

The Hill Was Already Holy.

Guruji Simply Said Yes.

A personal account by Smt. K. Sai Sudha, TadEkam Sevaka, Vijayawada

Written shortly after the Pratishtha, Tirumalayapalem, East Godavari

I am still trembling as I write this. My hands are not fully steady. The Homa smoke is still in my hair, the sound of the Vedic recitations still in my ears, and the image of Guruji sitting in stillness during the Pratishtha — that image I do not think will ever leave me.

I need to write this down now, before the ordinary world rushes back in and I begin to doubt what I witnessed. Before I start explaining it away. Before the miracle becomes a memory and the memory becomes a story and the story loses the feeling that I am holding inside me right now like a lamp cupped against the wind.

Let me start from the beginning. Though I am not sure where the beginning is. Because looking back, it feels as though Tirumalayapalem was always waiting for us — and we were always being walked toward it, one step at a time, without knowing.

The Day We Walked Into Tirumalayapalem

It started as a normal day of seva. We were doing our village rounds in the Jaggampeta region — Sri Krishna Manohara Rao ji, myself, and our small

team. We had done this many times in Kotturu, in Kakinada, in village after village across this district. You show up. You listen. You see what is needed. You go back to Guruji and report.

But when we entered Tirumalayapalem, something happened that I still cannot explain rationally. The village seemed to be expecting us. Not just politely expecting, the way villages sometimes do when they hear outsiders are coming. But expecting us the way you expect someone you have been praying for.

Before we had even introduced ourselves properly, the entire village had assembled. I mean this literally — every family, elders, children, young men, women. And instead of speaking, they pointed. Quietly. Together. Toward a hill at the edge of the village.

"He lives there," one elder said. His voice was completely calm. No performance. No drama. The way you tell someone about a family member who lives next door.

Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy. On that hill. For generations.

What They Told Us

Then came the stories. And I, who have heard many stories in many villages, found myself unable to take notes. I just listened.

A child recovered from a fever that had terrified the family for weeks — on the night the father had gone to the hill and prayed. A farmer whose crops had failed for two consecutive years — he had sat on that hill one evening and simply wept, and the next season his fields had come back. A woman whose husband had returned safely from a distant city where he had gone for work and not been heard from — she had prayed on that hill and he had walked through her door the next morning.

Small miracles. Personal miracles. The kind that do not make headlines and do not need to. The kind that live inside families for generations, passed down the way sacred knowledge is passed down — quietly, carefully, to those who will receive them with the right heart.

And then Sri Srinivas Garu spoke.

He had nearly died. A medical condition the doctors could not fully diagnose or control had brought him to a point where his family had quietly begun to prepare for the worst. He knew this. And in that hospital room, he had made a promise to the deity on the hill — the one he had grown up looking at from his doorstep — that if he was given his life back, he would build Him a proper home.

He was sitting before us. Alive. Well. And now, he said softly, he had found us. Because Guruji would know how to keep the promise he could not keep alone.

I looked at Madhavi. I looked at the others. None of us said a word.

The Question That Silenced the Village

When we brought all of this back to Guruji, I watched his face as he listened. That face I have come to know so well over these years of seva — the face that gives nothing away until it gives everything. He asked a few quiet questions. He wanted to understand the land, the deity, the history, the community.

And then he asked the one question that I now understand was the real question:

“Who will take responsibility for the temple after it is built?”

He has asked this before — in other villages, in other contexts. I have come to understand that for Guruji, this is not an administrative question. It is a spiritual one. A temple without seva is not a temple. It is a structure. The deity does not dwell in structures. The deity dwells in devotion.

When we relayed the question to the village, what happened moved me beyond what I can put into words. There was no hesitation. No consultation. No looks exchanged between community elders while the rest waited. Every single family — in one voice, in one breath — pledged a rotating day of seva. They promised the rituals would never stop, even without a priest. They said: we will do it ourselves, with our own hands, on our own turns, without fail.

