the bewailing old woman. He walked upto them and said: "Mother, what do you want? Who are you? Why are you here?". The old

woman replied, "Son, we came here to have the darsan of Lord Visveswara. My husband suddenly took ill and fainted out of exhaustion. He might survive if someone were to pour some water into his parching mouth.

His condition is too critical for me to leave him and go to bring water. I requested many people to help me, but nobody would spare any water though they have been carrying pitchers full of it." The thief was moved to compassion. He had brought some water in the dried gourd-pot. The

woman stopped him and said: "Son, my husband may die any moment, he will not accept water unless the person who gives water speaks truth." The pickpocket could not catch the meaning. He said: "Mother, please tell me what I should do"?

With a cynical laughter, he said: "Mother, I have not done any good deed so far. I am a professional pickpocket. The only good deed is that

which I am going to do now, to offer water to this dying old man. This is true." He poured gently some water into the mouth of the old man. No sooner had the pickpocket done this deed than the old couple disappeared and in their place stood Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvathi, in all their splendor.

Shiva said: "Son, you are indeed blessed. There is no greater morality than speaking the truth, and no true worship more faithful than service to fellow human beings. You have been atoned for all the sins you have committed so far because of this one good deed."



Three in one Oka Chinna Katha

There was a small kingdom in which strangely enough all people were quite happy and very healthy. In course of time both the ruler and ruled grew proud of this rare good fortune and claimed it to be a reward of their personal righteousness. Since all of them were healthy, there was no physician in the kingdom. One day, a physician came to its capital city and was happy to find that there was no other physician to compete with him in his profession in the whole kingdom.

But whenever he entered into conversation with the people and enquired after their health, they would say: "Oh! We are brahmajnanis, no illness can touch us. We are the fortunate few chosen by God and blessed by Him with health and happiness. Why do you tarry here, better go elsewhere to earn your living". The physician however did not want to leave the city and was also hopeful that this snobbery of the people will not last long.

Once the king suddenly fell ill. The physician was summoned to the royal presence. He was pleased that God had given him an opportunity to display his talent. He treated the king with reverence and great attention. The king was slowly but steadily improving. However, he said: "Sir, I really thank you for your treatment but can you not cure me quickly? I am not used to lying down like this for days together".

The physician wanted to teach the king and the people a lesson. He said: "Oh king, there is a quick cure, but I am afraid, I may not be able to get what I want for preparing the medicine". The king said: "you need not doubt the capacity either of my ministers or my people. They will be ready to procure anything you may require. They are all brahma jnanis. They will not bother about any type of strain or sacrifice on their part to get their beloved king cured. Come, tell me what you want".

The physician said: "My Lord! I am glad that you are so confident". I require 1/4 pound of flesh from the body of a brahma jnani - that is all". "Oh! How simple!", exclaimed the king. The king immediately sent word to his minister and commanded him to get at once 1/4 pound of flesh of any brahma jnani in the city".

The minister returned very late in the evening, very sad and dejected. The king asked eagerly "Why so late? Come

on, where is the flesh?". The minister pleaded, "Oh! King, I am sorry, I could not get what you wanted. When I made the people know of what you need, everyone said: 'Oh, I am not a brahma jnani. Do you think that brahma jnanis will be found in cities such as this?' How can we say confidently that we are all brahma jnanis?".

The king was surprised to hear this and looked at the physician pitifully. The physician said: "Oh king!, do not feel sad. This is the way of the world. One may claim to be anything but to actually live up to that high ideal is extremely difficult.

You are now recovered. Nothing is wrong with you. I need no human flesh. I planned this little drama, only to let you know the truth. Pardon me".

Each person is "three in one", i.e. what he thinks of himself, what others think he is and finally, what he really is.

Mahashivaratri - Thursday, March 06, 2008

**Celebrations will be held from
Thursday, March 06, 2008, 6.00
PM to Friday, March 07, 2008,
6.00 AM**

**For detailed schedule, please
visit www.omsaimandir.org**

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