



January 2012 Edition

Quote

The human body has been given to you for a grand purpose -- realising the Lord within. If you have a fully equipped car in good running condition would you keep it in the garage? The car is primarily for going on a journey; get into it and go. Then only is it worthwhile to own it. So too, with the body. Proceed, go forward to the goal. Learn how to use the faculties of the body, the senses, the intellect, the mind, for achieving the goal and march on.

~ Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

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Editorial

**Dear Love & Light Readers,
Sai Ram and Happy New Year!**

January was established as the first month of the year by the Roman Calendar. It was named after the god Janus (god of the doorway). Janus had two faces which allowed him to look backwards into the old year and forwards into the New Year. Hence January became the door to the year.

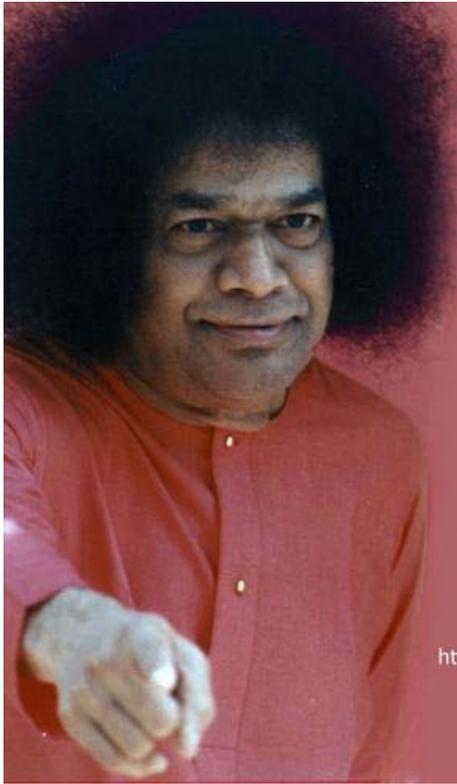
January therefore heralds many new beginnings and new endings: a New Year, New resolutions, New ways of working and New opportunities. This January is no exception for it heralds many new and exciting changes.

New beginnings, many new events have been planned for 2012 by the Central Council of United Kingdom including National Eashwaramma Day, a special tribute to mark the one year anniversary of Bhagawan's Mahasamadhi, events to celebrate Eid, Christmas and many other festivals.

New Endings, after having served on the Central Council of United Kingdom for over 9 years in various capacities and roles, as well as completing my term of office as National Chair I am therefore planning to step down on 14th January 2012. The past 2 years has been an incredible journey. When I was told of Swami's wish for me to take on the post I knew then it would not be an ordinary but extraordinary experience and unique opportunity to serve the Lord. This edition of Love & Light will also be my last as Editor. I will be passing on the baton to a very worthy, respected and honourable member of the UK Central Council (more on this and the other appointments on January 14th).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the devotees and office-bearers in the Sai Organisation for their constant love and tireless support with all the various projects and roles I have been involved in over the years.

**Lovingly
Shitu Chudasama**



Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation
United Kingdom
**National Orientation and
Welcome Day**



The Divine teacher has chosen you
Let us make the Organisation the way
He intended it to be!

All Office Bearers and Active Workers
are requested to attend

Saturday 28th January 2012
10am - 5pm

Onslow St. Audrey's School
Business and Enterprise Specialist College
Old Rectory Drive
Hatfield
Hertfordshire
AL10 8AB

To register please visit

<http://www.srisathyasai.org.uk/national-programmes/NOWD2012>

If you have further queries, please contact
Kiran Patel, National Secretary

Gayatri Bikoo, National Service Coordinator
national-programmes@srisathyasai.org.uk

Forthcoming Calendar of Events 2012

National Wing News

National Events

28 January 2012 - National Orientation & Welcome Day
28 April 2012 - National Mahasamadhi Day
5th May 2012 - National Easwaramma Day
17-19 August 2012 - National Retreat
15-16 September 2012 - National Healthcare Conference
24 November 2012 - National Birthday Celebrations
15 December 2012 - National Christmas Celebrations

UK Central Council Meeting Dates

3rd March 2012
2nd June 2012
1st September 2012
1st December 2012

National Wing Meetings Dates

10 March 2012
9th June 2012
8th September 2012
8th December 2012

National Orientation and Welcome Day 2012

National Wing News

**Dear Brothers & Sisters,
Om Sri Sai Ram!**

On behalf of the planning team, I would like to invite all new and existing office-bearers and active members in the Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation (UK) to attend our annual National Conference:

Date: Saturday 28th January 2012
Time: 10.00am - 5.00pm
Venue: Onslow St Audrey's School
Business & Enterprise Specialist College
Old Rectory Drive
Hatfield,
Hertfordshire
AL10 8AB

Those who are requested to attend are: All Active-Workers including, Centre/Group Chairs, Centre/Group Wing Coordinators, Regional Chairs & Vice Chairs, Regional Wing Coordinators and UKCC Members.

