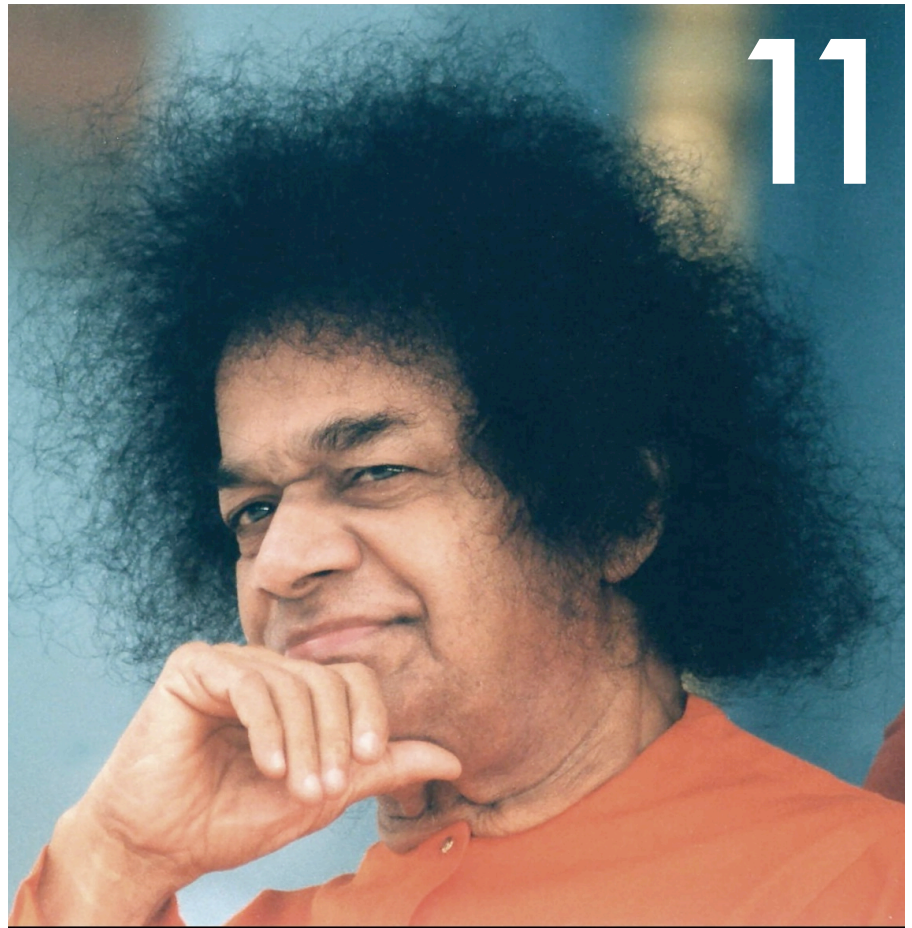


Newsletter

ZONE 7

ISSUE 11
SEPT 2014



Sandeha Nivarini - chapter XI (edited)

Question: Swami! I have one doubt. Can I ask you?

Sathya Sai: Certainly. Why do you say, "Can I ask you"?

Q: What are the "obstructions of the present"?

Sathya Sai: Good, I shall tell you. The obstructions of the present are of four types: attachment to sense objects, cynical criticism, dullness of understanding, and absurd conceit. The first is the cause of attachment to objects that attract the senses. The second makes men discover wrong meanings in the teachings of the Teacher. The third causes confusion, because things explained by the Teacher are not grasped at all. The last obstruction makes one feel that one is a great scholar, pundit, or ascetic, mistaking the body and the senses for the *Atma*.

Q: And the "obstructions of the future"?

Sathya Sai: Oh! They come always through sinful deeds. They come and obstruct unawares!

Contents:

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Sandeha Nivarini | 1 |
| Zonal meeting 2014 | 3 |
| Zone 7 Pilgrimage | 6 |
| Sarva Dharma Choir Tour | 8 |
| Selfless service in Denmark | 9 |
| Zone 6 news | 10 |
| Good company quotations | 11 |



This newsletter is intended for members of SSO. This newsletter is published by the SSO Zone 7 Newsletter team.
To contact us, please use e-mail: secretariate@sathyasai-zone7.org

Q: How are we to meet them, Swami?

Sathya Sai: It is not possible for all. The aspirant can to some extent be aware of the approaching wrong and its wiles. It creates a desire, which puts on the cloak of want. Then you must recognise it as an "obstruction of the future." It is difficult to be forewarned like this as the result of the effort of one single life. It may take many births to acquire this education.

Q: Are there any who have so learnt it?

Sathya Sai: Why, there are. The scriptures speak of Bharatha and Vasudeva. Bharatha required two or three births. Vasudeva had to be born once.

Q: That means these three obstructions cannot be overcome except after many lives. Can we not succeed without all that bother?

Sathya Sai: Why? The aspirant can, by reasoning out the nature of these three, escape from being worried by them. Otherwise, it may take many lives.

Q: Swami, how to get over the "obstruction of the present"?

Sathya Sai: There is a way for this also. Through Karma, the appropriate Karma. There is no obstruction that cannot be surmounted. Attachment to sense-objects can be removed by developing purity, self-control, withdrawal of desires and the ability to suffer. Dullness of understanding can be removed by listening again and again. Constant meditation on the things heard will abolish the habit of cynical criticism. All absurd conceit will vanish through the teachings one imbibes.

Q: Swami, to master all this seems impossible for everyone! To make it easy for all, tell me which is important?

Sathya Sai: My dear fellow, to know a thing, higher wisdom (*Vijnana*) is necessary. False knowledge (*Ajnana*) makes one ignorant, don't you know?

Q: So many people say so many things about this higher wisdom and this false knowledge. What is the basic thing about them? What is the basic thing behind both, tell me.

Sathya Sai: Now you have come again to the very first step. False knowledge is the mental attitude that has reference to the external Object and higher wisdom is the mental attitude that has reference to the internal Subject. *Ajnana* is known also as *Manas* and *Chithham*. When the activity and attitude turn inwards, they are called *Buddhi* and *Antahkaranam*.

Q: Some say that a wise person (*Jnani*) will have only two things, the desire to attain the other world and the burden of the past *Karma*. Is that true?

Sathya Sai: Both the *Jnani* and the *Ajnani* will have desire, absence of desire for the other world, and the burden of past *Karma*, all in equal measure. Their experiences also will be in equal measure. Only, the wise will not have the consciousness that he is the doer; so, he will not be bound. The ignorant is conscious that he is the doer and so he gets bound. This is the distinction. I have already told you, haven't I, that "the mind" is the cause of bondage as well as of liberation? The mind is the cause of everything.

Q: Mind, mind, they keep on saying. What is it? What is its form?

Sathya Sai: "Cognition" and "understanding" is its form. If you know the basis of that knowing, there will be no bondage at all!

Q: What is the basis?

Sathya Sai: The basis is what you refer to as I. Seeking for the I, if you are in that I state, however many "understandings" come or do not come, you will remain unaffected.

Q: Right. That is very good, Swami. Please make all this soak into our brains, so that we may realise the purpose of our lives.

Zonal meeting 2014

Milano, Italy - Zones 6,7,8

Zonal meeting 2014

6th-7th September, 2014 - Milan, Italy

Overview of SSIO and resolutions

Prasanthi Council oversees operations of the Sathya Sai International Organisation all over the world (except India)

- Narendranath Reddy, M.D. – Chairman
- Leonardo Gutter - Member
- William Harvey, Ph.D. - Member
- Marianne Meyer - Member
- Art-ong Jumsai, Ph.D. - Member

Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation handles legal and policy matters of the Organisation

- Gary Belz - Chairman
- Narendranath Reddy, M.D. – Director
- H. J. Dora – Director
- Marianne Meyer - Director

There are 9 Committees to assist PC & SSSWF:
Education, Medical, Information Technology, Publications, Disaster Relief, Media Coordination, Cultural, Hospitality, Youth

Resolutions of the SSIO

The official name of the Organisation is:
Sathya Sai International Organisation



Marianne Meyer,
PC member, SSSWF Director

The same name and approach will be used by the SSIO, in all zones and countries.

National officers will be called National Council President (NCP) in all countries. Even if there is only one centre, they are an NCP.

Yagna, pujas, and other religious ceremonies are not part of the SSIO activities. They can be



Zones 6 and 7 leaders watching a presentation

Zones 6,7,8 Meeting 2014

Milano, Italy - Zones 6,7,8



Youth in dialogue: Sergei Sevdoyan (NYC of Lithuania), Marta Panjeta (YC Zone 7) and Olga Baranova (YC Zone 8)

conducted privately. The same for the Vedas. Sathya Sai said: "The Vedas of the Sathya Sai Organisation are the human values".

We should always prefer local speakers for our events.

Meetings in Prasanthi Nilayam

- Zone Chairs, Prasanthi Council, SSSWF,
- General Assembly including CC and deputies, Committees
- Individual meetings with PC & Committees
- Meetings with Trust and PC/SSSWF

Pre World Conference and 10th World Conference

Motto: Love is the source, Love is the path, Love is the goal. In Europe, there will be three Pre World Conferences in 2015.

1st – 3rd May, Milano, Mother Sai, Italy
 4th – 6th May, St Petersburg, Russia
 8th – 10th May, Munich, Germany

Youth activities

International Sathya Sai Youth Festival - July 2016 in PN

European Youth Meeting (EYM) in Czech Republic. Motto: Inner Vision – "The Joy of Revealing what Resides Within"

31st October – 2nd November 2014, Prague, Czech Republic. Programme will cover workshops, singing and service.

YOUunity band CD is now available. Youth music band with songs dedicated to human values.

More information is available in the Zone meeting minutes, available with your NCP.



The Netherlands at Zones Meeting

Zones 6,7,8 Meeting 2014

Milano, Italy - Zones 6,7,8



Zones 6,7,8 group photo - ladies side



Zones 6,7,8 group photo - men side

| Zone 7 news | Region 71 | Region 72 | Region 73 |
|----------------|--|--|--|
| | Austria Czech R. Germany Hungary Slovakia | Belgium Denmark Netherlands Norway Sweden | <u>Estonia</u> <u>Finland</u> <u>Latvia</u> <u>Lithuania</u> Poland |

Zone 7 Pilgrimage

1st - 8th August, 2014 - Prasanthi Nilayam, India

The pilgrimage of Zone 7, which consists of 18 Northern European countries, took place from 1 to 8 August, 2014 in Prasanthi Nilayam. Of the 121 participants, people started trickling in one by one towards the end of July, and at first one did not know who was a member of this pilgrimage. Hailing from 13 countries with as many different languages spoken, we were like different flowers scattered in a field.

On July 28th choir rehearsals started in Prasanthi. There we met each other as fellow pilgrims. Our many voices, levels of preparation, singing experience and personal stories leading up to this special time in the Holy Abode demanded that we form a bouquet out of all the wildflowers from the field. Young and old, children and parents, long-time devotees and people coming to Prasanthi for the very first time.

The feeling of unity started to grow thanks to the loving guidance of the two choir directors, the dedication of the musicians and all the participants, the beautiful children's program and participation of the children in parts of the choir and the support of the team leaders and volunteers.

The discipline too became easier day by day as we started to taste unity and peace in our silent walks to Darshan -the ladies dressed in the same saris, and received special seating for Darshan every day. Charged with the sacred vibrations of Vedam, bhajans and Darshan we would joyously return to our rehearsals and other activities.

The ashram authorities did everything possible to welcome us and to make our stay both comfortable and spiritually uplifting.

Pilgrimage Zone 7



Children pilgrims



Rehearsing pilgrims

Zone 7 news

Outstanding activities and best practices from Zone 7

We were most blessed to receive deeply inspiring talks by two members of Radio Sai, Sri Bishu Prusty and Sri Prem Anush. Sri Bishu spoke on gratitude as an expression of love. Sri Prem Anush spoke on dedicated service as an expression of gratitude and about being grateful for having been called by Bhagavan among 7 billion people on earth.

Sri R. J. Ratnakar, one of the Trust members, took time to meet us all and shared experiences as a student, as a direct member of Sathya Sai Baba's family and as a member of the Trust.

Finally, August 7th arrived, the day of our offering of love and gratitude to Bhagavan in the form of songs and music. Singing in 9 different languages accompanied by various instruments, the joy and harmony poured forth from our hearts.

Yet, the activities were still to continue... On August 8th we were invited to visit the Superspeciality Hospital and the Director, Dr Choudhari Voleti, took the time to meet with us. He gave us insights in this temple of healing, where dedication and faith are palpable and prove that free medical care of the highest standard is possible.

In the evening ex-Vice Chancellor G. Venkataraman, known for his talks on Radio Sai, offered us a question and answer session. In answering each question Prof. Venkataraman showed the importance of being precise and knowing the meaning of each term exactly. To give just one example, the question : 'How to be in tune with the atma and lead a normal life in the Western world ?' led him to explore what it means to be in tune with the atma (to never do anything you feel Swami would not like), what a normal life could mean (to do your duties) and what the Western world represents today (a world ruled by money). He said : 'You must make a revolution : follow Swami's teachings and serve !' 'Surrender to Swami and He takes care of you.' Ask yourself : 'In the affluence of the Western world, can I bring Swami's teachings and help people to transform ?'



Mr. Venkataraman

Pilgrimage



Disciplined pilgrims



Zone 7 news

Outstanding activities and best practices from Zone 7



Sarva Dharma Choir Region 73 Tour

17th – 24th August 2014 Region 73, Europe

The “Sarva Dharma Choir” from Region 73 went on its first tour. The concerts were performed in four Baltic countries: Estonia, Finland, Latvia, and Lithuania.

The choir was founded five years ago. The motive was to bring to society the message of unity of all religions. The choir compiled spiritual songs from different cultures, different countries, and different religions. The Choir already performed in Dharmakshetra and in Prasanthi Nilayam in 2013.

Sarva Dharma Choir

Region 73



The tour was a divine challenge for all Sai devotees from Region 73. The members of the choir had been working all throughout the year to improve the quality of the program, and some devotees who were not able to participate in the choir’s tour took on themselves the big task to prepare the logistics for the concerts in all four countries. This was a good opportunity for bring together all the devotees of the different Sai Centres.

The result of this cooperation exceeded all expectations. We had an opportunity to use the best concert halls in the centres of all the cities we visited – Tallinn, Helsinki, Riga, and Palanga (in Lithuania). Many came to hear and see the show and appreciated the concerts and provided encouraging feedback.

The trip lasted for only eight days, but we felt that we were able to convey much joy to many people, and we ourselves received much more that we could ever imagine.



Performance in Palanga

Zone 7 news

Outstanding activities and best practices from Zone 7

Service for the homeless

Two Sai centres started serving the homeless in a settlement in Copenhagen. A monthly cafe has been established by Sai devotees in a shed and during the last year the homeless have been provided with vegetarian soup, sandwiches, fruit, coffee and cakes, as well as clothes.

The homeless residents have all massive addictions, social and psychological traumas, crime etc. Homeless visitors living in the streets also participate. Every time we have small talks, joyful community singing and music with our homeless friends.

Service for refugees

Sathya Sai Centre Hilleroed, Denmark does service for refugees. Many from Syria – more or less traumatized by war – arrives currently at our local asylum centre.

In His Love we are bridge builders between the refugees and the Danish society. We organize cultural excursions, picnics in nature etc.

By organizing meaningful activities outside the centre we give our little contribute to create delighted and good experiences “in the now” in spite of a insecure future as a refugee.

Selfless service

Denmark



Open air festival for the homeless



Open air festival for the homeless



LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

Zone 6 news

Outstanding activities and best practices from Zone 6

Greece

Selfless service in Greece

Service activities offered by the Sri Sathya Sai Centres and Groups in Athens and Piraeus. The Sai Volunteers of Athens and Piraeus had a busy month of February 2014. On February 1st, 15 volunteers visited surrogate families in the

town of Perama where they distributed 35 bags of food to the families and also much needed medicines for patients who had no social security. Another 6 families received 6 sacks of wood for heating purposes. During the same weekend the volunteering paediatrician visited 15 families and examined 22 children. He also donated food supplies and some clothes for 16 families.

SSEHV Workshops in FYROM

Short SSEHV workshops were conducted between January and May 2014 in Skopje.

There were 14 children participants, divided in 3 groups ranging from 9 to 16 years of age. They had one workshop class per week, duration 30 to 45 minutes.

Children were learning basics of Human Values, finding out which of the Values they already know, discovering new aspects of the Values and how to implement them, etc. In this first stage, team-work was used as a teaching method as well as several other teaching techniques – brainstorming, quotes, storytelling, research, analysis, art techniques etc.

The children acquired initial knowledge about Human Values; they became aware of how important it is to put them in practice. Through team-work they were also developing skills of listening, speaking and building a team spirit. The project continues in September 2014.

FYR Macedonia



Sai quotes on...

Sometimes, you may get bad thoughts. You should immediately change them into good thoughts. For this, good company is necessary. "Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are," it is said. When you join good company, you become good. On the other hand, when you are in bad company, you become bad. Hence, always have good company. How can anybody accept you as a good person when you indulge in smoking, drinking and meat eating? If you want to be good, perform only good deeds. Whatever is the type of action you perform, you will get the result according to that. Human life is most sacred. It is attained as a result of merits earned in many previous births.

Sathya Sai Speaks Volume 41 p.04

When a smoker joins a group of non-smokers, there is every likelihood of his giving up that bad habit; but, when a non-smoker falls into a den of smokers, he is certain to become a victim soon! Such is the subtle influence of the company one keeps. The company you join must be qualitatively and quantitatively greater and higher than the one in which you are now caught.

Sathya Sai Speaks Volume 13 p.15

All that is good or bad in man is based upon his good or bad behaviour. This conduct is traced to the mind, which itself is dependent on thoughts. Therefore, to have good thoughts you must cultivate good company. Good thoughts appear small in the beginning like one's shadow at noon. But as the day advances, the shadow lengthens. Likewise, the influence of the good thoughts also grows as time passes. In due course it acquires a magnificent form. It attains a highly sacred place. It confers divine bliss and redeems one's entire life. Thus, good company is supremely important. Good company, by

Good company

promoting good thoughts, leads to the highest achievements in life. Bad company, on the contrary, is like the shadow caused by the morning sun. At dawn, the shadow produced by the sun is long. As the morning progresses, the shadow gets shorter and shorter. Ultimately, it gets limited to one's feet. This is how the effects of bad company operate. At the beginning the gains seem to be large. But as time goes on, the gains vanish. Human values get destroyed.

Sathya Sai Speaks Volume 27 p.17

If you keep on in good company, everyday, your hearts will maintain their purity unimpaired; but if you seek one, only off and on, it will be difficult to win Grace or particles of it, for, the vessel will be tarnished and untidy. In your own households, you must have noticed that a vessel in daily use is bright and clean; but, vessels stored and used only now and then will have to be scrubbed with great vigour to become bright.

Sathya Sai Speaks Volume 13 p.15

The easiest and the most fruitful method of keeping yourself free from dust and rust, is the holy company. The company of the good and godly will slowly and surely chasten and cleanse the persons prone to stray away from the straight path towards Self-realisation. Care has to be taken to see that you select and stick to the proper company. A cup of water has no cash value; but, if it is poured into ten cups of milk, it acquires the value the people attach to milk. If on the other hand, one cup of milk is poured into ten cups of water, it loses the value. It had and is condemned as useless. So, the company you join must be purer, more venerable and sticking to higher ideals of virtue and truth than you yourself.

Sathya Sai Speaks Volume 13 p.15



This newsletter is intended for members of SSO. This newsletter is published by the SSO Zone 7 Newsletter team.
To contact us, please use e-mail: secretariate@sathyasai-zone7.org