



# HOMAGES FROM NON-GBC SANNYĀSĪS





# Amala-bhakta Swami

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

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

O spiritual master, I offer my endless gratitude to you for your infinite mercy of engaging me in the loving devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, though I have always been so unworthy of this.

*Your servant,*

Amala-bhakta Swami

# Ātmanivedana Swami

## **Fifty Years and More Joy of Devotion**

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most auspicious day of your appearance, I would first like to thank you for coming to this material world. You came to establish the mission of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This year, 2016, we are celebrating fifty years of your wonderful ISKCON. When you established ISKCON in 1966 in New York City, who could have imagined that today, fifty years later, the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya would have spread to every town and village? But by your mercy, it has spread all over the world.

When you started in New York City in 1966, you had only one center, but you still registered your society as The *International Society for Krishna Consciousness*. Only you knew that in the near future the whole world would be inundated with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. All the wonderful devotees who came to assist you in spreading love of Godhead were fully dedicated to Your Divine Grace. They simply followed your instructions with faith. That is the great quality of a pure devotee. In my humble opinion, I think that you were commissioned by the Supreme Lord Himself to come to this material world. Indeed, Your Divine Grace is without a doubt a personal associate of the Supreme Lord.

Today we see that throughout the whole world a great change in consciousness is taking place in people from every field. In the world of science, for instance, scientists are looking at creation with a different view and studying the origin of consciousness. This is one of your contributions to the world.

By your divine grace, you brought the four *sampradāyas* under one umbrella. Please allow me to serve in your ISKCON. I beg to remain in your service.

*Your humbled servant,*

Ātmanivedana Swami

## Bhakti Ananta Kṛṣṇa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this wonderful day, please let me offer you my humble obeisances.

You appeared in the most terrible age, Kali-yuga, in a civilization that is destroying itself. It is the most inauspicious time for spiritual practice. But, fulfilling your spiritual master's will, at the age of 69 you went to America, the most awful place on the planet, to teach the truths of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

You wrote commentaries on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Īśopaniṣad*, and other books. You distributed the teachings of Lord Caitanya on six continents, establishing more than hundred temples, schools, and agricultural communities all over the world. In the Soviet Union you stayed less than a week, leaving behind only one disciple. And he, in his turn, distributed Kṛṣṇa's message throughout the country.

By your kind will, more than a half billion of your transcendental books have been distributed all over the world, in more than sixty languages. It is impossible to count all your achievements and transcendental characteristics.

Thank you very much for giving me and many thousands of other devotees the chance to take part in Lord Caitanya's mission!

Bhakti Ananta Kṛṣṇa Goswami

## Bhakti Anugraha Janārdana Swami

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you on this most auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

In 1969 you wrote the following in a letter to one of your disciples:

Just as you have already understood the benefits of this Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Movement, try to realize and assimilate it more and more and distribute it to the suffering humanity. Our movement is the greatest gift to the human race. They may not immediately appreciate it, but time will come and history will give evidence that this movement saved the human society from being fallen into barbarianism. [Letter to Jayaśrī, 13 November 1969]

This year, as we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of your society, ISKCON, this prophecy is already being realized. Our movement is increasing more and more, as many devotees are being made, many temples are being constructed, your transcendental books in many languages are being printed and distributed by the millions every year, *prasādam* is being profusely distributed all over the world, many sustainable community farm projects are being set up all over the world, many restaurants are being opened everywhere, many festivals spreading the holy name are happening each year, etc.

Your dream of the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium in Māyāpur is quickly becoming a reality, and hopefully it will be inaugurated in 2022.

All of your leaders are working hard to maintain and increase what you started, and it is sure that the movement will go on for the next ten thousand years. Many initiatives have been undertaken to make this happen. This year the third ISKCON Leadership Saṅga was held in Māyāpur, with over 1,200 leaders from all over the world participating. Also, this year a second batch of 48 students enrolled in the GBC College for Leadership Development, ensuring that in the future there will be a smooth transition to the next generation of qualified leaders in the various GBC zones all over the world.

I would like to mention some of your main achievements so that we can meditate on your greatness as the founder-*ācārya* of our movement on this most auspicious day.

In 1965, at the age of sixty-nine, you ventured outside India for the first time to fulfill the order of your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. During your sea voyage you suffered two severe heart attacks. You reached the shores of America with the equivalent of seven dollars to your name.

After struggling alone in New York City for almost a year, on July 13, 1966, you founded ISKCON as a formally registered society with a small group of young followers. This marked the first time in history that a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa had successfully trained non-Indians on foreign soil in the strict disciplines of Vaiṣṇavism, and you did it during the height of the blossoming American hedonistic countercultural movement.

You sent your followers into the streets of cities and towns everywhere to chant the names of God, and “Hare Kṛṣṇa” became a household phrase.

You sent your disciples to London, where in 1969 they recorded the hit single record “The Hare Krishna Mantra” with George Harrison. It became the fastest-selling of all of Apple Corporation’s releases, including those of the Beatles. The record reached #3 in Czechoslovakia and #9 in Britain, and made the top ten in Germany, Japan, Australia, South Africa, Yugoslavia, and many other countries.

You formally initiated almost five thousand disciples. These initiates, both men and women, represented a sweeping diversity of nationalities, races, and religious backgrounds.

You established 108 Kṛṣṇa temples on six continents, installed the Deity of Kṛṣṇa in each center, and trained your disciples in the process of Deity worship. Thirty-two new temples (almost three a month) were opened in a single year, between 1970 and 1971.

You inaugurated the Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā festival in major cities around the globe, in effect bringing the temple to the people.

You instituted the *brahmacāriṇī āśrama*, something previously unheard of in Vedic culture, to give shelter to single women wishing to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

In 1967 you instructed your disciples to start an incense business to provide financial support for the temples. Within four years the business, Spiritual Sky Incense, generated an annual revenue of one million dollars, equivalent to almost six million dollars today.

You introduced the Sunday Love Feast and other programs for distributing *prasādam* (sanctified

food). These programs have provided millions of free meals to the public, along with regular university lunches, which still go on today.

You created the world's first chain of vegetarian restaurants, Govinda's.

You spoke daily on the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, delivering thousands of formal lectures. Over 2,200 were recorded and archived.

You conducted many hundreds of informal conversations on the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness with disciples, scholars, professors, guests, and friends. Over 1,300 were recorded and archived.

You had scores of interviews and philosophical discussions with journalists, scientists, religious leaders, and politicians, as well as meetings with world-renowned dignitaries and celebrities like Indira Gandhi, Allen Ginsberg, Ravi Shankar, Alice Coltrane, John Lennon, and George Harrison.

You recorded more than twenty albums of devotional music.

You published the monthly magazine *Back to Godhead*, which you called the backbone of your movement. At the height of its circulation in the mid-seventies, over a million copies per issue were sold.

You launched the ISKCON Life Membership Program, which enrolled tens of thousands of members to encourage them to take to the devotional process.

You built major temples in Bombay, Hyderabad, and Vṛndāvana, and founded a spiritual city at Māyāpur. All became international sites of pilgrimage.

You established *gurukula* schools to provide education in the principles of devotional service. You founded the Bhaktivedanta Institute to advance Kṛṣṇa consciousness within the scientific community, engaging serious academicians in consideration of the science of self-realization.

You formed the Bhaktivedanta Swami Charity Trust to unearth and renovate the holy places of Lord Caitanya's pastimes.

You set up farm communities to teach "simple living and high thinking," emphasizing cow protection and dependence on God and nature.

You commissioned your artist disciples to produce hundreds of illustrations of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, windows to the spiritual world, based on your meticulous instructions and the descriptions in your books.

You directed some of your followers to learn the Indian art of "doll-making" to present Vedic philosophy through dioramas. This project became the FATE Museums. You wanted such museums in every temple.

You counseled your disciples on complex managerial, philosophical, and personal issues in more than six thousand archived letters.

You were the subject of more than 30,000 archival photos and more than seventy hours of documentary film footage.

You wrote approximately seventy books on the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, sleeping only a few hours a night. Dozens of prominent scholars and educators from leading universities have praised your literary work. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* proclaimed that your voluminous translations from the original Sanskrit and your lucid commentaries "have astounded literary and academic communities worldwide." This feat is even more astonishing considering that you wrote the translations and commentaries in English, your second language.

You founded the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT) in 1972 to produce your books. By 1976, over 55,000,000 pieces of literature had been published in twenty-five languages and distributed in almost every country, making the BBT the world's largest publisher of Indian religious and philosophical texts. One printing alone of *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* required seventy-six railroad cars to ship the paper needed to print it.

You completed the entire *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* manuscript (seventeen volumes) in eighteen months in 1974.

You circled the globe fourteen times, visiting twenty-four countries, preaching, inspiring your followers, and making countless public appearances before multitudes of people.

You skillfully managed your international society simply through letters and personal meetings, virtually without the use of a telephone. When the devotees wanted to use the telex machine, your quick response was that "it will simply become a gossip machine."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, our only desire is to satisfy you by becoming more and more enthusiastic to spread this mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, so that the holy name will be spread everywhere. If we actually sincerely work under your direction—that is, for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa—then we are confident that Kṛṣṇa will help us in every way.

So on this most auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā we pray that you empower us to be your fully surrendered souls and thus fulfill your desire that the whole universe become Kṛṣṇa conscious.

*An insignificant servant of your servants,*

Bhakti Anugraha Janārdana Swami

## Bhakti Bṛhat Bhāgavata Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

Through the Society you founded more than fifty years ago . . .

You gave us the eternal existence of the soul,  
 You gave us the Supreme Absolute Truth, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa,  
 You gave us devotional service,  
 You gave us the association of devotees,  
 You gave us *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*,  
 And above all you gave us the simple chanting of the Holy Names—  
 Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa,  
 Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare  
 Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma,  
 Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Simply, you gave us everything—and you are still giving, and will give eternally.

And I simply say thank you, thank you, thank you . . . Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*A servant of your servants,*

Bhakti Bṛhat Bhāgavata Swami



# Bhakti Gauravāṇī Goswami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

ISKCON is celebrating.

Celebrating 50 Golden Years.

All over the world, events have been planned throughout 2016 to highlight your unparalleled achievement of globalizing Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana* movement and spreading Kṛṣṇa's name to every town and village via your spiritual offspring, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

As a humble Vaiṣṇava, you would shy away from being praised and put in the center continuously, but how can we not put you at the heart of our celebrations? If you had not come and knocked on the doors of our hearts, where would we be now? Without your sacrifice of bringing Kṛṣṇa to the Western World and founding ISKCON, in what condition would the world be today?

It was in bad shape fifty years ago, but things have gotten much worse since then. Kali's agents never sleep; they are working around the clock with single-pointed determination and one aim only: to undermine the remaining values of human society and accelerate mankind's downward spiral toward more and more hellish conditions of life. The flames of lust, anger, and greed have been stoked into a raging fire of unprecedented devaluation, barbarous violence, and ruthless exploitation.

You declared war against Māyā and fought relentlessly against her influence and the schemes of her minion, Kali. You were outspoken and uncompromising when it came to pinpointing and exposing the degrading tendencies and foolish plans of human society. And you expected us to continue in the same line. Commenting on Gajendra's crisis, you wrote:

Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has actually declared war against the illusory energy, in which all the living entities are rotting in a false understanding of civilization. The soldiers in this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement must always possess physical strength, enthusiasm, and sensual power. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.2.30, purport]

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your merciful glance and the Lord's grace the ISKCON army is still marching. Not that it has been an easy task, especially after your departure. But the army has not been routed by the enemy and dispersed in all directions. No doubt, in the last fifty years we have had many casualties, frequent setbacks, countless challenges, and a number of battles lost, but the war on Māyā is going on. *Param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*. Let there be all victory for the chanting of the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Despite all difficulties, those who have taken your instructions as their life and soul are in good spirits, because they are confident that nothing can harm us as long as we are following your command.

And the last fifty years have also seen unexpected advances on many fronts. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the peoples in the East have embraced the *bhakti* cult in an unprecedented way. Who could have imagined that the former Soviet Union would become a major offshoot from the ISKCON branch of Lord Caitanya's desire tree of devotional service? Who could have foreseen that even in China twigs are sprouting? Furthermore, your secret agents are operating undercover in countries that are off-limits for any form of "preaching," introducing the chanting of the holy name under the most trying circumstances—with surprising success.

You founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness with a clear purpose: “To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.” To accomplish this goal, you created an army of volunteers and deployed them all over the world. You stated the mission, showed the direction, and supplied the weapons. Forty years ago, while in London, you said:

So, in this age, Kali-yuga, to kill the demons means to stop their demonic activities by the *astra* [weapon] of *kīrtana*—*hari-saṅkīrtana*—which is spread by Lord Caitanya’s associates: Nityānanda Prabhu, Advaita Prabhu, and Śrīvasādi-gaura-bhakta-vṛnda. They are going door to door, country to country, city to city, and saving the demons from being implicated more and more in material existence.

ISKCON is celebrating fifty years of life-saving missions. Because you have taken the desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to heart, your main concern was to do good for others (*para-upakāra*), “to take the Lord’s message to the residents of this world, to work for the benefit of all other people.” Our only ambition is to be counted among the *gaura-bhakta-vṛndas* who have full faith in your instructions and have developed the same compassionate vision you embody, a world-view so characteristic of the true followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The *saṅkīrtana* mission is based on compassion. Your leaving behind the tranquil life in Vṛndāvana, boarding the *Jaladuta*, sailing into Boston Harbor, and incorporating ISKCON fifty years ago are all based on that compassion. We are celebrating your compassionate heart, *karuṇa-hṛdaya*.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this auspicious day of your appearance in this world, we are especially appreciative of your kindness and the spiritual benefits we have received. We pray for strength, both material and spiritual, so we may be able to share the matchless gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness with as many souls as possible. May the mirror of our heart reflect the soothing rays of your kindness and thus benefit all those who are open to receive them.

*An insignificant foot soldier in your army,*

Bhakti Gauravāṇī Goswami

## Bhakti Mādhurya Govinda Goswami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated *daṇḍavat-praṇāmas* at your lotus feet. Let me eternally massage those feet, which are the shelter for all living beings, and not just those in this universe, for indeed even the inhabitants of the spiritual world immediately recognize the eminent position of you, the greatest of souls, and offer their *daṇḍavat-praṇāmas* and throw flowers in salute. If only I had qualified to physically massage your lotus feet when you walked this planet! Still, please grant me the benediction that I will be able to do so in the spiritual world, regardless of what your *svarūpa* is.

On January 10, 1972, you wrote me what I consider to be lifetime instructions as to what my duty for you is in this movement. Although I was the president of a small temple at the time, and in that capacity

had written you some initiation recommendations, nevertheless I consider your instructions to me to be permanent—not just suitable for a certain *deśa-kāla-pātra*:

. . . These are all very nice boys and girls, that I can understand, so now you take charge of giving them all good guidance and help on the path back to Home, back to Godhead. Practically the leadership of this Krishna Consciousness Society is now in the hands of you, my older disciples, and I am very pleased that you are taking such huge responsibility very seriously. In this way remain very sober and cool-headed and always think of Krishna somehow or other, and there is no doubt this Movement will one day conquer all over the world. One thing is, that I want that the highest standards of devotional service be maintained. Our routine work—rising early, cleansing, chanting, temple worship, sankirtana, study—these things must go on very nicely, and if they become improved more and more, and are not neglected or in any way decreased, then now become very convinced of our Krishna philosophy and very enthusiastically and soberly maintain temple routine standards, increase book distribution, satisfy the devotees, and in every way become the perfect KC example of angel.

