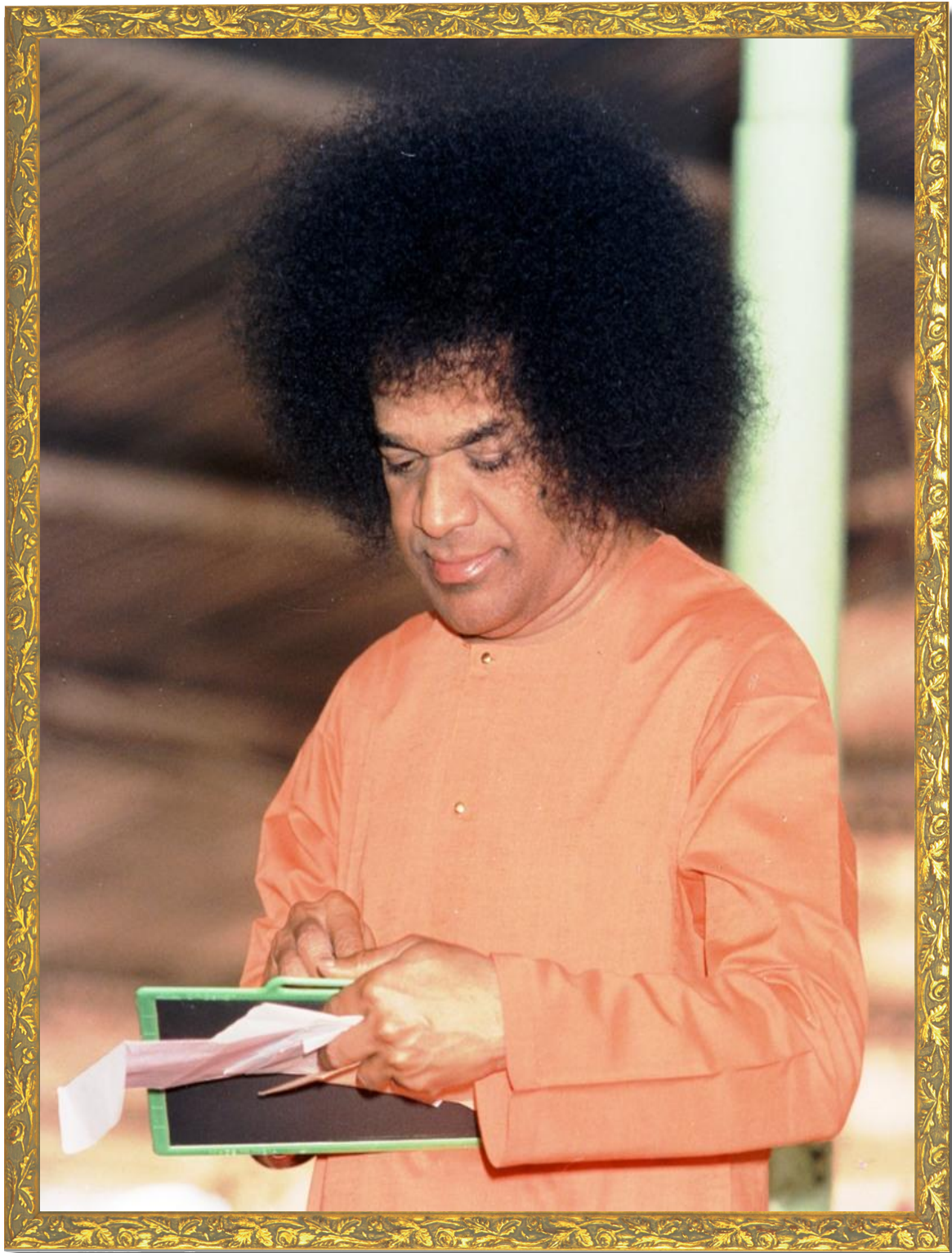




# VIDYULLEKHA

## Guru Poornima

### 2025





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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear sisters and brothers,

As the gentle rains of July grace the land, our hearts turn towards one of the most sacred months in the spiritual calendar—month of Guru Purnima. On this auspicious occasion, we pause to offer our deepest gratitude to the Supreme Guru, the one who dispels the darkness of ignorance and illuminates our path with unconditional love and timeless wisdom. For all of us, this day is a profound reminder of the immense good fortune we have in being guided, shaped, and loved by Swami. He is the Divine Director, the loving Sculptor, and the silent Prompter in the grand drama of our lives.

It is only fitting, then, that we begin this edition by anchoring ourselves in the wisdom that is the fountainhead for all these endeavors. We are blessed to share a timeless letter from 1972. These potent aphorisms on divinity, duty, and purity serve as a powerful reminder of the core truths that fuel our journey with Him.

From this foundation of pure wisdom, we witness how these truths blossom in a life of devotion. We invite you to read the beautifully intimate narrative, “From My Diary,” by Brother Shivkumar Shankarnarayan. It is a powerful chronicle of faith, from a child’s simple prayer held in a yellow cloth to an adult’s understanding of divine timing. His story reminds us that Swami always sees our silent longings and fulfills our forgotten prayers in His own perfect time, teaching us that in His drama, every role is significant.

From the personal stage, we turn to the vast arena of professional life, tracing the inspiring journey of Brother Rajesh Krishnamoorthy. His story is a masterclass in the values instilled at the Institute—discipline, humility, and the courage to ask for help. It is a powerful lesson for our younger readers on the importance of building a 'body of work' with integrity, proving that a career built on a foundation of Swami’s teachings is a career built to last.

