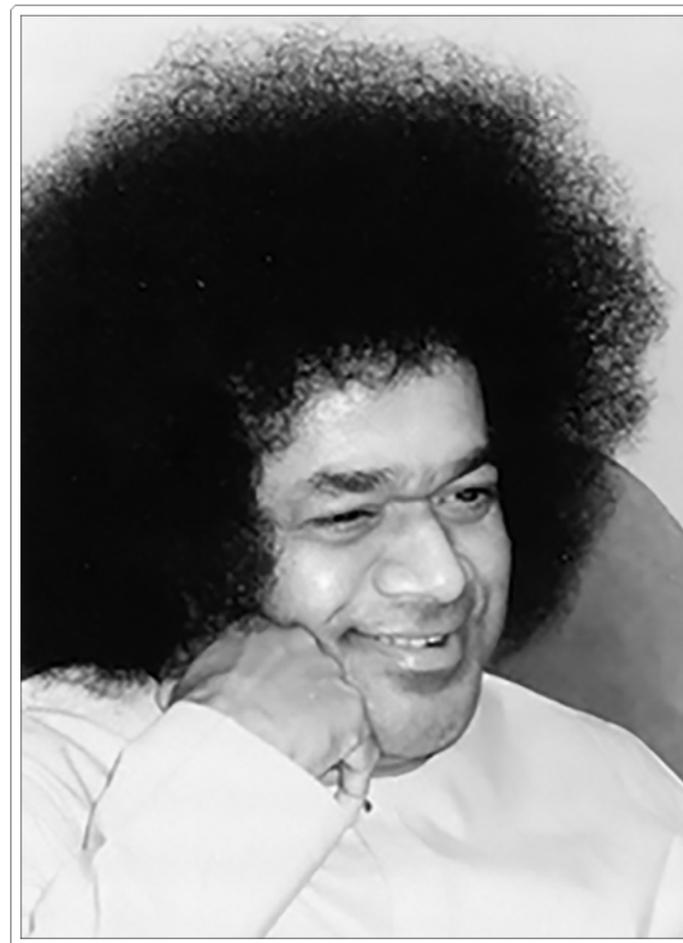


action (karmendriyas) from vice and sin, and the sublimation of all the senses to serve truth (indriya-moha). 8) Victory over Self resulting in acceptance by the world. 9) The destruction of one's prejudices and the pursuit of truth at all times (dharma). It is essential that all humanity today acknowledges the glory of this universal dharma. You must earnestly pray, "May all this be conferred on me" as found in the "Chamakam" hymn. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 13)

31.01.2016

Really speaking, this world has to serve only the purpose of sustaining the body. Those aspiring for liberation have to subdue the senses. "Food for guarding the body, dress to ward off the cold," states the Uttara Gita (the Gita Krishna imparts to Arjuna after the Kurukshetra war). However, if one gets immersed in these pursuits, one forgets the purpose for which one has come and the goal of all activity and holy endeavour. Instead whatever activity a person may be engaged in, the person must, as automatically as breathing, be contemplating on and always aware of this: "I am born to serve God and to realize my true self." All acts — wearing, eating, walking, studying, serving, moving — should be performed in the belief that they take one into the Presence of the Lord. Every act must be done in a spirit of dedication to the Lord. (Prema Vahini, Ch 55)

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



Thought for the Day

(January 2016)

1.01.2016

Today everybody is enthusiastic about New Year's Day. For a true devotee, every day is a festival. Consider every minute, every day as new and live in joy. All great men and women have sanctified their lives only by serving humanity. Service is not merely helping people in difficulty. 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. So undertake selfless service, and when you do good work, you will enjoy peace in life. Cultivate good qualities and prepare yourself for sacrifices. Sacrifice bestows eternal bliss. Share your education and wealth with your fellow human beings. In fact, God is the real owner of your earnings. As God's trustee, use your earnings properly. Constantly contemplate on God with faith that He is always with you and win over your demonic qualities. (Divine Discourse 1 Jan 2004)

