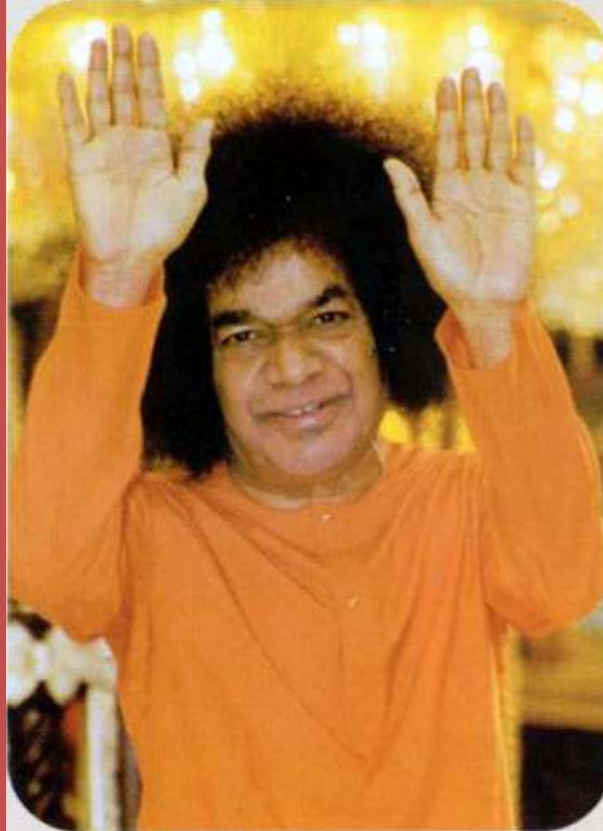


# Venugaanam

*Sai Krushna Charitable Trust Newsletter*



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## Why Sai Colleges?

*An extract from a divine discourse by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on July 7, 1981*

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**M**an is essentially mind, and mind is a composite of thoughts. These thoughts shape his fortunes.

We are experiencing the effects of the actions provoked by such thoughts. What exactly is the reason why the world today is different from what it ought to be? The reason is' human activities are not of the nature they ought to follow. Why, then, these activities? Because, man's thoughts are polluted; they lead him into wrong paths. The remedy, therefore, lies in reshaping these thoughts so that they are pure, holy, tending towards detachment and service to others.

Every activity of man has an urge which impels it. When he goes to the bazaar, it is to shop for provisions. When he reaches home with them, that activity ends. That urge is over, purpose is served. The student goes to school to acquire education. Each little act of ours has to be in pursuit of a goal. We forget that the great big activity of living on the earth for years and years and years must also have a goal, a purpose, an urge that impels us.

For whom is life, for what do we live? No one asks himself these questions and no answer is sought. Many reply proudly that they live for themselves alone; but this is totally wrong. Probe them still further. Each one will assert, "I eat when I am hungry. I drink when I am thirsty; I breathe myself the air I need. I apply a bandage on my foot when I have an injury there. I swallow tablets myself when I am ill. I am living for "myself". Besides, two people sleeping on the same bed have distinct dreams; they do not have the same dream. So, it is clear one leads a unique special life of his own.

But, consider the case of one of these persons, appealing before the manager of an office for a job slightly bigger than what is offered. He says "Sir! I have my mother, my .father, and four children. I have my wife. How am I to maintain so many persons? Please, therefore, give me a higher salary!" Now, for whom does he work on the job? Why does he seek more wages? Does he not feel the responsibility for keeping others in comfort? He works for himself and his family too.

### **Duties are not limited to oneself and the family**

This is not all. Ask the person another question. "*Guru Poornima* is being celebrated at Prashaanthi Nilayam. We are going there. Do you join us?" He replies, "What a pity? I have exhausted all the 'leave' at my disposal. I cannot think of joining you." In spite of this, if his wife has a sudden attack of illness, he admits her into a hospital and goes on leave for fifteen days foregoing his salary for the entire period. Or, let us think of another situation. This person is sitting with a plate in his hand containing his favourite savoury, '*gaare*', and is just about to relish the first bite when some one rushes in with the news, "Your son is caught under the wheels of a bus." He throws away the dish he likes so much, forgets the hunger that gnawed his stomach and runs to the street where the accident occurred. He loves his son more than himself. He runs about frantically to save his life. So, his assertion that he lives for himself is obviously not correct. He lives for himself and his family. Most people's lives centre around only these two. Highly learned men and leaders in political fields

are no exceptions to this rule. This narrow outlook is the cause of all the endless troubles that haunt the world. Our duties and responsibilities are not limited by these two entities. We have to rise to higher levels of obligation. When the village or town we live in is swept by an infectious disease, the people gather and resolve on counter-measures. This person, who announced 'I live for myself,' is also one of the leaders who have to carry out the measures. He is now struggling not for himself nor for his family but for the townsmen. He feels that any calamity that visits the town will be a personal calamity. So, we have to concern ourselves with the society in which we are.