. . . I am very much appreciating that you are becoming yourself Krishna Consciousness and that you are helping me in this way. Thank you very much.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, your personal instructions, your orders to me, are so heavy, even though I was an insignificant devotee at an insignificant temple, and am still insignificant. You were demanding and begging me that “Now you take charge of giving them all good guidance and help on the path back to Home, back to Godhead.” By this did you mean that I should guide and help only the twenty-five or so devotees in my small temple, or by the phrase “them all” did you mean that I should guide and help all the devotees, even into the future? After all, you were *tri-kāla-jñā*, aware of past, present, and future, so you knew that you were going to make me a *sannyāsī* one day and that I would eventually travel and teach on your behalf all over the world, an ant endeavoring to follow in your giant footsteps. Therefore I am begging you to empower me to instruct the devotees without offending any of them, so that your order will be fulfilled.

You declared boldly, “Practically the leadership of this Krishna Consciousness Society is now in the hands of you, my older disciples, and I am very pleased that you are taking such huge responsibility very seriously.” This statement is amazing! I was at most a four-year devotee, but you were mercifully giving me so much credit simply because I was attempting to serve the mission. I was president of the Seattle temple, a very small temple that would now be called a preaching center, though we had Deities. You declared that you were “very pleased that [I was] taking such huge responsibility very seriously.” O Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you so much for showering your blessings upon me, even when my service was insignificant. But you did not see it that way, just because I was attempting to assist you. All the current devotees should also take great encouragement from your merciful statements to me, for they are meant for all devotees for all time, not just in those pioneering days. Now a four-year devotee is not considered particularly senior, but your causeless mercy is still fully available to all sincere devotees endeavoring to assist you. They should not think, “I don’t know your Prabhupāda.” Such things have been told to me, but here they can see your same mercy and love is still available for them, even if they are beginners.

You powerfully ordered me personally: “One thing is, that I want that the highest standards of devotional service be maintained.” O Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is very difficult to achieve this goal, not so much personally but collectively, as a society. Please help us co-operate so that we may act in accordance with your instruction and satisfy your earnest desire.

Your order, which is for all devotees, not just me, is crystal clear—no ambiguity whatsoever: “[Standards must] become improved more and more, and [must not be] neglected or in any way decreased.” Again, this heavy instruction is meant for all of ISKCON, not just me. Please give us the strength and fortitude to carry out this essential order.

In a letter to me dated 22 June 1973, you ordered:

Now you instruct them carefully that they must chant 16 rounds daily without fail and always follow the four regulative principles as well as engage in daily duties of temple attendance, classes and street sankirtana. The word initiation means “to begin”—not that when he is initiated a disciple becomes slack; rather upon initiation he begins spiritual life in earnest.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, please help us collectively keep up this standard.

To encourage all the devotees who are upset by the reverses and periodic turbulence in our movement, such as the destruction of the Moscow temple and the Kazakhstan project, I want to present your direct instruction to me on this subject:

You have asked what is the mentality of the demons who attacked New Vrndavana and why did this happen? You should know this already, that there are two classes of men, devotees and demons. The whole history is that the peaceful devotees are disturbed by the demons but that the devotees are always victorious by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. In the Bhagavad-Gīta Kṛṣṇa ordered Arjuna to declare to the whole world that His devotees would never be vanquished. And in the last verse of the Gīta, Sanjaya says wherever there is Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa’s pure devotee Arjuna there will always be opulence, victory, extraordinary power and morality—*tatra srir vijayo bhutir dhruva nitir matir mama*. But because we are engaged in warfare with the forces of Maya, there will be casualties. Even Arjuna’s son Abhimanyu, a 16-year-old boy, was killed at the battle of Kuruksetra. We should be prepared to protect the Deities and always expect Kṛṣṇa’s Mercy, because we are always dependent on Him and we cannot do anything on our own without Him.

You have asked about whether nuclear devastation on this planet would affect the Sankirtana Movement. No, there is nothing that can stop the Sankirtana Movement because it is the will of God Himself, Lord Chaitanya, that His Holy Name be heard in every town and village. Neither can the demons devastate this planet independent of the will of Kṛṣṇa. Nothing happens without His sanction. If Kṛṣṇa wants to kill someone, no one can save him, and if Kṛṣṇa wants to save someone, no one can kill him. For our parts, we should just be determined to carry out our mission against all opposition, demons, nuclear war, whatever. The whole universe is finally subject to certain annihilation by the will of Kṛṣṇa, but devotional service is eternal and is the only certain way one can save himself from devastation. We can preach all over the world that the only way to be saved from collective and individual devastation is to take to the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa. In short, this material world is a very precarious place, therefore we should always chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and seek Kṛṣṇa’s protection.

Hoping this will meet you in good health.

Your ever well-wisher,

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

[Letter to Makhanlal Dasa, 22 June 1973]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, here are more vital instructions to me and all the devotees that you intend to be carried out for all time, not just *deśa-kāla-pātra*. Here you’re speaking to me at a *darśana* on 28 June 1971, in San Francisco, the day after the fifth Ratha-yātrā there:

Śyāmasundara inaugurated this Ratha-yātrā here. You know? I advised him to perform Ratha-yātrā on a motorcar, and that was the first Ratha-yātrā. Then gradually it came to cart, now it is three. It is very nice. We are improving. More improve, more and more.

San Francisco was hardly a wealthy temple in 1971, but we managed to build three *ratha* carts anyway. Now there are many temples around the world with much greater assets than we had in 1971 in San Francisco, yet they do not attempt three carts. However, here we see how pleasing it is (present tense) to Śrīla Prabhupāda. Worldwide, then, we as a movement should strive to fully please Śrīla Prabhupāda rather

than consider it impossible. At the 2014 ISKCON Leadership Saṅga in Māyāpur, a GBC member solemnly and boldly declared from the stage: “The GBC has vowed to carry out *all* the unfulfilled orders of Śrīla Prabhupāda!” This was in front of 450 witnesses. Surely at least some of the readers of this offering recall. Let us all, therefore, work cooperatively, especially during and after this fiftieth anniversary celebration, to carry out this ambitious goal. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you declared, “Impossible is a word in a fool’s dictionary,” so we should not consider this formidable task unachievable.

You continued instructing me at the *darśana*. Note that I was not the temple president and was only a 3½-year devotee, but you were addressing me as if I were in charge. Actually, Jayānanda Prabhu was the president:

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Your *prasādam* this year, I think it is not sufficiently distributed. Why?

**Makhanlāl:** Not sufficient amount, you mean?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Eh?

**Makhanlāl:** Not sufficient menu?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. [Note: You were displeased that there was only a little fruit instead of nice *prasādam* for distribution. The previous year it had been more opulent. You continued:] “Previous year . . . [there was better *prasādam*] . . . Anyone? Everyone you have got? All right. So this is the difference. I have been in Moscow. So there is . . . I could not find this. I could not eat fruit. Now your country, Kṛṣṇa has given so nice, so nice flowers, and so nice Vaiṣṇavas.

Here you point out that there is no shortage in America, unlike in Russia at that time, so why the skimpy *prasādam*? We should understand that this was not just a *deśa-kāla-pātra* instruction for San Francisco but is the standard for our whole movement. “We are improving more and more,” you said. But are we? On the occasion of this fiftieth anniversary, O Śrīla Prabhupāda, please help us make certain that we are “improving more and more.”

You continued instructing us at the *darśana* in San Francisco, regarding the former Soviet Union:

No food and no freedom, that’s all. This is the sum and substance. So in your country also that position may come. Now in America you are happy. Because the nature is changing, *jagat*. *Jagat* means which is changing. So before any further changes come, you spread this Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over your country. You should utilize these fruits and flowers for Kṛṣṇa and be happy. Don’t slip down. [Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please help us all not to “slip down”!] That is my request.

Now you continue, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to define what you mean by “don’t slip down”:

Whatever I could do, I have done. [O Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are begging us, with folded hands and tears.] Now it is up to you to spread this movement all over the world. Don’t go away. There is some tendency, somebody. Therefore, I ask you, no. This is all nonsense. This is Māyā’s peeping, “Why you are working so hard for a sentiment, chanting and dancing? Come on, take to [my] service and be happy with your wife and children.” This is Māyā. This is Māyā. I did not ask my students to marry to become a lost child. I wanted to give them some facility, because you cannot do without wife. But now I am seeing that some of them are slipping away. This is not to be done, no. Every one of us [is] as good as *sannyāsī* because we have sacrificed everything for Kṛṣṇa. *Sannyāsī* does not mean simply having no wife and children, he’s a *sannyāsī*. No. Nothing to possess except Kṛṣṇa. That is *sannyāsī*. One should know that “I will have simply Kṛṣṇa, nothing more.” Then he is *sannyāsī*. This mentality, that “I have nothing to serve, I have nobody to serve except Kṛṣṇa.” But if you serve Kṛṣṇa, you will serve everyone.

But there is no difficulty. Where is the difficulty? I think we are living better than anyone in the world. [laughter] Where is the difficulty? Simply we have to be very sincere devotee of Kṛṣṇa, that’s all. Everything Kṛṣṇa will supply. Everything. So in that position, go on preaching. [Note:



Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are ordering us not to fret over costs, not to dwell in a scarcity mentality, providing, of course, that we preach and engage people vigorously. You are instructing us that we must have full faith that “Kṛṣṇa will supply. Everything.”] Don’t be tottering. You have taken a great responsibility; go on executing it. Don’t fight amongst yourselves for petty things. Go on, advance. . . . Now chalk out your plan how to preach nicely all over the world.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, please give us the strength to upgrade this movement according to your orders, to co-operate, especially during this year honoring ISKCON’s fiftieth anniversary, for the need for upgrading is indeed critical— “Make certain standards are maintained.” You have directly ordered me to “become the perfect Kṛṣṇa conscious angel,” yet how can I possibly attain that goal? It is too high, but on your order I must try. Perhaps I can become that “perfect angel” when I re-unite with you in the spiritual world.

*Respectfully submitted by your eternal servant,*

Bhakti Mādhurya Govinda Goswami  
(formerly Makhanlāl Dāsa)

## Bhakti Narasimha Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace! All glories to ISKCON’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

The great events of history revolve around great personalities. In times of great international stress, it seems nothing short of providential that certain people have been found in certain places with certain qualifications. It is as though certain people were born for such times. Many of the things you did in the sixties had such far-reaching results that only now are we realizing the part you played in creating the spiritual journey for many souls.

No one knew at the time, but with hindsight we can see that your appearance in the mid-sixties in America was in every way ideal for the times. The main historical events in the early sixties centered on the military buildup in Vietnam and the growing involvement of the US in the Vietnam War. In August 1964, a year before you arrived in America, Congress passed the Tonkin Gulf resolution, which set the stage for a massive US military buildup and invasion of South Vietnam. In cities all across the US, huge antiwar demonstrations gave voice to millions protesting the wanton slaughter in Southeast Asia. “Peace and Love” became a motto of millions of disaffected youth, partly in response to the ever-increasing casualties, both American and Vietnamese.

In September 1965 you arrived in the USA, and the following July you founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in New York City. Around that time one of the attendees at your evening programs was Mr. Steven Goldsmith, the lawyer who had helped you incorporate your society. One evening after the lecture he stood up and loudly asked on behalf of millions of peaceniks: “If God is so kind, why is He allowing so many of our American boys to be killed in Vietnam?”

Looking right at Mr. Goldsmith, you immediately answered, “You are daily killing so many animals, so God is saying, ‘Send your sons to the slaughterhouse.’” With this statement you made it clear to your

audience that you were not going to compromise your principles. His question was symptomatic of the concern gripping millions of American youth. Anti-Vietnam demonstrations, draft card burnings, and many other protests were going on all the time.

When word got out that you were going to conduct a “peace vigil” at the United Nations headquarters in Manhattan, it was an exciting proposal for the new members of your Society. After four hours of chanting opposite the famous United Nations Secretariat building, several officials emerged from the building and politely told the devotees that they were only allowed to engage in silent prayer. During the *kīrtana* you stayed on your feet, handing out leaflets to the commuters. The leaflet was entitled “The Peace Formula.” An excerpt:

As a state is protected by the department of law and order, so the state of Universe, of which this earth is only an insignificant fragment, is protected by the laws of nature. This material nature is one of the different potencies of God, who is the ultimate proprietor of everything that be. This earth is, therefore, the property of God, but we, the living entities, especially the so-called civilized human beings, are claiming God’s property as our own, under both an individual and collective false conception. If you want peace, you have to remove this false conception from your mind and from the world. This false claim of proprietorship by the human race is partly or wholly the cause of all disturbances of peace on earth.

Foolish and so-called civilized men are claiming proprietary rights on the property of God because they have now become godless. You cannot be happy and peaceful in a godless society. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says that He is the factual enjoyer of all activities of the living entities, that He is the Supreme Lord of all universes, and that He is the well-wishing friend of all beings. When the people of the world know this as the formula for peace, it is then and there that peace will prevail.

Therefore, if you want peace at all, you will have to change your consciousness into Kṛṣṇa consciousness, both individually and collectively, by the simple process of chanting the holy name of God. This is a standard and recognized process for achieving peace in the world. We therefore recommend that everyone become Kṛṣṇa conscious by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

The following day, *The New York Post* published an article on the peace protest at the UN. It included a large photo of the devotees on the pavement sitting around you.

Between 1966 and 1968 ISKCON spread to other major North American cities (San Francisco, Boston, Toronto, and Los Angeles) and globally (India, England, Germany, and France).

In 1968 you also founded New Vrindavan, a rural community in West Virginia. In 1970 you established ISKCON’s Governing Body Commission (GBC) and Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. Over the years, your International Society for Krishna Consciousness has grown into a giant that is covering the entire planet with its steps in the form of book distribution, college preaching, Nama-haṭṭas, Bhakti Vrikshas, *harināmas*, Ratha-yātrās, and many other preaching activities.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, with this insignificant offering I fall at your lotus feet.

*The servant of your servants,*

Bhakti Narasimha Swami

# Bhakti Prābhava Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

This year we celebrate the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Your Divine Grace’s appearance and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your founding ISKCON. After serving twenty-five years in ISKCON, I realize that there is no shelter apart from rendering service to your lotus feet. Though I sometimes lament that I wasted half my lifetime rendering service to men with meaningless goals, I am ever thankful that my life then became auspicious by engagement in your mission. You are the *senāpati-bhakta*, Lord Caitanya’s commander-in-chief, who traveled all over the world to bring all of us back to the spiritual world.

On this auspicious day of your appearance, I pray to Your Divine Grace to bestow your mercy upon all your sincere followers and allow them to remain united under the umbrella of ISKCON. In Kali-yuga people’s consciousness is deeply infected with the modes of passion and ignorance, which cause them to adopt a separatist mentality. In your purport to *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 3.29.9 you write:

A separatist is one who sees his interest as separate from that of the Supreme Lord. Mixed devotees, or devotees in the modes of passion and ignorance, think that the interest of the Supreme Lord is supplying the orders of the devotee; the interest of such devotees is to draw from the Lord as much as possible for their sense gratification. This is the separatist mentality.