Swami’s message, when truly absorbed, must manifest as action. Our “Love in Action” section is a heartening roundup of this principle at work. From the rural school service in Chennai and the dedicated hospital seva in Bangalore to the multifaceted community support offered by alumnae in Indianapolis, these reports paint a vivid picture of a global family united in service.

This sense of global connection is beautifully captured in our cover story on SEAM 2025, the Sai Alumni Europe Meet. Set against the serene backdrop of the UK's Lake District, alumni gathered to "Reconnect, Recharge, and Rejoice," strengthening their spiritual bonds and reaffirming their shared purpose. It is a wonderful glimpse into how the Sai family continues to create vibrant epicenters of love and sadhana all over the world.

As we stand on the threshold of Guru Purnima, we pray to Swami that these stories fan the flame of our devotion. May they serve as a mirror, reflecting the myriad ways Swami works through each of us. May our lives be His message, and may our collective love and service be our eternal offering of gratitude.

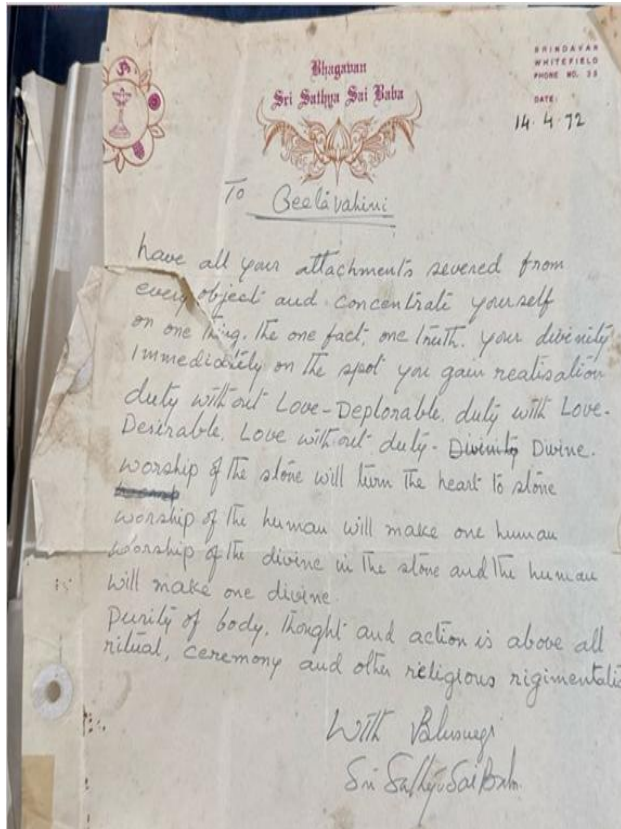
*We dedicate this edition at the Lotus Feet of Bhagawan. Do write to us at [Vidyullekha@saistudents.org](mailto:Vidyullekha@saistudents.org) with your feedback*

With gratitude and love,

Team Vidyullekha - Sri Sathya Sai Alumni

# Bhagawan Uvacha

Below letter is shared by brother Raj Patel (MBA 1996) from his family archives. This letter was written by Bhagawan to his grandfather Dr. C G Patel. Dr. Patel was actively involved in arrangement of Bhagwan's East Africa Visit in 1968.



Date: 14.4.72

Brindavan, Whitefield

## *To Geeta Vahini*

*Have all your attachments severed from every object and concentrate yourself on one thing: the one fact, one truth - your divinity. Immediately, on the spot, you gain realization.*

*Duty without love - Deplorable.*

*Duty with love - Desirable.*

*Love without duty - Divine*

*Worship of the stone will turn the heart to stone. Worship of the human will make one human. Worship of the divine in the stone and the human will make one divine.*

*Worship of the stone will turn the heart to stone. Worship of the human will make one human. Worship of the divine in the stone and the human will make one divine.*