2.01.2016

Do all lucky people who possess wealth, gold, riches and comfort have peace? Are all highly learned people, or those of extraordinary beauty, or of superhuman physical strength, in peace with themselves and the world? No! The reason for this lack of peace in many is that they forget the divine basis of creation. All lives lived without faith and devotion to the Supreme Lord are despicable lives; they are all wasted chances. It is indeed very strange! Your genuine basis, the fountain of your joy, your ultimate fundamental (paramartha) principle, has become unnecessary and unsought for; on the other hand, the world with its tinsel tawdriness has for you

29.01.2016

Even when you attain the state of living with God and merger in a divine form (sarupya-mukti), there is still a trace of differential feeling. Just because a devotee has a form like the Lord's, one may not have the powers of creation, preservation, and destruction that the Lord has. Only when all trace of difference disappears and unity is attained, the highest stage is reached. This is real union (Sayujya). This comes of divine grace won by the essence of the spiritual practice of each; it cannot be claimed as the fruit of effort. The devotee wishes to serve the Lord as one pleases and to experience the joy of the form that one has attributed to the Lord. But the Lord, out of His grace, gives the devotee not only existence with the Lord, witnessing always the glory of the Lord, and being suffused with God-consciousness but also Sayujya - union with Him! The path of devotion results also in attainment of ultimate knowledge (Brahma-jnana). Even if the devotee does not crave it, the Lord Himself vouchsafes it to the devotee. (Prema Vahini, Ch 54)

30.01.2016

You must seek Truth and test it thoroughly with all the canons of reasoning. The discipline consists of: 1) The heroism to observe dharma rigorously (Ojas). 2) Fearless self-control (Tejas). 3) Discarding of all feelings of joy or sorrow with equanimity, due to the peaks and troughs of life. 4) Having unshakable faith in dharma and truth (Sahana). 5) Mental and physical health of the most excellent kind, earned by discipline and celibacy (bala). 6) The desire and ability to speak sweetly and straight, won by the practice of truth and love. 7) Withdrawal of the five senses of wisdom (Jnanendriyas) and the five senses of

As a result of this mental union, the Lord appears before the inner eye of the devotee in the form that they have chosen for worship. The vision is not merely a matter of imagination; it is a 'face-to-face' experience. Without changing location, the devotee can abide in the presence of the Lord in the self-same place. This is called 'being always with God (salokya-mukti)'. Besides being always with the Lord, the devotee realises all that they see as the glory of the Lord. The experience is referred to as 'seeing always the glory of the Lord (samipya-mukti)'. Existing ever with the Lord, witnessing always the glory of the Lord, and becoming suffused with God-consciousness is merger in the divine form (sarupya-mukti). This is the final fruit of devotional scriptures. (Prema Vahini, Ch 54)

28.01.2016

If you are careless about the discipline of truth, every duty laid on you by dharma and every action prompted by dharma will hang heavy as a burden. Hence, you must search for the reality behind all these phenomena in your daily living, and that search will make all your duties, which are dharmic actions, light and pleasant. The Lord has designed people such that they are inclined towards God and are delighted at the expansion of their vision, and are happy when they are moral and virtuous. So, people must serve their own best interests by adhering to their basic nature, by concentrating on the Divine (Brahman), by assiduously cultivating truth, and by rigorously practicing right conduct (dharma). (Dharma Vahini, Ch 13)

become necessary and desirable. Even the most comfortable house, equipped with all the luxuries and heaps of treasure that people crave, is worthless to endow you with peace. Peace can be won only by surrender to God, who is the very core of one's being, the very source of all life and living. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 12)