In the same purport you explain how to give up this neophyte mentality:

The mind of the Supreme Lord and the mind of the devotee should be dovetailed. A devotee should not wish anything but to execute the desire of the Supreme. That is oneness.

Since you are an empowered representative of Lord Kṛṣṇa, your instructions are our only guidance. Your glories are expanded through the actions of many of your elevated disciples, who have all taken your instructions as their life and soul. By fully dedicating themselves to your mission, and by cooperating to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, working side-by-side with other devotees and ISKCON authorities, they have been saved from the influence of Kali-yuga. Only in that way will our movement remain united and able to expand for decades and centuries to come.

By your personal example you showed us how to stay out of the clutches of Māyā by always staying in spiritual touch with the spiritual master and Lord Kṛṣṇa. My spiritual master and your disciple His Holiness Bhakti Chāru Swami explains this as follows:

When Prabhupāda first went to Māyāpur with his American disciples, they drove straight to our ISKCON land without stopping at the Gauḍīya Maṭha, Caitanya Maṭha, or Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura’s *samādhi*. Some of Prabhupāda’s godbrothers commented: “He did not even stop at his spiritual master’s *samādhi*.” When Prabhupāda was told that they were speaking like that, he commented, “Do they think that I am ever separated from my spiritual master, even for a moment? My spiritual master is always with me.”

By your personal example, you have shown us how to establish a spiritual connection with Lord Kṛṣṇa through constant meditation on and execution of the order of the spiritual master. Your Divine Grace is the epitome of one who has perfectly dovetailed his body, mind, and words in executing the desire of the Supreme Lord. On this auspicious day, please bless all ISKCON devotees, and with them this insignificant



servant of yours, to remain purely dedicated to executing your will.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Bhakti Prābhava Swami

## Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisance in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace! All glories to your most merciful appearance 120 years ago today.

Thank you, eternal thanks to you, for opening our eyes with the torchlight of genuine knowledge. You are coaxing us toward increasing appreciation of Wonderful Kṛṣṇa. Even by a simple look at this world, at the sun rising, or by hearing the conversation of people or even the cries and calls of animals, whatever—we are learning to at first appreciate and then relish how the cosmic order and all it contains is pervaded and supported by “a single fragment” of Beautiful, Wonderful Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Your Divine Grace has educated us, whom you often called your “students,” by transparently transmitting Kṛṣṇa’s own teachings pertaining to love of God, the ultimate benediction to arise from first appreciating the Lord’s beauty and opulence. Kṛṣṇa consciousness encompasses all these degrees of awareness. The more we know Him, the more we want to serve Him. And the more fully we devotedly serve Him, the closer we get to Him and to our eternal loving relationship with Him. Kṛṣṇa is, after all, *rasa* itself. *Raso vai saḥ rasam hy evāyam labdhvānandī bhavati*: “He Himself is *rasa*, the taste or mellow of a particular relationship. And certainly one who achieves this *rasa* becomes *ānandī*, full of bliss.” (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.7.1)

But now I am foolishly diving beyond my limited depth. And, in another sense, my (all of our) “depth” is *increasingly* limited:

*naivāvidan kṣīyamāṇam jalam gādha-jale-carāḥ  
yathāyur anv-aham kṣayam narā mūḍhāḥ kuṭumbinaḥ*

“The fish swimming in the increasingly shallow water did not at all understand that the water was diminishing, just as foolish family men [and so many others!] cannot see how the time they have left to live is diminishing with every passing day.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.20.37, translation [*insertion mine*]).

A half-century ago you began the Hare Kṛṣṇa explosion at the Matchless Gifts storefront at 26 Second Avenue, New York City. So please allow me to conclude by praising one of the “matchless gifts” you have bestowed upon us: (Yes, in this case, various gifts can simultaneously be dubbed “matchless,” or matched only by one another. Yet the whole transcendental package is indeed unmatched by any other gift ever given in the history of the worlds.) This is the matchless gift of real philosophy, which takes into account the imminence of death while cultivating the sense of eternal life. By focusing our consciousness on Kṛṣṇa, the very root of existence, you magnificently bless us by delivering the ultimate understanding

of life and death, of everything and everyone. (Out of your unfathomable humility, you described such work as that of the postal peon, who must simply deliver the mail with its information unchanged.) And you have made this focus on Kṛṣṇa practical by urging us to worship Nāma Prabhu, who is nondifferent from Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, your personal, intimate friend, and indeed the friend to *all* His parts and parcels.

I am so fortunate to have met Your Divine Grace, yet I still remain unhappy due to my causeless unwillingness to truly and wholly surrender. So I pray for your continued mercy upon me and upon all my godbrothers, godsisters, godnephews, godnieces, and all other members and well-wishers of your ISKCON mission. Most are (fortunately for them) more spiritually advanced than myself.

Aspiring to remain

*Your eternal servant,*

Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami

## Bhakti Prema Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Throughout the history of this world, many so-called socialists, moralists, humanitarians, nationalists, etc., tried to benefit the world in their own limited ways. But no one can fathom the limits of the genuine benefits you offered this world, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your great struggle and perseverance, born of your deep compassion for the suffering living entities, manifested in the form of the greatest shelter for everyone—your ISKCON. Without this shelter, I cannot imagine what would have been the fate of this world.

As today is the most blessed event, the anniversary of the divine appearance day of your physical body, so similarly this year all over the world we are celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the incorporation of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, your institutional body. Today your Society has grown to such an extent that it touches all kinds of people, from presidents and prime ministers to the poorest people in the remotest parts of the world. Surely this is the time for great celebration and festivity. But we should never forget for a moment that behind the success of ISKCON lie your immeasurable hard work and the unimaginable austerities you underwent to establish and develop this glorious Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. You prayed to Kṛṣṇa to show some miracle, and Kṛṣṇa has shown that miracle through Your Divine Grace.

From the last verse of your “Mārkinē Bhāgavata-dharma,” we can easily understand how humble and surrendered you are:

*bhakti nāi beda nāi nāme khub daro*  
*“bhaktivedānta” nām ebe sārthak kor*

“I have no devotion, nor do I have any knowledge. I have been designated as Bhaktivedānta, and now, if You like, You can fulfill the real purport of Bhaktivedānta.”

In my travels I see how all your prophecies are coming true. When I went to South Africa, I saw how the local people are so simple and are so much in need of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. During the many years of apartheid there, white people dominated the blacks and ignored their needs. But now, just by receiving love, affection, and care from the devotees, many black people are very readily taking up the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In Bangladesh, so many youth are now coming forward and dedicating their lives to your service. In Europe, regardless of so many difficulties, your loyal followers are continuing to push on your movement. Although in Singapore there are many restrictions against publicly preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness, still your movement is spreading like wildfire. Wherever I go, I see how people are struggling in the absence of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and when we introduce them to Hare Kṛṣṇa *kīrtana*, people readily chant with us and dance in great bliss. It appears that the whole world is just looking for the happiness you offer in your teachings.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you wanted your temples to be vibrant spiritual centers that propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Under the guidance of your dear disciple His Holiness Bhakti Chāru Swami, we are trying to please you by our little efforts to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in central India, in Ujjain. In this attempt to serve Your Divine Grace, the devotees at ISKCON Ujjain are gradually getting very nice results in their preaching. There are thousands of congregational members all over Madhya Pradesh. Two *saṅkīrtana* buses continually travel, with around eighteen *brahmacārīs* distributing your books all over India. Today hundreds of youths in our area are getting seriously involved in practicing and preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness, especially in Ujjain, Indore, and Bhopal. These students live together in spiritual hostels, called Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Chātrāvāsa, to practice the sublime path of devotional service you so mercifully distributed to everyone without discrimination.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this year Kumbha-melā came to Ujjain, and we took advantage of this great opportunity to introduce your divine teachings to the masses. For your transcendental pleasure, we distributed more than 30,000 *Bhagavad-gītās* during the month of Kumbha-melā. We also set up a big 3-D dome screen to present Kṛṣṇa conscious videos to the visitors. Many devotees from ISKCON temples all over India joined us in Ujjain to help us preach at this great spiritual gathering.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā I beg you to please give us the strength and vision to follow your pure teachings so that we can become your true followers and not become another *sahajiyā* group. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*Your humble servant,*

Bhakti Prema Swami

## Bhakti Rāghava Swami

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

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

*om śrī surabhyai namaḥ! om śrī gurave namaḥ!*

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this, your 120<sup>th</sup> sacred Appearance Day anniversary.

The year 2016 marks a very special one for all the members of ISKCON, as we are celebrating our Golden Jubilee. Amazingly, fifty years have already gone by since you incorporated your International Society for Krishna Consciousness in New York City. And as ISKCON celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year, all your disciples still physically present are anticipating the dates during the next eleven years when they will commemorate their own Golden Jubilees as your duly initiated disciples. In addition, so many other memorable events will be celebrated in the months and years to come during the twelve-year Golden Jubilee period that will terminate in the year 2027.

Once in a lecture you described Kṛṣṇa as “amazing,” and you went on repeating the word “amazing” again and again in connection with His names, qualities, pastimes, and associates. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are that amazing personality who came to deliver us fallen souls from the clutches of Māyā. I will remain forever indebted to you for having performed such a miracle.

Recently I started listening to the Memories DVD Series of your disciples, especially those who had very close association with Your Divine Grace. Their memories are full of nectar anecdotes expressing their admiration for you and their profound gratitude for the mercy you have showered upon us all. I could understand more clearly how deeply personal and affectionate you are to all your disciples. Although I was not so fortunate as to verbally communicate with you directly, I nevertheless feel immense gratitude to you for introducing me to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, without which my life would have no meaning.

I can share one small personal incident that reveals your exalted position. When you visited the Montreal temple in the summer of 1975, the few devotees staying at the Ottawa temple, where I had joined, came to Montreal to take your *darśana*. While you were in your quarters near the temple, discussing topics related to the Fifth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with some of the senior men, a group of us younger devotees were in the next room stretching our ears to catch every word you uttered. In reply to one question relating to the structure of the universe, I clearly recall you stating that this particular explanation you gave in a purport was based not on *śāstra* but on realization. This immediately struck me as something unique to only such a personality as you and further increased my faith and reverence for Your Divine Grace.

I am writing this offering in Rajasthan, attending the Gau Kripa Mahotsav at Nandagram. This festival is run by the members of the Pathmeda Godham Mahatirth, who maintain the largest *gośālā* in the world, close to 300,000 cows. They are very active in helping revive our Vedic culture by providing healthy *deśī* cows to poor farmers and assisting them in returning to the normal and natural farming techniques advocated by our *ṛṣis* in the *Vedas*. You often spoke of the importance of Mother Cow and how our Vedic culture is Vṛndāvana culture, a culture based on land, cows, and loving devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Our ISKCON leaders in India have established a separate Ministry for Cow Protection, and the state of Rajasthan remains the only one at present having a Minister for Cow Protection. I pray that by your mercy more such developments can take place to reintroduce the basic concepts of cow care that are fundamental to fulfilling your order to bring about a complete overhaul in modern society.

Our OM Śrī Surabhi 12-Year Campaign, which we started on January 1, 2015, has now entered its second year. To honor ISKCON's Golden Jubilee, our ISKCON Daiva Varṇāśrama Ministry has pledged to visit 108 villages, since you once expressed a similar desire. So far, by your kind mercy, our dedicated team, through the Śrī Govind Gau Gram Prachar Yatra, has reached 67 villages and plans to honor its pledge of 108 before the end of the year. You may also be pleased to hear that our ministry has pledged to produce a weekly video interview and PowerPoint relating to some aspect of our Vedic culture promoting the *varṇāśrama* mission. By your mercy we are getting increasingly favorable responses.

Thank you again and again, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your wonderful gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which alone can save the world from its present suicidal path. Let me remain eternally engaged in your divine service and learn to become more and more surrendered under your lotus feet. Kindly forgive my many shortcomings and defects.

Forever seeking your favorable glance and mercy, I remain

*Your humble servant,*

Bhakti Rāghava Swami

## Bhakti Rasāyana Sāgara Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you!

This is my very first attempt to write a Vyāsa-pūjā homage to glorify Your Divine Grace, and I pray that it pleases you.

Belonging to the generation of devotees who joined ISKCON after your physical departure, I never had a chance to associate with you directly. However, all your association is still available for us through your books, conversations, letters, and your wonderful example, so nicely described by many of your direct associates. We are all so fortunate to have this legacy we can rely on to actualize the inspiring vision you established for the Society and worked so hard to fulfill.

In my humble view, the least developed of all your purposes of ISKCON is the very first one:

To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all people in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.

We know quite well from our experience that it is not so easy to “achieve real unity and peace” even within ISKCON, what to speak of the world. But it seems that now we have matured enough to the point of finally making this bold step of starting the program of respiritualizing the human society, since by your wonderful pioneering effort the world has actually changed for the better and we now have many more supporters and friends willing to join hands with us in performing this noble task. There are many examples of this positive attitude toward you and your mission. I will mention just one of them, from my personal experience.

I was distributing your books at the Covent Garden in London City, when I stopped a man in his mid sixties to offer him a book. He smiled and said that he “knows the guru personally.” I wondered whom he was talking about, and he responded that it was “the elderly Indian man,” whom he, as a teenager, had met in New York on the Lower East Side. I realized then that he was actually speaking about you! Then he asked how you were doing and was shocked to learn that you had left this world many years ago. He paused and said that you were always very nice to him and other kids in the neighborhood. They were very surprised to see how you could endure staying outdoors dressed quite lightly in the snowy New York winter, and he remembered that despite the cold you had a blissful expression on your face as you chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa next to a piece of cardboard on which the *mahā-mantra* had been written by hand. Apparently these were the days when you were completely alone, with no followers or supporters at all.

And then before he left he said something I'll never forget: "I know there are many people who speak ill of him, but don't believe any of it. He was the most wonderful person I ever met in my life!"

It was a special appreciation coming from an unbiased source. You've touched the lives of so many and continue to do so in countless ways. Please bless me so I may be successful in dedicating the rest of my life to helping you fulfill your inspiring mission.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Bhakti Rasāyana Sāgara Swami.

## Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Mahārāja

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

This year is a very special one for all of us, since in the summer we will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of ISKCON. ISKCON is still alive and growing, and while it has its problems, it has also had some successes. I would like to tell you of some of the successes I am aware of, though there are many more.

You told us how your spiritual master instructed you, "If you ever get money, print books," and you asked us to adopt the same policy. In this regard, the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust continues to print all your writings in numerous languages, and has also published some of the important works of the Six Gosvāmīs, such as Sanātana Gosvāmī's *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* and Śrī Kṛṣṇa-līlā-stava, Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta*, and Jīva Gosvāmī's *Tattva-sandarbha*. In addition, your leading disciples have taken up their pens and are publishing their own works. Your *Back to Godhead* continues to serve as an important communication journal for all the devotees, as well as an introductory magazine for newcomers. There are several BTG editions produced in local languages, such as Bengali and Hindi, and a special English edition for the Indian market.

