

Homages from
ISKCON Centers

Accra

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

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

The Divine Passenger on the Jaladuta

Boarding the *Jaladuta* steamship in Calcutta in 1965,
You carried the divine message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu westward.
Suffering several heart attacks on the way,
You remained undaunted.

To execute the divine orders of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura,
You accepted so many difficulties on your sea journey.

Arriving in the concrete jungle of New York City,
Where more difficulties awaited you,
You chanted in Tompkins Square Park and attracted the materially exhausted hippies.

Taking them back to your humble residence, you taught them the science of *bhakti-yoga*.
From a fallen population you slowly but surely created many stalwart Vaiṣṇavas,
Who helped you spread the Lord's mission across the globe.

Today, ISKCON is a great spiritual movement.
Its numerous temples, schools, restaurants, farms, members, and books
Are available in every nook and corner of this troubled world.

Offering spiritual knowledge, solace, and hope to a spiritually bankrupt world,
ISKCON is a result of the singular efforts of the divine passenger on the *Jaladuta*.

All glories to His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda, the divine messenger of the Lord,
Who became the divine passenger on the *Jaladuta* just to save the world from gross ignorance.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's servants at ISKCON's temple in Accra, Ghana.

(written by Śrīvāsa Dāsa)

Adelaide

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace! And all glories to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara, the principal Deities here in Adelaide, Australia.

*ei kali-kāle āra nāhi kona dharma
vaiṣṇava, vaiṣṇava-śāstra, ei kahe marma*

“In this Age of Kali there are no genuine religious principles other than those established by Vaiṣṇava devotees and the Vaiṣṇava scriptures. This is the sum and substance of everything.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 9.362)

You have made countless contributions to this world, but the most valuable of all is the presentation of the Vedic knowledge to everyone in a simple and palatable manner, without any compromise of its essential teachings. You used simple analogies to explain complex philosophical truths—analogs that were accepted with delight. Your teachings are now available in all the major languages of the world (and many minor ones as well), and as a result many people from the USA to Russia, Canada to China, and Africa to India have seriously taken up the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

At the recent ISKCON Leadership Saṅga held in Māyāpur, delegates from the far corners of the earth received practical assistance in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in their home countries. We are confident that if you had been physically present you would have been most pleased to see the participation, enthusiasm, and various efforts undertaken by your disciples and granddisciples to spread your message, as you had predicted.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this blessed day of your appearance, the devotees here in Adelaide would like to pledge our solidarity once again at your lotus feet. We have moved from a very negative situation of huge debts to a positive one of even buying a property next-door to the temple. As you envisaged, we also had our first Ratha-yātrā festival on Australia Day, and it was well received. Though we have made a lot of strides, we are still faced with many challenges. You said, “The more progress is made in devotional service under the guidance of the *bhāgavatas*, the more one becomes fixed in the transcendental loving service of the Lord” Sorry to say, but we are still fixed in our own ways. We hope you will shower mercy upon us so that we can reform and live up to your expectations.

We beg to remain

Your servants at the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara temple in Adelaide, Australia.

(written by Ādi Puruṣa Kṛṣṇa Dāsa)

Ahmedabad

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept millions of our obeisances at your lotus feet.

Blessed by your eternal spiritual master, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, and Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, and Their associates, you are the most empowered personality who appeared in this world to spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement. This is proved by Śrī Vallabha Bhaṭṭa's words recorded in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 7.11–12), along with your purport:

kali-kālera dharma—kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana
kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana

“The fundamental religious system in the Age of Kali is the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Unless empowered by Kṛṣṇa, one cannot propagate the *saṅkīrtana* movement.

tāhā pravartāilā tumi,—ei ta ‘pramāṇa’
kṛṣṇa-śakti dhara tumi,—ithe nāhi āna

“You have spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore it is evident that You have been empowered by Lord Kṛṣṇa. There is no question about it.”

[Purport:] Śrī Madhvācārya has brought our attention to this quotation from the *Nārāyaṇa-saṁhitā*:

dvāparīyair janair viṣṇuḥ pañcarātrais tu kevalaiḥ
kalau tu nāma-mātreṇa pūjyate bhagavān hariḥ

“In the Dvāpara-yuga one could satisfy Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu only by worshiping opulently according to the *pañcarātrikī* system, but in the Age of Kali one can satisfy and worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari simply by chanting His holy name.” Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains that unless one is directly empowered by the causeless mercy of Kṛṣṇa, one cannot become the spiritual master of the entire world (*jagad-guru*). One cannot become an *ācārya* simply by mental speculation. The true *ācārya* presents Kṛṣṇa to everyone by preaching the holy name of the Lord throughout the world. Thus the conditioned souls, purified by chanting the holy name, are liberated from the blazing fire of material existence. In this way, spiritual benefit grows increasingly full, like the waxing moon in the sky. The true *ācārya*, the spiritual master of the entire world, must be considered an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa's mercy. Indeed, he is personally embracing Kṛṣṇa. He is therefore the spiritual master of all the varṇas (*brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* and *śūdra*) and all the *āśramas* (*brahmacārya*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa*). Since he is understood to be the most advanced devotee, he is called *paramahansa-ṭhākura*. *Ṭhākura* is a title of honor offered to the *paramahansa*. Therefore one who acts as an *ācārya*, directly presenting Lord Kṛṣṇa by spreading His name and fame, is also to be called *paramahansa-ṭhākura*.

Indeed, you are the *paramahansa-ṭhākura* who is described in the above purport.

Even academic scholars like Drs. Harvey Cox, Stillson Judah, and A. L. Basham recognized that your contribution to the world was on a par with that of former great religious teachers like the Buddha and Jesus Christ.

Your spiritual status is clearly demonstrated by the following pastime Lord Caitanya enacted with Sanātana

Gosvāmī, as told in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya-līlā*, chapter 4.

Sanātana Gosvāmī walked alone on the path through the Jhārikhaṇḍa Forest in central India. Sometimes he fasted, and sometimes he would eat. Because of bad water in the Jhārikhaṇḍa Forest and because of fasting, Sanātana Gosvāmī contracted a disease that made his body itch. Thus he was afflicted with itching sores from which fluid oozed. In disappointment, Sanātana Gosvāmī considered, “I am of a low caste, and my body is useless for devotional service.” [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 4.4–6]

Sanātana felt that because of his low birth he wouldn’t be able to enter the temple to see Lord Jagannātha, and that he would only rarely be able to see Lord Caitanya. He was afraid of going near the temple and risking touching the *brāhmaṇas* who worship the Deity and thus offending them. So he considered as follows:

“Therefore if I sacrifice this body in a good place, my unhappiness will be mitigated and I shall attain an exalted destination. During the Ratha-yātrā festival, when Lord Jagannātha comes out of the temple, I shall give up this body under the wheel of His car. After seeing Lord Jagannātha, I shall give up my body under the wheel of the car in the presence of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This will be the highest benediction of my life.” Having made this resolution, Sanātana Gosvāmī went to Nīlācala, where he asked directions from people and approached the residence of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 4.10–13]

Every day Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would visit Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura and forcibly embrace Sanātana, and the liquid oozing from Sanātana’s itching sores would touch Lord Caitanya’s transcendental body. Though the Lord wouldn’t mind, Sanātana was horrified and became even more determined to end his life.

But Lord Caitanya, being the Supersoul, knew of Sanātana’s plan. So one day He spoke to him as follows:

“My dear Sanātana, if I could attain Kṛṣṇa by committing suicide, I would certainly give up millions of bodies without a moment’s hesitation. You should know that one cannot attain Kṛṣṇa simply by giving up the body. Kṛṣṇa is attainable by devotional service. There is no other means for attaining Him. Acts such as suicide are influenced by the mode of ignorance, and in ignorance and passion one cannot understand who Kṛṣṇa is.” [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 4.55–57]

From these statements Sanātana could understand that the Lord knew his mind. Then, after hearing the glories of the ninefold practice of devotional service and especially of chanting the holy name, Sanātana spoke to the Lord, and the following exchange ensued (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 4.75–91):

“I am lowborn. Indeed, I am the lowest. I am condemned, for I have all the characteristics of a sinful man. If You keep me alive, what will be the profit?”

*prabhu kahe,—“tomāra deha mora nija-dhana
tumi more kariyācha ātmasamarpaṇa*

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “Your body is My property. You have already surrendered unto Me. Therefore you no longer have any claim to your body.

*parera dravya tumi kene cāha vināśite?
dharmādharmā vicāra kibā nā pāra karite?*

“Why should you want to destroy another’s property? Can’t you consider what is right and wrong?”

*tomāra śarīra—mora pradhāna ‘sādhana’
e śarīre sādhimu āmi bahu prayojana*

“Your body is My principal instrument for executing many necessary functions. By your body I shall carry out many tasks.

*bhakta-bhakti-kṛṣṇaprema-tattvera nirdhāra
vaiṣṇavera kṛtya, āra vaiṣṇava-ācāra*

“You shall have to ascertain the basic principles of a devotee, devotional service, love of Godhead, Vaiṣṇava duties, and Vaiṣṇava characteristics.

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti, kṛṣṇaprema-sevā-pravartana
lupta-tīrtha-uddhāra, āra vairāgya-sikṣaṇa*

“You will also have to explain Kṛṣṇa’s devotional service, establish centers for cultivation of love of Kṛṣṇa, excavate lost places of pilgrimage, and teach people how to adopt the renounced order.

*nija-priya-sthāna mora—mathurā-vṛndāvana
tāhāñ eta dharma cāhi karite pracāraṇa*

“Mathurā-Vṛndāvana is My own very dear abode. I want to do many things there to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

*mātāra ājñāya āmi vasi nīlācale
tāhāñ ‘dharma’ śikhāite nāhi nija-bale*

“By the order of My mother I am sitting here in Jagannātha Purī; therefore, I cannot go to Mathurā-Vṛndāvana to teach people how to live there according to religious principles.

*eta saba karma āmi ye-dehe karimu
tāhā chāḍite cāha tumi, kemane sahimu?”*

“I have to do all this work through your body, but you want to give it up. How can I tolerate this?”

*tabe sanātana kahe,—“tomāke namaskāre
tomāra gambhīra hṛdaya ke bujhite pāre?*

At that time Sanātana Gosvāmī said to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, “I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. No one can understand the deep ideas You plan within Your heart.

*kāṣṭhera putalī yena kuhake nācāya
āpane nā jāne, putalī kibā nāce gāya!*

“A wooden doll chants and dances according to the direction of a magician but does not know how he is dancing and singing.

*yāre yaiche nācāo, se taiche kare nartane
kaiche nāce, kebā nācāya, seha nāhi jāne”*

“My dear Lord, as You cause one to dance, he dances accordingly, but how he dances and who is causing him to dance he does not know.”

*haridāse kahe prabhu,— “śuna, haridāsa
parera dravya inho cāhena karite vināśa*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu then said to Haridāsa Ṭhākura, “My dear Haridāsa, please hear Me. This gentleman wants to destroy another’s property.

*parera sthāpya dravya keha nā khāya, vilāya
niṣedhiha inhāre,—yena nā kare anyāya”*

“One who is entrusted with another’s property does not distribute it or use it for his own purposes. Therefore, tell him not to do such an unlawful thing.”

*haridāsa kahe,— “mithyā abhimāna kari
tomāra gambhīra hṛdaya bujhite nā pāri*

Haridāsa Ṭhākura replied, “We are falsely proud of our capabilities. Actually we cannot understand Your deep intentions.

*kon kon kārya tumi kara kon dvāre
tumi nā jānāile keha jānite nā pāre*

“Unless You inform us, we cannot understand what Your purpose is or what You want to do through whom.

*etādṛśa tumi inhāre kariyācha aṅgikāra
eta saubhāgya ihān nā haya kāhāra”*

“My dear Sir, since You, a great personality, have accepted Sanātana Gosvāmī, he is greatly fortunate; no one can be as fortunate as he.”

This account illustrates that when a devotee achieves something great in the field of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the devotee must have acted as a cent percent instrument in the hands of the Lord. The Lord then considers the devotee’s body to be His own. Śrīla Prabhupāda, You performed extraordinary activities that the Lord wanted done. As Lord Caitanya said, *prthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma/ sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma*: “My name will spread to every town and village on the earth.” Lord Caitanya fulfilled this most ambitious desire through your body, which He considers His own. Therefore we humbly believe that every word you wrote or said was dictated to you by the Lord. All your words are absolute. Some things we may not understand, but faith in your words is our only means for real success in our life.

*guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete koriyā aikya,
ār nā koriho mane āśā
śrī-guru-carāṇe rati, ei se uttama-gati,
je prasāde pūre sarva āśā*

“Make the teachings emanating from the lotus mouth of our spiritual master one with your heart, and do not desire anything else. Attachment to his lotus feet is the best way to make spiritual advancement. His mercy fulfills all desires for spiritual perfection.”

And *yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo/ yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*: Your favor brings Kṛṣṇa's mercy, and your slight displeasure brings disaster. As you said, *punar mūṣiko bhava*: Without your pleasure, we will again become mice.

Kali-yuga is expanding day by day. The situation is worsening every day. If we don't get out of this situation, we will have to take another birth in this Kali-yuga. So we pray to you to give us shelter at your lotus feet. *Hā hā prabhu koro doyā, deho more pada-chāyā; jogyatā-vicāre, kichu nāhi pāi, tomāra karuṇā-sāra/ karuṇā nā hoile, kāndiyā kāndiyā, prāṇa nā rākhibo āra*. We have no good qualities; we are simply made of your mercy. If we don't get your mercy, we will cry and cry and give up our life.

Begging to remain at your lotus feet, we remain

Your servants at ISKCON Ahmedabad, India.

Allahabad

Śrīla Prabhupāda, You Are an Exception

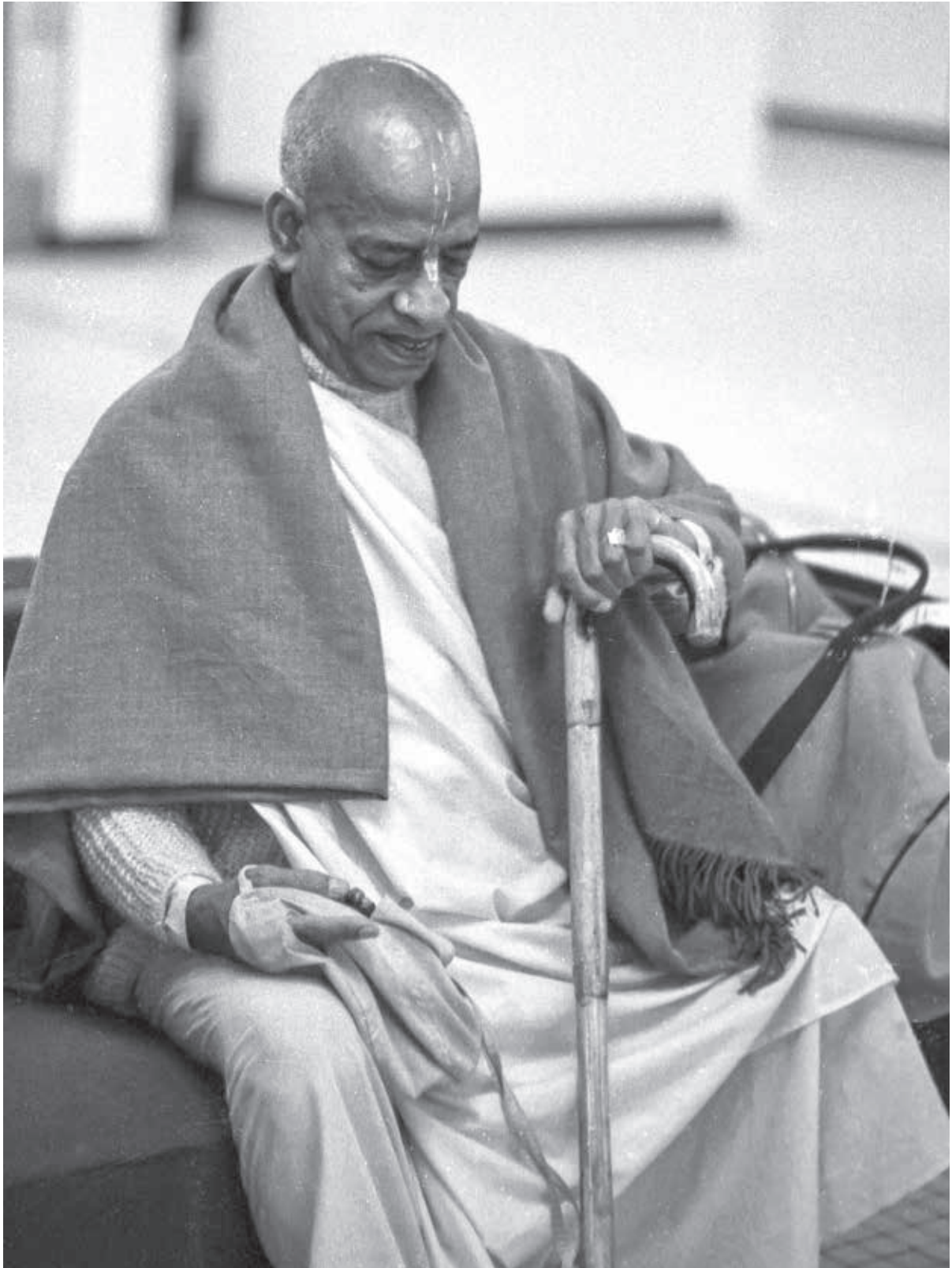
All the swamis who before went westward
Praised the hedonism, increasing their misconception.
It was only you who showed Kṛṣṇa afterward.
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an exception.

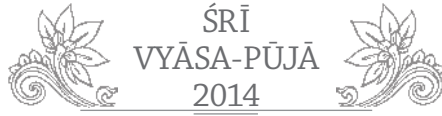
The *sādhus* in India parade on elephants,
Smoking *gañjā* without restriction.
You preached pure devotion, saying "No intoxicants!"
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an exception.

The so-called *sannyāsīs* are lusty in ripe old age.
Following Rāvaṇa, they simply cause destruction.
You trained the youth to get out of the sexual cage.
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an exception.

Your godbrothers tried but utterly failed
To revolutionize the Western world's atheistic notion.
With faith in Kṛṣṇa's name, you succeeded when you sailed.
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an exception.

The order of your master you took to heart
And, like Hanumān, crossed the ocean.
Now Lāṅkā is burning due to your love dart.
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an exception.





Puffed up by money, erudition, and following,
Neophytes fall to the illusory attraction.
Always humble despite of all the knowing,
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an exception.

“Eat, drink, and be merry”
Is the world’s motto of sense gratification.
You say “austerity” to stop the transmigratory ferry.
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an exception.

When wayward disciples are a trouble,
Causing a disturbance to devotion,
You are expert in clearing the rubble.
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an exception.

The modes of nature bind one and all,
Making them dance to their direction,
But they can never make you fall.
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an exception.

We beg to always remain

Your servants at ISKCON Allahabad, India.

(written by Śyāmānanda Dāsa Brahmācārī)

Amravati

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most respectful and humble prostrated obeisances at your divine lotus feet on this 118th anniversary of your most auspicious appearance day.

Although every moment is meant for your glorification, today is a special day to express our gratitude to you by remembering what we have received from you.

You appeared as a jewel in 1896, O Prabhupāda,
Showering benedictions on fallen souls at large . . .

You gave the holy name to deliver us from Māyā’s tyranny,
Pouring on us the eternal transcendental epiphany . . .

Spreading Vedic knowledge through your powerful publications,
You have blessed all souls with scriptures so magnificent . . .

You gave us all the pious Vaiṣṇav association,
Which has uplifted fallen spirits engulfed in depression . . .

O Prabhupāda! You have sheltered us in temples, divine destinations,
Where one can experience transcendental bliss without hesitation . . .

You have given us the shelter of a Vaiṣṇav family so extended,
Where the whole world can live a life totally contented . . .

You delivered the West from the harshest cacophony
By manifesting many *dhāmas* where souls can live in harmony . . .

You gave wandering souls what they needed for times unknown:
The real relationship that we have with Lord Kṛṣṇa alone.

Devotees all over the world have started preparing for the grand golden jubilee celebration of ISKCON in 2016. For more than a year a constant discussion has been going on about the plans and strategies for creating more and more awareness of your unique contribution to the world.

Out of your causeless mercy you tolerated so many difficult situations, but at the same time you showed human society at large that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the practical means for solving all problems. Gradually humanity will discover this most precious jewel that you gave to the world. Human society owes an eternal debt to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and everybody will acknowledge this very soon.

We followers of yours acknowledge that eternal debt, and understand that we can never repay it. Still, one when a disciple of yours asked how your followers could become free from this eternal debt, you answered, “Do as I am doing.” In other words, take up the preaching mission as our life and soul. So, keeping these words in mind, and recognizing that there is so much to do, we can only paraphrase the famous American poet Robert Frost: “We have many promises to keep, and many miles to go before we sleep.”

And paraphrasing Śrī Vallabha Bhaṭṭa’s famous statement from the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 7.11): *prabhupāda-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*: “Without being empowered by you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have no hope of accomplishing anything at all.”

In conclusion, please kindly accept this humble prayer: Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless us so that unitedly and sincerely we can all follow your instructions concerning intense chanting of the holy name, in-depth study of *śāstras*, Deity worship, and service to devotees so that we can become your humble instruments in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness near and far.

Your eternal servants at ISKCON Amravati, Maharashtra, India.

(prose written by Ananta Śeṣa Dāsa, poem by Priyadarśanī Dāsī)

Austin

My dear most exalted Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Somehow or other, by the causeless mercy of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and you, my beloved spiritual master, I got the opportunity to surrender my life unto you and your most glorious Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Serving in your movement has not always been easy, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I have faced many struggles over the years since I joined your movement in 1978. But I know one thing for sure, Śrīla Prabhupāda: whatever difficulties

I have faced have all been endured for your pleasure and satisfaction. They have not been for my material sense gratification. Therefore they are all transcendental. In this connection I recall your saying that there is nothing at all intolerable in this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, but even if we think something is intolerable, we must still tolerate it and not go away.

So, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as your fully surrendered servant I am carrying on in my service to you under all circumstances, both the tolerable and the seemingly intolerable, and I am begging your causeless mercy upon this useless fallen soul so that I may never give up your service for all of eternity.

Your lowly servants at ISKCON Austin, Texas, USA.

(written by Viṣṇupriyā Devī Dāsī)

Baltimore

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We often hear that your books are the basis. A question arises: What are your books the basis of? As we reflect on this question, we find that they are the basis of everything desirable and valuable in our lives. As we embark on the project of building a new temple and growing our community, we are realizing that the task requires so many elements to come together—knowledge, unity, relationships, clarity, inspiration, organization, funds, progress, and much more. At first glance the project looks daunting, but on deeper reflection we find that you’ve already given us the solution to the difficulties facing us.

To illustrate the point that the best way to serve society is by serving Kṛṣṇa, you often used the analogy that the best way to nourish a tree is by watering its roots. Similarly, we believe that simply by keeping your books in the center—by reading them regularly and applying the knowledge to the best of our ability, and by sharing them with others—everything we need to build our new temple and community will become manifest by your mercy. To this end we started a reading program on the first day of this year. More than twenty-five devotees came together and read from your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and shared realizations. This reading inspired everyone so much that we all took a vow to read a certain number of pages from your books every day. The word spread quickly, and now our combined vows have us reading over 370 pages per day. That amounts to 135,000 pages per year. Devotees who are reading are feeling rooted in their Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and consequently they are feeling more enthusiasm in their chanting and their services. To signify that our temple is built on the foundation of your books, we plan to put the names of those devotees who have taken vows to read every day in the foundation of our new temple.

We pray at your lotus feet that as we progress, as we see the community grow, we may never forget each individual, that as the new temple becomes manifest we may never forget the substance, that as we strive for bigger goals we may never forget our smallness, that as we taste the fruits of your mercy we may never forget the cause, and that rather than striving for big things with small love we may always strive for big love in small things, as you taught by your personal example.

At *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.9.24 Lord Brahma prays, *mā rīṣiṣṭa nigamasya girām visargaḥ*: “I pray that in the course of my activities I may not be deviated from the vibration of the Vedic hymns.” We similarly pray at your lotus feet that as we embark on many exciting projects we may never be deviated from your books.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an ocean of mercy. That is a fact, for you liberated thousands of people with your personal association (*vaṇṇ*) and are liberating millions more through your books (*vāṇī*). We devotees at New Kulīna-grāma *dhāma*, in Baltimore, are experiencing that fact when we go out to distribute your books and hear the realizations of all sorts of people. Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, on your Vyāsa-pūjā day please bless us that we will always serve your lotus feet with unflinching devotion and faith.

Your servants at ISKCON Baltimore, Maryland, USA.

Bangkok

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Although Your Divine Grace never visited Bangkok, you did have a plan to come here. At the last moment the plan was changed, and instead you wrote a message to the people of Bangkok.

You understood the mentality of the Thai people, especially their love for deities of all descriptions, and therefore you advised us not to be too eager to install Deities here but to make sure that the people first understand the philosophy. Keeping these instructions in our hearts, we are making all efforts to distribute your books and present your teachings throughout Thailand.

Last year we had the good fortune to host a group of Russian devotees who did wonderful *harināma-saṅkīrtana* in all the public places of Bangkok. We also held a conference on environmental pollution and presented the Vedic perspective. We are in the process of establishing regular classes for students in two of the leading universities here, and we hope that in the coming year we can distribute larger quantities of *prasādam*.

We have many things still to do before we can claim that we have introduced Kṛṣṇa consciousness to Thailand. We have managed to bring out your *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Kṛṣṇa* book in Thai, but we have not yet printed a single volume of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. We have established a small restaurant for distribution of *prasādam*, but Bangkok is a city of over ten million, and there is a great need for us to expand on our present endeavor.

We have regular morning and evening programs, celebrate all the major festivals, and strictly observe Ekādaśī. The devotees here are steady in their services and work together enthusiastically. Although they have full-time jobs, they still manage to join our Sunday *saṅkīrtana* and book distribution. We have a grand Ratha-yātrā festival every year, and devotees come from all over the country take part. At the present time Bangkok is not a peaceful city, but our devotees have gained a reputation for bringing a message of peace.

In this way we are trying to establish your mission in a land that is almost totally Buddhist. Please give us some intelligence so that we may serve you as you would like to be served.

We pray that on this auspicious anniversary of your appearance in this world we may be pure in our efforts and remain faithful to your instructions.

Please give us shelter at your lotus feet eternally.

Your unworthy servants in Bangkok, Thailand.

Boston

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

The very first place you arrived in America was Boston. The Deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīvallabha were directly installed by your lotus hands. You stayed at the temple on North Beacon Street even though the facility wasn't fit for a pure devotee. When a devotee living outside paid for a suite at an expensive hotel, you refused to go, saying the hotel was in the mode of ignorance and the temple was transcendental. You stayed at the temple with the devotees and set a perfect example. Before you came to Boston the devotees did some last-minute painting, and you pointed out that a paint tray with a brush was left outside and should have been properly cleaned and put away. You were always conscious of your surroundings and of not wasting Kṛṣṇa's energy. Once you mentioned that if a person slept in a barn he should know how many rafters there were in that barn. In this way you taught us that to be Kṛṣṇa conscious means to be conscious of everything, although you also said, "We can forget everything else, but we should never forget Kṛṣṇa."

Your whole life was an example for your followers to follow. We can learn from every little thing you ever did or said. Please help us, your Boston devotees, become more Kṛṣṇa conscious and increase Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the first city in America to be graced by the touch of your divine lotus feet as you began your mission of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all around the world.

Hare Kṛṣṇa!

Your servants at ISKCON Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

(written by Pyāri Mohan Dāsa)

Botswana

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept our humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you on this most auspicious day of your appearance!

On this day we have the opportunity to reflect on all the amazing things you have accomplished. Your hard work goes on through all your amazing disciples who have dedicated their lives to your service. This is possible only because you are a pure and empowered personality.

By the mercy of Your Divine Grace, ISKCON Botswana has gone from strength to strength. Since we opened the new purpose-built temple for Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, a wide range of new preaching opportunities has opened up.

We welcome the students from at least two schools every month, who visit as part of their religious studies curriculum. They are given a tour of the temple, a concise presentation of our philosophy, *darśana* of our Deities, and some *prasādam* to take with them. These visits are proving very popular, and more and more schools are approaching us.

We have several local outreach programs, including regularly inviting our neighbors for *prasādam* and going out on *harināma* in the neighborhood. These have been very successful. We have a regular Sunday Feast program, like the one you started, and we recently began a Bala Gopal group for our younger members.

We also hold a very successful Food Festival twice a year. While *prasādam* is the main attraction, we have a book stall and gift shop as well, and in this way we appeal to a wide range of people.

All these activities are due only to your mercy and kindness.

*he guro jñāna-da dīna-bandho
svānanda-dātaḥ karuṇaika-sindho
vṛndāvanāsina hitāvatāra
prasāda rādhā-praṇaya-pracāra*

“O spiritual master, O giver of divine wisdom, O friend of the fallen, you are the giver of your own bliss and are the only ocean of mercy. Although dwelling in Vṛndāvana, you have descended for the welfare of fallen souls like me and are preaching the divine love of Rādhā for Kṛṣṇa. Please be kind upon me.”

Without your mercy we would be in total ignorance and would waste this most precious human life. “Thank you” is inadequate for all you have given us. I pray that we can continue serving you and this most brilliant ISKCON society, life after life.

Your servants in Botswana.

Brahmapur

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*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*

By the example of your own life you showed how a devotee should untiringly serve the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. On this auspicious occasion of the 118th anniversary of your appearance, we pray to humbly follow in your footsteps so that our deeds will be pleasing to you and Lord Kṛṣṇa.

This year we plan to start systematic youth preaching so that we can develop strong, dedicated *brahmacārī* and *gṛhastha āśramas*. Last year we introduced the Puṣya-abhiṣeka festival in our temple and will try to do better next year.

We are trying to complete the plastering and brick works of our main temple building.

We are trying to put more stress on our morning program so that our *brahmacārīs* can maintain the highest spiritual standards.



Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless us so that our efforts will be successful and we can better serve you and Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Your insignificant servants at ISKCON Brahmapur, India.

Brisbane

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Sitting at your lotus feet today, writing this offering, I remember back two years ago when we brought you here to our new address for the first time. It was a triumphant moment—after many struggles and much effort, leading from Bank Rd. to Jennifer St., we carried you in, and it was clear that you were not just being brought here but that you had consented to come.

I look around now and think about what we have accomplished here to offer you: Śrī-Śrī Gaura-Nitāi stand on the altar near you, dressed and cared for as though every day were a festival by *pūjārīs* who are well aware that on some days few visitors will even see Them; we are led by a manager who is continuing the legacy of his own compassionate spiritual master and making devotee care a priority; there are devotees you initiated, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who still, in spite of their age, are distributing books, cooking, and showing us how to honor the previous *acaryas'* festival days; there are so many professional people here in our community who work long hours at their day jobs and then continue into the night with service to your ISKCON; there is a handyman who sometimes exchanges his overalls for *dhotī* and *kurtā* and then gives incredible philosophical classes on your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; there are young, enthusiastic men and women keeping your traditions of Sunday Feast and *harināma saṅkīrtana* alive and thriving; there is a *bhaktin* with a bad leg who drives two hours to come here and make the gardens you look out upon pleasant; there are the youth who are maturing now and by themselves putting on entire huge festivals such as Janmāṣṭamī; and this year, for the first time, there are sincere devotees working to put on Brisbane's first major Ratha-yātrā, in the heart of the city, with the procession being solely for Lord Jagannātha.

Our Bhakti-vṛkṣa program is nicely training devotees; our Yoga of Success program is a creative way of introducing newcomers; our restaurants distribute tons of *prasādam*—Śrīla Prabhupāda, we could greatly extend this list of devotees who love you and for whom service to you is the highest goal of their lives. Because, Śrīla Prabhupāda, each one of us knows in our heart that you have saved us. Are saving us. Everything we have mentioned above is here because of you: Deities, *prasādam*, books, temples, *kīrtana*, festivals—everything.

With gratitude, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all you did, all the sacrifices you made that we can never repay, we offer you whatever Kṛṣṇa has given us, to be used in His service. Please consent to using us as instruments as we face the next challenge of building a temple for your pleasure. We hope that one day soon we will be carrying you once more—just next door—to an even larger and grander new residence.

All your humble servants at ISKCON Brisbane, Australia.

Budapest

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to your divine lotus feet!

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

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

On the occasion of your most auspicious appearance day, please kindly accept this offering from your sincerely aspiring devotees at the Budapest yātrā.

Fully aware that the glories of the pure devotees of the Lord are beyond the limits of the words uttered by a materially contaminated person, I still hope that both you and the Lord may find some pleasure in this imperfect attempt.

Unless we are cautious, we who live in a blissful community of devotees can too easily forget what it means to be a devotee. We may forget what a rare and fortunate situation we are in.

The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.14.5) says:

*muktānām api siddhānām nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ
su-durlabhaḥ praśāntātmā koṭiṣv api mahā-mune*

“O great sage, among many millions who are liberated and perfect in knowledge of liberation, one may be a devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa, or Kṛṣṇa. Such devotees, who are fully peaceful, are extremely rare.” And not only fully peaceful, but perfectly fearless:

*nārāyaṇa-parāḥ sarve na kutaścana bibhyati
svargāpavarga-narakeṣv api tulyārtha-darśinaḥ*

“A pure devotee of Nārāyaṇa is never afraid of going anywhere and everywhere. For him heaven and hell are one and the same.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.17.28)

Blinded by pride, the average Westerner considers the Orient backward, underdeveloped, and underprivileged while admiring his Western world for its prosperity and progress. Discoveries of modern science, combined with the educational system, have convinced people that most problems can be solved by science and that even death will soon be defeated. Science sells the mirage of hope: “Everything will be all right. Just enjoy life and don’t care about anything.” This strong faith of the materialists is the reason why they do not see that what they consider prosperity is, in reality, poverty, that their so-called progress is leading them to hell. The depth of their faith—their illusion—is shown by how desperately and bravely they defend their baseless and absurd tenets.

