

Nina Foundation
Founder's Day – 9th March, 2015

The New Year always brings cheer to Nina Foundation! It begins with the Standard Chartered Marathon, a run bringing renewed hope to the SCI family. Then comes the much awaited Founder's Day, March 9, a spiritual sojourn celebrated in a unique way. Visiting new places of worship, beyond any man-made barriers of religion. Just to FEEL HIS presence in our lives. This darshan visit is, not only just an outing and a social interaction but is actually a spiritual calling to take a visit, for those who stop to listen to the sound of silence within.

Who says that this year's Monday, March 9, 2015 was a MANIC MONDAY? Oh no. In fact, SCI members, their family and friends who sought this darshan visit, thought it was a fabulous MAGIC MONDAY!! For, this year the untold blessing came in the form of a beautiful experience with a 'yatra' to Dharmakshetra in Andheri, which is where ShriSathyaSai Baba lives on. A visit to this destination brought immense joy to the many who answered Hisblessed call. It is they who left the kshetra with abundant peace within. This plan was possible only due to His Divine Grace that worked through the very humble, hospitable, amiable magnanimous Trustees, wonderful volunteers and devotees. Thank you Mr. K.B. Santhanam, Mr. Bhat, Mr. Vasant Nayampally, Mr. Vinod Narayan for the wonderful arrangements. Not to forget those silent, 'behind the scenes' *sevakaris* who had made the flawless, well timed functional arrangements, which thoughtfully included accessibility ramps, chairs and the Mahaprasad made and served by kitchen devotees- *Om Sahana vavatu, Sahana u Bhunaktu.....* Not to forget the TriDevishaving the melodious voice of kokilas who sang bhajans so beautifully with the accompaniment of the dholak player, without whom the bhajans would have been incomplete and insipid! For, when the strings of the 'veena' within our hearts pelt music out of devotion, is not the heart without the beat lifeless? This is exactly why our dholak 'PACE'KEEPER was so important!

This year's spiritual outing was organized by our Trustees, Dr. Dhruv Mehta and Vidya Shenoy. It was well supported, as usual, by Pooja Khedekar. Also like each year, members of Cheshire Home and Paraplegic Foundation also joined in this darshan visit to make it a great SCI celebration. Guests and SCI

friends accompanied by their family members, escorts and friends too made their day, galore! Also blessed were our extended family, charming ladies of AIWC (*Akhil Hind Mahila Parishad*) Santacruz (E) Branch without whom our OPD, Nirmaan that offers free service to those affected by SCI would not have been possible.

The morning started with melodious Sai Bhajans and Naam Japas by the melodious trio with Vidya's interlude of a Krishna Bhajan, *Hey Govind, Hey Gopal*' which asks Him to tide us all safely across the river of Life to the 'other shore'. After which, our Vidya took over, as usual, to handle and anchor the morning's flow.

Being Sankashti dedicated to Lord Ganesh, she began with invocations to Him, Lord Dattatreya, Vedavyas and the Gurus followed by asking for Grace of Shri Sathya Sai Baba. Thereafter she welcomed one and all with special mention of members of Nina Foundation, Cheshire Home and Paraplegic Foundation, AIWC (*Akhil Hind Mahila Parishad*) Santacruz (E) and definitely each and every SCI member who had come all the way.

Vidya started with a brief introduction of how the human body (*Pind*) is a replica of the Universe (*Brahmaand*). And added that Nature's five elements in the body are represented by the Chakras, viz., Mooladhar, Swadishthan, Manipura, Anahad, Vishuddha, Adnyaa and Sahasrar. And how God resides in our heart, the 'altar' in the 'a temple', our human body. She sang a beautiful Bhajan that describes exactly these thoughts.

This time though Vidya took the course of *Pravachan* in Hindi, she explained the meaning of SAI and Baba. Sai Baba is believed to be Shiva and Mata Parvati – Devi. He is one in all and all in one. He is the repository of all auspicious omens on this planet, a munificent donor of all sacred blessings, and Benevolence Incarnate. Sai Baba is an eliminator of evils, propeller of genius, promoter of achievements and saviours of devotees. He is Pragna Dham of Vishwa Mata, Gayatri Mata. Lord Sai is Father and Mother of and is there for all. "SAI" is made of two terms: – "SA" and "I":

"S(A)" □ meaning auspicious and Divine. *Saakaar. Sagunaroop-dhari*

"A(A)" □ meaning *AAEE* as in mother, Supreme Mother.

“I” □ symbolic representation of *Ishwar.SakshatIshwar*.

“Baba” □ meaning father.

In short, “Sai Baba” means “Divine Parents”. Literally “Sai” is taken from the Sanskrit term “Swami”, meaning Lord or Master and Baba means father or protector. So whole term mean or Heavenly Father, Protector or Master “. She gave a reference to the answer that Shri Swami Ramakrishna Paramhansa gave a disciple, Shri Master Maharaj, when he was asked “What does Sai mean?” He said, “ A *Siddha* who is a *Sthithapradnya*(who is not affected by anything or anyone).

She said how when the right time comes, our Guru ‘finds’ his student, steps into our lives and evolves the *shishya*. For which we have to do *Sadhana* and practice good deeds, unconditionally. How we need to go through stages of *Satsang*, *Nissangatvam*, *Nirmalatvam* that lead to *JeevanMukti* that can be achieved in Life as well.

She rounded off with the beautiful bhajan in Sanskrit “*Atmashatak*” by ShriAdiShankaracharya. It was a beautiful rendition that included *SaamudayikNamajapam*. All in the interactive audience joined in the chorus, “ *Shivohum, ShivohumSatchidanandohum*”.

Before inviting our SCI friend SambhajiJadhavof Cheshire Home to sing a bhajan, Vidya introduced him as a very fine creative artist, as the one who writes poetry, who sings and also paints cards. Many bought these cards made by him. This truly did make him feel very happy and proud of his achievements. God Bless you! May you fill colours in your life too, Sambhaji!

Vidya invited Dr. Dhruv Mehta, our Trustee to speak about Nina Foundation, its growth and its vista of activities, the OPD services of our Doctor Trustees and their Team, that are given to the needy and those below the poverty line, totally free of cost. He mentioned how fruitful this venture has been with SCI friends coming from far off villages. They are all given expert medical advice coupled with counseling by our Trustees and Team which goes a long way in their rehabilitation.

A wonderful *Arti* was arranged, for which all had a prized chance to do the *arti* individually. A disciplined organized queue enabled all to do so at their own pace. After which envelopes containing ShriSatyaSai Baba's photo and Udi were distributed to one and all. This was followed by blessed MAHAPRASAD.

Needless to say, many pictures were taken to enable all to 'go down memory lane' whenever they wanted to. Each wished the other a 'soulful' goodbye and thus ended yet another Founder's Day with a beautiful epilogue.