3.01.2016

What is important is not the acquisition of argumentativeness but the acquisition of single-mindedness, equanimity, and freedom from likes and dislikes. Why does one undertake these spiritual disciplines, this chanting, meditation, devotional singing, etc.? Isn't it for acquiring single-mindedness and one-pointedness? Once that one-pointedness has been earned, human effort becomes unnecessary; the inner significance of life gets revealed. So those eager to become spiritual aspirants, should not yield to arguments and counterarguments. They should not be enticed by the wiles of bad feeling. They should see their own faults and not repeat them again. They should guard and protect the one-pointedness they have acquired, with their eyes fixed on the goal they are after, dismissing as trash whatever difficulties, defeats, and disturbances they encounter on their path. They must dwell on subjects that would give enthusiasm and joy, and not waste valuable time building up doubts regarding all things, big and small. (Prema Vahini, Ch 45)

4.01.2016

Many dull-witted moderns are puzzled at the purpose of all the constructions and conditions, conventions and customs that revolve around the temple. They cannot grasp the significance

of any answer because it is beyond their limited understanding. A patient suffering from high fever will find even sweet things bitter; so too, those afflicted with the high fever of worldliness can never taste the real sweetness of truth. The fever must subside; then they can appreciate the value of the things of the spirit. Similarly if you deny yourself of the bliss derivable from surrender to the Lord, and run about madly pursuing sacred spots, sages, and holy rivers, how can you be helped? Cultivate an ounce of pure devotion! That is sufficient for you to be awakened from this delusion! Devotion will teach you that you can attain peace only by returning to your own native home, which is God within you. Until then, homesickness will haunt! (Dharma Vahini, Ch 12)

5.01.2016

Temples are invitations and signboards directing people to their Divine home. Temples are intended to instruct people in the art of removing the veil of attachment that lies over their heart. That is why Tyagaraja cried in the temple at Tirupathi, "Remove the veil within me, the veil of pride and hate." The fog of illusion (maya) melted away with the touch of the rays of grace. Then he sang out describing the image of divine charm in the song, "Sivudavo Madhavudavo"; he drank deep the sweetness of that form. The churning of his heart by the divine formula produced the spark of wisdom (jnana), and it grew into the flame of realisation. On one occasion, Lord Sri Ramachandra spoke thus: "Dawn breaks and dusk falls. With dawn, greed awakes in people; with dusk, lust gets hold of them. Is this to be your goal and way of life? With every passing day, you are nearing one step closer towards the cave

delusions. Choose any path through which you feel grace is flowing to you. Liberation is achieved by strict adherence to the rules and observances of following your chosen path. The path will give you the strength to overcome delusion and grant you one-pointedness. (Prema Vahini, Ch 53)

26.01.2016

From the most ancient times Bharatiyas considered Truth as God, loved it, fostered it and protected it and thereby achieved divinity. Bharatiyas were devoted to Truth, wedded to Dharma (Righteousness) and esteemed morality in society as the foremost duty. It is high time you realised what a sacred country Bharat is. In this holy land, nothing is lacking. "What cannot be found in Bharat cannot be found elsewhere" is an ancient saying. In spite of these multifarious endowments, this country is being regarded as poor and backward. This is born of delusion. When everything is available within Bharat, why go begging to other countries? Everything has originated from Bharat. Hence, having taken birth in Bharat, strive to promote the glory of Bharat. Every devotee should take a pledge to protect and promote the greatness of Bharat. Like an elephant that does not know its own strength, Bharatiyas are unaware of their power. Despite their myriad capacities, they are behaving as weaklings like an elephant before its mahout. You have to get rid of this weakness. (Divine Discourse 23 Nov 1990)

27.01.2016

Worship with deep-rooted consciousness on the Divine, purity of feeling, and being free from all extraneous thought, becomes itself mental union with the Divine (bhava-samadhi).