The day will set out the Vision of the Organisation and the Wings. It will also include presentations and workshops to assist you in your existing or new posts and empower you to become effective leaders while maintaining the focus on the spiritual goal.

Please note that there will be NO Registration Fee, however to assist us with Health & Safety as well as catering, I would be grateful if you could still register. Please click [here](http://www.srisathyasai.org.uk/national-programmes/NOWD2012/registration.php) to register online - <http://www.srisathyasai.org.uk/national-programmes/NOWD2012/registration.php>. Once registered, you will get an e-pass within 24 hrs which you will need to bring with you on the day. Programme details will be notified to you in due course after registration.

General:

Registration begins at 09.00hrs with a welcome breakfast.

Everyone to be seated in the hall by 09:50hrs

There will be plenty of time to network, share ideas and meet with devotees during the day. It is important that all officers stay for the full day.

I look forward to welcoming you on the day.

**Lovingly, In Sai Service
Shitu Chudasama
National Chairperson**

National Christmas Celebrations 2011

It always seems to me to be a miracle that out of apparent chaos (albeit organized chaos) comes something so beautiful when it is held in Swami's Name and when everyone comes together to Love and Serve and to honour our beloved Lord.

This is how I felt at the end of the National Christmas Festivities held in Swindon less than 3 weeks after the wonderful Birthday Celebrations and just 8 days before Christmas. We had all enjoyed a very beautiful and uplifting celebration of the Nine Lessons and Carols, celebrating the Birth of Christ, which was attended by about 350 devotees from all over the UK.

The whole day had flowed seamlessly, guided by the gentle touch of the MC for the day Dr. Mahesh. From Anahata's dulcet tones and Mel's eloquently respectful opening welcome; the delightful singing of the Children's Gospel Choir; the beautiful carols and Bible readings telling the story of the nativity, led impeccably by the Rev Stephen Henderson; Louise Illig's humble and heart felt description of magical moments with Swami; and Santa's avuncular appearance; through to Shitu's robust and appreciative vote of thanks at the end. And last, but definitely not least, the delicious Christmas Lunch. Everyone left with a big smile on their faces, full of Christmas cheer!

However, it is unlikely that this event would have happened had it not been for the extraordinary dedication and commitment by many devotees from all parts of the country, working independently or in small groups but coordinated by the loving, firmly gentle and persistent encouragement of the National Planning Team.

Just a few weeks earlier, in preparation for this wonderful day:

- long nights in cold sheds up and down the country were spent by many in construction of the stage and props;
- groups of singers were anxiously trying to learn their various carol harmonies and practising them on unsuspecting (but nevertheless grateful) elderly residents of nursing homes and hospitals;
- emails and conference calls buzzed to and fro in abundance, discussing delicious recipes for Christmas fare, decorations, talks, flowers, music, readings....
- Local Christian priests were consulted and encouraged to participate;
- Musicians and singers from many different regions were debating keys and instruments and descants, knowing that there would be no time for all to come together for a final practice...
- Devotees, carrying bits of scenery, drove along icy motorways from various parts of the UK the night before or in the early hours of Saturday morning, trusting that all their hard work would come together on 'the day' to create a spectacularly beautiful nativity alter.

There was no alternative but to put our faith in Swami and trust all would be as He Willed.... and He willed that it was really beautiful, a wonderful start to the Christmas season with true Christian sharing and unity in evidence.

My thanks to all who contributed and attended and above all to our Beloved Swami without whom none of this would have been possible.