*yā niśā sarva-bhūtānām tasyām jāgarti saṁyamī
yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni sā niśā paśyato muneḥ*

“What is night for all beings is the time of awakening for the self-controlled; and the time of awakening for all beings is night for the introspective sage.” (Bhagavad-gītā 2.69)

You told us that the main fault of this world is that although no one is perfect everyone thinks he is, and not only perfect but the most perfect—the supreme, God. Since everyone more or less shares this view, these

many “godlets” have created a so-called civilized society based on pride, envy, competition, and corruption. This “advanced” Western realm is the perfect manifestation of the dark side of the material world, a world your beloved spiritual master compared to a toilet. Gentlemen leave such places as soon as possible because they feel uncomfortable there. What do the pure devotees of the Lord have to do with such a dirty and dark place, where no one has even heard of Him?

Our *śāstras* describe the qualities of the pure devotees in many places. Because such devotees are individuals, their individual qualities make them exceptional and special. Their loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa is also individual, and He reciprocates with each of them uniquely. Among the colorful jewels of these wonderful qualities, one is common among them. It is the effulgent gem of devotion. This jewel, unconditional love of God, is solid, deep and irrevocable, and is the possession of every pure devotee. Loving devotion can inspire a devotee to perform deeds that amaze even the mundane moralist.

sarvathā dhvaṁsa-rahitaṁ saty apī dhvaṁsa-kāraṇe
yad bhāva-bandhanam yūnoḥ sa premā parikīrtitaḥ
(Ujjvala-nīlamanī 14.63)

A devotee’s love for Kṛṣṇa is pure when he remains faithful even though he has every reason to cut off his relationship with the Lord. This pure love inspires the devotee to surrender with his whole being. This is incomprehensible to the materialist because understanding such devotion is beyond the limits of mundane logic. What does such a person, perfect in every respect, have to do in this hellish world? Why did he come here?

Of course, we cannot refer to you as being here in the sense of an ordinary person being a part of this world. Scripture tells us that saintly persons, although they seem to be here with us, are always with God in His realm. Therefore the material world has no power over them. The scriptures compare the feet of such saintly persons to lotus flowers. This indicates that just as the petals of a lotus flower are never touched by the water the lotus grows in, the lotus feet of the pure devotee never touch this land of illusion, impermanence, and darkness.

That said, we should not think that the pure devotee undergoes no difficulties, hardships, impediments, or suffering. That belief would cast doubt over the concept of love. Those who walk the path of God have to face many difficulties, by which they get ample opportunity to express and deepen their love and devotion for Him. The difference between them and the materialists is that, unlike the latter, under no circumstances do they ever forget Kṛṣṇa, and therefore they are under His protection at all times.

Therefore the crest jewels of the pure devotees, the *paramahāṁsas*, appear in this material world for the pleasure of the Lord and out of mercy toward the conditioned souls, and thus they work to ease the burden of the world even in the face of severe hardship.

You did not come to this world as we did. You never fell down, never committed any sins, and never turned away from Kṛṣṇa. As you told your most confidential disciples, you came on the personal request by Kṛṣṇa, and although you knew that this is hell, you agreed. You undertook this mission for Kṛṣṇa, and for us.

You showed what love beyond words is. You gave yourself to Kṛṣṇa as He desired while living the life of an ordinary person. Then you met your eternal well-wisher, your spiritual master, and received your mission from him. He initiated you and you quickly manifested your perfection. After finishing with householder life, you took up residence in your eternal abode, Vṛndāvana, and prepared for your great mission in the temple of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara.

What a pastime! What a wonderful drama! Kṛṣṇa is the greatest director, and His cast is always the best.

Then, encouraged at every moment by this wonderful director, you arrived in the land of darkness. Although nothing was easy, by your devotion, humility, and love you achieved success in your mission. You made a miracle.

Free will is the only possession of the spirit soul. Depending on how he uses it, Kṛṣṇa provides various facilities for him. Although everything comes from Him—everything is His energy and nothing is independent of Him—still He does not influence the living beings in exercising their free will. In the spiritual world He provides every soul with the bliss of eternal relationships, full of knowledge, but also the possibility of

forgetfulness leading one to take up the role of independent enjoyer in the material world. The *jīva* receives all this from Kṛṣṇa, whether or not he acknowledges it. The Lord does not interfere with the *jīva*'s free will, because true love can be based only on free will. Love cannot be coerced but must be given freely. Kṛṣṇa is waiting patiently for the *jīva* to express such love toward Him again. This is His supreme desire, for He fervently loves his devotees even if they turn away from Him.

Great yogīs and sages can use their mystic powers to enchant the ignorant, but such miracles do not benefit the living beings. The real miracle is to change the heart of the living beings, to induce them to use their free will to direct their love toward Kṛṣṇa again. You turned Kali's rogues into pure devotees of the Lord, who are effulgent with good qualities.

No one but a pure, empowered devotee of the Lord could do this. You fulfilled the prediction that the holy name of Kṛṣṇa would spread all over the world. How dear you must be to the Lord! What an intimate relationship you must have with Him!

No one can find the limits of your glorious qualities, no matter how hard one might search throughout the eons. My purpose here has been to highlight the crest jewel of your qualities: your infinite loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa, along with its consequent fathomless compassion for the suffering *jīvas*.

Such a pure devotee, a *siddha*, cannot be deterred but is determined to satisfy the Lord in any circumstance. This is a rare quality even among those who have achieved perfection. Words fail to express how very fortunate we are just to be in contact with you. Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the most wonderful devotee.

If you consider us worthy and are at all satisfied with our service, please help us increase our devotion and love for you and the Lord of your life!

Please shower your mercy on us so that someday we will also become pure devotees and perfect servants of your perfect mission!

Your insignificant servants at ISKCON Budapest, Hungary.

(written by Candragupta Dāsa)

Canberra

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

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

Vyāsa-pūjā is the celebration of the appearance of Śrī Guru, the spiritual master. His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda is not an ordinary guru, for he is the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON. As the founder-*ācārya* of the ISKCON institution, Śrīla Prabhupāda gives the directions on how to understand and apply the teachings of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and *The Nectar of Devotion*. The *ācārya* teaches by example how to practice *bhakti-yoga*, known to us as Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Being a pure devotee of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and empowered by Lord Caitanya, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the world at a time when India was trying to forget about Kṛṣṇa. Indeed, the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, thought that India's progress was being impeded by the people's belief in God and their general spiritual inclination. He even stated that it would be better to turn the temples into factories to achieve prosperity.

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇaṁ kurute lokas tad anuvartate*

“Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.” (*Bhagavad-gītā* 3.21) So the leaders were trying to stop the progress of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India, and the common people were influenced by this effort.

In 1965 the United States of America was the world leader in terms of overall prosperity, standard of living, and material achievement. Śrīla Prabhupāda thought, “If I can make the Americans Kṛṣṇa conscious, then the whole world, including India, will surely follow.” Thus he traveled to America in 1965 and began preaching the pure message of Lord Caitanya, and ISKCON was founded a year later with the express purpose of spreading the teachings of Lord Caitanya all over the world. In 1970 Śrīla Prabhupāda, accompanied by a small band of Western disciples, returned to India and began preaching there, with great success.

We cannot overestimate the potency of the teachings Śrīla Prabhupāda presented:

*kali-kālera dharma—kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana
kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*

“The fundamental religious system in the Age of Kali is the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Unless empowered by Kṛṣṇa, one cannot propagate the *saṅkīrtana* movement.”

Being an empowered representative of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda imparted the unadulterated teachings of the Lord. He made it clear that his only qualification was that he did not change the pure message of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, and that everything was the mercy of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. In this way Śrīla Prabhupāda acted as the transparent medium through which the pure teachings of Lord Caitanya were transmitted through the *paramparā*, or disciplic succession. One can act as a transparent medium only if one has no desire separate from Lord Kṛṣṇa’s—or, in other words, if one has no material desires and is completely surrendered to the lotus feet of the Lord. This was Śrīla Prabhupāda. He started ISKCON for no reason other than to serve Lord Kṛṣṇa, and personally he was never compromised by the material facilities that came with the success of being the head of an international society. His Divine Grace’s sole purpose was always to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, never to enjoy the fruits of his work. Śrīla Prabhupāda never used any of the money that came with success for sense gratification, although he worked tirelessly. In fact, His Divine Grace worked harder than any of his disciples, who were all in the prime years of their life. He was old enough to be their grandfather, but he worked harder than any of them.

In Śrīla Prabhupāda we saw all the qualities of a spotless, pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, unaffected by the modes of material nature, ecstatically executing devotional service, full of enthusiasm, not wasting a minute that could be used for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The activities and qualities of the pure devotee described in the verses of *Śrī Śrī Gurv-aṣṭaka* were present in the person of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Some of us were fortunate to see the *mahā-bhāgavata* in person. To actually witness the pure devotee behaving in exactly the way described in the revealed scriptures is a rare blessing. This was certainly very special mercy given by Lord Caitanya and Lord Kṛṣṇa to the disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda. For the devotees who have joined ISKCON after the disappearance of Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is absolutely necessary to stick very closely to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings and example, without making any changes. In this way they can have the same result as those who were present during his preaching *līlā*.

Once, after Śrīla Prabhupāda had visited a temple, a disciple from that temple wrote him a letter expressing how devastated he and the other devotees there were after Śrīla Prabhupāda had left their temple and gone to his next destination. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s answer was that there are two forms of the spiritual master, *vāṇī* and *vapuḥ*. *Vāṇī* consists of the spiritual master’s teachings, and *vapuḥ* is his physical presence. Of the two forms of Śrī Guru, *vāṇī* is more important, because while the spiritual master’s physical form will go away, his teachings will stay forever, and the disciple can always feel his presence in his teachings if he remains faithful and dedicates himself to living and spreading those teachings of the *paramparā*.

The extent of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s achievement in giving the teachings of Lord Caitanya to the world

cannot be overestimated, and as time goes by we will see more and more just how great was the contribution of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's servants at ISKCON Canberra, Australia.

(written by Svayambhūr Dāsa)

Cape Town

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances at your lotus feet on this most auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration.

In the eighth verse of his *Śacī-sutāṣṭakam*, Śrīla Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya writes:

*aruṇaṁ nayanam caraṇam vasaṇam
vadane skhalitaṁ svaka-nāma-dharam
kurute su-rasaṁ jagataḥ jīvanam
praṇamāmi śacī-suta-gaura-varam*

“His eyes, the soles of His feet, and His clothing are reddish like the color that heralds the rising sun. As He utters His own names, His voice falters. Throughout the universe He awakens the sweet flavor of life. I bow down to Gaura, the beautiful son of Mother Śacī.”

While meditating on Your Divine Grace and remembering this beautiful verse glorifying Lord Caitanya, it occurred to me that just as Lord Caitanya awakened the sweet flavor of life by appearing in this world, you have also awakened the same sweet flavor by taking the message of Lord Caitanya to the whole world. The sweet flavor of life that Śrīla Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya refers to is pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Advaita Ācārya Prabhu felt great distress upon seeing the absence of devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa in the world, and especially in Navadvīpa, which was a great center of learning in India at the time. Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura tells us:

Many people came from various provinces to study in Navadvīpa, because by studying there one achieved a taste for education. Therefore no one could count the innumerable students and millions of teachers gathered there. By the merciful glance of Rāmā, the goddess of fortune, everyone lived happily there, but they wasted their time in mundane activities. . . . Even the so-called scholars—the Bhaṭṭācāryas, Cakravartīs, and Miśras—did not know the real purport of the scriptures. [*Caitanya-bhāgavata*, Ādi-kāṇḍa 2.60–63, 67]

Seeing the absence of devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Advaita Ācārya Prabhu felt great distress and knew that only the Lord Himself could correct the situation by personally appearing. Therefore constantly offered *tulasī* buds in water from the Ganges and loudly called on the Lord, and in this way Advaita Ācārya caused the Lord to appear.

As Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī tells us, Lord Caitanya desired to deliver the whole universe, yet although He is undoubtedly Kṛṣṇa Himself, He spread the chanting of the holy name only throughout India.



In His incarnation as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa descended to deliver all the living beings in the three worlds, from Brahmāloka down to Pātāloka. He caused their deliverance in three ways. The Lord delivered the fallen souls in some places by meeting them directly, in other places by empowering a pure devotee, and in still other places by appearing before someone Himself. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu delivered almost all the fallen souls by directly meeting them. He delivered others by entering the bodies of great devotees, such as Nakula Brahmācārī. And He delivered still others by appearing before them, as in the case of Nṛsiṃhānanda Brahmācārī. “I shall deliver the fallen souls.” This statement characterizes the Supreme Personality of Godhead. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya-līlā* 2.3–6]

From these verses, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we can understand that you are without doubt Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s eternal associate and that He has therefore caused Your Divine Grace to appear in this material world. He has also appeared in your body to deliver all the living entities in this world. Lord Caitanya Himself said:

*prthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma
sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma*

“In every town and village of the world, the chanting of My name will be heard.” (*Caitanya-bhāgavata*, *Antya-kāṇḍa* 4.126)

Just as Śrīla Advaita Ācārya felt great distress to see the lack of Kṛṣṇa’s devotional service in this world, you also expressed great compassion upon arriving in Boston in 1965. Onboard the *Jaladuta* you wrote a Bengali poem, *Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma*, “Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West.” An excerpt:

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, You are so kind upon this useless soul, but I do not know why You have brought me here. Now You can do whatever you like with me. But I can guess that you have got some business here; otherwise why should You call me here [to a place] which is demoniac? Most of the population here is covered by ignorance and passion modes of nature, and I do not know how they will be able to understand the transcendental messages of Vāsudeva. But I know Your causeless mercy can make everything possible because You are the most expert mystic. Therefore, I am simply praying for Your mercy so that I can be able to convince them about Your message. All living entities have come under the control of the illusory energy by Your will, and therefore, if You like, by Your will they can also be released from the clutches of illusion. If You so desire, I wish that You may deliver them all, and only by Your such desire all of them will be able to understand Your message. [Śrīla Prabhupāda’s translation, from a letter to Satsvarūpa, 28 April 1970]

You have fulfilled the prophecy of Lord Caitanya by awakening the sweet flavor of life wherever you went in the world. But more than this, you have made many pure devotees who are also awakening that same sweet flavor of life wherever they go. Also, we can understand that your glorious ISKCON movement will go on generating pure devotees, who will awaken that sweet flavor of life for many thousands of years to come. Therefore we find it impossible to fully understand your greatness and how dear you must be to Lord Caitanya, so much so that He reserved this incredible achievement for you.

Meditating in this way, we, your humble followers in Cape Town, sincerely pray at your lotus feet that we may be able to do some small service to assist you in this great endeavor.

Your humble servants at ISKCON Cape Town, South Africa.

Chandigarh

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

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

Respected Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most respectful obeisances unto your divine lotus feet.

Once again we have the opportunity to glorify Your Divine Grace for giving meaning to our lives, nay, for giving us life itself. This time we would like to bathe in one of the unlimitedly glorious and profound teachings of Your Divine Grace one that is very natural and simple and yet most important. In fact, this teaching pleased the heart of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who, being very much moved by your writing, gave this instruction to the editor of the *Harmonist* magazine: “Whatever he writes, publish it.” We are referring to the fundamental teaching that God is a person, that the living entities are also individual persons, and that the process of *bhakti* is therefore a personal process. You penned this philosophical truth in a poetic stanza glorifying Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura on his Vyāsa-pūjā day:

Absolute is sentient
Thou hast proved.
Impersonal calamity
Thou hast removed.

There have been so many inspirations for devotees to write Vyāsa-pūjā offerings to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but the main inspiration has been the joy of discovering one’s own personality by the means of understanding the personality of Kṛṣṇa through the bona fide spiritual master. As we learn from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.6: “The supreme occupation [*dharma*] for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendent Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self.” Or in other words, one who renders unmotivated and uninterrupted devotional service to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is completely satisfied. How can a devotee know Kṛṣṇa is satisfied with his service? He will feel deep satisfaction in his own heart.

Now, to an impersonalist, or one who is not acquainted with his own heart or personality, the check of one’s own satisfaction would be quite bewildering. Since he is unable to relate to Kṛṣṇa’s heart, how could he ever possibly relate to his own heart?

People in general, being ignorant of their identity, are not satisfied. Then how would a dissatisfied heart satisfy or please others? In your preface to *The Nectar of Devotion*, you compassionately explain how to satisfy not only ourselves but everyone else as well:

The basic principle of the living condition is that we have a general propensity to love someone. No one can live without loving someone else. This propensity is present in every living being. Even an animal like a tiger has this loving propensity at least in a dormant stage, and it is certainly present in the human beings. The missing point, however, is where to repose our love so that everyone can become happy. At the present moment the human society teaches one to love his country or family or his personal self, but there is no information where to repose the loving propensity so that everyone can become happy. That missing point is Kṛṣṇa, and The Nectar of Devotion teaches us how to stimulate our original love for Kṛṣṇa and how to be situated in that position where we can enjoy our blissful life. . . . The Nectar of Devotion will teach us how to turn the one switch that will immediately brighten

everything, everywhere. *One who does not know this method is missing the point of life.* [Italics added]

As explained above, people do not know that they should repose their love in Kṛṣṇa, and hence they are always dissatisfied at heart. And society, being a collection of such dissatisfied hearts, is day by day becoming filled with people who are more and more frustrated and inhumane. The hippies in the 1960s grossly exhibited this frustration, but the situation today is worse. People are not hippies externally by appearance, but internally they are so—quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unlucky, and above all, always disturbed (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.10).

As the true and eternal well-wisher of everyone, you made available the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to provide light for the people of this dark age. You presented the scriptural teachings very practically:

Everything that exists is a product of matter and spirit. Spirit is the basic field of creation, and matter is created by spirit. Spirit is not created at a certain stage of material development. Rather, this material world is manifested only on the basis of spiritual energy. This material body is developed because spirit is present within matter; a child grows gradually to boyhood and then to manhood because that superior energy, spirit soul, is present. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.6, purport]

So it is spirit that moves matter. Any machine or process is actuated by the spirit or personality behind it; even the most automatic machine needs the intervention of spirit by way of a command to begin operating.

Anyone who understands such a simple presentation will not be deluded by the word jugglery and complex expressions of the scientists concerning the evolution of life or the mysteries of the origin of species, etc. As you would often say, “What is the difficulty?” Since rendering devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is the natural, constitutional position of the living entity, it is not an artificial imposition on the mind or some sort of intellectual adjustment. What is the proof? One feels satisfied at heart when applying his heart to the process of *bhakti*.

So how can one understand his identity and the identity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead? You explain how in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.1.10:

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is recognized Vedic wisdom, and the system of receiving Vedic knowledge is called *avaroha-panthā*, or the process of receiving transcendental knowledge through bona fide disciplic succession. For advancement of material knowledge there is a need for personal ability and researching aptitude, but in the case of spiritual knowledge, all progress depends more or less on the mercy of the spiritual master. The spiritual master must be satisfied with the disciple; only then is knowledge automatically manifest before the student of spiritual science.

You give a similar instruction in your purport to *Bhagavad-gītā* 4.34:

One has to approach a bona fide spiritual master to receive the knowledge. Such a spiritual master should be accepted in full surrender, and one should serve the spiritual master like a menial servant, without false prestige. Satisfaction of the self-realized spiritual master is the secret of advancement in spiritual life.

In summary, to get true knowledge of the scriptures one should approach a bona fide spiritual master. The purports above do not just describe the process of *bhakti* but express the heart of one who has lived such a life—you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. The poetic stanza you wrote—“Absolute is sentient, Thou has proved”—was not just a mere poem but a personal glorification of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, written out of genuine worship and joy at having accepted a genuine spiritual master.

The whole process of *bhakti* therefore depends on approaching the personality of Kṛṣṇa through the personality of the bona fide spiritual master. One has to follow the process, and the process is to follow a pure devotee of the Lord.

Once one of your African disciples left the movement, thinking he would attain love of Godhead by chanting a lakh of holy names every day. You commented that the idea that Kṛṣṇa will automatically give *prema* if one does such-and-such is Karma-mīmāṃsā philosophy. Kṛṣṇa is not obliged to give *prema* to anyone, no matter how many rounds he chants.

We come back to the theme we began with: we are individuals, and we need an individual approach to the Personality of Godhead. The ninefold process of devotional service has to be followed, but under the direction of an expert bona fide spiritual master; otherwise one will simply be victimized by Karma-mīmāṃsā philosophy, i.e., thinking that when one performs his duties nicely Kṛṣṇa has to award good results. No. Rather, while following all the details of the process rigidly, one has to consciously seek the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa. And the proof of achieving Kṛṣṇa's pleasure is that one's own heart is englanded.

Seeing *bhakti* in its pure and natural form removes all sorts of confusions, contradictions, and deviations on the path of *bhakti*. All our questions or doubts—concerning creation or evolution, the hen or the egg, mercy or endeavor, energy or the energetic, etc.—are easily resolved by this natural approach, i.e., the personal approach to spirituality: the person brings the process, or the *bhakta* delivers Bhagavān, as is told by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura: *kṛṣṇa se tomāra, kṛṣṇa dite pāra, tomāra śakati ache*. “Kṛṣṇa is yours; you have the power to give Him to me.” Or as you put it in your purport to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Ādi 11.59: “A pure Vaiṣṇava, as the proprietor of Kṛṣṇa and love of Kṛṣṇa, can deliver both to anyone and everyone he likes.”

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for offering us Kṛṣṇa and love of Kṛṣṇa through the *guru-paramparā* system. You received the personality of Kṛṣṇa from your eternal spiritual master and awarded us the facility to receive Kṛṣṇa in the same *paramparā*.

Following your instructions to please Kṛṣṇa, we are trying to do our bit at ISKCON Chandigarh. The center is stable and moving forward steadily. We distributed 32,000 *Bhagavad-gītās* during the 2013 marathon, held four Ratha-yātrās last year, and added one Bhakta Prahlad School (BPS) to the already existing four BPSs. About eighty devotees are ready for first initiation. We held one T.T.C.I. seminar conducted by M.I. Regular spiritual courses are being held every week for young boys, young girls, and *gr̥hastha* devotees. Six young devotees (including four engineers) joined the *āśrama* with the intent of dedicating their lives to your mission as *brahmacārīs*.

All this has been possible by your blessings, the guidance and encouragement of senior Vaiṣṇavas, and the mercy of our presiding Deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava. Kindly continue showering your blessings upon us so that we may succeed in our efforts to please Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The servants of your servants at ISKCON Chandigarh, India.

Chennai

O worshipable Śrīla Prabhupāda! O dear Grand-Gurudeva!

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you!

Only by your causeless mercy have I been given the opportunity to write this glorification of you in honor of this most blessed occasion, your appearance day. You are the perfect transparent medium to receive and transmit Kṛṣṇa's mercy because you always act as a selfless instrument in His hands to accomplish His mission. Such an instrument never has any self-motivation: his the only motivation is to please Kṛṣṇa.

I appreciate your description of Kṛṣṇa as perfect and complete. He is completely perfect and perfectly complete. After reading your books, I have concluded that you are also perfect and complete—that is, you

are the perfect and complete representative of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore I have the strong hope that if I can get your mercy by pleasing you I will certainly get Kṛṣṇa's mercy one day.

Your books are the source of all knowledge. Anyone can easily understand your purports and imbibe the principles of devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. One who follows those principles will easily purify himself, such a pure soul can easily preach the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and such a preacher can easily understand the essence of the mission of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, you, and all the previous *ācāryas*!

The fruit of potent preaching is sincere disciples. I am fortunate to have one of those sincere disciples of yours, His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami, as my *gurudeva*. Unfortunately, I am still struggling to become fully submissive to my Guru Mahārāja. Still, I aspire to become a better instrument in your hands for the accomplishment your mission. Hence today, your divine appearance day, I humbly fall at your lotus feet and beg you to bless me so that I may become more submissive and help all Vaiṣṇavas in this ISKCON movement of yours. On my own it is not possible, but by your mercy and your representatives' mercy it is certainly possible.

Again I beg you to bless me so I will become your perfect servant.

Thank you very much.

All glories to you! All glories to all Vaiṣṇavas!

Your servants at ISKCON Chennai, India.

(written by Parameśvara Dāsa)

Coventry

Our dearest and most caring ever well-wisher Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you on your glorious Vyāsa-pūjā day!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Śrīla Vyāsadeva describes the condition of the people of Kali-yuga: They are short-lived, quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unfortunate, and always disturbed. With these disadvantages, people are very disinclined to inquire about the real purpose of life, much less take up some practice to pursue it. With our own eyes we have seen that with the progress of Kali-yuga this disinclination is increasing day by day. Even those who initially make good progress often stop making progress and stay where they are or even go backwards. In such an atmosphere, how is it possible to seriously turn toward Kṛṣṇa?

The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* recounts how Lord Caitanya sent His two generals Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī to Vṛndāvana, how He sent Lord Nityānanda to Bengal, and how Lord Caitanya Himself went to South India to broadcast the holy names of Lord Kṛṣṇa in every town and village and in this way distribute *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

But what about the rest of the world? For this we had to wait another five hundred years—we had to wait for you.

In the *Caitanya-maṅgala* Śrī Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura writes:

[Lord Caitanya said:] “Taking the sharp sword of *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, I will root out and destroy the demoniac mentality in the hearts of all the conditioned souls. If some sinful people escape and, giving up dharma, go to far-off countries, my *senāpati-bhakta* will go there [to deliver them].”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are that *senāpati-bhakta*, that devotee general, who took mercy upon the whole world and came to point us in the right direction. Knowing that almost all people were deeply engrossed in temporary activities for their bodies, and that there was so much misguidance, you traveled around the world fourteen times to give us true guidance and show us what true spirituality is. For this most compassionate act of yours, we and the whole world owe you a great debt that can never be repaid.

We in Coventry are certainly relishing your blessings, and we thank you very much for twenty years ago sending us our beloved Lordships Śrī Śrī Śacīnandana and Nitāicānda, whom we have been worshiping ever since. Twenty years ago we could not have imagined where we are today. We have had many ups and downs, many challenges, but after twenty years we are still here, and our standard of worship has improved a lot from those beginning days. With your continued blessings we hope to keep improving our service to our Śacīnandana and Nitāicānda for the next twenty years, and to do our best to pass on your mercy to others.

Begging to remain attached to your lotus feet, we remain

Your servants at ISKCON Coventry, UK.

Denpasar

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On your most glorious appearance day, we would like to convey to you our sincere gratitude for giving us this matchless gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Through the books you have given us, the śāstric instructions you lived, and your mood of surrender, which your disciples have imbibed, we are every day learning more about ourselves and our long lost love, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

You gave us the panacea—the *mahā-mantra*—which we carry everywhere, from the famous beaches of Bali to the volcanoes that pierce the ground. We have been through a lot, and some of our devotees were even thrown in jail. They were able to tolerate the experience only because you always remained their guiding light. Your presence is felt every time we follow your instructions, and feeling such protection, we happily engage in your work.

Although you visited Jakarta only for a week during your manifested pastimes, the teachings you imparted then have continued to echo down through the years so that now thousands of devotees in this land are keeping them in their hearts.

We seek to always be of service to you and your disciples. Our desire is simply to see you pleased with our endeavors.

Your servants in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia.



Detroit

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

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

Our dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most respectful obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you and your ever-expanding ISKCON movement!

On this most auspicious day we offer you our heartfelt gratitude for giving us everything we need to go back home, back to Godhead. Before we came in touch with you through your movement, we were totally ignorant, drowning in the ocean of material existence. You introduced us to the most merciful Lord Caitanya, Patita-pāvana. Your Divine Grace also gave us the prayers of great Vaiṣṇava ācāryas like Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura. In his song beginning *gaurāṅga karuṇā koro dīna hīna jane*, Śrīla Narottama Dāsa teaches us how to plead to Lord Gaurāṅga: “Holding grass between my teeth, O Lord Gaura, I am calling out to you now! Please be compassionate upon me and come to reside within the temple of my heart.”

Last year, 2013, will remain one of the most blessed years for us here in Detroit, for we received the blessed association of many of your dearest leaders. Under the guidance of our beloved GBC, Her Grace Mālātī Dāsī, we started the celebration of Govardhana Pūjā with a most ecstatic *abhiṣeka* of Lord Śrī Nāthjī—a celebration we will remember throughout our life. His Holiness Gopāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami and His Holiness Romapāda Swami gave us the opportunity to serve them twice during the year and enlivened us with their instructions for making progress on the path of devotional service. His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami blessed us with so much love and inspiration on his first-ever Vyāsa-pūjā celebration in Detroit. After more than twenty years since his last visit, His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami paid us a surprise visit and filled our hearts with utmost bliss.

We understand that only by your causeless mercy were we able to receive the blessed association of these beloved generals of your movement. Empowered by the blessings of these leaders, all the devotees at the Devasadan Mandir helped increase book distribution, *harināma*, our Bhakti-vṛkṣa programs, and Deity worship. In addition, we were able to upgrade the multimedia theater you envisioned so that viewers can experience devotional videos most effectively.

Last year devotees throughout Michigan blissfully attended all our festivals—Ratha-yātrā, Puṣpa-abhiṣeka, Gopāṣṭamī, etc.—in record numbers. As a result of this greater interest in the state, our leaders Śrīmān Yugala Kiśora Prabhu and Śrīmān Deva Mādhava Prabhu are working to establish centers in the suburbs of Farmington Hills and Ypsilanti. Please infuse us with the intelligence and ability to expand your movement in Michigan effectively, so we may help fulfill your desire to spread the cultural conquest of Kṛṣṇa consciousness from Detroit throughout the world.

O savior of the whole world, please continue showering your mercy on us so that we can continue serving you and our most merciful Deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kuṇjabihārījī, until we leave these bodies. Please hold our hand tight because we have the tendency to run away from you.

Begging for forgiveness for our offenses, we remain

Your humble servants at the Devasadan Mandir in Detroit, Michigan, USA.

(written by Jagad-Guru Dāsa)

Durban

Our dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

We bow down before you with gratitude.

The relationship between guru and disciple is so sacred that even the destruction of the universe cannot separate them. [Letter from Tamāl Krishna Goswami]

You are here, beyond doubt. Time, distance, and physical absence cannot hinder the sacred relationship you share with every devotee, on whatever level, any more than the destruction of the universe could. We can still approach you with sincerity, and you will still reciprocate.

Whatever our endeavors, it is plainly evident that what is fueling the mission of Lord Gaurāṅga is your powerful desire to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness to every town and village in the world. And success is coming despite all our mistakes. We remain but pieces on the chessboard. In the mood of a devotee offering Ganges water to the Ganges, we offer you our endeavors.

The instructions you imparted during your short stay in South Africa have remained the blueprint of the thriving *yātrā* we relish today. One of your main desires was that students at the universities here get the opportunity to connect to Kṛṣṇa. You wanted this even more than an exquisite temple and Ratha-yātrā. Over the last year we have been active on five campuses here, maintaining a total of nine programs weekly. Many seeking minds and hungry hearts find refuge at these programs. Every month students visit the temple, and some stay over on the weekends. Twice a semester we host student retreats on a local and national level. These retreats have changed lives.

Over the decades in South Africa, devotees of different eras have apparently been given specific missions. The first wave of devotees ploughed the field as pioneers. The second wave embraced sacrifice and labored diligently to build an inimitable temple. It appears that the mission of the third wave of devotees is to break the racial barriers, ensuring that Kṛṣṇa consciousness has a future in South Africa. The attendance at our university programs is on average comprised of 80% black students—the intelligentsia of our country. Our hopes for accomplishing the mission of the third wave largely rests with them.

These students are beginning to appreciate your books, some of which are now available in their native languages. The most recent December book marathon saw twice the number of books distributed as in the previous year. Overall, book distribution has experienced a significant and constant increase over the last few years. More amazing last December, however, was the large number of young devotees who took to the streets to share your words with their compatriots. Many had never distributed a book before. That experience affected their hearts, and the taste for sharing Kṛṣṇa with others became contagious. This was your simple formula, Śrīla Prabhupāda; you always taught us that book distribution would keep temples afloat and devotees enlivened. The marathon became a festival. And since the marathon, a team of committed distributors has kept the wheels turning.

And the Ganges water flows through our hands back into the sacred river. Even the act of worship is not to our credit. It was you who gave us the opportunity, the facility, and the motivation. We pray to become your ever-willing instruments, even if imperfect.

Your servants at the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rādhānātha Temple in Durban, South Africa.

East Hartford

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

I bow down to the beautiful lotus feet of my spiritual master, by whose causeless mercy I have received the supreme holy name, the divine mantra. [Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, *Muktā-carita*]

We want to thank you for caring about us, the fallen souls throughout the world. You were the only one who cared so much that you sacrificed your peaceful life in Vṛndāvana to accept so many problems, troubles, and anxieties just to give us the holy names. When you landed in Boston on September 18, 1965, you wrote a beautiful poem in which you expressed your humility:

I have no devotion, nor do I have any knowledge, but I have strong faith in the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

You gave the world Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy names, and so many people are delighted because you did. Without chanting the holy names, no one can be genuinely happy, but by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa one becomes truly ecstatic.

