

Om Sri Sai Ram

**SSE Instructional Framework
Commemorating Bhagawan's 95th Birthday
at
Sathya Sai Center of South Bethesda**





This year you have named My birthday the "Golden Jubilee" of the Avatar (Divine Incarnation), and gathered in vast numbers from all parts of the world. I am sure you have benefitted by the sathsang (holy company). I do not ascribe one particular date in the calendar as My birthday, for I consider the day when divinity blossoms in your heart as My birthday in you. Therefore each of you should individually celebrate such a day as My birthday. **The day when you resolve to practise My advice, to follow My directives, to translate My message into acts of service, and to engage in sadhana—that day is My birthday for you.** The 23rd day of November which you now honour as the day on which I was born, is only like any other day if you celebrate it in a routine, ritual fashion. Adore man; the adoration reaches Me. Neglect man; you neglect Me. Of what avail is it to worship the Lord and to suppress man, His counterpart? Love for God must be manifested as love for man, and love must express itself as service. Through love alone—Love acquired through sadhana, and shared with all as sadhana—can peace be attained, by the individual as well as by the nation. My Life is My Message and My Message is Love. That explains why you have gathered hither in hundreds of thousands.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 13 Ch. 19, November 23, 1975

Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) Instructional Framework Sathya Sai Center of South Bethesda

SSE Objective

"Our aim is to mold the mentality of the child to regulate his habits in an ideal manner. The aim is to bring about a transformation in the child and not merely burden him with information. The character of the child must be made pure and strong. Give them all the confidence and courage they need to become good, honest, and self-reliant children."

~ Sri Sathya Sai Baba

SSE Instructional Framework

The Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) program is based on Sathya Sai Baba's five Human Values: Sathya (truth), Dharma (right-conduct), Shanti (peace), Prema (love), and Ahimsa (non-violence), all of which serve as the core of Swami's teachings. Sub-Values include: Love and Truth in Speech, Love in Action, Love in Thought, and Love in Understanding. The SSE Gurus must support the Human Values on which the fabric of daily life is based, be it at home, work, school, or during recreational and service activities. Drawing out and teaching the practical uses of these five inherent Human Values will aid our SSE students in developing good character.

The SSE Instructional Framework will serve as a curriculum guide to help each student effectively understand and internalize the Human Values and Sub-Values and meet the educational goals of Swami's teachings as they transition to the next SSE group level. This will lend a continuous, cohesive alignment to each student's education from group to group, and help Gurus know what goals must be met for that transition to take place. The SSE Instructional Framework was collectively developed by the SSE Gurus and the Coordinator. This will serve as a rubric for Gurus of different levels of teaching experience, to bring clarity to the SSE curriculum, and serve as a solid teaching tool. By the time students graduate from SSE, each one will have met all learning expectations and be closer to knowing the inner SELF. This will prepare them to serve society, while being guided by Swami's teachings.

With Love,
Imani Gonzalez
SSE Coordinator
November 23, 2020

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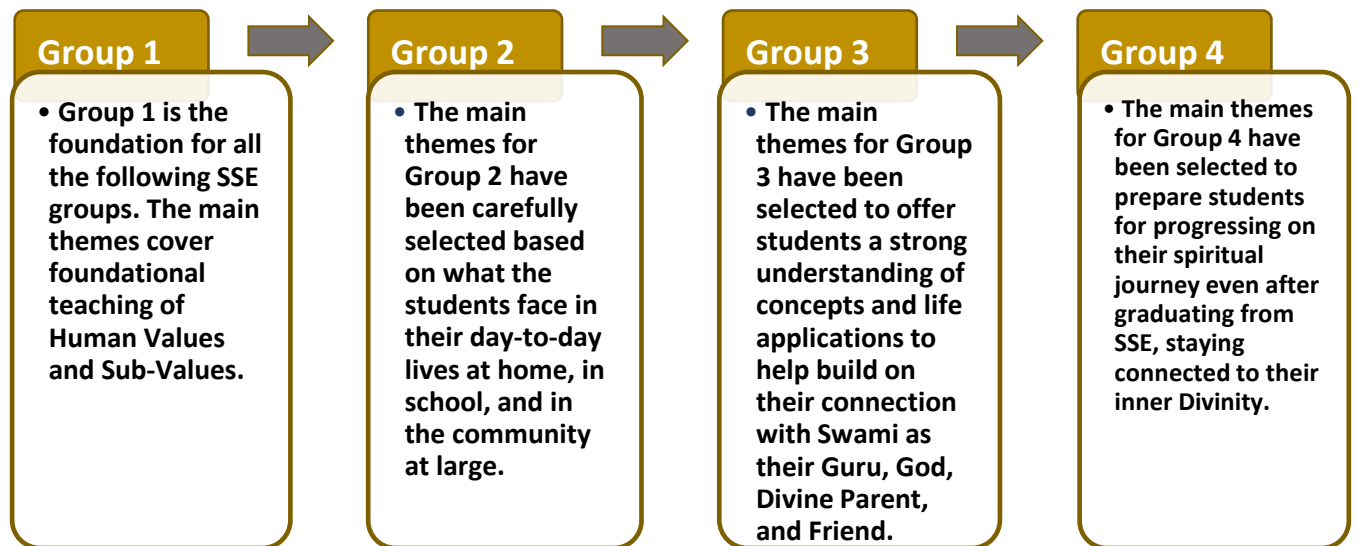
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SSE Framework Structure

