



## The best gift to ask from God



Our faith diminishes because our ambitions are limitless. There was a rich person who had a daughter with a flat nose. The father wanted to get this girl married. Every person who came and looked at the girl used to go away, although they were tempted by the wealth. In those days, persons who could perform plastic surgery were not available. In desperation, he announced that he would give plenty of money to anyone who would marry his daughter. The marriage was performed, and thereafter the couple developed considerable faith in God. They visited many temples, went on many pilgrimages and bathed in many sacred rivers. They met a saint who advised them that he, who created the nose, alone, could bring it back to normal. Although they had lot of wealth, they were not happy at all. The girl used to feel others were looking at her and making fun. She suggested to her husband that they should both go to the lonely Himalayas and spend a month there in that manner. He agreed and they did go. The girl had a great desire to get back her nose, so she began to pray to God in great earnestness. God appeared, due to her good luck, and asked her what she wanted. As soon as God appeared, she asked for the grant of a good looking big nose. God said, so shall it be and granted her the boon. As soon as God disappeared, she looked at her face. She looked at the big nose and felt that she had become uglier than before. She prayed again more earnestly and God appeared again and asked her what she wanted. She said that she did not want that big nose. God said, so shall it be and granted her the boon. She immediately found that her nose had completely disappeared. The moral of this story is that although God is present before you, playing with you and talking with you, you do not know what to ask.

### Devotional Activities in Chicago and Suburbs

Activity	Time	Venue	Contact
Every Monday – Bhajans	07:00 pm to 08:00 pm	Aurora (Shirdi Mandir)	630-854-2004
Every Wednesday – Bhajans	07:30 pm to 08:30 pm	Hoffman Estates	847-519-1631
Every Friday – Bhajans	08:00 pm to 09:00 pm	Oak Brook	630-655-1718
1st Saturday of the Month – Bhajans	03:30 pm to 04:30 pm	Glenview	847-729-2779 / 773-510-5936
Saturday, Nov 21 <sup>st</sup> – Padhuka Puja	10:30 am to 12:30 pm	Bolingbrook	630-819-9081

### For more information, please contact any of the Center Officers

Role	Name	Phone	e-mail
President:	Ram Katuri	847-664-0564	Ram.Katuri.Chicago@gmail.com
Vice-President:	Prasad Aduri	847-204-8444	p_aduri@yahoo.com
Devotion Coordinator:	Rama Raghuraman	815-790-9421	RamaRaghu310@gmail.com
Education Coordinator:	Jayashree Tatavarti	608-216-5005	Vr4SaiRam@gmail.com
Service Coordinator:	Vithal Mirmira	630-888-1513	MKSVithal999@yahoo.com
Bookstore & Library Coordinator:	Suriya Sastri	630-842-9214	SSastri@hotmail.com
Study Circle Coordinator:	Sridhar Ramaswamy	847-508-9786	SridharRam24@yahoo.com
YA Male Representative:	Biswas Pradhan	617-888-5190	Biswas.Pradhan5@gmail.com
YA Female Representative:	Haritha Krishnamurthy	773-710-9567	Hari.Krishy@gmail.com

## Sathya Sai Baba Center of Chicago Metro

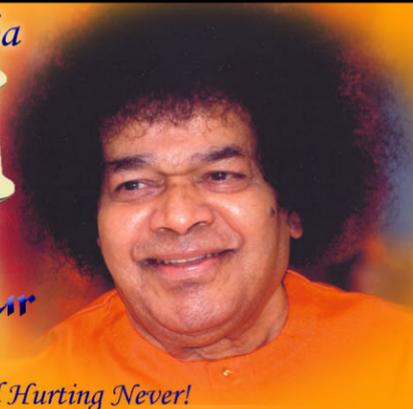
November 2015

Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

# Chicago Sai WATCH

Dear Swami, please help us to watch and control our Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character and Heart

So that we realize our inherent Divinity by Loving All, Serving All, Helping Ever, and Hurting Never!



**Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup> – FMSC (Feed My Starving Children)**

**Special Service on the occasion of Bhagawan's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

**Time:** 6:45 PM–9:00 PM; **Venue:** FMSC Libertyville, 742 East Park Ave, Libertyville, IL

**Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup> – Diwali Celebrations**

**Time:** 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM; **Venue:** Longfellow Center, Oak Park, IL

**Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup> – Sunday November 15<sup>th</sup> - Global Akhand Bhanjans**

Saturday 11/14 6:00 PM – 11/15 Sunday 6:00 PM

**Venue:** Clarion Inn, 933 S. Riverside Drive, Elmhurst, IL

**Sunday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>; Monday November 23<sup>rd</sup> – Bhagawan's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

**Celebrations**

Sunday November 22<sup>nd</sup>; **Time:** 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM;

**Guest Speaker:** Panch Panchanathan & Soumya Panchanathan

Monday November 23<sup>rd</sup>; **Time:** 7:30 PM – 9:30 PM;

**Guest Speaker:** Al Drucker

**Venue:** Armada Inn, 780 E North Avenue, Glendale Heights, IL



Love All , Serve All

Upcoming Events!

### Date

### Calendar of Events

11/07 – Saturday	<b>05:00 PM – 08:00 PM:</b> Dinner Service Project at Northside Housing Men's Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.) <b>06:00 PM – 08:00 PM:</b> Dinner Service Project at Sarah's Circle Women's Shelter (on N. Sheridan Road) <i>(Pizza will be served at both projects as we have a special FMSC project on 11/7)</i>
11/08 – Sunday	<b>10:00AM – 11:00AM:</b> Bingo with Nursing Home Residents (on North Ave., Oak Park)
11/14 – Saturday (YA Service)	<b>06:00 AM – 08:00 AM:</b> Breakfast Service at Northside Housing Men's Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.)
11/21 – Saturday	<b>05:00 PM – 08:00 PM:</b> Dinner Service Project at Northside Housing Men's Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.) <b>07:00 PM – 10:30 PM:</b> Dinner Service Project at Jesus People USA Men's Shelter (on Kenmore Ave.)
11/28 – Saturday	<b>06:00 AM – 08:00 AM:</b> Breakfast Service at Northside Housing Men's Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.)
12/05 - Saturday	<b>05:00 PM – 08:00 PM:</b> Dinner Service Project at Northside Housing Men's Shelter (on Lawrence Ave.) <b>06:00 PM – 08:00 PM:</b> Dinner Service Project at Sarah's Circle Women's Shelter (on N. Sheridan Road)

### Sunday Center Schedule:

09:00 AM – 09:30 AM: Center Setup

09:30 AM – 10:25 AM: Study Circle (Current Topic – "What is Love?" - Study Guide of Collection of Swami's Quotes from His Discourses)

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM: Devotional Singing

### Ongoing service projects on Sundays:

- Grocery collection and food items delivery for Mother's House (North Avenue, Oak Park)
- Sandwich preparation & delivery for residents of Northside Housing Men's Shelter (Lawrence Ave.)



## Vidya Vahini – Instruments Of Learning



The term vidya is derived by adding ya to the root vidh. Ya means 'what'; vidh, 'light'. So, "that which gives light" is vidya. This is the basic meaning of the word. Therefore, it is evident that only knowledge of Brahman (Brahma-vidya) deserves to be known as real knowledge. The ancients considered knowledge as light and ignorance (a-vidya) as darkness. Just as light and darkness cannot coexist at the same time in the same place, knowledge and ignorance cannot be together. So, all who journey along the path of progress have to purify their consciousness and illumine themselves through knowledge of Brahman.

### The two aspects of education

In the section on manifestation of power (Vibhuthi Yoga), the Gita says that God declares, "Among all knowledge systems, I am the knowledge of the highest Atma!" All other knowledge systems are rivers; knowledge of the highest Atma is the ocean. Just as all rivers find fulfilment merging in the ocean, all knowledge systems join the ocean of knowledge of the supreme Atma as their ultimate goal. This is not all. When rivers meet and mix with the ocean, they lose their separate names and forms and assume the name and form of the ocean itself. So too, the varied systems of knowledge concerned with the objective external world renounce their individual names and forms when they arrive at the confluence with the vast ocean of knowledge of Brahman

Education can be considered as having two aspects: worldly education and knowledge of Brahman. Worldly education provides the wherewithal for human livelihood. One can study many subjects, earn valuable degrees, acquire higher and higher jobs, and manage to spend life without worry or fear. This type of education helps, whatever the job. On the other hand, knowledge of Brahman endows all human beings with the strength that enables them to discharge successfully the duty they owe to themselves. It lays down the path that leads both to joy in worldly relations and bliss in the life beyond.