We recently chanted for over six hours straight at a festival in Amherst, Massachusetts. The festival was called Extravaganja (it was a marijuana festival), and many people commented about how happy the devotees were. One person said, "They must be stoned out of their minds because they're so happy singing the same song for six hours straight." Actually, the mantra isn't even a whole song—it's just a couple of lines, and we were feeling ecstatic chanting it for hours. If it were a mundane song or a couple of lines from such a song, we would not have been able to sing it for very long. But by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, which you freely gave us, we were able to chant for hours, and the longer we chanted the more enthusiastic we became, and the more ecstatically we danced.

Here in Hartford the devotees want to thank you for giving us the holy names and the blissful service of giving those holy names to others. We can't thank you enough, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all you have given us. Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare!

Your servants at ISKCON East Hartford, Connecticut

(written by Pyāri Mohan Dāsa)

Finland

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

The Finnish *yātrā* has faced some stiff challenges the last few years. The house we had rented for twenty years was sold, and we were forced to find a new place. In these modern, secular times it is very difficult for any spiritual organization to find proper accommodations. The real estate business is such that it was almost impossible to find a place to accommodate all temple activities, the Bhaktivedanta College, and living facilities. When we would find a suitable place, the cost was far beyond our capacity.

Still, in this helpless situation we made a full effort and didn't give up. ISKCON became famous all around Finland because of our hard struggle to get a proper place. When we first began our search we faced hardcore political and racist elements that aimed to prevent ISKCON from getting any property whatsoever. These elements' illegal and dishonest acts raised a big countermovement that worked to our advantage. The media and many politicians, scholars, lawyers, Hindu organizations, the Indian ambassador to Finland, and even the Lutheran Church (Protestants) stepped forward to support ISKCON. We enjoyed vast positive publicity all over Finland. This showed us clearly the good results of our preaching here for many decades.

To top it all off, the City of Helsinki offered us a very nice big manor house in the center of town. ISKCON Finland is now settled down and operating in that government-protected old manor in the middle of Helsinki. The place fulfills all our needs: it's perfect for temple activities, congregational preaching, educational functions, and *āśrama* development. Not only are the devotees happy, but people in general are now positively aware of ISKCON and its achievements in many different areas.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, these last few years have been a great opportunity for us to perform *saṅkīrtana* on a wider scale than ever before. They have shown us what is possible when all *āśramas* and *varṇas* work in unison. The Manor project not only showed that we have more supporters than we ever thought, but it also made it clear how strong the power of your instructions is and how your movement is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servants at ISKCON Finland.

(written by Tattvavāda Dāsa)

Gainesville

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Mahātmā

Mahātmās are broad-minded souls who always see the best.
They tolerate and liberate those others would reject.
Because externals aren't eternal, they dismiss the dress
and help the soul within begin to truly manifest.

My dear, beloved Master, for a span of forty years,
you offered *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* but found few receptive ears.
And then Lord Kṛṣṇa took you and astonished all your peers
by sailing you unaided to the backside of this sphere.

If you'd been narrow-minded, would you sail behind the earth
to look for lost potential where the others saw no worth?
Retrieving and believing in us, firmly, yet with mirth,
you planted us in fertile lands so ISKCON could take birth.

You did not curse our craziness, our decadence and flaws;
you won our hearts completely, giving love that had no cause.
You took our best, our fight and drive, our will to scratch and claw,
and sent us out on *saṅkīrtana*, though we were young and raw.

The drumbeat of critiquing us began that very day,
for everybody honored you, but we were bad, they'd say.
Mistakes we made were epic, and some leaders went astray,
but in our hearts we were too smart to let you get away.

Now as our lives are ending and we look back at the trail,
although it hasn't gone too far, the train's still on the rails.
And I recall that frenzied fall when your health finally failed.
You only wanted us with you, and still your love prevails.

Now what will come tomorrow, only Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa knows.
When East and West don't neatly mesh, it keeps us on our toes.
Though cripple-minded *kṛpāṇas* still can't see past their nose,
because you loved us, one and all, your congregation grows.

You are the true Mahātmā, Prabhupād, for what you've done
is possible because you see all souls as Kṛṣṇa's sons.
The quality of mercy is not strained, but gently comes
as tears of separation when your words adorn our tongues.

Your servants at ISKCON Gainesville, Florida, USA.

(written by Kālakaṇṭha dasa)

Genova

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I bow down with full respect and love at the dust of your most glorious and eminent lotus feet! *Bando sāvadhāna mate.*

Today being the auspicious appearance day of Śrīpād Śrīla Rāmānujācārya, I feel very inspired to write about you.

As the potent *sampradāya-ācārya* Śrī Rāmānuja challenged and defeated the impersonalists, so you challenged and defeated all our misconceptions and transformed our lives with your strong and merciful preaching. Thanks to you, today Śrī Kṛṣṇa is known everywhere. Wherever we go, people welcome us as the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees. Your missionary spirit has no limit. At the age of 69, your health very precarious, with no economic security and no assistants, you traveled to America alone, depending only on your books, your Guru Maharaja's order, and the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. What an example for all of us! We shouldn't worry about our old age, our security, our pension, and so on. We should consider the order of Caitanya Mahāprabhu the



highest priority: *yāre dekha, tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-upadeśa*. We should preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness to everyone we meet. Old age is approaching all of us; so let's make the order and the example of our dearmost Śrīla Prabhupāda the topmost priority in our lives.

This year in Italy we are celebrating the fortieth anniversary of your visit to our country. In 1974, at the end of May, you visited our small temple in Rome. Forty years have passed, and now is the time to renew our vow to purify our lives more and more and dedicate ourselves to your mission—spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world for the benefit of all conditioned souls.

Let's work together as humble representatives of Your Divine Grace! *Jaya* Śrīla Prabhupāda, our divine lord and master! Please allow us to remain forever among your serious and faithful servants.

With love and deep respect,

Your servants in Genova, Italy.

(written by Dayānidhi Dāsa)

Gianyar

*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*

Dearmost Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, the real messenger of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura!

The radiance of your books has destroyed the proud philosophies of *nirviśeṣa* and *śūnyavādī*. You changed the face and consciousness of the world by distributing love of Godhead to everyone equally.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, you established the *saṅkīrtana* movement and dozens of temples, thus fulfilling the prediction of Lord Gaurāṅga that His name would be heard in every town and village. The history of the world will record your achievement. The world is eternally indebted to you. You live eternally in the hearts of your followers.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, we pray for your kind mercy. May we fallen servants of your servants eternally remain so.

The servants of your servants at the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava Mandira in Gianyar, Bali, Indonesia.

(written by Dhīra Dāsa and Kīśora Kṛṣṇa Dāsa)

Gītā-nāgarī

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

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

Our dearmost Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our respectful obeisances at the dust of your transcendental lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this most auspicious day of your appearance!

As one by one your disciples and granddisciples leave to join you in the next great adventure, your legacy for Gītā-nāgarī becomes more pertinent. The vision you gave us, of a self-sufficient agriculture-based devotional community, which you said was “An extremely important part of our Movement,” (letter to Rūpānuga, 18 December 1974), is manifesting day by day by your causeless mercy. Gītā-nāgarī now has the only Grade “A” certified slaughter-free dairy in the USA, serving the devotee communities of New York, New Jersey, Potomac, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Delaware, Detroit, and Harrisburg. The first shoots of oats and wheat are emerging from the freshly tilled fields, and the seedlings of the various vegetables we will be growing this season are already sprouting. The cows are content, protected, and producing delicious creamy milk for the pleasure of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara; the Health and Wellness Center is ready to offer service to the devotees and the surrounding community; and everywhere your presence can be felt through your instructions. You wanted *varṇāśrama* to be a reality, and you wanted your farm communities to be at the vanguard. By following your guidance we see this “Hospital for the Heart” drawing thousands of people a year, who come here for the workshops, retreats, *prasādam*, and festivals, or just to seek shelter from the blazing fire of material existence, as you said they would.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, as the years fall away, we pray that we may more fully comprehend your divine greatness and the scope of your enlightened vision. Please keep us engaged in your service and let us never leave the shelter of your transcendental lotus feet, the shelter of your teachings, and the shelter of your mercy. Allow your legacy to thrive here in the center of Pennsylvania’s heartland, so that “others may be attracted” (Gītā-nāgarī evening lecture, 1976) and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your grateful and loving disciples, granddisciples, and great-granddisciples at the Gītā-nāgarī farm community in Port Royal, Pennsylvania, USA.

(written by Yaśodāmāyī Devī Dāsī)

Guyana

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Unlike ordinary living entities, who must take birth in this material world, you appeared by your own choice to execute Lord Caitanya’s sacred mission of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness worldwide. Śrīla Bhakti-vinoda Ṭhākura predicted this feat, and the *Caitanya-maṅgala* foretold your advent, as did the *Brahma-vaivarta*

Purāṇa. Your goal was always clear; you never doubted but always had firm faith in the words of your spiritual master. In this way your life was perfectly exemplary.

The pure devotees wander throughout the universe not for their personal, selfish interests but to purify all the conditioned souls. As the 50th anniversary of the founding of ISKCON nears, we in Guyana are making a humble effort to spread your glories to every corner of the country. Our dedicated devotees at the Nīmai Pandit Study Centre, near the University of Guyana, are working toward building a brand-new temple there by 2016 as an offering to you. Many innovative initiatives are also planned. And out of your divine mercy you are sending so many very capable devotees who are so diligently assisting in your divine mission here in Guyana. Our humble realization is that whatever good there is in us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is simply the fruit of the endeavor you made. We have had other accomplishments this past year, but we are always aware that whatever we've done so far is insufficient.

Please allow us in the Guyana *yātrā* to be an instrument in spreading your glories far and wide. Our foremost duty is to help everyone get an opportunity to receive your blessings, which you so mercifully bestow if we learn the secret of simply linking with your ISKCON. We can only marvel at how much more we have to discover about your transcendental personality. The more you allow us to participate in this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, the more we experience newer chapters in this great spiritual adventure. We pray that we can always remember the great contributions you have made to human society, and also the great struggle you underwent to bring the teachings of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to the Western countries.

Our realizations are tiny, and our minds are covered by *anarthas*. Therefore we feel so far away from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Still, we desire to stay under the cool shade of your lotus feet and serve you. Please allow us to be useful; allow us to always stay in the association of your devotees despite having so many faults. You said that all the material opulences in this world are like so many zeroes—absolutely useless. However, if a person adds the “one” of Kṛṣṇa in front of all those zeroes, he will become very rich. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the one who provides that “one.” We pray that we may become a fit candidate to receive that “one” from you, and that we may also help others receive that “one” from you. We pray that we may be engaged in your service always, and we thank you for allowing us the opportunity to be engaged thus far in our lives.

You allowed us to understand the reality of the spiritual world, you allowed us to taste the nectar of chanting the holy names, you gave us service that can qualify us for returning home, back to Godhead, you gave us *mahā-prasādam*, which is so dear to all your devotees, and you gave us a reason for wanting to continue living in this world, which is quickly progressing toward hell. How, therefore, can we think for a moment that anything is more important than your instructions and teachings? As a result, out of gratitude the least we can do is simply focus on your desires and make them our life and soul. We should never doubt your words and try to rationalize our inability to fully surrender to you. We should know without any doubt that there can be no happiness in this world without full surrender to Kṛṣṇa and His pure representative.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we pray that our gratitude for what you have done for us will continue to be the motivating force that inspires us to help you in your mission and to struggle to conquer over all obstacles. By forgiveness and tolerance and continuing faith, we can emerge victorious over the tricks of Kali. It is a mistake to limit our conception of you to your manifest pastimes when you were physically present on this earth. We are aware that you are in everything in ISKCON. Please bless us that we can become exclusively and selflessly attached to your glorious service.

We beg your forgiveness for making such a poor offering, and for our boldness in expressing our determination to continue being yours through thick and thin. Still we pray that you will bless us in this coming year with the energy and commitment to better satisfy you by our service. Be compassionate upon us and remove from our hearts all inauspicious things. We are weak and cripple-minded. We depend on your mercy. Kindly keep us in some corner of your fragrant lotus feet.

Your insignificant servants at ISKCON Guyana.

(written by Paramātmā Dāsa)

Hong Kong

Our dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet on this auspicious day.

You strengthen the devotees in the far-east countries. We are so thankful for your influence in ISKCON's Hong Kong temple and in China. There are myriads of wandering conditioned souls in China, who, by your grace, can understand the goal of life. By studying your commentated translations of the scriptures and by following the example you have set for us, we have the opportunity to leave this temporary, miserable material world and return to the eternal, blissful abode of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Through your books and lectures, Your Divine Grace guides the devotees with the sublime teachings of the scriptures, which display the scientific knowledge of the creation of the material world and extol the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, the beauty of the spiritual world, and the glories of devotional service. Through the process of devotional service we are gradually becoming purified of material desires and spiritually enlivened. You are so merciful for allowing such fallen, conditioned souls as ourselves to have the shelter of your lotus feet.

Śrī Māyāpur *dhāma* is the headquarters of ISKCON. By your blessings the magnificent Temple of the Vedic Planetarium there will help spread the glories of the Lord all over the world. With unflinching determination your disciples and granddisciples have been fulfilling your desire to build the TOVP project. In a few years it will be completed, by your mercy.

We also hope that the project in Śrī Māyāpur will help bring the devotees in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China into sweet and blissful association with one another and with other devotees from around the globe. It is our sincere desire that people all over the world be blessed and inspired and find their love for God and for one another increasing by the influence of Śrī Māyāpur *dhāma*. May the devotees become empowered to taste the spiritual nectar from the ocean of love brought forth by Lord Caitanya.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your love, your compassion, and your instructions. You make this world a world of rainbows. You and your disciples have been spreading the mercy of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Lord Caitanya, and Lord Nityānanda all over the world. Please help us distribute this truth and enlighten people with the knowledge that all work except devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa is bondage. May we remember your love and your instructions in our daily service. May we embrace and cherish all that you have given us. We offer our humble obeisances unto the dust of your lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!*

Your servants at ISKCON Hong Kong.

(written by Lalitā Sundarī Devī Dāśī)

Jagannātha Purī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our *śata-sahasra-koṭi-daṇḍavat praṇāmas*. All glories to you!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, at birth your parents may have noticed fearlessness in you, and that is why they named you Abhay. In this way glorification of you started.

Now your disciples and granddisciples glorify you every year on your Appearance Day for what you did for human society. I am very eager to know how your friends and associates glorify you on your present planet.

I'm sure all of them must be lagging behind you in rendering service to the Supreme Lord. Do they glorify you for the service you did on this planet, for you service you're doing there?

Please bestow your mercy on us so that we can also glorify the service you render to the Supreme Enjoyer.
Begging to remain your menial servants,

Your devotees at ISKCON Purī and Silchar, India.

(written by Gaura-Nitāi Dāsa)

Karunā Bhavān

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you on this day of your auspicious appearance! It is our great fortune and privilege that we are able to take part in this worldwide celebration.

Your life was an unparalleled example of patience, determination, and enthusiasm in all circumstances. Nothing could break your faithfulness to the instructions and desires of your beloved spiritual master, of the *guru-paramparā*, and of the cherished Lord of your heart, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You knew success was in His hands. Without having that living ideal before us, how could we expect the possibility of success beyond our dreams to the dream that is yours?

In New Vrindavan in June of 1976, you said “I have given you some framework. Now you fill up. Make it a nice building.” In Los Angeles in May of 1972, you called it a “framework of expansion.” To make a nice building, professional craftsmen are needed, craftsmen who take pride in doing a perfect job with a finishing touch. Similarly, we see how so many thoughtful devotees, grateful for the privilege of serving you, have been innovative and have become expert in their field of preaching. So many nice programs, projects, and departments have been constructed. They give devotees so many tools and resources to initiate, preserve, and deepen their Kṛṣṇa consciousness and that of others. In this way the devotees channel the spiritual energy that flows from your heart, via their hearts, to the hearts of others—an energy that is driven by compassion and the desire to please guru and Kṛṣṇa and deliver all fallen souls. Thus empowered, the members of your spiritual family are increasing by the thousands.

As the servants of your servants, we aspire to follow in their footprints.

Karunā Bhavān became famous for its book distribution and for thereby helping other temples financially. “Gaurāṅga” became a household name in Scotland. But so many difficulties also arose that caused some setbacks. This is now history. Those who remain are a dedicated few. As we have matured, we have made mistakes. But we're not allowing ourselves to be crippled by them or by any accompanying criticism. Senior and more experienced Vaiṣṇavas are assisting us toward great achievements.

We have been making a mark in the yoga scene with *kīrtana* and *prasādam* distribution. In Scotland there's no competition. The field is practically untouched. When we ask for feedback, the most common response is “Nothing can be improved.”

We toured northern Scotland last year, planting some seeds of interest. We made a few contacts that look promising for big public festivals in the future, but in general a follow-up in the north would be difficult due to distance. It was a lot of hard work and sacrifice for too little a result. So this year we're planning to focus locally, where many seeds have already been planted by many years of book distribution, upon which Karunā Bhavān was built. Continued contact would then be easier, with a view to making more devotees.

So many temples are flourishing by communicating with and taking a personal interest in the members of their congregation. We have been taking help from devotees who have become professional in this field.



So far the biggest result is in Edinburgh, where the devotees have maintained a Nāma-haṭṭa continuously for eighteen years. With the introduction of an accompanying Bhakti Vriksha program, a core of very sincere devotees has developed into a small, close-knit community. They meet regularly for *kīrtana* and *Kṛṣṇa* book reading, and they attend the temple at least once a month. For your pleasure, the Edinburgh devotees desire to reestablish the Centre of Vedic Culture there.

Begging for your blessings as we attempt to continue the expansion of your framework in Scotland, we remain

The servants of your servants at Karuṇā Bhavān, ISKCON Scotland.

Khaśadesh

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Your granddisciples in Khaśadesh are showing increasing dedication and progress on the path of *bhakti*, and in sharing it with others. It is by your mercy only that the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the glories of the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu are changing the hearts of so many in this godforsaken land. Just as Lord Rāma appreciated the efforts of the spider in its attempt to push small grains of sand to help build the bridge to victory and *dharma*, you kindly encourage us every day in our infantile steps in building a bright spiritual future for many Chinese souls.

The translation of your books is ongoing. Your dedicated team of translators have this year completed the Twelve Cantos of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and other titles are being translated for mass distribution. Each book, each chapter, each word, is a rain of flowers in the hearts of those who, as in a desert, hanker for knowledge of the soul and everlasting happiness away from the heat of the ultramaterialism and impersonalism that plague this vast land. Increasingly, too, your Chinese servants enjoy spending time in the holy *dhāmas* of Śrī Māyāpur and Śrī Vṛndāvana, where they chant and dance with no restrictions for weeks on end, as you instructed. This is also your immense mercy, and we are grateful to you for offering us this opportunity.

The strong family that you created and that you originally placed under the care of your dedicated servant Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami is expanding far and wide. The satellite *yātrās* of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Philippines are all harmoniously joined with Khaśadesh, and with the constant presence of your dedicated disciples, who give their love, care, and association in so many ways, we are securely on the path to spiritual success, all the way to your lotus feet.

On this auspicious day we pray that you will shower even more of your kindness, blessings, and mercy upon us for another year of long hours of service, tireless preaching, intense *sādhana*, and the continuous attempt to cleanse our hearts by the chanting of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. Let us be like soft clay in your perfect hands so we may serve your mission with great devotion and bring pride to the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *paramparā*.

Your servants in Khaśadesh (China).

Kaunas

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you!

In my teenage years I used to visit the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple with my friends. At that time it was only one of a hundred spots we would visit. Then I ran away from home and started to think, “What really has value for me?” I was surprised to realize that the temple was the place my most dear to my heart. I didn’t know anything about devotional service at the time, but devotees made a deep impression on my soul.

As time passed, your ISKCON movement became the oasis that saved my life. It became much more than a lighthouse in the dark, much more than an antidote for a man dying of poison. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you took the shining *cintāmaṇi* dust of Vṛndāvana and distributed it all around the globe, like Prometheus did with fire. You gave us a place to stay and engagement in Lord Kṛṣṇa’s service. I pray that all people may one day experience cooling effect of the shade of your lotus feet.

Your eternal servants in Lithuania.

(written by Saṅkīrtana Dāsa)

Kiev

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet on this auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration on the 118th anniversary of your appearance.

Taking the opportunity of this glorious event, we are trying as far as we can to glorify the limitless ocean of your transcendental qualities, just for our own purification.

You taught us not only by your words but by your own example, just as Lord Caitanya accepted the position of a devotee and taught devotional service by practicing it Himself (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 3.20–21):

*āpani karimu bhakta-bhāva aṅgikāre
āpani ācari’ bhakti śikhāimu sabāre*

[Lord Caitanya said:] “I shall accept the role of a devotee, and I shall teach devotional service by practicing it Myself.

*āpane nā kaile dharma śikhāna nā yāya
ei ta’ siddhānta gītā-bhāgavate gāya*

“Unless one practices devotional service himself, he cannot teach it to others. This conclusion is indeed confirmed throughout the *Gītā* and *Bhāgavatam*.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you once said that your books are nondifferent from you, and this is the absolute truth.

The ninth chapter of the *Ādi-līlā* of Śrī *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* describes how Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself became the tree of devotional service and its gardener:

I take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who Himself is the tree of transcendental love of Kṛṣṇa, its gardener, and also the bestower and enjoyer of its fruits. . . . Thus the Lord brought the desire tree of devotional service to this earth and became its gardener. He sowed the seed and sprinkled upon it the water of His will. . . . By His inconceivable powers, the Lord became the gardener, the trunk, and the branches simultaneously. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 9.6, 9, 12]

Your ISKCON is also a branch of the Caitanya tree of devotional service, and you, like Lord Caitanya, are also its gardener, for you are carefully nourishing this growing tree until one day it will include all the countries, cities, villages, and houses in this world. And, like Lord Caitanya, you are distributing the fruits of the tree by the handful to all the poor and hungry people:

The transcendental gardener, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu distributed handful after handful of fruit in all directions, and when the poor, hungry people ate the fruit, the gardener smiled with great pleasure. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 9.30]

We witnessed all of this during last year's Bhakti Sangama festival, when thousands of devotees and guests participated in wonderful and powerful *kīrtana*, and all their faces reflected your divine smile. In this way your life will be an example for ten thousand years, bringing the highest benefit to others.

You are the example of how to carry out this famous order of Lord Caitanya's:

*bhārata-bhūmite haila manuṣya janma yāra
janma sārthaka kari' kara para-upakāra*

One who has taken his birth as a human being in the land of India [Bhārata-varṣa] should make his life successful and work for the benefit of all other people. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 9.41]

You are the perfect example of how to do this with compassion and the tolerance of a tree. Anyone who personally came in contact with you attained the highest eternal benefit. We can see this by contemplating the lives of your disciples who for the last forty years or so have unceasingly and tirelessly helped you distribute the fruits of Lord Caitanya's tree.

Please empower us to deliver your sublime message to the world purely, without any distortion, by cooperating in your service.

Your servants at the New Navadvīpa Mandir in Kiev, Ukraine.

(written by Bhairavatarjaka Dāsa)

London (Soho)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble and respectful obeisances. All glories to you and this amazing ISKCON movement spreading like wildfire across the globe!

Another year has passed, and sometimes it is hard to keep up with all that is happening in our small corner of the world.

Over the last year we have seen here in London some amazing progress in the areas of community development, team building, and focus on a new temple for Their Most Beautiful Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Londonīśvara.

Last year we initiated a project to focus on trying to fulfill your vision for London, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We know how important this was to you. It is our strong desire that your most beloved Deities Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Londonīśvara be situated in a facility that is befitting. We truly want to please you and the whole *paramparā*.

We started a petition to acquire land in Regent's Park and are working on designs for something special—something more than just a temple, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We want to erect a holy place of transcendental pastimes that will attract unlimited souls to the service of the Lord and bring together devotees in order to deepen their loving exchanges and their faith in Guru and Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are in need of your mercy and guidance. Please help us become pure instruments of your divine will and desire. Please help us co-operate to satisfy you and Their Lordships.

We simply want to become your humble and surrendered servants.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servants at ISKCON London (Soho), UK.

London (South)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most auspicious day!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, instead of staying in Vṛndāvana, you spent your valuable time giving us the sweet nectar of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Even if all of us thank you from the bottom of our hearts for this effort for the rest of our lives, it will not be enough. Your books are saving the whole world and are also the safety net protecting us from the material miseries we encounter daily. We do not know where we would be without your divine grace and your transcendental books.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are indeed the *jagad-guru* of all the lost souls. All your granddisciples are united only by you. Even though we may all have different *dikṣā-gurus*, you are the *śikṣā-guru* of all living entities. At ISKCON South London, devotees have come together due to your books and teachings. We have been able to do some small amount preaching due to the powerful weapons you provided us for this age—your books. Lord Caitanya gave us the *yuga-dharma*, the chanting of the holy names, and you gave us the *yuga* weapons, your books.

During last year's Christmas marathon the whole temple was so inspired to distribute your books that we were able to go out every day and far surpassed all our previous efforts. We have tried to place your books in many of the houses in Croydon and hope to place *Bhagavad-gītā*s in all the schools in the area.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for spending your precious time translating and writing so many books. These books are invaluable in our preaching. Your blessings are also with each and every devotee who reads any of your books.

*nṛ-deham ādyaṁ su-labhaṁ su-durlabhaṁ
plavaṁ su-kalpaṁ guru-karṇadhāraṁ
mayānukūlena nabhasvateritaṁ
pumān bhavābधिṁ na taret sa ātma-hā*



“The human body, which can award all benefit in life, is automatically obtained by the laws of nature, although it is a very rare achievement. This human body can be compared to a perfectly constructed boat having the spiritual master as the captain and the instructions of the Personality of Godhead as favorable winds impelling it on its course. Considering all these advantages, a human being who does not utilize his human life to cross the ocean of material existence must be considered the killer of his own soul.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.20.17)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this year, by your grace, the devotees put in more effort in many ways:

- We held two Diwali festivals outside the temple, which attracted many new people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- We visited sixteen schools, where we were allowed to do Diwali presentations to a total of approximately four thousand children. The children were very receptive to the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.
- During the month of Kārttika, we held *sat-saṅgas* in a different home every day, and more than a thousand devotees offered candles to Lord Dāmodara during the month.
- As mentioned above, the Christmas marathon was our most successful yet. Many devotees participated in the distribution of your *Bhagavad-gītā*, and, thanks to your divine grace, they were enthused by this service.
- Recently we held a very successful Rāma Navamī festival at the Oshwal Hall. This festival attracted five hundred people, who chanted the holy names and enjoyed performances of Bharat Natyam dances and a drama performed by the Bhaktivedanta Players.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we pray that you will continue to keep us engaged in your service.

Your foolish disciples at ISKCON South London, UK.

Malaga

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

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

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

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

“The symptoms of a *sādhū* 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. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.25.21)

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

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the deliverer of the fallen souls. His mercy turns the dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains.” (Śrīdhara Svāmī’s commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.1.1)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā!

In 1965, at the age of 69, you left the shores of India and embarked on your journey to the Western world to spread the holy names of Lord Kṛṣṇa and deliver the fallen souls from the nescience of material existence. In spite of your advanced age and your enduring all kinds of difficulties, you were determined to fulfill the desire of your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, to propagate the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the Western world. You had complete confidence in the ultimate success of your mission because of your firm faith in the prophecy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu that His holy name would be chanted in every town and village in the world. Because of your full surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa and your taking shelter of the lotus feet of your spiritual master, you were able to accomplish your mission.

For you, preaching was always the essence. This you stated in your own Vyāsa-pūjā offering to your Guru Mahārāja in 1961, which you called *Vaiṣiṣṭyāṣṭakam*. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the savior of the fallen souls in this material world. Without your kindness, we would never have known our real goal of life as human beings, nor would we ever have known that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Some verses from your *Vaiṣiṣṭyāṣṭakam*:

12. To see a sense enjoyer is just like drinking poison, but you, O my master, go far and near, even abroad, to give them your *darśana* [and the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu].
13. *Mlecchas* and *yavanas* are forbidden to enter the Hindu temples, but you, my lord, made them the chairmen and sat them in the assembly of devotees.
15. In the cities of Kali-yuga the instructions of the bona fide spiritual preceptors are “forbidden”; still you remain there in any way possible.
16. The devotees want to hide in a secluded place to perform their *bhajana*. You, however, do not accept this in your judgment.
17. Wherever there is an increase in population, in that place preaching work is to be found.

Below are some other verses from Your Divine Grace’s *Vaiṣiṣṭyāṣṭakam*, written as you were preparing your First Canto volumes of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and planning your worldwide mission. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you always had a very clear Kṛṣṇa conscious vision; you were *dṛḍha-vrata*, absolutely resolute in your determination to deliver the world.

25. But simply a festival of flowers and fruits does not constitute worship. The one who serves the message of the guru really worships him.
26. The service of the message is the real meaning of the *Vedas*. Don’t be proud, brothers. Come back to this.
27. Kalidas Nag [a learned man who was defeated by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and later became his disciple] said in a public forum one day:
28. “Kali’s mission is to kill the entire world while the essential meaning of Lord Caitanya’s message is kept locked in a cage.”

In the *Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭakam* it is said that Kali (the personification of the age of quarrel and hypocrisy) became sad upon the appearance of Lord Caitanya. Up until then, Kali’s main soldiers—irreligion, falsehood, lust, anger, and greed—were very proud that in this age they had already captured and disabled all the saintly persons by their powerful influence. But seeing their master, Kali, very sad, these soldiers asked him, “Why are you so afraid of just one inexperienced son of a *brāhmaṇa*? We have already defeated all the great Vedic scholars and learned *paṇḍitas*. What can this one *brāhmaṇa* boy do?”

Kali replied, “Oh, you do not know that this *brāhmaṇa* boy is not ordinary. I foresee that He will purify all the fallen souls. Simply by his *saṅkīrtana* he will turn Kali-yuga into Satya-yuga. He is Lord Nārāyaṇa Himself. Indeed, I’m fortunate that He is appearing in my jurisdiction. Even though I will be defeated, I will also be delivered.”

Only Lord Caitanya and His empowered generals like you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, can change the face of the earth. The *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi-khaṇḍa 2.159) says that devotees of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu are so powerful that each of them can deliver the whole universe.

So we gather together to express our gratitude to you. We cannot truly understand the gigantic blessings you have given us through your herculean preaching efforts, your patience, your dedication, and, most of all, your compassion. There is no one in the three worlds who can give anyone something more valuable than what you gave us.

In the present degraded age, when we are threatened from every side, when even the concept of spirituality is often corrupted, what would have been our fate without the blessings you gave us? If we could truly understand the magnitude of your blessings, we would know that there is nothing else for us to do but distribute your books or in some other way help book distribution.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, forgive us for not yet having inundated the world with your books. This is our obligation. So please forgive us, for we still haven't absorbed ourselves completely in the service of your lotus feet. Therefore please give us your blessings so we can do it and thus fully express our gratitude to you for your mercy upon us.

We ask for your blessings because on our own we will not be able to inundate the world with your books. Only through your mercy can we do this and much more. Thank you a million times and more, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

We wish to achieve your blessings so that we will become expert at serving the lotus feet of your servants. Śrīla Prabhupāda, that's all we can present to you as our humble offering. We pray for your mercy and the mercy of your disciples so that you and they may continue to guide us in our attempt to progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda. May your glories be proclaimed throughout the three worlds.

Your humble, faithful followers and great admirers at ISKCON Malaga, Spain.

Manchester

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most sincere humble obeisances. All glories unto you, our dear lord and master!

Please accept our deepest heartfelt gratitude for your kind gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Thank you for the International Society of Krishna Consciousness, a transcendental gateway to our eternal home, the abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Within this transcendental gateway, ISKCON, lie all truths, the acts of devotion, and all blissful symptoms of loving service. ISKCON is your gift of rejuvenation and the oasis of transcendental nectar that we are forever seeking. However, due to our material vision, sometimes this oasis appears to be ever distant and to be imposing a constant uphill struggle for success. Due to foolishness and being blinded by our material conditioning, we cannot understand the real essence of spiritual progress.

You have given us everything we need within the society of ISKCON. There is nothing to add or remove. Everything is there in its full splendor, but that splendor is invisible to the untrained eye, just as gemstones are appreciated only by those who understand their value.

Sometimes visions of failure emerge due to past conditioning and the lack of determined enthusiasm, and these visions lead us to emphasize imperfections rather than seek viable solutions. While it can be easy in these

circumstances to become absorbed in the desire for recognition (whether it be knowingly or unknowingly), we unwittingly place ourselves in deeper illusion and frustration. Your Divine Grace has very nicely described the true path of spiritual emancipation: cooperation. Within the spirit of cooperation to please you, we can truly find all answers we seek. The heart and mind increasingly become blissfully surrendered at your lotus feet, where we find an ever-shining shelter of hope, loving service, and deep satisfaction, for which we are eternally grateful. Therefore we pray wholeheartedly that this spirit of cooperation may ever be present in our hearts.

ISKCON Manchester continues its preaching mission, focused on three key areas, namely outreach preaching, *prasadam* distribution, and congregational chanting of the holy names. The core congregation of devotees are *gṛhasthas* with children, and that fact has led us to promote family worship of the Supreme Lord, creating an attractive setting for visitors and the public at large.

Over the past year some notable changes have taken place here at ISKCON Manchester. The number of core devotees has reduced significantly due to devotees' jobs or family commitments taking them to other places. While this reduction has affected how much we can reach out and support further expansion, it has also given us an opportunity to concentrate on the remaining core devotees and, where possible, re-allocate responsibilities to those who are able. Currently ISKCON Manchester has no full-time serving devotees, and so we are fully dependent on volunteers.