I have been in rooms where promises are made. I have learned, doing seva in difficult places, to listen not just to the words but to the silence beneath them. There was no hollow echo in that silence. These people had been keeping faith with this deity for generations without a temple. They did not need one to believe. They were building one out of gratitude, not need.

When I told Guruji what they had said, he was quiet for a moment. Then he smiled — that particular smile of his that I have come to recognise as the moment he has received his own confirmation from somewhere deeper than us.

He said yes.

What We Built Together

I will not pretend the work was easy. The logistics of constructing a temple on a hill in a small East Godavari village, sourcing the right stone, finding the right sculptors, coordinating the ceremonies — there were days of difficulty, of course there were. That is seva. That is how you know it is real.

TadEkam Foundation invested approximately ₹25 lakhs. But what I want to say, and what I want every sadhak who reads this to understand, is that Guruji did not just approve the funds and stand aside. He contributed personally from his own resources — over and above the Foundation's support. When I learnt this, I had to sit down quietly for a few minutes.

This man who teaches us non-attachment. This man who tells us the world is maya. He put his own money into a village temple in East Godavari because he believed — completely, without reservation — that temples are not stone and mortar. They are energy centres. Living, breathing, consecrated channels of divine grace. And he was not willing for this one to be built with even a rupee of hesitation.

I think about that often.

The Priests from Tirumala and the Days I Will Never Forget

Sixteen priests came from Tirumala.

Let me sit with that sentence for a moment, because I want you to feel what I felt when I saw them arrive. Sixteen priests from Tirumala — the abode of the Lord of the Seven Hills, one of the holiest and most sacred shrines in all of Bharat — had come to consecrate a temple in a small village that most maps do not show. Because Guruji had asked. Because the faith of a community deserved nothing less.

The villagers received them the way I have only read about in our shastras — with a completeness of love and service that made the priests themselves visibly moved. Accommodation, food, everything — the families took turns in an unbroken chain of hospitality that lasted the entire duration of the ceremonies.

The Homams and Yagnas began. The Vedic recitations filled the air. I have been present at many sacred ceremonies in my years with TadEkam, but I had never felt the air change the way it changed in Tirumalayapalem during those days. I am not being poetic. I mean something is literally different in a place where this level of concentrated Vedic energy is being released. It changes the quality of the silence between sounds. It changes the quality of the light.

Guruji was present throughout. And I watched him — I could not stop watching him. He was not the organiser overseeing an event. He was not even the Guru blessing a ceremony. He was a devotee. Completely absorbed. Completely still. Completely there.

That is the teaching I received in Tirumalayapalem. Not from the priests, not from the rituals, not even from the beauty of the newly consecrated deity. From watching Guruji be fully, completely, unreservedly present in the presence of the divine.

I understood then, in a way I had not fully understood before, why we call this work Sewa Bhi Sadhna. Why we say service is also spiritual practice. Because on that hill in that moment, I was not a coordinator or a logistics manager or a Foundation representative. I was a sadhak. And the seva had brought me here.

After the Pratishtha

I am writing this just days after the consecration. The priests have returned to Tirumala. Guruji has returned to Pune. Our team has dispersed to our various lives and various roles.

But the temple stands. Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy is home.

And the villagers — I received a message this morning. The rituals were performed on time today. By a family on their first assigned seva day. Without being asked. Without a reminder. Without a priest needing to be present.

They kept their word. Of course they did.

I think about Srinivas Garu, walking out of that hospital, looking up at the hill, knowing he had a promise to keep. I think about that elder who simply pointed and said: he lives there. I think about Guruji sitting in stillness during the Pratishtha, his presence making the sacred more sacred.

And I think: this is why I do this work. Not to solve problems, though we solve them. Not to build things, though we build them. But for moments like this — when a community's faith and a Guru's grace and a small team's willingness to show up all converge in one place, and something is born that will outlast all of us.

The villagers are already calling it a wish-fulfilling temple. Some call it the Second Simhachalam. I do not know about any of that. I only know what I felt standing on that hill when the consecration was complete.

I felt that the channel was open.

That is all I know. That is enough.

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