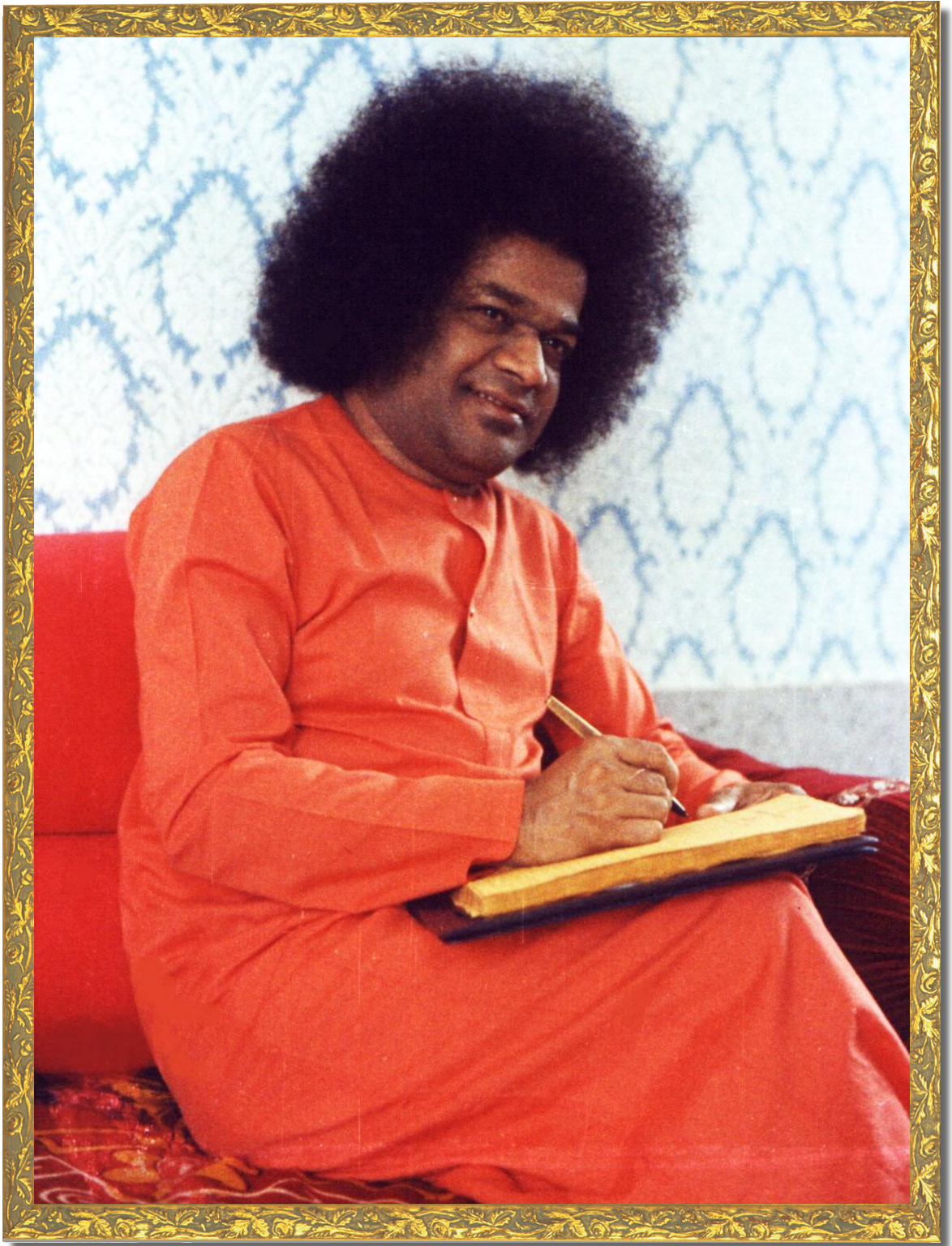
*Purity of body, thought, and action is above all ritual, ceremony, and other religious regimentations.*

With Blessings,

Sri Sathya Sai Baba



Swami with Dr C.G Patel and Mrs Madhukanta Patel



# COVER STORY

## Soaked in His Love: A Divine Reunion at SEAM 2025

With the divine blessings of our beloved Swami, alumni from His educational institutions gathered for a weekend retreat from May 2nd to 5th, 2025. The serene setting was the village of Grange-over-Sands in the picturesque Lake District of the United Kingdom. This gathering, fondly known as SEAM (Sai Students Europe Alumni Meet), brought together approximately 165 participants—including 81 Sai students and their families—from across Europe and the UK. This annual event, now in its fourth year, builds on the success of past retreats in Zurich, Amsterdam, and Munich. Attendees represented the full spectrum of Swami's institutions, including the Primary School, Higher Secondary School, and the Anantapur, Brindavan, Prashanti Nilayam, and Nandagiri campuses of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. The group was a beautiful blend of generations, from alumni of the very first Brindavan batch to recent graduates from the class of 2024. Regardless of geography or generation, everyone gathered as children of Mother Sai, immersing themselves in Swami's love. Participants gratefully soaked in Swami's stories, witnessing and experiencing the living legacy of His love. The planning, which began a year in advance, was consecrated by an invitation offered at Swami's Mandir, seeking His divine blessings for the retreat. The theme for this year was “Reconnect, Recharge, Rejoice.”

The retreat aimed to recreate the cherished rhythm of student days: starting the day with love, filling the day with love, and ending the day with love. It commenced on Friday evening with the lighting of the lamp by Sri Navin Patel, a distinguished alumnus from the inaugural Brindavan batch. Swami was ceremonially welcomed with Vedam chanting and a welcome song, followed by morning and evening sessions structured like those in Prashanti Nilayam. The Vedam chanting particularly emphasized the three *Shuddhis* (purities), and bhajans were led by nearly a dozen gifted Prashanti Mandir singers and musicians.



Each day began with the familiar spiritual cadence of Omkaram, Suprabhatam, and Nagarsankirtan. Sessions were filled with the sharing of divine experiences and, more importantly, the profound lessons drawn from them. The evenings included bhajans and cultural programmes offered with love to Bhagawan. After dinner, a campfire provided a relaxed setting for sharing more of Swami's stories, followed by a joyful session of *Bhajan Antakshari*. The collective chanting of the Hanuman Chalisa and night prayers at 10 p.m. brought each day to a peaceful and love-filled close. There was even a well-received archery masterclass for all ages. And while the formal day ended, the nights came alive with hostel memories, fueled by late-night *Avakai Annam* and *Podi Annam*, whose authentic spiciness did not deter even the youngest from embracing this classic part of the hostel experience.



A musical programme offered to Swami featured a bouquet of carefully chosen songs once sung in the Divine presence. On the second day, a moving drama on the advent of the Sai Avatar was warmly received by all. Its highlight was a mesmerizing *Shiva Tandava* dance, depicting Sage Bharadwaja's patient wait for Lord Shiva. The piece was performed to perfection by a trained Bharatanatyam dancer among the alumni. His performance was so powerful that some younger children, seeing him in the corridor afterwards, spontaneously offered him *Namaskar*!