*Knowledge of Brahman is far superior to all other systems of knowledge available on earth. Knowledge of Brahman has the divine potency to liberate everyone from bondage. Worldly education has no such potency. Knowledge of Brahman makes you aware of the Omniself, the Absolute, the highest Brahman (Parabrahman).*

### Spiritual austerity and spiritual education

By means of spiritual learning and austerities (practices), one is transformed into a purified soul. Spiritual austerity (tapas) enables you to merge with That. Spiritual education is the process of acquiring knowledge; spiritual austerity is the known. The first is indirect, it is the means; the second is the goal, the end. Soap and water are needed to wash accumulated dirt off one's clothes. So too, both spiritual knowledge and spiritual penance are essential when one is anxious to remove the dirt that has stuck to the mind. Only when both are used can the levels of consciousness be thoroughly cleansed. No vehicle can move without two wheels, nor can a bird fly on one wing. So too, no one can be rendered holy or purified without spiritual learning and spiritual austerity.

Spiritual austerity (tapas) does not mean positioning oneself upside down, head on the ground and feet held up, like a bat.

Nor is it the renunciation of possessions and properties, wife and children, or emaciating one's body, or holding the nose to regulate breath. No. Physical actions, oral assertions, and mental resolves — all three have to be in unison. The thought, speech, and act all have to be pure. This is real spiritual austerity. Moreover, the three have to be coordinated not by the compulsion of duty but instead for the contentment of the self. The effort must be undertaken to satisfy one's inner yearnings. This struggle is the essence of spiritual penance (tapas).

### The guru and the pupil

Guru means literally the "big" person, the "great" person. That is to say, the guru must have mastered both spiritual knowledge (vidya) and spiritual austerity (tapas). The Gita depicts the ideal guru and the ideal student (sishya) — the pupil is the person of authority and the preceptor is the manifestation of the Avatar. Arjuna had earned the right to learn; Krishna had come as a man to teach man. The pupil is the best of people; the preceptor is the best among physical embodiments (purushothama). The pupil wields the bow; the guru wields the secret of all skills, yoga. Krishna is the Lord of yoga (yogeswara); Arjuna is the archer. When these two meet, education (vidya) is transformed into knowledge of Brahman (Brahma-vidya).

*The pupil, Arjuna, after imbibing the teachings of Krishna, said, "I will do as you command". He threw away not his bow, the Gandiva, but his great big ego itself, the egotism (ahamkara) that was deluding him.*

The guru was the director of the play. The pupil (sishya), Arjuna, was the character in the play. The pupil should not be proud to have been entrusted with a duty. As long as you are conceited, you cannot get a guru. When the guru accepts you, your pride will disappear. Pupils should not feel great, be proud, or boast of the sense of renunciation when giving their all. The real renunciation is to give oneself away. Then, the guru will grant freedom to follow one's own will, as Krishna did. "Beloved Arjuna! As you will, so you act. Think well. And do as you like," Krishna told him. He meant that He had given him all the advice he needed and had also accepted the ego Arjuna had discarded. So, Arjuna could now be granted freedom to act as he willed, for his will has become His.

The individual who has reached this level has to be given freedom. The guru should not mercilessly order the pupil about simply because the pupil dedicated everything to him. The greedy guru and the indolent disciple — both fall into perdition. The guru should not turn into a person who steals wealth but should be a person who steals hearts! The guru has to be an alarm timepiece. The guru must wake up those who are enveloped in the sleep of ignorance and reward them with teachings on the knowledge of their Atmic Reality.

**- Excerpts from Vidya Vahini**



## HOLD ON TO THE PRINCIPLE OF ONENESS OF GOD



*If you keep chatting all through the day without doing any work,  
Do you think this is Sadhana?  
If you fill your belly thrice a day,  
Do you think this is Sadhana?  
If you spend the day in inactivity and the night in deep sleep,  
Do you think this is Sadhana?  
Is this for which God has created you?  
You while away all your time in this kind of routine,  
But this is not Sadhana.  
Do not waste your time in this manner.  
From this very moment, strive to know God.  
This alone is Sadhana. (Telugu Poem)*

### Embodiments of Love!

AIR IS PRESENT AT ALL PLACES IN the world. It is above, below and all around us. The ancients called it a form of God. God is present everywhere. Though God is omnipresent, He cannot be seen. Only human beings can realise the Cosmic Person by constant contemplation. In fact, human life is the manifestation of divine power.

### Attain Purity Of Heart

It is necessary for man to remember God and think of Him at all times to experience Him.

*Sage Narada affirmed that God could be realized through the nine forms of devotion, namely, Sravanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), Vandanam (salutation), Archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), Sneham (friendship), Atmanivedanam (self-surrender).*

There is no one in this world in whose heart God does not dwell. Does it require meditation to visualize such an all-pervading and omnipresent God? There are many who teach different techniques of meditation today. However, meditation is meant merely to acquire purity of heart. Man undertakes many spiritual practices to attain purity of heart. Without attaining this purity, God cannot be realized. Hence, one has to strive to attain purity of heart. No Sadhana would help in realizing God if one is devoid of purity of heart. Some people think that God gave Darshan to such and such person. But the truth is God never gives Darshan to people who have no purity of heart. Hence, if you wish to have God's Darshan, you must develop purity of heart. All kinds of spiritual practices are meant only to attain purity. Prayer to God is one of the most powerful spiritual practices to attain purity of heart. When you clean utensils repeatedly, they shine with added brilliance. Similarly, repeated prayer makes your heart shine with the brilliance of purity. The moment you attain purity, the omnipresent God will manifest right in front of you.

See God everywhere. Sitting in meditation is not enough. Unfortunately, in the world today, there is a dearth of Gurus (preceptors) who can lead the seeker on the path of purity. People listen to others and read books about several kinds of meditation and start Sadhana that catches their imagination or kindles their interest. In fact, one does not need to undertake any complex system of meditation. One can undertake the simple Sadhana of constant contemplation on the omnipresent God. Few teach such simple methods nowadays. Purity of heart is, however, of utmost importance if you want to progress on the path of God realization.

*God incarnates on earth in different forms like Rama, Krishna, etc. Some aspirants observe differences between various forms of God. Since they try to identify God with a particular form, they entertain feelings of difference. By doing so, they make themselves distant from God and remain at the level of Jivas (bound souls) only. All such differences exist in the individuals only. God is only one. In fact, He is not different from you. He is in you. You are verily God!*

### Divinity is Immanent in all

You refer to a certain individual and say that he is your father. But he is, in reality, the same Atma Tattwa that is present in all human beings. You marry a girl and refer to her as your wife. But she is, in fact, the embodiment of the divine Atma. Similarly, you caress a child affectionately, calling him as your son. But he is not your son in reality; he is the embodiment of divinity. Thus, all relationships in this world are Atmic relationships only. Truly speaking, real Atma Sakshatkar (self-realisation) is merging of Jiva (individual self) with Brahman (Supreme Self). Whatever you see around is nothing but the manifestation of divinity. How can there be human beings without such omnipresent divinity? Lord Krishna declared that He incarnates in every Age. He also declared that He is immanent in all, but is not attached to anyone at worldly level. The Gopikas who were aware of this truth constantly contemplated on Him chanting the Divine Name "Krishna Krishna!" The very name Krishna brought the embodiment of Divinity before their eyes. The Gopikas were highly evolved souls who had the firm conviction that the same Atma Tattwa was present in every individual, nay, every living being. That is why they could visualize Krishna in every individual and every object of the world. All that we see in the objective world is really the manifestation of Divinity in various forms. People often get deluded on seeing these external forms. The universal Atma Tattwa is present in all of them. It is only the Gopikas who realized this supreme truth naturally and spontaneously. They could visualise Krishna in all individuals and objects. We often refer to individuals as my son, my brother, my father, my mother, my wife, etc., keeping in view the worldly relationships. But the truth is that the same God is manifesting through all those individuals. Hence, one has to consider every individual as the embodiment of divinity. The entire universe is permeated by Brahma Tattwa (principle of Divinity). All the names and forms attributed to the Atma Tattwa are of our own making.

**Excerpts from Bhagavan's Discourse - 2005**