24.01.2016

Sometimes, when the steering of a car is turned one way, you may experience the wheels dragging the car in another way – this indicates there is a problem you must fix! When the tyres are flat with no air, they behave as if there is no relationship with the steering. But they can never go beyond the bounds of steering. The steering in the hand must be connected to the wheels below for the journey to happen, that connection is mandatory and inevitable. For the one who has struggled with and conquered their out-going senses, their internal instruments become easily controllable. The external world distracts your senses and attracts you and you succumb by becoming objects of experience. To overcome them is indeed a difficult task. But your internal instruments have no form even though they may be endowed with name; they have experienced spiritual bliss (ananda) before, so they can be tamed with greater ease. (Prema Vahini, Ch 53)

25.01.2016

Overcoming senses that stray outward is difficult – they are attracted by taste, looks, and feels. The internal tendencies are like pure water which has no form, taste, or heaviness and is good for you! Impure water hurts you and harms you. You must purify your mental behavior, which is presently spoiled by the delusions of the world. If you desire happiness, you must first control and conquer the external delusion. Then your internal tendencies will easily move in the direction of securing bliss (Atma-ananda). Spiritual practices and penance (Yoga and Tapas) are only other names for the path to control and conquer these external tendencies and shield you from

of death, missing precious opportunities. Do you ever worry over a wasted day?”(Dharma Vahini, Ch 12)

6.01.2016

Humans are full of love (prema). Their hearts are springs of mercy. They are endowed with true speech. Peace is the characteristic of the mind of humans. It is the innate quality of the mind. Do not search for peace outside. Just as gold and silver lie hidden under the earth, and pearl and coral under the sea, peace and joy lie hidden in the activities of the mind. If you desire to acquire these hidden treasures, dive deep and turn your mental activities inward, you will become full of love. Only one who has so filled themselves with love and who lives in the light of that love deserves to be called human. Those devoid of love are demons and monsters. Within every man, the holy quality of love is ever present, without change. It is one and indivisible. Those saturated with love are incapable of spite, selfishness, injustice, wrong, and misconduct. (Prema Vahini, Ch 47)

7.01.2016

Lord Krishna declared in the Gita, “Among sacrifices (yajnas), I am the repetition of the name (nama-yajna).” For curing grief and earning joy, temples where the name of God can be remembered are very essential. Remembering the name (smarana) grants bliss; there is nothing more fruitful, charming or blissful than this activity! Sage Vyasa wondered, “Having the great yet simple name, on the ever available tongue, and the temple where His enchanting image is installed so that people can sing His glory in an exalted voice... why should people

hasten toward the gates of hell?” So too, Saint Tulsidas, who lived constantly in the temple and sang of the joy he tasted, lamented, “Alas! When people give up the name and the temple, and seek peace and joy in other places, I am reminded of the foolishness of those who forsake the rich and tasty fare on their plates and beg with outstretched hands for the remains from other’s plates!” (Dharma Vahini, Ch 12)

8.01.2016

Whatever you are dealing with, you must first grasp its real meaning. Then, you have to cultivate it daily, for your benefit. By this means, wisdom grows and lasting joy is earned. The two basic things everyone must be super clear are dharma and karma (action). Righteousness (Dharma) has no prejudice or partiality; it is imbued with truth and justice. So if you choose to adhere to dharma, you must see that you never go against it. It is wrong to deviate from it. The path of dharma mandates that you give up hatred against others and cultivate mutual concord and amity. Through concord and amity, the world will grow, day by day, into a place of happiness. If these practices are well established, the world will be free from disquiet, indiscipline, disorder, and injustice. The wise, who are impartial and unprejudiced and have resolved to follow Dharma, must walk on the path of truth (sathya). (Dharma Vahini, Ch 13)

9.01.2016

Humans are those who consider love as the only quality to be fostered and stay away from inferior qualities as if they are snakes. Bad conduct and bad habits distort the humanness of

Through these physical regulations, traits (vasanas) are destroyed and concentration is established. One-pointedness is essential to establish spiritual wisdom firmly in the heart, and this one-pointedness can easily be gained by bodily disciplines and austerities (tapas) prescribed in the Upanishads. External control helps internal control in many ways. To succeed in external controls indeed is more difficult than to achieve success in controlling the internal! In a working car, the wheels will always follow the direction of the steering. A turn of the steering wheel in one’s hand in any direction makes the wheels of the car, which are not in your hand, move in the same direction of the steering wheel – isn’t it? (Prema Vahini, Ch 53)

23.01.2016

Always love and follow only truth; falsehood is never beneficial. Some people may respect, but you will find that no one honors falsehood, deceit, and injustice all the time. On the contrary, everyone respects truth, honesty, integrity, and justice. Who is a divine person (devatha)? It is just a name for the person who observes truth as their vow (vratha) in daily living. The right conduct (dharma) as prescribed in the scriptures (Vedas) is tested, proven and capable of standing the test of time. It is impartial and just. Faith in it grows with practice. The worship of the Divine must follow the rules prescribed in the Scriptures (Vedas); through this means, people get strengthened in leading a righteous (dharmic) life. This dharma is the command of the Lord; it is the authentic voice of God, so it might as well be followed by all. Dharma brings goodness to all; it confers bliss (ananda) here and hereafter. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 13)

purpose was only to follow Him, serve Him, and surrender his will to Him. If you place all burdens on the Lord and adore Him continuously and consistently, He will certainly provide everything you need. (Prema Vahini, Ch 51)

21.01.2016

To attain the knowledge of righteousness (dharma), first, you must receive training under wise people, who are imbued with righteousness (dharma). Next, you must aspire to purify yourself (Atma shuddhi) and practice truth (sathya). Thirdly, you must realize the value of knowledge of the scriptures (Vedas), which is the voice of God. When these three steps are completed, you will clearly understand the truth and discriminate it from untruth. This enquiry into truth must be done in amity and cooperation. Everyone is entitled to attain spiritual wisdom. Everyone must be equally eager to discover the truth and benefit from it. All opinions must be tested on the touchstone of dharma, of universal goodness (sarvaloka-hitha). The principles that pass this test alone must be chosen and practiced, and shared with the world. Then will help humanity to progress. Then, everyone will develop joy and happiness in equal measure. All of you must use this method and perform noble and pure deeds consistently. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 13)

22.01.2016

Many argue about how discipline (as described in the scriptures) can result in the dawn of knowledge. Aren't these mere bodily limitations, they ask. Knowledge can arise only by the realisation of the principle that guarantees self-realisation, they argue. But this line of thought is based on a big mistake.

people. Hearts filled with the nectar of love indicate genuine humanity in people. True love is unsullied, unselfish, devoid of impurity, and continuous. The difference between human (manava) and demon (danava) is only 'ma' and 'da'! The letter 'ma' is soft, sweet, and immortal in symbolism, while the sound 'da' is merciless, lawless, and burning. Are they humans who have no sweetness in them and who endeavour to suppress the craving for immortality? Theirs is the nature of demons, though the form is human! For, it is the character and not the form which is primary. Good nature is resplendent on the faces of true humans as bliss (ananda). But without that goodness, even if they are infatuated with joy, the face will indicate only the destructive fire of the demon; they won't have the grace of spiritual bliss. (Prema Vahini, Ch 47)

10.01.2016

Many do not invest time to understand the sacredness and value of their culture. 'Culture' means that which sanctifies the world, which enhances the greatness and glory of a country, and which helps to raise the individual and society to a higher level of existence. The observance of morality in daily life, divinisation of all actions and thoughts related to life, and adherence to ideals - all these together constitute culture. Culture contributes to the refinement of life. The process of refinement or transformation is essential for improving the utility of any object. For instance, paddy has to be milled and the husk has to be removed before the rice is fit for cooking. This is the process known as Samskriti or transformation. This means getting rid of the unwanted elements and securing the

desirable elements. With regards to people, Samskriti (culture) means getting rid of bad qualities and cultivating virtues. A cultured person is one who has good thoughts and good conduct. (Divine Discourse, 14-Jan-1990)

11.01.2016

Bharatiya Samskriti (Culture of Bharat) is a composite of purity, divinity, sublimity and beauty. This combination is reflected in sports and games. Although there may be differences among nations in their food and recreational habits, the spirit of harmony and unity displayed in sports is a gratifying example to all. It is a distinctive quality of sports that differences are forgotten and persons engage themselves in games in a divine spirit of friendliness and camaraderie. Sports help the players not only to improve their health but also to experience joy. Students, however, should not be content with realising these benefits. It is equally essential to promote purity of the mind and develop large heartedness. True humanness blossoms only when the body, the mind and the spirit are developed harmoniously. The enthusiasm and effort which you display in sports should also be manifested in the spheres of morality and spirituality. (Divine Discourse, 14-Jan-1990)

12.01.2016

The greatest disease is the absence of peace. When the mind is peaceful, your body will be healthy. So everyone who craves for good health must pay attention to their emotions, feelings, and motives that animates them. Just as you wash clothes, you must wash your mind free from dirt every day. To cleanse your mind you should mix in good company and avoid dirt elements

19.01.2016

Devotion has to be continuous and uninterrupted like the flow of oil from one vessel to another. Without love (prema), nothing in this world can be acquired. Only when there is love, does attachment (anuraga) in its turn create the desire to protect and guard. In the path of self-effort based devotion, also called as 'young-one-of-the-monkey' path, the child has to rely on its own strength to protect itself — wherever the mother might jump about, the child has to attach itself fast to the mother's belly and not release its hold, even if pulled apart! So too, the devotee has to stand the tests at the hands of the Lord and hold on to the Lord's name at all times and under all conditions, tirelessly, without the slightest trace of dislike or disgust, bearing the ridicule and the criticism of the world and conquering the feelings of shame and defeat. This type of devotion was practiced by little child Prahlada. (Prema Vahini, Ch 51)

20.01.2016

The path of surrender is like the life of a kitten. Just as the kitten places all its burdens in the mother cat, so too the devotee must place their complete trust on the Lord. The mother cat holds the kitten in its mouth and transports it safely at all times, including very narrow passages. So too, the devotee must place all their burdens on the Lord and surrender fully to His will. Lakshmana is a great exemplar of this path. To serve Rama, Lakshmana renounced all obstacles in his path, like wealth, wife, mother, home, even sleep and food for full fourteen years. He felt that Rama was his all, his happiness and joy, that Rama would grant everything he needed, and his life's

calf from danger, and the eyelids guard the eyes effortlessly and automatically. When the infant grows up into an adult, the mother won't pay so much attention to its safety. So too, the Lord doesn't pay much attention to the wise one (jnani). The devotee who worships any form (saguna bhakta), like an infant of the Lord, has no strength except the strength of the Lord. For the realized soul (jnani), their own strength is enough. Therefore, until one can rely on one's own strength, one must be an infant in the Lord's hands, just like a devotee of the Lord's form. No one can become a devotee of the Formless Supreme (nirguna bhakta) without having been a devotee of the form. (Prema Vahini, Ch 48)

18.01.2016

Consider how much talent the Lord has given to people. With that endowment, seek the four goals (purusharthas). Move forward on the path to the Lord, adhering strictly to the demands of truth. That is the purpose of the gift of talent. Only those gifted with eyesight can see things; those bereft of sight do not have that fortune. So too, only those gifted with truth, longing for the four goals and adherence to dharma, can see the Lord; all others are blind. The Lord has also given people instruments for developing their intellect and discrimination. If they use them well and try to realise God within themselves, the Lord will add unto them fresh talent and new sources of power, for He is full of grace toward the struggling. When people seek to follow dharma, the truth will also reveal itself to them. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 13)

like falsehood, injustice, indiscipline, cruelty, hate, etc. Truth, righteousness, peace, love — these form the clean elements. If you inhale the pure air of clean elements, your mind will be free from evil bacilli and you will be mentally sturdy and physically strong. As Vivekananda said, you should have nerves of steel and muscles of iron. You must brim in hope and joy as your unshakable resolution, not display despair and dejection. (Divine Discourse, 21-Sep-1960)