A special highlight of the retreat was the presence of Dr. Sainath Manikonda, a respected alumnus and former faculty member of the Institute. He shared profound lessons learned over his many years at the Lotus Feet, connecting Swami's timeless message to our contemporary lives and the retreat's theme. The experience was truly heightened by the loving, selfless contributions of several Sai devotees. One devotee single-handedly designed and decorated the altar, creating a space that was both aesthetically beautiful and spiritually uplifting. Another dedicated group of devotees, most over the age of 65, lovingly came forward to prepare the most delicious *Prasadam*. The retreat participants extend their deepest gratitude to Swami and to these loving devotees, who served their beloved Lord by serving His children.

Throughout the preparations and the event itself, the participants aimed for perfection, viewing every contribution as a direct offering to Swami. As the weekend unfolded, every element seamlessly fell into place, creating a perfect experience whose impact is still felt today. When the time came to depart on Monday, no one was truly ready to leave.



The spiritual momentum has continued. Within a month of the retreat's conclusion, children and adults alike began gathering online every weekend. They start their mornings with Omkaram and Suprabhatam and end their evenings with the Hanuman Chalisa and night prayers. Many continue this *sadhana* on their own during the weekdays, keeping the spirit of the retreat alive.

It is fair to say, therefore, that Swami not only blessed the event—He led it from start to finish. The event left everyone suffused with Divine love and, indeed, hungry for more. Making every single person feel so completely immersed in His love and joy is only possible when the Divine Himself takes over. Ultimately, the theme—“Reconnect, Recharge, Rejoice”—was not just a slogan; it was a deeply lived experience for all who attended.

# From My Diary

## The Stage Was Always His

*Shivkumar Shankarnarayan, MBA (Finance, 2012–14) | B.Com (Hons., 2009–12)*  
Currently serving as Director – Finance at Straive, Chennai, Shivkumar leads FP&A and strategic finance initiatives across global operations. During his student days, he was an active part of the Sathya Sai Brass Band and Dramatics Team—passions he proudly continues to this day, thanks to the enduring love and blessings of Bhagawan.



It was time for *Vidyābhyāsam*—the sacred beginning of learning, when Swami would lovingly write *Om* on the slate and bless a child’s educational journey.

In those days at Sai Kulwant Hall, there was an unspoken code—pin-drop silence, no calling out, and certainly no trying to catch Swami’s attention unless He looked your way. But my mother, ever hopeful, had embroidered Swami’s image in *Abhayahasta* along with the sacred Omkaram on a piece of yellow cloth. A quiet prayer in thread and devotion.

We had the blessing of attending five *darśans*. Each day, our tokens ranged between 3 and 6—not too close, but not too far either. I would sit on my father’s lap, clutching that yellow cloth like a placard, hoping Swami would see it and understand.

The divine music would play. Swami would glide down the aisle—grace in motion—accepting letters, blessing devotees, picking people for interviews. And each time, I’d stretch out my tiny hands, neck craned, eyes wide with longing. And each time, He’d look... and walk past.

After the fifth *darśan*, we were heartbroken. Maybe we weren’t ready. Maybe our prayers didn’t reach Him. With heavy hearts, we prepared to return to Mumbai. Before leaving, we bowed before Lord Ganesha, offering our thanks that at least we got to see our beloved Swami.

Just then, my grandfather came running—his face lit with urgency and excitement. He was an

active Kerala Seval, and this was the last day of *seva* for their group. “Swami has called the Sevals for blessings before they leave for Kerala!” he said. He scooped me up in his arms—and off we went, still holding my slate, chalk, and that yellow cloth which hadn’t left my hands since we arrived in Parthi.

We were seated towards the back with the Seval group—those who had done *shrama seva*. Swami walked down the line, blessing each one, giving *vibhuti*. I still held the cloth high, eyes fixed on Him like a *chakor* waiting for the moon.

Then, unexpectedly, He paused, looked at me, and beckoned.

**I rushed forward, heart pounding, tiny feet flying—worried He might change His mind if I took too long. He asked me to place the yellow cloth on the floor. I gently laid it down. Swami stepped onto it, picked up my slate, and with great care, wrote “ॐ” in Devanagari.**

He handed it back to me. I dropped to the ground in full *sashtanga namaskaram*—flat on the floor, every bit of me surrendering at His feet. Swami was visibly amused to see a little one do that. He smiled warmly, waved His hand in that signature circle—and manifested a big *ladoo*. It was so large, I had to drop my slate and use both hands to hold it.

And then came the most unexpected blessing. Swami remained standing on the yellow cloth and invited each Seval to come forward for *padanamaskar*. One by one, they approached—eyes brimming with love, tears, and gratitude. For 15 full minutes, He stood there—smiling, blessing, lifting hearts.

In the corner, I sat quietly—watching, absorbing, and... well, finishing the entire *ladoo*. Everyone’s eyes were on Bhagawan, and by the time He turned and glided back towards Poornachandra Hall, the *prasadam* had disappeared.

My grandfather and the Sevals noticed only then. They smiled, passed it off as innocence—and perhaps it was. But to me, it was grace, poured into the shape of a sweet. To this day, that yellow cloth is preserved like treasure in our home. It’s not just fabric—it’s His footprint, His presence, His promise. Over the years, that moment became the foundation of a beautiful personal bond. During my school and college days, I would write small letters—just a few lines—in pocket-sized spiral books. Swami would always take them.