Clare Pargeter, Centre Chair, Bath. Region 7

"At this season of goodwill and peace it was a real pleasure to be able to come and share in your national celebrations. There was a real sense of people wanting to pursue the very highest human aspirations of reverence, holiness and a real sense of joy in people meeting together. The food was good too. I haven't opened the mysterious parcel yet and will do so on Christmas Day. The tradition of opening presents on that day symbolises the receiving of the divine gift of the Saviour who by showing the full extent of his love by forgiving us even when we showed how wrong we could get life and miss God"-

**Reverend Stephen Henderson,
Presiding Minister, Christmas Service at the National Christmas Celebrations**

"Congratulations for a most beautiful and enchanting Sai Christmas gathering. The atmosphere was charged with His Love and your programme was from A to Z a pure delight. My husband and I count ourselves privileged to have been invited. Wishing your brilliant team of helpers a very Merry Christmas & a New Year filled with Swami's Blessings"-
Louise Illig-Mooncie, Guest Speaker

"....Wow and wow again - at the surprise of a traditional Christian lunch. It was the best Christmas dinner so far this year! By the end of the first half when the familiar smell of curry wasn't coming out of the kitchen, I wondered whether the cooks and the food had arrived. From someone who cannot digest spicy foods, I was amazed and touched to find a roast dinner had been organised. Every detail down to the goblets of sparkling red and white 'wine', the mince pies and cream - pretty impressive. Thank you ladies, planners and financiers!

It can sometimes be a rush to eat lunch and get back to the second half of programmes when events overrun but on this occasion. I thought that everything was so relaxed, with plenty of time to eat, mix with friends and digest meals before moving on to the second half .

Wow, wow, wow again and again to the Gospel singers. As with other Sai events, children are never forgotten but given centre stage and this choir with its charming children of all ages was just what we needed to energise the proceedings in readiness of the second half.

I've lost count of the number of wows, but the 'pièce de résistance' has to go to dear Santa Claus. When word gets out

about him he will have a full time job delivering his jollity and gifts to the children of this world. Best Santa I've ever seen - so full of fun and hilarity. The perfect ending to a wonderfully uplifting programme" -

Lynnette Stopford

Participant from Devon





National Medical Camp 2011

December 2011

On 17th December 2011, set in the beautiful, sacred and hilly terrain of Dang, Gujarat, India, a medical camp was set up in the grounds of a school for the visually impaired. It was a grand occasion made even more special by the brightly coloured décor of all of the marquees - it was as if there was a festival about to take place. In creating this fun yet relaxed atmosphere surely contributed in encouraging the villagers to come and take advantage of this opportunity.

The 116 school children welcomed us with songs, and in the evenings the tribals entertained us with traditional dance.

There were also low level firework displays that were carefully thought out for those who have little or no sight using sound, smell.

Bus loads of villagers arrived all through each and every day. Some of the very young village girls were dressed in what looked like their best frocks even though they were torn and grubby yet they were all smiling and happy to see us. We had taken new blankets, clothing for the children and adults, stationery and rucksacks to be distributed to those in need.

The group of more than 50 people from the UK, India, Germany and America were kept busy and the resultant team work was phenomenal. It was a mix of Sai and non-Sai devotees although this made no difference - it was all love in action. Swami's direction could be seen in all. The skill set included dentists, optometrists, paediatricians, pharmacists, psychiatrists, general practitioners, medical students, nurses, general volunteers, a gynaecologist, ophthalmologist and ENT specialist - not to mention the help from the host community that included translators, kitchen and registration team, some of who were school-age and were a brilliant help. Absolutely everyone was keen and willing to do whatever was asked of them!

It was a fantastic event. To watch the camp unfold and develop, see people change in such a small time frame was incredible. To be able to listen, understand, empathise and where possible give direction, advice or medicine to those who are suffering from illness, hardship and poverty was an invaluable life experience. The wonderful and heartening thing about this camp was that all the information and patient needs were being and will continue to be followed by the host team, thereby it becoming an on-going project.

As a general volunteer it has been an amazing adventure and I'm not sure who benefited from it the most as it was such a heart opening, heart warming and humbling experience. To be given the opportunity to interact with everyone from villager, to school children to doctors has been very inspiring. And despite the distinct disadvantage of not being able to speak anything other than English only made it more fun. My attempts at Gujarati caused great hilarity amongst the villagers and it's amazing what a simple smile and unconditional love can achieve.

My main purpose was to fit and give out spectacles, which was a new experience and hopefully everyone was happy with the service. Special times included spending time with the children and trying to communicate using drawings, a variety of sign language and seeing a young girl's huge smile as she looked in the mirror having been given a glass eye which meant she would no longer be ostracised by her peers for looking different. Every day was a joy, busy too but then we had gone for a purpose which hopefully we achieved - it was certainly a place of much love.