13.01.2016

For all actions, the inspirer, the performer and the experiencer is the Sun-God. For people caught up in a meaningless existence and going through an endless round of futile activities, the Sun-God stands out as the exemplar of tireless and selfless service. He enjoys no respite from work. He is above praise and censure. He carries on his duties with absolute equanimity. Everything he does is only for the well-being of the world and not to cause any harm. Draw inspiration from Sun-God. The world cannot survive without the Sun. Life on earth is possible only because of the Sun. The Sun teaches man the lesson of humble devotion to duty, without any conceit. The Sun is the supreme example for everyone that one should do one's duty with devotion and dedication. Doing one's duty is the greatest Yoga, as pointed out by Krishna in the Gita. Let your actions and thoughts be good. You will then experience the Bliss Divine. (Divine Discourse, 15 Jan 1992)

14.01.2016

Once when Narada asked Lord Rama about the nature of His servitors and of spiritual aspirants, the Lord answered, "My

servitors are full of love; they always stand by righteousness and truth; their hearts melt with mercy; they avoid sin and renounce everything gladly; they eat in moderation, engage in doing good to others, and have no selfishness and doubts. They won't lend their ears to flattery but are eager to listen to the praise of the good in others. Spiritual aspirants are those who endeavour to acquire such qualities and possess such a character. Anyone engaged in repeating the Lord's name has self-control and discipline, faith, patience, comradeship, kindness, and joy as well as unalloyed love towards Me — such a person is dear to Me. Whoever with discrimination and renunciation, humility and wisdom is aware of the knowledge of Reality; who is immersed in the contemplation of My divine play (leela), dwells on My name at all times and sheds tears of love whenever the Lord's name is heard from any lip —these are My genuine devotees." Thus did Sri Rama answer Narada. (Prema Vahini, Ch 48)

15.01.2016

The Sankranti festival should be regarded as the day on which one turns one's vision towards God. Your life may be compared to a stalk of sugarcane. Like the cane, which is hard and has many knots, life is full of difficulties. These difficulties must be overcome to enjoy the bliss of the Divine, just as sugarcane must be crushed and its juice converted into jaggery to enjoy its permanent sweetness. Enduring bliss is got only by overcoming trials and tribulations. Gold cannot be made into an attractive jewel without melting it in a crucible and converting it into a beautiful shape. When I address devotees as Bhangaru (golden one), I consider you very precious! Only by going

through the vicissitudes of life with forbearance you become most valuable. Never allow yourselves to be overwhelmed by difficulties. Develop self-confidence and firm faith in God. With unshakeable faith, dedicate yourselves to serve your fellowmen and lead exemplary lives. (Divine Discourse, 15 Jan 1992)

16.01.2016

Dependence on righteousness (dharma) will ensure your happiness and increase it. It can remove the spite that one develops toward others. It will not allow you to swell with pride when another suffers or grieves. Can such wickedness confer happiness on you? Remember you can be happy only when all are happy! The mind and conscience have to be kept straight on the path of welfare of all mankind (sarva-manava-sukha). Dharma will shine and illumine only in the person who serves all and confers joy on all. Such a person will receive not only the grace of the Lord but also the unique privilege of merging in Him. Whenever you give or take anything from anyone, see that you do not transgress the boundaries of dharma. Do not go against its commands. Follow it at all times, believing this to be your bounden duty. Fill every ounce of your energy with the essence of dharma and endeavour to progress in that path, more and more, with every passing day. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 13)

17.01.2016

The Lord will protect in all ways and at all times those who worship Him in complete and pure uncontaminated devotion (bhakti), just as a mother protects her infants, a cow saves her