I believe it was His way of telling me: “You don’t need to say much. I understand even your silence.”

Just like that yellow cloth said it all back then.

By His grace, I completed my entire education—from school to MBA—under His loving guidance. That simple request from a little boy was answered in full. A promise kept.

But His ways were never linear.

I loved dramatics and theatre. I longed for the world of drama—the lights, the lines, the magic of stories unfolding on stage. Acting, directing, saying lines—it gave me a thrill even as a child during summer camps. But when I joined school, my academic performance was, let’s say, less than ideal. And teachers, lovingly strict, reminded me of my first *dharma*—to study well for Swami.

So, during our Silver Jubilee celebrations, I wasn’t picked for any role. Not a line, not a

walk-on. While classmates went for rehearsals, I stayed back trying to solve for X and Y, longing to be part of the journey they were undertaking.

So I chose another path: *seva*. I began serving drinking water at practice venues, helped at dinner—anywhere they were short-staffed. One afternoon, a teacher came in asking for volunteers for *seva*. Six of us raised our hands.

He led us to the auditorium. We thought we were there to serve snacks.

An hour passed. We sat watching others rehearse. Suddenly the teacher returned, this time with one of the play's directors. "So you are the dancers?" he asked.

Confused, we clarified—no, we were here to serve.

He chuckled. "That's exactly why you've been chosen. We only want those who first wish to serve."

And just like that, from being on the sidelines, we were suddenly inside the sanctum. We played the young *Pandhari Bhajan* group with young Sathya. Two dance sequences. It wasn't the lead role—but I was inside. I belonged.

On the day of the final offering, during the group photo, I sat beside Swami. He extended His hand. I held it and wept. He smiled. And in that smile, I knew He had seen my journey. That it was He who had picked me up quietly and placed me in His drama of love.

The first photo with Bhagawan—just a tiny me, holding His hand, tears running down my cheeks.

Class 8: The drama was *Bhakta Bheeshma*. I auditioned for *Karna*. Rejected.

I cried that night. I believed in miracles... but they seemed delayed.

Two months prior to the drama, a different opportunity arose. One of the teachers proposed a musical offering—songs written by Bhagawan during His Patha Mandiram days. An elderly devotee who had learnt them directly from Swami came to teach us. I was chosen as part of a 25-member music group—perhaps a consolation prize from the cosmos.

The previous year, the singing group hadn't gotten any personal interaction with Swami. I remembered that. But I reminded myself: an opportunity is still an opportunity.

We practised from morning to dusk. At Prasanthi Nilayam, we sat through seven darśans, letters in hand, holding a card requesting permission to offer our songs. Nothing. On the seventh day, dejected, we prepared to leave.

After lunch, our teacher gathered us.

"What now?" he asked.

One student replied, "Sir, we came to sing for Bhagawan. He is here. Let us offer our songs... here."

Outside our shed, we placed a chair for Bhagawan, lit incense, and performed the entire offering—songs, interludes, speeches. Devotees gathered. We sang, cried, and ended with Aarthi.

Swami came for darshan, again took our letters and cards. And we thought—this is our final farewell.

In our hearts, it had reached Him.

Later, we packed our instruments and went for darshan. Buses had arrived to take us back.

As we entered, we met the Senior Boys Hostel warden. He asked about our visit and we told him about the musical offering.

Swami came for darshan, again took our letters and cards. And we thought—this is our final farewell.

But then, in the portico, Swami turned to the senior warden and asked, “Where are the music boys?”

Now here’s the comic twist. That evening, a group from the Mirpuri College was scheduled to offer Meera bhajans. Only three performers and two accompanists were planned—and their seating was already arranged.

But the senior warden, fresh from his conversation with us, assumed Swami meant our group.

He rushed to us, breathless, “Swami is calling the music boys! Come, quick!”

And just like that, 25 of us—with harmoniums, dholaks, keyboards—charged toward Swami like a herd of elephants. The entire portico shook with our clumsy energy.

Swami laughed. A sparkle lit up His eyes.

He gestured lovingly to the bhajan group to shift and make space. Seating was limited, and only a few boys were expected to sit close to Bhagawan. As per plan, I was to sit in the last line. But miraculously, all 25 of us were accommodated—and I found myself sitting right at His lotus feet, on the steps. He had not just remembered us—He made room for us in every way possible.

We sang 10 songs. Each time we thought we’d be stopped, Swami smiled and said, “Next.”

Afterwards, He asked our names, enquired about our play (*Bhakta Bheeshma*), and posed for a group photo.

Tears again. This time, not of longing—but fulfillment.

The next day, the drama team performed

Years passed. Final year MBA. Our Sports Meet drama was titled Jaya—about Krishna teaching the Pandavas the meaning of true victory. As we divided characters, I was given the role of Karna—yes, the same one I didn’t get in Class 8.

He wasn’t physically present anymore. But He was. Quietly fulfilling forgotten prayers.

It was as though He was saying: “I never say no. I just say—not now.”

And in between these milestones, He had me do so many other roles—in front of Him, behind the curtain, and most lovingly, in His Brass Band. Marching in unison, playing notes in

discipline and devotion—it was a different kind of sadhana. There was no dialogue, just rhythm. And yet, even in that silence, I felt His approval.

I now realise—*Vidyarambham* wasn't just about learning the alphabet. It was Swami taking me into His workshop and shaping me—role by role, song by song, beat by beat.

A spark was lit with that yellow cloth and a child's slate. And across two decades, He fanned it gently into a flame.