Groups 1 through 4 have developed their respective SSE frameworks with details on the following sections:

- **Content** - What you want the students to learn (should tie into the Key Learnings)
- **Spiritual Tools** - What tools and resources you will use to teach the content
- **Key Learnings**
 - **New Concept** - Exposure and introduction to deeper content; more complex
 - **Enhanced Awareness** - Deeper understanding of content
 - **Enhanced Skills** - Applying the content to your daily life

SSE Group Progression from Group 1 to Group 4



Group 1 SSE Framework

Summary of Group 1 (G1)

Group 1's goal is to help children connect to and love Baba (especially as many have not had exposure to Baba earlier), and to bring out their inner divinity (Educare). This is done by gently introducing them, directly and indirectly, to the 5 Human Values and many Sub-Values.

There is also emphasis on showing how all faiths lead to God and all faiths are Human Values-based; and how people with different external attributes (including ages, races, disabilities, nationalities etc.) share the same spark of Divinity in them and therefore need to be respected (i.e. the 5 Human Values in action). Focus will also be given to Service (how the children are being served by parents, teachers, community workers, and how children can serve), along with an emphasis on prayers.

Group 1 is the foundation for all the following SSE groups and hence, taking the age, attention span, and conceptual/vocabulary skills of the children into account, the teaching and activities are visual and age appropriate.

Content

- The 5 Human Values and Sub-Values
- Sarvadharmā - the symbol, various religions
- Self-control (e.g. Ceiling on Desires)
- Respect - for elders, different religions, races, the disabled, etc.
- Unity of mankind

Spiritual Tools

- Gayatri mantra (3 times every class, and more times when doing short teachings on it, which will be sprinkled throughout the semester)
- Meditation through visualization of Baba's form
- Stories from Baba's Life, Chinna Kathas, different religions/cultures, modern stories which relate to their life experiences/choices, the lives of saints and great achievers (e.g. Isaac Newton, Vivekananda, Lincoln etc.)
- Mazes, dot-to-dot, cryptograms, crosswords and other puzzles
- Art and craft activities
- Games (e.g. BINGO, "Snakes and Ladders") to show the impact of choice
- Quizzes
- Role Plays
- Baba's quotes
- Affirmations
- *Samastha Loka* chanting (9 times during each class)
- Bhajans

- “Sai Fun” packets which include things like SSE-related coloring, “Can you reach Baba?” mazes etc.
- Audio and video materials (e.g. animation on kindness, Baba singing, X-mas darshan at Prasanthi Nilayam etc.)
- Participation in SSE exhibits
- Easwaramma Day program
- Guest Speakers
- Service activities

Key Learnings

New Concept

- Universal love
- Brotherhood of man
- Respect
- Self-control
- All faiths lead to God

Enhanced Awareness

- Baba as an omnipresent friend, guide, and protector
- Chanting and the importance of Gayatri
- Age-appropriate understanding of the 5 Human Values and Sub-Values
- Importance of respect for parents and elders
- Acceptance, understanding and respect for people different from themselves
- Discernment about right and wrong - including when peers are doing unhelpful things, as well as their own actions
- Self-control

Enhanced Skills

- Daily prayers
- Discernment
- Self-discipline
- Service



Group 2 SSE Framework

Summary of Group 1 (G1) to Group 2 (G2) Progression

The following framework has been developed to guide SSE G2 curriculum as students transition from G1 to G2. As students continue their spiritual journey in G2, they build on concepts from G1 through constant emphasis on **keeping God as our Best Friend**. This fundamental principle is addressed through plays, discussions, stories and is a key undercurrent in many lessons.

In G2, students also gain a deeper understanding of the Human Values and Sub-Values and the Unity of Faiths, as discussed in G1, but with greater depth. In addition, students learn new concepts such as WATCH (Watch your Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character & Heart), ABC's (Always Be Careful) of Life, Nine Forms of Devotion (Sraavanam, Kirtanam, Smaranam, Pada Sevanam, Archanam, Vandanam, Dasyam, Sakhyam, & Atma Nivedanam), and an introduction to the 5 Koshas (Annamaya, Pranamaya, Manomaya, Vijnanamaya, & Anandamaya). They will study key events and lessons from Swami's life. The lives of Saints/Role-Models/Exemplary Sai Devotees are also explored. Students are taught to recite and understand daily prayers, and prayers from various faiths. The idea of being "Plugged In" (staying connected) to God through Constant Integrated Awareness (CIA) is repeatedly emphasized as integral to their daily lives. ***The main themes for G2 have been carefully selected based on what the students face in their day-to-day lives at home, in school, with friends, and in the community at large. Students are taught to work through scenarios.***

Content

- Human Values and Sub-Values
- Swami's Teachings:
 - Ceiling on Desires
 - WATCH
 - ABCs of Life
 - 5 Koshas (basics)
 - Nine Forms of Devotion
- Key events and lessons from Swami's life
- Lives of Saints, Role Models, Exemplary Sai Devotees
- Unity of Faiths
- Reciting and understanding of prayers:
 - Gayatri Mantra
 - Food Prayer
 - Think Through Me All Day
 - Prayers from various faiths
 - *Samastha Lokah Sukhino Bhavanthu*
 - SSE Pledge (not a prayer)

Spiritual Tools

- Life Application
- Homework
- Spiritual Diary
- Experiments/Activities
- Role Plays
- Quotes by Swami
- Appropriate songs
- Arts and crafts
- Stories from Swami's life, the life of great saints and people of exemplary character
- Modern day value-based stories
- Quizzes
- SSE exhibition
- Bhajans
- Easwaramma Day plays
- Service activities

Key Learnings

New Concept

- WATCH
- Forms of Devotion
- Koshas (introduction)
- Lives of Saints, Role Models, Exemplary Sai Devotees

Enhanced Awareness

- Ceiling on Desires Program
- Unity of Faiths
- Human Values and Sub-Values/Topics:
 - ✚ Truth (Honesty)
 - ✚ Truth (Distinguishing Right from Wrong)
 - ✚ Right Conduct (Respect in the Home)
 - ✚ Right Conduct (Discipline)
 - ✚ Peace (Calmness)
 - ✚ Peace (Faith in God)
 - ✚ Love (Devotion to God)
 - ✚ Love (Friendship / Keeping Good Company)
 - ✚ Love (God is Your Best Friend)
 - ✚ Love (Empathy/Kindness)
 - ✚ Non-violence (Harmlessness)
 - ✚ Non-violence (Service)

Enhanced Skills

- Constant “Plugging In” (staying connected) to God (i.e. CIA)
- Speaking softly and lovingly
- Gayatri Mantra chanting (morning, bath time, noon, night)
- Practicing light meditation on a daily basis
- Soham breathing



Group 3 SSE Framework

Summary of Group 2 (G2) to Group 3 (G3) Progression

In G3, while students will learn some new concepts, the focus is on developing a deeper understanding of concepts learned through G2 and prioritizing the application of Swami's teachings and spiritual practices in daily life. As students transition to G3 with their Sai Spiritual journey progression, they also enter their teenage years, which are very defining foundational years of one's life. Therefore, the emphasis for G3 curriculum will focus on strengthening Discrimination through the Human Values along with instilling Sadhana and learning how Faith and Surrender lead to Self Confidence and Constant Integrated Awareness (CIA). Students will continue to get a deeper understanding and meaningful relevance of the 5 Koshas (*Annamaya, Pranamaya, Manomaya, Vijnanamaya, & Anandamaya*), the 5D's (*Dedication, Devotion, Discipline, Discrimination,, & Determination*), the 4F's (*Follow the Master, Face the Devil, Fight to the End, & Finish the Game*), and the importance of Seva, Dhyana and daily Prayers. ***The main themes for G3 students are to start understanding and practicing these concepts in their daily life, which will not only help guide them in their spiritual journey as they progress to Group 4, but will also help build on their connection with Swami as their Guru, God, and Divine Parent and Friend.***

Content

- Swami's Teachings
 - Emphasis on Self-Confidence- Sadhana, Faith and Surrender
 - 4 S's (*Self-Confidence, Self-Satisfaction, Self-Sacrifice, & Self-Realization*) of Sadhana of Love
 - 5D's, CIA, 4F's, 5 Koshas and the ABC's (*Always Be Careful*)
 - Importance of Prayer, Omkar, Japa and Dhyana and Seva
 - Awareness of the 5 elements and its relationship to Man
- Swami's Stories at a deeper level with relevance to their lives (including challenges such as peer pressure, self-confidence, ecology, life goals)
- Study of Unity of Faiths (not a repetition of content covered in Groups 1 & 2, but more in-depth and meaningful exploration, including listening to speakers from other faiths and field trips to places of worship)
 - Understanding the true significance of festivals that happen year-around.
- Slokas & Prayers: Understanding the meaning (and application) of basic/routine prayers:
 - Gayatri mantra
 - Sahana Vavathu
 - Guru Brahma Guru Vishnu
 - Shanti mantra
 - Brahmarpanam
 - Sarva Dharma prayers etc.

Spiritual Tools

- Life Applications of Swami's teachings
- Stories from the lives of great men like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa & Swami Vivekananda, and messages from the Gita, etc.
- Learning through Role plays of various scenarios relating to spiritual topics
- Refer to the 'Sadhana of Love' (4S's) program guide to build on activity framework
- Sadhana practice – daily and weekly goals
- Conduct at least one presentation and study circle with the Center adults
- Keep journals – Sadhana and key experiences and track progress
- Participate in Center activities and help at the center
- Participate in SSE exhibits
- Bhajans
- Service activities & class projects

Key Learnings

New Concept

- The 5 Koshas- Deeper explanation of significance vs. what students learned in Group 2 – Understand the significance of the 5 Koshas to one's inner journey
- Sai Ashotharam (108 names) of Sathya Sai Baba – Recite and understand
- The 5 elements and its relationship to Man –Be able to realize why it is important for the five elements 'inside us humans and in the creation' to be in balance, harmony, and peace (*Sat-Chit-Ananda*)
- The 4 F's and Swami's emphasis on why they are fundamental for the pursuit of the four Purusharthas (goals) of Life – Dharma (righteousness), Artha (wealth or money), Kaama (desire), and Moksha (liberation)
- Constant Integrated Awareness – what is CIA? Why should we practice CIA, how does it help us?

Enhanced Awareness

- Understand the importance of Unity in Diversity of Faith
- Significance of the 4 S's from Sadhana of Love – incorporate the basis in daily life
- Importance of the 5 D's in all actions
- CIA and why it is vital for spiritual growth and how it can enhance the awareness of the 5 Koshas

Enhanced Skills

- The 5 Human Values become a fundamental application guide
- Emphasis on 'Truth' and 'Right Conduct' helping to navigate in their teenage to young adult years
- The ability to discriminate between Self-Confidence and Ego
- Practice Faith and Surrender in daily actions

- Apply the basics of the 5 D'S and 4 S's to daily life, to enable faith, surrender and self- confidence
- Practice Jyothi Meditation as part of sadhana
- Chant key prayers and understand their significance
- Practice CIA to stay grounded and be able to handle the challenges in life
- Understand the 5 Koshas and how they can help us lead a disciplined life



Group 4 SSE Framework

Summary of Group 3 (G3) to Group 4 (G4) Progression

The following framework has been developed to guide G4's SSE curriculum as students transition from G3 concepts to G4 concepts. During G3, students learn about several key concepts regarding Human Values (e.g., the **5 Koshas, Self-Confidence, Constant Integrated Awareness, and Prayers**). As students continue their spiritual journey in G4, they will gain a deeper understanding of these concepts, such as reviewing self-confidence with the additions of self-satisfaction and self-sacrifice as key concepts toward self-realization. The 5 Koshas and prayers will also be covered in G4 with a deeper understanding of its relation to self-realization and practical application, as well as its relevance to students as they go through high school and prepare for life after SSE graduation. ***The main themes for G4 have been selected to prepare students for progressing on their spiritual journey even after graduating from SSE and always staying connected to their inner Divinity as a source of guide and strength in their life.***

Content

- “Mansion of Life”
 - Which Human Values can aid in building the mansion of life? How can said Value be practiced?
 - How does Swami define [self-confidence](#)?
 - Self-confidence can be strengthened through many Human Values i.e., surrender and love (as learned in Group 3), but how does faith play a part in self-confidence?
 - What is the relationship between [self-confidence and faith](#)?
 - When and why is self-confidence needed?
 - How can one strengthen self-confidence through [faith](#)?
 - Self-confidence through recognition of God in everyone and all are equal (Constant Integrated Awareness)
 - Similar questions and discussions for all parts of the [mansion](#) (self-satisfaction, self-sacrifice, and [self-realization](#))
 - Science and Spirituality
- [Constant Integrated Awareness \(CIA\)](#)
 - Non-compartmentalization of Swami's teachings and the Human Values – the idea of having spirituality integrated in daily life, not limited to just Sundays during SSE
 - Why is CIA needed in daily life?
 - Which Human Values can aid in [CIA](#)?
 - How can high school challenges be addressed through CIA?
- [The 5 Koshas](#)
 - Integration of [Human Values](#) – Value can be chosen based on students' preference and/or need for a given semester

- How can practice of a given Human Value aid in overcoming obstacles in high school and beyond?

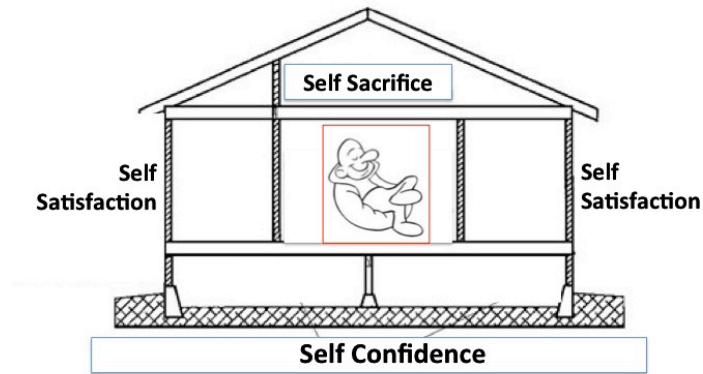
Spiritual Tools

- **Life applications** of Swami's teachings
 - Swami says [Namasmaraṅga](#) is essential for faith in the [Kali yuga](#)
 - Actively keeping Swami with us throughout the day by talking to him in our heart and strengthening the connection to the inner Divinity
 - Offering all daily duties and activities to Swami to be closer, be rid of ego and maintain equanimity
- [Gayatri mantra](#) to increase discrimination and strengthen faith and self-confidence
- **Weekly, student-led discussions** on the Human Value concepts for a given semester
 - To aid in strengthening self-confidence
 - To demonstrate student's personal understanding of the topic through contemplation and sadhana
 - To prepare students to individually be able to contemplate and apply using Swami's teachings of the Human Values even after graduating SSE
 - In a similar vein, students can also lead discussion and activities with younger students (Group 2 and/or Group 3)
- **Participate in Center Activities**
 - Initiating service Activities & Projects
 - Bhajans
- **Keep journals / track progress** – journals can even be letters to God – another form of connecting with the inner Divinity
- **Preparation for college** (taking Swami with them under His shield of armor)
 - Practicing Human Values (e.g., surrender, self-confidence, time management, etc.)

Key Learnings

New Concept

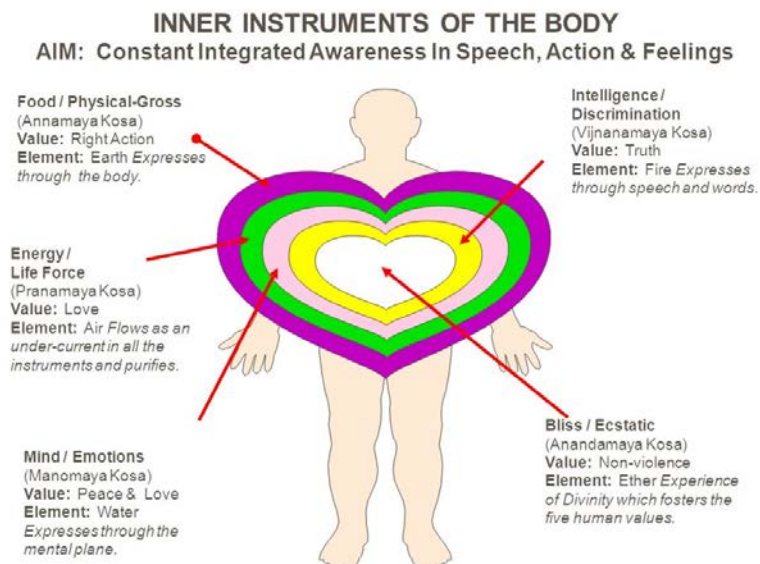
- Selection of a Human Value and Kosha – Value can be chosen based on students' preference and/or need for a given semester
 - ✚ Human Value and Kosha discussion should reflect students' lives as high schoolers and how they can practice and apply those concepts to high school life and beyond
- Building "the mansion of life" – learn about self-satisfaction and self-sacrifice after self-confidence to understand how these build on self-confidence and should be practiced in the process of self-realization
- Deeper understanding, not just conceptual, but also real-life application as it relates to the students' daily lives
- Stories of great men (Churchill, Abraham Lincoln, Einstein, Robert the Bruce, Gandhi, Martin Luther king, etc.) and how they derived self-confidence from God



The Mansion of Life

Enhanced Awareness

- Deeper understanding of the Human Values using real life examples that students face in high school and preparing them for life after graduating SSE
- Deeper understanding of self-confidence and further build on accompanying concepts of self-satisfaction and self-sacrifice in the journey toward self-realization
- Deeper understanding of Gayatri mantra as a form of Namasmarana for strengthening self-confidence
- The 5 Koshas and CIA
- 🌈 **G3 to G4 progression:** G3 has begun the discussion on the 5 Koshas and CIA, and G4 will continue this discussion but with a deeper understanding as it relates to the “mansion of life” (i.e., how does the awareness of the 5 Koshas and practice of Values aid in the process of self-realization?) Also relating the 5 Koshas to specific Human Values that have been identified for that particular semester.



Enhanced Skills

- Daily chanting of Gayatri
 - ✚ Start with 5 per day, then 11, leading up to 21 per day
 - ✚ Goal is to chant multiple times during the day to actively bring Swami along with us in every single moment – Swami says we should chant Gayatri at least once in the morning, noon, and night
 - ✚ Strengthening of Vijnanamaya Kosha (intelligence/discrimination)
- Practice of light meditation to bring inner peace and steadiness during our busy days
- Understanding of science at higher level and limitations of science in explaining the worldly phenomenon
- **G3 to G4 progression:** G3 practices both skills of meditation and Namasmaraṇa, but G4 will begin a deeper understanding of the effects of these practices in relation to the koshas. These practices will also be used as tools in strengthening CIA (non-compartmentalization of spirituality) to work toward self-realization.

Guru Offerings

GROUP 1

Madhulika Jinsi
Angira Desai
Sunanda Bhushan

GROUP 2

Trusha Bhatnagar
Sunitha Gangappa
Sai Sree Cherukuri

GROUP 3 Girls

Sonia Kalra
Jaya Nelliot
Prema Sai Narasimhan

GROUP 3 Boys

Suri Vangala
Sundar Sreenivasan

GROUP 4 Girls

Padamaja Mummaneni
Meenakshi Gopal

GROUP 4 Boys

Mohan Kumar
Govind Vaidyanathan

Our Humble Pranams at the Divine Lotus Feet of Our Beloved
Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

