



Homages from Non-GBC Sannyāsīs

Bhakti Bṛhat Bhāgavata Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances in the most merciful dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace. All glories to your International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for continuing to allow me to be in the wonderful and purifying association of your disciples and granddisciples in your International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

During the course of this past year, some of your disciples and granddisciples exposed within me my state of consciousness, as you have described:

One may make a show of devotional service like the *prākṛta-sahajiyās*, or one may try to support his philosophy by joining some caste or identifying himself with a certain dynasty, claiming a monopoly on spiritual advancement. Thus with the support of family tradition, one may become a pseudo *guru*, or so-called spiritual master. . . . Also, one may become a cheap Vaiṣṇava by trying to chant in a secluded place for material adoration. . . . Just to cheat some innocent people, one makes a show of advanced spiritual life and becomes known as a *sādhū*, *mahātmā* or religious person. All this means that the so-called devotee has become victimized by all these unwanted creepers and that the real creeper, the *bhakti-latā*, has been stunted. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 19.160, purport]

My path is very difficult. I am blind, and my feet are slipping again and again. Therefore, may the saints help me by granting me the stick of their mercy as my support. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 1.2].

Please bless me to improve so that I may better serve your disciples and granddisciples in your International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

The unworthy servant of your servants,

Bhakti Bṛhat Bhāgavata Swami

Bhakti Rāghava Swami

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-sālākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

“I was born in the darkness of ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torchlight of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him.”

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī-guruṁ dīna-tāraṇam*

Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā 2011

“By the mercy of the *guru*, even a dumb man can become the greatest orator, and even a lame man can cross mountains. I offer my obeisances to Śrī Guru, the savior of the fallen.”

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this, your 115th appearance anniversary.

I am writing this homage on Śrī Rāma-navamī, and since early morning I have been hearing musical bands parading the streets of Chirala, commemorating the historical event of Lord Rāmacandra’s divine appearance in this material world some two million years ago. In the last week or so I have been conducting a tour of Andhra Pradesh and have come across so many temples of Lord Rāma and Hanumānījī. Although these personalities appeared such a long time back, they are still fondly remembered and worshiped by those sincere devotees who long to see the Vedic way of life once again become established.

Although we are followers of Lord Kṛṣṇa, you have taught us the importance of Lord Rāmacandra, especially in his exemplary role and behavior as an ideal husband and ideal king. In today’s society, we are sadly lacking such good leaders, and therefore the whole situation has become extremely chaotic and degraded. When I reflect on the vast mission you have left us, in particular the aspect of establishing a *daiva-varṇāśrama* society, I begin to understand how *kṣatriyas* are so much needed to help restore society to its sane position. But where are such *kṣatriyas* today?

Although you played the role of an ideal spiritual leader overseeing the development of a worldwide society of Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees, you also demonstrated many of the qualities of a *kṣatriya* by boldly and fearlessly preaching the message of Lord Caitanya, by strongly protecting the assets of your fledgling ISKCON society, and by taking all risks for spreading the *saṅkīrtana* mission of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. You traveled untiringly across the globe some fourteen times within eleven years just to bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness to as many people as possible. Is it possible that some of your followers must take up the role of such needed *kṣatriyas* to help bring about the needed changes in society?

You wonderfully displayed the qualities of a pure Vaiṣṇava, which are nicely described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.25.21):

*titikṣavaḥ kārūṇikāḥ suhrdaḥ sarva-dehinām
ajāta-śatravaḥ śāntāḥ sādhaḥ sādhu-bhūṣaṇāḥ*

“The symptoms of a *sādhu* are that he is tolerant, merciful, and friendly to all living entities. He has no enemies, he is peaceful, he abides by the scriptures, and all his characteristics are sublime.”

You have left us a legacy which is difficult to grasp and fathom, a task which is not easy to accomplish, that of bringing about a total overhaul in society and reverting to the standard and sane way of living.

Every day when I perform my *pūjā* to my *śālagrāma-śilā*, I hear a lecture by Your Divine Grace. It has become a daily routine. I always look forward to hearing your classes, for they are full of wit and wisdom. You were always so spontaneous in your dealings with your disciples, so simple in your explanations, and so natural in expressing your sentiments. You showed no artificiality or formality in dealing with whomever you met. Because of such spontaneous dealings, all based on your purity of heart and without any trace of duplicity, you conquered the hearts of so many conditioned souls, myself included. I see that you continue to win over thousands upon thousands of conditioned souls even today through your teachings. In this way you remain fully present in your *vāṇī*, and the whole world is benefited by your divine presence.

My humble request is that you kindly keep me engaged in your service life after life. Every single day I hear your soothing voice and take your divine *darśana*. I need your kind blessings to continue serving. Please help reveal the different aspects of your mission to more and more devotees, for there is an urgent need to spread your mission all over the world.

Kindly forgive my many shortcomings and mistakes. Kindly allow me to keep the good association of your sincere followers. Kindly shower your mercy so that I may assist you in some meager way to help spread the mission of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and that of your Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

Homages from Non-GBC Sannyāsīs

I pray that I may always remain engaged in your devotional service regardless of what obstacles may come my way. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Without you this life would be totally meaningless.

Your servant,

Bhakti Rāghava Swami

Bhaktisiddhānta Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga!

Another year passes, just a flash within eternal time, and another moment and opportunity for devotional service is at hand by your grace and blessings, which empower your dependents. It is amazing to see that, as we follow your wake, however small our ripples of service are in comparison, the goal of unalloyed *kṛṣṇa-prema* is getting closer and closer.

As we serve on this plane, our offering to the Absolute is recorded on the next, and now we are witnessing how those who are near and dear to you are transiting from this realm to the next with greater frequency. Of course, there is great joy in knowing that they are more intimately united with you and your associates, but due to our present situation we feel a great loss, being left behind in separation.

Apart from the inconceivable feats Kṛṣṇa has empowered you to perform—the establishment of a worldwide society, including temples, farm communities, preaching centers and projects, congregations, and an “international collective,” all nourished by your translation work and book distribution—we are realizing more and more that the snowballing exit of elevated souls is one of the greatest “lessons of sobriety” you have given us, a repetitive vision of “the final lesson,” which we must each face. Your trainings in service encourage the “shoot for the rhino” ethic, preparing one and all to take real shelter of Them, inviting a natural transition, a return to spiritual form, from caterpillar to butterfly.

By your grace you have set into motion a culture of personal relations, of caring for one another, which is the needed oil in the machinery of realistic expansion. This is the greatest catalyst and real preparation for becoming willing participants in the collective effort to fulfill Kṛṣṇa’s plan: not just a quest for personal freedom but the inclusion of others also. This is what is truly needed and surely most pleasing to you.

Apart from all the successful exiting, as we remain behind I pray that I may become your instrument in the above, someday becoming qualified to instill pure *bhakti* in the hearts of others while remaining aloof from all obstacles to attaining that end. I beg for that opportunity and your blessings in this light, a consolation in our present surroundings.

Best wishes.

Your servant,

Bhaktisiddhānta Swami

Bhakti Sundar Goswami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please allow me to take shelter at your lotus feet, which are the abode of pure *bhakti*.

You once said that if one single person in ISKCON becomes self-realized—i.e., becomes a pure devotee—you would consider your mission a success. So every time a devotee becomes self-realized, that is a success for you. We know it's not easy, but if we have the conviction and determination to do or die to please you, then we will get all help from Kṛṣṇa. Since pure devotional service begins after liberation from material entanglement, it's our utmost duty to you to reach that *brahma-bhūta* stage and remain there for good. We, the soul, shall take control of the lower self all the time by engaging our body and mind constantly in *bhakti*. Then we can aspire for higher realization in our relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

When you were a child, your father would ask the visiting sādhus to bless you so that you would become a servant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. By broadcasting Her glories and Her supremely wonderful love for Kṛṣṇa, which Śrī Gaura revealed to the world, you are the most merciful servant of Rādhārāṇī.

When performing the *līlā* of your illness in Vṛndāvana, you expressed your desire to go to Govardhana. Your desire apparently wasn't fulfilled due to the devotees' worries about your health, but in my humble understanding you may not have been speaking only about going there physically, but you also wanted to go there in your eternal *svatūpa*. Once your Guru Mahārāja, speaking about his eternal service, said that he felt unqualified to reside at Rādhā-kuṇḍa, the place of residence of his gurus, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Gaura Kīśora Dāsa Bābājī. He said that he would stay at Govardhana and go to Rādhā-kuṇḍa just to assist them in their service to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. So you desired to go to Govardhana not only to perform *parikramā* but also, in my opinion, to assist your Guru Mahārāja in his eternal service to the divine couple.

I pray that one day by your mercy I will be able to aspire to assist you in your eternal *līlā* by taking shelter as a speck of dust at Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

Your lowly and undeserving servant,

Bhakti Sundar Goswami

Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Mahārāja

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace. All glories to Your unlimited mercy on the conditioned souls of this Kali-yuga.

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For the last two months I have been residing in Māyāpur, studying the section of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describing the history of Dhruva Mahārāja. We heard how Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would hear this narration again and again from the mouth of Gadādhara Paṇḍita. While we take pleasure in hearing of Dhruva Mahārāja, we also derive great pleasure in hearing of your activities. I therefore feel drawn to compare Dhruva Mahārāja's activities with your own awesome pastimes.

Dhruva Mahārāja left his home to enter the forest and underwent great austerities while still a mere child only five years old, but he conquered the Supreme Lord by his extraordinary devotion and austerities. In contrast, Your Divine Grace waited until later in life to take up your preaching mission and conquer the Lord. However, you told us that throughout your life there was never a moment when you forgot Kṛṣṇa. We also remember how you performed Ratha-yātrā as a child and later, as a *grhastha*, actively served your spiritual master by raising funds and introducing interested persons to the Gauḍiya Maṭha.

When a Yakṣa killed Dhruva Mahārāja's brother, Dhruva made war on the Yakṣas and killed them in large numbers. When you saw the conditioned souls suffering under the spell of the illusory energy, you made war on *māyā* and gave us a new life in the shade of Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

It was Dhruva Mahārāja's mother Sunīti who instructed him to go and find God. Later, when he was about to be transported to Vaikuṇṭha, he remembered his mother and wanted to make sure she was also going there. The Lord could understand Dhruva's desire and fulfilled it. Dhruva then saw his mother boarding another Vaikuṇṭha aircraft. In the same way, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you desired a better life for all us conditioned souls, and the Lord, knowing your desire, fulfilled it.

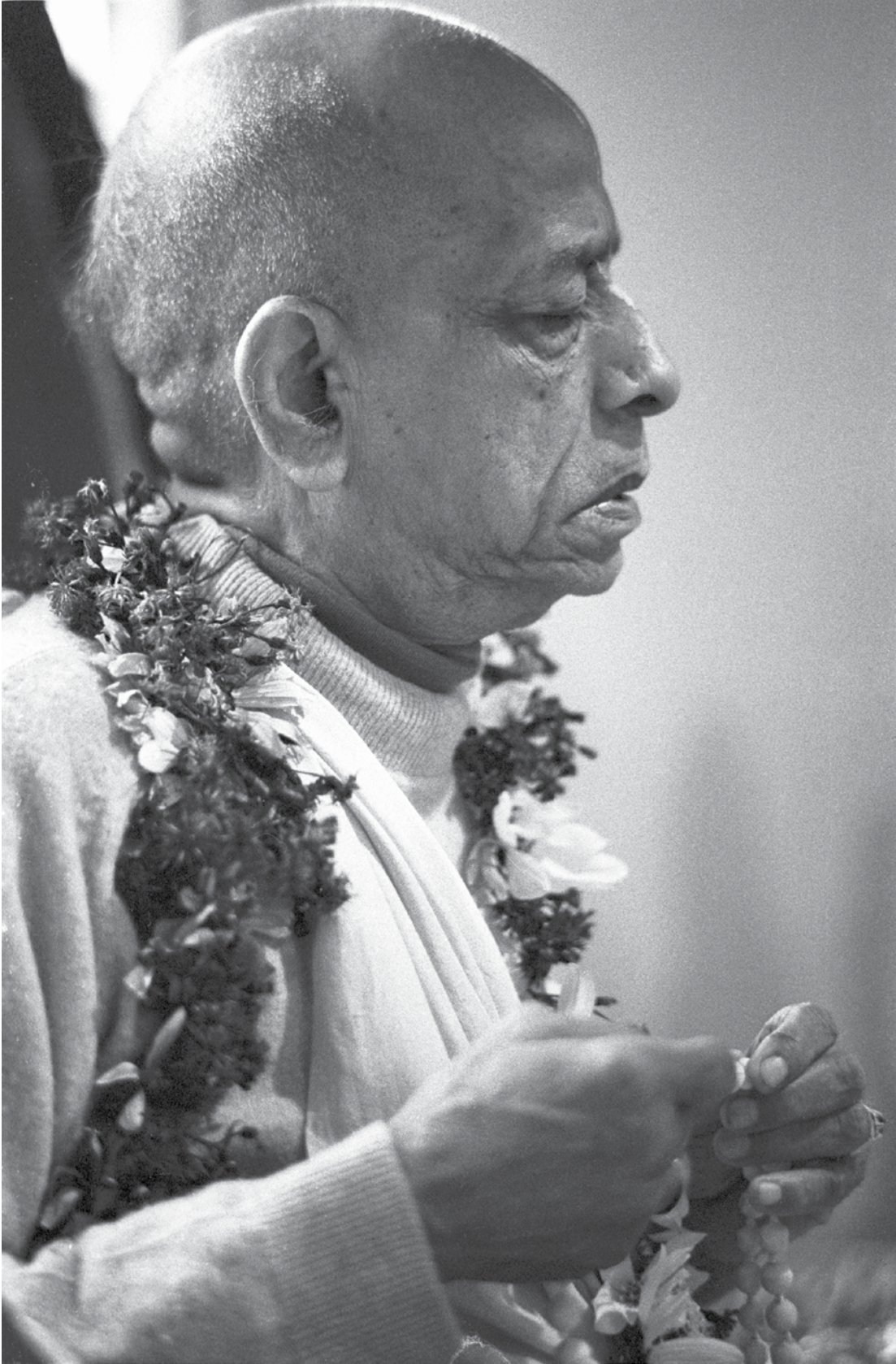
In your purport to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verse describing this incident (4.12.33), you write, "Sometimes I think that even though I am crippled in many ways, if one of my disciples becomes as strong as Dhruva Mahārāja, then he will be able to carry me with him to Vaikuṇṭhaloka." Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are unique in your humility. You are the hero and the one who can conquer the Lord, but you look to your disciples and ask them to help you.

In the concluding verse of the *dhruva-carita* it is said, "The transcendental activities of Dhruva Mahārāja are well known all over the world, and they are very pure." In the purport of this verse you state, "As the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is everlastingly famous, so the reputation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotee is also everlasting." Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are also known all over the world through your temples and your books, and also through your disciples' books describing your activities. Every day thousands visit your *samādhi* in Māyāpur, and as the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium rises we are sure that your fame will continue to increase.

I feel so fortunate to have been able to witness your glorious acts. I heard you lecture in our temples in London, New York, Dallas, New Delhi, Vṛndāvana, Kolkata, Māyāpur, and Mumbai. I went on walks with you. I chanted the *mahā-mantra* for you as you lay resting in your room in Juhu. Once in London I was allowed to place a garland of flowers around your divine neck, and once during *guru-pūjā* at the Kolkata temple I even dared to take the dust from your lotus feet and place it on my head. It is said that a moment with a pure devotee is sufficient to make one's life perfect. Still, I feel unfortunate because I have failed to properly serve you. I see many others doing wonderful things for your pleasure, but I am useless. I am like a duck in the midst of so many swans. I can understand that I am being punished by Yamarāja for my past sins. Maybe in my coming crores of births I will somehow be able to take proper advantage of your association and be engaged in your service.

Begging to remain in your service,

Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Mahārāja



Bhakti Vikāsa Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
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Śrīla Prabhupāda, only a fool would consider you anything less than a topmost perfect *paramahansa*, an ambassador from the spiritual world, a personal representative of Kṛṣṇa. For one blessed with the eyes to see, everything about you evidences your extraordinary love for Kṛṣṇa. As is profusely and lovingly described in this Vyāsa-pūjā book, you are abundantly decorated with all the symptoms of a pure devotee.

Yet you defy the pathetic, disgusting stereotype of a saintly person who wears a dreamy smile and is perpetually “nice.” Your unfathomable love for Kṛṣṇa is manifest not simply by talking of love, compassion, and other such exalted virtues, but more realistically in your down-to-earth, service-oriented example—which defies the listlessness of so-called *premī-bhaktas*, whose reputations rest on their narrating of *gopī-līlās*, bathing in Rādhā-kunḍa, and other such esoterica. You demonstrated in practice how a devotee who loves Kṛṣṇa strives against all opposition to establish His glories in this world. You did not care for reputation; you simply wanted to serve the order of your guru. Anyone who reads your books can readily understand that you are not at all sentimental, vague, or wishy-washy. You are a natural, unaffected saint, not an actor dancing according to the expectations of mindless people. Indeed, your profound compassion for the rebellious *jīvas* often manifested as extraordinarily forceful attacks upon their foolishness and rascaldom.

Among the many transcendental characteristics that distinguish you as the *jagad-guru* (Kṛṣṇa’s selected emissary to this world), in my mind one towers above all: your unmitigated, uncompromisable commitment to defeat the enemies of your beloved Kṛṣṇa. You especially targeted the *nirviśeṣa-vādīs*, who attempt to belittle Kṛṣṇa by denying that He is categorically superior, in every respect, to all other living beings (*nirviśeṣa* literally means “not special”), who claim latent or already attained parity with Kṛṣṇa, and whose mystic-sounding ambiguities are extolled as realized spirituality by persons so overwhelmingly insincere as to be attracted to such charlatans.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, that you left Vṛndāvana to contest Māyāvāda amid the nastiness of America is a more convincing testimony to your love for Kṛṣṇa than had you stayed in Vṛndāvana. Your *praṇāma-mantra*, composed by yourself, describes what you considered to be the essence of your mission: service to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī (*sārasvate deve*) on this plane (*bhū-tale*) by preaching the message of Caitanya Mahāprabhu (*gaura-vāñī*) and thus saving (*tāriṇe*) the Western countries (*pāścātya-deśa*) from impersonalism and voidism (*nirviśeṣa-sūnyavāda*). Such extraordinary activities could be performed only by a devotee who is exceptionally dear to Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-preṣṭha*).

In accord with your mission, and pertinent to the arena and ethos of your service, you emphasized and exemplified more the need to fight for Kṛṣṇa than to discuss His *rāsa-līlā*. For me, one particular anecdote (narrated by Hayagrīva Dāsa in *The Hare Krishna Explosion*) encapsulates your intense devotion to Kṛṣṇa as manifested in *vīra-rasa*.

In 1966, during one of your classes at 26 Second Avenue, after you had criticized Dr. Radhakrishnan’s comment that it is not to the personal Kṛṣṇa that we must surrender but to “the unborn, beginningless, eternal who speaks through Kṛṣṇa,” you added, “This Māyāvādī philosophy is worse than atheism.” Thereupon Keith, the Mott Street denim-clad “guru” (later initiated as Kīrtanānanda Dāsa), launched a long spiel in defense of Dr. Radhakrishnan and Māyāvāda. He rambled on about the “Self and the One Mind,” quoting Śāṅkara and Huang Po, Buddha and Christ, Spinoza and St. Paul, while you, “Swamiji,” sat on the dais, your complexion turning red. After Keith finally wound down, you asked him:

“So, you have understood what we have been saying—that Kṛṣṇa is God?”

“Yes,” Keith says.

“And that worship is due God?”

“Yes,” Keith says.

Suddenly Swamiji, red and furious, stands up. “Then why do you want to take it away from Kṛṣṇa?” he roars, shaking the small storefront. “It’s Kṛṣṇa! It’s Kṛṣṇa!” He slams his hand down on the lectern. “It’s no unborn within Kṛṣṇa! It’s Kṛṣṇa!” We all sit stunned, as if a lion had pounced on the dais. “Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is directly telling Arjuna, ‘To Me. Worship Me.’ And Dr. Radhakrishnan says that it is not to the person Kṛṣṇa but to some void. Just see what a nonsense rascal! Do you want to worship some unborn void instead of Kṛṣṇa? Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth. His body, mind, and self are absolute. And He says, ‘Think of Me, be devoted to Me, worship Me.’ And even Śaṅkara says, *bhaja govindam, bhaja govindam, bhaja govindam*: ‘Worship Govinda, worship Govinda, worship Govinda. Your nonsense will not save you at death!’ And yet this rascal wants to take it away from Kṛṣṇa. Do you want to follow such a rascal? Kṛṣṇa says, ‘Worship Me.’ Do you not understand? Then why are you saying it is not to Kṛṣṇa? Why? Why not to Kṛṣṇa?” . . .

[Next morning] “We are declaring war,” Swamiji says. “War on *māyā*.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by declaring war in the storefront, you risked losing your fledgling flock, the only followers (if at that stage they could be considered followers) that you had after several months in America. But you could not brook Māyāvāda. And for that reason Kṛṣṇa was to bless you most extraordinarily.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please enlist me in your army, without an option to retire. I beg for the benediction to be eternally engaged in your mission. May I be prepared to go anywhere throughout the universe—tolerating the difficulties of heat, cold, hunger, thirst, unpopularity, persecution, or whatever the material energy may throw at me—always happy to follow your orders, knowing that by doing so, Kṛṣṇa will be pleased, and that hence there is nothing better for me to do. Of course, words like these are easy to state yet difficult to fulfill. If I could actually pray in that way from within my heart and be unhesitatingly ready to do anything and everything to serve you under all circumstances, then I might qualify as your genuine servant.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my words are insufficient to praise you or to in any way approximate a sufficient portrayal of your innumerable divine qualities. Even if I were millions of times more pure and intelligent, I could not sufficiently extol you, for your glories are immeasurable. Nonetheless, I offer this with love—which also is a gift that you nurtured within us. So kindly accept it. Please uplift me and bestow upon me the qualification to finally be accepted as your eternal servant.

The foolish Bhakti Vikāsa Swami

Bhakti Vinoda Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

This is the first Vyāsa-pūjā offering I am writing for Your Divine Grace since being given *sannyāsa* in 2009 by my beloved *gurudeva*, His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami. I am still getting adjusted to my new *āśrama* and its associated duties, while also meditating deeply on my commitment to preaching boldly and spreading the Kṛṣṇa conscious message widely. The new assignment is no doubt exciting and also helps me to deeply reflect on my fortunate association with guru and Kṛṣṇa.

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Quite often, in dire times, I get ample encouragement from reflecting on the life of Your Divine Grace and the trials and tribulations you withstood to promote the message of Lord Caitanya successfully. I feel very intimately connected with you when I read your purports and remember your glorious life of sacrifice in pure devotion for the betterment of humanity.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, regarding you as my affectionate spiritual grandfather, I seek your blessings to push forward your cause in Kerala, the land of Śaṅkarācārya, where I have been asked to serve. Although the population here is a strange mix of Māyāvādīs, intellectual wranglers, Communists, Christians, and Muslims, who sometimes fight with one another like sharks in a pool, I am hopeful that the intelligentsia will read your *Bhāgavatam* purports, get attracted to the simple prescription of Lord Caitanya, and find relief from the bane of mental speculation.

For your pleasure, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we just published the first and second cantos of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in the Malayalam language. Six other new titles were also published this year, along with eight issues of our new *Back-to-Godhead*-like magazine, *Bhagavad Darśanam*. It's taken a lot of work to produce these books and magazines in this land. By your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your wonderful books will soften the hard hearts of the impersonalists and stubborn intellectuals in this land of Kerala, where you once set your lotus feet. Your mercy and blessings have made these services possible.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in one of your brilliant purports in the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (18.17) I found this expression especially telling and instructive: "Personal activity and responsibility arise from false ego and godlessness, or a lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness." After many years of pondering this statement while struggling to perform the various duties assigned to me, I concluded that whenever we perform an action independent of the guru's order, for our own sense gratification, we must assume responsibility for it. We assume responsibility in this world to get applauded by the world as a responsible person, while deep inside we are enjoying the role of responsibility, since it bestows control over men and matter.

But there is another kind of responsibility, spiritual responsibility.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, at an advanced age you assumed responsibility for executing the will of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, at an age others would be fearfully mumbling prayers in the twilight of life. You assumed responsibility for following the instructions given to you by your spiritual master and the *paramparā*, and you executed them verbatim, under dire conditions. You exposed self-centered, mundane personal responsibility and redefined responsibility for the self as achieving the highest goal of life—*kṛṣṇa-prema*—and facilitating a similar achievement for one's fellow human beings.

You wanted your ISKCON members to follow suit and become most responsible human beings, executing practical work to fulfill the mission of human life in sobriety while being the best well-wishers of mankind.

The execution of devotional service is not a matter of idle meditation but practical action in the foreground of spiritual life. [*The Nectar of Instruction* 3, purport]

Your brilliant example—the life you led—is a challenge to the human intelligence to respond and to strive to achieve the real goal of life. This is in essence the "response-ability" of every human. The ability of the human being to perform this unique function constitutes the essence of real human rights. The rest are human wrongs perpetrated by the seemingly responsible on a miserable populace! You taught us that, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, seeing you as my spiritual grandfather, I seek your "grand" mercy and blessings to become a responsible follower of your mission, with the internal strength to overcome the trials and challenges that Māyā may place in my path. I am very happy to be serving in your glorious mission—producing your books, distributing your books, reading your books, living your books, and teaching your books to the extent of my realization. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you said that in Kali-yuga the demigods will not visit the earth even to pass urine, since it is so degraded. But . . . Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for visiting us!

Your servant,

Bhakti Vinoda Swami

Candramauli Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn iti nāmine*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa on this earth, having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

For more than four decades, devotees of Kṛṣṇa and many others in different categories of life have with great pleasure and enthusiasm listed and extolled your glorious deeds. Since Kṛṣṇa is unlimited in all categories, so are His glories, and because you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are fully connected with Him in pure loving devotion, you perfectly exhibit His qualities in a most powerful way.

Probably the greatest of all your glorious deeds is your transforming the hearts and lives of so many people from all backgrounds and mentalities of materialistic life. From prisoners up to recognized political leaders and entertainers, you knew how to reach everyone.

In our humble attempt to follow in your footsteps, we are finding it extremely difficult to change the hearts and minds of others so they will accept Kṛṣṇa and His devotional service; obviously we lack both the purity and the necessary intelligence to be truly effective.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the perfect mystic, since you are fully connected to Kṛṣṇa, the master of all mystic powers, and He, residing in the hearts of all, can inspire anyone and everyone to accept Him. But the Supreme Lord does that only when He is fully pleased with our effort to act on your behalf as a pure, transparent instrument of His mercy coming through you.

Lord Caitanya was so pleased by Vāsudeva Datta's compassion for all conditioned souls that He liberated the entire universe.

Our humble prayer is to become a more sincere and surrendered servant so other souls may be delivered from material suffering by your mercy.

Grateful for this service,

Candramauli Swami

Candraśekhara Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Kṛṣṇa's mercy flows abundantly, but Lord Caitanya's mercy is given more freely. Just imagine if we had to abandon everything to gain that state beyond fear. Imagine us residents of Kali-yuga abandoning everything.

But there is another process that has been given to us, care of Lord Caitanya, which involves chanting and dancing. And that process is simply joyful. Ahh—but the catch is that we have *no* attraction for that chanting and dancing. Well, maybe a little. Certainly I include myself here, and even specify myself. Lord Caitanya said the same thing, though obviously it could not have been true for Him. This sentiment is echoed by other devotees of Lord Caitanya.

Another way to say this is that the *yuga-dharma* is simultaneously easy and difficult. There are those among us who have secretly or openly given up, and some just never got off the ground. What makes a thing difficult, anyway? Some things are difficult because they require great wealth to provide costly ingredients or facilities. Some things are difficult because they require difficult physical training that tunes the senses in an exacting discipline. Some things are difficult because they require great physical strength, which implies physical health. Some things are difficult because no one has ever done them before, so the procedure is not clear. Some things require extreme mental agility or memorization. Some things require the ability to tolerate tedium or repetition. Some things are difficult because they can be done only under dangerous conditions, or conditions which extremely trouble the body. Some things are difficult because they go against the grain of human nature or against the grain of our deeply entrenched habits. Although some of these issues may play a minor role in why *japa* or *kīrtana* is difficult, they are not central.

Kīrtana, of course, is the easier of the two. The scriptures tell us this, and I certainly concur, having learned this from personal experience.

Yet although the *yuga-dharma* is difficult, it is difficult primarily for none of the reasons mentioned above. It is difficult because it requires constant, second-to-second recommitment. It is difficult because it requires grace. We face neither of these two requirements in the ordinary situations of this world. We could make the point here that these two items are deeply interrelated, but to bring out a different point I would like to speak of them individually.

When taste appears, chanting is not only *not difficult*, it is absorbing. This is the segue of *vaidhī bhakti* into spontaneous love. The grace of which I have spoken is the taste which appears. Recommitment is not an issue when there is nothing to fight against, when one is absorbed. There is no wind blowing in the other direction.

So here am I, left with my mind full of distracting sidelines. Not only is my mind distracted, but I have committed many offenses, which put the advent of taste into the far distant future.

What is the use? Obviously, I should just give up. No, wait, that is not the answer. Maybe it will take a million births (and in my case there are statistics pointing in that direction), but it doesn't matter. The bridges are burnt, the past is dead, other options are lost. And though the future is not easy or certain, there is nothing in the past I care to reconsider or redo, taking a different path. Again and again, I always come around to this same point: there are really *no* other options. Just one option: forward, first gear.

On this most auspicious anniversary of your divine appearance, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I simply pray to obtain a small measure of your grace to overcome my distractions, offenses, and lack of service attitude, and to recommit to the *yuga-dharma* until it leads me out of this world. There is much to do, and I see my godbrothers and godsisters doing amazing things. Please give me your grace so that I can take my place

among them, doing what little I can. The holy name is not my salvation alone but the salvation of the world in general. Easy or difficult, whichever way one would look at it, please, please give me the mercy.

Your servant,

Candraśekhara Swami

Dānavīr Goswami

With all humility, I offer my most humble repeated obeisances to the divine lotus feet of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda's self-effulgent disciple who is my beloved spiritual master, Oṃ Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrajakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON.

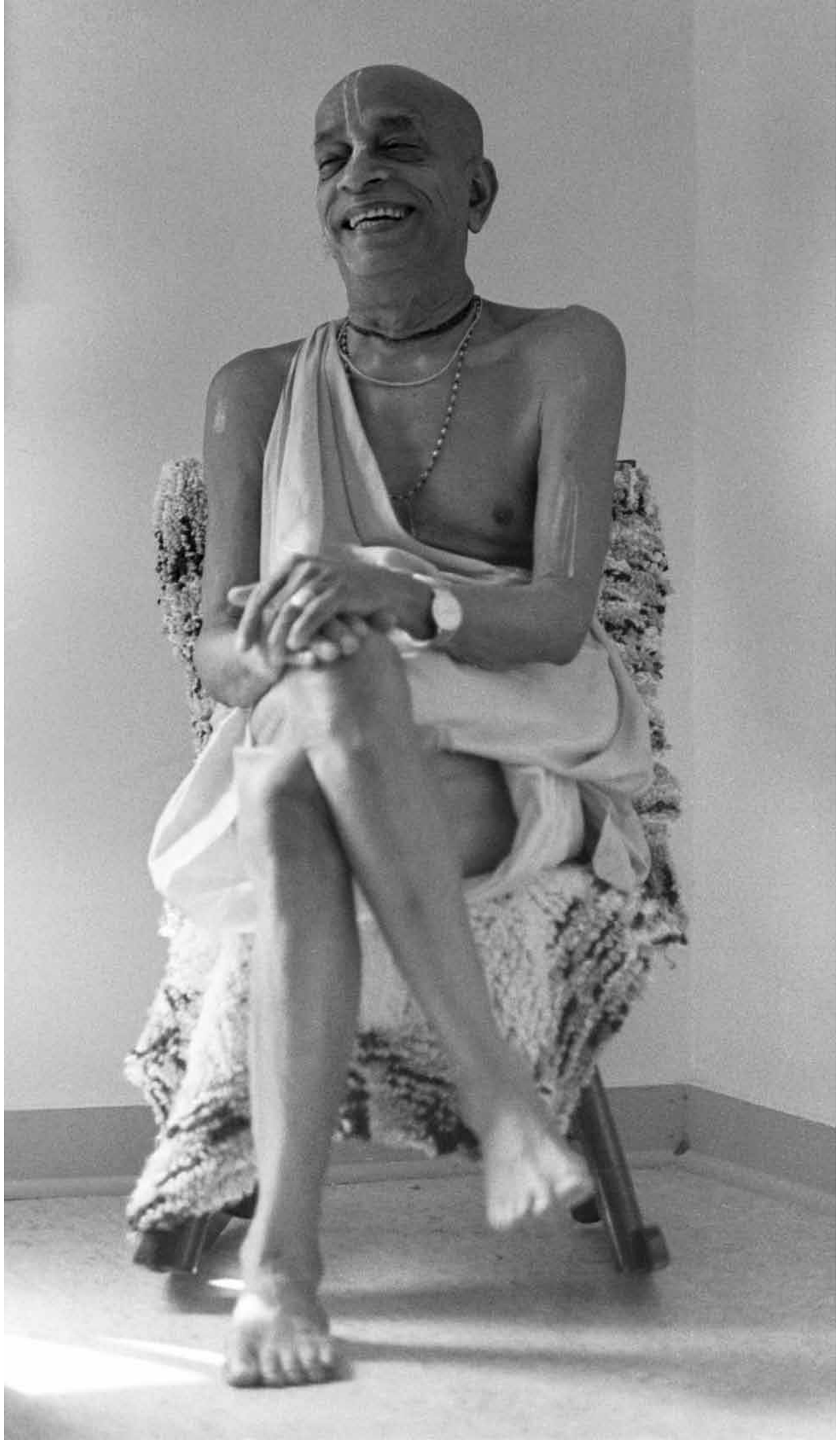
My spiritual master is *karuṇa*—compassionate to all the fallen souls. Who else would have come to Culver City (Los Angeles) to drag a wretched fool such as myself off the beach and give him a permanent place among the Vaiṣṇava devotees? His compassion is also demonstrated by his dissemination of hundreds of millions of books full of transcendental knowledge meant to save all fallen souls. He opened and maintains hundreds of centers, which are spiritual hospitals for the suffering patients of this world.

My spiritual master is a source of great pleasure. To be in his divine presence was an indescribably blissful experience. One of my godbrothers, Tribhuvanātha Prabhu, put it nicely when a devotee said to him that being with Śrīla Prabhupāda was like being in the spiritual world. Tribhuvanātha Prabhu replied, "Śrīla Prabhupāda is the spiritual world." But that pleasure did not stop upon His Divine Grace's departure from our sight when he returned to Goloka. It continues for everyone fortunate enough to take his association through his *vāñī*, or instructions.

My spiritual master delivers the end of knowledge (*vedānta*), beginning with the etymological meaning of the word (*veda* and *anta*). He teaches the difference between matter and spirit and the controller of both. He enumerates the material elements that bind the living entity, and he gives the means to extricate oneself from material entanglement—*bhakti-yoga*. He delineates the different stages of devotional service, culminating in *kṛṣṇa-prema*, and provides us with protective guidelines for avoiding the pitfalls on the path.

My spiritual master teaches science (*vijñāna*). He humbly denies that he is a scientist and instead claims that his only qualification is that he has faith in the words of Kṛṣṇa, Vyāsadeva, and his spiritual master. But isn't Kṛṣṇa the greatest scientist? And isn't Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī a walking encyclopedia and renowned astronomer? My *gurudeva* learned science from them and passed on the same knowledge with his own added realizations. For example, on the strength of the *Bhagavad-gītā*'s assertion *na jāyate mriyate vā*, "Neither it is created; neither it dies," His Divine Grace concluded that anyone proposing to create life from chemicals is a fool because the soul is not created, *na jāyate*. He also expressed doubt about the American moon landing on the strength of the Vedic version, which states that the moon is a heavenly planet requiring great piety to attain.

My spiritual master is expert and humorous (*vidagdha*). Once in Melbourne he was speaking to Dr. Copeland, Professor of Modern Indian History, explaining to him the system of *parampara* (disciplic succession). Śrīla Prabhupāda stressed that the real guru must present the same message that was passed down from the predecessor teachers, without adulteration. To illustrate his point and distinguish between real and false teachers, he said that he did not tell people, "Give me thirty-five dollars. I give you mantra, and within six months you become God." The professor acknowledged the honesty and good



humor as well. On another occasion, a devotee's mother was complaining that Śrīla Prabhupāda did not teach his disciples mundane subjects. She argued that his movement should not just teach Sanskrit but should also teach Latin. In reply His Divine Grace commented to her, "Yes. It will be better. If you also join, then we'll have full understanding." The mother laughed and said, "You have a sense of humor."

My spiritual master is a chivalrous hero (*vīra*). Who else leaves his home at age seventy to start a movement in a foreign country, with no money and no acquaintances on the other end? Once arriving he boldly told the young people of New York that they should renounce their prized drugs and illicit sex and instead worship Kṛṣṇa.

My spiritual master is my best friend (*suhṛt*). He doesn't cheat me but always tells the truth. He continues to forgive my innumerable mistakes made minute by minute, and although my heart is as dirty as coal, he keeps trying to forge into a diamond by the fire of his kindness.

I can never repay my debt to him, but at least I pledge to remain faithful to his mission and, for whatever it's worth, engage myself in preaching his message in line with his last letter to me. He wrote:

Go on preaching with vigorous enthusiasm and increase your program for bringing new men to live in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. You yourself must be ideal in following the rules and regulations, rising early, and restricting eating and sleeping. The less a person is concerned with material enjoyment such as eating, sex and sleeping, the more he is spiritually advanced. If the "devotee" himself lives like a hog or dog, how can he preach?

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!*

Dānavīr Goswami

Gaṇapati Dāsa Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

This year I had the fortune to read *Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava*, authored by your disciple Bhakti Vikāsa Swami. From its study, enhanced with reflection upon your life and instructions, I was graced with some important realizations. Overall, I have managed to more fully appreciate your Guru Mahārāja's influence on your preaching content and style. Specifically, I would like to place the following before you for your confirmation (please view relevant quotations below):

1. Driven by a mood of selfless compassion¹ and highlighted by a display of extreme generosity, both Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura and Your Divine Self were willing to use all available resources and techniques (*yukta-vairāgya*) to proffer the message of Godhead to the world.² At the same time, you both took care that that message was never diluted or compromised in the slightest degree.³ In this way, you displayed absolutely no leniency toward the distortion of truth while employing sometimes shocking innovations to spread the truth.⁴

2. The preacher is first and foremost a servant of truth—Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person—represented in the form of Śrī Guru. It is because of his steadfast submission to this service that he becomes a benefactor and well-wisher of other entities. If he independently considers himself to be "the

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friend and well-wisher of all living entities,” he is subtly usurping the position that Lord Kṛṣṇa reserves for Himself in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.⁵ We are warned, “First *Mādhava-seva*, then *mānava-seva*.”

3. Although it is a great loss that someone, due to immature presentation of Gauḍīya *siddhānta*, leaves our association disgusted, it is even a greater loss that a sincere seeker misses the opportunity of hearing the truth due to our unwillingness (because of laziness, or in order to maintain a popular image) to disseminate the transcendental message.⁶

I pray to maintain my position of being enlivened and corrected by Your Divine Grace as you see fit.

Your fallen servant,

Gaṇapati Dāsa Swami

1. “Let our bodies, which are like those of aged oxen, be offered into the *saṅkīrtana-yajña* of Lord Caitanya and His associates.” [Last address]

“I wish that every selfless tenderhearted member of the Gauḍīya Maṭha be prepared to shed two hundred gallons of blood for the nourishment of the spiritual body of every individual in human society.” [Gauḍīya]

2. *Āsakti-rahita sambandha sahita/ viṣaya-samūha sakali mādharma*: “All sense objects which are used without personal attachment and in relation to Kṛṣṇa are nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa.”

Śrī-hari sevaya yāhā anukūla/ viṣaya baliyā tyāge haya bhūla “It is a mistake to reject anything suitable for serving Kṛṣṇa, considering it an object of sense gratification.” [Vaiṣṇava Ke?]

3. “Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura was not for sectarian coexistence, conciliation, or syncretism. His sole means for bridging the abyss between others and himself was to exhort them to come to his side. He spoke against mushy tolerance of nonsensical ideas in the name of ecumenism, which he anyway took as a nebulous and impossible dream, unless people were prepared to forswear miscellaneous rubrics of cheating religion and simply surrender to Kṛṣṇa . . .

“Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī dubbed as ‘pseudo-latitudinarianism’ the impersonalistic attempt to obfuscate or make light of meaningful differences, such as those between genuine and watered-down dharma, and considered it to be based on what he termed *cit-jāḍa-samanvaya-vāda* (trying to conflate material with spiritual), which he compared with the endeavor to inosculate gold and stone.” [Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava, vol. 1, p.139]

“The loyal servant of the Absolute Truth is required to be the active opponent of all violent enemies of truth. It is his imperative duty to protest against the violence of nontheists in uncompromising terms and take all consequences of such protest. . . . One who does not perform these imperative duties commits a grave offense against the truth.” [Harmonist]

4. “I decided all these things thousands of births ago. We have to do anything and everything for serving Mahāprabhu [including supplying meat to the Bengali governor and providing cigarettes for a German scholar].”

“Don’t scrimp or go in a poor or lowly manner. Keep a high standard. Spend for preaching and make an impression.”

5. “Everyone is eager for adoration by others, not for the absolute truth. Those who make a show of being preachers do not disturb mankind, but rather maintain everyone’s present mentality while busily protecting their own existence. Therefore there is no propagation of the truth, since one’s popularity is not served by speaking or hearing the truth.” [Gauḍīya]

“Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī appreciated daring disciples who took risks in preaching and did not hedge or compromise. He referred to conciliators as ‘good-for-nothings,’ or in Bengali, *sander gobar*

(bull's dung), a disparaging term meaning 'useless person.' He cautioned his disciples that 'a flatterer can neither be a guru nor a preacher,' and told them, 'Don't speak to please the *janata* [people in general], but to please Janārdana [Kṛṣṇa]. Declare that those who do not perform *hari-bhajana* are foolish and butchers of their own souls. The public may not like our message, yet it is incumbent upon us to state the truth. It is our responsibility to strongly refute ideologies opposed to Vaiṣṇava dharma. Our precious *ācāryas* did so to a great degree, and our only duty is to follow in their footsteps.'" [SBV, vol.1, p.141]

"The *sādhū* stands there to kill those [sensuous] desires [of men] by the merciful stroke of the keen edge of the sacrificial knife in the form of unpleasant language. If the *sādhū* turns into my flatterer, then he does me harm; he becomes my enemy. If he flatters us, we will be led to the road which brings worldly enjoyment but no factual well-being.'" [Harmonist]

"I don't make any compromise with these rascals. No words. No, no. I never made that. Even if I don't get any disciples, I'll be satisfied. But I can't make any compromise like these rascals. I cannot make. *Ekaś candras tamo hanti na ca tārā sahasraśaḥ*. If I create one moon, that is sufficient. I don't want many stars. That was my Guru Mahārāja's principle, and that is my principle. What is the use of having number of fools and rascals? If one man understands rightly, he can deliver the whole world." [SP Walk, Bombay, 1974]

"They are now feeling the pressure of the opposite party. So fight is fight. When there is fight, my Guru Mahārāja used to say, 'Some of our soldiers will die. It doesn't matter.' You don't expect that not a single soldier of your party will not die. No, some of them will die. Still fight must go on. Fight cannot be stopped. So fight like brave soldiers, Kṛṣṇa will help you. Don't make any compromise. No truce with these demons. Fight must be." [SP Talk, Bhuvanesvara, 1977]

6. "He explained that *jīva-himsā* (violence to or envy of *jīvas*) included not only the conventional definition of killing, disturbing, or causing trouble to all categories of *jīva*, but more importantly consisted of apathy or miserliness toward preaching *śuddha-bhakti*, or in encouraging Māyāvādīs, *karmīs*, or *anyābhilāṣīs*, or speaking in a manner sympathetic to and accommodating of their outlook." [SBV, vol.1, p.148]

"Millions of materially motivated speakers will go to hell, but someday someone will realize the independent truth spoken forthrightly and be saved. It may take hundreds of lives or millions of years before someone will be able to comprehend this confidential reality. It is not possible to make even one individual do so without spending hundreds of gallons of blood." [Śrīla Prabhupādera Upadeśāmṛta]

"He would often declare, 'Even at the expense of all these properties, temples, and Maṭhas, if I could assist even one soul in becoming a pure devotee, my mission would be fulfilled.'

"Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī avowed that even if the whole world were against him, or if not a single individual were to stay with him, or if those who made a pretense of surrendering to him were to leave, still, under the protection of his *gurudeva*'s lotus feet, he would fearlessly and unceasingly preach the unadulterated truth until the last moment he remained in this world; and if some day that truth were to enter the ear of even one fortunate soul, then through that lone person the entire universe would attain the topmost benefit." [SBV, vol.1, p.153]

Guṇagrāhi Dās Goswami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet.

Our deep feelings of gratitude always form the basis of our offerings to Your Divine Grace on this glorious day of your appearance. Such feelings came to me in a unique and wonderful way this year. Just as I was preparing to compose my homage, an old friend from high school called to say that he had emailed me a beautiful poem he had come upon and to assure me I would love reading it. Although my time was short and I really needed to begin writing my offering, my curiosity and love for poetry finally got the best of me. So I decided to take a few minutes and give the poem a read. As it turned out, the impression it had on me was overwhelming, touching my heart to the very core. Reminding me of you, it was just the inspiration I needed for writing this offering. I submit the poem to you now, hoping that it will please you:

“The Touch of the Master’s Hand”

’Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But he held it up with a smile.
“What am I bidden, good folks,” he cried,
“Who’ll start the bidding for me?”
“One dollar, one dollar. Do I hear two?
Two dollars, and who’ll make it three?”

“Three dollars, once; three dollars, twice;
Going for three . . .” But no,
From the room, far back, a grey-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow;
Then wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening up the strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet,
As sweet as an angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said, “Now what’s the bid for the old violin?”
And he held it up with the bow.
“One thousand, one thousand. Do I hear two?
Two thousand. Who’ll make it three?
Three thousand once, three thousand twice,
Going and gone,” said he.

Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā 2011

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
“We do not quite understand.
What changed its worth?” Swift came the reply:
“The touch of the Master’s hand.”
And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.

A “mess of pottage,” a glass of wine,
A game—and he travels on.
He is “going” once, and “going” twice,
He’s “going” and almost “gone.”
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that is wrought
By the touch of the Master’s hand.*

How perfectly this poem describes the deep transformation your love and kindness have brought to us doomed and forgotten souls.

How perfectly you served as our Master by seeking us out, picking us up, cleaning us off, polishing us up, and making us dance as your puppets in the mission of Lord Caitanya.

How profusely we must thank you for the miracle you performed.

Everything we have ever done, are doing, and will do as your servants is a result of your divine intervention in lives otherwise doomed to failure and suffering.

When I see the emptiness in the godless souls whom I have known for years, and when I feel the loneliness and despair that continue to grow in their hearts as their days come to an end, I marvel at my great fortune and give thanks to you again and again and again. Somehow you have chosen to pluck this undeserving soul out of the ocean of misery and give me your eternal shelter.

I pray that my appreciation for you grows with every day and that I never tire of making it known that I have truly been blessed by the Touch of My Master’s Hand.

Your most grateful servant,

Guṇagrāhi Dās Goswami

*Myra Brooks Welch, “The Touch of the Master’s Hand”

Hanumatpresaka Swami

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

*tatropanīta-balayo raver dīpam ivādr̥tāḥ
ātmārāmaṁ pūrṇa-kāmaṁ nija-lābhena nityadā*

*prīty-utphulla-mukhāḥ procur harṣa-gadgadayā girā
pītarāṁ sarva-suhṛdam avitāram ivārbhakāḥ*

“The citizens arrived before the Lord with their respective presentations, offering them to the fully satisfied and self-sufficient one, who, by His own potency, incessantly supplies others. These presentations were like the offering of a lamp to the sun. Yet the citizens began to speak in ecstatic language to receive the Lord, just as wards welcome their guardian and father.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.11.4–5)

One young Brijavāsī respectfully entered the ISKCON temple in Vṛndāvana. He was curious, but he was also a little intimidated. There was so much opulence. After wandering around for some time with the other *yātrīs*, he came to the *samādhi-mandira* of the ISKCON Guru, Śrīla Prabhupāda. He saw a sign which translated as “His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.” He wondered what that meant, exactly, but he walked as near as he could to the beautiful, enormous brass *mūrti* of Swami Prabhupāda, and with folded hands attempted to look at his feet, wanting to offer his *praṇāmas*.

However, he was baffled in his determination and looked with a little amazement, because what was blocking his view of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s lotus feet was a very beautiful volume of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. It was sitting in a bookstand in front of Gurujī. The Brijavāsī was amazed because he suddenly had the very strong impression that this was the way to Swami Prabhupāda’s feet: not through *darśana* with the eyes, but rather *darśana* with the ears.

“Hmmmph.” He and a few rupees would have to part. He walked back over to the *mātājī* who he had seen selling books. She convinced him that Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s *Upadeśāmṛta*, with commentaries by Swami Prabhupāda, was the book for him.

Sitting under a tree, he began to look through it. Again, before he could even open the cover, he saw the words “His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.”

“So, this is Gurujī’s position,” he thought. Then he began to thumb through the little book, asking himself, “How does Swamiji describe his Society?” He read . . .

When we mix with a few friends, we immediately begin unnecessary talking, sounding just like croaking toads. If we must talk, we should talk about the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. . . .

Association with those engaged in a similar line of business is very conducive to advancement in that business. . . . Similarly, we have established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness to give people an opportunity to associate with those who have not forgotten Kṛṣṇa. This spiritual association offered by our ISKCON movement is increasing day by day. Many people from different parts of the world are joining this Society to awaken their dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness. . . .

This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement offers a spiritual community that can bring about a peaceful condition in the world. Every intelligent man should purify his consciousness and rid himself of the above-mentioned six hindrances to devotional service by taking wholehearted shelter of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. . . .



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These activities must be executed with patience. One should not be impatient in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Indeed, this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement was started single-handedly, and in the beginning there was no response, but because we continued to execute our devotional activities with patience, people gradually began to understand the importance of this movement, and now they are eagerly participating. . . .

If one lives in the association of devotees, there is little chance of associating with non-devotees. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness is opening many centers just to invite people to live in the company of devotees and practice the regulative principles of spiritual life. . . .

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness has been established to facilitate these six kinds of loving exchanges between devotees. This Society was started single-handedly, but because people are coming forward and dealing with the give-and-take policy, the Society is now expanding all over the world. We are glad that people are donating very liberally to the development of the Society's activities, and people are also eagerly accepting whatever humble contribution we are giving them in the shape of books and magazines dealing strictly with the subject matter of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. . . . In this way our Society is successfully spreading all over the world, and the intelligentsia of all countries is gradually appreciating our Kṛṣṇa conscious activities. The life of the Kṛṣṇa conscious society is nourished by these six types of loving exchange among the members; therefore people must be given the chance to associate with the devotees of ISKCON because simply by reciprocating in the six ways mentioned above an ordinary man can fully revive his dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness. . . .

The members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness invite the Society's members and supporters to dine with them when they hold love feasts in all their branches every Sunday. Many interested people come to honor *prasāda*, and whenever possible they invite members of the Society to their homes and feed them sumptuously with *prasāda*. In this way both the members of the Society and the general public are benefited. People should give up the company of so-called *yogīs*, *jnānīs*, *karmīs* and philanthropists because their association can benefit no one. If one really wants to attain the goal of human life, he should associate with devotees of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement because it is the only movement that teaches one how to develop love of God. . . .

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is especially meant for creating an atmosphere in which people can take to the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. . . . One must begin with faith, and when this faith is increased by chanting, a person can become a member of the Society. [*The Nectar of Instruction* 2, 3, 4, 7 purports]

"Fundamentally, it sounds very nice, very social, very practical. I should talk more with these devotees."

Hanumatpresaka Swami

Hridayānanda Dās Goswami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my sincere obeisances to you.

In *kṛṣṇa-līlā* we find that various pure devotees enjoy different relationships with Kṛṣṇa. We observe this principle when Kṛṣṇa descends as Govinda, and also when He comes as Nimāi Paṇḍita to manifest the *sankīrtana* movement. There is variety not only of *rasas*, but of “moods.” Thus among the servants of Mahāprabhu, some are bold, others meek, some innovative, others traditional.

As a pure devotee not different from Kṛṣṇa, you accept and reciprocate the sincere devotion of varieties of ISKCON devotees. With great wisdom and foresight, you often insisted that within reasonable boundaries we should respect the individuality of the diverse souls who come to you for shelter.

Everyone knows how you came to the West, how with pure devotion you ingeniously established Kṛṣṇa consciousness in America, and thereupon throughout the world. You did this within a specific historical context. We, your followers, now struggle, faithfully and creatively, to continue your glorious legacy by trying to act with ingenuity and purity to keep Kṛṣṇa consciousness relevant.

Before coming to the West you strove with complete sincerity to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India, with results that did not at all satisfy you. Thus you boarded the *Jaladuta* with a magnificent global strategy that you enacted with unique success. Your activities in India prior to coming west demonstrate, as you revealed to Girirāja Swami just before leaving this world, that both purity and intelligent strategy are needed to spread Lord Caitanya’s divine mission.

On the holy day of your appearance, we pray that you bless us with purity and intelligence so that we can powerfully perpetuate your grand movement and serve you as worthy descendants.

With best wishes,

Your servant,

Hridayānanda Dās Goswami

Janānanda Goswami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

I offer my humble obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is the most dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa on this earth because he has taken complete shelter at the Lord’s lotus feet.

Homages from Non-GBC Sannyāsīs

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

I offer my humble obeisances to you, O spiritual master, servant of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanya and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I have just spent three weeks in Christchurch, New Zealand. The city was hit by a devastating earthquake just before I arrived. I have come here, Śrīla Prabhupāda, hopefully at your behest, to be with your devotees, who have lost their temple and the manifested form of your and their beloved Śrī Śrī Nitāi-Gauracandra. Amazingly enough, no devotees were seriously injured. Your *mūrti* form also remained unscathed in the midst of falling plaster, wood, and glass.

Everything you speak about becomes so alive when I see the situation here. Many ask why the temple and Deities have been destroyed. There may be many ways of addressing that question, but I would like to share what you said that very morning of the quake in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class, right here in Christchurch. Karuṇikā Mātāji was reading a very profound purport—to text 5 of the Sixth Canto’s nineteenth chapter—explaining the Lord’s pleasure at being dependent on his devotees:

Sometimes He [Kṛṣṇa] tells His devotee in a dream that His temple and His garden are now very old and that He cannot enjoy them very nicely. Thus He requests the devotee to repair them. Sometimes He is buried in the earth, and as if unable to come out Himself, He requests His devotee to rescue Him. Sometimes He requests His devotee to preach His glories all over the world, although He alone is quite competent to perform this task.

It seems that the Lord has answered the question Himself through you. And that is always the case. How much do I have to learn before I realize this?

A few days before the quake, thirteen-year-old Varṣāṇā, granddaughter of the head *pūjārī*, had a dream. Here is some of it, in her own words:

A large group of devotees were having a sit-down *kīrtana* in the temple room. It was very sweet and melodious.

All of a sudden Lord Caitanya gave a small wave to the devotees with His right hand. All the devotees continued the *kīrtana* but were looking at each other in amazement at what they had just seen! Then the devotees jumped up and started a roaring, fantastic *kīrtana*. There was lots of dancing and chanting, and tears filled the devotees’ eyes when they saw that both Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda started dancing where they were standing! The Lords had left the altar and come down to the marble floor where the devotees were dancing and chanting and were enthusing the devotees to keep going.

After the *kīrtana* had finished, the Lords told some of the devotees to go on *harināma*. Though They didn’t exactly speak, the devotees just somehow knew. I was one of the *harināma* people who were told to spread the holy name. We went through the conservatory, out the sliding door, and into the car park.

The message again seems clear and obvious: the primary pleasure of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi is to see the devotees spreading the holy names on *nagara-saṅkīrtana*.

The very old temple and garden mentioned in your above-quoted purport could certainly be taken literally, but the words could also indicate your larger Society in the form of communities, farms, self-sufficiency, simple living and high thinking, and unity in diversity, what to speak of the unlimited other manifestations of the burgeoning International Society for Krishna Consciousness. I have just come from the hospital, where I visited a critically sick mother of a devotee. The motto of the ward is “unity with diversity.” Is this not one of our greatest challenges, as per your own indication to our GBC? “With all

GBC and senior men present, we should discuss how to make unity in diversity.” (letter to Kīrtanānanda Swami, 18 October 1973)

I see so many devotees with so much talent and initiative in all areas. What is preventing all this power from being unleashed? Is it our lack of purity or boldness? Is it our lack of faith in your instructions or lack of dependence on you? Is it false prestige, envy, or some other enemy? Maybe it is merely time separating, as you once said. Perhaps next year, as many predict, there will be a real earth-shaker. Is that what is required before we realize this world as it is?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have so many dreams, as no doubt many others have. I hope I can be an instrument in developing them, at least to some extent. I dream of a community based upon simple living and high thinking and self-sufficiency. I dream of centers with devotees going out chanting the holy names from morning till night. I dream of devotees maturely cooperating, playing their natural parts. I dream of *kīrtana* with friends and enemies dancing together in ecstasy. I dream of a community where devotees can reveal their minds to each other without bigotry or fear of being judged.

I dream of a community of devotees truly caring for each and every one of its members, and not just theorizing about it. I dream of a society which is not managed from the temple but which expands way beyond the walls of the *mandira*, into every sphere of life in this world. I dream of a society with mature brahminical leadership guiding and inspiring all classes of people to make offerings to Kṛṣṇa. I dream of a society wherein there is more and more opportunity to hear and chant about Kṛṣṇa in every spot. Where there are temples everywhere, restaurants in every suburb, Kṛṣṇa conscious businesses. I dream of “the house for the whole world to live in” which you have built.

Is this all a dream? Or will it come to reality? But the truth is, I myself am fraught with faults, and if anyone has the disease of being self-centered and a poor co-operator, it is I. Only when your great desire for us to co-operate is fulfilled will we see this movement progress. For sure, without that none of these dreams or any other dreams will become realities. I searched “dream” in the VedaBase, and here are the first five statements of yours which I come across.

Actually it is my dream to have such a perfect community established fully in Krishna Consciousness so that the people of your country may have a right example what is the natural way of life or pure spiritual living. [Letter to Stan, 17 November 1970]

Prabhupāda: So this was my dream, that a place should be there where we can get all nice foods, best foods, of milk. Kṛṣṇa is fulfilling our desire. Everything’s there. Simply these rascals they do not know how to live or to eat. Everything there. Intelligence is there, everything is there. Simply for want of training they have become rogues. Make them human beings, your countrymen. [Conversation in airport and car, Toronto, 21 June 1976]

Prabhupāda: Yes. Now arrange for big festival. There is a program, Manipur. I want to start in that small state *varṇāśrama* idea. That is my dream. Small state it can be done, *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya* . . . [Room Conversation, Māyāpur, 14 February 1977]

Prabhupāda: No. Give and take. [break] You are fulfilling my dream, New Vṛndāvana. I dreamt all these things. Wonderful things have been done. [Room Conversation, Vṛndāvana, 6 October 1977]

By Krishna’s Grace, everything is gradually coming to the fulfillment of my dream. The Sankirtana party is walking in the streets and is getting good response, from the public. They are selling Back To Godhead nicely, and getting good sympathy from the public by considerable collections. We are not after collecting money, but when people offer something out of love and sympathy for our mission, it becomes a great asset. I am sure if you all my beloved disciples combined together try to preach Krishna Consciousness in this spirit, Krishna will give the necessary strength. [Letter to Satsvarūpa Dasa, 28 September 1968]

I dream of being a simple, menial servant at your lotus feet, to act at your beck and call in whatever

Homages from Non-GBC Sannyāsīs

capacity pleases you. I dream of the day I will actually realize the truth of you and what you have given us. I dream of the day I will take Kṛṣṇa consciousness seriously and take full shelter of your lotus feet. I dream of being a “pure devotee,” of being a suitable medium for you to work through to spread the holy names.

I may be a dreamer, but unfortunately I am not sincere in my service to you. I know I like to take credit. I know I have little love for you. I am at best a shadow devotee. I have no taste for selfless service and see myself having a duplicitous attitude. Śrīla Prabhupāda, such a rotten person as myself is only here by your causeless mercy. But at least this gives me heart: if I can be here, maintained by your causeless mercy alone, then everyone is eligible to be here. I get an inkling of the meaning of a house for the whole world to live in.

Will these thoughts remain dreams or mere words to espouse once a year, or will they become reality? Will I wake up? Please kick me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and give me the intelligence to accept that the kick is coming from you and is your mercy.

My relationship with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is always one of service, be it short of the mark or on the mark, and I hope it always will be. I do not feel as close to your *vapu* as many do. Thank you for allowing me to remain in the association of your *vāṇī*. Please, please keep me there always, and may I be an instrument of yours to help whomever I may meet come closer to your *vāṇī*. I feel completely incapable on my own.

I fall at your lotus feet, crying and crying and begging and begging for your mercy. If my dreams are pleasing to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, then I pray they may become realities, no matter what the price. May the earth quake, the buildings shake, and the body break, but I pray I will never leave your lotus feet.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your servant,

Janānanda Gosvami

Kadamba Kānana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

You brought all the wealth of the spiritual world—in your person, in the holy name, in your books, and in the form of your movement.

Now I desire to go back to Godhead, and this material world looks bleak.

But you showed that preaching transforms the material into the spiritual world. Now I am excited to see Gaurāṅga touch people’s lives everywhere; I want to be a better instrument of that flood of mercy. Now the world transforms into *Vaikuṇṭha*, and we are becoming *Vaikuṇṭha* men and women. You have turned crows into swans.

May I do something to repay you.

Your servant,

Kadamba Kānana Swami

Krishna Dāsa Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

It is very rare when a truly great soul descends to this world to reclaim the fallen conditioned souls. That person would need to be especially empowered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this Age of Kali, when sin is rife and there are hardly any pious activities, let alone God conscious activities, taking place, life is simply lived to gratify the senses, and there is no desire, let alone endeavor, to realize the self. Even a man of discrimination who attempts to make some spiritual progress is afflicted with so many difficulties that only an amazing personality who is a direct associate of the Lord can inspire such a soul to achieve the Lord's mercy.

In the *Vedānta-sāra* (11), it is stated:

janana-maraṇādi-saṁsāranala-santapto dīpta-śirā jala-rāśim iva upahāra-pāṇiḥ śrotriyam brahma-niṣṭhaṁ gurum upasṛtya tam anusrati

“Just as a person whose head is on fire runs toward water, one burning from the fire of material existence—birth, death, old age, and disease—must run to a guru for relief. Such a guru must be fixed in the Absolute Truth and well versed in the scriptures. One should approach him with all that is needed for sacrifice, submit to him, and be ready to carry out his every instruction.”

It is also stated in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.2.7):

*śravaṇyāpi bahubhir yo na labhyaḥ
śṛnvanto 'pi bahavo na vidyuḥ
āścāryo 'sya vaktā kuś lo 'sya labhdā
āścāryo jñātā kuśalānuśiṣṭaḥ*

“Many cannot hear about the soul, and even after hearing about it many cannot understand it, because it is hard to find a guru who is a genuine seer of the truth. Such a qualified guru is a great soul and is very rare. Only those who follow his teachings can realize the truth and become expert in the science of God. Such disciples are also very rare.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are truly this amazing personality, empowered by the Lord, coming directly from the spiritual world. By your incredible potency you reclaimed and inspired so many souls to perform devotional service.

By opening temples you inspired us, your disciples, to engage in gorgeous Deity worship.

By translating *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* you inspired your disciples to distribute millions and millions of transcendental books.

By traveling the globe fourteen times, going from town to town preaching Lord Caitanya's mission, you inspire us to also travel and preach throughout the world.

By converting the hippies into happies and showing the potency of Lord Caitanya, you inspire us to bravely and courageously chant the holy names on the streets of every town and village.

By engaging in cow protection, you inspired us to open *gośālās* where *go-mātā*, who is so dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, is afforded all protection.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your inspiration and blessings, without which it would not be possible to perform any devotional service to the Lord.

Your humble servant,

Krishna Dāsa Swami

Lokanātha Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of my first meeting with you. Although many years have passed, my memories of that moment are vivid. It is through this lens that I assemble my thoughts on the occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

I can still see myself in 1971, a mere youth of twenty-two years, having come to Bombay a year before. I had left the rustic village of my birth, with its rolling hills, sprawling grape fields, buffaloes, and cows, to attend college in a bustling city. As I walked through the busy streets one morning, I came across some freshly posted, striking advertisements for the Hare Krishna pandal program. There were giant eye-catching posters on the walls, and colorful banners and buntings were strung across the streets. The posters announced an upcoming eleven-day event: “Bhāgavata Dharma Discourses—A Hare Krishna Festival— March 25 to April 4, 1971.”

The fact that American and European sādhus would be featured at the festival was given prominence. This created a different ambience for the people of Bombay, for whom this phenomenon was sensational. I shared their exhilaration and excitement, since the conjunction of “American” with “sādhū” was barely imaginable. We had always taken it for granted that sādhus came from Haridwar, Vārāṇasī, Vṛndāvana, Purī, or some other holy place in India, not from overseas, and certainly not from America or Europe!

I learned that Your Divine Grace had arrived in Bombay on the 24th of February and had then shared with your followers in town your plans to hold a huge Hare Kṛṣṇa festival. This, you thought, would be a perfect way to link American ingenuity with Indian spirituality. Śyāmasundara Dāsa had organized the massive publicity campaign, which resembled that for a large-scale public event in America. Two days before the festival, a huge billboard displaying the words “Hare Krishna” in giant letters was set up at the busiest intersection in the city. A colossal helium-filled balloon attached to a long rope soared high over the Cross Maidan site, where the festival was to be held. It hovered over the city. There was a streamer attached to the balloon, saying “Hare Krishna Festival.” This was real American ingenuity, announcing the festival for several miles around and successfully creating an anticipatory mood for the event. Like the rest of the people in Bombay, I was intrigued. Something inexplicable was drawing me to the event, from within and without. Driven by this compelling feeling, I found myself attending the entire festival from the first night to the last.

My first experience of you, my dear Prabhupāda, was through your pictures, which the devotees had posted all around Bombay. Your portrait was ubiquitous: on the banners that hung from trucks and buses, and on posters stuck on billboards on practically every Bombay street corner. The crowds were so large at the pandal that I was unable to meet you or even get close enough to see you clearly. But I did get a close look at your portrait.

On the stage, within a stunning, golden-domed altar, stood the Deities of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, enshrined by exquisite floral decor. In the center was a large red *vyāsāsana*, on which you sat. This was covered by a decorated canopy. The stage was also adorned with a display of your books. The elevated and spacious pandal, constructed to hold more than twenty thousand people, was lined with fluorescent bulbs, and the stage glowed with colorful flashing fairy lights to create a spiritual paradise.

At the entrance I glanced at the book table, on which *Back to Godhead* magazines and many books were set up for sale. The books on display were of excellent quality, having been printed in Japan at the Dai Nippon Press. The display attracted tremendous attention from the visitors, including me, for whom this was the first experience with such a collection of literary work. Alongside the book table was a long serving counter where hundreds, sometimes thousands, of people would queue up to receive their free *halavā prasādam* from leaf cups.

On stage the Western devotees performed *kīrtana*. I was deeply moved by their alluring performance. I watched them dance, their shaven heads swaying, totally absorbed in the moment, their bodies glistening with perspiration from their energetic movements in time with the melodic chanting. They were in

their own world, seemingly unaware of the presence of the thousands who watched them. I loved them spontaneously. It was not just their attire, which resembled that worn by sādhus. I found them genuine, and the *kīrtana* they were performing was not a shallow performance but an expression of their real inner emotions.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you lectured every evening to the Bombay gentlemen and their well-groomed wives. You addressed the audience with conviction:

Because *Bhagavad-gītā* was not properly presented, although for the last two hundred or more years *Bhagavad-gītā* is widely read all over the world, yet there is not a single *bhakta*. But since *Bhagavad-gītā* is being presented *as it is*, within four years there are hundreds of thousands of *kṛṣṇa-bhaktas*.

Madhudviṣa Prabhu recalls that when you preached to the crowds you would persuasively tell them, “I am just one Indian and you are millions of Indians. If we all join together, just see how much work we can do.”

On the evening of March 29th an initiation ceremony was held. The crowd responded with much merriment when you awarded each devotee his or her new name. There was further excitement when a *yajña* was performed to consecrate the marriage ceremony of Vegavān Dāsa and Padmāvatī Dāsī, from Sweden and Australia respectively. You jovially exclaimed that this was the real United Nations. This statement met with much applause from the audience. Recently Madhudviṣa reminisced on this moment:

There was one devotee there, Himavatī—she was as American as the rest of us, but her parents were from Russia, so Prabhupāda would say, “Here is our Russian lady,” and she would stand up.

It was not unusual for you to call upon your different disciples to address the audience.

On the final evening of the festival, the devotees carried the Deities of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in a palanquin to the Girgaun Chowpatty seaside. I walked for many miles behind the beautifully decorated palanquin, mesmerized by the events of the past days. When we arrived at Chowpatty, you addressed the thousands in attendance. When you talked about the Vaikuṇṭhalokas I was amazed, since this was the first time I had ever heard of Vaikuṇṭha, the spiritual sky. You implored us all to go back to Vaikuṇṭha, back to Godhead. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you spoke about the spiritual world with such certainty and fervor that I immediately understood you were not simply quoting scripture in a trivial way. I realized that you personally knew the spiritual world and that you had come from that divine abode to facilitate our journey back to that sacred world. The next day, the Indian Express reported: “Fitting Finale to Hare Kṛṣṇa Festival.”

At that time I couldn’t imagine I would end up joining these Hare Kṛṣṇa sādhus. All that I understood was that I was very attracted to them. Their singing and dancing had immense appeal. Actually, I liked everything about these charismatic sādhus. I could not speak with any of them, so I simply watched and listened. I knew English, but I was not sufficiently fluent and had difficulty communicating with foreigners. Apparently there was a notice stating that anyone who wished to see Śrīla Prabhupāda for *darśana* could do so, but unfortunately I did not see that notice.

I had a burning ambition to dedicate my life to serving humanity, but I was clueless about where to begin, especially since I did not have any resources. You mercifully saved me from the dilemma by guiding me onto the right path at that 1971 pandal. During one of your lectures you quoted a verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.31.14):

*yathā taror mūla-niṣecanena
tṛpyanti tat-skandha-bhujopasākhāḥ
prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyāṇāṁ
tathaiva sarvārhaṇam acyutejyā*

“As pouring water on the root of a tree energizes the trunk, branches, twigs and everything else, and as



supplying food to the stomach enlivens the senses and limbs of the body, simply worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead through devotional service automatically satisfies all living entities, who are parts of that Supreme Personality.” Hearing that poignant verse changed my life forever. I understood at that moment that there was no turning back, and I made up my mind to dedicate my life to serving the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

I walked away filled with deep and profound impressions and carried the *Back to Godhead Magazines*, two small books, and a *japa-mālā* with me. Although I was drawn to the *Kṛṣṇa* book, I could not afford to buy it.

By your mercy, for the past forty years I have been committed to chanting the holy name and reading your books. With heart and soul I have taken up the mission you gave me, viz., to practice and propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness. On this blessed day I thank you for the gift of revolutionizing my consciousness. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving me real, eternal life. I am ceaselessly grateful to you and pray for your continued mercy upon me.

Your servant,

Lokanātha Swami

Nava Yogendra Swami

My dear *gurudeva* Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to your divine personality! You saved the whole world by spreading *sanātana-dharma* (Kṛṣṇa consciousness) throughout the whole world. You have saved the most fallen souls, and among them I am foremost.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, today is your glorious appearance day. Yesterday was the appearance day of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, so you are a divine gift to us from Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa appears in this material world to console saintly persons and finish demonic persons, but you appear in order to uplift all fallen souls by preaching the mission of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, because in this Kali-yuga almost all are demoniac. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have entrusted various preaching services to me, but I do not feel myself qualified. Therefore you are my only hope. If you make me qualified, then only can I do them. You are the ocean of mercy.

ohe!
vaiṣṇaba ṭhākura, doyāra sāgara,
e dāse koruṇā kori’
diyā pāda-chāyā, śodho he āmāya,
tomāra caraṇa dhori

chaya bega domi’, chaya doṣa śodhi’
chaya guṇa deho’ dāse
chaya sat-saṅga, deho’ he āmāre,
boshechi saṅgera āśe

Homages from Non-GBC Sannyāsīs

*ekākī āmāra, nāhi pāya bala,
hari-nāma-saṅkīrtane
tumi kṛpā kori', śraddhā-bindu diyā,
deho' kṛṣṇa-nāma-dhane*

*kṛṣṇa se tomāra, kṛṣṇa dite pāro,
tomāra śakati āche
āmi to' kāṅgala, 'kṛṣṇa' 'kṛṣṇa' boli',
dhāi tava pāche pache*

You have entrusted me with the task of preaching in Haridwar and building a temple there. Though we are facing lot of difficulties, I have full faith in your lotus feet. One day, I'm sure, we shall succeed, but at present a lot of difficulties are coming our way, like those you had to face in Mumbai while building the temple at Juhu. You were determined to have a nice temple for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī. I'm sure you want the same in Haridwar. We pray at your lotus feet: In our efforts to establish the Haridwar temple, please make us pure and determined, like you were in establishing the Juhu temple. You are our only hope. I know that Kṛṣṇa is all-powerful and that you are always connected to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. We can get connected to Kṛṣṇa only if we are connected to you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you used to say that ISKCON is Vaikuṇṭha in this material world. Anybody can experience that, and it is 100% true. But due to our impurities we are not able to realize it. So please give us the strength to purify ourselves and realize your divine instructions.

In conclusion, I pray at your lotus feet: Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please make me your sincere devotee so that I can follow your divine instructions “as it is” and ultimately go back home, back to Godhead, which you have taught us is the ultimate goal of human life. Please bestow upon me your mercy so that I can become humble like straw in the street and more tolerant than the tree, qualities of which you were embodiment.

*kṛṣṇa se tomāra, kṛṣṇa dite pāro,
tomāra śakati āche
āmi to' kāṅgala, 'kṛṣṇa' 'kṛṣṇa' boli',
dhāi tava pāche pache*

Your ISKCON has the potency to lead the whole world, but we are not so pure. So please give us your purity so we can serve your ISKCON the way you want us to serve it.

Dear Prabhupāda, out of your love you have given the whole world *mahā-mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—and instructed us to chant all the time to become happy. Please give us the strength to follow your divine instruction.

Haribol!

Your humble servant,

Nava Yogendra Swami

Pārtha Sārathi Dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

The date is 7 July 1973, and you have just completed a twelve-hour journey from Calcutta to England, arriving at ISKCON's newly acquired Bhaktivedanta Manor. (I vividly remember that occasion because I had just moved into the London temple a couple of months before.)

A small group of your faithful disciples gather around you, eager to hear your arrival address. First you express your appreciation:

. . . given the facility of assembling in this nice house [Bhaktivedanta Manor], this good boy George Harrison, we must give him all glories. We must be thankful to him that he has given us the facility, and Kṛṣṇa will bless him more and more. [Arrival address, London, 7 July 1973]

Immediately after thanking George Harrison, you speak about what is really on your mind, Rādhā-Mādhava:

. . . Rādhā-Mādhava, our simple worshipable Supreme Personality of Godhead, Rādhā-Mādhava, He is always enjoying in company with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Rādhā-Mādhava. He does not go outside Vṛndāvana. Kṛṣṇa, original Kṛṣṇa, He does not go even a step out of Vṛndāvana, leaving aside the *gopīs*.

When you use words like “simple” and “enjoying in company with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī,” they are descriptions of *mādhurya-bhāva* without any type of *aiśvarya* or *jñāna*. You also add the words “worshipable” and “Supreme Personality of Godhead,” which bring the statement to a more practical level, considering the qualification of your audience. By your use of words you show how to balance the concepts of *rasa* and *tattva*. Since you are the perfect *ācārya* for this age, your presentation is also perfect. If neophyte devotees are not fixed in the *tattva*, the concept that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they will think He is an ordinary boy having so many romantic affairs. Because of this danger, you have warned your followers:

The word *rahaḥ-sthāne*, “in a secluded place,” is very significant. Talks about Kṛṣṇa and His pastimes—especially His pastimes in Vṛndāvana and His dealings with the *gopīs*—are all very confidential. They are not subject matter for public discussion because those who have no understanding of the transcendental nature of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes always commit great offenses, thinking Kṛṣṇa to be an ordinary human being and the *gopīs* ordinary girls. Following the principle of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who never discussed the dealings between Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* publicly, devotees in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are enjoined not to discuss the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana in public. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 8.56, purport]

Later in your arrival address you again refer to Rādhā and Mādhava: “*Gopīs*, they are village girls, not educated, not *brāhmaṇa*, not Vedāntist. But Kṛṣṇa is within their palms, within their hands.” This *rasika* statement shows your mature realization of *mādhurya-rasa*. Although you have written a warning about discussing such topics, still occasionally you made such confidential statements.

Factually, you are giving the whole world the highest possible gift, which is entry into Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. In practice you are doing this by first stressing following the morning program strictly, preaching, *guru-niṣṭhā* (absolute faith in the spiritual master), and the various *aṅgas* (limbs) of *vaidhī-sādhana-bhakti*. By carefully following your instructions, any sincere devotee can gradually be elevated to the higher aspects of *bhakti*, or spontaneous devotional service, referred to as *rāgānuga-sādhana-bhakti*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are fully confident that just as “Kṛṣṇa is within their [the *gopīs*] palms,” Rādhā

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and Kṛṣṇa are also within your palms. I humbly pray on this auspicious day of your appearance that this fallen soul and all your loyal followers will one day become qualified for you to deliver to us Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and *gopīs*.

Your insignificant servant,

Pārtha Sārathi Dāsa Goswami

Prahlādānanda Swami

Cooperate to Spread Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

When a soul sees himself as Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal servant, he becomes eligible to return to the spiritual world. In this age, service to Lord Kṛṣṇa specifically means service to Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission. While serving, a devotee must cultivate Kṛṣṇa consciousness and enlighten others that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the worshipable Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, to advance toward perfection, a devotee must also be able to discriminate between pure and materially motivated devotional service, for a soul bewildered by false ego can use even the *saṅkīrtana* movement for material enjoyment.

Freedom from false ego is possible when a devotee agrees to sacrifice his own ideas and selfish interests to cooperatively serve the mission. Śrīla Prabhupāda said that such sacrifice is essential for genuine spiritual advancement.

In the material world, people often temporarily cooperate for sense gratification, but such cooperation cannot endure, because when mundane cooperation no longer serves a materialist's ambitions and desires, it ends and dissension begins. Only cooperation between souls working on the spiritual platform endures. And this spiritual platform is achieved by persons who work under spiritual authorities and who use all their assets to please Lord Kṛṣṇa. Such devotees know that all things, even their material bodies, belong to Lord Kṛṣṇa and must therefore serve His interests.

When Lord Kṛṣṇa is satisfied by our efforts to please Him, He awards us the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which dissolves the prison of false ego. The Supreme Lord is most pleased when His servants cooperate to serve Him. The loving exchanges between His devotees inspire the Lord to empower them with His internal potencies, which reveal the true nature of the Lord and His pure devotees.

As Lord Kṛṣṇa told the Pracetās:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: "My dear sons of the King, I am very much pleased by the friendly relationships among you. All of you are engaged in one occupation—devotional service. I am so pleased with your mutual friendship that I wish you all good fortune. Now you may ask a benediction of Me." [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.30.8]

In the *Upadeśāmṛta*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī advises an aspiring devotee to respect other devotees, at least within his mind. Even the service of the least advanced devotee must be respected. As parents enjoy the stumbling of their child as he attempts to walk, so the Lord appreciates the immature attempts of a soul to serve Him. However, while acknowledging the devotional service of others, a devotee must also recognize his own spiritual strength, as well as his susceptibility to undesirable association. A devotee must avoid association that interferes even slightly with his spiritual development.

Each soul has a unique personality and set of desires, so there will always be differences of opinion. However, a devotee's individuality can be respected and devotees can work in harmony if Kṛṣṇa consciousness remains in the center. Conflicts between less advanced devotees usually arise when devotees hesitate to sacrifice their selfish interest for a higher cause.

A mature devotee tolerates disagreements with other devotees and, as far as possible, tries to compromise in order to further Lord Caitanya's mission. If such cooperation is sometimes impossible, a devotee continues respecting others within his mind and continues serving his guru and the previous *ācāryas*. Advanced devotees strive to create an atmosphere of harmony and respect among those engaged in Lord Caitanya's mission.

Your aspiring servant,

Prahlādānanda Swami

Śacīnandana Swami

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Mystical Potencies

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You can capture the hearts of those who come in contact with you, and not let them go.

You can maintain your devotees in all respects—simply by glancing at them with your merciful eyes—and grown-up men will say, "That is all we needed."

You can correct us simply by lifting your brows—and we understand the message.

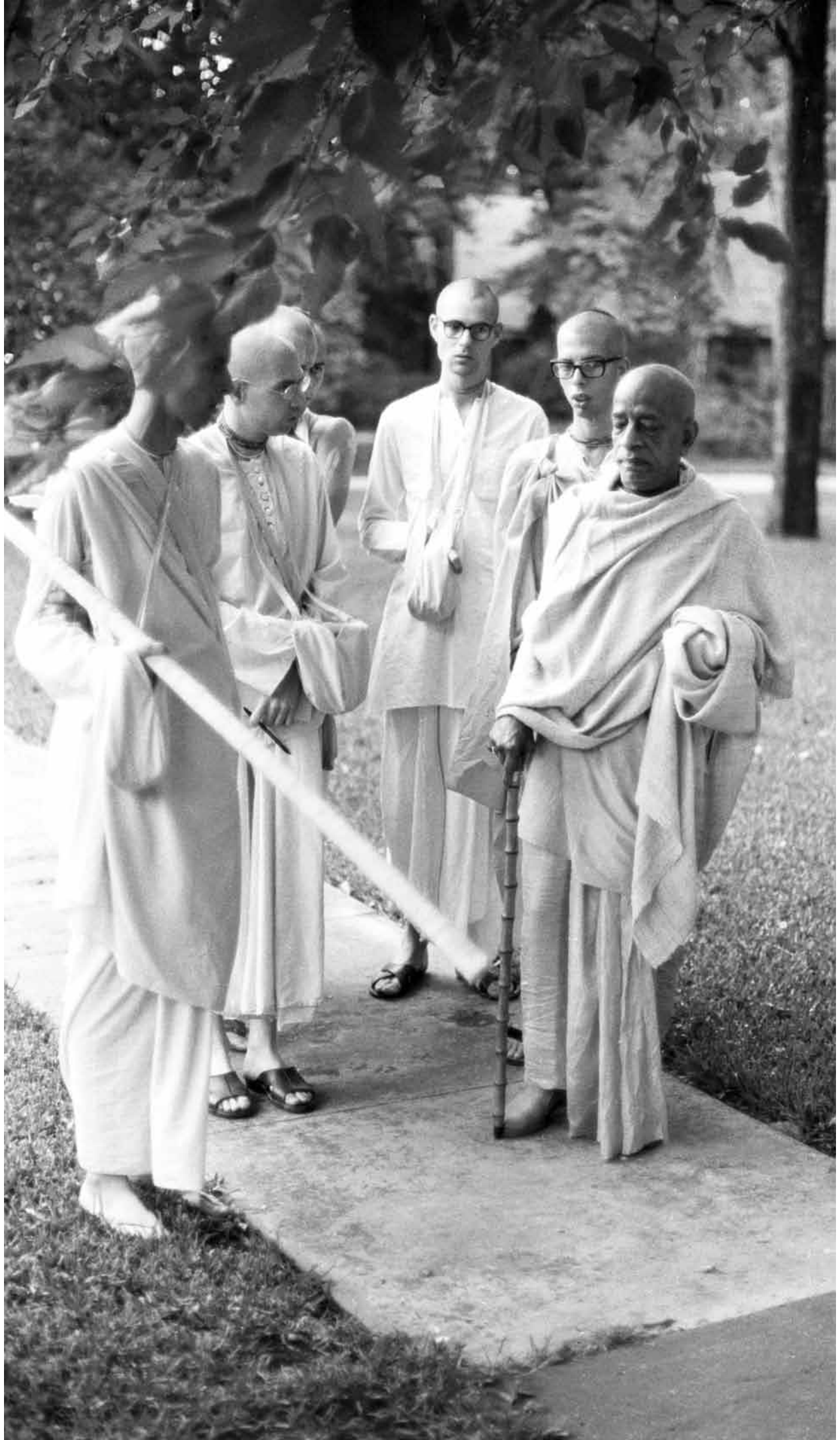
You can pierce through the thickest layers of attachments and illusions just by one sentence, such as "What do you do for eternity?" And the fortress of Māyā comes crumbling down.

You can extract from us all our time, energy, talents, and thoughts just by requesting us gently: "Please help me spread this movement." And we are prepared to sacrifice our lives.

You can empower even the most ordinary person, just by being satisfied with his efforts to please you. And off he goes and performs miracles.

You can so easily give the highest levels of Kṛṣṇa consciousness by blessing and encouraging us: "Do as I have done." And spiritual practitioners of various paths look at your followers with admiration.

You can speak the profoundest philosophy in a way that satisfies both simple people and great thinkers. And all praise your realizations.



You can utter the name of Kṛṣṇa in such a way that you deliver Kṛṣṇa. And we are simply ecstatic. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have so many other mystical potencies, such as your touchstonelike quality or the fact that you never actually die, etc., etc.

Today, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please, I beg you humbly, capture the wild mustang of my mind, maintain my spiritual vision, correct me as you see necessary. Take away my attachments and illusions, extract my every bit of energy . . . and give me Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am not a talented writer. All I wish to say is—I love and trust you a hundred percent. I know that real love is shown in the fire of separation—but you are so kind that you have made that fire cool, if one simply remembers you.

May these simple words please you on your glorious appearance day, which brought the sun of your divine presence into my desperate life.

Your humble servant,

Śacīnandana Swami

Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Humility—An Homage

Sometimes someone would address Lord Caitanya as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord would block his ears and say, “Viṣṇu! Viṣṇu! Viṣṇu! I am just an ordinary living entity. Do not address me as God.” He did not like the implied association with Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*, who addressed each other as Nārāyaṇa. Similarly, Śrīla Prabhupāda did not like being addressed as a pure devotee. “How do you know I am a pure devotee?” he would say. He did not like sentimental assertions. He always described himself as a humble servant of his spiritual master, Om̐ Viṣṇupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Śrīla Prabhupāda's only claim was that he had one hundred percent faith in his spiritual master as a representative of Kṛṣṇa. Once, within my hearing, he even said, “I do not know Kṛṣṇa. I only know my Guru Mahārāja.”

So Śrīla Prabhupāda was very humble. But he defended himself in comparison to other swamis, yogīs, and impersonalists. Once when another's swami's name was mentioned, Prabhupāda said, “But what is his realization?” As a humble servant of his Guru Mahārāja, he was better than all the imitators, professional holy men, and those who do not accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That much he would boldly declare. “I kick on their faces with boots.” He was humble like Hanumān, depicted as kneeling on one knee with his hands in *praṇāmas* before Lord Rāma, but ready to fiercely attack the Rākṣasas and nonbelievers.

Other spiritual movements, such as the Ramakrishna Mission, are known primarily by the name of their founder, but Prabhupāda kept himself in the background and propagated the International Society

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for Krishna Consciousness. When challenged as to his miraculous powers, he said he had none. He said his only power was the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa and the speaking of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, by which he was converting *mlecchas* (uncivilized men) into Vaiṣṇavas. This was a remarkable achievement by any standard, but it was one that Prabhupāda never took personal credit for. As he once said: “Who knew that I would come to [Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī’s] protection? Who knew that I would go to America? Who knew that you American boys would come to me? These are all Kṛṣṇa’s arrangements.” The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement grew by Lord Caitanya’s blessings, not by any personal magic of Prabhupāda’s, he said. After the disappearance of his Guru Mahārāja and the splintering of the Gauḍīya Maṭha, his godbrothers had become entangled in a fight to possess the temples. But Prabhupāda, without any support, had preached sincerely, and he saw the results as the mercy of Lord Caitanya.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said he was not a great scholar or a great devotee. He wrote that he was crippled in so many ways and that his only hope for going back to Godhead was if one of his disciples would become a pure devotee and carry him back to the spiritual world, just as Dhruva Mahārāja carried his mother. That was his humble estimation of his standing before the Lord. Prabhupāda wrote in a Vyāsa-pūjā offering that he had no hope of direct service to the Lord for many crores of births, but what he aspired for was the service of his Guru Mahārāja. That is his glory and his qualification as the direct servant of the Lord. He worked tirelessly to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world, and he allowed his disciples to address him in his *praṇāma mantra* as “very dear to Kṛṣṇa in this world, having taking shelter at His lotus feet.” He places himself at Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet and tells his disciples they may take shelter of him, even though he sees himself as “An insignificant beggar, Abhay Charaṇa Dāsa.”

Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

Smita Krishna Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviṣeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet.

On this auspicious anniversary of your appearance in this world, we are celebrating your Vyāsa-pūjā in what could be regarded as a remote corner of the world. Here the devotees are chanting and dancing and trying to serve in their different capacities. So for me, just now, it is not a remote corner of the world.

But you made your appearance in another part of the world, not far from Ekacakra and Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. Your appearance carried the significance of those places. As a representative of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, you carried the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu all over the world. As a true *jagad-guru* you preached the message of uncompromised pure devotion to the lotus feet Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāma. You preached with a loving heart. That love captured us, as did the truth of your preaching. You taught us that we are not this body and that the material world is a place of misery, of repeated birth and death. You also showed us the way out of this dark place, the way to the spiritual world. You showed us how to get there and gave us a glimpse of what it is like there.

Gradually your legacy is spreading and taking root all over the world. It is my good fortune to be part of that movement, of your movement. I may be a small part in a remote corner, but hopefully a small part that counts in a place that matters.

I beg to remain your servant eternally.

Your disciple and aspiring servant,

Smita Krishna Swami

Subhāg Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmilitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this, your most auspicious appearance day, we try to remember your glories, your life, and your instructions, which are our guide to mold our life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and achieve perfection by going back to Godhead. Recently I had the opportunity to go around the world and see what you have done, which I could never have dreamed of.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my dearmost father, the external manifestation of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Lord Nityānanda. Our goal is to go back to Godhead and associate with the Lord eternally, and to allow everyone to have a chance to achieve that goal you made a wonderful oasis in this material world, which is like a desert. You visited many distant and dangerous places where there is anxiety and tension and established temples, small Vaikuṇṭhas where people can come and have a taste of life free from anxiety. They can experience life full of unlimited bliss by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and associating with wonderful devotees.

I saw all this on my worldwide tour. I left India for Southeast Asia, visiting Singapore, Malaysia, and then Indonesia, especially Bali, and went on a preaching tour of that island and others. In Bali lots of people come to Kṛṣṇa conscious gatherings. They are enthusiastic, and the devotees are all meek, humble, and obedient. After recuperating from a brain operation and taking permission from the doctor, I went to Australia, preaching in Perth, Sydney, Govinda Valley, Brisbane, Melbourne, and Canberra. It was very nice to preach to those devotees, especially in Perth, where the temple draws a big crowd and where the devotees are very enthusiastic. On Sunday many devotees gathered in a big temple hall. This was my first time in about ten years that I had preached in Australia. I saw a lot of new things becoming manifest, especially in Perth and Sydney. It is quite positive. Particularly in Brisbane and the New Govardhana farm, Ajita Prabhu is doing very well, distributing lots of delicious *prasādam* through Govinda's restaurant in the Gold Coast area.

ISKCON preaching is still going on in Fiji. Two ladies—Guru-smaraṇa Devī Dāsī and Gitākīrti Devī Dāsī—did something wonderful and exemplary. They worked very, very hard, sacrificing their house and

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their salary and collecting lots of money to build a huge temple. They invited me to come visit in three months for the inauguration. I was amazed to see what they are doing. I think others can learn from them.

From there I went to Hawaii, where you used to stay for a month at a time and translate *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The devotees are very nice, and the presidents of the two temples, Vatsala Prabhu and Rāmānanda Prabhu, amazed me with their humility and hospitality. We have got so many jewels in our society, cultivated by you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I also saw Raghunātha, an old Vṛndāvana *gurukula* devotee, who greeted me with a big smile.

While visiting mainland America, we found that His Grace Hari Vilāsa Prabhu has constructed a big Vedic Cultural Center in Seattle and is attracting huge numbers of Indians to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In Spanish Fork, His Grace Cāru Prabhu and his good wife Vaibhavī Dāsī have worked hard and made a magnificent, palatial temple overlooking a mountain. It reminds one of Vṛndāvana and the Kusuma Sarovara palace. It is exemplary how they did this thing. To attract local people they hold festivals, especially the Holi Utsava. From there we went to Sedona, near the Grand Canyon, where a small center has been started by His Grace Daśaratha Prabhu. Sedona is a mystical mountainous area. Thereafter, we went to Phoenix and to Los Angeles. In Los Angeles we saw two of your oldest established Deities, Śrī Śrī Rukmiṇī-Dvārakādhiśa, at the New Dvārakā temple. There we also saw His Holiness Prahādānanda Mahārāja, His Grace Basu Ghosh Prabhu, and some other old devotees. We were there for the Jagannātha Snāna-yātrā, attended by so many joyful devotees, congregational members, and life members. From there we went to Laguna Beach, where you established very elegant Pañca-tattva Deities, which are still there and worshiped by the devotees.

We visited two centers in New York. Near your original 26 Second Avenue center is the Bhakti Center, which is run by a devotee from Germany, His Grace Yajña-puruṣa Prabhu. He is doing wonderfully by preaching to young boys and following your instructions strictly by going on *sankīrtana*, street chanting. I wish I could have joined them, but I was unable. Still, I very much appreciated that they are following your instructions, and I enjoyed their association in the temple, where I gave classes for a couple of days. They invited me to come again, and I look forward to going there again. I also visited the other temple in New York, where His Grace Rāmabhadra Prabhu, the president, is so nicely caring for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda.

From there we went to a city on the East Coast called Atlantic City, where devotees held a Ratha-yātrā. I met His Holiness Jayādvaita Mahārāja and other godbrothers there. I found the Ratha-yātrā festival very wonderful. Atlantic City is a place of sense gratification on the sea beach, but devotees are purifying the people by bringing Lord Jagannātha to them and giving them a chance to have His *darśana*. I thought I might be able to do a little service by distributing some books, though I am a good-for-nothing in book distribution. So I started distributing books and enjoyed distributing to the tourists and the local people very much. From there we went to Towaco, New Jersey. We attended a few house programs in New Jersey with many local devotees and congregational members.

From New Jersey we went to New Vrindavan, near Pittsburgh. You had a vision of building temples on the various hills of New Vṛndāvana, as the Gosvāmīs did in the original Vṛndāvana. In New Vṛndāvana we saw His Holiness Varṣāṇā Swami. From there we went to Atlanta and saw the very beautiful Deities of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, Śrī Śrī Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā Devī, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Madana-mohana. The devotees there are running the temple nicely. Next stop was New Orleans, where we saw many devotees from Māyāpur. We also went to the nearby New Tālavan farm community. The temple president, His Grace Yogīndra Vandana Prabhu, is planning to enliven the devotees there by bringing big Jagannātha Deities. In New Tālavan His Grace Dwibhuja Prabhu is making and promoting herbal medicines.

Then we went to Dallas, where we saw many devotees and the wonderful Rādhā-Kālachandjī Deities. The temple room has a nice dome painted like the sky. In Dallas you established the first *gurukula* and said, "This will be the future of ISKCON." From there I went to Houston, where a big new temple is being built according to the principles of Indian architecture. Then we went to Miami, where we found your old disciples His Grace Viśāla Prabhu, who distributes magazines and books every day, and His Grace Oṅkāra Prabhu, as well as others. From there we went to Trinidad and then Guyana, where your disciple Virabāhu Prabhu, the GBC, invited me. There are four temples in Guyana, and I visited two of them, where I saw that your granddisciples are very joyful. They invited me to come again, so I look forward

to going there again, along with other places on my tour. From Guyana I went to Panama. The Panama temple maybe small, but the Panamanian devotees' hearts are very big. They welcomed me and other devotees very warmly and treated us very nicely.

From Panama I went to Alachua via Orlando for the Śrī Balarāma Jayantī festival. It was wonderful—so many devotees were there. By your blessings I was able to associate with several of your senior disciples, such as Acyutānanda Prabhu and Puṣkara Prabhu, who are very nice Vaiṣṇavas. At Orlando I found my senior godbrother His Holiness Trivikrama Mahārāja. From there we went to Zurich and met with His Holiness Kavicandra Mahārāja and His Grace Rohiṇī-suta Prabhu. The temple is run very nicely, and the devotees are wonderful. There are two temples in Switzerland, one in Zurich and the other in Langenthal (this is a new temple). From there we went to Dubai, which has been given the name Dāmodara-deśa by His Holiness Jayapatāka Mahārāja because of all the wonderful devotees there.

On Janmāṣṭamī nearly 25,000 devotees gathered for the pandal program on the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma farm in Mauritius. I visited three or four temples there. By your mercy and strong preaching, everywhere I went in Mauritius there were large gatherings of devotees. I felt fortunate to get the association of the senior devotees there, for through them I associate with you and remember your teachings. I hope the movement continues to increase in Mauritius.

From Mauritius I went to Medellago, Italy, where our godbrother and GBC Madhusevita Prabhu is playing a very important role. The temple is so tastefully decorated, all the devotees are wonderful, and the *saṅkīrtana* devotees are endeavoring with great vigor and enthusiasm. There I attended the Ratha-yātrā and the Śrī Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī festival. In Milano I did street *saṅkīrtana*. People there are very receptive; they encourage and like the devotees. These are all your glories, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We are simply trying to become your sincere servants by preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. From Medellago we went to Villa Vrindavan and Bologna, where we also tried to do *saṅkīrtana*.

From Italy we went to Slovenia, Hungary, and Croatia. Ljubljana, Karlovac, and Zagreb remind me of my early days, when we tried to follow whatever you said: We used to get up early in the morning, take bath, go to chant and dance on the streets, and distribute books and *prasādam*. Devotees in these countries are wonderful, and the people like to see the devotees' joyful and bright faces as they chant and dance. In Hungary I met Śivarāma Mahārāja, our GBC godbrother. He has made a wonderful temple, which reminds of our Vṛndāvana temple. His followers have nicely decorated the temple, and Mahārāja gave me nice facilities. In Hungary I was fortunate to have the association of many of my godbrothers who are doing wonderful services in different parts of the world. These included Girirāj Mahārāja, Devāmrita Mahārāja, Keśava Bhārati Mahārāja, Nirañjana Mahārāja, and of course Śivarāma Mahārāja. He is making a village of Kṛṣṇa consciousness called New Vraja Dhāma, and people from the UN and the Indian Government, as well as students from European universities, visit there to learn the principles of simple living and high thinking, how to preserve fruits and vegetables, how to run a *gośālā*, etc. A disciple of Śivarāma Mahārāja showed us around.

In Spain I saw a nice temple in Malaga. They do a Ratha-yātrā, and they invited me to come again. I also saw the Madrid temple and the New Vraja Maṇḍala Dhāma Farm in Spain. The devotees are wonderful. They run a beautiful *gośālā*, where seeing the wonderful cows reminds everybody to follow your instructions of *kṛṣi-go-rakṣa*—cultivating the land and protecting the cow to the best of our capacity. From Spain I went to Rotterdam, where ISKCON has a center with many congregational members. In several of their houses we held programs, and the devotees there invited me to come again. From there we went to Amsterdam, where one of our old godbrothers, His Grace Dhanañjaya Prabhu, is running the temple. We had a Sunday program in Den Haag, where there is a small center. Though the center is small, many devotees came, by your mercy. From there we went to Radhadesh, which is a big château hundreds of years old. In Radhadesh is an ideal college for our devotees and many teachers. It is so first class that the devotees earn degrees from universities in *bhakti*, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

From Radhadesh I went to Cologne, Germany, and then to Iran. Devotees are very hospitable in Iran, though it is very difficult to preach there because of government restrictions. But for the sake of Kṛṣṇa, devotees still take great risks for preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am very fallen, so I am not in a position to glorify you properly. But as our *mahājana* Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura says, *adhama janāra bandhu, lokanāth lokera jīvana*. I am very fallen. I cannot

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estimate your glories. But at least I can say, *ebe yaśa ghuṣuka tribhuvana*. You glories know no bounds. Let them spread around the three worlds unlimitedly.

Thank you very much.

Your fallen servant,

Subhāg Swami

Śukadeva Swami

Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most prostrated humble obeisances in the dust of your divine lotus feet. The more we read your books and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, the more we appreciate your unique position in the modern world as its foremost savior. More and more we are seeing the unique contributions you have made for the salvation of mankind and of life on this planet in general. More and more it is dawning on us that the lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the root of all the problems of the world—whether racial discrimination, greedy and egoistic warmongers, horrible and often incurable diseases caused by extremely sinful ways of life, greed, illicit ways of amassing wealth, illicit ways of spending money for unwarranted sense gratification, crumbling family and social structure, agonizing mental stress, dissatisfaction and unhappiness, terror and insecurity, etc., etc. At this moment our society is like a structure without a foundation and is hell-bent for destruction. There is frustration, despair, depression, and hopelessness everywhere. It is totally dark out here. Everyone is bewildered and baffled about where to find the remedy for all this.

The conventional religions have all miserably failed to address the situation, if they haven't actually escalated the problem. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have the right and unfailing medicine for all the ills of the world. It is a medicine that can pass the tests of reason and faith. Your books can convince any sensible person in the world. The holy name—Hare Kṛṣṇa—faithfully chanted can give the complete benefit. Such chanting is preventive and curative as well. It is most easy yet most effective as well. It is very natural and practical.

You told us that your entire success lay in the fact that you did not change the age-old remedy and message of Lord Kṛṣṇa, which has again been delivered by the Kṛṣṇa incarnation of this age, Gaurahari. You did not claim to have manufactured it yourself but only to be a messenger—a representative or “postman” of the Absolute Truth. Such a big, big thing, to become messenger of the Absolute, but you have shown how this is possible: just become a simple and genuine follower. Here is your essential message: Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the eternal, blissful process whereby everyone can become blissful forever, irrespective of the dualities of the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray from the bottom of my heart, with whatever sincerity I may muster, to stay in the service of your followers. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

The aspiring servant of your servants,

Śukadeva Swami



Trivikrama Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Our respectful obeisances unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Sarasvatī Goswami. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanya and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I am so very grateful that you agreed to accept me as a disciple. My father died when I was thirteen, a difficult age for a boy to lose his father. I blamed God to some degree and rebelled against authority. Eventually I ended up in juvenile court and was released only on the condition that I report to my probation officer every month for over a year.

At college I became agnostic, leaning toward atheism. I was a free thinker who decided that religion was a scam and that the priests were hypocrites. I had some attraction to impersonalism and yoga and remember reading some edition of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and thinking, “Why is Kṛṣṇa getting in the way?”

I was a little serious about my so-called spiritual practice and was really impressed when I met your followers and disciples for the first time, thinking “These people are sincere and serious.” But I can honestly say that I would have never become a servant of Kṛṣṇa if I had not had an opportunity to meet and serve you.

I first meet you in your room upstairs in the back of 26 Second Avenue. I was introduced by your disciple Bhūrījāna Prabhu. My first impression was that you were so vulnerable, sitting there alone without any secretary or servant at your door, and that too in a rather bad neighborhood. You immediately spoke to me, saying, “Thank you very much.” I had done nothing worthy of thanks, but you were so warm and hospitable, reaching out with encouraging words.

Later, after initiation, you sent me to London. After a few months you arrived there yourself, in September 1969, and by my great good fortune I had the opportunity of giving you your regular massage. By the time you left London to return to Boston in December of that year, I had become firmly convinced that you were a worshipable person.

That conviction has not diminished as the years have past, and I see practically that by my keeping this strong faith in your person and your instructions, my life has become more and more joyful as my bad habits have been reduced.

From the bottom of my heart I am very grateful to you for taking on your shoulders this extraordinary task of spreading Lord Caitanya’s mission throughout the world. My prayer is that you continue to shower your mercy on me by allowing me to be of some small assistance to you in your sacred mission.

Your humble and insignificant servant,

Trivikrama Swami

Varṣāṇā Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you.

I often reflect on your Vyāsa-pūjā offering of 1961. Delivered in Vṛndāvana, it was more like an explosion than a eulogy. You implored your godbrothers to unite and preach, to truly serve the message of Śrīla Gurudeva. In the absence of such *sevā*, even the most opulent festivals of fruits and flowers fall short of the standard of genuine worship.

Your hope and aspiration was not realized on that day, as your words were considered merely poetic expressions of personal opinion. No one realized they would fan the fire of your beloved master's mission until it was a blaze whose reach would span "from the seas across the earth penetrating the universal shell." The lack of enthusiasm and participation of others did not sway your determination. Your spiritual commitment beckoned the assistance of universal energies. In time the influence of those potencies was irresistible, spreading like the wind, bearing messengers to all corners of the globe.

With your words resounding within my heart, admonishing our tendency to replace sacrificial service with flowery offerings, I had resolved to make my Vyāsa-pūjā homage this year more of a tangible expression of your glories. I pray that that resolve has not been defeated but rather integrated and embellished through a lesson imparted by, of all people, a flower.

Today the air is still and I find myself in a region wanting of devotees. To manage the pain of their absence, I take shelter in a prayer garden named Gethsemane. Clouds linger in the sky here, flowers are poised like paintings; everything is motionless.

Then I see a humble and glorious flower in motion. Though a native of North America, he is known in the vernacular as *gaura*, "the flower that dances in the wind." Yet here he moves even in the absence of a faint breeze. I approach, eager to see what lessons he has to impart.

My initial attraction to this delicate blossom awakened in the same way as my affection for you: through hearing. Before our first meeting, your qualities were relayed to me by others, and your instructions and voice inspired me through books and recorded classes. Hearing about *gaura*'s habit of perpetually dancing, I felt drawn to him. I knew he was the guardian of an important message about my unfolding relationship with you, now in the realm of separation.

In this world, nature provides us with indications of the spiritual world. The reflection and the reality are forever entwined. The ability to decipher the messages require the guidance and insight of the spiritual master. With a patient eye one can perceive the instructions of the guru confirmed in nature, and when we witness such demonstrations our faith is fortified.

In Western theology, wind is synonymous with spirit. Spirit is nondifferent from the Sacramental Word, which speaks to us through sound and is spread, carried, and delivered by the wind. Currents of air thus offer the tactile experience of the subtle element of sound. Sound carries the potential for all other sensations, elements, and movement, just as a seed contains the codified program for an entire tree within its shell. The original sound is the song of Kṛṣṇa's flute, containing the essence of love, which inspires the *jīvas* to respond by chanting Kṛṣṇa name. As the name enters the ears and illuminates the inner chambers of the soul, the heart must express its joy through dance. So what does the absence of such a wind indicate? It speaks of separation.

Love in separation is a profoundly deep and subtle concept which, prior to your appearance, had been confined in the limited editions of rare books which were actually destined to broadcast this public treasure. That fate remained unfulfilled until you brought it to fruition. With those rare books no longer restricted to being produced by the efforts of a few tiring hands, you engaged the untiring *bṛhat mṛdaṅga* in propagating Kṛṣṇa's name, glories, and *sevā* through every town and village.

Now in the absence of your physical form, what does service in separation have to teach us? My newfound friend conveys his message not by words but through the movement which he has earned him a reputation unique amongst the flora of this world. When the breeze is distinct the delicate *gaura* flowers sway gently like little butterflies struggling to become free of their tethers. But today is not such

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a day. The air has not moved. The sun is setting now, and the trees cast long shadows across the garden where I pray to you. Everything has become silent. Even the birds have stopped singing, yet the gaura flower continues to stir. Is this due to some faint updrafts from the already set sun? Or is he floating on a current so gentle that no one else can detect it? His movement continues, inspired by an invisible potency imperceptible to external senses.

Yet his message is clear: when received submissively, the breath of life—the instructions of Śrī Guru—makes mortals imperishable. Being thus infused, the soul finds that only dance will suffice to express such intimate feelings which are beyond the realm of words. Breath has two phases, exhalation and inhalation, spurring involution and evolution, expanding its manifestation and returning to latency. The fullness of the message is deciphered by integration of external with internal, presence with absence, temporary manifestation with eternal source. The great paradox of Lord Gaurāṅga's message is that a fuller presence of Kṛṣṇa is to be found in His absence. Lord Caitanya explored this dynamic in the relationship of Kṛṣṇa to the Brijabāsīs. It has application in the guru-disciple relationship as well. When the outer manifestation of Śrī Guru's mortal form departs from the vision of this temporal world, a disciple's connection to his mission will be stifled lest one realize that "He reasons ill who tells that Vaiṣṇavas die,/ When thou art living still in sound./ The Vaiṣṇavas die to live and, living, try/ to spread a holy name around!"

The gaura flower, knowing that sound is ever present, reminds us of this reality even when we cannot detect it. He assures us that subtle sound, like the instructions of Śrī Guru, still permeate the ether even when outward symptoms are unmanifest.

I take this newcomer to be a representative of you, for you are surely addressing my soul through him. In the pain of your physical absence, he gives tremendous assurance of our continued connection with you. Thus, to the shower of flowers offered to your lotus feet this year, I add the petals of gaura while praying that Vyāsa-pūjā not devolve into a static ritual of superficial formalities. Bless us that the unfolding dynamics of your appearance in our lives be aligned and confirmed by the dancing of our hearts.

Continuing to dance, even in separation from the wind, gaura articulates through his living example the unseen spirit which invokes the mercy and empowerment of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. That spirit is felt in the immortal words of yours that sparked your mission in the West, words that continue to resound in the hearts of those who sincerely yearn to follow in your footsteps: "O Lord, I am just like a puppet in your hands. So if you have brought me here to dance, then make me dance, make me dance, O Lord, make me dance as You like."

Your servant,

Varṣāṇā Swami

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

I offer my false ego at your lotus feet so you may kick me so hard that it may fall far away and drop, smashed. On this Rāma-navamī day, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class, which was given by my godbrother BV Narasimha Mahārāja on *Bhāgavatam* 1.3.22, I received a big jolt when he read your purport. There you state that no one can change the order of the Lord, who has manifested reality by His internal potency. Not even Rāvaṇa could finish his staircase to heaven, by which he hoped to allow anyone to go there without proper qualifications.

I always knew that preaching requires some calculated risk. However, such risk must be calculated under the full protection of the principles set down by Guru, sādhu, and *śāstra*, so that the order of the Lord will not be violated. But seeing failure all around caused by uncalculated risk, also called deviation or transgressing the order of the Lord, I have become very much alarmed. Many examples have started appearing before me, like demons, who are envious of the Lord and His devotees, who violate His order, and who are smashed. The nondevotee *jñānīs* think themselves liberated, but even if they rise up to the *brahmajyoti*, they ignominiously fall from there because of violating the orders of the Lord and maintaining a dirty intelligence, which prevents them from taking shelter of the His lotus feet. The Māyāvādīs are always smashed by their own perverted intelligence, which convinces them to try to become God, an effort which itself constitutes a violation of the Lord's order. So what to speak of the Ritvik-vādīs, who manufacture grotesque meanings out of the clearly expressed desires of Your Divine Grace? Similarly, a lowly devotee like me, who has so far failed to please you, also feels a chill in my false ego telling me I must be violating the order of the Lord. Therefore, on this holy appearance day of Your Divine Grace, I humbly pray to you, the representative of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, that you please smash my false ego and lift me up.

Your servant,

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

Yadunandana Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

On this most auspicious day of Śrī Vyasa-puja, I take the opportunity to express my gratefulness to you for giving us inspiring instructions in your books and lectures, for your impeccable example of selfless service to Guru and Kṛṣṇa, for giving me the association of many wonderful devotees, and for engaging me in serving the *saṅkīrtana* movement. It is a great privilege and honor to serve your magnanimous mission of spreading the holy names of the Lord and the teachings of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to as many places as possible.

Please empower me to become an instrument of your divine love and compassion in establishing and spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness around the world.

Aspiring to remain the servant of your servants,

Yadunandana Swami