For all this and more... how can I ever say thank you?

I can only write. And remember.

And maybe, just maybe, someone reading this will feel what I did:

That He is never far.

That no role is too small.

That the stage was always His.

And we, the most blessed cast.

# Alumni Profile

## Rajesh Krishnamoorthy

1996, MBA Prasanti Nilayam

Brother Rajesh is the Head of Retail Credit, Risk, and Collections at IDFC First Bank, Mumbai. A native of Palakkad, Kerala, he joined the Brindavan campus for his B.Com., graduating in 1994. He then completed his MBA at the Prashanti Nilayam campus in 1996. He came from a humble background, having lost his father at the age of seven.



His grandfather supported the family and was a formative influence in his early years. His aunt's family was close to Swami, and on His instructions, they moved to Prashanti Nilayam, where Rajesh's uncle served in the Institute's administration. Limited financial resources meant that he studied through Class XII on a state scholarship for underprivileged students. It was his aunt who then suggested he apply to the B.Com. program at Bhagawan's institution.

He vividly recalls his first day at the college after the summer course. Ruchir Sir administered a basic accounting test to gauge the new students' abilities. Lacking a strong foundation in the subject, Rajesh fared poorly. When submitting his paper, he candidly admitted to Ruchir Sir that he had not done well but was determined to improve with guidance. This courage to face difficulties head-on has always served him well. Ruchir Sir asked him to get the textbook from the library and meet him during evening study hours. There, Sir patiently helped him grasp the fundamentals. He remains deeply grateful to this day for that mentorship, which gave him the confidence to succeed. In hindsight, he sees that the courage to ask for help was the turning point in his academic journey and has remained a guidepost throughout his career.

Instilled with discipline by his grandfather, hard work came naturally to Rajesh. He had learned practical self-service skills like masonry and carpentry in his early years in Palakkad. In the hostel, he would rise at 4 a.m. to study accounting and do his own laundry, a service from the hostel dhobi being a luxury he could not afford. His diligence paid off: not only did he stand second in his class that first semester, but he was also blessed by Bhagawan with the coveted trip to Kodaikanal. As part of his self-service duties, he spent his mornings in the college library, dusting and cataloging books. The simple joy of 'Mundu' cricket, played with his classmates, was his release. His one regret, however, is not having taken fuller advantage of the campus's outstanding sports infrastructure by focusing on a particular sport.

Rajesh believes that the discipline of the Brindavan campus, combined with the support of teachers like Ruchir Sir, Nandgopal Sir, and Rajkumar Jain Sir, truly shaped him into the professional he is today. He lives by the belief that there is no substitute for hard work and that one must be almost paranoid in their dedication to quality. Swami's teachings of Trikarna Shuddhi (unity in thought, word, and deed) and the principle of not hurting anyone have stayed with him. While broader concepts like karma and rebirth can seem spiritually intense, the simple tenet of not hurting others in word or action is something he has deeply inculcated into his professional and personal life. Rajesh carries a profound gratitude for the education system created by Swami, without which he would have struggled to complete his education and build a stellar career. In the 1990s, placements took time. Through the help of an alumnus, brother Gurumurthy, he secured his first job with a salary of five thousand rupees. Accordingly, serving society and the Institute comes naturally to him.

## Service to Society

Rajesh is passionate about the education of girls, believing that to educate a girl is to ensure her entire future generation remains educated. Alongside his classmates from the 1996 batch, he contributes to this cause in and around Chennai—a seva activity ably led and coordinated by his classmate, brother D. Nagaswamy. Given his deep attachment to his alma mater, he also contributes to the placement efforts for graduating students.

## Advice to Youngsters

Life, he notes, will always demand that you make tough decisions. Early in his career, he faced a choice between two job offers: one in Pune, where his sister lived, and another in Delhi. Being from South India, his Hindi was average, and the Delhi job paid 10% less. However, the role offered a greater challenge and a higher quality of work. Rajesh found the courage to follow his gut, choosing the challenging path over the comfortable one. He was confident his hard work would see him through, and he excelled in the role.

He advises that while it is good to have a pleasing personality, one's focus should be on contributing to the organization, not on managing perceptions. For instance, when he joined an organization whose value system was flawed, he knew he could not stay. For him, a career is a marathon spanning more than three decades. Growth, he advises, may not always be vertical. He encourages looking for growth in one's work profile and functional responsibilities—this is what he calls building a 'body of work.' Today, he leads a team of about five thousand people across credit, collections, and risk. His mantra is to continuously add new profiles and roles to one's repertoire. When he interviews senior candidates, he looks beyond their background or designation, focusing instead on what they have handled, gained, and achieved.

“Don't chase salary; chase the body of work,” he says. He explains that when you focus on this, by the 10-15-year mark, the opportunities become significant and the remuneration immense. You leapfrog. He acknowledges that the current generation faces unique challenges with the distractions of gadgets and social media. Still, he advises that at the age of twenty-two, graduates shouldn't prioritize comfort and balance. While each generation is naturally smarter than the last due to improving education and information access, he stresses the importance of holding onto the enduring values of Indian culture and spirituality taught at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.