Recent figures show that there are now more than 650 ISKCON centers around the world. It was the desire of Your Divine Grace that whenever there are sufficient funds, and without stopping the preaching and book distribution, we should arrange facilities for the worship of the Deity of the Lord. An example of this is the magnificent temple opened last year in Malaysia, a predominantly Muslim country. Your Divine Grace once visited Malaysia, in the early 1970's, and requested that a temple of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa be constructed there, and the devotees have fulfilled your desire. Also, in February of this year a newly constructed temple opened in Ekachakra *dhāma*, the birthplace of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu. The construction of new centers in Trivandrum and Colombo is well under way, and they will open soon.

I am sure there are many other projects developing in other parts of the globe, but I am only describing the projects I am familiar with.



In Bangladesh there are now seventy-five ISKCON centers and lakhs of devotees. The annual Dacca Ratha-yātrā is one of the biggest chariot festivals in the world. Another country where Kṛṣṇa consciousness is expanding is Myanmar, where there are now some fifteen centers.

Your Divine Grace desired that all your disciples take up the work of being spiritual masters, provided they strictly follow your instructions. There are now more than one hundred initiating gurus in your Society, and many others who are also well qualified are content to serve by giving their valuable guidance. So that all new members of ISKCON properly understand the qualifications of the guru and the guru's relationship with Your Divine Grace, it is now mandatory that prospective disciples take the ISKCON Disciple Course(IDC). This course also ensures that candidates for initiation are fully conversant with the initiation standards, as well as with ISKCON's management structure. It is hoped that this course will increase the quality of new devotees entering the Society and allow more harmonious dealings between devotees of different gurus and of different generations.

Your Divine Grace desired to fulfill the prediction of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura that a great temple, an *adbhuta mandira*, would appear in Māyāpur. The entire worldwide ISKCON Society is doing its utmost to contribute toward the cost of constructing the temple you envisioned—the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium—and construction is well under way. It is hoped that it can be completed by 2022. We have to thank your devoted disciple Ambarīṣa Prabhu for his outstanding contribution to this project; he is taking a leading role both as a donor and a collector.

I would like to also mention the exceptional devotional service rendered by your stalwart son Jayapatākā Swami, who despite his stroke several years ago continues his vigorous preaching schedule and now has 70% of the 50,000 disciples you requested he initiate.

While these and many other great things are happening or have already happened in your Society, we have to also remember your injunction to strictly maintain the devotional standards. Lavish buildings and temple worship are not meant for just collecting some income and maintaining. That would be like what Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī described as keeping a *śālagrāma-śilā* and using it to break nuts. Also, simply increasing the number of devotees is not the goal; rather, we want to see that they become qualified to go back to Godhead. Our real business is to fight Māyā, and this requires that we educate people in this regard. We pray that we may have the benediction of dying on the battlefield as we take part in this great battle.

*Your most unworthy disciple,*

Tridaṇḍi Bhikṣu Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha

## Bhakti Vinoda Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances in the shade of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace! All glories to your sincere followers!

In response to a disciple who asked you, "How can I be sincere?", you answered, "By being sincere." Oftentimes we think we don't know how to perform the internal necessities of pure devotional service,

for we are lulled by bad choices into false thinking in the deep recesses of our subtle bodies. Your life is an epitome of sincerity, evinced by your perfectly following the words of Guru and Kṛṣṇa. Being naturally sincere, you carried out the instructions of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī to the letter, without any misunderstanding or minimization of those instructions' importance. Because of your sincerity, the lofty task given to you became do-able, for you knew it was Kṛṣṇa's task.

Even today, and for all time to come, it is those who sincerely believe in your words who are empowered to spread the movement by becoming your instruments, much to their surprise.

Last year in August we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of your visit to Kochi, Kerala, with grandeur and sincerity. The heroes were the BBT staff and more than twenty-five devotees across Kerala who gave their valuable time and energy to publish your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in Malayalam. They offered it to you on the fiftieth anniversary of the day you received your first volumes of your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* onboard the *Jaladuta*—August 22, 1966. We assumed that it was your order that the deadline had to be met, come what may.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it was an emotional moment for all the devotees in Kerala as the BBT devotees offered you the Malayalam *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. They followed the ceremony with a grand public function, wherein the *Bhāgavatam* was released by a minister, and scholars and dignitaries rose in ovation, seeing your multivolume magnum opus. Then we showed everyone a brief film about your *Jaladuta* journey.

A plaque commemorating your visit to Kochi and your subsequent memorable journey to spread *bhāgavata-dharma* all over the world was unveiled and later installed at the port of Kochi.

The core of the celebration was a conference entitled “Environment & Economy,” showcasing the principles of a value-based life that you reveal in your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* purports. Devotees and many professionals in the fields of environmental studies and economics met on the neutral platform of serving humanity, and the conference was attended by many students and others.

While we are happy to report this to you, we know that all this pales in comparison to distributing your books in this land of Kerala and actually changing the hearts of Māyāvādīs, communists, etc., so that they accept pure *bhakti*. I have full faith that your books will do wonders in Kerala, as it is the land of intellectuals, having the highest literacy in India.

Also, in this year of the Golden Jubilee of ISKCON we will be opening the first official ISKCON temple in Kerala, at Trivandrum. Devotees here have given their sincere energy and time to distributing books, preaching your glories far and wide, and introducing people to the real *bhāgavata-dharma*, chanting the Holy Names. We seek your blessings, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this milestone event in Kerala.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as my grand-spiritual-father, you seem so very accessible and immanent in my life and in your books as you describe the reality of Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual world. Your deep conviction of the reality everything you reveal in your books is so infectious that it can consume all my selfish, grandiose material plans for aggrandizement by shooing them away into thin air.

Your unprecedented mode of dynamic governance based on *saṅkīrtana* for the welfare of all in this world is a fresh leadership model for this day and age. While the leaders of the world may wax grandiloquent about their realizations concerning servant leadership, cultural diversity issues in globalization, the millennial generation, eco-friendly initiatives, and more people-oriented leadership, you have long surpassed them all by trailblazing a movement that answers all issues perfectly in principle and practice. Leaders of the future, you said, will talk about how you turned the course of human history. The great responsibility your followers have now is to perpetuate your legacy, to seize the moment and pitch the attack, as Your Divine Grace did after you landed in America.

To remain thus relevant and relatable requires a lot of resourceful intelligence and smart organization, as you rightly pointed out. As the world rapidly changes in front of our eyes, and as our members age and leave, leadership in ISKCON has to go through a realized, well-informed, and purposeful change to remain relevant. Thus in our fight with Māyā we are forced to rethink whatever set patterns and cozy complacency we may have fallen into. It's an exciting service—to be changing gears without compromising our deep principles, and to present Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the world according to modern trends and demographics so that our outreach is effective in wooing conditioned souls into the rich association of



devotees for a permanent change of consciousness.

Thus, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this occasion of the Golden Jubilee I would like to thank you for giving us dynamic service via the vehicle of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness—the service of carrying forward your lofty legacy into the future. You are a leader par excellence for these times, a leader who conducted himself with humility, grace, and a warm charm that bespoke your deep internal serenity, in the shelter of Kṛṣṇa’s arms.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! No wonder we sing every day that your glories are sung in all the three worlds!

To a disciple who asked how it was that he had changed rapidly from rags in the material world to riches in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, you said, “I created your good fortune.” You showed no artificial humility in revealing that you could change the fortunes of anyone who followed the instructions of Lord Caitanya in the way you prescribed. This is real eternal fortune.

I feel greatly fortunate to be able to help your servants make others fortunate through your movement, although I am the least qualified for that service. I am eternally dependent on your sincere followers as they tax their brains about how to make the souls of the world really fortunate by trapping them within the confines of your mercy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this historic Vyāsa-pūjā day during the fiftieth year of ISKCON, I offer my heartfelt prayers at your lotus feet so that I may remain sincere in my service to you and your followers amidst the challenges in your organization in the world of Māyā.

*The servant of your servants,*

Bhakti Vinoda Swami

## Bhakti Viśrambha Mādhava Swami

*vṛndāvane ramaṇa-reti prasiddha-bhūmau  
tatrāpi kṛṣṇa-balarāma-supāda-mūle  
jñānaṁ paraṁ parama-kṛṣṇa-sudharmīty uktam  
daṇḍas tu deva prabhupāda namo namas te*

I repeatedly offer my respectful obeisances unto that divine personality Śrīla Prabhupāda, who sits at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma in Vṛndāvana’s Ramaṇa Reti, giving supreme knowledge of Kṛṣṇa to one and all.

*vande śrī-gurudevam taṁ karuṇā-varuṇālayam  
yat-kṛpā-lava-leśena pāmaro ’py amarāyate*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the bona fide spiritual master, an ocean of compassion. Even a fraction of his mercy is enough to liberate even the most fallen person.

It’s interesting to note that many old people continue to leave their bodies by the order of the Lord.

If one takes shelter of Tulasīrāṇī, surely she’ll help liberate and guide those who take shelter of her lotus feet.

**The Generations to Come Should Never Forget . . .**

The following verses prove nicely that it's the sweet Lord's "company policy" to liberate His devotees on auspicious days like Ekādaśī. I personally heard of three devotees who left their bodies on Ekādaśī and of three devotees—all my godbrothers—who left their bodies on auspicious appearance days.

*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 12.69–72:

*athopavāsa-dine śrāddha-niṣedhaḥ*

Performance of the *śrāddha* ceremony is prohibited on fasting days.

*pādme puṣkara-khaṇḍe—*

In the *Puṣkara Khaṇḍa* section of the *Padma Purāṇa* it is stated:

*ekādaśyām yadā rāma śrāddham naimittikaṁ bhavet |  
tad-dine tu parityajya dvādaśyām śrāddham ācaret ||69||*

O Lord Rāmacandra, if a temporary ritual, such as the *śrāddha* ceremony, is scheduled to be performed on Ekādaśī, or on another fasting day, one should postpone it and perform it the next day.

*tatraiva uttara-khaṇḍe [6.234.13-14]—*

In the *Uttara Khaṇḍa* section of the same literature, it is stated:

*ekādaśyām ca prāptāyām mātā-pitror mṛte 'hani |  
dvādaśyām tu pradātavyām nopavāsa-dine kvacit |  
garhitānnaṁ na vāśnanti pitaraś ca divaukasaḥ ||70||*

If the annual disappearance day of one's deceased father or mother falls on Ekādaśī, one should postpone it to the next day. One should never observe such an occasion on a fasting day. In fact, the forefathers and demigods do not accept the food grains that are full of sins on Ekādaśī.

*skānde—*

In the *Skanda Purāṇa* it is stated:

*ekādaśī yadā nityā śrāddham naimittikaṁ bhavet |  
upavāsaṁ tadā kuryād dvādaśyām śrāddham ācaret ||71||*

The vow of Ekādaśī is an eternal function, whereas the performance of the *śrāddha* ceremony is a temporary ritual. Therefore, one should fast on Ekādaśī and perform the *śrāddha* ceremony another day.

*brahma-vaivarte—*

In the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* it is stated:

*ye kurvanti mahīpāla śrāddham tv ekādaśī-dine |*

*trayas te narakaṁ yānti dātā bhoktā paretakaḥ ||72||*

O King, those who perform the *śrāddha* ceremony on Ekādaśī will traverse the path to hell, along with the forefathers for whom the oblations were offered.

*Digdarśinī-tīkā:*

*ekādaśyām yadā rāma ity ādinā upavāsa-dine śrāddhaṁ niṣiddham | yac ca skāndādu—*

*śrāddha-dinaṁ samāsādyā upavāso yadā bhavet |  
tadā kṛtvā tu vai śrāddhaṁ bhukta-śeṣas tu yad bhavet |  
tat sarvaṁ dakṣiṇe pāṇau grhītvānnaṁ śikhidhvaja |  
avajighred anenātha bhavet śrāddhaṁ śikhidhvaja |  
pitṛṇām tṛptidaṁ tāta vrata-bhaṅgo na vidyate || ity ādi |*

*tac ca vaiṣṇavetara-viṣayaṁ mantavyam | vaiṣṇava-pitṛṇām api  
śrī-viṣṇu-dine śrāddha-grahaṇāyogād iti dik ||69-72||*

By the words starting with *ekādaśyām yadā rāma*, the prohibition of the *śrāddha* ceremony on the fasting days is indicated. It is also stated in the *Skanda Purāṇa*, “O Kārttikeya, when fasting falls on the day of the *śrāddha* ceremony, then after performing the ceremony one should place all the grain remnants from it in one’s right hand and smell it. By that the *śrāddha* ceremony is to be performed. The breaking of a *vrata* does not give any pleasure to the forefathers.” In this way other matters of the Vaiṣṇavas are to be considered. Even the *śrāddha* ceremony for the Vaiṣṇava forefathers is prohibited due to its prohibition on the day of Viṣṇu.

O Prabhupada, you taught us that on the *śrāddha* day of great devotees one should hold a fast until noontime and serve *prasādam* to devotees of the Lord.

It’s mentioned in the *Vaiṣṇavīya-tantra-sāra Gītā-māhātmya* that on the *śrāddha* day if one chants the *Gītā* (*Gītā*, *Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, etc.), then the forefathers become pleased and give all blessings to their ancestor.

*niḥśvāse na hi viśvāsaḥ kadā ruddho bhaviṣyati  
kīrtanīya mato bālyād harer nāmaiva kevalam*

Remember that our final breath may come at any time,  
No matter if we’re old and sick or in our youthful prime.  
So young and old alike should chant the Name incessantly.  
The Holy Name of Śrī Hari is surely all that be.

Yes! *Harināma* is the only thing left to us that will still work and give full effect. But only when chanted without offenses!

In our creeping old age, when your disciples are increasingly leaving this world in front of our very eyes to run back to your lotus feet, we beg to chant more rounds so we may remember the Lord and His Tulasīrāṇī at the time of death. All else will be stripped away from us!

Bhakti Viśrambha Mādhava Swami

# Candramauli Swami

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

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

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to your mood of compassion on the fallen souls trapped in Kali-yuga, which you express by lifting them up with the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the form of the chanting of the Holy Names of Kṛṣṇa. “Not considering who asked for it and who did not, nor who was fit and who unfit to receive it, Caitanya Mahāprabhu distributed the fruit of devotional service.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 9.29*) As a devoted follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the disciplic session, you kept this principle foremost as you distributed Kṛṣṇa consciousness worldwide.

After coming to the West, you could hardly find anyone qualified to receive the priceless gift of pure devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. Your method was to make us receptive, and thereby qualified, by presenting the Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy and practices as they were given by the previous spiritual masters, but in a way that was understandable to the Western mindset. In doing so you went everywhere, meeting all types and classes of people, and in the compassionate mood of Lord Caitanya you gave Kṛṣṇa consciousness freely to the fit and unfit. You also instructed us, your disciples, to adopt the same mood. As you wrote in your purport to the verse cited above (*CC Ādi 9.29*):

This is the sum and substance of Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement. There is no distinction made between those who are fit and those who are not fit to hear or take part in the *saṅkīrtana* movement. It should therefore be preached without discrimination. The only purpose of the preachers of the *saṅkīrtana* movement must be to go on preaching without restriction. That is the way in which Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu introduced this *saṅkīrtana* movement to the world.

There is a category of people who may be classified as the epitome of those unfit to receive the fruit of devotional service but who have nonetheless become more and more a focus of ISKCON preachers over the last twenty-five years. These are the criminals incarcerated in prisons around the world.

The strategy to reach these persons with Kṛṣṇa consciousness has mostly focused on giving them your books—*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and many of your smaller books.

