
Sarva Dharma Service Center Inc.

<http://www.sai-service.org>

Newsletter

Pranams at the lotus feet of our beloved Bhagawan, Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

July 2009

Walk For Values

With Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Grace, more than 500 people took part in a very successful and remarkable second annual Walk for Values on Sunday, June 21 at the Waterfront Battery Park, New York City, NY. Children, young adults, adults and senior citizens took part in the walk despite the inclement weather. However, Swami's Blessings were felt when very pleasant weather followed after a welcome shower of rain and cloudy weather at the start of the walk.

After the registration formalities, the participants selected a value from Love, Peace, Truth, Right Conduct and Non-Violence which they intend to practice. Many selected the banners depicting either a value or value related quote or teaching by famous leaders of the world. The program started at 10 am with rendering of the national anthem followed by talks from the President of the Sai Organization Mid-Atlantic Region and the Central Coordinator of the national Sai Organization. Two Marshalls were Dr. Phillip Gosselin, one of the founders of Sri Sathya Sai Center of Manhattan and Mr. Danny Garcia, a veteran of walking on all the continents of the world.

The Walk commenced after the cutting of the ribbon and was for about two miles including a stop at the Ground Zero for two minutes in remembrance of 911 victims. The walk culminated at the Battery Park. The participants were overwhelmed by the emotional musical renderings by a local New York Youth Group after partaking a light lunch.

During the walk many of the passers-by enquired about the walk and were pleased to know that such an event was taking place to increase the awareness of the human values.



Swami Blessing Students From The Navsari Sai Baba School From Gujarat After Their Presentation

Thought for the Day

The task before each of one of us is to plant the seeds of Truth, Righteousness, Peace and Love in each heart. Foster these saplings and watch over them with love and care until they grow into trees yielding a rich harvest of sweet fruits. Sages who had succeeded in this beneficial culture have laid down the means and methods, the steps and slips, the helps and hindrances, which one has to consider. The swimmer has to push the water behind him so that he might proceed forward. So too, while attempting to march forward, one has to push back from him the evil thoughts, habits, deeds and impulses that crowd in. Believe in this conviction, instill faith in your heart and you will be assured of success.

- Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Members of Sarva Dharma Service Center helped with the registration process both online and on site.

SDSC Presentation in Hatfield

Members of the Sai Baba Centers of Doylestown together with devotees from other Pennsylvania Centers conducted a special sathasang on Saturday, June, 2009 at the Fire Station Hall in Hatfield,

Pennsylvania. The theme for the event was "Transformation through Love". Anne and Bisu Sohani and Piyush Ghayal the President of the Mid- Atlantic Region were the chief guest speakers. Anne and Bisu gave a very sweet affectionate talk on the theme elucidating many of their personal Sai experiences. Piyush Ghayal talked about the structure of the Sai World Foundation and the Global Sathya Sai Organization.

After the talks, Rajen Ghayal spoke for about fifteen minutes on the theme and then made a half hour Power-point presentation about SDSC. It was received well and was followed by a lot of interest from the audience, specially young adults.

Seva Opportunities:

During the summer of 2009, SDSC would like to clean up the construction site. Some of the seva opportunities include straightening the silt fence, pumping water out of the basement, removing trash, and general clean up of the building premises. The date will be announced as soon as it is fixed. All are welcome to participate in the seva projects.

Sai Inspires

To remove the evil of egoism, service is the most efficient instrument. Service will also impress on the person doing the service the Unity of all mankind. One who dedicates his/her time, skill and strength to service can never meet defeat, distress or disappointment, for service is its own reward. His words will be ever sweet and soft, his gestures ever revered and humble. He will have no foe, fatigue, or fear.

- Divine Discourse, Aug 28, 1976.

Serve Man Selflessly And See God In Everyone

By Mr. Bjørn Ribers, Denmark

Bjørn is a social worker at the Red Cross. He qualified with an M.A. in Psychology and Communication Studies. A member of the Sai Youth Group, he was involved in the Centre's Project for Homeless People and also visits homes for the elderly and disabled. His wife Henriette Emilie is an artist and has portrayed Baba in her paintings.

In 1994, I was in Prasanthi Nilayam with a group of Danish Sai devotees for Christmas. I did not travel to India to find out who Baba was. For some unknown reason it already seemed clear to me that He was the reincarnation of Lord Krishna, the Creator of this Universe. Nor did I come for healing, to be convinced about Baba's ability to materialize, or to test His Divine powers. I went there because I had a deep longing to see Him and feel His presence.