# Alumni Profile

## **Bharti Lakshmi**

1993, BArts. Anantapur Campus

Sister Bharti serves as Principal, Hindustan International School , Chennai. She has been in the Education sector for three decades now, commencing her career as a Primary school teacher and to the position of a Principal in a reputed school at Chennai – Hindustan International School. She joined Bhagawan’s school as a primary school student and graduated from the Anantpur campus post which she served Bhagawan’s school till 1996



As a student of English, Political Science, and Philosophy, Bharti recalls with fondness the bus rides from Anantapur to Puttaparthi for celebrations, the laughter shared with friends, and the quiet strength that came from being in a space where every heartbeat resonated with Swami’s presence. “Listening to the experiences of esteemed faculty like Kiron Bala Madam and Rajeshwari Patel Madam felt heavenly,” she recalls — moments that would later become guiding stars in her personal and professional life.

Bharti believes that those formative years taught her three powerful lessons: teamwork, determination, and most importantly, faith in the Divine. “We were being prepared for a beautiful purpose,” she says, her words echoing with conviction. And indeed, her journey reflects this preparation. After serving as a primary school teacher at Sri Sathya Sai Primary School from December 1994 to June 1996, she went on to pursue higher studies — earning her B.Ed. from Annamalai University in 1996, a Master’s in English in 2001, and later, an M.Sc. in Psychology in 2015. The quest for learning never ceased. Her path even led her to international shores when she was awarded the prestigious Monbukagakusho Scholarship to study in Japan at Nagoya University (2007–2008). It was yet another affirmation that when one walks with faith, the road expands with opportunities and grace.

Bharti’s journey has always remained connected to service. Whether it was supporting the education of underprivileged children, participating in Narayana Seva, or involving her school students in acts of service through the Sathya Sai Organizations, she continues to uphold the value of selfless giving. For her, service is not an act but a way of life.

To young alumni and the graduating batch, she offers a message grounded in her deepest truth: “Believe that Swami will never leave you, come what may. His Presence and Love will always be felt. Life will always throw up challenges, the confidence to face them comes from Bhagawan’s words - MY STUDENTS ARE MY PROPERTY”



# Gratitude Corner

**Dr Srikanth Khanna,**  
**Registrar - Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning**

MTech 2006 - Prashanti Nilayam



Dear Sisters & Brothers, a Loving Sairam!

Each one of us had the golden opportunity in this life to be called a student of Sai. We spent a fortunate number of years at His lotus feet. How he picked us and polished us - only He can tell! A lot was bestowed on each one of us and it is a learning for a lifetime that we carry with us. When I entered this abode of peace, I had the crisis of my life - my vessel was too small to receive the ocean of compassion!

Living with God is true education! We had that chance to see Him, listen to His golden words of advice and accomplish small tasks that could bring a smile on the divine countenance. A “good boy” from Him would be the gold medal. A “dunnapotha” meant the need to strive for the betterment! We received our secular education however what we fondly reminisce about is what we learnt beyond the classes and books. What we share today is but a speck of what we received with folded palms. It is in this grateful deluge of His love that our lives find the true meaning.

Bhagawan’s avatar has several unique aspects. Every moment of His time spent with us - His students - is truly an inexplicable Leela of the divine. He had a unique bond with each one of us. Bhagawan’s love exhorted us always to be good and do good. Brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God is spirituality at its simplest. He would himself practice and then advise the students. Bhagawan is the happiest when the poor and needy are served with love - “love without duty” is always His signature.

Now, as we find ourselves on our life’s sojourn, fulfilling His mission in various corners of the world, it is energising to keep reliving the moments we spent at His feet. The Darshan, Sparshan and Sambhashan that we received ought to light our paths every moment. It is a matter of how much we invest in this joyful togetherness. In today’s fast paced world that alone would help us unlock access to the treasure of eternal bliss

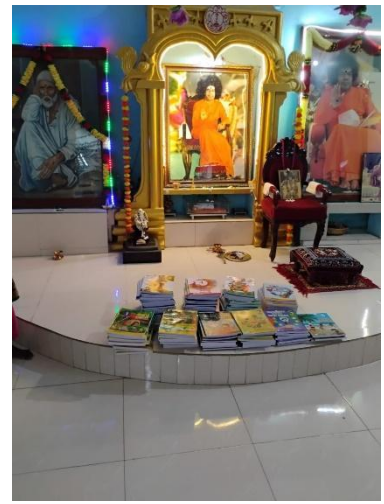
# Love in Action

Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, in a discourse delivered on 21 November 1988, said “Avail yourself of every possible occasion to render service to the society. It need not be limited to individuals. It is important to do national service. Whenever you find that you can render help to anyone in need, offer it. Do not make distinctions between rich or poor or the deserving and the undeserving. Offer service according to the needs of the situation. Today the needs of the poor in the rural areas are quite great. In this situation you must go out into villages, organise service activities, and encourage the rural population to participate in them. The village folk should be told the importance of health and hygiene and how to keep their homes and villages clean and healthy.”

Guided by His love and message, alumni of the Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions have consistently taken every opportunity to serve those in need. This edition of 'Love in Action' highlights several *seva* initiatives undertaken by our alumni around the world.

## Chennai

Tucked away in the hamlet of Nallattur near the temple town of Thiruttani, the Sri Sathya Sai Nursery and Primary School is a rare beacon of rural education, serving children from Lower Kindergarten (LKG) to the 5th standard. Established to bring schooling to even the most distant homes, its bus covers a 30 km radius, drawing over 150 students each year, most of whom come from local farming households. The school was blessed by Swami's divine visit in 1985. The school's Management Committee includes alumni of Swami's educational institutions alongside Trust members, working in harmony to ensure the school operates smoothly.



Over the past ten years, Swami has graciously permitted alumni from Tamil Nadu to immerse themselves in serving this institution, fulfilling the school's evolving needs through:

- **Health Camps:** Periodic medical outreach benefiting students.
- **Book Donations:** Annual supply of textbooks and reading materials to all students.
- **Infrastructure Support:** Providing fixtures, laptops, construction materials, RO water systems, stationery, and more.
- **Pallaki Seva** in February: Each year, alumni and devotees commemorate Swami's visit with a decorated pallaki (palanquin) procession. As the pallaki moves through every street of the village, students sing bhajans, and villagers offer coconuts and aarti at their doorsteps.

- **Prasadam**—consisting of vibhuti packets, photographs of Swami, sweet rice, and Sundal—is shared with every household, reviving cherished memories of the Lord's visit to this blessed land.
- **Annual Sports Day:** Entirely organized and led by alumni of Swami's educational institutions. The day starts with a vibrant flag-hoisting ceremony with the Prasanthi Flag, and a spirited march-past fills the event with pride and unity as the children salute the flag. Filled with various activities and presentations, the day culminates with a sumptuous lunch prasadam.



To participate in these seva activities, please contact Dr. K. Prasanna Sai at +91 9840039505.

## Bangalore

Initiated in 2015 by a group of alumni, this service activity at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Whitefield, began as a heartfelt effort to stay connected with Swami and support the hospital's mission. Along with the alumni, their families have remained actively involved, collaborating closely with hospital administration and staff for this monthly *seva*.

As the organizers aptly emphasize, the primary aim of this service is to facilitate *sādhana* through *seva*, transforming selfless service into a spiritual practice. Held on the third Saturday of every month, the initiative consistently draws 20–30 committed volunteers who support various administrative and back-end departments. Over the past year, they have contributed their efforts to areas such as Medical Records (MRD), Maintenance, Electrical, Library, College/Hostel Administration, Dietary, Neuro OT, Pharmacy, and HMIS. Activities include segregating items such as paper and medicine boxes for recycling, performing maintenance like cleaning HVAC filters to reduce vendor costs, and organizing medical records and files.

A cherished highlight of each *seva* day is the prayer session in Swami's room at the hospital. With the prayer *Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu* in their hearts and the Sai Gayatri and *bhajans* on their lips, the volunteers seek Swami's blessings and offer their gratitude at His lotus feet for blessing them with this invaluable opportunity.



To participate in these Seva activities, please contact Brother P. Boopala at +91 9742727103

### Indianapolis, U.S.A

Empowered by the boundless love and grace of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, a devoted group of alumnae and devotees from the Indianapolis Sai Centre came together this season to serve, celebrate, and deepen their devotion through a series of *seva* activities that drew them closer to Swami and fostered strong community bonds.

### SSSGC Ladies Day Celebration

The celebration commenced with a warm welcome extended to all the women as they gathered for the annual SSSGC Ladies' Day. Hosted at an alumna's home, the event brought together participants both in-person and virtually, with Sai sisters tuning in from across the U.S. to share their thoughtful reflections on Swami's love and teachings. As part of the session, alumnae and devotees folded, packed, and lovingly distributed winter clothes to families in need at Sanders Church. Each item exchanged was more than fabric; it was a gesture of Swami's compassion flowing through His daughters, restoring dignity and warmth to less fortunate neighbours



## **Support for College-Bound Families & New GC Centres**

Recognising the anxieties that accompany a child's first step into college life, alumnae opened their homes and hearts to parents navigating this transition. Through informal gatherings over lunch and reflections inspired by Swami's teachings, they offered practical guidance, spiritual encouragement, and the reassurance that no parent needs to walk this path alone. Acknowledging the young devotees' deep longing for Swami's presence, alumnae in Regional Officer roles facilitated the establishment of new Sai Centres in neighbouring cities, providing accessible, welcoming sanctuaries for them to gather and grow.

## **With Humble Hearts: Sharing Swami's Grace**

Invited to speak at various Sai Centres, several alumnae felt deeply humbled and honoured. With heartfelt gratitude, they stood before both new and seasoned devotees, offering their humble reflections on Bhagawan's boundless grace, sharing moments of surrender, acts of service, and personal transformation. Though these stories are small offerings at His lotus feet, by His grace, they may plant seeds of faith and inspire others to walk on the path of selfless devotion.

## **Monthly Narayana Seva at North United Methodist Church**

On the first Saturday of every month, alumnae join hands with local Sai Centre devotees to serve the needy at North United Methodist Church in Indianapolis. From 9:30 AM to noon, the church kitchen is transformed into a hub of love and nourishment, preparing and distributing simple yet wholesome meals of cheese and vegetable sandwiches, fresh bananas and oranges, and protein bars. Each plate is served with care, and when the last guest departs, we leave the hall spotless and welcoming, honouring Swami's teaching that true service attends to both people and place.

## **Annual Winter Drive**

Each winter, we mobilise once more to ensure warmth and comfort for those in need. Alumnae and Sai Centre devotees collect and distribute new coats, socks, hats, gloves, thermal wear, and care packs. This cherished tradition not only shields our neighbours from the cold but also rekindles the spirit of giving that Swami so lovingly exemplified. Through this annual drive, we reaffirm our commitment to His call: to wrap the world in love, one coat and one caring gesture at a time. Every act of service, every silent prayer offered, flows from the same divine source. The alumni and alumnae remain ever grateful to Bhagawan for granting us the opportunity to serve and to grow together. May our humble efforts continue to reflect His boundless love, and may the bonds forged here endure as a testament to the unity He so lovingly inspires.