Even though I was very nervous about going I would thoroughly recommend this awesome experience to you all! On a final note I thank Swami from the bottom of my heart for allowing me the honour and privilege to be part of a project serving my brothers and sisters in India.

Jai Sai Ram

Jennifer Robson
Region 4 Spiritual Wing Co-ordinator

Dang Service Camp December 2011





New Year Message "Service to Man is Service to God"

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba - Prashanti Nilayam, 1st Jan 2004

Embodiments of Love!

Today, everybody is enthusiastic about New Year's Day. Significantly, this New Year's Day started on a Thursday. It is one's foolishness to single out a particular day in a year and celebrate that day with great joy. For a true devotee, every day is a festival day. Therefore, it is essential that we consider every minute of every day as new and celebrate it with joy. In fact, every day is a New Year's Day.

Everything in this objective world is impermanent and unreal. Hence, we have to contemplate upon the eternal truth and reality. We should not waste our time brooding over the past or anticipating the future. It is great foolishness to worry about the future or the past, forgetting the present. Only the present is real. The past is past, you cannot get it back, however, much you may pray for it. The future is hidden in the womb of time. It is not possible to visualise it. Therefore, only the present is important. Unable to realise this truth, people are worried about the past and future.

The foremost activity that man should engage in is service to fellow human beings. Instead, people are wasting their precious time worrying about either the past or the future. Therefore, embodiments of love! You should always engage yourself in service to fellow human beings. There is no greater sadhana than such service.

Considering the nine paths of devotion, namely sravanam (listening), kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), vandanam (salutation), archanam (worship), dasyam (servitude), sneham (friendship), and Atmanivedanam (self-surrender) as the only important means for salvation, people are engrossed in these activities. They totally forget the importance of service. Only the fruits of service will be eternal. We must constantly engage ourselves in service to others. God has given us this body for that purpose only. This body is not meant to be engaged in mere eating and drinking and thus wasting our valuable time. We must realise the truth that God has given us this body for serving others and thus help others. There is nothing greater than service to humanity. Service to man is service to God. All great men have sanctified their life only by serving humanity. Therefore, you start serving humanity at least from now onward. Service is more important than bhajan and all other sadhanas (spiritual disciplines).

Embodiments of Love!

What, according to you, is service? You consider helping people in difficulties is service. No. It is not as simple as that. Your body should be constantly engaged in serving others. The human body consists of several limbs. All these limbs are meant to be engaged in serving the fellowmen and not for other activities. Unfortunately, we are forgetting this basic fact. Every limb in the human body has been granted by God for karmopasana (worshipping God through service). Karmopasana is the only means by which the human life can be sanctified. We are building several temples. We are undertaking various sadhanas. But, all these sadhanas can give us only temporary satisfaction, not eternal joy. Our ancient rishis (sages) have been able to achieve eternal joy through a conscious effort. Therefore, you must develop firm faith in the truth that nothing can provide eternal joy except service to humanity. Undertake service to the suffering humanity. Service is not merely confined to health services. Service encompasses every possible help to the fellow human beings.

The ancient culture of Bharat (India) is still preserved in the villages, and not in towns and cities. In fact, our culture is defiled in all possible ways in the cities. Therefore, go to the villages, find out their necessities, and undertake such types of services that will alleviate their sufferings. Today, several people shift to the towns and cities in pursuit of comfort and luxuries. In the process, they end up in sorrows and difficulties. This is their own making. Na sukhat labhyathe sukham (happiness cannot be obtained out of happiness). Only through suffering can happiness be achieved.

You should undertake service. In fact, the hands are given to you to serve humanity. Hands that serve are holier than lips that pray. Therefore, undertake selfless service and attain glory. When you undertake good work, you enjoy peace in your life. Today, the boys who sang bhajans are former students of the Institute. They have undertaken several services to please Swami. God is not interested in worship and other sadhanas (spiritual disciplines). He is interested only in service. Hence, undertake service and more and more service. The best way to love God is to Love all and Serve all. God is interested only in love and service. If you can recognise the importance of these two sadhanas and conduct yourself accordingly, there can be no greater sadhana.