Over the years we have seen a steady increase in the number of these social rejects seriously taking up the process of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, many of them sixteen rounds daily, and regularly studying *bhāgavata* philosophy. Such serious prison devotees often enthusiastically preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness to their fellow inmates.

A few committed devotees have made it their main service to regularly correspond with these convicts and send them your books. Occasionally a devotee will visit the devotee-convicts in prison, and in some places prisons are hosting regular Kṛṣṇa conscious programs.

But, Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is your books that are the foundation of their practice of devotional service.

His Grace Svavāsa Prabhu, the Los Angeles temple president, has generously offered to send a set of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams* to any prison that requests one. Over the last year and a half, more than seventy sets of *Bhāgavatams* have reached prison libraries in the US.

In Croatia, His Grace Mahāsīnha Prabhu, one of your granddisciples, managed to successfully place

all your books that have been translated into Croatian into all the prisons of that country.

Bhakti Latā Dāsī, a resident of New Vrindavan, has developed ISKCON's Prison Ministry so that it now reaches out to hundreds of inmates throughout the US, mostly by sending them your books, organizing regular correspondence with them, and inspiring devotees to get involved through her website, [iskconprisonministry.us](http://iskconprisonministry.us).

Candra Prabhu, in Boise, Idaho, employed as an inmate counselor in a prison in Oregon, has started and maintained a regular Kṛṣṇa consciousness program that has been active for more than ten years.

As a result of your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, some of these inmates have become initiated disciples of your disciples. Bhakta Ben, an inmate in an Arizona prison, is now Balavān Nitāi Prabhu, having received initiation last year from one of your most dedicated preachers, His Grace Vaiśeṣika Prabhu.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are very grateful to be able in some small way to assist you as your humble instruments in bringing the wealth of *bhakti* into the dark but no longer hopeless lives of the *patitas* of society.

With great appreciation for the life you have given me—a life dedicated to your mission of giving Kṛṣṇa to others—I offer my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Candramauli Swami

## Candraśekhara Swami

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

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

This year has started out with an amazing bucketload of controversy. I probably should have expected it, since this year we will observe the fiftieth anniversary of the birth of ISKCON. In February I was already praying just to live through 2016. I guess my problem is that I just expect things to not be awkward. Yet they are awkward in defiance of anything I feel, think, or want. Therefore, I am consistently disappointed and shocked when awkwardness happens. But expecting clear sailing on smooth water is unrealistic. Even on the material platform, it is unrealistic. The material world is here to rub our noses in our mistake—the mistake of having come here in the first place.

Every square inch of the material world has witnessed outrageous horror stories. Horror story after horror story, with the previous horror story being buried under the blood, poop, and mud of the present one. This world is the place of horror stories. When I think back on my life, I see that the things I have personally experienced do not even come close to the worst that this world can dish out. Kṛṣṇa has been way kind, and yet I still find myself barely able to cope.

Our general world situation is not ideal, people are not perfect, and I am not expert or pure. Yet Kṛṣṇa consciousness must go on. Every spiritual organization is just a collection of ex-sinners, some a little more ex than others. Sometimes that fact seems more obvious than at other times. We must tolerate as we are tolerated. But then none of this matters: if we don't want to freeze we must just keep on building our igloo from blocks of frozen snow, never mind our numb fingers.

There are many things that should be done, many things that could be done, many things that are not getting done, and many things that are getting done on the 10% level. I could look at the glass as 90%

empty or as 10% full. It seems better to light a candle than curse the darkness.

Although these mundane musings are miscellaneous and scattered, they are actually the fabric of life on the surface. Beneath this surface crust is the reality I constantly remind myself of, the reality painted by *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In that reality, all that matters is to serve the great devotees. As Lord R̥ṣabhadeva puts it at *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.5.2:

*mahat-sevāṁ dvāram āhur vimuktes  
tamo-dvāraṁ yoṣitāṁ saṅgi-saṅgam  
mahāntas te sama-cittāḥ praśāntā  
vimanyavaḥ suhṛdah sādhave ye*

“It is the verdict of all *sāstras* and great personalities that service to a pure devotee is the path of liberation. By contrast, association with materialistic people who are attached to material enjoyment and women is the path of darkness. Those who are actually devotees are broadminded, equal to everyone, and very peaceful. They never become angry, and they are friendly to all living entities.”

Because this year is presenting amazing obstacles, it must at the same time present amazing possibilities. Any time there is intense struggle in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is also a chance for great spiritual advancement—bumping us up by a quantum leap to await the next challenge. All that should be remembered is that we must serve the great devotees. Things may pan out soon or they may not pan out for a hundred years. But service to the great devotees will always be the door to liberation, the door to reviving our eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

You opened the door for us, Śrīla Prabhupāda; now it is fitting that we open it for others. The door seems stuck, so please help us pry it open. Let me do or become whatever it takes.

*Your servant,*

Candraśekhara Swami

## Dānavīr Goswami

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

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

*Jaya Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata (108) Śrī Śrīmad A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda Kī Jaya!*

My dearest Guru Maharaja, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

From sinful acts you saved this boy,  
Transformed his life to peace and joy.

Your “one-ness” links home and abroad—  
One book, one hymn, one work, one God.

You reveal, beyond space and time,  
The Absolute Truth—pure and sublime.

None can match or supersede your  
Service to Siddhānta Ṭhākura.

A Vaiṣṇava world—your foundation—  
Back to Godhead recreation.

Thanks to you, we’re free from pain,  
In Kṛṣṇa’s fam’ly once again.

I pray to stay at your lotus feet;  
Else I’m just a dog in the street.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

*Your eternal servant,*

Dānavīr Goswami

## Dhīraśānta Dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Kṛṣṇa’s appearance and activities are inconceivably wonderful, and therefore the name, form, qualities, and activities of Kṛṣṇa cannot be understood by the material senses. For this reason He is called *adhokṣaja*, or “beyond sense perception.” Only when the senses are purified by devotional activity can a devotee understand the Lord in truth, by the Lord’s grace. In the same way, your own divine appearance and activities are of a similar nature because they are so intimately connected with Kṛṣṇa.

Throughout my many years of practicing devotional service, my spiritual quest to understand Lord Kṛṣṇa has simultaneously opened my eyes to the unlimited nature of your own unique personality.

Sometimes I am asked by devotees who have never met you, “What was it like to be in the movement when such a great personality as Śrīla Prabhupāda was physically present before us?”

Not to disappoint the inquirer too much, I will say, “It was a most wonderful experience, never to be forgotten.” However, at the same time I will also often express with regret my dissatisfaction in my lack



of understanding the full extent of your greatness at that time, or what you would come to accomplish over a significant period in the future.

\* \* \*

If only I could turn the clock back. Now, knowing a little more about you, I am certain my attitude and service mood would have been so different. Little did I know that your appearance and accomplishments in this world were even predicted by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself.

Recently I came across an article by a devotee which helped me further understand your greatness. It was full of predictions highlighting your unique position and accomplishments in this world, containing quotations not only from *śāstra* but also from great personalities within our line of disciplic succession, as well as from prominent devotees in other *sampradāyas*.

This being the year when we are celebrating fiftieth anniversary of ISKCON, my glorification of you on your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration will be supported and summed up by the following reassuring statements:

His Holiness Viśveśa Tirtha, the *pīṭhādi-pati* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Maṭha in Udupi, glorifies you in this way:

Of all people, the devotee of the Supreme Lord is the greatest. And in order to become a devotee, one does not need to be born in any specific type of class or caste or nation. Devotion to Kṛṣṇa was limited only to India, but Swami Prabhupāda took this devotion out of India and distributed it to anyone and everyone all over the world. That's why today we can see that people from all over the world are accepting devotional service and becoming devotees of Kṛṣṇa. In this way, they are becoming the best of humans.

In a similar vein, in 1976 after viewing one of your books and witnessing the preaching of some of your young disciples, a South Indian guru of the Rāmānuja-*sampradāya* remarked about you: "This person is the *summum bonum* of all *ācāryas*."

Thus it is the foremost duty of any sincere disciple and follower of Śrīla Prabhupāda to emphasize his unique and distinct position as the *viśva-ācārya*, the world *ācārya*, the Jagat Guru, a position awarded by his accomplishments and not merely by a self-given title. He is the actual *sampradāya-ācārya*, to be surrendered to and fully served by all Vaiṣṇavas and all preachers and preceptors in the future.

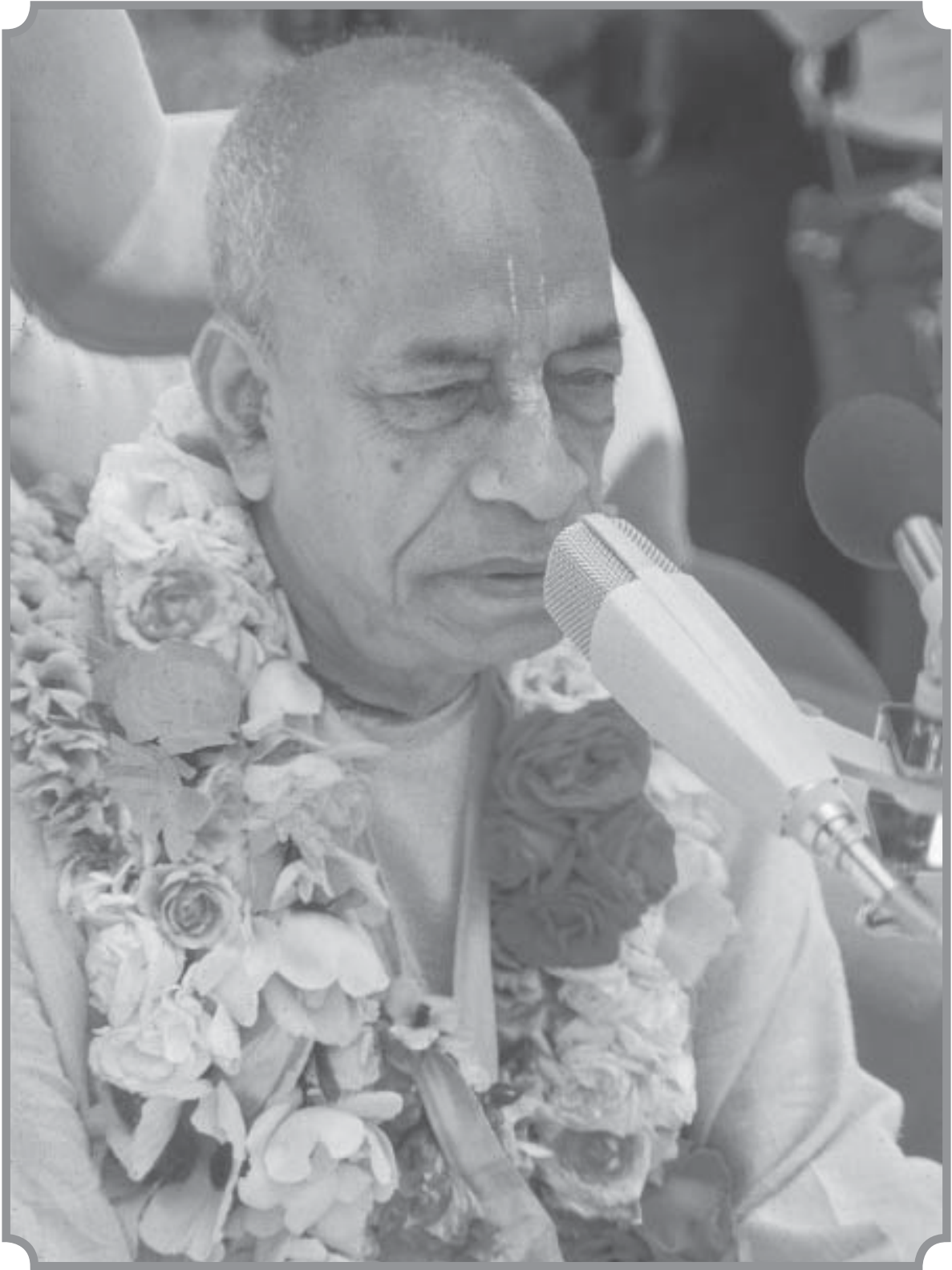
### Predictions from the Revealed Śāstras and Realized Ācāryas

Lord Jagannātha, the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari Himself, spoke these attractive words for the welfare of all: "The *mlecchas* who are born from mixed countries ruled by Kaśyapa's descendants [demons] and the *sūdras* will become *brāhmaṇas* by initiation. They will wear *śikhās* and *brāhmaṇa* threads and will become well versed in the *Vedas*' uncontaminated fruit [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*]. They will worship Me by the *yajña* prescribed by the Lord of Lords, the protector of Śacī Devī, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. [*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, Pratisarga*, chapter 20, verses 71–73]

Gaṅgā Devī said to Kṛṣṇa: "O Lord, we can see that Your pastimes are about to end, and people are becoming more and more materialistic. You have been very merciful to us. After You leave, however, all the sinful people of Kali-yuga will bathe in our waters, and we will become overwhelmed with sinful reactions."

Smiling, the Lord replied, "Be patient. After five thousand years My *mantra-upāsaka* [worshiper of the holy name] will appear in this world and spread the chanting of My holy name everywhere. Not only in Bhārata-varṣa but all over the world people will chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. By this chanting the whole world will become *eka-varṇa*, of one designation, namely, *hari-bhaktas*, devotees of Lord Hari. And because the devotees of Lord Hari are so pure, anyone who contacts them will become purified from sinful reactions. These pure devotees will visit Bhārata-varṣa and purify





you of sinful reactions by bathing in your sacred waters. This period of worldwide chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa will continue for ten thousand years.” [*Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* 4.129.49–59]

Forty-six years before the beginning of Kali Yuga, Viṣṇucitta, one of the twelve great Vaiṣṇava saints of the Śrī Rāmānuja-sampradāya, predicted, “There will come a race that will tread the earth with raised hands and vertical *tilaka* on their foreheads, who will chant the names of Hari; this will destroy the influence of Kali.” (*Divya-prabandha* 1.10).

Furthermore, Nāmmālvār (3102 BC), another one of the twelve great Vaiṣṇava saints of the Śrī Rāmānuja-sampradāya, proclaimed, “Victory! Victory! Victory! I behold something wonderful: all the inauspiciousness of the living entities is destroyed, no one is going to hell, Yamarāja has no more work to do, and the effects of Kali-yuga have ceased to exist. This is because all over the world an increasing number of Lord Viṣṇu’s devotees are singing His names while dancing and playing musical instruments.” (*Divya-prabandha, Tiruvaymoli* 5.2.1)

Śrīpāda Rāmānuja predicted, “The pure devotion to Śrī Hari devoid of *karma* and *jñāna* will grow and grow like a banyan tree covering the whole world, teaching everyone who takes shelter.” (*Prapannāmṛta-tarpaṇa*)

Śrīpāda Madhvācārya predicted, “The real knowledge of the difference between the *jīva* and Śrī Hari and knowledge of the service of Śrī Hari will spread all over the world very shortly.” (*Anu Madhva Vijaya*)

In the *Bhāgavata Māhātmyā* (in the *Uttara-kāṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa*) Bhakti personified says to Nārada Muni: *idaṁ sthānam parityajya videśam gamyate mayā*. “I will leave this country [India] and go abroad.

\* \* \*

Prediction by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu: In *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala*, by Śrīla Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, Lord Caitanya Himself predicts the appearance of a great *senāpati-bhakta* (a general leading the army of devotees) who would preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world:

*ebe nāma saṅkīrtana tīkṣṇa khaḍga laiṅyā  
antara asura jūvera phelibe katiṅyā*

*yādi pāpi cadi dharma dūre deśe yayā  
mora senāpati-bhakta yāibe tathāya*

“Taking the sharp sword of *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, the congregational chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, 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 religious principles, go to some far-off country, then my *senāpati-bhakta* will come at that time to give them Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

Prediction by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura:

Śrīman Mahāprabhu did not descend with His associates to deliver a certain number of human beings in the land of India, but rather His purpose was to deliver and uplift all living beings in all countries of the world by preaching the eternal religion of all souls. There are many kinds of religion in the world, and among all of them the highest development of religion is the congregational chanting of the Supreme Lord’s Divine Names. Of this there is no doubt. Alas! When will that day come when all greatly fortunate souls in countries such as England, France, Russia, and America will take up banners, kettledrums, *mṛdaṅgas*, and *karatālas* and thus cause the ecstatic waves of Hari Nāma Kīrtan and the singing of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s holy name to rise in the streets of their towns and cities? Oh when will that day come when pure and transcendental Kṛṣṇa-prema (love of God) will be the only religion of all souls, and all tiny sectarian religions will meet in the

unlimited and universal religion of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, as rivers merge into the great ocean? Oh when will that day come?" (*Sajjana-toṣaṇī*, written in the 1880s).

It was certainly none other than you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who fulfilled all these predictions of the scriptures and the *ācāryas* by spreading the teachings of the *Vedas* throughout the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is now clear to me that you are a Vaiṣṇava of the highest order, with the power to create *bhakti* where none existed before. You are an *ācārya* who both carried the age-old message of the *paramparā* and intelligently applied it to the present-day world. In this you are unique, even among Vaiṣṇavas.

I am very grateful to be able to assist you in whatever small way in this great mission of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Please continue to shower your merciful glance upon me and reveal to me the full extent of your mercy.

*Your unworthy servant,*

Dhīraśānta dāsa Goswami

## Gaṇapati Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale  
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn̄ iti nāmīne*

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

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

It is with some trepidation that I submit to you this report. Your international Māyāpur project, meant to be the beacon of solidarity for your followers, this year met with major challenges. The devotee in charge of collections for the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium had to be replaced, and the management of the entire project was thoroughly overhauled. If the TOVP is to actually be the *adbhuta-mandira* predicted by Lord Nityānanda and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, if it is to be the instrument of the flood of love of God over the whole world, it must then be a spiritual edifice. A spiritual building must have an extraordinary foundation—spiritual purity. Only the force of purity can sustain a spiritual building.

It is naturally expected that many obstacles would arise to impede its manifestation. Indeed, in 1977 after the Ananta Śeṣa Deity was established and then stolen from the temple site, you ominously predicted that difficulties would be forthcoming. These obstacles would reasonably attack the building's foundation, as without a sturdy foundation, surface embellishment would only act to burden the structure.

The TOVP is the symbol of all the selfless service your followers have been inspired to perform over several decades, by your example. It is they who, by your grace and that of the previous *ācāryas*, will be instrumental in disseminating Kṛṣṇa-*prema*. It is to be expected, therefore, that in order for the temple to

reach completion we will experience a painstaking purification from the top down to the bottom. Hopefully, these recent events are a demonstration of that process. And hopefully, that process is extending down to my lowly self.

Just before the auspicious advent of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the condition of Bengal and Bhārata was lamentable. Vaiṣṇavas were withdrawn and forlorn, almost hopeless, being bereft of the Lord’s association. Today, we are in a similar condition. The personality of Kali has characteristically infiltrated our Vaiṣṇava society, sapping our enthusiasm and energy by internal conflict, particularly between conservative and liberal factions. In place of love and trust, prejudices of all sorts have reared their ugly heads. Please bestow upon us your harmonizing and uplifting glance and, if need be, your purifying slap.

*Your downtrodden servant,*

Gaṇapati Swami

## Janānanda Dāsa Goswami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my obeisances in the divine dust of your lotus feet.

Fifty years have passed since that day in July 1966 when you declared, “We shall call our society ISKCON.” A few days later, on July 13<sup>th</sup>, you incorporated the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Besides a few well-wishers, who wondered what need there was of a legal society, the rest of the world was oblivious to the significance of this event.

Around you, a heat wave in the eastern United States was wiping out hundreds of Americans. Another heat wave—the fever of greed—was killing thousands as the Vietnam War heated up. Russia and China were issuing heavy threats despite efforts to negotiate peace by Indira Gandhi and Harold Wilson. Not by chance were the Beatles in India for the first time. Who would have thought that a few years later they would be so instrumental in spreading your mission?

All these events and others indicated that Kṛṣṇa was preparing the way for the imperceptible awakening of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The greatest revolution in history was about to take place, led by the greatest general of all times. Without a doubt you are the *senāpati-bhakta*, the chief field commander in Lord Gaurāṅga’s *saṅkīrtana* army. You once said, “As Lord Rāma crossed the ocean and brought back Lakṣmī, so did I. And as Lord Rāma was assisted by an army of monkeys, so was I.”

The rest of the world, however, cared or knew nothing of an Indian Swami founding his “international” society in the backwaters of New York City. What relevance had it for them? I for one was completely oblivious to the event. As I think back, exactly at that time (July 1966) I (made in England) was enwrapped in another world, for England was on its way to winning the World (Soccer) Cup. That was a highlight

of my illusory desires. I had not a single iota of consciousness beyond the immediate dream around me.

In 1971, after years of experimentation in sensual pursuits, I was drowning, deep in the pit of ignorance and moments away from falling into the abyss of drug addiction. In the depths of darkness I visited my “friends” —junkies, drug addicts. What was I to do? “Join us and turn off.” I looked for some shelter, some guidance. A pile of rejected magazines sat in the corner of the drug den. The subject matter is too vulgar to mention, but something told me to delve into the pile. Then, at the bottom of the pile, almost hidden, *Back to Godhead* manifests. For hours I remained glued to these unexpected mysterious gems. At the time I had no idea of your greatness or even perceived your presence behind it. Later I realized this glory of yours: you always put Kṛṣṇa, guru, and others first.

Unbeknownst to me, you had reached out your merciful hand to whoever wished to take it, even in the darkest regions of ignorance. There is no discrimination in you, Śrīla Prabhupāda—like the sun, you shine for all. Kṛṣṇa reciprocates according to our surrender, but you, even if someone does not reciprocate, still shower your mercy on this dark world.

A Vaiṣṇava is therefore described as being *para-duḥkha-duḥkhī*, very much aggrieved by the sufferings of others. As such, a Vaiṣṇava engages in activities for the real welfare of human society. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 9.21.12, purport]

\* \* \*

*gaurāṅgera saṅgi-gaṇe, nitya-siddha kari' māne,  
se yāya vrajendra-suta pāśa*

One who executes Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mission must be considered eternally liberated. He is a transcendental person and does not belong to this material world. Such a devotee, engaging in the deliverance of the total population, is as magnanimous as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself. [from *Prārthanā*, by Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, as cited by Śrīla Prabhupāda in his purport to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 15.163]

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*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā  
caḥsur 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.

What is that darkness which we are all in? Is it that we lack material education, or is it that we do not know how to enjoy in this world or that we are uncivilized in the eyes of modern society? No! You made it quite clear that the darkness is spiritual ignorance, *māyā*, forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa and our own identity as His servants. Your mission: to cut through the ignorance, which is the only real disease in the world. As an expert physician cuts out a cancerous tumor, you cut out the cancerous tumor of material attachment by covering the world with your ISKCON movement—an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When Kṛṣṇa appeared, many misunderstood Him and related to Him unfavorably or offensively. Similarly, we may misunderstand your movement, try to divert it, or commit offenses within it, but because it is Lord Caitanya’s movement, manifest through you, it will go forward nonetheless. As Kṛṣṇa achieved His purpose despite opposition from the material forces, so will you despite the likes of myself.

In 1972 you said to Guru Dāsa Prabhu that this movement would go down in history as having “saved the world in its darkest hour.” We are only just beginning to see the fruition of this statement. One born



in darkness does not know what is light. It is sometimes blinding to bear the power of your message.

In early 1966, as you sat alone in an almost bare office, which was your residence on New York's West 72nd Street, you formulated the groundwork for the incorporation of this great movement. Your thoughts focused on how to save society in its darkest hour and fulfill your spiritual master's order.

\* \* \*

It is 6 March 1966:

According to Mayapur Panjika today is Adhivas day of Gour Purnima. Devotees at Vrindaban and Nabadwipa are enjoying the celebration. I am here alone without any devotee companion. But I have come here to serve the Lord and not for personal happiness. I am prepared to live in hell even if I am able to serve the Lord. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu wanted that His mission should be propagated all over the world and that is my objective. I do not mind the inconvenience personally felt.

You described our reality—our beloved England—as hell. You even described London, the greatest city in the world (to Englishmen), as hell on several occasions.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Any questions? . . .

**Kṛṣṇāveśa Dāsī:** Does Kṛṣṇa speak the *Bhagavad-gītā* in the hellish planets? . . .

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** It is hellish planet. [laughter] You are not thinking it is hellish? This is hellish planet. What do you mean by hellish planet? Especially this London, [laughter] always dark and moist, and what do you want more, hellish? [laughter] You have to close your door. You cannot go out. Then? Then go to the mine and subway. That is hellish.

[Class on *Bhagavad-gītā* 7.3, 11 March 1975, London]

Many decades have passed by, and much dirty water has passed under the bridge. I wish it had passed for good. So much time spent in wrangling over whether others are right or wrong. But is this how we should spend our time? There is so much to do in pushing forward your mission, as the world around us is rolling along its hell-bent course. I have hope that Kṛṣṇa will correct us if need be, providing we are sincere. In all honesty, however, in my case this is the problem. I understand from your Guru Mahārāja's statements that first we should look at ourselves:

Look within. Amend yourself, rather than pry into the frailties of others.

In this world of Maya, averse to the Lord, full of trials and tribulations, only patience, humility, and respect for others are our friends for Hari-bhajana.

The Lord, Gaurasundara, puts His devotees in various difficulties and associations to test their patience and strength of mind. Success depends on their good fortune.

When faults in others misguide and delude you—have patience, introspect, find faults in yourself. Know that others cannot harm you unless you harm yourself.

When I look at myself today, I still see a self-centered, duplicitous character failing to embrace your lotus feet, which shine more than ever. Compromising to satisfy others, hiding my stoollike desires, parading as if some kind of spiritual person, envious of others, failing to take advantage of association (especially yours in the form of your books), inattentive in *japa*, not giving the message to others, miserly, greedy, lusty. The cancerous tumor, which you cut out, seems malignant still. It seems I have no good quality.

If there is any good in my existence, it is solely due to your mercy. Only by your mercy do I remain in your movement. I came entirely by your mercy and am maintained by it. You are the personification of tolerance.

In your last few days you ardently appealed to your beloved godbrothers:

All over the world there is a beautiful field to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I didn't care whether I would be successful or not. People are willing to take. They are all taking also. If we preach together, the saying of Mahāprabhu, *pr̥thivīte . . .*, will come true. We have everything. Spread the holy name and distribute *prasādam*. There is a beautiful field. In Africa, in Russia, everywhere they're accepting.

You so much wanted cooperation—united forces against the illusory energy.

It is 2016, and all around us the fever of material ignorance still blazes; the anomalies of human society continue to captivate the illusioned minds of the aimless citizens. Overcome by false ego and pride, totally unaware of the solution to their problems, fools try to adjust the world. Their “solutions” simply cause more problems. They have no real idea of where they're going. Around 1975 I remember seeing you sitting in Heathrow Airport with tears streaming down your eyes as you looked at the aimless flow of impassioned *jīvas* rushing to hell. Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have shown the clear way through the bewildering jungle of this human life in Kali-yuga.

Who knew then or even knows now who you are? The greatest *ācārya* of the times, the *mantra-upāsaka*, the great soul who, in the words of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, would soon appear to spread Lord Caitanya's message all over the world—His *senāpati-bhakta*.

Fifty years have passed since that fateful occasion on July 13<sup>th</sup>, and almost forty years since you removed your physical presence from our sight. Still you remain present as much as ever. Your mercy shines forth in your movement, association, books, and instructions, lighting up the darkness of this world. The day will come when your glories will be recognized and your praises sung all over the planet. Please chastise me in whatever way you feel fit to reform this egotistical renegade, so that I may be engaged by you as an instrument in your mission forever.

*Your lowly servant*

Janānanda dāsa Goswami

## Kadamba Kānana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

### Revolution

In your Preface to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, included in every volume, you cite this verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.11):

*tad-vāg-visargo janatāgha-viplavo  
yasmin prati-ślokaṁ abaddhavaty api*

*nāmāny anantasya yaśo 'ṛikitāni yat  
śṛṇvanti gāyanti grṇanti sādhaḥ*

“On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, forms, pastimes, etc., of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world’s misdirected civilization. Such transcendental literatures, even though imperfectly composed, are heard, sung, and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest.”

Some have pointed out that this verse describes your mission, and that in fact your coming to the West is predicted in the *Bhāgavatam*. They present this verse as evidence that you are a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*, a personality especially empowered by the Lord to accomplish an exceptional mission. I first heard this explanation from Jagadīśa Prabhū around 1980, and I would say that the evidence is convincing. You brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness from East to West, carrying your translation of the *Bhāgavatam*’s First Canto across the ocean on the *Jaladuta*, knowing that the *Bhāgavatam* is the pre-eminent book for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness because it directly describes the nature and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa.

Once, while riding in a car in Detroit, you noticed a billboard with an advertisement for a paint company. On the billboard was a picture showing a paint can pouring its contents over the globe, with the line “Cover the earth.” You commented, “Yes, this is Lord Caitanya’s movement.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, you started a worldwide spiritual revolution.

### Expectations

In the world of crows a *paramahansa* appeared. You offered men of the crow category a process by which they could become swans. Simply glorify the Lord and chant His holy name and serve the Vaiṣṇavas. How much have I changed? Have I become a swan, or am I a crow who has merely painted its feathers white? It doesn’t matter: even those who have motivations other than pure *bhakti* become purified.

“Do as I do,” you said. *Sato vṛtteḥ*: follow in the footsteps of the saintly persons and gradually become one of them. It’s not that some are successful and others fail. Everyone who takes to this process makes spiritual advancement. Everyone is a success. As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *nehābhikrama-nāśo 'sti pratyavāyo na vidyate*. “There is no question of loss or diminution in this process.” Prabhupāda, you brought the *saṅkīrtana* movement to the West, and now it is transforming whatever it touches, in all directions. We will surely change, even beyond our expectations!

But are we living up to your expectations?

You gave us the perfect example of preaching extensively, following Lord Caitanya’s instruction: *yāre dekha, tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa-upadeśa*. “Whomever you meet, instruct them about Kṛṣṇa.” And then for all who were ready to hear, you thoroughly established *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*, “Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

You wanted to achieve many things. You wanted to establish a spiritual city in Śrīdhām Māyāpur with the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium at its core, and at the same time you wanted to increase book production and distribution all over the world. You wanted high standards of Deity worship maintained in all ISKCON temples, and you also wanted self-sufficient farms centered on simple devotional life and cow protection. You introduced so many annual festivals, such as Ratha-yātrā, Janmāṣṭamī, and Gaurā-pūrṇimā. Hundreds of temples have been established worldwide, and thousands of devotees have been initiated. There are opportunities for everyone to engage in devotional service, all over the planet.

You wanted us to be pure, unalloyed devotees, Śrīla Prabhupāda. But if not that, then at least *madhyama-adhikārīs*, who may not have full realization of Kṛṣṇa but who dedicate themselves with strong faith and who preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. “You must know these books as a lawyer knows his lawbooks,” you instructed. But you wanted us to strive for the highest level, about which we sing every day in the *Gurv-aṣṭaka*: *romāñca-kampāśru-taraṅga-bhājo*. When will the hairs on our bodies stand on end and tears flow from our eyes? When will such love for Kṛṣṇa awaken in our hearts?



You also told us to boil the milk and to work on improving the quality of the spiritual life of the individual members of this movement. With all support and guidance, we must ultimately do that ourselves.

### From 50th to 500th Anniversary

This year ISKCON is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, its Golden Jubilee. A lot has been done, a lot has been achieved; I think you will certainly be pleased. On the other hand, a lot is still to be accomplished—the high court judges don't wear *tilaka* yet! If you were physically present, you would surely push everyone beyond their limits. The fiftieth anniversary is not a time to rest on our laurels. Since ISKCON has endured and flourished for fifty years, however, we can safely conclude that it has passed its infant stage and is here to stay for the long term.

What will ISKCON be like five hundred years from now? Will it be a society matured with the wisdom of the centuries, deeply embodying Vaiṣṇava principles and loving dealings among its members because love of God includes love for all created beings? By then how great will this movement's impact be in the world? Will we witness the fulfillment of the predictions found in the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa*, which describes the 10,000-year golden age in a discussion between Kṛṣṇa and Gaṅgā? The *Purāṇa* says *eka-varṇa hari-bhakta*, that there will be one *varṇa*, one class of human beings, devotees of the Lord, transcendental personalities beyond *varṇāśrama*! Will there be *saṅkīrtana* on every street corner? Will people roll on the ground in ecstasy? What miracles will Lord Caitanya's movement bring to the world?

Will mass *prasādam* distribution programs be feeding hundreds of millions daily? Will that day come to pass? Will governments be Kṛṣṇa conscious? Will we have *rāma-rājya*, government rule like that at the time of Lord Rāmacandra? In Dvārakā, when a *brāhmaṇa*'s son died at birth, the *brāhmaṇa* went to King Ugrasena and complained that it was his fault for violating religious principles! Will the leaders of society centuries hence be held to account like this? Will the present Kali-yuga civilization based on *ugra-karma*, horrible work meant to destroy the world, cease to exist? Instead of nuts and bolts, will people produce fruits, grains, and milk in abundance? What will ISKCON and the world look like five hundred years from now?

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* you write that since ISKCON is a branch of the Caitanya tree, it can produce many fruits of love of God. Such fruits will manifest in the hearts of the devotees. The onus is on us to make such fruits appear in our own lives by taking full advantage of the ISKCON branch, and then in turn to make sure that conditions are right for many such fruits to appear in ISKCON in the future, just as you filled ISKCON with transcendental gifts. I can only imagine how ISKCON will flourish in the future, but I know that our actions today will contribute to that.

I know one thing for sure, Śrīla Prabhupāda: in the ISKCON five hundred years from now you, will still be in the center of the lives of the devotees, not only because they will worship you as the founder-*ācārya* of the society but more importantly because your glories will touch the hearts of the devotees generation after generation.

I am not a great man, but I have great teachers, and through their guidance I hope to make some contribution in your service.

Please allow me to be your servant,

Kadamba Kānana Swami

# Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Goswami

*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*

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet, dust that will perpetually uplift the world through your Bhaktivedanta purports.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, at this year’s ISKCON Leadership Saṅga (ILS)—which was an impressive kick-off to the year-long series of events celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of your incorporating ISKCON—we learned many things about how your movement has progressed since you incorporated it in 1966. We especially learned of the increased numbers of devotees and centers that distribute throughout the world the holy names of Kṛṣṇa, knowledge of Kṛṣṇa’s absolute nature and transcendental pastimes in the form of your books, and, of course, Kṛṣṇa’s *prasāda*, the remnants of food offered to Him in devotional service.

When you departed in 1977, there were 108 temples and other projects distributing Kṛṣṇa consciousness on six continents. Now there are more than 600. Representing those centers, 1,200 leaders gathered in Māyāpur to attend seminars and plenary sessions to discuss how better to serve your mission. It was inspiring just to see that many leaders gathered together and to witness their sincere efforts to learn how to improve in all aspects of organizing, maintaining, and expanding your movement.

Finally, at the last plenary session, a survey was taken to find out how many of the leaders were reading your books. Of the 1,200 registered leaders, 700 attended that last plenary session. Of those 700, only 250 filled out the survey forms. Those 250 devotees had been in devotional service for an average of 19 years. The results of the survey showed that the average number of times the 250 leaders had read the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* was 4; the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 1.8; *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, 0.9. I couldn’t help but wonder what those numbers would have been had all 1,200 attendees filled out the forms.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in 1974, during ISKCON San Francisco’s Ratha-yātrā festival, I was among the book distributors who were privileged to meet you in your *darśana* room. Your first words to us were “Are you reading my books?” You went on to stress that you are writing your books for us to read, not just to distribute. Needless to say, that instruction, coming as it did directly from your mouth to our ears, was seared into my heart.

As our founder-*ācārya*, you taught us by example how important it is to read your books. For example, later that same year, on October 1<sup>st</sup>, you wrote this to Haṁsadūta:

We read the scriptures again and again, and it is still fresh. When there is time, I go on reading my own books.

You obviously saw a trend, Śrīla Prabhupāda. As our efforts intensify to increase the numbers of books published and distributed, devotees made, and preaching centers opened, the general tendency is for our own reading of your books to decline.

During the forty-four years I’ve been reading your books, I’ve witnessed leaders empowered by you to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness gradually reduce their reading of your books as their managerial duties intensified. And I’ve even seen leaders fall away from Kṛṣṇa consciousness when their reading finally stopped, thus fulfilling your own prophecy:

All the devotees connected with the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement must read all the books that have been translated (the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, and others); otherwise, after some time, they will simply eat, sleep, and fall down from their position. Thus they will miss the opportunity to attain an eternal, blissful life of transcendental pleasure. [*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 25.278, purport]

How important, then, are the instructions found in your purports to the successful execution of our devotional service? How essential is it that we hear submissively and sufficiently to learn how to deal with the inevitable problems that arise as we attempt to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness? The fact is that we can't know how to think, feel, will, or act properly in Kṛṣṇa consciousness without hearing and applying the merciful guidance you freely give in your Bhaktivedanta purports.

I propose that of all the methods we as leaders employ to solve the inevitable problems—individual and collective—that naturally arise as your movement expands, the most effective method is to systematically read out loud, either alone or with others, your purports, especially to those in the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

But doesn't the morning program, hearing one verse a day along with one of your purports, satisfy the prerequisite of regularly reading your books?

I submit that your strong statement to us that day in San Francisco, and the many others you made after that day to the same effect, were clearly meant to inspire us to read your books outside of the morning program as well.

As I write this offering, tensions among devotees in different parts of your movement have flared up, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as they did even in your physical presence. This can only mean that there is an ongoing and crying need for all the leaders of your movement not only to read your books themselves but also to stress the reading of your books and to read them with the devotees under their care.

Here are some samples of the profound guidance you give us in your books in this regard, guidance that if followed sincerely and carefully will greatly help mitigate whatever obstacles we confront daily in the heat of our busy devotional lives.

It is especially mentioned here that one should be very inquisitive to hear with open ears from the authorized source of the bona fide spiritual master. How is one to receive? One should receive the transcendental message by aural reception. The word *karṇa-randhraiḥ* means “through the holes of the ears.” The favor of the spiritual master is not received through any other part of the body but the ears. [*Bhāgavatam* 3.22.7, purport]

One should be very careful to receive the message from the spiritual master through the ears and execute it faithfully. That will make one's life successful. [*Bhāgavatam* 3.22.7 purport]

To hear and explain [the revealed scriptures] is more important than reading them. One can assimilate the knowledge of the revealed scriptures only by hearing and explaining. [*Bhāgavatam* 1.1.6, purport]

And you further stress how to judge whether the hearing is being done properly by measuring its effect:

A devotee should always see that his Vaiṣṇava qualities increase with the advancement of his Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A devotee should be blameless because any offense by the devotee is a scar on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The devotee's duty is to be always conscious in his dealings with others, especially with another devotee of the Lord. [*Bhāgavatam* 3.16.5, purport]

Herein lies the secret to improving our dealings with one another and, by the cooperative spirit that results from such amicable dealings, to solve seemingly intractable problems.

Over the past two years, Śrīla Prabhupāda, since I made the vow to hear your books systematically out loud rather than read them silently, I've found renewed spiritual strength and enthusiasm. And whenever devotees join me, they tell me that they relish the same phenomenon.

Regarding leadership, in regard to Svāyambhuva Manu, you write:

It is especially mentioned here, *viṣṇoh kurvato bruvataḥ kathāḥ*. When he talked, he talked only of Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu, the Personality of Godhead. . . . For the entire duration of his life—4,320,000 x 71 years —Manu engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness by chanting, hearing, talking about, and meditating upon Kṛṣṇa. Therefore his life was not wasted, nor did it become stale. [*Bhāgavatam* 3.22.35, purport]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when you lived among us you showed us how not to waste valuable time, even while managing complex situations, for in all circumstances you taught us by example how to manage even the most difficult of affairs by constantly referring to examples of personalities and events chronicled in your books.

Students are generally supposed to rise early in the morning. They do not usually arise of their own accord, however, but only when there is a bell sounded in the temple or other spiritual institution. By the order of the spiritual master they immediately rise, and after finishing their morning duties they sit down to study the *Vedas* or chant Vedic mantras. Similarly, everyone is sleeping in the darkness of Kali-yuga, but when there is a great *ācārya*, by his calling only, everyone takes to the study of the *Vedas* to acquire actual knowledge. [*Kṛṣṇa Book 20: Description of Autumn*]

You often said that if our minds are disturbed while chanting *japa* we should chant louder. Applying the same principle, I've found that since I made the vow to read your books out loud, my mind stays more absorbed and also more easily finds solutions as I counsel devotees.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most sacred day of your appearance, in the special year in which we are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of your incorporating your ISKCON, I renew my vow to continue to read out loud your books every day, at least 41 pages, to myself and to whomever I'm with, for the rest of my life.

Please give me the strength to fulfill this vow and to continue to assist you in spreading Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement.

*Your eternal son and servant,*

Keśava Bhārati Dāsa Goswami

## Krishna Dās Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace, who conquered death by dedicating your whole life in the service of the Lord.

The spiritual master is present in many forms, even when he may no longer be physically present on the earth. The disciple can serve the spiritual master's *vapu* when the spiritual master is on the earth, and then the disciple can serve his *vāṇī* when he leaves to enter the divine pastimes of the ever-joyful Lord. The *vapu* is the spiritual master's personal presence, and the *vāṇī* is his mission. The spiritual master always guides his genuine disciples even when he is no longer present in this world. So how does the spiritual master come to us when he is no longer on the planet?

During his last days on earth, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura said that the spiritual master is always with the disciple in a variety of forms. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta acknowledged the support from these various forms of Śrī Gurudeva. He had lost his spiritual master and his father, two of his most prominent spiritual guides, within one year of each other, in 1914 and 1915. Although devastated after their departure, he had an extraordinary experience. He felt, "How shall I preach to the world the pure message of Śrī Caitanya and establish the heart's desire of my gurus? I have no support of people, no support of wealth, and I do not have any learning or intelligence that can attract the common people." This feeling of void was answered by a visionary dream in which Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta saw the Pañca-tattva and their *saṅkīrtana* associates, along with Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Gaura Kīśora Dāsa Bābājī, Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī, and others in the disciplic succession—all having come before him to give assurance. They said:

Don't you worry at all. With supreme enthusiasm preach the conclusion of pure devotion, and in intense earnestness chant the glories of the name, abode, form, attributes, associates, and pastimes of the Godhead at various places. All of us will help you. There is no need to worry. The support of unlimited people, countless wealth, and boundless learning await the blessing of being engaged in the service of your preaching. They will be received when they are necessary. No type of worldly hindrance or danger will be able to make any obstruction for this great work of yours. We are always with you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, fifty-one years ago you made the spiritually adventurous journey of leaving your beloved Vṛndāvana to travel by ship to the USA. In a short period of time you achieved impossible transcendental success and offered solace to millions of souls. And although you left the planet many years ago, I have always felt guided and protected by you.

You are present with us via the transcendental literature you so painstakingly translated, such as the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. What would we do without your Bhaktivedanta purports?

You are present in our chanting of the holy name. Who would have thought the "Hare Krishna chant" would actually spread throughout the whole world, to every town and village? Lord Caitanya and Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura predicted this, but before you preached all over the world, who believed that it would actually happen? When we chant the Lord's holy name, we remember that it is you who made us aware of it; moreover, you made us aware of its importance. This is the special mercy of Lord Caitanya, relayed to us by you. *Harer nāma eva kevalam*.

You are present in your faithful disciples. You spent much time with various disciples, training them to lead, training them to understand the deeper levels of the task of bringing neophytes up to full Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is easy to falsely imagine that we understand Kṛṣṇa or devotional service, and it is easy to think that we know how to lead others, as often in these activities there are traps and pitfalls. Without the guidance of advanced devotees, where would we be? Devotees learned to serve Kṛṣṇa by serving you, and now newer devotees are learning to serve Kṛṣṇa by following those you trained. Following in the footsteps.

You are present in the Deities you installed. In the Western world it was never clearly understood that God has a personal form. The major religions in the West are not clear on the matter; even some directly reject the concept of a divine form. Deep commitment to and love for the Lord can happen only when a full image of the Supreme is understood. Therefore, the understanding of and devotion to a Deity form is the steppingstone for understanding the worship of the Lord that broadens into a divine relationship. This mystery would have been beyond us had it not been for you.

You are present in devotee *saṅga*. My godbrothers and godsisters are living proof that Kṛṣṇa consciousness has worked for them and continues to work for them. What if we had been forced to practice devotional service on our own? There would be no support and no visible evidence that the devotional lifestyle can factually work. After all, almost everything in the material world seems to go against the practice of self-surrender to the Supreme by service. It might then seem that the glorious and noble path is only a wonderful ideal, too high for the real mortal world and impractical in this world of hard knocks and selfishness. Seeing firsthand the genuine realization and commitment of my godbrothers and godsisters in our ISKCON is actually your hand lifting us, through each other.

You are present in the worldwide network of ISKCON temples and centers. It is amazing that anywhere one goes on planet earth there is a temple nearby. Who could have imagined that in a few short years such an incredible network of temples could be developed? What does the future have in store? These centers are all individual oases in the dry material desert.

You are present in your recorded lectures and conversations, as well as the recollections of the devotees. Because of modern technology our planet is threatened, but there are also useful aspects to this technology when properly deployed. It is amazing that, even today, thirty-eight years after your departure, I can still see you chanting in Tompkins Square Park or hear you speaking in Nairobi, Kenya. The tone of your voice, the details of the philosophy, the setting—all have not faded like an old flower but remain ever fresh, ever able to uplift.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura said:

It is my Gurudeva who is graciously present in all these different forms. If he is not graciously present in all these different forms, who would then preserve me? Those whom my Gurudeva has made his own are my saviors. The order of the gurus which have in their nature the protecting power of the Divinity are always present in different forms and figures to bestow their mercy on me. All of them are specific manifestations of the Sri Guru who confers spiritual knowledge. . . .  
[*A Ray of Vishnu*, “Final Days”]

As stated at *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.7.36:

*anuvratānām śiṣyāṇām putrāṇām ca dvijottama  
anāpṛṣṭam api brūyur guravo dīna-vatsalāḥ*

“O best among the *brāhmaṇas*, those who are spiritual masters are very kind to the needy. They are always kind to their followers, disciples, and sons, and without being asked by them, the spiritual master describes all that is knowledge.”

The guru lives on for the disciple in his *vāṇī*. This *vāṇī* can be perceived by those who make the simple effort to serve this *vāṇī*.

This grateful servant humbly takes the lotus feet of his beloved spiritual master upon his head.

Krishna Dās Swami



## Kṛṣṇakṣetra Swami

O Master at whose feet all masters sit, O Śrīla Prabhupāda, here is one of your students—by no means a master—bowing at your feet and begging to remain seated there, among my many masters, your followers.

It has been fifty years since you officially established your mission in the form of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. This year we celebrate a half-century of your enduring mission, and I pray to always have a place in your Society for the remainder of my life and beyond.

This year we celebrate your Society’s perdurance, and one aspect of celebration is reflection on successes, but also reflection on challenges, weaknesses, and failures, individual and collective. We do so, always with the aim of reaffirming and better comprehending your vision of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

You often expressed your vision in terms of a “movement,” the “Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.” With your blessings, I wish to reflect on your notion of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, as an appreciation of your vision for the world and as a challenge for us, your followers, to perpetually renew and deepen our comprehension of this vision.

In the Preface to your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, you refer several times to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. In one passage there you write, “Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is genuine, historically authorized, natural and transcendental due to its being based on *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*.” These four qualifications—authenticity, historical grounding, naturalness, and transcendence—outline the features of this movement that you wished to emphasize; and each of these features you locate as originating in the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa as given in the *Bhagavad-gītā* as delivered through a proper teacher-student relationship (“as it is”).

To say that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is “genuine” is to contrast it with other, apparently similar, movements which are in one or more ways lacking in authenticity, hence not facilitating proper training in how to serve the Lord. As you wrote (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.9.17, purport), “Humanity must be trained to engage in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. That is the purpose of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.” We should note that acknowledging that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is genuine does not preclude the possibility that there are other movements of a similar nature which are similarly authentic, or that missions or organizations other than ISKCON might be part of the same Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

To affirm the historical grounding of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is to set aside misperceptions that it is “a new religious movement,” calling attention to its pedigree by virtue of disciplic succession. And in case one might express skepticism about the purity and consistency of the message thus delivered (after all, Kṛṣṇa himself admits in the *Gītā* that the message gets lost in course of time), you point to its “natural” quality: since it is the nature of all beings to serve, and since all beings are part of the Supreme Being, it follows that it is natural for all to serve the Supreme Being. As long as this basic truth is recognized, we can be assured that the essential teaching is on course.

Finally, you point to the “transcendental” nature of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Here you may be referring to its connection to Kṛṣṇa as the transcendent Lord, and by virtue of this connection you are contrasting this movement with so many social, political, or cultural movements, all of which are tethered to worldly motivations, ideas, and ideals. However exalted they may be in their aims, such movements are, at best, limited in their potential to spiritually uplift humanity.

You write optimistically of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement: “It is gradually becoming the most popular movement in the entire world, especially amongst the younger generation.” Just how one could measure such popularity might be a matter of contention; yet your optimism suggests to me that the “movement” aspect of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement may be perceived on many levels, in unexpected places, and by cultural trends that one might not necessarily register as being directly associated with Kṛṣṇa consciousness as we presently understand it.



For me, this raises the question of how to conceive the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in the broadest terms, aligned with and grounded in your and the previous *ācāryas*' teachings, yet truly transcendent in being ever respondent to and fostering solutions to the perceived needs of all kinds of people in the world today. How can we serve and promote the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement *as a movement*, unfettered by self-imposed limitations that accompany the various forms of unhealthy reification that typically creep into missionizing organizations and institutions? The admittedly vague yet dynamic term "spirituality" may be of help in this reflection.

In her essay "Approaches to the Study of Christian Spirituality," Prof. Sandra M. Schneiders defines spirituality as "the experience of conscious involvement in the project of life-integration through self-transcendence toward the horizon of ultimate value one perceives" (Schneiders p. 16 in *Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality*, Arthur Holder, ed., Blackwell, 2005). This is clearly a very broad, inclusive definition, with the advantage that a wide spectrum of people could accept it and see themselves included in it. Understanding spirituality in this way, she notes, allows us to recognize that spirituality is "ontologically prior to its specification by history and theology." The point for us is that, as you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have said about the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, transcendence is an essential feature: as a movement of spirituality, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is meant to be manifest in the world, in history; but as a movement of spirituality, Kṛṣṇa consciousness always resists containment by the world.

What does this mean for members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness? To me it suggests that we keep alert for opportunities to engage with the world in a spirit of service, to help everyone, in whatever position they are in, to become more deeply "consciously involved" in their own "projects of life integration," with respect to whatever they perceive as ultimate value. It means that we remain faithful to our own conviction that Kṛṣṇa, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the sum and substance of ultimate value, but that we can appreciate and honor others' convictions regarding ultimate value as well. It means that we resist the temptations of sectarianism and constantly stretch ourselves to see the Lord's presence in all sincere efforts by people to deepen their spiritual lives. In this spirit we may affirm your aspiration to "respiritualize" (*Path of Perfection*, ch. 1) the whole world through the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, and we may thus position ourselves, individually and collectively, as members of ISKCON, in such ways as we can positively advance the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement throughout all spheres of human society.

My prayer, on this day and in this year of ISKCON's fiftieth anniversary celebration, is that I may be an instrument—an agent—in whatever small way I can, in the advancement of your mission to foster a truly spiritual movement, one that brings all people together in service to the Lord of all, recognizing and celebrating how indeed everyone follows His path in all respects.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Kṛṣṇakṣetra Swami

## Lokanāth Swami

My most beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at the dust of your divine lotus feet on this most auspicious occasion of your 120th Vyāsa-pūjā celebration! It is just remarkable that it coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of ISKCON. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Vāsudeva Ghoṣa, an eternal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, wrote, *yadi gaura nā hoito, tabe ki hoito*: “If Lord Gaura had not appeared, what would have happened?” Similarly, this evokes in my mind a significant thought: “If you had not appeared, Śrīla Prabhupāda, what would have happened?”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared, performed His pastimes, and established *saṅkīrtana* as the dharma for this Age of Kali. He also predicted that the holy name would reach every town and village on the surface of the globe. However, even after more than four hundred years had passed after Mahāprabhu’s appearance, the holy name had not been spread worldwide. There was some chanting taking place in certain parts of Orissa and Bengal, and at Rādhā-kuṇḍa and a few other places. Apart from these sporadic endeavors, the holy name was truly not going anywhere. There was even a thought that Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s prediction might not be fulfilled. Two questions were frequently asked: Who would make this happen? How would this happen?

Then one hundred and twenty years ago, in Calcutta, a phenomenal occurrence took place. The Lord made your appearance possible. In 1922 Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura instructed you to propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the Western world. After a lifetime of preparation, you went to New York in 1965, and exactly fifty years ago you became the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). You tirelessly circled the globe fourteen times, spreading the holy name and propagating Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It was you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who made Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s prediction come true.

*Saṅkīrtanaika-pitarau*: Lord Gaurāṅga and Lord Nityānanda are the founding fathers of the *saṅkīrtana* movement, but it was you who formalized that movement. Lord Caitanya made you *nimitta-mātram*, His instrument in founding the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement fifty years ago. You perfectly executed the will of the Lord. This year marks the Golden Jubilee celebration of ISKCON. It is not a conventional victory celebration but the supreme victory—*param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam*.

I believe that this victory is not commonplace. I recall how it all began: here you were, seventy years old, friendless, and practically penniless, with only your guru’s instruction in your heart. How was it possible that a person with this standing could achieve the victory, opulence, and extraordinary power that are exhibited by ISKCON today? This brings to mind the final verse in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, where Sañjaya declares:

*yatra yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇo yatra pāṁtho dhanur-dharaḥ  
tatra śrīr vijayo bhūtir dhruvā nītir matir mama*

“Wherever there is Kṛṣṇa, the master of all mystics, and wherever there is Arjuna, the supreme archer, there will also certainly be opulence, victory, extraordinary power, and morality. That is my opinion.”

I want to extract *śrīḥ* (opulence), *vijayaḥ* (victory), *bhūtiḥ* (exceptional power), and *nītiḥ* (morality), and delve deeper to illustrate how you are the epitome of these concepts.

*Śrīḥ* is translated as “opulence.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, forty years ago you wrote, “[T]he Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement actually started with only forty rupees, but now it has more than forty crores worth of property, and all this opulence has been achieved within eight or ten years” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.5.47, purport). ISKCON’s assets have grown immensely since then and continue to expand. I also recall you saying that if an Indian person has a servant from the West, that is an indication of the Indian’s opulence and prestige. You had close to five thousand disciples from the West serving you. Your opulence knew no bounds.

Your *vijayaḥ* (victory) is self-evident. Fifty years ago you started with one temple in New York. You informed us that victory meant spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We would “conquer” the West by spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Caitanya Mahāprabhu spread the chanting of the holy names in India and left the task of spreading it all over the world to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda—and ISKCON. Today we have no fewer than six hundred and fifty ISKCON temples, centers, schools, and colleges worldwide. We have distributed five hundred and sixteen million books. One hundred and fifty *padayātrā* teams, with an average of almost seventy devotees each, have walked a staggering two hundred and sixty-thousand

kilometers, visiting fifty-two thousand towns and villages in one hundred and ten countries. More than six thousand festivals are celebrated annually in ISKCON worldwide, and more than one million *prasādam* meals are served daily as part of the Food for Life program. It is estimated that more than nine million people worship at ISKCON temples every year.

You shared with us the maxim that at its height the British Empire was “the empire on which the sun never sets.” After visiting England, you joked that in reality “The sun never rises in England.” In comparison, in the ISKCON Empire our sun is Kṛṣṇa-sūrya, and it truly never sets. Every fifteen minutes the reverberating sound of a conch shell announces the beginning of *maṅgala-ārati* at an ISKCON temple somewhere on this planet. In that sense the warmth and light of our Kṛṣṇa-sūrya is omnipresent—constantly and consistently spreading everywhere and truly never setting.

ISKCON’s *bhūtiḥ* is Kṛṣṇa’s extraordinary power. During the years when the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement was trying to make inroads into the former Soviet Union, it was reported in *The Telegraph*, a Calcutta newspaper, that Semyon Tsvigun, the deputy chief of the KGB under Andropov, had said that the three main threats to the Soviet Union were “pop music, Western culture, and Hare Kṛṣṇa,” and that the KGB perceived the distribution of ISKCON literature as a threat since Lenin had also caused a revolution with the help of the printing press. How could anyone be surprised that a superpower such as the Soviet Union felt threatened by the Hare Kṛṣṇas? If the power of the holy name makes the Age of Kali tremble, what can it not do to Russia? In 1976 a magician visited our Kṛṣṇa-Balarām Mandir and showed you and the devotees his repertoire of tricks. The magician made many objects appear and disappear. After a while you asked the magician: “What about the miseries of life? Can you make these disappear? Birth, death, disease, and old age?” The magician replied submissively, “No, that I cannot do.” At these words the magician sat down and you said, “But I can make these things disappear. That is the real magic.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, this is proof of how you were extraordinarily empowered.

As for *nītiḥ*, morality, you gave your followers four regulative principles: no meat-eating, no illicit sex, no gambling, and no intoxication. There are no better or higher principles of *nītiḥ* than this.

In your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.12.26, you state:

The symptoms of Kali are (1) wine, (2) women, (3) gambling, and (4) slaughterhouses. Wise rulers of all states should take lessons from Mahārāja Parikṣit in how to maintain peace and morality by subduing the upstarts and quarrelsome people who indulge in wine, illicit connection with women, gambling, and meat-eating supplied by regularly maintained slaughterhouses. In this Age of Kali, regular license is issued for maintaining all of these different departments of quarrelsome people. So how can they expect peace and morality in the state?

You put your stamp on these substantial principles of morality. And in your purport to *Bhagavad-gītā* 18.78 you write:

The supreme instruction of morality is stated in the Ninth Chapter, in the thirty-fourth verse: *man-manā bhava mad-bhaktaḥ*. One must become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, and the essence of all religion is to surrender unto Kṛṣṇa (*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*). The instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā* constitute the supreme process of religion and of morality. All other processes may be purifying and may lead to this process, but the last instruction of the *Gītā* is the last word in all morality and religion: surrender unto Kṛṣṇa.

In 1933 Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura dispatched his first group of *sannyāsīs* to the West. In England they were invited to the House of Lords. Upon meeting the British aristocrats, the *sannyāsīs* were asked what it would take to become preachers like them. The *sannyāsīs* responded that they should just follow the four regulative principles. However, when they heard what these principles were, they said that it was impossible. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you made it possible.

Wherever there is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and Your Divine Grace, we will continue to see the attributes of opulence, victory, extraordinary power, and morality manifesting themselves in your ISKCON. You are eternally Caitanya Mahāprabhu's man.

I remain

*Your humble servant,*

Lokanāth Swami

## Mahāvishnu Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda! You were totally fixed in following the order of your Guru Mahārāja, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. His order was to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the English-speaking people and, to facilitate this task, “If you ever get money, print books.” By miraculously accomplishing this seemingly impossible task after traveling to America at age 69, you have paved the way for all of us to go back to Godhead, simply by cooperating to spread the *saṅkīrtana* mission of Lord Caitanya.

During this year, 2016, we will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of your establishing ISKCON for the purpose of fulfilling Lord Caitanya's desire that in every town and village of the world the holy name of Kṛṣṇa would resound. Without a doubt you are directing us in your *vāṇī* form as the captain of the ISKCON ship, which anyone can board to cross over the ocean of birth and death. “You live forever by your divine instructions, and the follower lives with you.” Therefore, during this fiftieth-anniversary-year of ISKCON we aspire only to be your worthy, humble crew-members and somehow or other get millions on board your ship to go back to Godhead.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your special mercy, for the last eight months I have been allowed to travel with the adventurous Harināma Ruci street *saṅkīrtana* party (HR), which has been traveling on its fourth world tour spreading the Holy Names and distributing about 50,000 of your books. The party is made up of your granddisciples, led by His Grace Viṣṇujana Dāsa (Slovakia), and their current team also includes Gaura Karuