

SERVICE TO MAN, IS SERVICE TO GOD



'God serving God'



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DISCOVER YOUR INNATE DIVINITY

Message from Zone 3 Chairperson

Dear fellow devotees,
Sai Ram to you All.

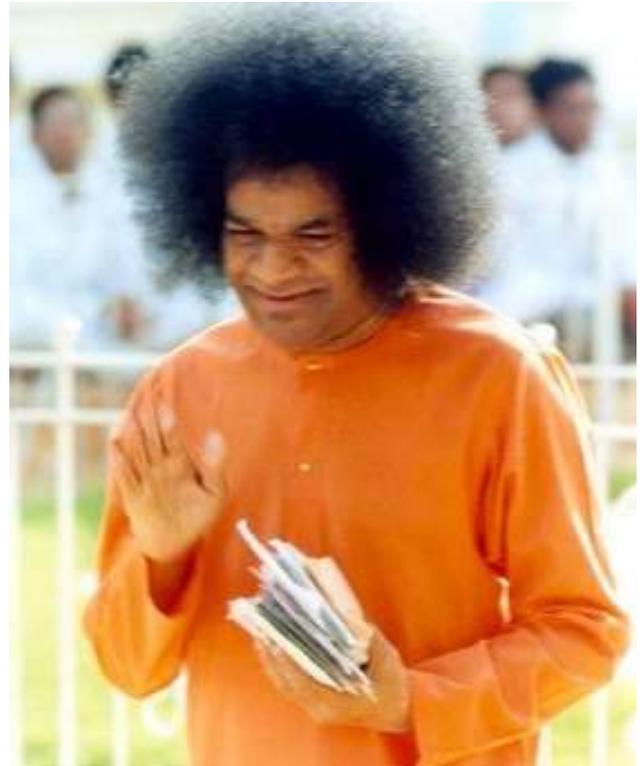
The Springvale Centre's 25th year is a milestone worthy of celebration. Twenty-five years of love and service aimed at uplifting the individual, the family and society through the advancement of our understanding that all are Divine.

Our Founder, Sathya Sai Baba said, *"The sole objective of all the Sathya Sai Organisations is to enable man to discover his innate Divinity, regain his self confidence and faith in God"*.

A well functioning Sai Centre is a place where members can practice the exchange of Love and inspire each other towards the highest ideals of life. To follow the path of Right Action and to Love and Serve all.

We have been inspired by Sai to work for the wellbeing of society, and through 25 years of well-coordinated devotional, service and educational activities in the Springvale Centre, thousands of people have benefited directly and indirectly.

Through their sweetness and humility, through their eagerness to serve those in need, members are having a significant and positive influence on others within their orbit. They are also deepening their faith in themselves.



***"Take one step towards Me,
and I shall take 100 towards you."***

~ Sathya Sai Baba

Gratitude is expressed to all members and office bearers for creating such a loving environment in the centre over these years. May this continue into the future with greater energy and enthusiasm.

*"Be about my work my beloved devotees.
Your breath will carry the scent of the blossoms
of heaven. Your example will be that of Angels.
Your joy will be my joy."*

~ Sathya Sai Baba

**Neville Fredericks
Chairperson, Zone 3**

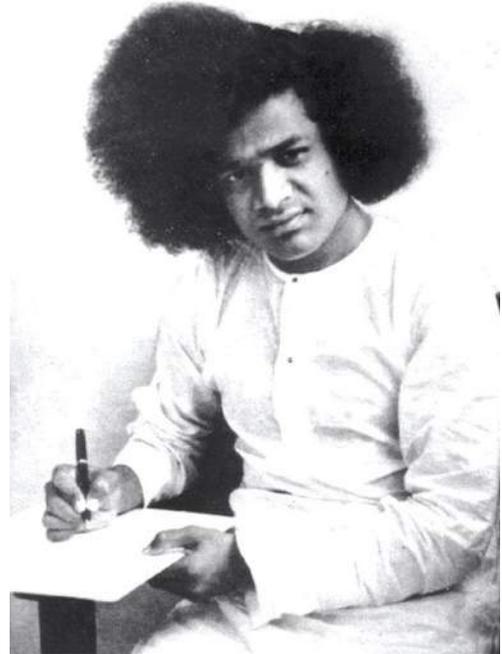
SERVE ALL IN A SPIRIT OF DEDICATION

Message from Victoria Region East President

“There are thousands of organisations already working with such aims, but what is the special need for an organisation bearing my name? You must realise me in all, and serve all in a spirit of worshipful dedication.”

~ Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 6, pp. 323-324



I have been attending Springvale Sai Centre for the last 5 years, previously once in 3 months and currently once a month. The members are most welcoming and the attention they shower on all makes newcomers want to attend their devotional singing sessions more often.

Unlike most Sai Centres, Springvale Sai Centre has weekly devotional singing sessions on a Sunday. This gives an opportunity for devotees to attend the Sai Centre in a relaxed environment. This also enables devotees to absorb in the energy from the proceedings at the Sai Centre.

Springvale Centre is one of the older Sai Centres in Victoria. For the last 25 years, the Centre has been successfully promoting spirituality through all its activities. Currently, it has 80 registered members. Twelve years ago, when Victoria had three regions, Springvale Centre was considered a hub in Region 3 as being the biggest in that region.

Weekly Devotional Singing sessions, SSE classes, monthly Study Circle sessions, interfaith activities, a variety of service activities ranging from nursing home visits to meal service to homeless, are the norms of Springvale Sai Centre.

This year, Springvale Sai Centre hosted the Eid Festival, inviting our Muslim brothers from Ahamadia Muslim Group. To my knowledge, this is the first time at a Sai Centre I witnessed the narration of passages from the Quran with English Translations.

Sai Centres are outlets which deliver specific activities that assist in the growth of spirituality among its devotees. The purpose of the Sathya Sai International Organisation (SSIO) is to promote awareness among devotees of their inherent divinity. Springvale Sai Centre provides all the necessary activities that SSIO would expect from a Sai Centre.

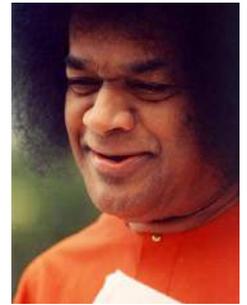
Victoria East Region would like to take this opportunity to express our congratulations and best wishes to Springvale Centre for its 25 years of dedication and continued excellent service to the community.

Congratulations on your 25th Anniversary.

Deven Srikantha
President, Victoria Region East

GOD AND I, HIS LOVE AND MORE...

Message from Centre President



Growing and living with His Divine Love was a blessing and a privilege. Knowing that He was my saviour was a further assurance to my belief that I did not need any more than His Love and that His Love alone would conquer all of my fears.

From a very early age our parents told us that Sathya Sai Baba was Divine. We were not fortunate at the time to attend Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) classes. However, I now recall many experiences whilst I grew up when He brought me closer to Him, although at the time I was blinded by my ignorance of His presence.

After I got married, a close friend, Rajchandran, told us about Sathya Sai Baba and the Sai centre he was attending. My husband began attending Springvale Sai Centre on a regular basis. At the beginning I had my doubts. I would question everything my husband had heard about Sai Baba. One day my husband related a story about Al Drucker and his miraculous mid-air rescue during a flight that should have ended in disaster. I questioned him and would not believe it until I had some affirmation. Sai then came in my dream and stood beside my bed. He told me that I would be serving Him in time to come and not to worry about anything. I was trembling when I opened my eyes and knew that this was true as the energy in the room felt real and I was in awe - the Divine had touched my heart.

In my heart I longed to be with this man of miracles so when I eventually was relieved of my motherly duties of young children, I started going to the Springvale Sai Centre and have never looked back.

Sai tested me many times as I continued to persevere on the spiritual path. My success and failures in life are a testament to His Love and His Perseverance as my journey in this spiritual endeavour continues.

I am grateful that Sai came in my life. I am grateful that Sai came into my family's life. I am also grateful to be linked to the Springvale Sai Centre throughout my connection with Sathya Sai Baba.

I had the privilege to serve Springvale Sai Centre in my capacity as a president from 2008 to 2009 and again in 2016 to 2017. I trained as an SSE Teacher in 2001 and since then served in the capacity of Education Coordinator many times.

Our centre's strength is in the combined running of the SSE classes along with Centre sessions. We have SSE and Young Adult Devotional Singing once a month. Our Study Circles are conducted every fortnight and while our membership may have lessened, the strength is in the quality of our devotional programs and the committed members who keep the Springvale Centre active.

I wish to thank all past presidents for doing their duties so diligently and carrying the Centre forward. My gratitude and appreciation goes to all past and present wing coordinators, the Devotional Wing along with its dynamic devotional singing, the Education Wing, the Service Wing, the Young Adult Wing, the Ladies Wing, Newcomers and Unity of Faith coordinators and all those who have been instrumental in the building of the Springvale Sai Centre for the past 25 years.

May this Centre flourish for the next 25 years and many more years to come.

"I have come to light the lamp of Love in your hearts, to see that it shines day by day with added lustre. I have not come on behalf of any exclusive religion. I have not come on a mission of publicity for a sect or creed or cause, nor have I come to collect followers for any doctrine. I have no plan to attract disciples or devotees into My fold or any fold. I have come to tell you of this universal unitary faith, this spiritual principle, this path of Love, this virtue of Love, this duty of Love, this obligation of Love."

~ Sathya Sai Baba,

Sathya Sai Speaks 8.22 1968

Saras Verma
Centre President

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

My fondest memories of Springvale Sai Centre are of my SSE Teacher Krishna teaching us the morning and evening prayer, SSE Teacher Kugan giving us hardcover books which had a positive message, and SSE Teacher Devi for being tough but fair.

The Springvale Sai Centre has come a long way from humble beginnings. We have many people working tirelessly behind the scenes so that our devotional singing sessions run smoothly. These are the real heroes who go unnoticed serving the centre selflessly.

Many of the teachers and elders at the centre inspire the young adults to go out into the community and their workplace to work hard and to set a good example for others.

I look forward every Sunday to meeting with familiar faces along with newcomers who attend our centre. I appreciate learning about other faiths such as when we had our *Eid-al-Fitur* (Ramadan) celebrations. I enjoy listening to those with experience imparting their wisdom during Study Circles, hearing the melodious voices during Devotional Singing sessions and seeing the SSE students singing and playing instruments at the centre.

Our centre has come a long way and I hope it will be here for many more years to come.

Happy 25th Anniversary Springvale!

Arjunan Sundaramoorthy
Devotional Coordinator

Respectful greetings everyone,

I feel honoured to present to you my experiences during my time in SSE at Springvale Sai Centre. I have been associated with SSE since childhood and it has provided me with valuable lessons. I really enjoyed going to SSE classes, since there were a lot of activities, which turned out to be

fun and entertaining as well as providing a priceless education in Human Values and service to the community, which is the aim of SSE.

I remember those good old days when we all came to SSE on Sunday afternoon starting with Group 1 where it all began with a bang. This gave me the opportunity to get along with other people and make new friends, an important aspect that I learned. Apart from the spiritual lessons that we used to attend, I also participated in dramas and music performances for special occasions such as *Easwaramma Day*, *Guru Poornima* and for Baba's Birthday celebrations.

