



Sri Sathya Sai International Organization

## PLANTING TREES FOR THE WORLD AND EACH OF US

### **P**lanting trees helps restore a healthy climate

Our excessive demands on Nature, especially fossil fuel burning and loss of forests, have disrupted the climate that served us well for millennia. The result is excessive heat, wildfires, drought, stronger storms, and more. We need to work *with* Nature to put back what we have taken away and restore conditions for a healthy climate. Planting trees is an integral part of this effort.

### **P**lanting trees also helps us grow into better human beings

Through planting trees, we can also sow the seeds of Love, Nonviolence, Peace, Truth, and Right Action that help us live in greater harmony with each other and the Earth.

*“The world’s forests are a shared stolen treasure that we must put back for our children’s future.”* Desmond Tutu

### **P**lanting the seed of Truth

When we live in Truth, our thoughts, words and deeds are in harmony. We not only think and speak about protecting the planet, we *do* so.

*“Truth is one’s real nature, and when you are yourself, there comes a great flood of joy welling up within you.”*

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Through Truth we know it is within our power to transform into selfless, human beings, feeling great joy when we work in unity planting trees for the benefit of all.

*“A man is ethical only when life, as such, is sacred to him, that of plants and animals as that of his fellow men, and when he devotes himself helpfully to all life that is in need of help.”* Albert Schweitzer

From the seeds of Truth, which trees are destined to express, they grow as Nature intended in roots, leaves, trunk, and crown, fostering life in manifold ways. From them, we learn to grow into kind and helpful souls — the Truth of what Nature intended for us.

*“The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn.”* Ralph Waldo Emerson

### **G**rowing Right Action

*“I dream of our vast deserts, of our forests, of all our great wildernesses. We must never forget that it is our duty to protect this environment.”* Nelson Mandela

**H**uman beings have a great capacity to work *with* Nature. But when our excessive demands cause harm instead, we must work to restore the natural systems we disrupted. It is only by working *in tune* with Nature that Nature will be able to continue meeting our needs.

*Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed.*  
Mahatma Gandhi

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*"I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees. I speak for the trees for the trees have no tongues."* Dr. Seuss

**W**e humans have tongues to speak, legs to move, arms and hands to work, and hearts that allow us to use all these in a compassionate way. We simply need to do what is Right, including not just planting trees but protecting existing forests as well.

## *F*ostering Love

A forest of trees is an interconnected, multi-specie family communicating and caring for one another through a broad communication and nutrient exchange network underground. How can this be anything but an expression of Love and harmony?

*"I frequently tramped eight or ten miles through the deepest snow to keep an appointment with a beech tree, or a yellow birch, or an old acquaintance among the pines."* Henry David Thoreau

Such kinship with trees as embodiments of Love and harmony brings us closer to

our inner self where these same qualities dwell. We enter a sphere of silence and stillness amidst a forest, and Peace prevails.

*"Ultimately, the decision to save the environment must come from the human heart. The key point is a call for a genuine sense of universal responsibility that is based on love, compassion, and clear awareness."* Dalai Lama

When we develop a kinship with Nature, we see her as one who nurtures us both in her beauty and her gifts.

How can we not give back? How can we not love and serve her well?

## ● *M*aturing into Peace

*"Trees teach the lesson of sacrifice in that they not only bear fruits while they are alive, but also give away their body to be used as firewood once the life goes out of them. Amongst teachers, a tree is the greatest."*  
Sri Sathya Sai Baba

**T**rees help maintain the water cycle, provide vital oxygen while absorbing carbon, give shade, shelter, fruit, nuts, firewood, and more without asking for anything in return. They selflessly serve in a state of Peace, no matter what hardship comes their way, and thereby serve as role models for us.

*"Until we extend our circle of compassion to all living things, humanity will not find peace."* Albert Schweitzer

In planting trees, and learning from them, we may also experience the Peace that allows us to endure hardship and live in greater harmony with one another and

in greater harmony with one another and the Earth.

## **C**ultivating Nonviolence

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**T**rees exist in the eternal stillness of Peace, are Nonviolent to other living beings and the environment, and give unconditional Love through their self-sacrifice and generous service. May we learn from them and serve them as much as they have served us.

*“What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another.”*

Mahatma Gandhi

**W**hen we plant and protect trees, we cultivate forests and good relations with the entire world family. Such forests serve life in a Non-violent way without distinction of species, country, race, class, or religion. They serve as beacons of Nonviolence, role models for us all.

For more information:

<https://www.sathyasai.org/environmental-sustainability>