Our lives are spent largely in the social milieu. Our birth, our residence, our demise are all bound to social conditions. Without the human community, man cannot survive at all. This is the truth; this is the special good fortune of man.

*The long-beaked stork never gets upset thinking over the sad fate of the living beings it swallows. Students of today are also unconcerned about the society that fosters them and expects their gratitude. Every individual must prepare himself to promote the happiness of ten others. Students have to resolve to look upon society as fostering their own lives. This involves renunciation of one's own fond dreams of gain. This attitude of renunciation can alone render life holy.*

*Students talk of friends and friendship but what do they mean by it? They mean by it an easy way to vicious paths. It does not encourage the adoption of holy, spiritual attitudes and paths. Friendship must serve as lids for the eye, as sandals for the feet. The friend must be "another me." He must experience in equal depth the joy and the grief of the other. Friends must be like milk*

*and water. Let me elaborate this example. When milk, into which some quantity of water is poured, is placed on a burning stove, the water goes off as steam. The milk laments the separation and boils over. Then, the only way to keep it calm is to sprinkle a spoon or two of water; its friend is back and it is happy. Milk cannot tolerate separation from its friend.*

*Your friends today attach themselves not to you but to your purse or to some advantage they can gain through your father's kindness. When your purse is empty or when your father is no longer in power, they bid you good-bye. Friends who drag one away into evil habits and vicious deeds are prowling around in search of victims. A Telugu proverb says, "Long before Truth put on her shoes, Falsehood completes her journey round the world." Falsehood travels fast. False friends stick faster. Truth will reveal itself only slowly through the clouds of denial and doubt.*

The world has a million colleges. But, these Sai Colleges have as their aim the production of a generation of youth who live ideal lives. If only the students imbibe the right ideas and plunge into society with their thirst for service as a spiritual duty, they would be proclaiming that their humanness is worth-while.

#### **Plan to be rich in virtue and devotion**

Students have to cultivate gratitude, compassion and tolerance. Sympathy with the distressed is a fundamental human quality. They must also develop a sense of gratitude. We feel thankful to some one who gives us food when we are gnawed by hunger, to the doctor who cures us of disease, the friend who pulls us out of a crisis, the officer who gives us a job when

we are desperately in need of one. But, are we grateful to God who equipped us with this wonder-filled body and endowed us with qualities and skills to live through the passage of time? Alexander expressed gratitude to his mother for the body he had. But, he also said that God who enabled the mother to retain and release the body has to be thanked more. Youth is the stage in life when the slightest turn towards wrong will spell disaster. Thoughts shape the career. You plan to earn much wealth, because you imagine that rich people are very happy. The rich have plenty to eat, but they have no appetite. The rich wield power over others but they are held down by disease. The rich can have many servants but they cannot live in peace. So, plan to be rich in virtue, in devotion and in dedication to good causes. Be rich in sovereign character. Steady adherence to truth, renunciation, genuine *prema* (love), selfless service---these are the essential components of character. Follow the dictates of your conscience; you will never be wrong.

#### **To-day's scholars have no steadiness of conviction**

Students now believe that the study of books is all that is needed. But, the test for scholarship is: Are soft and sweet words uttered? Are good works planned and executed? Are the scholars involving themselves in society and doing good for society? Are they grateful to those who promote their happiness? These are the tests; not how many books they have read or how many degrees they have collected. Consider the learned scholars of today! They are bond-slaves to greed, suspicion, envy and factionalism. They have no steadiness of conviction. So, they have no sleep, they do not relish food. Each one suspects the other. The reason for this sad

condition is that they have no spiritual outlook and experience.

A person prayed to Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth, so long and so sincerely that she planned to follow him to his house and be there. But, on one condition and one only: "You should not look back. If you turn and try to see me coming. I will disappear at once." He agreed and started walking towards his house. He could hear the jingles on the feet of the goddess and her chuckling laughter. Yet, suspicion haunted him. Was it the real Lakshmi? He turned back to verify and Lakshmi disappeared from view.