Sai Baba says, "**Service to man is service to God**". Through the SSE program, I became involved in many service activities, such as tree planting, Clean Up Australia Day, and performing Christmas Carols at our local nursing home. These activities made me realise the role we should play in society and provided me with the experience and knowledge that enables me to keep offering service to society and the environment.

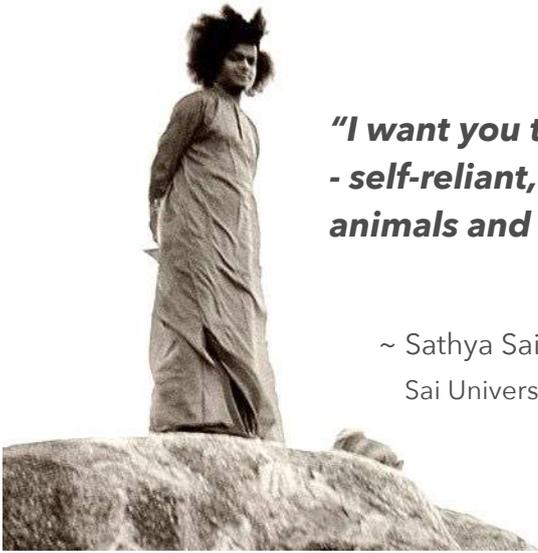
Last but not least, I would like to thank each and every teacher who taught me Spiritual Education and the five Human Values. These are fundamental Spiritual Disciplines that enable us to live happily and most importantly, to be in harmony in society and the world. I must thank my SSE Teachers Saras, Muruga, Vishaal and Alvin, Vimal and Mitesh for including me in plays and activities, for believing in me and having faith in me.

In summary, I would like to highlight a few lessons which I will always remember:

- 1. Follow the 5 Human Values principle**
- 2. Be happy. Don't compare yourself with others, as everyone in society is important.**
- 3. Respect your fellow man, everyone is important in our life.**

Athivan Pandithan

LEADERSHIP IS IDEALISM IN ACTION



“I want you to be leaders to protect the world. Leaders like lions - self-reliant, courageous, majestic and just. Lion is the king of animals and I want you to be king among men.”

~ Sathya Sai Baba, Inaugural Address to Students
Sai University - Summer Course, 1992

Baba's infinite guidance is ever present if we stay in contact with the Sai within, because Sai is in our hearts. This is not difficult, it simply requires practice. Unlike our respected elders who find it difficult to change their entrenched habits, for the young adults it is much easier to achieve. Baba's message will soon rest solely on our young shoulders in this Golden Age with young adults who immersed themselves wholeheartedly with Sai's teachings and by developing methods in dealing with the diverse range of situations that we face in today's world.

I vividly remember Neville Fredericks, Zone 3 Chairperson of the Sathya Sai International Organisation, speaking at our centre after a young adult devotional singing session last year. He said Baba doesn't want you to advertise Him. If we live and breath His message properly, people will automatically be attracted and they will ask, *“What is different about you? You seem much happier than the majority of people.”* When people ask, then you can talk about Baba, but you cannot push Baba on to people. I see our young adults displaying His message, whether it is teaching SSE classes; donating blood & plasma; providing food for Joey's Van; participating in Unity of Faith events; or cleaning at the Shiva Vishnu Temple. These are all done with humility and without any expectations of acknowledgement or reward.

In the 'Sai Mission', the energy and dedication of young adults has a unique part to play. Baba has said that the years between the ages of 16 to 35 are a golden period in one's life; *“for that is the period when life adds*

sweetness to itself, when talents, skills and attitudes are accumulated, sublimated and sanctified.”

The Young Adult wing does not work in isolation. We understand and recognise the importance of learning and working with the other members of the Organisation. It is through working together that we can understand Baba's message of Unity in Diversity.

Young adults comprise of talented individuals from all walks of life where each share their own unique offering to the Sai mission. Most importantly are our young adults who teach SSE classes, who in recent years include Shane, Pranevan, Vishaal and Vaamini, just to name a few. They have all graduated from SSE themselves and understand the impact of education on young minds. These young adults are leaders of today, displaying all the qualities of a lion as described by Baba.

“Students! You are the ones who will assume the leadership of the country in future. The future of the nation depends upon you. Your nature and character will decide the character of the nation. You should work for the prosperity of the nation, welfare of the world, and universal happiness. First of all, you must follow the command of the Lord. Therein lies your welfare, as well as the security of the nation and society.”

~ Sathya Sai Baba, Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1996

Mitesh Achari
Young Adult Coordinator

THE AMAZING GRACE... OF OUR BELOVED SATHYA SAI BABA

**Sathya Sai Baba has said that,
“*Knowingly or unknowingly every
living being is undergoing a
spiritual evolution.....*”**

Perhaps my spiritual evolution began when my mother took me along with her to the temples whenever she went and when she was constantly relating stories to me from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. My mother believed in God, had actually lived during the lifetime of our Sai Baba but had never heard of Him! Although of Indian origin, my parents were Malaysian Nationals. I had not heard of Sai until after I returned from England and took up a position as a Registered Nurse in an Army Hospital away from home in the 1980s. There for the first time I met some Sai devotees, although they never explained who Sai Baba was when I queried them. Then I migrated to Australia in October 1990. It was then that I met the lovely Murugaiah family. It was Padma Murugaiah who played a pivotal role in putting me on the Sai path, when she clarified my doubts. I have never looked back since. I became an ardent Sai devotee. Yes, it was the Springvale Sai family that adopted me into their fold.