By the Lord's grace we are seeing more new visitors to ISKCON Manchester from diverse backgrounds. While this is very encouraging, it will take some time before we see the fruits—these individuals' becoming committed devotees. The other challenge the management faces with the reduced core devotee congregation is the increased demand of temple services on the remaining initiated devotees. We are greatly fortunate that they are so dedicated and willing, but their service time is limited because they have to balance their temple services with responsibilities relating to work, home, and children.

We continue to support outreach preaching via Nāma-haṭṭa groups in Bolton, Stoke-on-Trent, Warrington, North Wales, and Stockport, and we are working with the Scottish *yātrā* to support other areas, such as Preston, Leeds, and Liverpool. We hope that these *yātrās* will gradually develop stronger, more self-sufficient devotees and increase the congregational links during key festivals.

We host more than 250 visitors at key festivals, which we now hold at external venues, helping to widen our outreach to the community at large. His Grace Jagadātmā Prabhu runs the Stockport storefront center full-time with very little resources, and he has done extremely well by attracting local interest. He has recently started Sunday Feast programs to reinforce a stronger local focus on Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śloka recitation classes for children are going on in Bolton and Manchester. We hope this foundational training for younger devotees will help train future preachers and *brāhmaṇas* for the mission.

We hold five main annual events to create increased traction for the Northwest ISKCON mission. These are the North Spring Retreat, Manchester Ratha-yātrā, Gaura Pūrṇimā festival, Janmāṣṭamī festival, and twelve-hour *kīrtana* during Kārttika. These events stimulate immense cooperation and significantly cement loving relationships among devotees and visitors alike.

Kindly bless us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, so that we will always focus on the needs of the devotees who are dedicating their lives to helping push forward your missionary activities. Please guide us to keep Lord Kṛṣṇa in the center of all our activities by deeply understanding your desires to serve Him in all circumstances. May we see challenges as great opportunities for advancement in devotional service, and may we always seek to find solutions that bring greater unity despite apparent diversity.

We beg to truly embrace the many different ways devotional service is rendered. Please increase our maturity so we may deeply transform the core of our hearts and imbibe the virtue of selfless loving service.

Your insignificant servants at ISKCON Manchester, UK.

Miami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you, for you have blessed us all with the privilege of devotional service.

On this auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, we are especially appreciating your gift of the devotional process of Deity worship. In February 1936, in your Vyāsa-pūjā offering to your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, you wrote a poem containing this stanza:

Absolute is sentient
Thou hast proved,
Impersonal calamity
Thou hast removed.

Your spiritual master very much liked your poem, and especially these lines. It showed him that you had fully realized the essence of his teachings, namely, that the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Person and that we each have an eternal personal relationship with Him. Nearly thirty years later, when you journeyed to the United States to preach, you continued to propagate the same essential truth. Understanding that the Western world was heavily covered by passion and ignorance and impersonal tendencies, you took the bold step of introducing the devotional process of Deity worship to Westerners.

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness is popularly known as The Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement because everything is centered on chanting the holy names of the Lord, especially the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. You revealed to us the life of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura—how he chanted 300,000 holy names of the Lord each day and propagated the importance of chanting the holy names. You also warned us not to imitate him by staying in a secluded place and attempting to chant *japa* all day. You knew that none of us are able to follow such a rigorous practice and that we needed to be engaged in many kinds of attractive devotional activities. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has enumerated sixty-four activities by which a novice devotee practicing *vaidhī-sādhana-bhakti* can engage all his senses in the service of the Lord. Among these activities, he has selected five as principal:

1. Hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*
2. Association with advanced devotees
3. Living in a sacred place, such as Mathurā
4. Chanting the holy name of the Lord
5. Serving the Deity form of the Lord with great faith

Of the fifty-nine remaining items, at least thirty-five are directly related to Deity worship. That makes the fifth item, serving the Lord in His Deity form, especially significant, since it includes so many ways to serve the Lord. Deity worship itself can be broken down into sixty-four items, and many of those find their counterparts in the original sixty-four items given by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

One of the practical benefits of Deity worship is that it helps us change our consciousness from being absorbed in material sense gratification to being absorbed in satisfying Lord Kṛṣṇa. Practically speaking, the most miserable thing in life is to work hard for our personal happiness. The harder we try to become happy ourselves, independent of the Lord's service, the more unhappy we become. In Deity worship we regularly serve Lord Kṛṣṇa by dressing Him, feeding Him, holding festivals for Him, chanting His holy names, revealing our minds to Him, and more. By feeling the satisfaction of beautifully dressing the Lord, we gradually lose the desire to decorate our own bodies. By cooking wonderful preparations for the Lord to eat, we gradually become so satisfied that we lose our greed to eat opulent food. By working cooperatively to hold wonderful festivals

for the Lord, we enjoy those festivals so much that we lose our desire for mundane parties and social events.

Lord Kṛṣṇa is always our well-wishing friend, and He is present in our heart to guide us. The Deity of Kṛṣṇa is identical to the Lord in the heart, and He understands all our happiness and distress, anxieties and desires. Just as we can reveal our mind to a friend and get relief from some intense anxiety we are holding within, so we can reveal our mind to the Deity and get that same relief. As a close friend may offer some good advice to help us, so the Deity, from within the heart, will reciprocate with us. For example, we may feel upset about the actions of some devotee and want to confront him or her, but at the same time we know that emotionally we will get hurt, or that we may make an offense by directly dealing with the situation ourselves. If we reveal our feelings to the Deity, He may tell us, “Trust Me, I will take care of the problem better than you can.” If we follow the Lord’s guidance, we will see that He will take care of the situation in the best way possible and that we will not be hurt emotionally or spiritually. We will also increase our faith in Him and love for Him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given us many detailed instructions on how to worship the Deities. For example, you have taught us to not keep *prasādam* and *bhoga* in the same refrigerator. Sometimes we do not take those rules so seriously, but you explained that if we are not even willing to follow some simple rules then how can we show Lord Kṛṣṇa we want to love Him? If we follow the rules and guidelines for Deity worship under your direction, that endeavor will show the Lord we want to advance in spiritual life, and He will reciprocate by granting us that advancement.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving the world the privilege of Deity service. You took a great risk by engaging your disciples in Deity worship, since the Deity is the Lord Himself and we are not qualified for such intimate service to the Lord. Here at ISKCON Miami we pray that you will send more devotees who are eager to serve our Deities and that you will guide those who render such service how to do so with a pure heart. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your humble servants at ISKCON Miami, Florida, USA.

Midrand

Dearest Srila Prabhupada,

Please accept our prostrated obeisances in the dust of your divine lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Loving Grace! All glories to your Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā!

So much trouble to gift us this process you have undergone.

In every endeavor, you did the Lord depend upon.

When times got tougher, your devotion by purity and devotion you fortified.

Steadfastly with every word and deed you the Lord have glorified.

The lesson of your devoted life is thus most instructive,

Teaching us how to cross Māyā’s hurdles and to remain devotionally productive.

You afforded us the best of everything so causelessly,

Saying that if we felt indebted we should preach this message vigorously.

Our attempts here in the last two years are possible only by your mercy—

Many newspaper articles, regular gatherings, and book distribution weekly;

Food for life monthly; regular hall programs and courses based on your teachings;

New souls becoming inspired, and here in Midrand a new temple opening.





To please you in service is our only desire and fervent prayer.
To create a loving family of servitors we do aspire.
May our humble attempts to Your Divine Grace bring pleasure.
We depend your words “The grandfather is more merciful than the father.”

Your aspiring servants at ISKCON Midrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

(written by Mādrī Devī Dāsī)

Montreal

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances on this auspicious day of your divine appearance.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu predicted that in as many towns and villages as there are on the surface of the earth, His holy name will be preached: *prthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma/ sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma* (Caitanya-bhāgavata, Antya-khaṇḍa 4.126)

The Lord showered His mercy on you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, so that you could go to many countries and make devotees of thousands of people who had never before heard of Kṛṣṇa or had any knowledge of the Vedic civilization. *Kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*: “Without being specially empowered by Kṛṣṇa, no one can preach His glories all over the world.” It is amazing that wherever one goes on this planet there is an ISKCON temple nearby, where devotees follow the standard temple programs, perform *harināma*, distribute your books and *prasādam*, etc..

Another reason for your success is that you had unflinching faith in Kṛṣṇa and your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. You took to heart the order of your spiritual master to spread Kṛṣṇa’s glories all around the world.

In 1952 you launched the League of Devotees in Jhansi, aiming to widely preach the invaluable knowledge of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, by which one can be delivered from the clutches of *māyā* and go back to the spiritual world.

You started *Back to Godhead* magazine single-handedly and went out daily in the oppressive heat of a New Delhi summer to sell the magazines at tea stalls.

To preach in the West you would have to have books, and so you started translating *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and by Lord Kṛṣṇa’s arrangement and your Guru Mahārāja’s blessing you arrived in New York in 1965 with only forty rupees.

In the early days you met with many obstacles, but nothing could discourage you from your mission. Your tape recorder was stolen when you lived at Dr. Mishra’s office, and later you had to live on the Bowery in a madman’s loft, and you had to walk in areas filled with dirt, bums, hippies, drug addicts, weirdos, and drunks lying on the street.

Your deep love for Kṛṣṇa was manifested by your constant endeavor to establish the mission of Caitanya

Mahāprabhu. Your purity, deep conviction, knowledge, and love of God attracted young hippies, who for the first time found someone they could trust, and a few sincerely followed your guidance.

After successfully opening centers in New York and San Francisco, you sent devotees to Montreal in 1967. The following year you came here for a few months to bless our city. The devotees, by your mercy, opened a temple on Park Avenue; they would go out every day for *harināma* and book distribution. In the early days the devotees had a rough time with the police, who would sometimes break their neckbeads and then throw the devotees in jail overnight. Yet they were not discouraged, because they were confident that you were showering your unlimited grace on them. They were fully surrendered at your lotus feet. Although they were living in an austere condition, they were very happy to serve in your mission.

In 1975 you came to visit our newly acquired temple on Pie IX boulevard, near the Olympic stadium. After the *guru-pūjā* you gave a wonderful class, encouraging us to become more Kṛṣṇa conscious in our daily activities. Later the devotees gave you a tour of the building. Just by the dust of your lotus feet, our temple has become a place of pilgrimage.

Today your devotees here go out regularly on *harināma* and distribute your books and *prasādam* with full enthusiasm. All our major festivals attract many people, and we have regular visits from high school and university students eager to know about our philosophy.

Recently we opened a new preaching center in a predominantly French area; it's called The Bhakti Center. By your blessings we hope to spread the glories of Vedic knowledge and expand our preaching activities.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an ocean of mercy for many reasons, but especially because of your books, which have saved many lives around the world. Your books have been translated into all the major languages of the world and are the law books for the next ten thousand years. Many people have been introduced to your books on the internet. For example, recently we received a phone call from a person who read your books while browsing the internet. He lives quite far from Montreal, but after reading some of your books online he started chanting the *mahā-mantra*, and now he wants to visit our temple and meet the devotees. There are many amazing *saṅkīrtana* stories in Montreal—about how your books have affected the lives of people who have received them. You are saving us all. It is inconceivable how much good you have done for the human society by giving transcendental knowledge through your books.

Your books have given us a clear vision about how to cross over the nescience of this material world. That is why you said we must continue to distribute your books.

Śrī-guru-caraṇe rati, ei se uttama gati, je prasāde pure sarva āśā. The topmost achievement in spiritual life is devotion to the lotus feet of the spiritual master. By his mercy all spiritual aspirations are fulfilled.

If we want success in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we have to follow your instructions, just as you followed your spiritual master's instructions. "One should accept the instruction of a bona fide spiritual master as one's mission in life." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.41, purport).

Please bless us to become more humble and meek yet bold in our preaching activities. You told us to be careful how we spend *lakṣmī*. Any donations we receive are actually yours; so please help us remember this simple fact and guard against unnecessary spending.

Please guide us so that we do not change what you have given us and we maintain the institution you have wonderfully left us for the benefit of mankind.

You have always stressed that we work cooperatively and expand the service of the Lord without personal motivation. Please give us the strength to follow this instruction and to always remember not to add anything in the name of preaching that was not practiced by you or by our previous *ācāryas*. We pray that we do not deviate from the guidelines you gave us.

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu freely distributed pure love for Kṛṣṇa. Because of your exclusive dedication to Caitanya Mahāprabhu, you have brought this matchless gift to all mankind. The whole world is indebted to you.

On this most auspicious day of your appearance, we are humbly begging for your mercy so that despite our disqualifications we will remain strong in devotional service.

Your servants at the ISKCON temple in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Mumbai (Chowpatty)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace and the *guru-paramparā*!

A few days ago I was listening to your audio recordings of 1977. That was the year I heard you on the terrace of your apartment at Juhu, where you spoke to a small group of us. You spoke some very profound truths then that have been deeply embedded in my consciousness ever since.

When you were asked about your leaving Vṛndāvana to travel to the West, you stated that you never left Vṛndāvana because you took Vṛndāvana in your heart all over the world. You said that Kṛṣṇa also resided in your heart and helped you write the *Kṛṣṇa* book and all the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* purports. So you were always spiritually with your guru and Kṛṣṇa, though you were apparently alone in New York in 1965–66.

In February 1977, in Māyāpur, when you spoke at the Appearance Day ceremony of His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, you stated another profound truth. After quoting Kṛṣṇa's famous verse explaining how he comes to this world whenever there are discrepancies in people's following real *dharma* (*yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata . . . tadātmānam sṛjāmy aham*), you stated that Kṛṣṇa's pure devotees also repeatedly appear somewhere in these vast material universes to establish Kṛṣṇa consciousness and preach the Absolute Truth, and when their mission is accomplished they depart. So whereas somewhere you are taking birth on a planet where you will one day preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness as you did here, in another universe devotees are seeing you leave after establishing a strong ISKCON.

We are therefore eternally grateful for all your mind-, intelligence-, and heart- cleansing books, your lectures, *prasādam*, temples, the holy name, senior leaders (your disciples), and the unlimited number of other gifts you bestowed on us and all people of the world. These are truly the "Wonders of the World" now, which can convert the whole world into Vṛndāvana, the land of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

In the service of the *guru-paramparā* and Lord Kṛṣṇa, we remain

Your insignificant servants in Mumbai (Juhu), India.

(written by Śrī Nāthjī Dāsa)

Mumbai (Juhu)

Our dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

We have acquired a farmhouse on a four-and-a-half-acre plot near your Nilachal Farm in Talasari. This land has plenty of water, even in summer, which will help the Nilachal Farm, which dries up in summer. Several rooms in the farmhouse are used for preaching purposes. We beg for your blessings to increase the preaching activities here.

We recently started receiving pure cow's milk and organic produce from our Talasari farm for your beloved Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārījī. We are also completing the permanent structure of the *gośālā*, for the comfort of your cows. Please bless us so that we can preach to the world your formula "simple living, high thinking."

During last December's book distribution marathon we distributed 220,024 *Bhagavad-gītās*, number two

out of all temples in the world. This is the first time we ever distributed more than two lakhs of *Bhagavad-gītās* during the December marathon. We also came in third in the world for our yearly book distribution score, which included 648,957 *mahā*-big books. By your divine mercy may we distribute more books this year.

In February of this year we held Lord Jagannātha's Ratha-yātrā, starting from the Bhaktivedanta Swami Mission School in Sastri Nagar and culminating in Juhu Vile Parle Scheme. In the pandal program that followed the Ratha-yātrā, devotees from Poland and other parts of the world, led by His Holiness Indradyumna Swami, presented the KrishnaFest cultural program. All participants were inspired by the various items presented. By your divine grace may these preaching activities be expanded in the future.

During our Śrī Rāma Navamī festival this year, we held Śrī Śrī Sitā-Rāma's *abhiṣeka* for *kalash* donors in the evening, which most donors appreciated. During the festival, His Grace Sārvabhauma Prabhu recited Śrī Rāma Kathā for five days, a program very well received by many members of our enthusiastic congregation. Please bless us to expand this celebration in the future.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we know you are displeased by unnecessary demolition of constructed buildings so we can make something new. Therefore, since your school in Hare Krishna Land was shifted to its new premises in Shastri Nagar, we have been renovating the former school building with minimum demolition. The renovated building will house an ashram, a dormitory, guest rooms, and offices. Kindly give us the intelligence to renovate the building nicely for your transcendental pleasure.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for engaging us in the service of your dear Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārījī.

Your insignificant servants at ISKCON Mumbai (Juhu), India.

Nagpur

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We wish you the best of Vyāsa-pūjā celebrations on this most auspicious day.

ISKCON Nagpur has grown over the last year in many ways, and on Gaura Pūrṇimā we inaugurated the new temple in the center of the city.

We feel there is great potential for spreading Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission here, and we pray for your mercy so we will have the purity and strength to walk in your footsteps and selflessly serve your mission.

We all feel that the time to "boil the milk" has come, since we now have many devotees and further growth will depend on purity. We have very much taken to heart the instructions you gave Hamsadūta Prabhu in 1972 to "boil the milk" to insure the spiritual strength of the devotees, and we intend to do that in Nagpur.

Please accept this poem-prayer:

The Age of Kali has descended on us like a black cloud in the sky,
Throwing us into the clutches of Māyā like an insignificant fluttering fly.



For a long time our consciousness lay in deep slumber
As we, lo!, ran around in this rat-race blunder.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda! We pray for your causeless mercy
As we strive to attain our transcendental positions in urgency.

Give us the power to become more civilized
And follow the four principles without being demonized.

Our material body is a golden cage we perceive—
Please give us the divine intelligence to conceive
That the self is not this body we receive
But the soul, whose freedom we must achieve.

O divine father! Show us the righteous path to divinity,
So that we may practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness with sensitivity.

Let us follow ISKCON's path of brotherhood, we pray to thee,
So that our society can grow into eternity!!

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Hare Kṛṣṇa!

Your devotees at ISKCON Nagpur, India.

New Badarikāśrama

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you!

You have given us so many spiritual shelters: your temples, your devotees, your books, all the different services—*sādhana*, *kīrtana*, *harināma*, Deity worship, outreach—and what to speak of *prasādam*! We are eternally indebted to you for all these transcendental gifts. You have said that the disciple can never repay the debt owed to the spiritual master but that he can try by giving to others what the spiritual master has given him.

By your divine grace, this month seven devotees will be receiving *dikṣā* from your disciples His Holiness Devāmrita Swami and His Grace Vaiṣeṣika Prabhu. Since last year the devotees here have developed a *saṅkīrtana* training program that is building momentum and generating great enthusiasm for all the temple programs. Govinda's restaurant has re-opened and is distributing the mercy. There are a handful of senior devotees whose steadiness in service is a shining example for all of us. We pray to you on this most auspicious



day of your Vyāsa-pūjā that we may be instruments in your hands in serving Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda.

You once said that we will show our love for you by how we cooperate to push on this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in your absence. Here at New Badarikāśrama we pray to be empowered by you to work together so that we can please you and Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda.

Your humble servants at New Badarikāśrama, Denver, Colorado, USA.

New Biharvān

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most auspicious occasion of the anniversary of your divine appearance on this planet, please accept our most humble obeisances at your most merciful lotus feet. All glories to you and to your auspicious Vyāsa-pūjā celebrations, which are going on in every part of the world.

How fortunate we are to have come in touch with you in a remote place like Boise, Idaho! In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 19.151) Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu tells Rūpa Gosvāmī:

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*

“All living entities are wandering throughout the entire universe. Some of them are being elevated to the upper planetary systems, and some are going down into the lower planetary systems. Out of many millions of wandering living entities, one who is very fortunate gets an opportunity to associate with a bona fide spiritual master by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. By the mercy of both Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master, such a person receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service.”

We feel very grateful for the matchless gift of pure love of God that you have offered us. We pray that we may not take this gift cheaply, and that we can gradually come to appreciate just how exalted a gift this is. In a letter to one of your disciples, you give us a glimpse of how great you are and how immense this gift is:

It is a basic principle that one must accept a bona fide spiritual master in order to achieve the highest perfection of life, love of God. I thank all of you very much for accepting me as your spiritual master, and I promise that I will take you back to home, back to Godhead. I ask you all to promise me to always chant at least sixteen rounds, follow the regulative principles, read our books and try to preach this Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Movement all over the world. So far my qualifications are concerned, I am simply trying to carry out the order of my Guru Maharaja. [Letter to Nityānanda, 12 November 1971]

The gift you are giving us is the ultimate gift of eternal devotional service, as described in the song you gave us to sing every morning during Tulasī āratī:

My desire is that you will also give me a residence in the pleasure groves of Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma. Thus within my vision I will always behold the beautiful pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. I beg you to make me a follower of the cowherd damsels of Vraja. Please give me the privilege of devotional service and make me your own maidservant. This very fallen and lowly servant of Kṛṣṇa prays, “May I always swim in the love of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Govinda.

You are an eternal resident of the spiritual world. You are one of the confidential servitors of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. You are a pure devotee of the Lord, and therefore you are fully empowered to take us back to Godhead. We are fallen and ignorant, having given up the service of Kṛṣṇa. On this day of your appearance, we humbly pray to you that we may always remember your mercy and never disrespect you or your kind-hearted devotees.

We beg that together we may be able to do something to please you and your devotees, and help spread your *saṅkīrtana* mission. We humbly beg you to kindly pick us up from this ocean of birth and death and place us as one of the atoms at your lotus feet.

The past year was a good one at your Boise temple. We had some very wonderful devotees join your *saṅkīrtana* party here in Boise. Due to the concerted, dedicated efforts of many devotees residing in Boise, we had many wonderful festivals throughout the year, and these festivals were well attended. By your mercy the devotee community here is also growing and maturing, and we now have a steady congregation during the Friday and Sunday programs. The atmosphere in the temple is pleasant, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Baṅkebihārī look ever more beautiful and smile favorably upon Their devotees, and that is our only success. At the same time, there is so much more we can do to spread your divine movement and so many ways in which we could improve. We are in great need of your mercy and guidance.

Your aspiring servants at New Biharvān Dhāma, ISKCON, Boise, Idaho, USA.

(written by Gopāl Hari Dāsa)

New Caitanya Candrodāya Mandira

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

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

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

Please accept us as your followers. Everything we know and everything we have have come from you.

The order of your spiritual master was ever your guiding light as you set out to spread Lord Caitanya's mission in foreign lands. So firm was your faith in that order that you did not consider the possibility of failure. In following the order of guru there is no failure. A follower of the spiritual master has no separate existence. You did not take time out of your personal life to do something for your spiritual master: your life *was* the order of your spiritual master. You never felt that you were alone: Kṛṣṇa and your spiritual master were always with you, and your movement—your branch of the Caitanya tree—was a solid fact. As you said to an acquaintance in New York as early as 1965: "There are temples and books. They are existing, they are there, but the time is separating us from them."



*śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma, kevala bhakati-sadma,
bandoṇ mui sāvadhāna mate*

“The lotus feet of our spiritual master are the only way by which we can obtain pure devotional service. I bow down to his lotus feet with great awe and reverence”

The Vedic literature describes many yogic perfections, but the ability to reach out and touch a person’s heart and transform that person’s every desire into the pure desire for service to the Lord—this is the highest mystic perfection of the pure *bhakti-yogī*.

We do not fully understand Kṛṣṇa, we do not fully understand what it means to be a devotee, what it means to be a *rūpānuga*, but we have you. Please let us be your Prabhupādānugas.

You have given us Kṛṣṇa in the form of the holy name, in the pages of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, in the Deity form you’ve allowed us to worship, and in the association of the devotees. You have entrusted Lord Caitanya’s movement into our hands. You have given us the *sādhana-bhakti* process that can actually elevate us to the steady, realized platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And you’ve bestowed all these gifts by your mercy

You have given so many instructions, and when we take these instructions to heart and make a firm commitment to follow them, we are sure to one day taste the fruit of perfection in *bhakti-yoga*.

Our village community here is a small but diverse group of devotees of all ages. Our project has gone through different stages, beginning as an outpost of enthusiastic pioneers, dealing with change and adversity, and transforming from a farm community into a village. Throughout it all we have had your instructions and the association of your followers. We believe that this is our *prabhu-datta deśa*, the place where our service is pleasing to the Lord, accessible to the *jīva* souls in this Kali-yuga, and useful to your ISKCON movement.

Please help us take full shelter of your instructions, making them our very life and soul. Please help us enter deeper into the relationship of servants to our masters—to you, our dear spiritual father and ever well-wisher, and to our Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, especially in His forms as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the holy name. Please help us appreciate all the different devotees and take full advantage of their association. Please help us find ways to include and accept all the devotees serving you together with respect and love. Please let us participate actively in Lord Caitanya’s preaching mission. Please give us your mercy and be with us as we continue in our service, working to bring out the full potency of our New Caitanya Candrodāya temple and village community as it unfolds and blossoms, becoming a living example of your teachings in so many wonderful ways.

Aspiring for the shelter of your lotus feet, we remain

Your humble servants at the New Caitanya Candrodāya Mandira, Almviks Gard, Jarna, Sweden.

(written by Labaṅgalatikā Sevīnī Devī Dāsī)

New Gokula (Australia)

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are the personification of kindness and mercy, sent here by Their Lordships to liberate the whole world.

As ordinary, conditioned souls struggling within the material energy, we had no chance of lifting ourselves out of this ocean of ignorance and suffering. But your instructions have opened our eyes with the torchlight of knowledge, knowledge that only continues to grow as we read your books, delivered to us in the unadulterated disciplic succession, the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*.

As members of the New Gokula farm community here in Australia, we understand that it is our duty to please you—and thus satisfy Their Lordships—by creating a working model of an agrarian community based on the principles enunciated by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, a community in which everyone can work according to the nature the Supreme Lord has bestowed upon them and at the same time make spiritual progress. This ideal is supported by these statements of Lord Kṛṣṇa's from the *Bhagavad-gītā*:

By following his qualities of work, every man can become perfect. Now please hear from Me how this can be done. By worship of the Lord, who is the source of all beings and who is all-pervading, a man can attain perfection through performing his own work. It is better to engage in one's own occupation, even though one may perform it imperfectly, than to accept another's occupation and perform it perfectly. Duties prescribed according to one's nature are never affected by sinful reactions. Every endeavor is covered by some fault, just as fire is covered by smoke. Therefore one should not give up the work born of his nature, O son of Kuntī, even if such work is full of fault. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.45–48]

Though engaged in all kinds of activities, My devotee, under My protection, reaches the eternal and imperishable abode by My grace. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.56]

In addition, Lord Brahmā says this to Mahārāja Priyavrata at *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.1.14:

*yad-vāci tantyām guṇa-karma-dāmaḥ
sudustarair vatsa vayaṁ suyojitāḥ
sarve vahāmo balim īśvarāya
protā nasīva dvi-pade catuṣ-padaḥ*

“My dear boy, all of us are bound by the Vedic injunctions to the divisions of *varṇāśrama* according to our qualities and work. These divisions are difficult to avoid because they are scientifically arranged. We must therefore carry out our duties of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, like bulls obliged to move according to the direction of a driver pulling on ropes knotted to their noses.”

[From Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport:] The *varṇāśrama* system is scientific. Therefore if we accept the divisions of *varṇa* and *āśrama* according to the Vedic instructions, our lives will be successful. Unless human society is thus divided and arranged, it cannot be perfect. As stated in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (3.8.9):

*varṇāśramācāravatā puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān
viṣṇur ārādhyate panthā nānyat tat-toṣa-kāraṇam*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, is worshiped by the proper execution of prescribed duties in the system of *varṇa* and *āśrama*. There is no other way to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One must be situated in the institution of the four *varṇas* and *āśramas*.” . . .

The injunctions in the *Vedas* are explicit directions from the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Over the years since you left our mortal vision, dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, your movement has gone through many upheavals. Where once there was a thriving community in Millfield, with many industrious and enthusiastic devotees, we now have only a few dedicated souls.

In the past much suffering has occurred all over the ISKCON world due to a lack of understanding of

our actual natures and the human condition. Proper understanding was lacking, along with proper compassion for the innocent. Even though we knew and directly experienced that you were nothing like us, when we saw how easily you performed pure *bhakti* we thought (like complete idiots) that we could emulate you, forgetting just how fallen we were and how it was only by your empowerment that we were able to push on Lord Caitanya's message of chanting the holy names. You were never from this world! You are an eternal associate of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All the twenty-six qualities of a pure Vaiṣṇava are manifest resplendently within you. Fortunately, by your mercy, we are now armed with a greater spiritual maturity and are determined not to repeat the mistakes of the past.

At New Gokula we are striving to please you by creating a sanctuary for both visitors and permanent residents, a sanctuary where all worship Their beautiful Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gokulānanda; Lord Jagannātha, Lord Baladeva, and Śrīmatī Subhadrā; and Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, and where all live in harmony with mother nature and the cows while joyfully performing their duties and keeping Kṛṣṇa at the center of all activities.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your books are the basis, and if we develop our understanding of both the pure philosophy and the practical advice they contain, we can, by your divine grace, achieve success.

Great inroads into society at large have been made by the many dedicated souls who have distributed your books over the years, both in person and by making them so easily accessible online. We pray we may be among those who further contribute by creating a working model of a caring Kṛṣṇa conscious community, as described within these transcendental literatures.

Your humble servants at ISKCON'S New Gokula Farm, Millfield, New South Wales, Australia.

New Gokula (Canada)

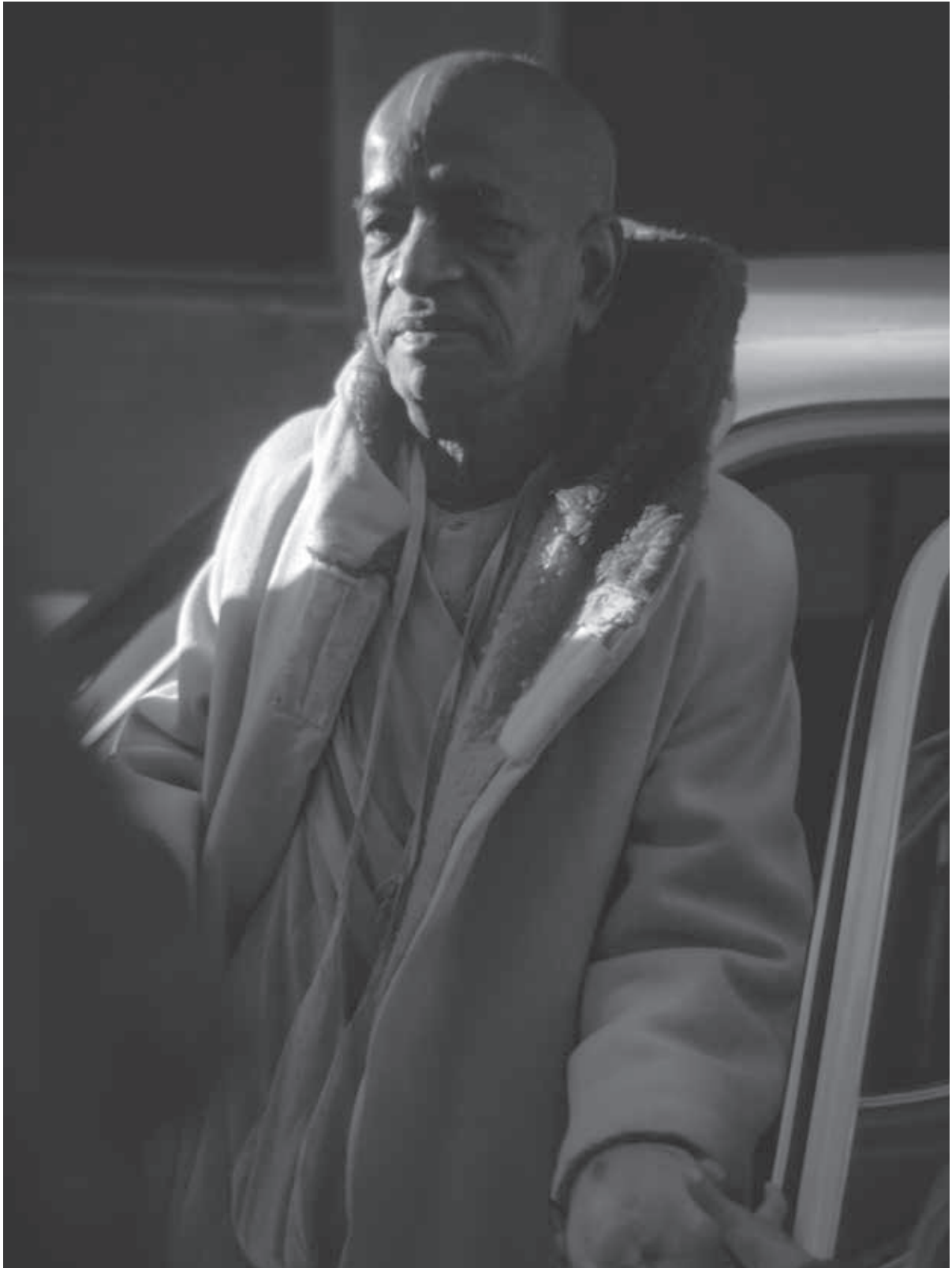
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our collective obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories unto you, our loving master, father, grandsire, and guide.

It has been thirty-seven years since you disappeared from our mortal vision. Most of us in ISKCON nowadays never experienced your physical presence, beheld your beautiful form, witnessed live your miraculous and unprecedented feats, or heard the transcendental sound coming directly from your lotus mouth. Strangely enough, however, these common limitations appear not to have limited your ability to extend your mercy. As with our previous *ācāryas*, your mercy extends far beyond material time and space, to any and all who avail themselves of your *vāṇī* form with due submission and sincere aural reception. Śrīla Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda has stated: "The souls of the great thinkers of the bygone ages, who now live spiritually, often approach our inquiring spirit and assist it in its development." Your Divine Grace not only assists us in our inquiry—you nourish our very soul.

During the last decade of your manifest *līlā* you flew here and there, transforming hearts amid the concrete walls of skyscrapers in the streets of big Western cities, on the islands within the great seas and oceans, in tropical jungles, and deep in the Canadian wilderness forests, where, somehow, by your miracle, Vaiṣṇavas now hear and chant *harināma* together. You leapt like Hanumān with his tail ablaze, setting fire to the entire world and igniting a global inferno of *harināma-saṅkīrtana*. Thus you were singularly and especially empowered by Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu Himself to propel the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu out of the confines of India and across the face of the earth, giving her much-needed hope and joy.

In the years since you entered your unmanifest *līlā*, the momentum generated from the tsunami wave of your mercy, which washed over seven vast continents, has continued to reverberate, striking fear into the hearts of atheist cheaters and attracting the hearts and minds of all sincere, yearning souls. This lasting effect



is further proof of your special mercy and unique power.

As we all know, crisis after crisis has come upon us, and the grand material *māyā* has tested our determination to serve your mission, which is her eternal duty. For the damage done, we have only ourselves to blame, as you have already delivered to us all means of success. It is thus up to us to employ them in our lives. You have given everything in your books, yet who among us studies them deeply? Those who do can see the direction your divine finger points toward. Acting on that direction, those devotees are grateful and feel indebted to your lotus feet:

nāma-śreṣṭham manum api śacī-putram . . .

We are fully indebted to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, because you are giving us so many things. You are giving us the holy name, containing the highest form of thought, aspiration, and ideal, and you are giving us the service of that great savior, the son of Mother Śacī, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is like a golden mountain indicating the way to *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. (Paraphrased from Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's *Muktā-carita*)

This untainted message and current of love have come down through realized transmission in *paramparā* from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and through his *rūpānuga guru-varga* line to you, and through your divine agency, to us. Armed and supported by your army of protectors, how then could we ever become vulnerable or experience diminished faith in the power of *mahā-prasadam*, Śrī Govinda and His holy name, the *brāhmaṇas*, and genuine Vaiṣṇavas?

Sometimes we ask ourselves why it is that after so many years of serving we feel meager progress in our spiritual lives. We often engage in idle talk, worry for our material stability, and calculate our way into old-age security. Abandoning the hope of *śaraṇāgati*, we lose confidence. With the passage of time, we more often ask “What can the temple do for me?” than “What can I do for the temple?” Meanwhile, we wonder why the higher stages of *bhakti* have eluded us while our *anarthas* remain alive and even flourish within us. “Was the promise of attaining *bhāva* a false one?” we ask. “Does the storehouse of love of God even exist, what to speak of being plundered and distributed freely to all recipients without concern for who is qualified or not?” These doubts are all nonsense and the products of faithlessness arising from our own misconceptions of ourselves as the “doers” and “achievers” of our own destinies. In *bhakti*, we are dependent on the mercy of those who are dependent on Śrī Guru.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has stated in the *Ādi Purāṇa*:

*ye me bhakta-janāḥ pārtha na me bhaktās ca te janāḥ
mad-bhaktānām ca ye bhaktās te me bhakta-tamā matāḥ*

“Those who are My direct devotees are not actually My devotees, but those who are the devotees of My devotees are My actual devotees.”

Therefore, just as simply by being exposed to sunshine we receive illumination, warmth, and life, simply by properly associating with *sādhus* we will receive their mercy. With the Vaiṣṇavas' mercy, a very sweet and humble mood appears within the heart of the recipient. We will pray to Harināma Prabhu, the *śāstra*, and the *dhāma*, but we will pray only for further taste in *harināma*. Thus, good results will appear within us. As you have stated, “The result of chanting is that it leads to more chanting.”

We have heard so many instructions, but if we have no relationship with Nāma Prabhu or His Vaiṣṇava devotees, our hearts will never change. Nothing can be pushed into a heart made of stone. “Better to tear down the marble from the walls and sell it for the printing and distribution of books.”

What constitutes favorable Vaiṣṇava-saṅga has been stated sweetly in Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Nectar of Instruction*, verse 4:

Offering gifts in charity, accepting charitable gifts, revealing one's mind in confidence, inquiring confidentially, accepting *prasādam*, and offering *prasādam* are the six symptoms of love shared by one devotee and another.

These exchanges are found exclusively among those Vaiṣṇavas whom we ever aspire to emulate. All success arises within the practitioner of *bhakti* when the quality of those exchanges pleases the Lord, who then bestows His mercy. Facilitating and culturing such relationships constitute the purpose of having temples in ISKCON; that devotional character blossoms in the persona of the devotees. The results are infectious, and sincere souls are inevitably drawn to an atmosphere of devotional enthusiasm and energy. Money and facilities then follow of their own accord, like faithful servants, and they need not be separately endeavored for on the basis of some material calculation or nefarious scheme.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are utterly dependent upon you for our success in this human form. If not for you, we would still be out there, alone and afraid, exhausted from treading the cold, dark waters of material existence. Please help us recognize genuine Vaiṣṇavas and help us relate to them appropriately, according to their devotional disposition (*adhikāra*). Above all else, please give us the strength, your mercy potency, to enable us to truly become Vaiṣṇavas and serve you in a mood free from material motives based on some weird misconception of ourselves, the Lord, or His energies. Thus we can advance further in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and give you pleasure.

Your humble servants at New Gokula Dhāma, ISKCON Vancouver, Canada.

New Govardhana (USA)

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

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

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

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

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I am deeply honored to have the opportunity to write this offering to you on behalf of the New Govardhana community in San Diego, California. Despite my limitations, I can only attempt to convey the profound effect you have had and continue to have on my life and the lives of the other devotees of New Govardhana.

I was raised in a devout Roman Catholic family, and as a young boy I aspired to become a priest. But my many unresolved questions and negative experiences with the Church eventually turned my aspirations to apathy toward all things labeled “religion.” A verse in the Spanish version of the Penitential Rite is meant to be the proper response of a good Catholic to his or her suffering in this world. It states *Por mi culpa, por mi culpa, por my gran culpa!* (“Through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault!”) I remember asking myself, “What did I do?” and “Why is it my fault?” These were among a list of questions I had that I never received satisfactory answers for. As a result, I stopped accompanying my mother to Mass and distanced myself from God.

But my desire to explore spirituality never wavered. So I dabbled in astrology, Native American rites,

traditional Aztec beliefs, and *haṭha-yoga*. It was through *haṭha-yoga* that I learned of *bhakti-yoga*, and since I hadn't exactly found what I was looking for, I researched it and enrolled in an introductory *bhakti-yoga* course here at New Govardhana. It was during this course that I finally got satisfying answers to the many questions I had about the soul and God. Within a few months my strained relationship with God had healed, and now it has become my most important relationship. With folded hands I thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for this amazing gift! Thank you for mending my broken heart and for reconnecting this lowly fool with God in a way that fills my life with purpose and meaning. My experience, however, is not unique, as there are countless devotees with similar experiences.

All the devotees here in the New Govardhana community are eternally grateful for your mercy. Despite the many hardships you faced, you selflessly and bravely persevered. Your resilience and spiritual fortitude in bringing Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the West and taking it all over the world was an act of pure love. A spiritual revolutionary, you have served as a catalyst to bring about a revolution in the consciousness of the conditioned souls everywhere. Almost forty years after you left this world, Kṛṣṇa consciousness continues to spread. New temples are being built, older ones are being modernized, and the ISKCON family is growing.

New Govardhana continues to be a vibrant spiritual oasis, with increasing potential and many opportunities for devotional service. By your mercy, over the last few years the number of regular home programs has increased throughout San Diego county. In addition, the temple has established a planning committee of devotees to support New Govardhana's board of directors. These initiatives are being led by senior devotees whom you trained and whom many of us have the honor of serving. Please bless these initiatives so that we may assist you in spreading Lord Caitanya's teachings throughout the world.

Your servants at New Govardhana Dhāma, San Diego, California, USA.

(written by Bhakta Otto)

New Hastināpura

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, spiritual master, savior, eternal guide, ever well-wisher, best masterful friend, strict representative of Śrīla Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON, greatest exponent of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the Western world, general in the *saṅkīrtana* army of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, bringer of the authorized conclusions of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana (headed by Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana), giver of the treasure of the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, carrier of the mercy of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead, lord and master of the devotees, dearest servant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, eternal resident of Goloka Vṛndāvana, and our only shelter—please accept our prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

On this anniversary of your most kind appearance in this world, we, your servants in Potomac, Maryland, are praying to remember your transcendental qualities. Śrīla Prabhupāda, in 1965, when you began your preaching in America, by your perfect character you attracted many sincere persons to assist you in establishing the mission of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda and Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Then you personally cared for your new disciples with great attention and kindness. Receiving your transcendental affection, they became enthused to serve your mission.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, four decades later we still feel your personal presence. Your unconditional love and clear instructions enliven us. Although you left this world almost thirty-seven years ago, your spiritual influence continuously increases, carried by this bond of love and broadcast everywhere by your divine instructions. Whenever we work to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we feel your presence within our hearts. You asked us to make strenuous efforts to expand the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world. But you yourself

always set the example by working harder than any of us. You showered us with encouragement, love, discipline, proper instruction, and very high expectations. These gifts shelter us, guide us, and thus maintain us.

Gurudeva, you have given us a divine family of devotees who are our very life and soul. When we see these devotees, whether novice or stalwart, we immediately feel your presence. They are the fruits of your preaching work, and our spiritual advancement is measured by how much we appreciate them, even if we sometimes have different opinions about important matters.

The ISKCON society you created by your pure-hearted devotion is a spiritual shelter. We are grateful to have this shelter in the form of the association of many sincere devotees of the Lord, and in the form of the blissful preaching activities that sustain our spiritual lives.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, here in Washington, D.C., your book distribution has dramatically increased in the last ten years. Regular *harināma saṅkīrtana* parties have expanded, and thousands of people chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* in temple festivals, receive *prasādam*, hear the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and serve the Deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava-Mohana, Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, and Śrī Śrī Sītā-Rāma-Lakṣmaṇa-Hanumān. The devotees are increasingly realizing that spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness outside our community causes Kṛṣṇa consciousness to spread within our own hearts. The best way to honor, love, and serve someone who has left this world is to carry out the mission to which that person dedicated his life. Your mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda, was to alleviate the suffering of all the people of the world by teaching them how to reach the soothing shelter of Lord Nityānanda's lotus feet. You tolerated many difficulties to spread this mission, and you have ordered us to continue your work.

[S] imply work cooperatively for spreading this movement all over the world. The standards I have already given you, now try to maintain them at all times under standard procedure. Do not try to innovate or create anything or manufacture anything, that will ruin everything. Simply do as I am doing and be always serious and sincere to serve Kṛṣṇa, and He will give you intelligence how to do everything. [letter to Bali Mādhava and Puṣṭa Kṛṣṇa, 18 September 1972]

You remind us to tolerate difficulties, put aside our differences, and strive to appreciate one another and help one another serve Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Please remain with us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your divine instructions. Kindly purify us, deliver us, and thus maintain us.

ohe!
vaiṣṇava ṭhākura, doyāra sāgara,
e dāse korunā kori'
diyā pada-chāyā, śodho he āmāya,
tomāra caraṇa dhoi

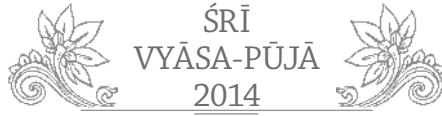
Your servants at New Hastināpura, ISKCON Potomac, Washington, D.C., USA.

(written by Lakṣmīvān Dāsa)

New Jagannātha Purī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace, O Jagat Guru, savior of the whole world!



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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we fallen followers of yours in your New Jagannātha Purī *dhāma* are happily remembering you on this, your auspicious appearance day. Here in New Jagannātha Purī we are so fortunate to have the first and oldest Deities of Lord Jagannātha, Lord Balarāma, and Śrīmatī Subhadrā in the Western world. Their carving was commissioned by you, and you personally installed them in San Francisco in 1967. In that year you also initiated the first Ratha-yātrā in the Western World, in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. If not for your mercy and that of all the Vaiṣṇavas, we would not have been successful, but by your grace we will be holding the forty-eighth annual Ratha-yātrā this year. We are so grateful for this service and hope to continue it in years to come, in keeping with Lord Caitanya's mission.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you told us that just by chanting "Hare Kṛṣṇa!" we would be happy, and every day we are seeing that this is true. So, in honor of your topmost desire, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are still going out on *harināma* every day, because we know that this is what you want us to do. By your grace we have come to the realization that everything you instructed us to do is perfect and the ultimate goal of our life and of our very existence.

In 2017 we will celebrate the Golden Anniversary of Ratha-yātrā in the Western world. We are beginning to prepare for this grand celebration and will attempt to make it a major event in ISKCON. We ask your blessings to make this a grand festival, one of the biggest that ISKCON has ever presented, with devotees coming from all over the world and people coming by the thousands to see your legacy on the 50th anniversary of Śrī Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā here in New Jagannātha Purī.

We beg to remain

Your servants in New Jagannātha Purī, Berkeley, California, USA.

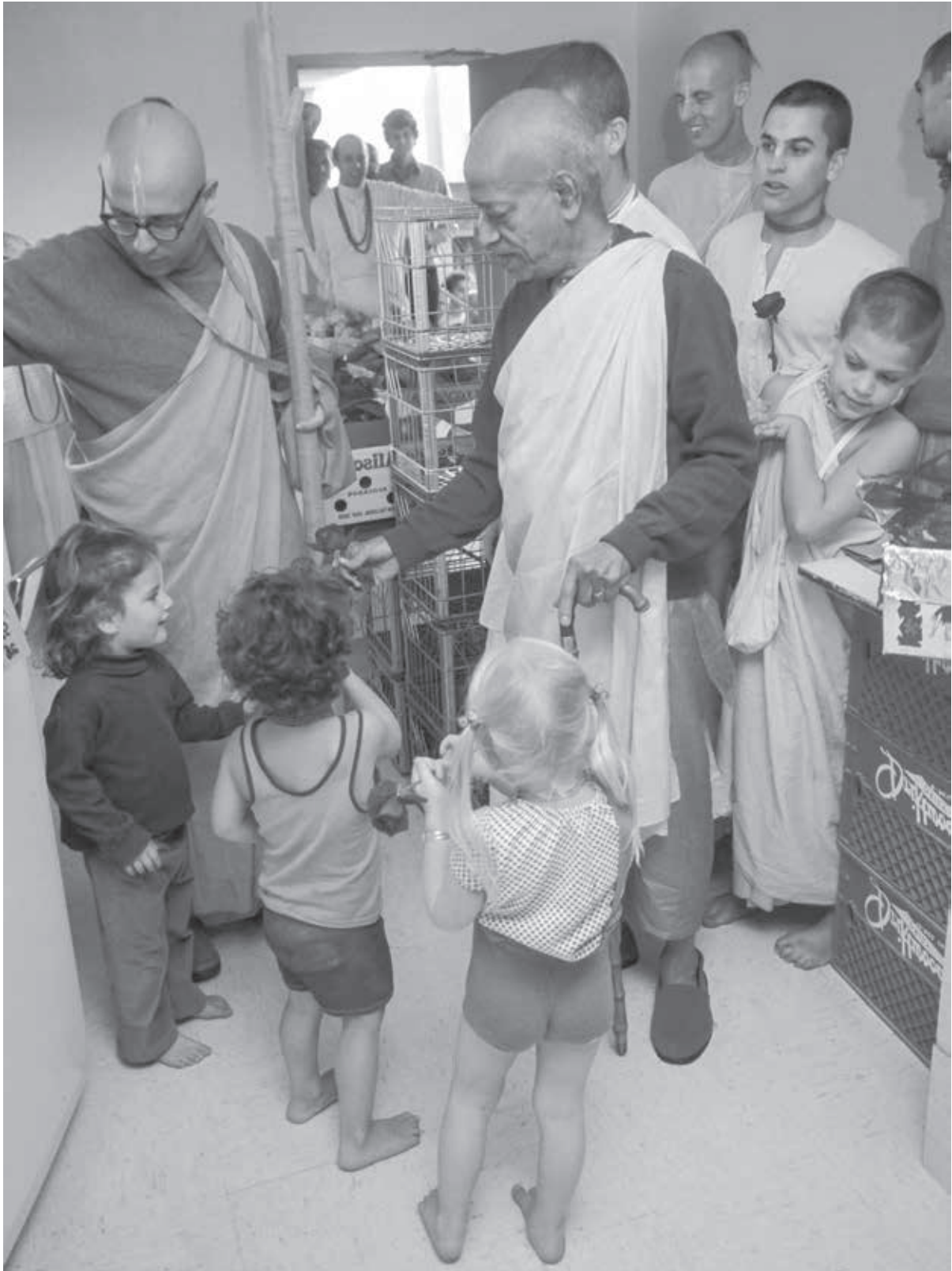
(written by Jagannātha Swami Dāsa)

New Māyāpur

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace! Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the most wonderful devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa—a genuine well-wisher and savior of humanity at large—and you have captured our heart and soul.

New Māyāpur is inseparably connected with you. Here we always feel your personal *śakti*, and this feeling is also experienced regularly by visiting devotees. You forever lead us from your *vyāsāsana*, facing your Deities: the all-merciful Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, after whom you named this *dhāma* New Māyāpur; powerful Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, who you said would "give strength to the devotees and the movement in Europe"; and beautiful Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda-Mādhava, whom you allowed us to install "later." Your apartments in the "palace," which you "liked very much" and where you translated your books, vibrate with your personal presence. In fact, everywhere in New Māyāpur we can remember you, spiritually guiding the devotees, organizing this project, and preaching to the guests. Beautifully sitting on the grass in these "unique outdoors," surrounded by happy devotees who had come from all over Europe, you gave your *sūtra*-like vision for New



Māyāpur: “A perfect place for loving Kṛṣṇa (*man-manā bhava mad-bhakto*) without difficulty (*yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*), and a shelter for many in the future.”

As everyone knows, France is a charming country, but it has been strongly polluted by sense gratification and atheistic philosophy. Thus for Europe it has historically been the cradle of a sterile and destructive revolutionary spirit, which is still alive today. This year, once again, the European Parliament rejected with concern a proposal by the French government to extend to all Europe its repressive laws against spiritual minorities. However, you mercifully did not neglect this difficult country, which you visited five times. Now in all of continental Europe this temple stands as the only one left from your time, like a great family home for ISKCON devotees. And just as you instructed that the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium, the greatest challenge to modern materialistic science, be established in Śrīdhām Māyāpur, ISKCON’s world headquarters, so you settled New Māyāpur, a big challenge to godlessness, in France, at the heart of atheism.

Today, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we—your humble, poor, and aging servants—beg you to bless our renewed endeavors to maintain and preach for your New Māyāpur embassy according to your instructions, so that future generations can benefit from this wonderful and potent spiritual oasis, of which you are the founder-*ācārya*.

Your grateful servants in New Māyāpur, France.

New Navadvīpa Dhāma

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

Please accept our most respectful, humble obeisances.

On behalf of all the devotees of New Navadvīpa Dhāma in Hawaii, we wish to express our gratitude to you for giving us the opportunity to participate in Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mission. Without your grace it would have been impossible for us to understand the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Without your compassionate mercy it would have been impossible for us to participate in this divine mission. Here in Hawaii, you first established the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in late 1968 and early 1969, and since that time many devotees have become your followers because only you can show us the path back home, back to Godhead.

*(yadi) prabhupāda nā haita tabe ki haita
(e) jivana bahita kise?
nitāi-gaurera apāra karuṇa
ke dīta sakala deśe*

“If Śrīla Prabhupāda had not come, what would have happened? How could we have passed our lives? Who

else would have distributed the unlimited mercy of Lord Nityānanda and Lord Gaurāṅga all over the world?”
(From a Bengali song by His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami)

If you had not come to these Hawaiian Islands, what would have happened to fallen souls like us? But because of your mercy and inspiration, we continue to carry out your order to push on Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mission. It is our privilege to make a commitment to satisfy Your Divine Grace.

Under your guidance, every Saturday evening we go out on *harināma saṅkīrtana* in Waikiki Beach, Hawaii’s international tourist capital. We worship the celebrated Śrī Śrī Pañca-tattva Deities, which you personally installed. We engage in book and *prasādam* distribution and faithfully celebrate all the festivals you have instructed us to. Additionally, we also continue the weekly tradition of the Sunday Love Feast.

Your Divine Grace, we petition you to bless our new projects, which will create new opportunities for the residents of the Hawaiian Islands to participate in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Because you are our spiritual master and hope, we approach you with humility. We understand that without your causeless divine mercy we cannot be successful in any of our endeavors. Please, therefore, bless us so we can fulfill our desire to have a traveling *saṅkīrtana* bus party in the Hawaiian Islands.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, we beg that you mercifully empower us to continue serving you at every moment of our lives. Here in New Navadvīpa *dhāma*, the devotees are very much looking forward to celebrating your auspicious Vyāsa-pūjā with great enthusiasm.

Your humble servants at ISKCON’s New Navadvīpa Dhāma, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA.

(written by Sundarānanda Dāsa)

New Nīlācala

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances.

There have been changes at ISKCON of Philadelphia over the past year. Ravindra Svarūpa Prabhu and his good wife Saudāmanī Devī Dāsī, who had been managing the center for over twenty years, retired from temple management and moved away. This change had been encouraged by the GBC so that Ravindra Svarūpa Prabhu would have more time to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness through writing. Several of his disciples relocated with him. Because of these changes, there were concerns that the temple might not continue, since many essential services would not be covered and the financial situation was precarious. Some of us prayed to you for help and guidance. We also appealed to the Vaiṣṇava community for assistance.

Then an interesting thing happened. Many devotees in the area took the situation as an opportunity to increase their service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. We also received vital help from the GBC and devotees from Potomac and Atlanta. Śikhi Māhiti Prabhu has stepped in as our new temple president, and he’s been doing an exceptional job. The Deity services are covered, the festivals have been well attended, our financial situation has stabilized, and book distribution and other preaching efforts have continued and are developing.

All this could not have happened without your presence as the unifying, inspiring, and guiding force of ISKCON. You continue to provide the transcendental philosophy, laws, *sādhana*, devotees, vision, and personal example needed for cooperation and progress. The proof of this is that devotees coming from various backgrounds, with different *dīkṣā-gurus*, of different ages, and living in various locations have rallied to the cause of Kṛṣṇa’s devotional service in Philadelphia, as inspired by you.

You requested devotees to cooperate to push on the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. We are happy to report that here in Philadelphia we are cooperating forty-eight years after you founded ISKCON.

The French are fond of saying *plus ca change plus c'est la meme chose* (“The more things change, the more they remain the same.”) This is relevant in our case, for despite so many changes, the whole menu of delightful devotional services to Kṛṣṇa continues here in Philadelphia.

We pray to your lotus feet to help us make ISKCON of Philadelphia an even more vibrant and welcoming center for broadcasting Lord Caitanya’s glories and message to the residents of the greater Philadelphia area, as exemplified by you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Thank you.

Your servants at New Nilācala Dhāma, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.

(written by Viṣṇugadā Dāsa)

New Orleans

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

In 1975 you placed your lotus feet in the city of New Orleans and arrived at our fledgling temple, at once creating a transcendental place of pilgrimage, for all time. The then mayor of the city, Ernest Morial, granted you the key to the city and opened all doors for you to traverse its environs and preach at will. And so you blessed New Orleans, “the city that care forgot,” and left an indelible impression upon it for all future generations of devotees and well-wishers, who have since brought so much Kṛṣṇa consciousness to a place that frankly has few rivals in the pursuit and promotion of the most bewildering phantasmagoria of hedonism.

Since that time mass book distribution has gone on nonstop, with some of the world’s top distributors pumping out steady streams of your saving grace to the multifarious droves of humanity who come here seeking elusive and illusory happiness. On occasion challengers have tried to revoke the carte blanche you were given for preaching, but your determined servants have fought tooth and nail and, by your mercy, always come away victorious, securing its continuance.

In the years following your historic and benedictory visit, the world-famous annual Mardi Gras festival in New Orleans regularly drew North America’s biggest *mahā-rathī sankīrtana* leaders, who never failed to bring Vaiṣṇava to earth, creating roaring *kīrtanas* and distributing record-breaking numbers of your books to immense crowds of revelers, many of whom would fall right in to join our transcendently joyous chanting party. Throughout it all we experienced your presence buoying up the crowds, floating down the packed, narrow streets, washing over the darkened atmosphere with the ecstatic light of your and Lord Caitanya’s inconceivable compassion, never touching the ground.

Those were the magnificent highlights of our days with you in New Orleans. As time passes and great *mahā-rathīs* come and go, as preaching forums change and evolve, you continue to give us the faith, the knowledge, the enthusiasm, and a fraction of your compassion to place the mercy of your divine words into the hands of the most unfortunate, as we try every day to share you with the world. The more we do so, the

more tangible you become to us and the more we understand that we are nothing other than aspiring instruments of Your Divine Grace.

Please continue to bless us so that we may always remain with you as your humble servants, working to bring the cooling shade of your lotus feet to this parched, burning, squalid place on earth, so that one day it will cease to be known as the city that care forgot and will instead become known as the city that Kṛṣṇa could not forget.

Your servants in New Saṅkīrtana Purī, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA.

New Pānihāṭi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

On this most glorious anniversary of your appearance, I can only think of how you sacrificed your home in Vṛndāvana and the comforts of being surrounded by the Vrajavāsīs and thousands of temples, and you came to America to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

As a second-generation aspiring servant of yours, when I look around I see nothing but the evidence of your presence in the many dedicated disciples you left behind for us, the thousands of second-generation devotees, and so many wonderful temples and communities where the holy name is vibrating through the ether and the spiritual energy is permeating far and wide. Your love for us is written all over the faces of your disciples, who have tasted that nectar of your love and care. Reading and hearing your disciples' narrations of their association with you, I find that they were surrounded by your compassion and love and care, and I realize how fortunate they are. If we follow in their footsteps, there is hope for us to taste that nectar.

The past ten years I have been privileged to serve here in Atlanta, New Pānihāṭi Dhāma. I often remember your transcendental pastime of delivering your arrival address here with a choked voice, narrating the pastime of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mercy, saying that He doesn't even require us to fully surrender. I remember how you took so much pain and hardship to give that mercy of Lord Caitanya's to so many fallen, conditioned souls so that we would get a chance to taste it.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, here in New Pānihāṭi Dhāma we have been attempting to follow your instructions, with regular systematic study of your books, such as Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, and weekly street *harināma saṅkīrtana* and *prasādam* distribution. I know that your mercy is in your instructions

and that we can feel your presence in our lives only by following them. We beg that you please empower your lowly servants here to always follow your instructions and also to preach them so that we will always remain in your ISKCON.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have transformed the hearts of thousands with your mercy in the form of your books, with their wonderful purports, and we can feel your presence when we read your books and hear you speaking through them. You have given us everything we need to know; there is no need to go elsewhere. Please bless us that we may never stray from the shade of the dust of your lotus feet.

Your servants at New Pānihāṭi Dhāma, Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

(written by Vedasāra Dāsa)

New Ramaṇa Reti

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

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

*‘sādhū-saṅga’, ‘sādhū-saṅga’—sarva-śāstre kaya
lava-mātra sādhū-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya*

“The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment’s association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 22.54)

One moment!

One moment!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were and *are* so generous with your moments. Your disciples directly experienced the timeless ecstasy that surrounded you and enveloped them. You shared all the time in the world with us as you patiently guided us in service—administering the medicine, slowly but surely curing us of the disease of materialistic life. These moments are eternal. Everything else fades, pales in comparison. These moments continue to sustain us and take on a life of their own. Scintillating, pulsating, they take root in our heart, where they continue to nourish and inspire us.

The centers you established are still offering sanctuary to anyone who visits. Like oases in the desert, they beckon one and all to come and drink from the immortal fountain of mercy and knowledge.

Recently a godsister shared an experience she had had at a support meeting. There were only a few members at this particular meeting, and none of the others knew she was a devotee. One member, Sarah, began relating her experience of a traumatic car accident. Someone had blindsided her, and the impact caused her SUV to roll over. Her life had flashed before her eyes, and Sarah shared with the group that she couldn’t remember whether she was supposed to be thinking of Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu.

“What!?” the devotee asked.

Sarah repeated, “I couldn’t remember whether I should be thinking of Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu.”

“Either would work,” the devotee said. “I’m a Hare Kṛṣṇa devotee,” she revealed. “How is it that you were remembering Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu?”



Sarah said, “Years ago I visited a Hare Kṛṣṇa temple, and I never forgot what they taught me.”

Confronted with death, she remembered the pure devotee’s essential instruction for anyone in that situation. One small story, but there are countless anecdotes like this.

The web of your mercy extends beyond our comprehension. Everywhere we see evidence of your presence and the changes your association have brought to our world.

Besides the personal transformations your disciples have undergone, the whole world continues to undergo spiritual transformation due to the moments of your association. Vegetarianism was something relegated to a few eccentric beatniks back in the day, but presently you can request vegetarian entrees on any airline and in most restaurants. This is a result of your divine presence. *Prasādam* and your books are purifying the world. *Prasādam* distribution is one of the most effective ways that your disciples and granddisciples distribute Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. I remember you lecturing underneath a banyan tree on a balmy evening in Miami in 1975. Speaking of *prasādam*, you said that all of us had come to you due to *prasādam*. “Even you, Abhirāma,” you quipped, glancing at our temple president. *Prasādam*, the ultimate weapon, continues to work imperceptibly but powerfully to transform the world. Today devotees widely distribute *prasādam* on college campuses and wherever and whenever else they have an opportunity. As the *prasādam* works its magic, countless souls will come to your lotus feet in time.

Kīrtana was virtually unheard-of before you came to America in 1965, but by your strong desire and tireless efforts *kīrtana* is becoming a household word, and the world is thus undergoing extensive purification. There’s a YouTube video of a Catholic woman who was invited to the home of one of her students, an incognito Hare Kṛṣṇa, for a yoga experience. She didn’t realize she was in the middle of a Hare Kṛṣṇa *kīrtana* until it was too late! She was transformed! *Harināma-saṅkīrtana* has experienced a renaissance worldwide. All living entities in Kali-yuga are always close to tragedy and disaster. You told us that the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa could turn back the tide of Kali-yuga. It’s the only way, the only way, the only way. Ratha-yātrā festivals continue to expand worldwide—a dream of yours from childhood. People still approach us who are unfamiliar with the festival and ask, “What is this?” They beg to know more. Everyone joins in the labor of love, pulling the cart with Their Lordships seated regally, mercifully guiding the celebrants, as Lord Jagannātha floods the world with His mercy.

In 1976 in Vṛndāvana I awoke early and decided to walk near your quarters and chant my rounds. It was about 1:30 a.m., and I could see you through the window, painstakingly translating your books, knowing that they were the only hope for our pathetic world. I stood and watched you, aware that I was observing some unique moments. Stories of your books liberating the conditioned souls abound. “These books act like Deities,” you explained. “If they read one word their lives will be changed forever. Even if someone purchases a book and places it on the bookshelf, the book will act, purifying the home.” One devotee told me how she purchased a book at the Honolulu airport with no intention of ever reading it. She brought it home and placed it on an upper shelf, and there it sat for eight years purifying her home. One day while she sat daydreaming she looked up, saw the book, took it off the shelf, and began to read it. Convinced, she went to the nearest temple and surrendered.

Your genius is unfathomable, your compassion incomprehensible. The quintessential miracle is the ongoing power of your *prasādam*, *kīrtana*, and books. Drops of mercy, unconditional mercy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in a poem you wrote onboard the *Jaladuta* in 1965, entitled “Prayer unto the Lotus Feet of Kṛṣṇa” you spoke of the desire of your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura:

tāra icchā balavān pāścātyete ṭhān ṭhān
 hoy jāte gaurāṅger nām
 prthivīte nagarādi āsamudra nada nadi
 sakalei loy kṛṣṇa nām

“By [Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī’s] strong desire, the holy name of Lord Gaurāṅga will spread throughout the countries of the Western world. In all the cities, towns, and villages on the earth, from all the oceans, seas, rivers, and streams, everyone will chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you worked tirelessly to make sure Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's words were not in vain.

We pray to become *your* instruments—your pure instruments. You have set the stage and already accomplished the mission. Still, out of your mercy you are giving us an opportunity to participate in fulfilling Lord Caitanya's prediction. This movement will travel to every town, village, and farm. That is a fact. If we don't take up the task, others will. Please empower us; purify our hearts so that our only desire will be to push on this *saṅkīrtana* movement.

When the time comes for us to receive your personal association once again, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we will honor that moment. Inspired by a verse spoken by Lord Caitanya and recorded in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 2.38), we declare:

*punaḥ yadi kona kṣaṇa, karāya prabhupāda daraśana
tabe sei ghaṭi-kṣaṇa-pala
diyā mālya-candana, nānā ratna-ābharaṇa,
alaṅkṛta karimu sakala*

"If by chance such a moment comes when I can once again see Śrīla Prabhupāda, then I shall worship those seconds, moments, and hours with flower garlands and pulp of sandalwood and decorate them with all kinds of jewels and ornaments." Until that blessed reunion occurs, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please allow us to deliver your unconditional mercy.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your unconditional love.

Your devoted servants at New Ramaṇa Reti Dhāma, ISKCON's rural community in Alachua, Florida, USA.

(written by Sukhadā Devī Dāsī)

New Remuṇā

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

*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*

On this glorious anniversary of your appearance, we offer our most heartfelt thanks to you for the many gifts you have bestowed on us and all your sincere followers. The devotees of ISKCON Toronto, New Remuṇā Dhāma, would like to humbly present the small services we have rendered to your lotus feet, with the hope that we can continue to receive your mercy and shelter as we try to gain a small taste for devotional service to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the world around us today promotes itself as technologically robust and laden with scientific and industrial advances. Especially in the West, people live in a world where the release of a new computer or portable phone is celebrated as if it were the arrival of messengers from heaven. The public is

constantly bombarded with advertisements that induce them to consume more products, with the promise to help increase the comfort of their daily lives. Even something as simple as going to the grocery store to buy some produce is now discussed among business strategists and psychologists so as to make the consumer's "shopping experience" more pleasurable, comfortable, and convenient. The purpose of all this, of course, is to get the public to spend more of their hard-earned money in the futile attempt to buy happiness. Materialism and hedonism are rampant, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and the scariest part is that they are cloaked in a shiny, attractive, alluring package to convince the masses that happiness can be found through the almighty dollar.

As you aptly state in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.14.10:

At the present moment, however, everyone is engaged in technological advancement, which is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* as *ugra-karma*—extremely severe endeavor. This *ugra-karma* is the cause of agitation within the human mind. Men are engaging in many sinful activities and becoming degraded by opening slaughterhouses, breweries, and cigarette factories, as well as nightclubs and other establishments for sense enjoyment. In this way they are spoiling their lives.

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, depression rates are at all-time highs. Reports of mental illnesses continue to rise. The unbridled breakdown of the family unit and the destruction of the very social fabric that people rely on continue unabated. Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is for these reasons, and more, that we find a continued rising interest in Kṛṣṇa consciousness here in Toronto. In fact, although we are in the heart of materialism in downtown Toronto, our temple continues to flourish. Whether it be an eye-opening conversation on the street when distributing books, giving the holy name to students as they stress out preparing for exams, or teaching a yoga practitioner how to chant on beads, the devotees in our community continue to see that there is an eager appetite for Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the last year was a tumultuous one for the devotees of ISKCON Toronto. As a large community of devotees, we faced challenges together, seized opportunities together, broke new ground together, and collectively grew together in the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-cora Gopīnātha and you.

In our temple, grand festivals throughout the year saw people flood into our building to take *darśana* of the Deities and enthusiastically celebrate through *kīrtana*, classes, dramas, *prasādam*, and more. We continue to see wonderful turnouts for our Sunday Feasts and are inspired with the challenge of how to create more personal connections with our guests to help introduce them to your books and chanting the holy name. Our dedicated *pūjārīs* continue to render service to our beloved Deities with great care and attention to detail. The population of our temple *āśrama* has continued to ebb and flow, and we are pressing the search for a model by which we can develop a thriving *āśrama* for both men and women. Our old building continues to present new challenges, and we are always on our toes, trying to keep up with the ongoing needs of our historic home, which you personally selected back in 1975. We are developing grand plans to care for and utilize our temple building in the best possible fashion.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, outreach continues to thrive here at ISKCON Toronto through the tireless efforts of devotees who pour seemingly unlimited amounts of time into their service. The Kṛṣṇa Club program at York University regularly sees keenly inquisitive students attend programs where they are introduced to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Book distribution, something so close to your heart, Śrīla Prabhupāda, expanded this past year, and we set and achieved our goals as devotees distributed tens of thousands of your books. Monthly *saṅkīrtana* festivals are now just one of many ways that your books are making their way from the boxes in our storage room to the hands and minds of spiritual seekers.

Every month we hold an "Evening of Bhakti" at the temple, and the crowds are swelling as the yoga community continues to take notice that the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple is a hotspot for *kīrtana*, delicious food, and philosophy. Through dedicated effort and investment, our Govinda's restaurant has steadily grown, and we are seeing countless people come to your temple to partake of a dining experience that is so satisfying that they continue to visit time and time again. Our Ratha-yātrā has continued its explosive growth, with tens of thousands coming to take part in festivities that now extend beyond the weekend festival. The dynamic approach of bringing the Ratha-yātrā back to an outreach focus is seeing incredible success, with media, corporate

sponsors, and masses of people from varied ethnic backgrounds lining up to chant and learn of our spiritual culture. Every month our Food for Life program continues to serve hot *prasādam* to Toronto's homeless, and *kīrtana* always accompanies the *prasādam* as it is handed out. We preformed a massive *harināma* at City Hall on New Year's Eve, with thousands of revelers joining the devotees in dancing for joy. Several times a year, thousands upon thousands of convention-goers line up to buy *prasādam* at wonderfully successful food fairs. It is through these humble efforts that we continue to seek your blessings and guidance as we try to boldly share your message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness with the entire city.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as a growing community, we have begun to see the need to take care of our devotees. Cultivation efforts continue through wonderful initiatives like Bhakti Vṛkṣas, personal mentoring, and the building of friendships, but we are seeing the pressing need to formalize and develop programs to care for those who are newer in their practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We see this as a monumental challenge, and, as a community, we hope to realize the full potential of mentoring and caring for these newer devotees. Great strides are being made in developing formal educational programs for our community through seminars, classes, and workshops, and we continue to see a strong thirst for knowledge of your books and teachings from our devotee community.

The bright faces and squealing laughter of children resonate both at exciting Kids Camps and also throughout our temple as the now-formalized Sunday School program continues to blossom, resulting in children regaling their parents with pastimes of Kṛṣṇa as families drive home from the temple after Sunday Feasts. We are also humbly continuing to build bridges between our temple and the three other thriving centers in the Toronto area—ISKCON Scarborough, ISKCON Brampton, and the Bhakti Lounge. Our community of devotees at ISKCON Toronto has taken notice of the growing wave of enthusiasm in our movement with respect to devotee care. Our sincere desire is to develop programs, ideas, and support systems for our own community of devotees during their times of need. Whether it is bringing *prasādam* to a devotee who is ill, or offering spiritual and emotional support for devotee families when they lose loved ones, we see the growing need to take care of our own community, and we seek your mercy and blessings as we make small steps toward this goal.

Central to making all this happen is the guidance and blessings of senior Vaiṣṇavas. We feel truly blessed, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to have the personal association of so many of your direct disciples and granddisciples, who take time out of their busy schedules to come to New Remuṇā Dhāma. Senior devotees like Vaiṣeṣika Prabhu, Saṅkarṣaṇa Prabhu, Laxmīmonī Dāsī, Bhakti Bṛhat Bhāgavata Swami, Draviḍa Prabhu, Devāmṛta Swami, Kṛṣṇa-nandinī Dāsī, Nityānanda Prabhu, and so many more become personifications of inspiration as they bring your teachings and instructions to the hungry devotees of Toronto. Combining this with the ongoing guidance we receive from both Bhaktimārga Swami and Gopāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami yields a community that continually feels blanketed in love, care, and affection from senior Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are clearly the smallest of saplings in the gargantuan forest of worldwide devotees, and we do not feel qualified to render service to your lotus feet. It will only be through your blessings that we will be able to see our community establish stronger roots, branch out to wider audiences, and bear the sweetest of fruits in the form of soft-hearted devotees.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the message of materialism will certainly continue to bombard the wider populace, and it will do so with the mirage of shimmering images, dazzling tricks, and fancy packaging. But with your mercy, the devotees of ISKCON Toronto will be able to counteract these allurements with the shimmering images of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the dazzling sounds of *kīrtana*, and the most wonderful packaging of your pearls of wisdom in your books. Your love and personal instructions continue to inspire us to chip away at the edifice of illusion built by the servants of the material energy. We continue to strive toward living your teachings more and more and establishing even more strongly your role as our beloved founder-*ācārya*. We seek your blessings as we continue to try to broaden our outreach, develop a stronger community of devotees, provide support and care for our community, and take care of your beautiful temple at 243 Avenue Road.

We remain eternally indebted to you and humbly fall at your lotus feet. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your insignificant servants at New Remuṇā Dhāma, ISKCON's temple community in Toronto, Canada.

New Tālavana

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. Today I have decided to write your Vyāsa-pūjā offering on behalf of your New Tālavana temple and farm community. We hope you will appreciate it despite its inevitable faults.

Although this offering certainly has its faults, you are faultless. While suffering ordinary or extraordinary circumstances in this world of birth and death, you were fixed in devotional service to your Guru Mahārāja and the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You are always thinking and acting for the benefit of others, and you find infinite pleasure in serving the Supreme Lord. Consequently, there is no room in your divine being for anti-Kṛṣṇa-conscious nonsense.

We are your servants, and we are always ready to carry out your command. It wasn't easy when we joined you; nor was it easy after you left this world. However, sticking to your lotus feet has continued to provide us shelter. We are very fortunate. We should have drowned in the ocean of material existence, but you taught us the message of Lord Kṛṣṇa's *yuga-avatāra* and His *paramparā*; thus you delivered us by your teachings and the wonderful society you created for the purpose of delivering humanity, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Your ministry will continue to grow and grow because your teachings are the most potent weapons for piercing the darkness of fruitive activity and mental speculation. The devotees in your society will carry on, following in your footsteps; thus they will lead people back home, back to Godhead. Therefore the distribution of your transcendental literatures continues to be a priority in our lives, although we represent another aspect of your mission and much of your unfinished business on this planet.

Your mission's other aspect and your unfinished business are your farm communities and the establishment of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. Your farsighted vision included our society supplying its own food, and members embracing a sense of duty, or dharma. Protecting cows? No other so-called guru in the Western world even considered making this a priority, but you're different. You're the pure devotee of the Prince of Vrajabhūmi, and protecting cows is a big priority for Him. Thus you emphasized it. Performing our duties for you meant following in the footsteps of Lord Kṛṣṇa's dearest friend, the powerful Pāṇḍava Arjuna. Consequently, thinking and acting according to the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa's *Bhagavad-gītā* is your society's dharma.

Your books are purifying the hearts of humanity, and the directions you've given for living in this world are practical and hardy. Taking care of cows and growing food is real self-sufficiency and rugged individualism. And even more rugged and self-sufficient is the generation of energy from the power of Dharma the bull. You were far ahead of your time, Śrīla Prabhupāda. As a society we are just beginning to catch up to your pure intelligence in regard to farming communities and *varṇāśrama-dharma*.

Will we succeed? If we do, by your mercy, that will be our life's perfection. But if we fall short, I pray that the future generations of ISKCON devotees will fulfill these ideals for the benefit of humanity, thus adding to the recognition you deserve, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as history's greatest exponent of God consciousness in the fallen Age of Kali.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are grateful like Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and therefore we are hopeful that you will always appreciate our humble selfless service. Therefore let us push on and not waste time constantly looking back. We shall continue to serve the Lord's *arcā-vigraha* manifestation and distribute His merciful *prasādam* and your transcendental literatures. We will teach others this wonderful science you've given us, and simultaneously we will grow food, protect cows, and live according to the dharma of *varṇāśrama*, as espoused by Lord Kṛṣṇa and exhibited by His *yuga-avatāra*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the Golden Avatāra.

This science of the self, its relationship with the Superself, the nature of man, and how man can utilize his nature in God's service for His pleasure was transmitted to our humble selves by Your Divine Grace, mostly through your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and other hallowed writings, as well as through your service, Society, and personal instructions. May we never forget any of them and always hear and chant your glories and render service onto your divine lotus feet.



Chanting and dancing in the *harināma-saṅkīrtana-yajña* and eating the holy remnants of Their Lordships Nītāi-Gaurasundara, we are working our way back to Godhead to join your *saṅkīrtana* party, wherever it may be. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us devotional life and the wonderful opportunity to serve your brilliant perspective and devotees. May we always follow in your footsteps and help others on the path back home, back to Godhead. May we fulfill your great ambition to save the whole world from going to hell. Please bless us to always be one of your trusted servitors.

Your humble servants at New Tālavana Dhāma, in rural southern Mississippi, USA.

(written by Yogindra-vandana Dāsa)

New Varṣāṇā

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you on this great occasion!

It gives me great pleasure to let you know that since your first trip down under in 1972, when you traveled all the way from Kṛṣṇa's transcendental playground, Śrī Vṛndāvana, to this remote land, New Zealand, your ISKCON society here has steadily continued to win favor with the people in general, from the man in the street up to the prime minister.

Very bewildering indeed is Kṛṣṇa's external energy—He calls it “My divine energy”—with really no way out on our own, no matter who we are. The only way out is to surrender to Kṛṣṇa, with deep faith in guru and the previous *ācāryas*—a faith you showed to an amazing degree.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your *Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma*, the captivating poetic prayer to Kṛṣṇa you wrote on the *Jaladuta* in September 1965, nicely sums up the predicament of us all, and the solution. An excerpt from your English translation of the Bengali original:

Most of the population here is covered by the material modes of ignorance and passion. Absorbed in material life, they think themselves very happy and satisfied, and therefore they have no taste for the transcendental message of Vāsudeva. I do not know how they will be able to understand it. But I know Your causeless mercy can make everything possible because You are the most expert mystic.

By your pure devotion, strong conviction, and hard work, people from all walks of life, East and West, now have the opportunity to learn for the first time the ultimate goal of life: returning home, back to Godhead. This opportunity is very historic. Outside India, devotees are taking to the streets dressed as Vaiṣṇavas, with shaven heads, *dhotīs*, *kurtās*, and saris, and also in Western dress, chanting the holy name and dancing. This has never happened before in the West. It is all by your mercy and your desire to please the Supreme Lord.

There is no doubt that you are bringing great pleasure to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

You are Kṛṣṇa's expert mystic. Your movement is coming up on its fiftieth anniversary, and already there are thousands of devotees, millions of books distributed, and millions of people who have tasted *prasādam*.

We are just the first or second generation of pioneers. Kṛṣṇa's plans are not small. He is the Supreme, and this earth is only one of His planets. Kṛṣṇa has appeared in this age on this planet in His most merciful form, Lord Gaurāṅga, and called to the fallen souls of this age: “I have brought the medicine for destroying the illusion of *māyā*. Now pray for this *harināma mahā-mantra* and take it.”

How beautiful! It's free—just take it!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given the world the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is freely giving love of Godhead. If not for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, there would be no ISKCON, no *harināma*, no *prasādam*, no Deities, no books, no Māyāpur, no Vṛndāvana, no life.

Thank you for tolerating us.

Your servants at New Varṣāṇā, ISKCON's farm community in New Zealand.

(written by Kalasaṁvara Dāsa)

New Vraja-dhāma

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to the dust of your divine lotus feet!

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

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-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.

All glories to the day when you appeared! All glories to you for coming to the Western world to deliver us from sinful life and give us pure love of Godhead!

Your appearance in this world is a great benediction for us.

While contemplating how you sacrificed everything to carry out your spiritual master's order and fulfill Lord Caitanya's prophecy, I remembered this passage in one of your purports:

The prediction of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu will triumph: *pṛthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma/sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma*. "In every town and village, the chanting of My name will be heard." No one can check the spread of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement because upon this movement is the benediction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 17.203, purport]

It was the Lord's plan that you come because He wanted to fulfill this prophecy through His great devotee. What a wonderful person you must be, Śrīla Prabhupāda, if the Supreme Lord entrusts you with such a special service!

Lord Caitanya said to Lord Nityānanda (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Madhya 16.64):

prati-varṣa nīlācale tumi nā āsibā



gauḍe rahi' mora icchā saphala karibā

“Do not come to Jagannātha Purī every year, but stay in Bengal and fulfill My desire.”

[PURPORT:] The mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is to spread the only medicine effective in this fallen Age of Kali—the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. Following the orders of His mother, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was residing at Jagannātha Purī, and the devotees were coming to see Him. However, the Lord felt that this message must be spread very elaborately in Bengal, and in His absence there was not a second person capable of doing it. Consequently the Lord requested Nityānanda Prabhu to stay there and broadcast the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The Lord also entrusted a similar preaching responsibility to Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī. Nityānanda Prabhu was requested not to come every year to Jagannātha Purī, although seeing Lord Jagannātha greatly benefits everyone. Does this mean that the Lord was refusing Nityānanda Prabhu a fortunate opportunity? No. One who is a faithful servant of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu must execute His order, even if one has to sacrifice going to Jagannātha Purī to see Lord Jagannātha there. In other words, it is a greater fortune to carry out Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's order than to satisfy one's senses by seeing Lord Jagannātha.

A question arises upon hearing this pastime: Did the Lord deny you an opportunity to live in Vṛndāvana? Here is your answer to this question:

Preaching Caitanya Mahāprabhu's cult throughout the world is more important than staying in Vṛndāvana or Jagannātha Purī for one's own personal satisfaction. Spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission; therefore His sincere devotees must carry out His desire. [Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 16.64, purport]

Hearing these words from you means you certainly achieved perfection, because you entirely fulfilled this desire of the Lord's. You came to the Western world, renouncing the spiritual benefits of the holy *dhāma*, but in fact wherever you are, there is Vṛndāvana:

*bhavad-vidhā bhāgavatās tīrtha-bhūtāḥ svayaṁ vibho
tīrthī-kurvanti tīrthāṇi svāntaḥ-sthena gadābhṛtā*

[King Yudhiṣṭhira said to Saint Vidura:] My lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified. Because you carry the Personality of Godhead within your heart, you turn all places into places of pilgrimage.

By manifesting the knowledge in your books, the devotees here in New Vraja-dhāma feel that it has also become Vṛndāvana.

We will never be able to repay our debt to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The devotees of New Vraja Dhāma, Krishna Valley, Hungary.

(written by Sāṅkīrtana Dāsa)

New Vrajamaṇḍala

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances. All glories to your divine appearance in this world!

By your unfathomable compassion upon us fallen conditioned souls, you constantly distribute your mercy to your followers by engaging everyone, according to his or her capacity, in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Your merciful vāṇī association enables many sincere souls to advance quickly on the path of devotional service. Your words enter their hearts, inspiring them to dedicate their lives to the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu—giving the holy name to everyone they meet. People all over the world are being benefited by the association of the members of your transcendental family, who offer the holy name as the only refuge for suffering humanity in Kali-yuga.

Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa owns the “copyright” of His own name, He does not wish to keep this treasure for Himself but desires to share it with others. By His mercy, may all those sincere souls who develop an attraction for His name receive your books and understand the process of *bhakti-yoga*. Then the intelligent and humble followers of your instructions will be able to guide others to the Lord’s lotus feet. These transcendental books are not the fantasy of some fiction writer but have been dictated to you by the Lord personally because you are his pure devotee. Thus He revealed Himself within your heart, Śrīla Prabhupāda. The translations and commentary are therefore perfectly presented by one in full knowledge of the science of Kṛṣṇa.

By reading your transcendental books, anyone—regardless of gender, race, or social, economic, or educational status—can associate with the Lord and His pure devotee and become completely purified through hearing and chanting. As a result, such a fortunate soul will engage all his senses in the loving service of the Lord and His devotees. This is the only process for purifying the mind and senses, making the whole atmosphere auspicious, and coming to the platform of steady devotional service. As Sūta Gosvāmī explains to the sages at Naimiṣāraṇya (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.17–18):

*śṛṇvatām sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ
hṛdy antaḥ stho hy abhadrāṇi vidhunoti suhṛt satām*

*naṣṭa-prāyeṣv abhadreṣu nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā
bhagavatṭ uttama-śloke bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramātmā [Supersoul] in everyone’s heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted. By regular attendance in classes on the *Bhāgavatam* and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact.

We thank you a thousand times for giving us so much, so unconditionally. Begging your mercy to continue in the service of Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga, we remain

Your servants at New Vrajamaṇḍala, ISKCON’s rural community in Spain.

(written by Godrumadvīpa Dāsa)

New Vrindaban

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glory to your lotus feet!

Recently we held a board meeting at which members of various temple departments made presentations on their activities during the past year. One story was particularly memorable:

A highlight for pilgrims during the peak season in New Vrindaban is the Saturday evening swan-boat festival, where Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vṛndāvana-candra's *utsava* Deities float around Kusuma Sarovara on a swan-shaped boat while Their devotees and pilgrims chant on the banks and fireworks go off overhead. One Saturday, just as two members of the congregational development team were about to push off and start the festival, they discovered that the boat's motor was not working. Dismayed at the thought of disappointing the assembled crowd, their fears were confirmed when they quickly realized there was no way of fixing the motor in time, and so they prepared to step off the boat. Suddenly, however, it began to move. At first, they could not identify the cause. After listening for a few moments, though, they noticed that, in place of the steady purring of the motor that they were used to, they heard an intermittent "Splunk!" "Splunk!" "Splunk!" Finally, looking behind the boat, they were astonished to see their department head swimming in the water below. While the two of them had given up hope almost immediately after learning of the motor malfunction, their leader had, without hesitation, pulled off his shirt, jumped into the *kuṇḍa*, and begun kicking, pushing the boat ahead of him. They were so moved by his selfless dedication to serving you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that they began to cry.

New Vrindaban started as a "spiritual frontier," pioneered by dedicated and dynamic individuals. Their common goal was to fulfill your vision of a self-sufficient farm community and place of pilgrimage in the West. To this end, they devoted countless hours of loving service and incredible amounts of energy and enthusiasm. Some of those pioneers are still with us, as we try to revive this mood of unflagging endeavor to serve your instructions—the same mood illustrated above.

Part of this effort has involved bringing in new blood. For example, we hired a successful local organic farmer to head up our food production. Although not currently a practicing devotee, she has a natural fondness for the community: She visited here with her husband on their wedding anniversary, and when asked to write a geography paper comparing two locales, she chose Vṛndāvana (India) and New Vrindaban. Also, a young man who has grown up in your movement was so inspired by a recent ISKCON leadership seminar that he has taken over management of our guest lodge.

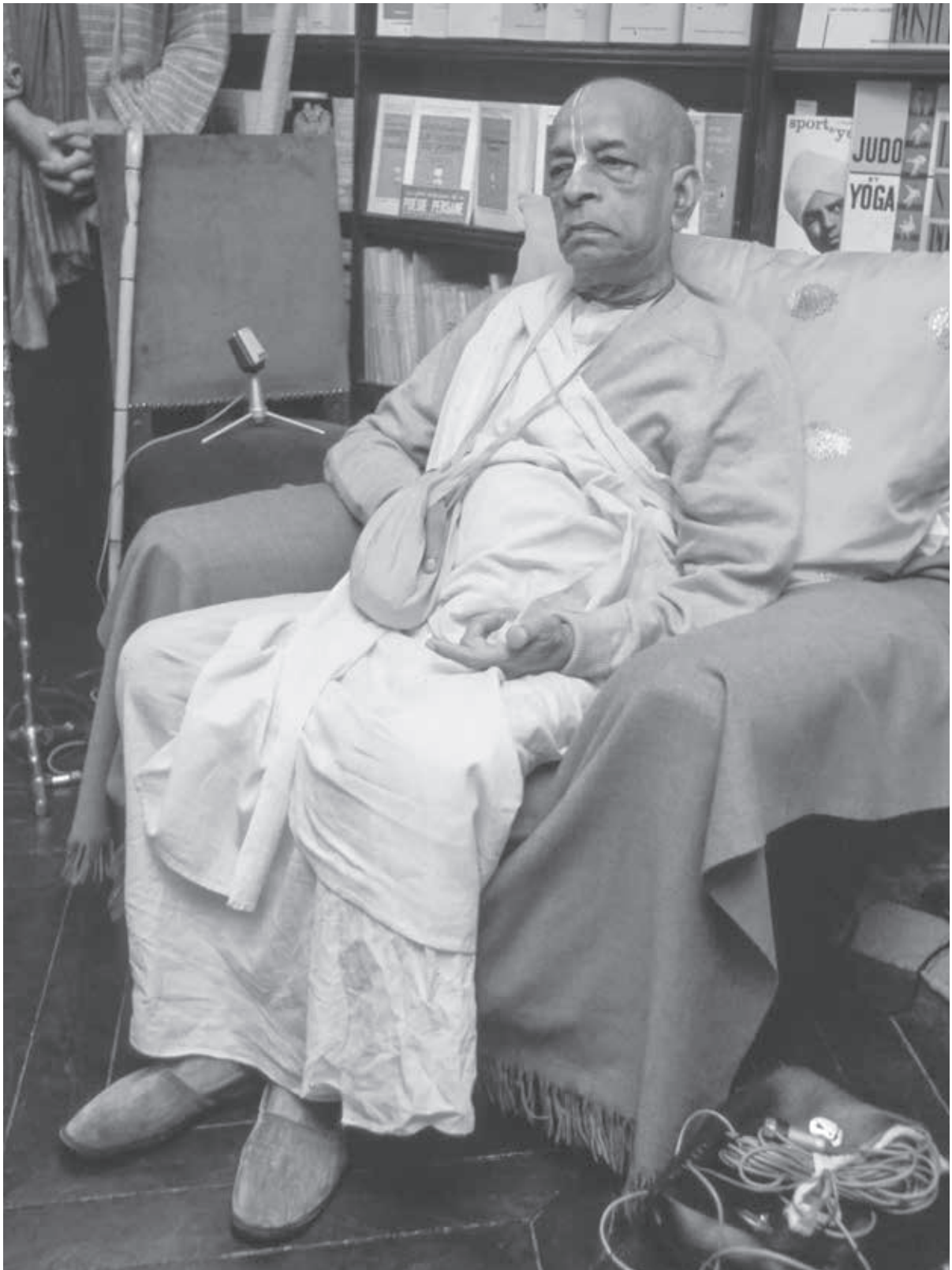
Another part of this effort has involved making the difficult decision to allow natural gas drilling on the property. Although we would never have invited this kind of activity into the *dhāma* on our own initiative, neighboring landowners brought it into our midst. So, making the best use of a bad bargain, we decided to sign leases and employ the funds to pursue your goal of simple living and high thinking; using a thorn to remove a thorn, as Your Divine Grace would sometimes say.

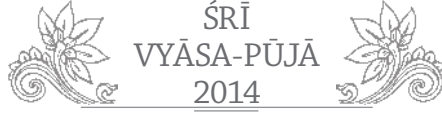
During your last visit here, in June 1976, you explained the role New Vrindaban should play in modern society:

Make this ideal life here. America has got good potency. We have got so much land here. We can have hundreds of New Vrindabans or farms like that. And people will be happy. And invite all the world, 'Please come and live with us. Why you are suffering congestion, overpopulation? Welcome here. Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.' Make that. Indian culture and American strength make the whole world happy.

Please bless us all with the same Brijabasi Spirit that inspired your original New Vrindaban "inmates" so that we can build on the foundation they laid and create the community you wanted—one that is a sanctuary and model for the world.

Your servants at New Vrindaban Dhāma, West Virginia, USA.





New York City (Brooklyn)

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate 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 on this earth, having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vānī-pracāriṇe
nirviṣeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

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

*vande gurūn īśa-bhaktān īśam īśāvatārakān
tat-prakāśāṁś ca tac-chaktiḥ kṛṣṇa-caitanya-saṁjñakam*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the spiritual masters, the devotees of the Lord, the Lord's incarnations, His plenary portions, His energies, and the primeval Lord Himself, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Today we feel most blessed and blissful on this occasion, the wonderful Vyāsa-pūjā celebration of Your Divine Grace.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I believe Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindadeva especially blessed us by scheduling your appearance day in 1896 on Nandotsava, the day after Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī. Kṛṣṇa knew the great spiritual mission Your Divine Grace would establish in this dark and dangerous Kali-yuga, and so, brilliantly shining His wonderful mercy that beautiful September day in 1896 when Your Divine Grace appeared, and which He would again radiantly manifest as the unlimited mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Rāma, He blessed all of us, your dedicated followers, with the double ecstasy of a wonderful two-day celebration of bliss, transcendental knowledge, and love, namely Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī and Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā. It is a very good day indeed, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all who serve Your Divine Grace with sincere eagerness, enthusiasm, and unwavering dedication, along with love, devotion, and immovable, unflinching faith. We are always inspired by your kindness, mercy, and love.

On this very special day we may oftentimes glimpse a little taste of divine *bhāva*, perhaps a few tears, perhaps a faltering voice, perhaps a heart and soul mystically affected and blessed by Your Divine Grace and Lord Śrī Nityānanda Rāma, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, influenced perhaps by the Queen of Vṛndāvana, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and by the transcendental, all-powerful cause of all causes, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the greatest lover, Bhagavān Śrīla Govindadeva, the master of the *gopīs* and the lover of Rādhārāṇī.

*mantra-guru āra yata śikṣā-guru-gaṇa
tānhāra caraṇa āge kariye vandana*

"I first offer my respectful obeisances at the lotus feet of my initiating spiritual master and all my instructing spiritual masters." (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 1.35)

Our goal, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is unalloyed devotional service offered at your lotus feet, birth after birth. Therefore we aspire to be servants of the servants of the servants of Gaura-Nitāi and Rādhā-Govindadeva. Our aim is to associate in blissful loving relations with the wonderful Vaiṣṇavas who come together to chant the purifying nectar comprising the eternal blissful glories of Kṛṣṇa. We associate safely and blissfully by

chanting Kṛṣṇa's holy names: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

The ever-growing worldwide community of wonderful Vaiṣṇavas has been attracted to this great Hare Kṛṣṇa movement by your unalloyed, pure *bhakti-sevā*, performed in loving obedience to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja and offered to the lotus feet of the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* predecessor *ācāryas*. This pure *bhakti-sevā*, offered and received as it is, unadulterated, through the chain of Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, arriving perfect and complete, delivered at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, whose desire has thus been fulfilled and who therefore becomes very much pleased upon us all and reciprocates and blesses us all with the soothing rain of His ecstatic bliss and love. Yes, pure *bhakti-sevā*, Śrīla Prabhupāda—the only acceptable prescription for fulfilling the Hare Kṛṣṇa mission, for it alone fulfills the mystical mission of the Golden Avatāra, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, thereby causing Śrī Gaurāṅga's causeless monsoon of mercy to pour down incessant loving vibrations from His golden heart. *Jaya Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, Prabhu Nityānanda, Jaya Advaita, Gadādhara, Śrīvāsa Ādi-gaura-bhakta-vṛnda! Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.*

We develop love for Kṛṣṇa by Kṛṣṇa conscious activities. Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we can know the Supreme Absolute Truth if you bless us with mercy so our blind, sleeping eyes awaken with divine vision. The most confidential secret of success, simple and sublime, is submissive aural reception of the transcendental sounds vibrated by those who know the science of God perfectly, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The most confidential secret, simple and sublime, is to follow the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness you established for us, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You are our *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please show us the simple and sublime path, awaken our eyes with divine vision, reveal to us the Absolute Truth, and remove our fears, our stress, the perpetual anxiety inflicted by the path of darkness, and make our faith stronger than steel, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please guide us to such wonderful transcendent light by shining the transcendental, eternal, and peaceful supreme divine light of *bhagavad-bhakti*, of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, deep into our dark, sleeping, and lonely hearts, which simply hunger only for pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, for pure *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, devotional service, birth after birth, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*śikṣā-guruke ta' jāni kṛṣṇera svarūpa
antaryāmī, bhakta-śreṣṭha,—ei dui rūpa*

“One should know the instructing spiritual master to be the Personality of Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself as the Supersoul and as the greatest devotee of the Lord.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 1.47)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, a devotee must have only one initiating spiritual master, as the scriptures state that having more than one is always forbidden. There is no limit, however, to the number of instructing spiritual masters we may accept. You are the perfect self-realized and Kṛṣṇa-realized *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your Bhaktivedanta archives of transcendental sound is unsurpassed, delivering the perfection of Kṛṣṇa conscious thought and a treasure house of realization and wisdom. The transcendent wisdom emanates from Bhagavān Śrīla Govindadeva, the supreme author, the original guru, who told you what to write in your wonderful books.