We too are haunted by disbelief. We do our duty but are doubtful whether we would receive our needs. This is a sign of weakness. The reward is certain. Why hesitate? Be satisfied that you have done your duty well; never fail in that. But, nowadays, even those who break the law and behave in evil ways quote the law and claim its protection when their interests are affected. This is indeed a tragic situation.

#### **Youth must learn the art of renunciation**

Sai has been witnessing this trend advancing in all lands. It is to end this evil that Sai is establishing these colleges. Here, youth must learn the art of renunciation; they must acquire character, these are the two eyes which can guide him safely through life. Renunciation is the golden key that opens the door to liberation. An educated person should not revel in acquisition and accumulation of properties and possessions. Sai does everything only for your sake and for teaching you high ideals. But, since your capacity to understand the underlying purpose is limited, you might fall into wrong conclusions.

Sai has not built these colleges and these hotels at the cost of crores of rupees for projecting Himself. The world has a million colleges. But, these Sai Colleges have as their aim the production of a generation of youth who live ideal lives. If only the students imbibe the right ideas and plunge into society with their thirst for service as a spiritual duty, they would be proclaiming that their humanness is worth-while. Ask yourself whether you deserve the 'human' nature implanted in you? Humility, readiness to serve, commiseration at the suffering of others--- these are the human traits of which you should be examples.

One other point: You must all understand well the affection that Sai is showering on you. He is caring for you, His tender children; He has built for you these splendid buildings and given you all the help you need. I am not pleading for gratitude in return. No. Like the Hindi writer, Prem Chand, who could not wipe out of his mind his agony when his younger son did not touch the feet of the parents while the elder did, I too feel pain when you take the wrong turn and neglect the royal road to truth, righteousness, peace and love. I feel

hurt when I see you wasting the most precious period of your lives. I am anxious about your future, for your own sake. I do not get praise if you lead good lives, nor do I get blame if you enter bad ways. I do not care for either.

Have the reputation of your Colleges in mind; have the good that the world expects from you in mind. And, stabilise in yourselves the two qualities of *thyaaga* (renunciation) and *sheela* (character).

I am not pleading for gratitude in return. No. Like the Hindi writer, Prem Chand, who could not wipe out of his mind his agony when his younger son did not touch the feet of the parents while the elder did, I too feel pain when you take the wrong turn and neglect the royal road to truth, righteousness, peace and love. I feel hurt when I see you wasting the most precious period of your lives. I am anxious about your future, for your own sake.

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, 18- 7-1981*

### **ATMAJYOTHI – The Eternal Light of SatChitAnanda**

**By Shri Lakshminarayan Aithal**

*(Shri Lakshminarayan Aithal has served for over 3 decades in Swami's institution and is the former Principal of the Sri Sathya Sai Loka Seva Institutions at Muddenahalli. Inspired by Swami's direct message to study the Upanishads, he first learnt Sanskrit and then studied the direct works of Adi Shankaracharya and Swami. Sincere perseverance led him to the reality of Aham Brahmasmi and He realized and experienced Swami's words: "I am God and so are you". He shares the import of the Upanishadic teachings with us in this series of articles.)*



(From this edition onwards, we begin a new series of articles in this section entitled Vedanta Praveshika: an Entrance to Vedanta. This is a guided discussion on the essence of Vedanta and outlines the main subjects of discussion.)

## 1. DISCRIMINATION OF THE SELF AND THE NON-SELF MOTIVE

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The Vedanta is a science that doesn't tell the fruit of the other world, it describes the experience that can be had in this birth itself; still the majority of the common people do not show any interest towards this Spiritual Science. The reason for this is as follows: Many people are not pleased to read the works of deliberation. Those who are eligible to deliberate upon also don't have the discrimination to know the main subjects of the Vedanta and also its sub-topics. Those who don't find taste in the deliberation are not eligible for the study of the Vedanta. At present we don't talk about them. Those who are really interested to know the Principle of the Self and also to experience It; and it is clear that they are in need of a chapter that deals with the topics of the Vedanta. For that purpose, Sri Shankara Bhagavat-Paada has composed Advaita Pancha Ratna, the Five Emeralds of the Advaita, a mini-chapter. This work is the explanation of that composition.

Main subjects of the Vedanta are as follows:

- i. The Real Truth is the One Brahman who doesn't have any second in Him.
- ii. In that Truth, self-hood and the world are imagined.
- iii. The Brahman, who is the Real Truth, is the Self of us all.