Sai devotional songs were a joy but my passion for knowing and understanding Sai's teachings was greater! So I attended all the conferences and devotional meetings that I could. With His Grace I grew from strength to strength and I dare say my spiritual evolution was put on a fast forward mode. I grew under the loving guidance and support of fellow devotees like Muruga, Shankara from India, Puttaparthi and the Murugaiah family to mention but a few. At Springvale Sai Centre I had the wonderful opportunity to serve as an SSE teacher for more than ten years. We had some wonderful children during that period, who have grown up to be fine young men and women.

Some of them are yet frequenting the Springvale Sai Centre and have served or are serving in different capacities as coordinators at various levels.

When serving as a Youth Coordinator at the regional level in early 2002 the highlight was the travel to Puttaparthi with an all Australian Young Adult group to perform a drama in front of Sai Baba during *Guru Poornima*. Sai showered us with all His Love and Blessings. For me, the other most important aspect while we were there was the release of '*Tapovanam: Sacred Life Story of Sathya Sai Baba*'. I suggested we start reading the book immediately. It was a great challenge for those youths who did it because we were kept busy from dawn to late evening with practices for the drama. But the rewards were manifold for those who finished the book within the stipulated time!! Miracles happened for us at Puttaparthi. The youth had front line whilst Sai Baba was in the hall, He stopped to talk to them and blessed a special greeting card that they had prepared!! One can imagine the joy and thrill of the youth involved. On returning to Melbourne I continued the study of '*Tapovanam*', initially with some of the SSE students and their family and later extended to the young adult group at regional level. Here too the families who were involved and individual young adults had various and wonderful stories to tell of their experiences from studying the book.

In His own inimitable way Sathya Sai Baba showed me the path that I was to take. For, has He not said, "*You do My work and I will do yours....?*". But I must add that the study of '*Tapovanam*' was initiated simply because of my passion for Sai Baba's teachings. My feeling was that every Sai devotee should read the '*Tapovanam*' in the prescribed way and reap the manifold benefit in the form of His Grace. Personally, His Grace overwhelmed me.

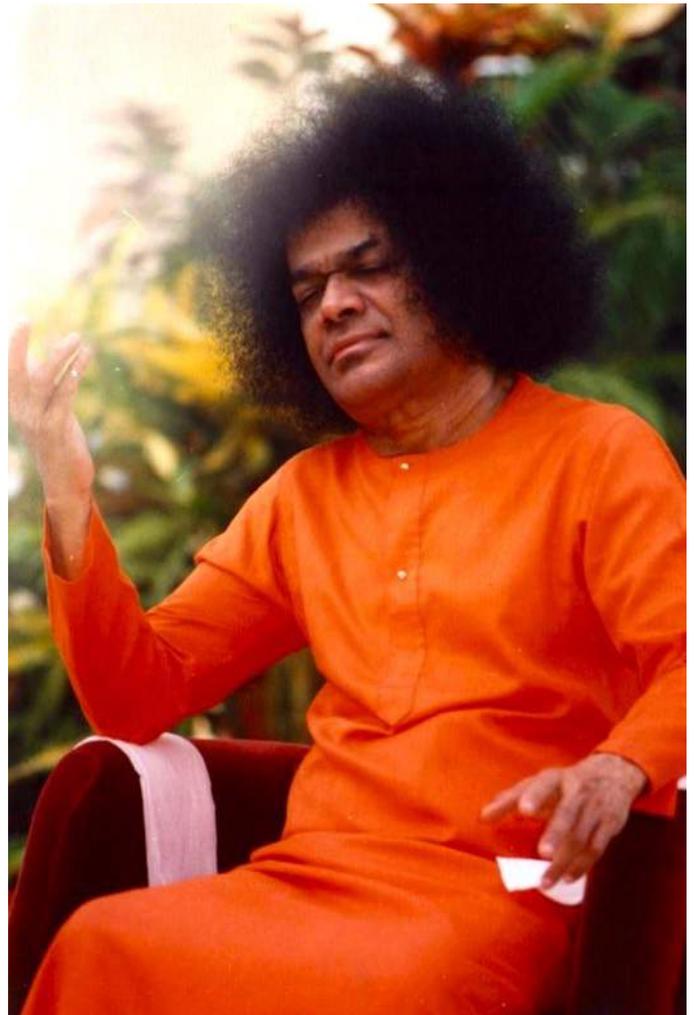
Overwhelmed as I was by His graciousness, one day at the altar I asked Sai Baba, *“Sai, thank You for everything, but please tell me what Your special message is, for me?”*

Within seconds a photograph of Sai Baba with both His hands raised in the blessing mode, fell on my altar. Immediately there was honey oozing from His right hand and around His heart on the left side there was a formation of ‘Om’ with *Vibhuthi* (holy ash)!! Beneath the photograph was the writing that read, *‘The Hands That Help are Holier Than The Lips That Pray’!!* This was the green light given to chase my dream that I've had since the age of 18. At eighteen, whilst employed as an English teacher in a rural area in Malaysia, a very good student in my class suddenly stopped coming to school because his alcoholic father fell ill and was unable to support the family. So the young 12 year old Manickam left school to supplement his impoverished mother's income! Upset as I was for him, I was helpless. It was then that I promised myself that one day I would do everything in my power to help disadvantaged children.

Currently I oversee the care and education of more than 50 children at the Uluru Children's Home established by The East West Overseas Aid Foundation of Australia that operates as The East West Foundation of India in a fishing village in South India. As a fellow member of the Foundation I have been working with the children for nearly 14 years now. I also help run an English medium nursery and primary school at the request of the founder of TEWOAF Dr. Natteri Chandran. I thank Sai with all my heart for opening up all the many padlocked gates that I had to surpass to get where I am. Without Sai's blessings and the constant emotional and spiritual support of my Sai family, I couldn't have done it. The Uluru Children's Home is my *‘TAPOVANAM’*, for, as Sai Baba said, I now plan to have my *‘Head in the forest, Hands in Society’*.

‘...Lord take my everything and let me be an instrument to work for Thee...’. Sai Ram.

Devi Krishna



***“Life is a Song, Sing it!
Life is a Game, Play it!
Life is a Challenge, Meet it!
Life is a Dream, Realise it!
Life is a Sacrifice, Offer it!
Life is Love, Enjoy it!”***

~ Sathya Sai Baba

LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

THE PRESENT IS A PRODUCT OF THE PAST...



THE BIRTH OF SPRINGVALE SAI CENTRE

In 1991 my brother Rajchandran together with Thavaraja and Deva wanted to open a Sai Centre in the now Greater Dandenong area of Springvale. At that time, Sai Centres were few and far between – there was only one centre in St. Kilda and another in Cheltenham and Camberwell. My brother was attending devotional meetings in St. Kilda along with my parents Pathmavathy and Tampoe Murugaiah. There they met Ratnasothy.

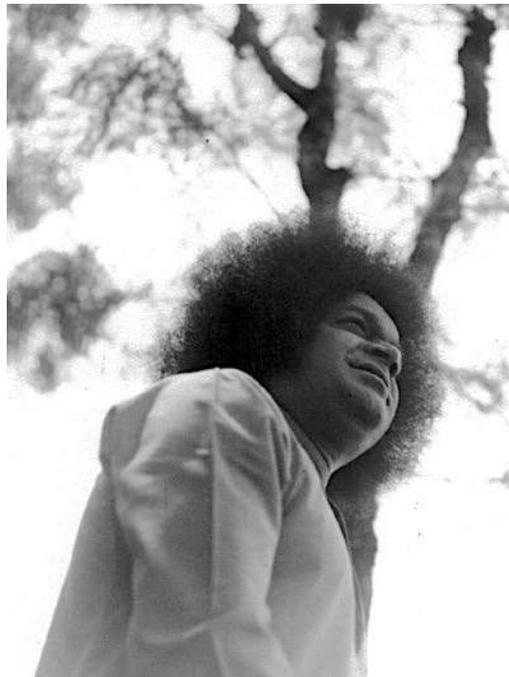
Chandran, Thava and Deva persuaded my parents to help them organise the centre. The philosophy of religious harmony with an emphasis on service and devotion was appealing to the new immigrants from Sri Lanka who were facing numerous challenges settling into Australia.

As all of them were new to the Sathya Sai Organisation, they needed an experienced Sai devotee to help them organise the format of the new centre. Lata Ramdany assisted in this regard and agreed to be the first chairperson. However, the group soon faced multiple hiccups resulting in imminent closure of the centre. Permission was sought directly from Sai Baba for the opening of the centre via a letter sent through Rick Prescott – then the Coordinator for Victoria. Baba tapped Prescott on the shoulder with the message ***“Don’t worry – all will be well”***.

Thus opened Springvale Sai Centre under the direct guidance of Sai Baba and a new chairperson was unanimously elected by the group – Ratnasothy. He went on to serve Springvale Sai Centre for 4 years and under his guidance the centre held devotional singing sessions every

Sunday from 2 pm to 4 pm in the Springvale Scout Hall. The collective prayers proved to be an instant hit and the devotional songs, despite being in a foreign language, were both catchy and soothing to the soul. People felt mentally and emotionally refreshed after attending the centre and participation slowly increased.

The founding members played a dedicated and crucial role in the viability and quality of the centre. Initially the centre had 3 wings – Spiritual Wing, Service Wing and Devotional Wing but it soon expanded as families started bringing their little children along! The Education Wing launched our first values-based education classes. They were taught by a Hindu Brahmin – Pundit Chintaman Dattar. What an auspicious start! The little ones learnt about human values with a lot of colouring in of all the spiritual masters from the major world religions - where else can you get this kind of education? The seeds of religious harmony were implanted in their tender hearts by a practising Hindu priest, who was also a true believer in Sai!



Over 25 young children attended the first SSE classes. One of their teachers, Kugan, had a natural ability as a teacher and the children had no hesitation attending his classes that were held over one hour in the kitchen of the Scout Hall. The children also delighted in performance, which Muruga and Devi Krishna and Rita Singh produced. These included spectacular dramas, dances, story telling and musical concerts at various centre events including the largest annual event, Sai Baba’s birthday.



Other new wings of Youth, Ladies and Interfaith were added to the Centre in due course. Regular Study Circles were held to expand the spiritual knowledge of centre devotees. Recently, Niranjana and Kham have added their dynamic presence to take the centre to new heights of spiritual inquiry!

Devi Krishna and Ursula also helped with the Dandenong Council's Interfaith program, while Trish helped with the library which was initially managed by Genga, Paras Ram and later by Shane Rao.

After Ratna, subsequent chairpersons Muruga, Kugan, Vinay, my late husband Rajaratnam, Kamla, Saras, Rajkumar and Alvin have helped shape the centre to keep unity and preserve its quality.

The former children from SSE – Priya, Arjunan, Gopikanna, Vaamini, Vishaal and Mitesh have taken positions in the centre's committee, further

enhancing its growth. Among the ladies to name a few Rajini, Saras, Kamla, Sutha and Kumuthini continue to work tirelessly year after year.

My parents and Uncle Ratnasothy never failed to miss one session. My late mother witnessed the birth of this mighty centre which to this day is run by dedicated devotees. The current group of Sai devotees who are the foundation of this great place, have brought much name and fame. They may be young in age but dedication, determination, duty and devotion shines in their eyes as they carry the centre on their brave, young shoulders – they are a shining example of what Springvale Centre has achieved in the last 25 years.

Although some adults and children have moved on from the centre, the centre has not lost its lustre. The numbers may be fewer but the quality remains the same. It is a shiny beacon spreading its warmth in a world full of chaos. Many miracles have happened in this centre and in the lives of devotees who have helped shape this place. Sai's presence is here, now and forever. May it bloom and grow, year after year. Happy 25th Anniversary. May Sai continue to shower His blessings upon us.

*Rohini Rajaratnam
Ranjini Sundaramoorthy
For Murugaiah*

***"Take one step towards Me,
and I shall take 100 towards you."***

~ Sathya Sai Baba

IN THE QUEST FOR SELFLESS SERVICE



Sai Ram to All,

Today, we celebrate the auspicious occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Sathya Sai Centre of Springvale.

I am delighted to write this message for the special edition of the souvenir that is being published to commemorate the anniversary. It gives me great pleasure as a past chairperson of this Sai Centre, to participate in the celebrations. Those of us who had been members of this Centre since its inception in 1991, will be able to reminisce with gratitude and joy on how the membership has grown in numbers. It has also increased manifoldly in its spiritual activities. 25 years is a significant landmark in the history of the Centre and it is appropriate to recall the history of its origin over the years. Today we can look back with pride in our steady growth and noteworthy achievements during those years.

It is important on this occasion to recognise the initiative and foresight of Murugaiah, his family members and a few Sai devotees who first established the centre. We must also not forget the remarkable contribution made since the opening by those who worked with love, dedication and unsparing efforts to spread the message and teachings of our Lord Sathya Sai Baba for the spiritual welfare of the members.

The Centre has now reached a significant milestone in its on-going provision of spiritually based services to community.

My congratulations are to all the past and present presidents, respective office bearers or coordinators, SSE teachers, youth leaders, SSE students and other service providers who continue in contributing to the spiritual welfare of the members and glorification of God. All of them through their sincere LOVE of Baba have contributed greatly and led the way to a high peak of accomplishment in our centre's endeavours. Further, they have by their perseverance paved the way forward for greater achievements in the future bestowing blessings on future generations and humanity at large. The valuable articles contributed by our young and old members to the souvenirs printed on both occasions of our 10th and 21st Anniversary is a testament to the great progress in spiritual growth within our members.

I am thankful to our beloved Baba, for giving me this life to watch the growth of the Centre over the last 25 years and also see the fruits of our dedication leading to these Silver Jubilee celebrations. May our beloved Baba enrich each one of us with His boundless Love.

I wish that our Centre may grow to greater heights and that the Silver Jubilee celebrations be a happy, meaningful and memorable one. Sai Ram.

Ratna Ratnasothy

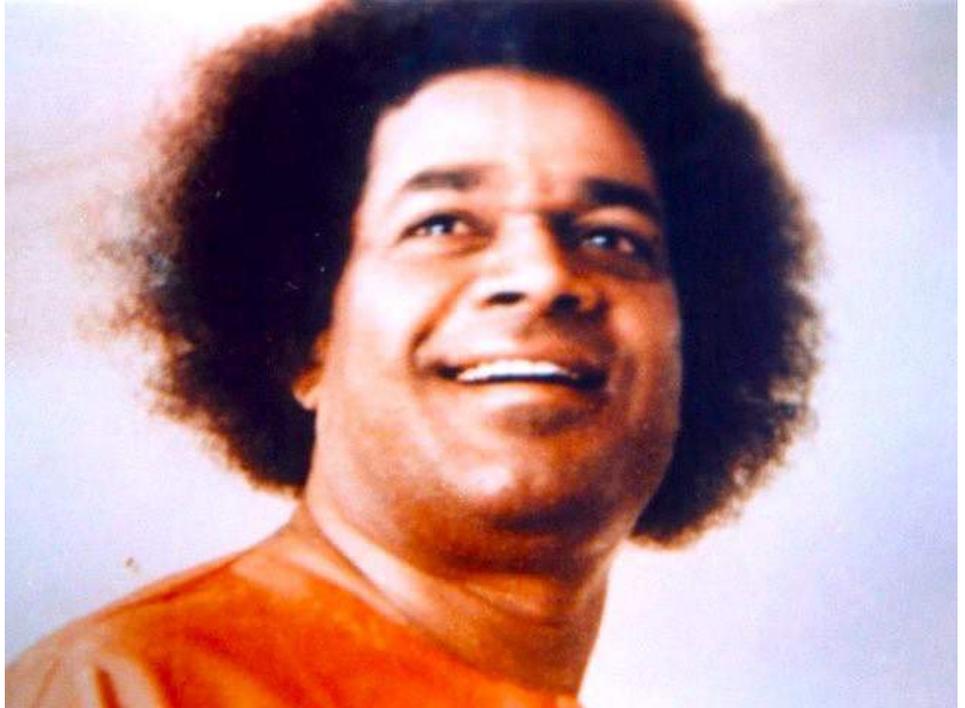
***"Only in silence can you hear
the voice of God."***

~ Sathya Sai Baba

OUR BELOVED TEACHER AND DIVINE GUIDE

My most humble salutations to our beloved Sathya Sai Baba.

How fortunate and blessed can one be to have been able to experience time with Sathya Sai Baba; to have seen Him, listened to His wonderful teachings about life and our purpose in life, to have even been able to speak with Him. This is truly a time to be ever grateful for and even though He is no longer with us in physical form, His influence supports and guides to this day. He is always with us.



In 1993 when I joined Springvale Sai Centre, I had limited knowledge of Baba's teachings. In those days it was difficult to obtain many books about Him in Australia. To satisfy my thirst for knowledge, I attended the Study Circles held at the Centre twice a month. They were rather appealing and interesting. Even now I enjoy participating in Study Circles, for without the knowledge of His teachings, we can not practice the five human values. The discussions also create the urge to learn more of the divine teachings.

Baba teaches us that God is within us, all around us and we must earnestly believe that. Connection with the divine within will give us the guidance we need through life. In reality, there is no separation, for in the Divine sense, **WE ARE ONE**, with the Divine, and **WE ARE ONE** with all humanity.

I first came to Sai in 1972 after reading 'Sai Baba, Man of Miracles' by Howard Murphet. This changed my entire life and was a real blessing.

I totally changed my approach to life; learnt not to have any fear and deepened my respect for my parents and elders.

Whatever happened in my life, I was ready to accept it and deal with it, as I could feel His Love, guidance and protection. Baba wants us to perform our duties in the Sai Organisation with full conviction and commitment. Once, during my term as a Centre Ladies Coordinator, I casually cancelled a meeting with the Ladies. Baba appeared in my dream and told me that I was not doing His work! This really woke me up! Sai has said 'Only those I have called can serve.' When we are called to serve, we must honour that calling with dedication and diligence.

My gratitude to Baba cannot really be expressed sufficiently in words. He is an inner experience that fills me with joy and a sense of fulfilment. His energy is amazing and one needs to accept it with love, gratefulness and total surrender. Sai Ram.

Kamla Rao

TRUE EDUCATION CONSISTS IN THE CULTIVATION OF THE HEART

Education is intended to direct the mind to gather information from various sources in order to utilise this information for an individual's future career. On the other hand, Educare is education of the heart and mind. Its purpose is to develop spiritual knowledge and help us find the true wealth already inside of us.

I was fortunate enough to experience the joys and benefits of Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) from the tender young age of four. Springvale Sai Centre's first SSE classes were held in my parent's garage, where I would sit and listen to the words of wisdom imparted through stories and activities. Over time, the knowledge I acquired through SSE helped me navigate the various trials and tribulations we all face, and enabled me to confidently handle these situations.

While in the pursuit for knowledge, we can easily forget that the highest education one can acquire is knowledge of oneself. This is why Sai's SSE program plays a vital role in our journey. Pythagoras' theorem will not help end the suffering caused by the constant wants of the mind, true education, or Educare, will.

"Education has two aspects; the first is related to external and worldly education, which is nothing but acquiring bookish knowledge. In the modern world, we find many well versed and highly qualified in this aspect. The second aspect known as Educare is related to human values. The word Educare means to bring out that which is within. Human values are latent in every human being; one cannot acquire them from outside. They have to be elicited from within. Educare means to bring out human values. 'To bring out' means to translate them into action."

~ Sathya Sai Baba,

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 33.16 26/9/2000

Through Sai's influence, Springvale Sai Centre has played, and continues to play, a significant role in helping us realise our true potential.

The Education Wing has guided children's hearts and minds for the last 25 years, and has delivered wisdom

and enlightenment to so many young lives. His message has been imparted with love and patience through ancient stories, spiritual chants, songs, plays and musicals. With the invaluable support of teachers, parents and devotees, children have been encouraged to foster their talents but, most importantly, have been shown how to be good citizens.

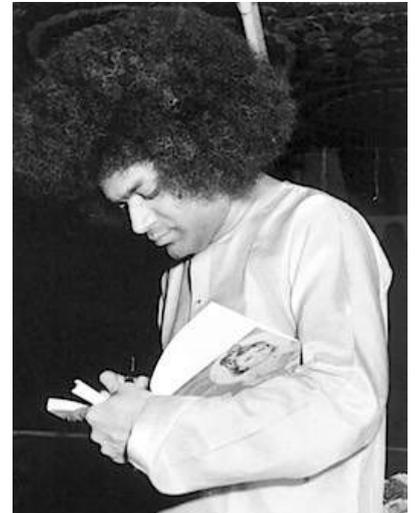
Our utmost thanks and gratitude goes to all our current and previous Education coordinators and teachers for their commitment and influence in helping us understand the true meaning of education.

"What is the aim of education? The aim of education is not only cultivating human qualities but attaining divinity. Education is mean for life, not only for a living."

~ Sathya Sai Baba,

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 33.16 26/9/2000

Vaamini Rajchandran
Education Coordinator



SAI GUIDANCE

Like many others, I was blessed to be born into a family who were committed devotees of Sai Baba. My grandparents were great devotees of Sai, as are my parents. As a result I have been coming to devotional singing regularly since I was born and perhaps even before that.

There are countless teachings that I have learnt and things that I have experienced throughout my time at Springvale Sai Centre. It is through devotional singing, study circles, involvement in service and SSE classes that I have been able to strengthen my connection with Sai. Although I am not able to go into depth for all of these, I would like to briefly touch on my personal experience of growing up as a Sai child and SSE student.

When I started SSE I was 4 years old; at the time my older brother had already started SSE classes and my interest to attend classes were purely to follow him around. I would sit through the classes and then afterwards fall asleep on my mum's lap during the singing. I began singing devotional songs during my second year at SSE; the teachers would encourage us to sing in the centre and even though I was beyond scared, I'm so thankful that I took that opportunity as it has boosted my self-esteem as well as brought me closer to Baba.

One of the first things learnt in SSE are the five human values. Everything that is taught in class, whether it be stories or quotes are all based on these values. It may seem as if this became slightly repetitive but this is by no means correct. SSE classes are always a lot of fun and each class is different from previous ones. Every week teachers prepare activities such as games, dramas and videos to share with us which I have found to be not only interesting but a source of guidance for me in my daily life.

Though devotional singing and Study Circles and SSE classes all revolve around values and fostering character development, I have learnt important life skills throughout my time growing up

in the centre. As students, we are always given the chance to perform, whether it be *Easwaramma Day*, Sai Baba's birthday or Centre celebrations. I have been presented with countless opportunities to stand up in front of hundreds of people and act or sing or dance. Needless to say this has definitely built up my self-confidence and these experiences have helped me flourish as a child and now adolescent. SSE has not only taught me how to be a good person it has also equipped me with important skills that have proved to be more than useful.

As a student who will soon be entering the final years of high school I get asked, 'Where do you want to go in life?' and 'Who do you want to become?' Similar to others I would respond with 'Finish my higher studies, acquire a decent job and have some stability in life.' However, SSE classes have also taught me that I should aspire to become someone who puts the needs of others in front of their own. I have been taught that being honest, treating others with kindness and respecting your elders are just as important as achieving a university degree.

Overall SSE has made a big impact on me and continues to do so. There is a quotation from Swami that has really stuck with me, it is from a divine discourse on the 18th of December 1994: *"Human life is precious, sublime and meaningful. But by involvement in purely worldly pursuits, the greatness of human birth is forgotten. Without human values, life is meaningless."*

I have been privileged enough to grow up a Sai child and I am forever grateful for this. I thank Sai for this opportunity to write about my experience and I am grateful to all my teachers/coordinators for their continuous service as both teachers and mentors.

Harini Rajakumar
SSE Group 3

SELFLESS SERVICE: THE PINNACLE OF ALL SPIRITUALITIES

“Love must express itself as service.”

~ Sathya Sai Baba

Our true nature is pure love. This love expresses itself spontaneously and without any external promptings as selfless service. In selfless service, there is recognition of oneness between the one serving and the one being served. This, then, leads us to realise the truth that the God in us is serving the God in others. Sai often tells us that selfless service is the most important spiritual discipline for a devotee and direct path to Self-realisation.

Sai's supreme motto, ***“Love All Serve All”***, which is also the essence of His teachings and life says it all. To attain God, we must love and serve all beings from the depth of our heart, without any trace of ego and attachment. Incarnations of God and countless saints and sages took human births in order to serve their beloved devotees and humanity. Lord Krishna served his beloved friend Arjuna as his charioteer. Lord Jesus washed the feet of His disciples, cured the lame, sick and blind. He died on the cross in order to redeem humanity. Mother Teresa, saint of darkness, served millions of the destitute, sick, and forlorn. Our Baba saved many lives, provided food, pure drinking water, free education from primary to university levels and health care to millions of people. All this service was done in the name of love. *‘Love is God. God is Love. Live in Love.’* Selfless service is love in action.

Selfless service goes beyond activity alone. It is also contained in our thoughts and words. Apart from our dealings with humanity, it is extended to the natural world and the animal kingdom. Even living in a righteous manner is a selfless service.

Why selfless service? When we serve society and help the poor and needy in distress, we alleviate their suffering and thus manifest the human quality of compassion. Social service is a spiritual exercise. When we do social service, it quickens our spiritual progress. It also promotes practical knowledge, skills and virtues.



Selfless service is our offering of love to God. Baba often says the best way to serve God is to serve our fellow human beings. Through selfless service, our ego is removed and we become purified.

How do we perform selfless service? By preparing ourselves well from the wakeful moment until we retire at night with prayers, and making it as an offering to God. We should be totally free from worldly desires, that is, not expecting any reward at all. Serve with love from the heart. Our efforts must be sincere and unwavering. No need to proclaim that we are rendering selfless service. When we serve, we have to treat the various contrary gusts of passion, emotion, impulse and intellectual doubts as tests from God. Nevertheless, bear them bravely and overcome them through prayer and meditation.



In the course of 25 years since its inception, Springvale Sai Centre and its members have been following Baba's teachings diligently and fully engaging in selfless service of many different kinds. For example, opening up the Centre for the weekly Devotional Singing sessions and Study Circles, volunteering service in Sai and public events, collecting non-perishable food items for refugees, distributing blankets to the homeless, providing pure vegetarian food to the hungry and needy on regular basis, providing aid (money, medical items, clothes and food) to disaster affected countries, providing entertainment and listening to the elderly at nursing home, participating in Clean Up Australia Day and National Tree Planting, just to a name a few.

Though the Centre has undergone many changes during its time, such as the change of venue and location, change of office bearers, fluctuation of member numbers, SSE children graduating to youth and adults and elders passing

on, the commitment, relentless effort and faith in selfless service from the Centre members remain ever strong. The dedicated and devoted members always rise to the occasion in spite of all odds for they know deep within their hearts that only through love and selfless service can they become whole and one with all. In this worthwhile endeavour, Baba has many times shown the help of His invisible hands, reassuring His beloved devotees that His help was only a heart call away.

As we humbly reflect on the 25th anniversary of Springvale Sai Centre and get into the celebratory mood, we can lovingly say that we have come a long way in terms of our collective and individual transformation from humble beginnings. We also know that we still have a long way to go

because life is a never ending journey of Self rediscovery through selfless love and service. To transform into a beautiful butterfly, the caterpillar needs to go through the struggle of breaking through and leaving behind the comfort of its cocoon. So, too, we must ***'Follow the Master, Face the Devil, Fight to the End, and Finish the Game'***. Let us hold hands, unite our hearts, and walk with our beloved Baba towards Oneness. Sai Ram.

Khamseng Sengsouvanh

"Hands that help, are holier than lips that pray."

~ Sathya Sai Baba



“Let the different faiths exist, let them flourish, let the glory of God be sung in all languages, in a variety of tunes that should be the ideal. Respect the differences between the faiths and recognise them as valid as far as they do not extinguish the flame of Unity.”

~ SATHYA SAI BABA