Anyone who is reluctant to accept Your Divine Grace as such a perfect, topmost, self-realized, and Kṛṣṇa-realized *śikṣā-guru* is very unfortunate, for he is sure to be slowed down in his endeavor to go back to Godhead. Indeed, such a person, unfortunately not taking advantage of your empowered *śikṣā*, your transcendental Kṛṣṇa conscious sound vibration, will have to encounter many stumbling blocks on the path of self-realization and Kṛṣṇa-realization. Such a person will thereby lose the great opportunity at hand: to achieve by your mercy the perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the topmost goal of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-yoga*, in this precious and short lifetime, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please bless us today, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please force us by the power of your mercy to avoid becoming aimlessly floating souls on the ocean of nescience, like ships without rudders. Śrīla Prabhupāda, by accepting your wise guidance as our preeminent *śikṣā-guru*, we are in fact accepting a miraculous blessing in our conditioned and sorrowful hearts. A miraculous blessing needed by so many unfortunate hearts, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

May your unsurpassed *śikṣā* kindle our hearts with peace, ignite them with happiness, and awaken them

with love, beginning with those inherent eternal blissful emotions of *bhava-bhakti*, leading to the ultimate transcendental vibration of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Some day, by your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda—yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda. When, oh when, will that day be ours?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is therefore of the utmost urgency that every sincere disciple and every person aspiring to be a sincere disciple accept bona fide spiritual masters in terms of the śāstric injunctions. Both a *dīkṣā-guru* and *śikṣā-gurus*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, a great *ācārya* and wonderful *śikṣā-guru*, advises us not to accept a spiritual master in terms of hereditary or customary social and ecclesiastical conventions. One should simply try to find a genuinely qualified, bona fide, self-realized spiritual master for real and substantial advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

*naivopayanty apacitiṁ kavayas taveśa
 brahmāyusāpi kṛtam ṛddha-mudaḥ smarantaḥ
 yo 'ntar bahis tanu-bhṛtām aśubhaṁ vidhunvann
 ācārya-caitya-vapuṣā sva-gatiṁ vyanakti*

“O my Lord! Transcendental poets and experts in spiritual science could not fully express their indebtedness to You, even if they were endowed with the prolonged lifetime of Brahmā, for You appear in two features—externally as the *ācārya* and internally as the Supersoul—to deliver the embodied living being by directing him how to come to You.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.29.6)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, while others give us help in showing the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the spiritual master who initiates us with the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* is to be known as the initiator, the *dīkṣā-guru*, and the saintly persons who provide instructions for our progressive advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are called instructing spiritual masters, *śikṣā-gurus*. The initiating and instructing spiritual masters are equal and identical manifestations of Kṛṣṇa, although they have different dealings.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Rāma have mercifully blessed us by establishing this divine system of transcendent dissemination of *divya-jñāna*, the blessing of transcendental knowledge and self-realization and Kṛṣṇa-realization. By the mercy of Gaura-Nitāi, all those who follow your perfect Kṛṣṇa conscious *śikṣā* shall achieve the topmost goal of perfect and complete Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and at the end all such perfect *śikṣā* followers shall be qualified to return home, back to Godhead.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, since you are our preeminent instructing spiritual master, we realize Your Divine Grace to be a bona fide representative of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself teaches us from within and without as the instructing guru. He teaches us within as the Supersoul, Paramātmā, our constant companion, and from without He teaches us from the *Bhagavad-gītā* as the instructing spiritual master. As the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are authorized by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu to deliver Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you enrich all your *dīkṣā* and *śikṣā* disciples with full spiritual knowledge, which awakens them to the activities of devotional service.

By learning from Your Divine Grace, a truly self-realized spiritual master, how to engage in the service of Lord Viṣṇu, a disciple begins functional devotional service. Śrīla Prabhupāda, some unfortunately do not understand the following transcendental facts: For the thousands of disciples for whom you are the initiating spiritual master, Your Divine Grace is a personal manifestation of both Śrīla Madana-mohana *vigraha* and Śrīla Govindadeva *vigraha*, and for your many thousands of *śikṣā* disciples Your Divine Grace is a personal manifestation of Śrīla Govindadeva *vigraha*. (This we learn from your purport to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 1.47)

*ācāryaṁ mām vijānīyān nāvamanyeta karhicit
 na martya-buddhyāsūyeta sarva-deva-mayo guruḥ*

“One should know the *ācārya* as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.17.27)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON, thirty-second in disciplic line from Kṛṣṇa in the Gauḍīya *sampradāya*, Your Divine Grace is always offering blessings to everyone fortunate enough to contact

you or appreciate you, what to speak of sincerely serve you. An ever-increasing worldwide congregation of new, aspiring, and dedicated practitioners are arriving on the path of devotion leading to the true and pure, unadulterated platform of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the beloved *dīkṣā-guru* of thousands of wonderful, beautiful, and great disciples. Your Divine Grace is the preeminent *śikṣā-guru* for those thousands of fortunate and blessed *dīkṣā* disciples, and you are the preeminent *śikṣā-guru* for thousands of thousands of younger *kṛṣṇa-bhaktas*. Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, Your Divine Grace has the potential to be the preeminent *śikṣā-guru* for millions, and even millions of millions. Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, someday you may have billions and trillions of *śikṣā* disciples. Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are like the great Śrīla Nārada Muni or the great Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are qualified to be the *śikṣā-guru* for everyone in the universe.

Such is the great legacy of a great moonlike pure devotee of Gaura-Nitāi and Rādhā- Govindadeva, such is the great legacy of a moonlike surrendered *mahātmā* disciple of the great ray of Viṣṇu Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and such is the great legacy of the ever well-wisher, the kindest friend, and the great spiritual master for a multitude of unfortunate, misguided, and misdirected spirit souls who hanker for the peace, mercy, blessings, and love of complete Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Yes, this is your great and wonderful legacy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and therefore we are humbled and feel most insignificant assembled at your lotus feet.

We, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your most fortunate followers, feel incomplete, imperfect. Yes, we feel fallible, Śrīla Prabhupāda, although we are standing in the direct line of the causeless shower of your mercy and perfect, infallible Kṛṣṇa conscious guidance. How can this be, Śrīla Prabhupāda? We hear from Your Divine Grace the real true Kṛṣṇa conscious *siddhānta*, we pray, we worship, and we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, *Jaya* Nitāi-Gaurāṅga, and *Jaya* Rādhā Govinda together, Śrīla Prabhupāda, which surely brings us together in faith, purpose, and dedication. Yet somehow or other, after the festival ends and we go our separate ways, all too often we become a little less fortunate—why *less* fortunate? sometimes *unfortunate*—and we lapse into forgetfulness of the great urgency, need, and hope of our mission, of your mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda, of the great Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas'* mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and especially of the great mission of the Golden Avatāra, Śrī Gaurāṅga, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and of Śrī Nityānanda Balarāma, Śrī Advaita Ācārya, Śrī Gadādhara Prabhu, and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura.

Please bless us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, with a drop of special all-powerful spiritual potency so we no longer lapse into such unfortunate forgetfulness, so we no longer lapse into spiritual weakness, so we no longer risk wasting this great opportunity for achieving complete Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this lifetime, in this precious human form of life.

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, bless us, your insignificant followers, with just a drop of awesome spiritual potency so we will perfectly obey and serve the higher order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and the Parampāda Bhagavān Śrīla Govindadeva as He wisely directs all humanity with these supreme words:

*yāre dekha, tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-upadeśa
 āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra' ei deśa*

“Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they are given in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 7.128)

*na rūpam asyeha tathopalabhyate
 nānto na cādir na ca sampratiṣṭhā
 aśvattham enaṁ su-virūḍha-mūlam
 asaṅga-śastreṇa dṛḍhena chittvā*

*tataḥ pādaṁ tat parimārgitavyaṁ
 yasmin gatā na nivartanti bhūyaḥ
 tam eva cādyam puruṣam prapadye
 yataḥ pravṛttiḥ prasṛtā purāṇī*

“The real form of this tree cannot be perceived in this world. No one can understand where it ends, where it begins, or where its foundation is. But with determination one must cut down this strongly rooted tree with the weapon of detachment. Thereafter, one must seek that place from which, having gone, one never returns, and there surrender to that Supreme Personality of Godhead from whom everything began and from whom everything has extended since time immemorial.” (*Bhagavad-gītā* 15.3–4)

This is the sublime mission of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please never kick us away. All of us love you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

We beg to remain your servants forever.

Your unfortunate, insignificant servants at Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindadeva Mandira, Brooklyn, New York, New York, USA.

(written by Rāmabhadra Dāsa)

Noida

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble and respectful obeisances. All glories to your lotus feet! All glories to your Vyāsa-pūjā!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the most auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā is always full of joy and excitement for all your children and grandchildren. On the morning after the busy night of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī, when everyone would prefer to take some extra rest, your sincere followers look forward to preparing for and taking part in the celebration of your Vyāsa-pūjā festival. This is the sweet relationship you have developed with all the devotees trained and nurtured in ISKCON.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are grateful to you for millions of things, particularly for giving us wonderful temples in all the cities and towns on the surface of earth, a perfect arrangement for associating with devotees of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, with your blessings we were able to inaugurate the Noida temple this year on Nityānanda Trayodaśī, as per the commitment we made to you on your Vyāsa-pūjā last year. This could happen only due to your causeless mercy and the guidance and inspiration from your dear disciple His Holiness Lokanāth Swami, who happily went through a lot of spiritual anxiety for this prestigious project solely for the pleasure of Your Divine Grace. Śrīla Prabhupāda, we took a little longer than expected to complete this project due to our incompetence, but as the saying goes, “All’s well that ends well.”

We had a memorable inauguration festival, attended by many devotees from different parts of the world who came to bless this function, justifying the name you gave this revolutionary society: the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. In addition, thousands of guests attended the opening festival, and everyone was served nice *prasādam* on all three days. Everyone witnessed the rare *mahā-abhiṣeka* and *prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā*



ceremonies for the Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindadeva, Śrī Śrī Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā, and Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi. Śrīla Prabhupāda, we could feel your presence in every sphere of the festival; it was actually Your Divine Grace who was making things happen here.

On this special day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we beg at your lotus feet to empower us with wisdom and purity so that we can utilize the nice facilities you've kindly provided us at Noida for distributing the holy name of the Lord to each and every living entity living in every street and home of this city. Please bless us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, so that we can get back to our preaching services with renewed vigor and improve the condition of the lives of everyone here.

Thank you once again, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for everything you have done for all of us.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Vyāsa-pūjā mahotsava kī jaya!

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your insignificant servants at ISKCON Noida, India.

Pandharpur

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most respectful humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

We owe you an infinite debt of gratitude for the divine knowledge you have given us. Through your books you have given us the ability to see the world with transcendental vision, and you have explained *bhagavat-tattva-vijñāna*—the science of Godhead—to all of us. By opening temples worldwide, you gave everyone the opportunity to regularly hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, etc., and also an opportunity to take *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*.

This year we arranged the program of Paṇḍharpūra-Dhāma-Pañcakrośī-Parikramā. During these three days of *parikramā*, more than a hundred devotees from different parts of Maharashtra participated. Accompanied by the Deities of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, devotees circumambulated Pandharpur *dhāma* while chanting and dancing enthusiastically. People in the villages on the *parikramā* path welcomed the devotees, and there was *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, *kīrtana*, and grand book and *prasādam* distribution.

This year we also celebrated the 500th anniversary of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's visit to Maharashtra and Pandharpur *dhāma* when He was on His South India tour. On this occasion we arranged a *padayātrā* from Kolhapura to Nasik, following the path that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu traveled. *Padayātrā* devotees walked the following path: Kolhapura-Arawade-Pandharpur-Satara (Krishna-Venna Sangam)-Pune-Mumbai-Wada-Nasik.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you greatly emphasized cow protection. The *gośālā* at ISKCON Pandharpur is flourishing. The number of cows and bulls are increasing. Milk has also increased. Devotees are very happy to drink milk from our own cows. Cow dung obtained from the *gośālā* is being properly utilized on the farm as manure. We are trying our best to keep the cows happy. Kindly guide us to develop this cow protection program, which is very dear Śrī Govinda and you.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda! You are the commander in chief of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu's army. We are following your commands by distributing your transcendental books, and we are traveling to many towns and villages to distribute the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.

The Śrīla Prabhupāda Ghāṭa Project we started last year is now sixty percent completed. We are going to offer this project to Your Divine Grace on the auspicious occasion of ISKCON's Golden Jubilee (50th anniversary) in 2016.

Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us a chance to serve you in various ways. We beg you to kindly keep us engaged in your divine service eternally.

Your servants at ISKCON Pandharpur, India.

Paris

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On behalf of the devotees in the Paris temple, I will attempt to write something for your glorification on your auspicious Vyāsa-pūjā day.

I ask myself, What is it that makes you the most important person not only in my life but factually in the lives of every human being on the planet, although most of them do not know it yet.

A concise answer: You gave us a way of life that enables anyone who follows it to transcend the miserable material existence altogether and attain the shelter of Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world.

That is not something esoteric but is the most tangible thing there is. It is the fulfillment of our innermost desires, the solution to all our problems. Who could give us all that except for you?

Many wise men have come and gone throughout history, and their thoughts continue to inspire and enlighten, but you are not just one of them. You gave us the complete package: everything we need to make a success out of this otherwise wretched life. Your gifts of course include your books, the law books for the next ten thousand years, and the mentors you personally trained in this science and empowered to train the next generation in the same very practical way.

How can I express myself with such confidence? Because I have seen your instructions work wonders in my own life. By my following the path you outlined, my life has changed from night to day. When I think back and try to remember what my life was before you saved me some thirty years ago, I can only compare it to a nightmare of the most horrific sort. It is truly a miracle that you have effected this change.

While writing these words I am sitting in Śrīdhām Māyāpur, Lord Caitanya's transcendental abode. Through my doorway I have a stunning view of the rising Temple of the Vedic Planetarium, the Vatican of Lord Caitanya's Golden Age. In the middle of the rice fields of one of India's poorest, most remote areas, this magnificent edifice is becoming manifest. How transcendental! And it is all because of you, and you alone. The many other temples in the area are hardly noticeable next to the massive temple complex you are creating here through your dedicated followers, whose hearts reverbrate day and night with the fervent instructions you imparted to them.

The special quality you have that distinguishes you from everyone else, even many saintly persons, is your absolutely firm faith in the instructions of your spiritual master and the holy name of the Lord. Even above that, one might say, is your unlimited compassion for the conditioned souls suffering in this world. You gave us something we had never known before, namely, unconditional, unselfish love—a love that the whole world is thirsting after, a love that makes life worth living, a love that makes hell into heaven, a love whose absence makes heaven into hell.

One of your disciples, in great amazement, once told you: “Śrīla Prabhupāda, everyone likes you so much.” Your response really revealed your secret: “Yes, because I like everyone.”

Recently I have relocated to ISKCON Paris. Here I feel closer to you in the sense that France in general and Paris specifically was a place of many pastimes of yours, and also because there are so many of your direct disciples here. You of course also had to face some strong opposition here, maybe even more than in other countries, since France has a tradition of revolution and anarchy, especially among the younger generation.

In the face of such opposition, you showed even more greatness. Simultaneously humble and determined, you persevered in all circumstances. When the students demanded “*par terre*” (“Get down on the floor!”), you humbly asked that for public appearances you be given an ordinary chair instead of the opulent *vyāsāsana* your followers had offered you. On the other hand, when your comparison of Kṛṣṇa to a president of a country whom we have to obey evoked loud protests, you didn’t budge but repeated the example, even causing the assembly to erupt to such a degree that you had to end the lecture.

Most famous is of course your conversation with Cardinal Danilou in Paris. You uncompromisingly exposed his hypocrisy when he suggested that it was ok to kill cows to feed hungry children. He was obviously intent on maintaining a cordial mood, but you refused to submit to his sentiment if it meant compromising the truth. Let us similarly serve you here in France as warriors fighting for the Absolute Truth. Your satisfaction is our sustenance, our only real objective, and the very perfection of our lives.

Your humble servants in Paris, France.
(written by Gaurahari Dāsa)

Perth

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept our humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

Your glories, your books,
We’ve not mistook.

So much information that’s relieving,
So many people receiving,

Coming down through the ages,
And now from you, the best of sages.

Applying your preaching with determination,
for you we give such admiration.

It’s after a heck of a search
we’ve come across this brethren church.

It’s brown ’n’ ugly to see from outside,
but now *kṛṣṇa-kīrtan* is sung in stride.

Your ISKCON's a nice place to chant
if we can tolerate the neighbors' rant.
They're bringing complaint of noise,
but people are coming with ease and poise.

It's your GBC who's said this state is so bleak.
We're happy to have your devotees come and speak.

Your servants at ISKCON Perth, Australia.

Phoenix (Arizona)

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you, the general of the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu! All glories to you! All glories to you!

As we sit down to write this offering, we look back and reflect on the activities of the past few months. We cannot write empty flowery words, but we write to you from our heart because we know that you will get the message.

Like many of your spiritual centers, we have had our ups and downs, some challenging moments, but at the end we see you sitting on the *vyāsāsana* and are confident that you are the captain of our ship. We believe with all our hearts that if we follow your instructions and sincerely surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa, everything will run the way He wants it to run.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the source of our inspiration to serve Their Lordships, your instructions are the nectar we relish to feed our minds, and you are the guiding light on our way back to Godhead, in our quest for devotional service. Here we are, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Here we are! Please do not leave us. Please help us understand and follow your instructions. Please help us stay away from false ego, from negativity. Please help us develop love, tolerance, humility, and faith. Please help us fulfill your desire and make of ISKCON a great spiritual embassy. Please help us become devotees and achieve *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Your servants at ISKCON Phoenix, Arizona, USA.

Phoenix (Mauritius)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace! All glories to your ISKCON!

You once predicted that Mauritius would be the first Kṛṣṇa conscious country, and so that will certainly happen, but we do not know how or when. Various devotees here are implementing various preaching strategies, but at the same time Māyā's attacks are becoming more and more fierce and threatening. Book distribution, *harināma*, Deity worship, festivals, and Food for Life programs are all growing, but side by side so are the attacks on your ISKCON.

Your disciples and granddisciples are doing everything possible to protect your ISKCON, and we desperately need your mercy to achieve that goal. Alone you established and protected ISKCON from so many attacks. We can't imitate you but can only pray to be empowered to follow in your footsteps.

Big preaching means big enemies. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu had to face Jagāi and Mādhāi. Śrīla Bhakti-vinoda Ṭhākura had to face the entrenched British culture and the *sahajiyās*. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura had to face a variety of opponents. And Your Divine Grace also had to face various obstacles, like the difficulty acquiring the Juhu land, the Price affair, and the dacoits in Māyāpur.

On this most auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, we humbly pray that you guide us from within to protect your ISKCON from so many attacks.

You gave so many specific instructions for Mauritius during your visit in 1975. Alas! If only we had listened and implemented those instructions. But we are confident that your desire and prediction will surely one day come to fruition.

Begging to serve your ISKCON eternally under your representatives, we remain

Your unworthy servants in Pheonix, Mauritius.

(written by Ajay Caitanya Dāsa)

Prague

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

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

This auspicious holy day of your Vyāsa-pūjā is always an opportunity to reflect on your mercy and the sacrifices you underwent to give us ignorant Westerners Kṛṣṇa consciousness. On this day we try to deepen our appreciation of your mercy and thus rededicate our bodies, minds, and words to you.

In a letter you wrote:

Actually these books are the foundation stone of our movement. Whatever we are is resting on these books, so far reading them and distributing them. This should be our only motto. [Letter to Hridayānanda, 31 October 1974]

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your most important gift to us certainly consists of your books, which you so painstakingly translated in the early morning hours, renouncing sleep. You wrote them with the intention that they would be the law books for mankind for the next 10,000 years—you gave them so much importance. And you yourself personally read them and distributed them. You told us that they were actually dictated by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself.

You said that every verse and purport in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*—indeed, every word!—is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa. The *Bhāgavatam* is all transcendental; it is *apauruṣeya*; it comes from outside this material world, from Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world. The *Bhāgavatam* is meant for creating a revolution in the misled materialistic society.

From the pages of your books comes the transcendental vision (*śāstra-cakṣus*) of different realities: our fallen condition, the spiritual world, our relationship with Kṛṣṇa. From your books we get the inspiration to serve Kṛṣṇa and return to Him. From practicing the *sādhana*, studying your books, chanting the holy name, and performing *saṅkīrtana* we get even more inspiration and realization that all this is actually truth, because it works. And then we are inspired to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the suffering people of the world in a way they are able to understand.



We will try our best to increase book distribution in this *yātrā*, and we humbly pray to you for help and blessings so that this endeavor will be successful. If you wish, please send us some new devotees to help. Thank you very much.

Saṅkīrtana-yajña kī jaya! Śrīla Prabhupāda kī jaya!

Your servants at Śrī Śrī Nitāi-Navadvīpacandra Mandira, Prague, the Czech Republic.

Radhadesh

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We, the residents of Radhadesh-dhāma, beg to offer our humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. Although it is not possible to describe the value of what you have bestowed upon us, we nevertheless take the opportunity to offer a palmful of words enumerating your glories into the ocean of your glories, in an attempt to indicate our eternal indebtedness to Your Divine Grace.

So many souls come to visit Radhadesh, and so many comment on how the atmosphere here is full of peace and happiness. When we reflect on what it is that makes Radhadesh such a haven, we can consider its setting—the charming and gently sloping Ardennes that display a great variety of natural beauty in the form of woodlands, meadows, and forest walks. There is the *gośālā*, with its happy cows and oxen, the thriving permaculture gardens growing ample vegetables and flowers, the guesthouse, restaurant, boutique, bakery, conference halls, Bhaktivedanta College, Bhaktivedanta Library Services, the sacred-art museums, the playgrounds where children frolic, and the happy, friendly devotees going to and fro while performing a variety of services.

But all these wonders emanate from and circumambulate the castle, which contains the cynosure of the entire property: the temple room, where reside Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha, Śrī Śrī Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā, and Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitai, and Your Divine Grace. Even visitors who may have some difficulty comprehending the significance of Their Lordships are awed when they look at your *mūrti*, and it is not unusual for them to whisper, “How does he manage to sit so still?” When they hear about your unprecedented sacrifice and glorious victory in spreading the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement worldwide, all in the last twelve years of your manifest *līlā*, they are deeply impressed by your unique selflessness and devotion. They then begin to realize who is behind this array of exotic art and devotional culture, maintained by so many content and amiable devotees. Seeing their responses to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we recall your words in the purport of *Bhagavad-gītā* As It Is, chapter 9, text 29:

When a diamond is set in a golden ring, it looks very nice. The gold is glorified, and at the same time the diamond is glorified. The Lord and the living entity eternally glitter, and when a living entity becomes inclined to the service of the Supreme Lord he looks like gold. The Lord is a diamond, and so this combination is very nice.

We know, of course, that there is no question of your having “become inclined” to the service of the Lord. You mercifully appeared in this world according to Kṛṣṇa’s request, just to offer the greatest benediction to any fortunate soul who could even dimly recognize its value.

We who have the great fortune of living in the shelter of all you have provided pray to never take such perfect facilities for granted, but to utilize them to satisfy you, who desire only the satisfaction of the Lord. You know perfectly well that His satisfaction is the source of unending peace and happiness. You, who are

beyond the all-pervading envy of the material influence, would have us become like you—a golden ring to glorify the diamond Lord. Obedience to your instructions is our access to genuine happiness and the ability to guide others who desire authentic spiritual life.

On this 118th anniversary of your appearance, we are so grateful to still be counted among your followers and servants. May we be blessed to always stay sheltered in the company of those who know you as our eternal guide linking us to the Lord and His entourage.

Always aspiring to be worthy servants of your servants, we remain

The Radhadesh-vāsīs, in Belgium.

Recife

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

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

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most important and auspicious day in my life, your appearance day, I will try to express some words of gratitude.

I feel gratitude because you came to the West to show your love for us fallen souls.

I feel gratitude because you distributed your mercy to all, regardless of our (my) fallen condition.

I feel gratitude because you wrote so many books, revealing the most valuable treasure—Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy name, activities, glories, etc.

I feel gratitude because you made it easy for us to follow you and serve you by helping you in your mission.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I could keep writing about my feelings of gratitude toward you, but there is not enough space. That's why I am trying to show my gratitude to you by being a good servant. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I aspire to be your devotee eternally.

Thank you once more, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your fallen servants in Recife, Brazil.

(written by Jagad-bhartā Dāsa)

Richmond

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you! All glories to this wonderful festival of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā!

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī describes Caitanya Mahāprabhu's tour of South India in these words:

As soon as [Gaurahari] saw someone, He would request him to chant “Hari! Hari!” Whoever heard Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu chant “Hari! Hari!” also chanted the holy name of Lord Hari and Kṛṣṇa. . . . Each of these empowered persons would return to his own village, always chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. . . . Such an empowered person would request everyone and anyone—whomever he saw—to chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. In this way all the villagers would also become devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. People from different villages who came to see such an empowered individual would become like him simply by seeing him and receiving the mercy of his glance. When each of these newly empowered individuals returned to his own village, he also converted the villagers into devotees. And when others came from different villages to see him, they were also converted. In this way, as empowered men went from one village to another, all the people of South India became devotees. (*Madhya* 7.97–104).

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this is the story of ISKCON. You brought Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mercy to the world, and you empowered your disciples to carry His message to every town and village. And when people come in contact with your dedicated disciples, they too have been inspired to become carriers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mercy. In this way, the contagion of Kṛṣṇa consciousness continues to spread far and wide.

And this is also the story of ISKCON Richmond. Our little ISKCON center here, in the capital of Virginia, has existed for over a decade now, passed from the hands of one devotee to another. No one was officially charged with starting a center in Richmond. Rather, each devotee who ran it was inspired to serve you in this way, and when that devotee had to move on due to work or family, the devotee made sure to leave it in the hands of another. And throughout these years, we have received guidance from your empowered disciples. Today, for the first time, we have the privilege of making a formal offering to you on your Vyāsa-pūjā day.

This year we were legally incorporated as the International Society for Krishna Consciousness of Richmond, a nonprofit organization—the newest member of your family of centers in the United States. We had a record year for book distribution—nearly five hundred books were sold during the December marathon alone. And we welcomed five devotees into your family: Mathurādhīśa Dāsa and Navīna-Rādhā Devī Dāsī received initiation from His Holiness Bhakti Cāru Swami; Subala-sakha Dāsa and Kṛṣṇa-pramodini Devī Dāsī were initiated by His Holiness Hanumatpresaka Swami; and Rādhikā-rati Devī Dāsī received shelter from His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami. Several other couples are chanting sixteen rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra daily and worshipping Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi at home. The youth of ISKCON Richmond have started a Bhakti Yoga Club at Virginia Commonwealth University, where we have hosted *harināmas*, book tables, and a Sacred Sounds *kīrtana* festival. Throughout all these activities we have tried our best to maintain a spirit of cooperation in your service, for we are mindful of this instruction of yours: “Your love for me will be shown by how you cooperate among yourselves after I am gone.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, here in Richmond we are weak and unstable in our Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Sometimes we are overzealous, at other times lethargic. At times we lack confidence, and at other times we become proud. But one thing we know for sure: we rely one hundred percent on your mercy for our survival. Please protect our sprouting *bhakti* creeper and guide our future development, both individual and organizational.

We end with two verses written about you by Prof. M. Narasimhachary, head of the department of Vaishnavism at the University of Madras, who passed away last year. He wrote a hundred beautiful Sanskrit

verses glorifying you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and here are two of them:

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-mahā-prabhūnām
kāruṇya-pīyūṣa-mahā-pravāhaḥ
ekatra loke puruṣe 'vatīrṇaḥ
sa eva cāsmad-guru-sārvabhaumaḥ*

“The great river of the nectar of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mercy has descended to earth in one person. That is our Śrīla Prabhupāda, the emperor among spiritual masters.”

*śrī-rādhikā-vallabha-mandirāṇām
nirmāṇam āsīn na paraṁ dharitryām
sad-bhakta-citteṣv api citram etat
gurūttamena pratibhā-yutena*

“With great intuition, the best among spiritual masters, Śrīla Prabhupāda, constructed temples of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the beloved of Śrī Rādhikā, all over the world. At the same time he established these temples in the hearts of honest devotees. How wonderful this is!”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for your books, thank you for ISKCON, and thank you for your empowered disciples.

Your grandchildren in Richmond, Virginia, USA.

(written by Rādhikā Ramaṇa Dāsa)

Richmond Hill

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

How can we really appreciate all that you have done?
Because of you the spiritual revolution has begun.

When we think of what would have happened if you had not come,
Our hearts and minds become weak and numb.

Because of you we have been saved;
Because of you tens of thousands of devotees have been made.

We were floating in the ocean of Māyā's grip,
Unknowingly holding on to a sinking ship.

We were chasing this life of illusion;
But you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, gave us the real solution.

Like Lord Nityānanda, you came to save countless Jagāis and Mādhāis;
You are our savior, sent directly from the spiritual skies.

You gave us a taste of this sweet nectar of *bhakti*,
Requesting that we share this openly and freely.
You knew that all of civilization is in a precarious position,
Everyone living their lives in sinful sense gratification.

Your appearance was predicted well before your arrival:
Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement would see a revival.

Indeed, in the year 1896 you did appear
Right after Janmāṣṭamī: Abhay Charan—one without fear.

You would be taught in Vaiṣṇavism right from the start,
From worship of the Deities to pulling a Ratha-yātrā cart.

In 1922 you would meet Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura;
This exalted soul of the unbroken *paramparā* would become your guru.

In that meeting you were given your life's mission:
Go out and preach Lord Caitanya's message across the nations.

After all, you were Lord Kṛṣṇa's dearest representative;
You were the one that was indeed predicted.

Honored with the title of Bhaktivedānta,
You gave up all material connections by taking *sannyāsa*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, with your determination,
You would preach the process of self-realization.

Following the instructions of your spiritual master,
You would translate *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, chapter after chapter.

Across the ocean you would travel on the *Jaladuta*,
Armed with volumes of books and purity you arrived in America.

Despite many struggles, you came as Lord Kṛṣṇa's ambassador,
Depending on Him and doing all for His pleasure.

From the first public *kīrtan* in Tompkins Square Park,
You would begin to dispel those in the dark.



Your thousands of awe-inspiring lectures, letters, books and festivals
Were topped by hundreds of interviews, *kīrtans*, trips, and temples.

The topmost Vedic philosophy would be found in your ISKCON,
Something that could easily be practiced dawn to dusk to dawn.

The Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* would resound in every town and city,
Providing the opportunity for relief for all humanity.

Preaching is the essence; books are the basis.
Each and every word of your books so perfectly translated.

Book distribution you would so strongly emphasize;
This effective *mṛdaṅga* beat you would ensure we recognize.

Based on a bona fide *paramparā*, you built this foundation;
Your request was that it be continued in cooperation.

With these instructions we could go back home, back to Godhead;
Nothing else is required, you yourself said.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are so very fortunate:
In our lifetime we were able to meet someone so great.

You gave us our true purpose in life:
“Get out of the clutches of *māyā* and its strife.”

Your Divine Grace is most merciful—
So much kindness you bestowed on our unworthy souls.

Undoubtedly, there is no way to express our gratitude,
All we can say is “Thank you, thank you, thank you” in servitude.

We bow down again and again at your lotus feet;
Please insure that any distractions to our service end in defeat.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please continue to shower us with your blessings.
Please help us escape this age of quarrel and hypocrisy by all means.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda! Jaya Gurudeva!

Your humble servants in Richmond Hill, Canada.

(written by Mīṇākṣī Devī Dāsī)

Rome

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances unto your lotus feet.

In your *Kṛṣṇa* book, while commenting on the prayers of the personified *Vedas*, you explain how the pure devotee is electrified by Kṛṣṇa consciousness and how he is able to electrify his disciples, too.

The devotees who were blessed with your direct association, both men and women, personally imbibed the intensity of your dedication to your Guru Mahārāja, of your desire to spread the holy name, of your desire to have your books distributed, and of your stalwart determination to open temples in every city of the world.

Two such devotees are Dhanañjaya Prabhu and his wife Bāla Gopāla Mātājī, who, electrified directly by you, in 1973 decided to open the first Kṛṣṇa temple in Rome. You blessed their good idea and promised them that as soon as they found a fit place, you would join them.

The temple this devoted couple inaugurated in Rome was located in a very congested area, and when you arrived there in May of 1974, they apologized to you for the traffic din. Much to their surprise, you appreciated the noise as a sign that the temple was situated in a central and strategic preaching area.

Just a few days after you had introduced the *guru-pūjā* song in the Bombay temple, you introduced it for the first time in the West in the newly inaugurated Rome temple and taught the devotees there how to sing it.

During your visit to Rome you remarked on the religious nature of the Italians, calling them “pious people,” and when the devotees wished to show you the Coliseum, you remarked how by the action of time even great empires like the Roman Empire crumble and their majestic structures become nothing but homes for stray cats.

When you asked the devotees if there was a toilet in the Coliseum and they replied that there was not, you said that the Coliseum was a monumental useless giant.

Forty years have passed since your visit to Rome, and on this special day we wish to show you how much your spiritual power keeps flowing unceasingly through your instructions, your sincere representatives, and your ISKCON, “electrifying” whoever comes in contact with it.

We are hoping that in time this prominent metropolis will showcase all the wonderful activities of your worldwide ISKCON movement, starting with the first-ever Rome Ratha-yātrā festival, to be held next May in the center of the city.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, we beg you to bless us so that we may stay fixed in devotional service, in the company of other devotees, enlivened by an enthusiastic spirit of cooperation.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all you have given us and are still giving us.

With everlasting gratitude, we remain

Your humble, aspiring servants in Rome, Italy.

San Antonio

Our dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you!

On behalf of the devotees here in San Antonio, we would like to offer this humble, heartfelt homage at your lotus feet as a small token of our infinite gratitude.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have made a place where the whole world can live. We know this is really true when we see San Antonio, one of America's foremost tourist destinations (all of which are havens of sense gratification), turning to Kṛṣṇa consciousness due to your sweet mercy. Here tourists flock to the famous River Walk for sense gratification, and suddenly they see Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees chanting. To our great surprise, many of these people actually join in the grand *saṅkīrtana* along the river. It's amazing!

People also come here to see one of the largest annual parades in America—the Battle of Flowers Parade—in which over four hundred groups participate. The whole city takes half a day or even a full day off work to join this spectacular parade. Hundreds of thousands line the sidewalks, and the event is broadcast over all the major TV channels. During the parade many devotees chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, riding along on a float with Lord Jagannātha. Many thousands hear the holy names, and countless more hear and see us on TV.

This is all by your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for if you had not come to these shores on the *Jaladuta* to save us from the ocean of birth and death, we would have drowned in the endless ocean of *māyā* and karma. With your powerful example you gave us a glimpse of the wonderful spiritual world, and today our hearts overflow with joy just to relish a drop of the unlimited pastimes and qualities you displayed during your earthly years. Our mind gets overwhelmed by the thoughts of Kṛṣṇa's true representative, who displays such matchless divine qualities.

The entire population of Kali-yuga should be very grateful to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We are, and in fact we feel eternally indebted to you for showing us the path to save our souls. We devotees here in San Antonio would also like to assist you in your monumental mission, and like squirrels in Lord Rāmacandra's army, we shall continue to struggle to contribute whatever service we can render out of gratitude for all you have given us. We can try to please you on your appearance day by giving this precious gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to as many souls in San Antonio as possible.

Please give us your mercy and strength so that we can continue our service to you, life after life. Haribol!

Your unqualified servants in San Antonio, Texas, USA.

Silicon Valley

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

There is growing concern in the world about economic inequality, the rapidly widening gap between the rich and the poor.

A January 2014 report by Oxfam claims that the combined assets of just 85 individuals is equal to the wealth of the bottom 50% of the world's population, or about 3.5 billion people. What these statistics don't show, however, is that 99.99% of the world's population is spiritually poor.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī tells how real wealth is to be measured:

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked Rāmānanda Rāya, "Of the many capitalists who possess great riches, who is the topmost?" Rāmānanda Rāya replied, "He who is richest in love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is the greatest capitalist." (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 8.247)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you came to make people truly wealthy by distributing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which removes all obstacles on the spiritual path and awakens pure love for Kṛṣṇa in the hearts of those who regularly hear from it.

Because of your campaign, people will soon come to know that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is more valuable than all the wealth of Kuvera, the heavenly treasurer, what to speak of the combined assets of the world's richest 85 people. Factually, no one can fathom the value of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, because it is Kṛṣṇa Himself.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when you first entered the United States you wrote on your customs form that your cargo—two hundred sets of First Canto *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* volumes—were meant as “gifts.” For this reason the customs officials allowed you to bring in your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams* duty-free. (Had the customs officials known the real value of your payload, they would have been shocked!)

Inspired by how you painstakingly imported these treasures to the shores of America, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the devotees at ISKCON of Silicon Valley (ISV) have been enthusiastically going door-to-door to distribute them.

In the course of our canvassing, some friendly people invite us into their homes and give us an opportunity to introduce them to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. As we do so, we realize the great challenge you wrote about while aboard the *Jaladuta*, en route to America:

Most of the population here is covered by the material modes of ignorance and passion. Absorbed in material life, they think themselves very happy and satisfied, and therefore they have no taste for the transcendental message of Vāsudeva. I do not know how they will be able to understand it.

In Book III, Chapter 25, of Plato's *Republic*, Socrates compares this material universe to a cave and the residents of the material world to cave-dwellers chained by their legs and necks so they can't go out. The cave-dwellers are habituated to living in darkness and take the confines of the cave and the shadows flickering on the cave's walls as ultimate reality. When someone comes to bring a cave-dweller outside into the world of light, the cave-dweller protests: “My cave is the only reality.” He may even become violent toward his liberator.

Socrates says that liberators should take only gradual steps in teaching cave-dwellers about the greater world outside their caves; for if one is too abrupt, the cave-dweller will be overwhelmed and reject one's help altogether.

As we enter the various cavelike dwellings that are people's homes, we face the daunting task of convincing our hosts that we have brought them something of great value. This is a challenging task because our hosts often listen to us just to be polite, while secretly hoping that we will soon leave so they can go back to watching television. Or, they offer myriad objections to accepting the books, most commonly saying they have no time to read.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is Kṛṣṇa's incarnation in Kali-yuga, but because people are in ignorance they feel we are trying to burden them with something that will only take up valuable space in their homes. However, we know that if they take *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it will become their most valuable possession by far.

To interest them in reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, we tell them some of its stories, like how a *brāhmaṇa* boy cursed the saintly emperor of the world, Parikṣit, to die within seven days; how emperor Parikṣit accepted the curse and gave up his kingdom to sit down on the bank of the Ganges to prepare himself for death; and how by God's arrangement the fully enlightened adolescent boy Śukadeva Gosvāmī arrived just in time to teach Parikṣit how to prepare himself for going back to Godhead upon leaving his body. We also remind them that we are all in a situation similar to Emperor Parikṣit's, since every one of us will soon face death.

While presenting the *Bhāgavatam* we remember how you began writing your *Bhāgavatam* purports in Vṛndāvana; how you personally distributed your books in India; how you brought hundreds of sets of the First Canto with you to America aboard the *Jaladuta*; and how you even sold a set to the *Jaladuta*'s captain. We remember how, upon your arrival in America, you tirelessly translated and wrote purports to each successive Canto, pausing only long enough to write a summary of the all-important Tenth Canto, your famous Kṛṣṇa book.

Remembering all this, we coax, encourage, flatter, smile, frown, and try anything to convince our hosts to buy the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and keep it in their homes.

We also introduce your *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and explain how Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the golden *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa who taught the blissful path of *saṅkīrtana*, which leads to perfection. We tell how *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* is the most esoteric and highly advanced spiritual book in the world and that it is very rare.

When people do buy a set of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* volumes, we perform an in-

stallation ceremony for the books, as follows: First we place the books on a prominent shelf in their home and decorate them with flowers. Next, we perform an *ārati* to the books while doing *kīrtana*. Finally, we pass around the first volume of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and ask everyone in the family to read one paragraph aloud. In this way, everyone present personally reads from the book. Throughout the ceremony, we see how the recipients have become attentive after paying their hard-earned money for the books and that by reading them aloud everyone present is promoted to the mode goodness and beyond, just by hearing the nectarean vibration of your books.

Aboard the *Jaladuta* you wrote:

The words of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are Your incarnation, and if a sober person repeatedly receives it with submissive aural reception, then he will be able to understand Your message.

Such sober persons are rare. But because you have instructed us to see to it that “every respectable person [receive] a full set of *Bhāgavatam* and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* in his home,” we continue to search for these respectable people. And when one of them accepts the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, we know that we’ve given them the startup capital they’ll need to develop their own spiritual enterprise and someday even make the journey back to Godhead.

To help these fortunate recipients take advantage of their newly found wealth, we also leave them with a simple chart that shows how many pages they can read each day to complete each set of books in a fixed period of time. For example, if they daily read forty-one pages of your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, they can finish all twelve cantos in just one year. Or, if they choose to read just eight pages a day, they will finish the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in five years.

In America, people who win lots of money in a state lottery are invited to attend a meeting of other newly-made lottery millionaires. We similarly invite all the new *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* owners to a gathering in their neighborhood, considering that they have won the spiritual lottery by purchasing your *Bhāgavatam* set. Many people enthusiastically attend these meetings, their lives having been uplifted by Lord Kṛṣṇa moving into their homes in His literary incarnation.

You once said, “When one book is published, I think I have conquered an empire.”

When we sell a full set of your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* volumes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we declare a similar victory.

Regarding the conquering of empires, in a dialog with some of your disciples you ask them to not make you like Alexander the Great, who conquered many kingdoms but who then moved on so quickly to conquer other kingdoms that he lost control of the ones he’d already conquered. You say that you are concerned that by opening too many temples too quickly without proper management, they will likely fall apart.

Continuing the dialog, you say, “I am stressing, therefore, book-selling, because it is permanent.”

Appreciating your point, your main interlocutor in the conversation, Tamāl Krishna Goswami, responds, “Once a devotee sells one of your books, the book will act. The book establishes itself as a Deity within a person’s home.”

“Yes,” you reply.

As our devotees install more and more of these special Deities in people’s homes, we feel your mercy empowering us in all of our important services to you at ISV.

To name only a few, dozens of our devotees have now passed the Bhakti Śāstrī course, and many more are taking it; classes for children are swelling; Deity worship and cooking standards are increasing; outreach programs at universities, corporations, and homes are expanding; our Internet broadcasts are becoming more refined; our new temple team is making our new temple increasingly more beautiful and efficient; and there is much more. But perhaps best of all, the devotees in our community are fond of one another and remain united in their goal to please you.

We are therefore the most grateful recipients of the spiritual wealth you have bequeathed to us on behalf of the greatest of all venture capitalists, Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Kavirāja Gosvāmī writes:



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is a wealthy capitalist possessing the touchstone of love of God. Not considering whether one is a proper or improper recipient, He gives His treasure to anyone and everyone. Thus He is the most munificent. [Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 2.81]

We pray to increase the spiritual wealth you've given us by engaging more people in reading and distributing your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and in broadcasting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. Please bless us on your divine appearance day so that we may continue to assist you in bringing the greatest spiritual fortune and affluence to all the people of Silicon Valley and beyond.

Your servants at ISKCON of Silicon Valley, California, USA.

(written by Vaiṣeṣika Dāsa)

Simhachalam

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you!

For us conditioned souls in this Kali-yuga, your lotus feet are the only shelter. Nowhere else can we learn how to cross the ocean of material existence. All the other options and solutions offered by bogus gurus, swamis, teachers, pseudoreligionists, and other misguiders simply bewilder seekers of the Absolute Truth. The true light in this dense, dark forest of wrong opinions shines in your magnificent books. Your books illuminate our vision, showing us the direct path to Goloka Vṛndāvana.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for saving us and engaging us in the mission of saving others. This is your gift—that we can offer your wonderful self in the form of your books to all the suffering people of this crazy age. Only by fulfilling the desire of the spiritual master can we obtain the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. For your true followers, what else is there to do but abide by your teachings?

Please empower us to bring as many people as possible to your lotus feet and, with ever-increasing enthusiasm and conviction, to distribute huge quantities of your wonderful books.

Your servants at Simhachalam, Jandelsbrunn, Germany.

(written by Ānanda Kṛṣṇa Dāsa)

Taiwan

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

On this occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, we devotees in Taiwan would like to express our heart-felt gratitude for your painstaking efforts in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. Your faith in Lord Caitanya's prophecy—that one day His *saṅkīrtana* movement would spread to each and every town and village in the world—brought devotees to this mostly Chinese-speaking country. You trained and empowered your disciples to travel all over the world and start preaching centers and temples to teach the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and save the unfortunate souls struggling in this ever-deteriorating material world. As a result of such preaching efforts, every year we see more and more Taiwanese becoming Vaiṣṇavas and receiving formal initiation.

Taiwan is considered a so-called advanced country, with modern material technology, but deep within their hearts, the people here are unhappy. So many times in your books and lectures you point out that material advancement is no guarantee of happiness. The only ray of hope we see is in your books and your dedicated followers.

You always said, “Read my books and distribute my books.” We have several of your books that have been translated into Chinese, and we are distributing them all over the country. Whenever we see a new person coming to our programs and buying your books, we see your unlimited mercy manifested. Whenever we see a new person chanting the holy names of the Lord, we know for sure that this is only possible because of your causeless mercy.

For the past several years we have been taking part in the yearly International Book Fair in Taipei. Most of your books in English and Chinese are displayed very prominently.

Also, for a couple of years we have been holding annual retreats, where devotees get together for a few days and emphasize the chanting of the holy names in the association of devotees.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you made this process so easy for us. You said, “Just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, dance, and take *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*, and your life will be successful.” But we are so fallen, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that we need constant reminders through your books and through your disciples who, following in your footsteps, travel all over the world to give association and guidance to fallen souls.

This year, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we plan to hold a Ratha-yātrā in Taipei in a big way. We sincerely pray to the Lord and seek your blessings so we may achieve the goal of attracting many more devotees to your mission here.

We, the members of ISKCON Taiwan, wish to again offer you our deepest gratitude for everything you have given us, and we pray for your continued blessings and mercy so we can more vigorously push on the *saṅkīrtana* movement in this country.

Your humble and insignificant servants at ISKCON Taiwan.

Trivandrum

I Need Śrīla Prabhupāda's Foot Dust!

One speck of Prabhupāda's foot dust—
It is all I want,
to place it on my tongue
so it will always speak the glories
of the Lord.
In this way the grain will multiply,
to storm with compassion
and love all humankind—
His Divine Grace so desired.

And two more specks I need
from his lotus feet,
to put 'em in my ears
so they'll properly hear
the chanting, the sound
that he so mercifully
has brought down.

And one more speck
I wish to have,
To keep it in my heart
So this rascal and crook
will become a worthy recipient
of the message in his books.

Still two more specks I desire—
to place 'em on my eyes
so they'll see in every condition
the way to serve with *bhakti*
his transcendental mission.

Still two more specks I desire—
to place 'em on my eyes
so they'll see in every condition
the way to serve with *bhakti*
his transcendental mission.

Oh, one more grain
of dust I beg to receive
from his feet—
to hold it in my hands
so they'll give, give, give
as he tirelessly did.
And once more, again
I plead for one grain
of his foot dust, and with faith
I will treasure it in my mind
so as to always be reminded
of the Lord and His Name,
'cause for spreading it
His Divine Grace came.

I remain a beggar
of Śrīla Prabhupāda's foot dust
in those streets of love
he has opened for all of us.

*Śrīla Prabhupāda's servants in Trivandrum, Kerala,
India.*

(written by Mādhava-latā Devī Dāsī)

Tucson

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

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

I was only twenty-three when I last saw your face.
Some details are fading—can't allow them to erase.
I kept a picture of us, but can't recall the place;
These precious few encounters I desire to embrace.

What was that verse? What was that quote?
What was that example? Let me check my notes.
Please keep my mind intact and my faculties afloat;
Let your pastimes be fresh and your words not remote.

Don't let me forget your compassion and grace,
Your mercy in saving the whole human race.
The clock is advancing, no time left to waste;
Allow me to hold firm to that sweet higher taste.

That amazing story—it's near the edge of my throat;
That melody, that *rāga*—what was that note?
My memory is slipping; I need to stay afloat;
I desire to remember everything that you wrote.

Let my devotion be indelible, just like India ink,
Remembrances flowing so I don't have to think.
Through my passage to Kṛṣṇa, you are my link;
The entrance to the spiritual sky is right on the brink.

Fortunately your devotees penned your every word;
We have your recordings, CDs, and videos transferred.
So even though my memory may become foggy and blurred,
From your lotus mouth into my heart the holy name was heard.

The world was your stage,
You came in old age,
Didn't ask for a wage.
You were the sage
Of the Lower East Side rage.
You taught *bhakti* in the Iron Age;
The youth you engaged,
The materialists you enraged,
You saved us as we came of age.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please keep us always under your lotus feet. Guide us, inspire us, and let us be a part of fulfilling your mission.

Your servants at ISKCON Tucson, Arizona.

(written by Sandāminī Devī Dāsī)

Ujjain

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at the dust of your divine lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Every year we devotees of ISKCON have this wonderful opportunity to offer our lives, our hearts, our services, and our very selves at your divine lotus feet through the medium of this Vyāsa-pūjā offering. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mercy is all we are made of.

Every incident in your glorious life is most exemplary and instructive. You narrated an amazing incident that occurred in Calcutta on December 12, 1942. There was heavy bombing in the city, and almost all the people had vacated. You could hear the bombs drop, but rather than being afraid, you enjoyed the sounds like one would enjoy fireworks! You were chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, and you felt that if you died then, it would be wonderful to die chanting the holy names. The experience increased your resolve to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, because you knew that it was a lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness that was the root cause of all the chaos that prevailed. Soon thereafter, in 1944, you published the first issue of *Back to Godhead* magazine.

Several lessons can be learned from this incident. First, a devotee has to be tolerant of the material situation, which is full of dangers at every step. Second, only by taking shelter of Kṛṣṇa through His holy names can one attain true fearlessness. Third, a devotee learns lessons and derives inspiration to serve Kṛṣṇa even in the worst possible situation, which, rather than being a source of trouble, in fact enhances his resolve to serve the Supreme Lord. This is just one of many incidents in your life that illustrate how a true *ācārya* teaches by example.

It is interesting to note how you lived through those bombings simply to provide shelter to the whole world suffering from the “bombing raids” of Kali. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness is your wonderful arrangement—a house in which the whole world can live and be protected from the dangers of Kali-yuga and the powerful attacks of Māyā. Your Society offers us the opportunity to associate with so many wonderful devotees, to be sheltered by their association, to engage in pure devotional service in a wide variety of ways. To accommodate the proclivities of various individuals, ISKCON provides preaching opportunities in such novel ways as book distribution, college preaching, Nāma-haṭṭas, prison preaching, and even Internet preaching.

By your spiritual potency, preaching is flourishing in and around Ujjain. ISKCON Ujjain is conducting programs in practically all the prominent colleges of Madhya Pradesh, and there are several hundred youth seriously practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Congregational preaching is expanding through the Bhakti Vriksha Program.

To further educate and train our devotees, we are conducting the Bhakti Shastri program for our temple devotees and congregation on a yearly basis. ISKCON Ujjain is one of the most prominent attractions of the city, and people flock into the temple by the thousands every day. Through regular book distribution, *harināma*, and our traveling *saṅkīrtana* party, our humble efforts to serve you are meeting with success, all by your divine



grace. Ultimately, by the divine association and guidance given by your spiritual son His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami, the devotees of Ujjain feel spiritually sheltered and inspired to serve the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa.

We recently organized a Kīrtana Mela for three days, where throughout the day and into the night the devotees simply took shelter of the *kīrtana* of the holy names, totally absorbing themselves in the divine nectar. Reputed *kīrtana* leaders such as His Holiness Bhakti Bhṛṅga Govinda Swami and His Grace Mādhava Prabhu led the *kīrtanas*, along with our local GBC, His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami, and other devotees.

Last December Bhakti Charu Swami organized a spiritual retreat attended by devotees from across the globe. The topic was the *Uddhava-gītā*, from the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Both the *kīrtana-mela* and the retreat were truly international events, and many devotees are requesting that they be repeated annually. It was truly a great fortune for us to have the opportunity to host these events and thus serve senior devotees, as well as to absorb ourselves in the transcendental sound vibration of *hari-kathā* and *harināma-kīrtana*.

Under the guidance of Bhakti Charu Swami, preaching in local villages has begun, with a very positive response. The main aim of these activities is to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the numerous villages of Madhya Pradesh.

We owe it all to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and pray for more and more such opportunities to serve you and your dear servants.

Thank you very much for everything you have given us.

Your humble servants at ISKCON Ujjain, India.

Vedic Farm (Mauritius)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble *daṇḍavats* at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you!

I am a fallen disciple of your beloved disciple His Holiness Girirāja Swami. I have been asked to write an offering to glorify Your Divine Grace, but you are so exalted that I do not know how to begin. Therefore I am humbly begging you to be kind to me and bestow your mercy upon me so I may understand how to glorify you. I would be very grateful to you if you did, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I am not good at anything whatsoever, but I love you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, from the core of my heart for what you have done for us. Your gifts are beyond comparison.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, from your birth till your departure your activities were all transcendental. Why? Because you are a genuine representative of the Lord. Therefore your birth and activities were all transcendental, like Lord Kṛṣṇa's. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.9) the Lord says:

*janma karma ca me divyam evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

“One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna.”

You once said, “My only credit is that I have not changed anything. I have presented [the philosophy] as it is.” You have given the whole world Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, which no one else ever did in the history of the world. You did this by giving us His holy names—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. These are your matchless gifts.

In your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.16.32–33 you write:

In this age, when everything is polluted by the contamination of Kali, it is instructed in the scriptures and preached by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu that by chanting the holy name of the Lord we can at once be free from contamination and gradually rise to the status of transcendence and go back to Godhead. The offenseless chanter of the holy name of the Lord is as auspicious as the Lord Himself, and the movement of pure devotees of the Lord all over the world can at once change the troublesome face of the world. Only by the propagation of the chanting of the holy name of the Lord can we be immune from all effects of the Age of Kali.

In your early twenties you became a follower of Gandhi. During that period you came in contact with your great spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who asked you to preach the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu all over the world. You challenged him: “Who will hear your Caitanya’s message? We are a dependent country. First India must become independent. How can we spread Indian culture if we are under British rule?”

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta replied boldly that Kṛṣṇa consciousness could not wait for a change in Indian politics—the urgency of preaching *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* did not depend on who ruled India. Kṛṣṇa consciousness was so important—so exclusively important—that it could not wait. The rule of one power or another was a temporary situation, but the eternal reality is Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and the real self is the spirit soul. No manmade political system, therefore, could actually help humanity. This is the verdict of the Vedic scriptures and the disciplic line of spiritual masters. Although everyone is an eternal servant of God, when one takes himself to be the temporary body and regards the nation of this birth as worshipable, he comes under illusion. The leaders and followers of the world’s political movements, including India’s movement for independence (*swarāj*), were simply cultivating this illusion. But real welfare work, whether individual, social, or political, should prepare a person for his next life by helping him reestablish his eternal relationship with the Supreme Lord.

Soon after your meeting with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, you left Gandhi and became a staunch follow of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. This meeting took place in the year 1922. After preparing yourself properly and publishing the three volumes of the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, in 1965 you prepared to depart for America to execute the mission of your spiritual master. You had no money at all, so you begged a free passage on a freighter owned by Mrs. Sumati Morarjee. Impressing her with your strong determination to fulfill your spiritual master’s order, you were able to convince her to offer the ticket.

During your trip to America you had two heart attacks, but Lord Kṛṣṇa consoled and pacified you in a dream. Your only solace was *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, in which you tasted the nectar of Lord Caitanya’s *līlā*. Thus you left India to execute the order of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, in pursuance of Lord Caitanya’s order. You wrote that you had no qualification but that you had taken the risk just to carry out the order of His Divine Grace. You depended fully on the mercy of the Lord and your spiritual master, so far away from Vṛndāvana.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, for months after landing in America in September 1965 you struggled alone, but you never gave up. You were very compassionate to everyone you met. You helped them in many ways. Dr. Ramamurti Mishra said the following:

[Swamiji] really knocked me down with love. He was really an incarnation of love. My body had become a skeleton, and he really brought me back to life—his cooking, and especially his love and his devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa. I was very lazy in the matter of cooking, but he would get up and have ready.

You would write many letters to contacts in India and ask for help, but no one helped. You struggled alone, but you never gave up. You had unbreakable determination.

You wrote to Sumati Morarjee in April of 1966:

I have come here in this old age neither for sight seeing nor for any personal interest. It is for the interest of the entire humanity that I am trying to implement the science of Krishna which will

actually make them happy. So it is the duty of every devotee of Lord Krishna to help me by all means.

You wrote to Śrīpāda Tīrtha Mahārāja for help, but there was no reply. You wrote to others—and the reply was loud and clear: “We cannot help you.”

But because you were so determined and qualified, very soon Lord Kṛṣṇa rewarded you with the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. You made the hippies into happies, and from 1966 to 1977 you preached worldwide, founding 108 temples and attracting thousands of followers. You translated more than nine cantos of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the entire *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and the *Bhagavad-gītā*, explaining each verse with your erudite purports. You also gave us *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme personality of Godhead*, a summary study of the Tenth Canto, and numerous other books—small, medium, and large.

As for Kṛṣṇa’s devotees, you glorified them as very intelligent because they have chosen to serve Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By watering the root of a tree, you taught, one nourishes all the tree’s twigs, branches, leaves, and fruits. In the same way, you taught (quoting the *Bhāgavatam*) that by worshiping Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the root of the tree of all creation, one worships all the demigods and -goddesses.

As for the chanting of the holy name, you said that the holy name is identical with the Lord. Or in other words, the Lord is present in His holy name. When the devotees have some free time, you said, they have a very important thing to do: chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Anyone can chant—old, young, sick, etc.—without restriction.

As for books, you said they are the basis. This is the greatest contribution you made. Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for this gift. Your books have saved the lives of many people around the world.

As for temples, they are the places where the Lord resides and where the devotees worship Him and offer Him *bhoga*, the remnants of which they enjoy as *prasādam*.

As for *prasādam*, who does not like to eat delicious food? Distributing *prasādam* is the best way to attract people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Many devotees have come because of *prasādam*. When we serve guests *prasādam*, they become very favorable.

As for preaching, you said it is the essence. You established outdoor and indoor preaching. In this way, everyone is a preacher in ISKCON. You established ISKCON to make first-class *brāhmaṇa* preachers. Because of the preaching and the performance of *harināma*, the movement is expanding very strongly. One who preaches has life. One who does not preach is dead.

This is my offering to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, a meager attempt to enumerate your infinite glories. I humbly beg you to excuse any offenses I may have committed here, and I beg you to please accept my humble offering at your lotus feet. I also beg you to bless me and keep me in the good association of devotees. Thank you very much.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!* All glories to you!

Your devotees at the ISKCON Vedic Farm and Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandira in Mauritius.

(written by Rāma-vijaya Dāsa)

Villaggio Hare Krishna

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you, my divine eternal master, who cured my eyes of blindness by giving me real spiritual vision.

Recently I had the good fortune to read a letter written on a palm leaf by Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. The letter contained the annual book distribution scores of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, Narottama

Dāsa, and Śyāmānanda Prabhu for the year ending on Gaura Pūrṇimā of 1501 Śakābda (A.D. 1579). Narottama Dāsa concludes his letter with the following emotional comment:

Until we are able to develop another type of technology to print the books, the difficulty involved in creating books by hand (which is being neglected) will force us to postpone most of our book distribution program. We are sure that one day some magnanimous person will come and develop the movement of ecstatic love of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, distributing books all over the world. Until then, what can we poor, bereft, and abominable persons do?

The magnanimous person mentioned in this letter is Your Divine Grace, and Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura could foresee the course of future events: from the very moment you stepped off the *Jaladuta* onto American soil, the world would never be the same.

As Christopher Columbus's discovery of America in 1492 opened new frontiers to the world, Your Divine Grace's arrival in America in 1965 opened new scenarios and life prospects no one could have imagined.

Your transcendental touch changed the course of history, and you predicted that this change would continue for the next ten thousands years due to the blossoming of the *saṅkīrtana* movement, and that your books would continue to be the foundation for the future spiritual progress of humanity.

This prediction is in your books, like the prophecy expressed by Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura in his letter, and in due course of time your prediction will be fulfilled in its entirety. Actually, we can say that it has already been fulfilled by the supreme authority. As Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna, "The battle is already won by My decision, but you take the credit."

With your presence you ignited a revolution in people's consciousness that, like fire, is spreading wildly all over the planet and touching thousands and millions of hearts, which are unlocking to welcome your mercy. The lives of these fortunate souls will never be the same.

I feel honored to be part of the dream of Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura and of all the other glorious *ācāryas* of the Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*. Their dream is coming true thanks to the fortitude and efforts of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, our great *senāpati bhakta*, our eminent general, who took up the leadership of the "movement of ecstatic love of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, distributing books all over the world."

Thanks to the enthusiasm and dedication of you, our founder-*ācārya*, that dream is now an established reality: people all over the world are chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.

I only pray to be blessed with a drop of the urgency for spreading this mission felt by our great *ācāryas*. Sometimes, since old age is quickly advancing, thoughts enter my mind of retiring to Vṛndāvana or another holy spot to chant and read peacefully. Then the vivid image of Your Divine Grace renouncing the serene life of Vṛndāvana at the age of seventy to come to the insidious Western countries at the risk of your life strongly fills my mind, and I lower my head in shame.

Actually, I am very happy to serve in one of your innumerable temples, transcendental embassies of the divine motherland known as Śrīdhām Māyāpur. We all belong to that magnificent realm, but now our duty and pleasure is to remain in our respective embassies and carry forward, as faithful diplomatic officers, the glorious activities of the most powerful ambassador of Caitanya Mahāprabhu this planet has ever known.

I will always be glad to serve in any embassy where you desire me to stay, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to help your mission as far as my capabilities allow me, in the role of a trustworthy representative of Your Divine Grace.

Your servants in Villaggio Hare Krishna, Bergamo, Italy.

(written by Āli Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsi)

Vṛndā-kuṇḍa

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

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

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

April marked thirty years since I took up your service in Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandira in Vṛndāvana. I remember that when you built this mandir in 1975 the locals asked, “Why are you building a mandir so far away? Who will go there?” Now I stand down in the courtyard for Sandhya-ārati at 7:00 pm, and even there I’m bumped and jostled by the multitudes of pilgrims coming to your beautiful *mandira* for *darśana*. But I don’t mind; I can feel you up there in Goloka, smiling down as you relish how popular the temple you built has become. And I’m amazed at the throngs of pilgrims coming and going, most of them stopping to chant the holy names and dance to the fabulous *kīrtana* going on there. Yes, although you have left us, there is still so much life in the grand temple you gave the world.

I remember once sitting with Banwari Lal Pathak, a member of one of the chief *brāhmaṇa* families of Vṛndāvana and an unconditional well-wisher of Your Divine Grace and your ISKCON movement. He told me, “We *vraja-vāsīs* are very proud of your Śrīla Prabhupāda.” I was amazed to hear this, since *vraja-vāsīs* are like New Yorkers: they’ve seen everything and they’ve heard everything—they’re not easily impressed. When I inquired what prompted him to say that, he replied, “We’ve seen many spiritual leaders come and go. While they’re here their *āśramas* and temples are very popular and full of life. But once they’re gone the temples become deserted. But here in ISKCON, although your Śrīla Prabhupāda has departed from our vision, when we come here there is so much life. The temple is clean, the *ārati* is going on, the *kīrtana* is enthusiastically going on. His movement has outlived him!”

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you’ve changed the face of Vṛndāvana. I remember when I first came here the standard of Deity worship in most temples was very low, and hardly anyone was coming. Now most of those temples have fabulous Deity worship and conditions have dramatically improved. Millions of pilgrims come here. Since you built this marvelous Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandira, so many temples have come up. Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you put Vṛndāvana on the map. Now it is our sacred duty to maintain our ISKCON temple as a favorite place of pilgrimage for people from all over the world. Please shower your blessings on us so we can perform this service.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving us Vṛndāvana, Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara!

Your lowly servants at Vṛnd-kunḍa, Vṛndāvana, India.

(written by Deena Bandhu Dāsa)

Vṛndāvana

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our prostrate obeisances at your lotus feet, the shelter of the entire world and resting place for those seeking relief from the pangs of material nature.

As from a small seed a huge banyan tree grows, so from the concise personal instructions you received from your revered Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the tree of ISKCON has sprouted, grown many branches, and proliferated, so that now it spreads the shade of Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world. On December 13th, 1936, a few days before leaving this world, your Guru Mahārāja ordered you in a letter:

I am fully confident that you can explain in English our thought and arguments to the people who are not conversant with the languages of the other members. This will do much good to yourself as well as your audience. I have every hope that you can turn yourself into a very good English preacher if you serve the mission to inculcate the novel impression of Lord Caitanya's teachings in the people in general as well as philosophers and religionists.

As a stalwart disciple of your Guru Mahārāja, you took this instruction as your life and soul and molded your life to execute this mission. You sacrificed your family, health, wealth, and solitude to spread the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu worldwide. You left behind the comforts of home and friends and struggled alone for years, wandering and wondering how to fulfill these orders. You prayed for the mercy of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī so this mission would be successful. Feeling unqualified, you knew your only qualification was the blessings from your Guru Mahārāja and the previous *ācāryas* for success. Alone, you ventured from the heartland of Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Vṛndāvana *dhāma*, and carried the message of Lord Caitanya to the Western world.

Your philosophy was: “We should always be enthusiastic to try for shooting the rhinoceros. That way, if we fail, everybody will say, ‘Never mind; nobody can shoot a rhinoceros anyway,’ and if we succeed, then everyone will say, ‘Just see what a wonderful thing they have done!’” So you went for the rhinoceros. You decided to go to America, the wealthiest and most influential country in the world, to plant the seed of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You succeeded, and that seed has now sprung into a huge sprawling tree with branches and sprouts covering the entire world. This tree has roots going upwards and branches going downwards, and nobody has been able to stop its growth—not the governments or *gūṇḍās*, not the communists or capitalists, not the religionists or atheists, not the scientists or ignorant fools. Many have tried to snuff out your ISKCON movement, but all have failed. This tree is being nourished by the nectar flowing from the *paramparā* as it reaches to the lotus feet of the Lord.

I am successful in my teaching work because I have not deviated one inch from my spiritual master's instruction—this is my only qualification. [Letter to Bṛhaspati, 17 November 1971]

My mission has come out a success by the mercy of my Guru Maharaja, who sent me on this mission. That was my only qualification in coming to your country—that I had the blessings of my Guru Maharaja. [Letter to Dānavīr, 17 October 1974]

I am not saying anything which is not given by my Guru Maharaja. I am simply repeating what I have learned from him. So you please do the same and your life will be full of ananda—blissful happiness—and you will be able to help spread this sankirtana movement all over the world. [Letter to Dārūka, 8 April 1975]

Now we, your unqualified disciples and followers, have a huge responsibility to nourish and maintain this ever-expanding tree of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Though it is impossible to trace the original root of a banyan



tree, we know that the root of the ISKCON tree is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, who resides eternally in Vṛndāvana. You called Vṛndāvana the beating heart of ISKCON. We who are fortunate to serve in Vrindavan have the responsibility of maintaining this root, the heart of ISKCON, exactly according to your instructions. You spent years giving detailed instructions how you wanted the Vṛndāvana temple to expand. We are trying to fulfill those instructions for your pleasure. We are your eternal servants. Our only purpose in life is to carry out your orders with the same determination that you carried out the orders of your spiritual master. Then our life will be successful and Kṛṣṇa consciousness will continue to spread until it covers the entire universe and enables everyone to reach the goal of life, the shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

You exemplify the ideal disciple by successfully carrying out the order of your spiritual master up to your last breath. Having left Vṛndāvana, you fulfilled his instructions and then returned triumphantly with an army of devotees, your offering to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. The residents of Vṛndāvana were overwhelmed with ecstasy and awe. How has this one humble, saintly person fulfilled the predictions of the Supreme Lord that His holy name would be taken to every town and village? What was his magic that enabled him to transform these *mlecchas* and *yavanas* into gentle Vaiṣṇavas? You revealed your secret to us and asked us to do as you did.

Imploring you to bless us with the intelligence and humility to remain always in your divine service, we remain

Your eternal servants at ISKCON Vṛndāvana, India.
(written by Daivīśakti Devī Dāsī)