These three aspects are discussed in this work.

The learned people tell that the wealth of four expedients are essentially needed in order to experience the above three aspects. The four means are as follows:

1. Nityaa-anitya Viveka, the discrimination of the eternal and transient; 2. Eha-amutra-Phala-bhoga-Viraaga, passionless towards the enjoyment of fruits of the present world and that of the next world; 3. Shamaadi Shatka-sampatti, the wealth of six qualities like tranquility etc; and 4. Mumukshutva, the desire for freedom.

What is the nature of transient objects that are subjects to time? How does an eternal object that surpasses the time, exist? The ability to separate the eternal and the transient objects is Nityaa-anitya Viveka. Absence of craving for enjoyments of this world and that of the next world is Eha-amutra-Phala-bhoga-Viraaga. The one whose mind is planted in the enjoyment, he always thinks about sensual objects; and he never deliberates on the Reality. Therefore, this indifference to sensual enjoyment is simply needed for an aspirant-deliberator. The spiritual-investigator should have six qualities in his mind. These qualities are as follows: 1) Shama, mind control; 2) Dama, sense control; 3) Upa-rati, refraining from sensual enjoyment; 4) Samaadhaana, peace of mind; 5) Shraddhaa, faith; 6) Titikshaa, patience.

The one who is having this group of six qualities in his mind attains refinement of his mind; and he becomes eligible to deliberate. The fourth wealth of expedient is Mumukshutva, the desire for

freedom. At present, we are not in the state of real happiness; the scriptures and the sages tell that there is a possibility to have the highest happiness to the man. The man gets confidence in this statement and he longs to free himself from the pettiness and to attain the superlative happiness. This longing is called the Mumukshutva, the desire for freedom. Those who have this longing will certainly think about the source of happiness and about the method to attain the source. The Real Principle is the fountain of happiness and that Principle is our Self alone. The aspirants who listen to this preaching are thrilled. Without delaying, they wholly devote themselves in the deliberation of the Reality; and they enrich themselves with the qualities like discrimination etc. Anyhow, prior to the deliberation of the Reality, the aspirants should have these Four Expedients. It doesn't mean that this work is not useful for those who don't have the wealth of the expedients. They also can know the subjects of the Vedanta; they may possibly obtain the longing for freedom.

The Acharya has pointed out these Four Expedients in this chapter. (The Four Expedients are explained in Sarveshta-siddhi, the work published from the Karyalaya.) For, this work is not mainly the practice oriented one and it is mainly the theory-oriented one. Those who have already obtained the four expedients, they should have the deliberation of the Self and that of the non-self. Here, the Acharya has commenced this discrimination.

People don't have the discrimination of the Self and the non-self. Therefore, they don't have the knowledge that everyone is of the Form of the Supreme

Auspiciousness ( Shiva-svaroopaa ). The Self is the reality of 'I' and the non-self is not real. The Self means one's own form. Which is that? The non-self means that is not the Self, which is that? To have separately the knowledge of the Self and the non-self is called the discrimination. People don't have this discrimination; therefore, they consider that they are body, etc. they think: "I have taken birth to my parents. This is my date of birth. This is my qualification. This is my address. This is my business. I have a wife, children, relatives, friends, etc. One day I will be going to die. " Do such people get the wisdom that everyone is the Supreme Lord, who is eternally pure and free? They have a doubt: "The Lord has created this world. I stay here at a corner of the world for three days; and I will be going to depart from the world. How can I be the Lord?" This is a mis-understanding. Therefore, the one who is desirous of freedom should be freed from this misunderstanding. Hence, the first verse of the Advaita Pancha-Ratna, the Five Emeralds of Non-dualism deals with the method of the discrimination of the Self and the non-self.

Naaham Deho Nendriyaani-antarangam  
Naahankaarah Praana-vargo Na Buddhihi I  
Daaraapatya-kshetra-vittaadi doorah  
Saakshee

Nityah Pratyagaatmaa Shivoham II  
Meaning of words: Aham: I, Dehah: a body, Na: not, Indriyaani: organs of sense, Antarangam: mind, Na: not, Ahankaarah: egotism, Na: not, Paana-vargah: a group of vital airs, Na: not, Buddhihi: intelligence, Na: not, Daaraapatya-kshetra-vittaadi-doorah: I am away from wife, children, field and money. Aham: I, Saakshee: Witness, Nityah: Eternal, Pratyagaatma: the

Inner-most Self, Shiva: the Auspicious One, Shiva.

duties. These will be deliberated upon in detail in subsequent editions of Venugaanam.