One day during Darshan, He was standing right in front of me. He did not speak to me, but He looked into my eyes and smiled. His face was so beautiful. An old saying states, "The eyes are the mirror of the soul" and I often felt that when I looked into the eyes of a person I would see a reflection of their soul's uniqueness.

But with Swami, there seemed to be no individual soul. No beginning. No end. Looking into His eyes was a view into Eternity, into the Absolute Infinite Beingness – God. I was plunged into the unfathomable, overwhelmed and deeply touched. He left me awestruck, with tears in my eyes.

A few days later, on Christmas day, an Indian Sai devotee shared with me the following quote by Baba:

"No matter where you go, always know that I will be there, inside you, guiding you every step of the way. In the years to come, you will experience Me in My different manifestations of My form. You are My very own, dearer than dear to Me. I will protect you like the eyelids that protect the eyes."

Little did I know at that time, how significant these words would be to me in the years to come!

When I returned to Denmark my life changed completely. If ever I were to be worthy of looking into His eyes again I would have to put His teachings into practice. What had He told me? That I should see Him in His different manifestations of His form, and that only through love and service to mankind could I serve God and attain God's grace. On a spring day in 1995 the following poem flowed easily into my mind.

***Beloved One, Beloved One,
Let me be your sacred son.
I am Yours and You are mine
We are all in Love Divine.***

***Take my life and make me You;
Make me just as loving too.
You are God and I am too,
Let me work in love for you.***

***Lead me on the journey through
All the way back Home to You.
I am Yours and You are mine;
We are all in Love Divine.***

***Oh, My Lord I pray to Thee,
Make me humble on my knee.
I will serve the best I can;
See You Lord, in every man.***

***We are One;
Father, Son.
Please make me Yours
Beloved One.***

I titled it ***Beloved One*** and the words defined the way I strived to live my life. Yet, words alone are not sufficient; they must be followed by practice. So I volunteered to become a visiting friend at the nearest old people's home. Several days a week I would go and spend time with the elders, talk to them, listen to their life stories and learn about the difficulties they are grappling with in the last days of their lives.

I realized, that when they viewed their lives in retrospect, the most valuable experience had been the love of their families. These moments of service were indeed rewarding for me. However, I often longed for India, for Swami and for the nearness of my Father, the Poorna Avatar.

It was on one such day, when I was on my way to visit an elderly man at the old people's home that I was longing for India and Swami. When I entered the room where the old man lived, I saw him lying on his bed. And as I went near and we started speaking, my thoughts went back to India and for a few seconds I didn't focus on the person in front of me, whom I had promised to serve.

When I looked up again it was no longer the old man lying on the bed. It was Sri Sathya Sai Baba, in His orange robe, with a crown of black hair! Not like a vision or a dream, but in His physical form. I was so awestruck that I almost fell on my knees. But the moment I moved, the scene changed. Again it was the old man lying in front of me.

"Serve man until you see God in all men," Baba tells us. I spent the rest of the day with my friend, reflecting upon Baba's words. As humble as I would be towards Swami, I should be to this man. As respectful as I would be to Swami, I should be towards this man. All the love I would have for Swami, I should have for this man. "In the years to come, you will see Me in My different manifestations of My form." Baba had indeed kept His promise. For five years I served several different people at the old people's home and I spent almost every evening there. I didn't see Swami in His familiar divine form again, but I learned to see and experience His omnipresence and His Love in His multiplicity of forms.

Source:

http://media.radiosai.org/Journals/Vol_05/01DEC07/07-Ribers.htm

"When the mind is cleansed of all its dross and impurities, and noble and pure feelings are cultivated, then will dawn the Vision of Wisdom and the entire creation will be glimpsed in its true light as Brahman (the supreme Godhead itself).

"If there be no flower, the fruit-bud is not born; if there be no fruit-bud there will be no fruit either. In the same manner, if there be no dedicated activity (Karma), devotion (Bhakti) will not arise. Without devotion, wisdom (Jnana) will not dawn."