You need not have to spend a lot of money in service. Sanctify your life by undertaking loving service. Today, the old students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning have brought a cheque for Rs. 48 lakhs to present to Swami as a token of their love and service. This amount has been saved by them from their salaries, by undergoing lot of difficulties. But to whom should the amount belong, really? This amount is meant to be utilised for service in the villages. It is for serving the poorest of the poor. Therefore, I told them, "My dear ones! You deposit the money in the bank and undertake the service activities with the interest accrued on the amount." Money is of no help in developing good qualities. Sacrifice alone can develop noble qualities. It is only in sacrifice, there is real yoga. That is why it is said thyagenaikē amrutatthwamanasu (it is only by sacrifice that man can attain immortality). Today, however, people want bhoga (enjoy material comforts). By such bhoga, only roga (disease) will be contracted. They cannot attain yoga. Hence, you try to attain yoga by thyaga (sacrifice). Only then can you attain eternal joy.

Embodiments of Love!

There is no use contemplating on God without making sacrifice. By contemplating on God, you may perhaps derive some mental satisfaction. But that is of no use. Therefore, develop firm faith in the truth that every living being is permeated by God and act accordingly. God lives in every living being and experiences bliss. The Upanishads declare, Easwarah sarva bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings) and Isavasyam idam sarvam (the entire universe is permeated by God). You should not be under the impression that God is confined to some temple or a structure somewhere. It is said Deho Devalaya proktho jivo Devah sanathanah (the body is a temple and the Indweller is God). The real temple for God is the body itself.

God is installed in the temple of our heart. That is why it is given the name of hridaya. Hrid + daya = hridaya. It is only when you cultivate compassion in your heart that it can be called hridaya. Therefore, cultivate the quality of compassion. Whatever service you undertake with a compassionate heart, it becomes sanctified. Consider every human being as a living divinity. God is present everywhere. Forgetting such an omnipresent divinity, we are hankering after petty and trivial bodily pleasures. The fact, however, is that we can never attain real happiness with the body. This body has several limitations. With such a body, you can never attain limitless ananda (bliss).

**The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish sooner or later,
but the Indweller has neither birth nor death. The Indweller has no attachment whatsoever and is the eternal witness. Truly speaking, the Indweller, who is in the form of the Atma, is verily God Himself.
(Telugu Poem)**

You must be able to recognise such a divine Atma. Today, we are worshipping idols and pictures, thinking that God is somewhere in the outside world. But God is very much present in the human being. That is why our ancient rishis (sages) have proclaimed, Daivam manusha rupena (God incarnates in the form of a human being). Of what use is it to worship unseen God while at the same time causing suffering to the living beings around us? Every human being that you come across is an embodiment of divinity. No purpose will be served by worshipping the idols and pictures, forgetting the living gods in front of us.

Therefore, give less importance to such indirect methods of worshipping God. Consider the human being standing in front of you as an embodiment of divinity. Even if you come across your worst enemy, say, 'hello' to him lovingly. Address him as brother. Then, he will also respond by saying, 'hello brother'. On the other hand, if you hate him and start scolding him, he will reciprocate the same thing to you. Respect every individual and you will be respected.

Man, today, expects others to respect him; but he will not respect others. If you do not respect others, how can you expect others to respect you? Manava (human being) means an individual deserving respect. Since you are born as a human being, give respect and take respect. This is the quality you have to cultivate today. When you respect others, others will also respect you. When you offer your pranams (salutations) to somebody, to whom does it go actually? You are not merely offering pranams to the physical body consisting of the five elements. It reaches, in fact, the Indweller in that human body, who is none other than God.

Embodiments of Love!

Today, everyone is literally crying for Peace. But, what is this Peace? It is in you itself. You are most sacred souls. Love is

within you. Peace is within you. Unfortunately, today you are losing the peace and happiness that is within you and craving to earn something in the outside world. You want to earn great wealth and build big mansions. Devoid of good qualities, all the wealth that you earn becomes mere waste. Therefore, cultivate good qualities. There can be no greater wealth in the world than good qualities. The more you spend the good qualities, the more you accumulate. They will never exhaust.

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

Prepare yourself for sacrifices. You will find eternal bliss only in sacrifice. One who does not make sacrifice will not find peace anywhere. People of every country in this world pray for peace chanting 'Santhi, Santhi, Santhi' But do they get peace? No. They are engulfed in disappointment and despair. Therefore, one should develop faith in the truth that the eternal Lord is always with us. How can you obtain peace by ignoring the Divinity immanent in you and worshipping some unseen God?

Embodiments of Love!

Share your education and wealth with your fellow human beings. In fact, God is the real owner of the wealth acquired by you. The money you earn belongs to God's Trust. God Himself is the President of the Trust. Keep your trust on God and make proper utilisation of your money. Do not hanker after money and other forms of wealth. Constantly contemplate on God. You need not go to the forest or caves in the hills in search of God. He is always with you. Develop that faith and win over demonic qualities. Today, wherever you see, demonic qualities and violence are rampant. People do not hesitate to acquire wealth by sinful ways. What ultimately comes along with you at the time of leaving the body is the sin or merit you have accumulated and not the wealth you have acquired. Share at least a morsel of food you eat, with others. Help yourself and help others. This is the greatest sadhana (spiritual discipline). In fact, it is so easy to practise. Leaving aside this sadhana and forgetting the noble quality of love, you are going in search of peace in the wide world. Is it not foolishness on your part?

Embodiments of Love!

Develop the quality of love. Do not hate anybody. Develop the faith that whatever happens is for your own good. Whenever you encounter any difficulty or suffering, you alone are responsible for it. Respect others. That alone will protect you. On the other hand, if you insult somebody, that alone will punish you. Pleasure and pain are the products of your own making. The merit or sin committed by you will follow you like a shadow.

Man today is giving sermons to others. But he himself is not following his precepts. What values such teachings will have? All this is mere deception. Whatever teachings you may read or listen to can never help you if you do not put them into practice. Help your fellow human beings at least in a small measure. That alone will help you. Do not blame others for the difficulties you face. Do not ever abuse others. Love all. Treat all people as your brothers and sisters. Cultivate the feeling of brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God.

Embodiments of Love!

Why are you given hands? Is it for feeding the mouth? No, no. You have to sing the glory of God with your tongue. The hands are given to you for the purpose of keeping the beat in accordance with the tune. Bharatiyas are those who worship God with bhava (feeling), raga (tune) and thala (beat). The syllable 'Bha' also stands for bhakti (devotion), 'Ra' for raga (tune) and 'Tha' for thyaga (sacrifice). You have to sing the glory of the Lord combining these three aspects. They alone are the real Bharatiyas. Every individual born in the country of Bharat is sanctified. We do not need heaven. Let's participate in seva (service) while chanting the divine name. There can be no greater wealth than this. Why should we suffer when we have such a great wealth with us? Consider all your education and the service you undertake as God's work. The Gitacharya has given a clarion call, Sarvadarman Parithyajya Mamekam Saranam Vraja (surrender unto Me all your activities and seek refuge in Me alone). Hence, dedicate all your activities to God. Only then will you attain peace in every possible way.

Bhagawan concluded the discourse with the bhajan, "Prema Muditha Manase Kaho".

Region 1 - Christmas Celebrations

Region 1 congregated at Wimbledon Sai Centre for its annual Christmas celebration on the evening of Saturday 17 December. Starting with multi-faith prayers, the evening comprised various items led by SSE students, such as group devotional songs, a nativity play from Merton, readings from Tooting and Brixton, a medley of songs and carols from Wimbledon and - with very little notice and only one practice - a reunion of the Region 1 element of the National SSE Choir, who finished their set with a rousing rendition of "Samasta Lokaah Sukhino Bhavantu".



The special guest for the evening was Rev Andrew Wakefield (Vicar), a local priest actively involved in inter-faith events. Rev Andrew Wakefield, taking his cue from the nativity play having just been staged, talked about life being a journey - indeed, how we were all making spiritual journeys.



After a surprise visit from a certain bearded red-clothed person, who shall remain nameless, and closing devotional songs and aaratee, the assembly retired to the dining room for a sumptuous feast.

The smiles on the faces of all clearly showed that Christmas had definitely arrived a week early in Region 1!

Region 2 - 86th Birthday Celebrations

November 26th 2011

Pinner Sai Centre

We celebrated Baba's 86th birthday on Sunday 27th November 2011.

The programme was a Divine event celebrating the Glory of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The various offerings consisted of SSE children singing a qawaali bhajan, beautiful birthday cakes, cake cutting by uncle and aunty Ladd and an uplifting talk by the special guest Dr Upadhyay.



Wembley Sai Centre

Wembley Sai Centre celebrated our Dearest Swami's 86th birthday with lots of love and laughter. Youth from across the region's came to support the centre celebrations by putting on a Musical Theatre Performance. The Musical Theatre Performance consisted of a comedy sketch intertwined with Devotional singing emphasising the importance of Devotional Singing with Discipline and Guidelines laid down by our Dearest Lord Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The evening concluded with a heart to heart message to all devotees in regards to our Swami taking MahaSamadhi which left everyone feeling reassured and high spirited. JAI SAI RAM!



Slough Sai Centre

Baba's birthday was celebrated on Sunday the 27th of November 2011 with over 180 guests attending. The programme

started with the children lighting candles to celebrate Swami's 85 years in his physical form. We had 2 international speakers from Toronto, Canada and the Theme for the evening was 'Form to Formless'.



Heston Sai Centre

We celebrated Swami's birthday on 27th November 2011 at our Centre. The Altar was beautifully decorated with flowers and garlands and we started our program at 5:30PM with 3 Aums and 108 Gayatri Mantra's to create vibrations for peace of the whole world. It was followed by melodious bhajans sung by the devotees for 45 mins. A Special birthday song was sung dedicated to Swami and praising mother Eswaramma followed by Arti and cake cutting by the SSE Children.



Later SSE Children performed a Bhajan programme with a small sketch that took all devotees to the time of Young Satya and his Bhajan Samelan.

We were honoured to have an inspiring speech from the Region 2 Chair Sister Bhadra Patel as our special guest for the event and another lovely speech from Sister Neeraja who was a student of Swami narrating her divine and personal experiences with our Beloved Bhagavan.

The celebrations ended with offering of Maha prasad to all.

Harrow West Sai Centre

Sunday the 27th of November 2011 was a very spiritually uplifting event for many of those who attended. Despite Harrow West's change of venue, every seat in the hall was filled throughout the duration of the programme - and Swami held each and every one of his children, on and off stage, close to His heart. Commencing with prayers and Rudram chanting at 3:15, and followed by an hour of melodious bhajans, the programme went on to include two dances by the Younger SSE and Youth, an inspiring talk from Dr. Upadhya, a thoroughly entertaining Akbar and Birbal play performed by the SSE children and a selection of heartfelt songs from the Harrow West Youth. And throughout the event, Swami's love quietly resounded in each and every individual; his aura pervaded the whole centre as if Swami was walking amongst his treasured devotees.



Region 3 - Christmas Celebrations

Colchester Group Christmas Celebrations

The programme started with prayers. This was followed by Christmas carols, songs and bhajans sung individually and in unison. All credit to the bhajan coordinator for selecting and arranging the songs.



The full moon was visible through the skylight and gave the feeling that Swami was looking down on us! It was a wonderful experience. Finally everyone enjoyed the cakes and the mince pies.

Ilford Sai Centre Christmas Celebration at St. Peters & Paul Church 17th December 2011

Christmas celebration started with Gayathri mantras, multi-faith prayers, Vedam chanting followed by sweet devotional songs by the Ilford centre musicians and choir group.



The programme continued with a candle lit procession by all the children in the centre followed with a variety of uplifting Christmas carols led by the musicians and choir group and joined by the whole congregation. A wonderful power point presentation of the Carols and energising Holy Scriptures accompanied the sweet sounds in the mandir which proved to be the food of love.

Devotees were enthralled by readings and personal experiences from the children about Xmas. Santa entered the hall and distributed sweets to all the devotees and presented the children, the committee members and the musicians and choir group with Christmas gifts.



The evening continued with vibrant music and unisons bhajans which was followed by a talk from brother Deepak who has been blessed by Swami on several occasions for his fantastic musical work in Prashanti.

The programme concluded with Aarti and prasadam which totally energised the congregation. It was a very moving evening which touched hearts and souls of everyone present and left a loving smile on everyone's face.

Sheila Ring
Spiritual Coordinator, Ilford Sai Centre

Joyous Christmas day at Manor Park

It is a lonely and depressing time for the elderly who have nowhere to go and nobody to care for, deprived of hot meals, warmth and love. For most of us the festive period is a time to relax and enjoy being with our families but for many elderly it is not so. We seem to be changing Holy days to Holidays and the good Lord does not wish to be on our guest list.

However in Manor Park in East London, this familiar story at Christmas is re-written and the lonely elderly look forward to coming to the Froud Community Centre to be pampered by the Sai devotees of Manor Park Sai Centre. For the last 19 years the Sai devotees of Manor Park have assisted the Froud Centre to give a truly festive feeling to the lonely and elderly.

This year too, the volunteers at Manor Park Centre drove the elderly to the Froud Centre showered them with hot

drinks, hot Christmas lunch lovingly prepared and served by them. During lunch the elderly were looked after by the volunteers who chatted with them. They were also entertained by playing BINGO and also took part in "give a clue" game organised by the Sai volunteers. The crowded programme also gave them a chance to listen to the Queen's speech.



In the afternoon the local Priest Rev. Brian Lewis came and spoke to the elderly. Later Carols were sung and a beautiful day ended with the elderly people praising the volunteers and the Froud Centre. The Elderly were also given Christmas gifts as they left.

This is truly a Christmas gift given by Swami to the Sai devotees to serve him.

Navin Raval - Chair Manor Park Sai Centre

Region 4 - Dawn Centre Christmas Party

23rd December 2011

Another successful Christmas Party was held at the Dawn Centre, homeless shelters in Leicester on Friday 23rd December 2011 by the Youth in Leicester. A great time was had by all. The party started with a Tower Building activity, time was allocated to build a tower from newspapers. Everyone was split into two teams and each had the task of creating the highest tower with the least amount of newspaper and sellotape. This caused lots of laughs and some questionable towers that needed human support, especially when one of the rules was to build in silence. Overall it was a great effort from both teams with the Sai Youth working alongside the residents.



Everyone pulled crackers with each other, shared jokes and wore the hats before the next activity "Name that Tune". The theme was taken from classic TV shows, questions had to be answered as fast as possible. Some very competitive and loud personalities were first to answer almost every tune! This was followed by a Pop Quiz which everyone clearly enjoyed with the amount of laughing going on, the teams worked well together.

Almost every resident took the microphone and sang a song for Karaoke, one of the ex-residents, even rapped about his troubles when he used to live at the Dawn Centre and thanked the administrators at the Centre for their help in setting him up with a better future.



The night ended by singing a remix of the "12 days of Christmas", with rapping and beatboxing. The devotees from Leicester had sent gifts for the residents which included warm socks, gloves and hats.

Sashi Parmar

Youth Wing - January 2012 Update

Swami said, "He has come in search of His old companions, in search of His instruments, in search of people who will

carry out His work and be Messengers of God" - Sri Sathya Sai Baba - God in Action.

Last year the Youth Wing focused on working in unity with the Wings, Regions and Centres, so that we could learn from the valued experience of the elders. We should all continue to encourage this vital relationship, with the elders moulding the youth in upholding Swami's message of Love in Action.

Even if we do not have Swami's physical form, He continues to live within all of us in our actions. I look back and can see how my own Centre Chair took me as a youth, under her wing and embodied Swami's message of Love in Action. The late Mrs Puri was very much devoted to Swami and ensured that the Centre devotees were treated as Swami Himself. I have a high regard for all who serve and pray that we may all work together for the future generations to come. We are part of His Story and I pray that the New Year brings us closer and closer to our true selves.

Jamie Raju
National Youth Coordinator

Region 1 and Region 3 Youth Service Activity

On 16th December, Region 1 and Region 3 youth collaborated in a joint service project as part of their monthly youth activity called "Hands that help are holier than lips that pray", hosted by youth from Tooting Sai Centre at the Sai Mandir in Merton.

The aim was to make 108 hampers within 2 hours, for a homeless shelter called The Passage, based in London Victoria. Each centre across both Regions were assigned with the task of collecting items in advance comprising; sleeping bags, thermos/flasks, hat, scarves, gloves and blankets with each hamper itself being made on the 16th December by Region 1 and 3 youth. Support was also given from Centre Chairs and Service Co-ordinators in collecting items.



All 108 hampers were made and nicely decorated as a Christmas gift to those that go to The Passage, with approximately 40 youth in attendance.

Two representatives from The Passage, Andrew and Miranda, came to collect the hampers and also address the youth. Andrew spoke about what The Passage do and the history of the shelter, where they provide facilities for the homeless to bathe and eat as well as providing counselling and support groups. Miranda spoke about her role in co-ordinating and working with many organisations to help serve those that are homeless on the streets of London, informing us about the many service opportunities there are across London.

"Hands that help.." was a great success, but it was the "many hands making light work" that made it achievable, with two Regions collaborating with unity together with the support given by the Centre Chairs and Service Co-ordinators.

Shyam Jamnadas
Region 1 Youth Co-ordinator

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