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**DIFFERENT STROKES- ASTROLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY:**

**SHANI SHIGNAPUR- AN EYE OPENER**

**By KVRK Bhargav**

*(Bhargav is a student of Swami who after completing his B.Tech in Textile Engineering graduated with an MBA from the the Sri Sathya Sai University in 2001. Ever since, he has had the great fortune of waiting for Swami's direct guidance. He has been blessed with many interactions with Swami and he pursues astrology as a hobby to understand how it complements and dovetails spirituality. He shares his insights on how the planets are not causes of fear; rather they all serve the common goal of prodding man towards his spiritual destiny of Self Realization)*



It was 1:00 pm and the sun was hitting hard on the dusty town of Shani Shingnapur. As soon as our vehicle stopped, the usual hustle bustle of the shopkeepers selling different items to be offered to the lord Shani started. There were many arguments furnished in favour of doing a pooja like you will get a good job, you will get promotion, you will have a happy married life, all your physical afflictions will vanish, you will win over enemies and so on. But one argument which always did the rounds was that you will be freed from the torment of Lord Shani with a caution that inability to appease him,



having come here, will result in dire circumstances.

A shopkeeper approached me and advised me, "Bhau! do the best pooja possible. Having come all the way here don't miss this opportunity of mitigating the ill effects of sade sati."

One thing which caught my eye in the shop was a small black effigy, a figure with a fearful face, ravenous teeth and eyes gouging out. Being curious, I inquired about it, the shopkeeper replied, "This is an effigy of Shani, one has to take it and hang it upside down at the entrance of one's house to keep him in check and ward off all his evil effects." These were clear examples of how the shopkeepers were trying to take mileage out of the fear psychosis of the gullible pilgrims.





The effigies are hanging to the left in this pic

Shani Shingnapur is a small town around seventy kilometres from Shirdi in the hinterland of Maharashtra. It is a hub of sugarcane production in the country. It is a famous pilgrim spot for people to propitiate Lord Shani. Pilgrims come from all over to offer their prayers in this holy place.

Swami has time and again told us that Spirituality is not about worshipping out of fear but out of love for god( *Daiva Preeti, Papa Bheeti*). When we reached the temple it was a peculiar site. All clamoured to put oil and offerings to Shani deva so that their delays, problems and difficulties are alleviated. There was an emotion of fear writ very clearly on their faces. Shani was seen by all as the tormentor who has to be pacified to have a good and peaceful life. Everyone were eager to do their share of worship so that their obstacles are removed and they can get a shortcut to success.

There were few lessons which all missed out in the whole process.

A time when all were running to take shelter in the shade of the nearest tree or a shed constructed for this purpose and were trying to avoid walking on the burning floor,

Lord Shani was standing majestically in an open courtyard, inviting all to have his darshan and take his blessings. The shila of shani( svayambhu) which was found by the villagers is kept in the open without any temple constructed for it with explicit instructions from Lord Shani himself. The shila of Shani was open to sun, rain and all the travails of the nature. I felt that Lord



Shani is trying to give a subtle message to all, that the most important thing in life is to face the difficulties head on and not run away from them due to pusillanimity. He was suggesting that we learn the virtues tolerance, endurance and virtue of forbearance from him. He teaches that life should not be lived in fear but in a spirit of joyful acceptance of every situation, which we encounter in our life. As Swami very beautifully puts it, 'Life is a Challenge meet it.'

One more interesting observation is the lack of doors in the village. Doors in my opinion have a direct relation with our psyche. They stand for insecurity and fear which are contra-spiritual. A man who is not parochial and has an open mind will always

keep the doors of his mind open for all thoughts and ideas. He will be free from all mental blocks and prejudices, understanding the sensitivities of life around him. Lord Shani suggests this aspect by the custom of having no doors in this town.

As Mahatma Gandhi aptly puts it, 'I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides

and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any." I thus came back from Shani Shignapur with a better understanding that this most feared planet also teaches one that God alone is permanent and one must learn to accept with equanimity the ups and downs of life.

### THE OYSTER AND THE PEARL

Source: Unknown



There was once an oyster whose story I tell,

For oysters have feelings although they are so plain.

Now did he berate the harsh workings of fate

That brought him to such a deplorable state.

Did he curse at the government, cry for election  
And claim that the sea should have given him protection.

"No," he said to himself as he lay on a shell.