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The Vibhuti Covered Pick

On 14th June 1980, I was lucky enough to be present in a house visited by Baba in New Delhi after His Divine visit to Kashmir. I was preparing to go on a pilgrimage to the Nanda Devi Sanctuary, one of the most difficult treks in the Himalayas. I took my high altitude equipment with me, including ropes, pitons (rock clamps) and my trusted ice-axe, an indispensable tool for negotiating precipitous icy terrain in the high mountains.

Baba graciously asked after my welfare and I said I would like Him to bless my adventure. My hostess suggested I give Baba my ice-axe to bless. He smiled, took it and began to ask some searching questions about the composition of the steel used in its making. His students knew more about this than I did. Suddenly He produced Vibhuti from thin air (without the usual circular movements I had seen in public) and proceeded to rub it with great intensity on one side, the pick side, of the ice-axe only. He didn't put any Vibhuti on the other parts. Then with an air of finality He said, "You will be successful," and handed back the ice-axe.

I do not know what constitutes a miracle but I do know that a month later, on 26th July, while climbing into the Sanctuary, the pick office-axe saved my life.

Traversing some tricky wet slabs of rock cut croppings above the Rishi Ganga gorge at Rhamani I was aided by two excellent Garhwali porters. They were so skillful and daring that they disdained to use any rope and would cross the wet slabs sloping out over the edge of the gorge in their bare feet. They would go ahead fixing rope, then sit on their haunches and wait for me with all my climbing regalia to haul myself up.

We began up a narrow earth gully which was particularly slippery and treacherous. There were no reliable footholds anywhere and we had to make them as we went. I looked back into the yawning chasm that led a thousand feet straight down into the huge gorge carved out by the rushing river below.

I kicked a toehold in the damp earth and reaching up whacked the pick of the ice-axe into the earth above. To my dismay the six inch pick clanged against rock after it had gone in only three inches, not enough to hold much weight. At the same moment the earth under my toehold crumbled away and I felt myself sinking gently with the earth until I was dangling above the gorge supported only by the Vibhuti covered pick. For the agonizing moment my full weight came on the axe; my thoughts were more of self disgust at my incompetence than fear of hurtling a thousand feet to certain death.

Somehow the three inches of steel didn't slice through the soft earth but held me long enough for the porters to back down and grab me. After a few more close shaves we were successful and got to our destination, the Nanda Devi Sanctuary, reaching that holy place on Gurupurnima. There were other hair raising incidents on our return trip, but thanks to Baba's Divine Grace, we came through all right and I am alive today to narrate this story.

- Bill Aitken

(William McKay Aitken, is a Scottish born naturalized Indian writer and traveler).

Source:

<http://www.sssbpt.org/Pages/SaiSpiritualShowers/SS25oct2007.html>

SERVICE DETAILS

Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen:

18, Neilson St, New Brunswick, NJ 08901.

Ph: 732-545-9002 (Third Saturday of every month)

Schedule: July 18, 2009 & August 15, 2009

Time : 1:00 PM - 4:30 PM

Directions to Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen,

From Route 18 North (Exit 9 NJ Tpke.)

1. Pass Route 1 and go for about 1 mile, passing a traffic light
2. Make left on to Commercial Ave.
3. Make right at the next light onto Neilson St.
4. Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen is the 2nd building on the left.

Directions are also viewable at:

www.Sai-service.org/html/newsletters/current/currentNlt

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

SDSC building project is a great seva opportunity. Those motivated to participate in any manner can contact any of the CC members listed under.

Want To Host CC Meeting & Bhajans?

SDSC Meetings & Bhajans are usually held on third Sunday of the month. Anyone who would like to host SDSC CC Meeting and Bhajans, please contact one of the Coordinating Committee members.

How To Reach Us?

Web Site Address: <http://www.sai-service.org>

E-mail: info@sai-service.org

U.S. Mail: Sarva Dharma Service Center Inc.,
P.O. Box 801, Howell, NJ 07731

Coordinating Committee:

President: Rao Andavolu (609) 683 3828

Central Coordinator: Rajen Ghayal (732) 276 6727

Secretary: Sudha Medepalli (732) 297 0758

Fiscal Coordinator: Kanneth Sugathan (609) 423 4833

LOVE ALL, SERVE ALL

JAI SAI RAM

HELP EVER, HURT NEVER

Be part of the 'Expansion' of Swami's mission on earth. Please feel free to communicate on all issues related to Sarva Dharma Service Center, by any of the means convenient to you.