"Since I cannot remove it, I shall improve it."

Now the years have rolled around as the years always do;

And he came to his ultimate destiny- stew.

And the small given grain of sand that had bothered him so,

Was a beautiful pearl all richly aglow.

Now the tale has a moral- for isn't it grand

What an oyster can do with a grain of sand.

What couldn't we do if only we'd begin, With some of the things that get under our skin.

## SAI KRUSHNA MANDIR – CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Page | 11 With the Divine Blessings and grace of our Beloved Swami, the children’s home – Sai Krishna Mandir – is to be inaugurated on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2012. As part of this, the SKM construction team is working to ensure that the architectural drawings, foundation and construction are all moving along expected timelines. In this April update we share with you the Front View that has been developed by the expert architects and reviewed by the SKM Construction Team.



As of now, architectural drawings , soil testing and structural design have been completed. We are now in the process of engaging a civil contractor for the completion. T the same time, the design for the support staff and volunteers block has also been completed.

However, considering the total project cost of almost Rs 3.5 crore, the architects have advised us that we should have at least Rs 50-70 lakhs of ready funding before work on the foundation can begin. The construction team is meanwhile engaged in spreading the word on this project and interested people are coming forward. We are confident that, just as Swami’s bounteous blessings ensured the procurement of the land, Swami’s grace will crown our genuine intentions and His work will proceed rapidly.



**CHILDREN'S CORNER:**



**By Manjula- Class 3**



**By Shanti- Class 2**



**By Sanjay- Class 1**



**By Sudeep- Class 4**

## MASS MEDIA

By Sushmita

A class 6 student of Sharavathi Kannada Higher primary School at Hossadoddi.



The world is becoming closer and growing smaller. The countries are independent of one another. Important events are taking place in the world. We have got to be in touch with the events. The mass media, such as newspaper, radio, television etc. help us to aware of the events.

Newspapers provide all kinds of news which are helpful to the politicians, farmers, doctors, teachers, students, businessmen, unemployed people etc. We can listen to classical music, weather reports, sports commentaries, Hari kathas etc. on radio. Television is the most effective means because we can hear and also watch all the programmes taking place in the world.



**THE MOST MELODIOUS SOUND****SOURCE: Anonymous**

An old man was visiting a city for the first time in his life. He had grown up in a remote mountain village, worked hard raising his children, and was then enjoying his first visit to his children's modern homes. While being shown around the city, the old man heard a sound that stung his ears. He had never heard such an awful noise in his quiet mountain village. Following the grating sound back to its source, he came to a room in the back of a house where a small boy was practising on a violin.

'SCREECH! SCREECH!' came the discordant notes from the groaning violin. When he was told that it was called a 'violin', he decided he never wanted to hear such a horrible thing again.

The next day, in a different part of the city, the old man heard a beautiful sound, which seemed to caress his aged ears. He had never heard such an enchanting melody in his mountain valley. Following the delightful sound back to its source, he came to a room in the front of a house where an old lady, a maestro, was performing a sonata on a violin.

At once, the old man realised his mistake. The terrible sound that he had heard the previous day was not the fault of the violin, nor even the boy. It was just that the young man had yet to learn his instrument well.

With a wisdom reserved for the simple folk, the old man thought it was the same with religion. When we come across a religious enthusiast causing such strife with his beliefs, it is incorrect to blame the religion. It is just that the novice has yet to learn his religion well. When we come across a saint, a maestro of his religion, it is such a sweet encounter that it inspires us for many years, whatever their beliefs.

But that was not the end of the story.....

The third day, in a different part of the city, the old man heard another sound that surpassed in its beauty and purity even that of the maestro on her violin. What do you think that sound was?

It was a sound more beautiful than the cascade of the mountain stream in spring, than the autumn wind through the forest groves, or than the mountain birds singing after a heavy rain. It was even more beautiful than the silence in the mountain hollows on a still winter's night. What was that sound that moved the old man's heart more powerfully than anything before?

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It was a large orchestra playing a symphony.

The reason that it was, for the old man, the most beautiful sound in the world was, firstly, that every member of that orchestra was a maestro of their own instrument; and secondly, that they had further learned how to play together in harmony.

'May it be the same with religion,' the old man thought. 'Let each one of us learn through the lessons of life the soft heart of our beliefs. Let us each be a maestro of the love within our religion. Then, having learned our religion well, let us go further and learn how to play, like members of an orchestra, with other religions in harmony together!'

**That would be the most melodious sound!**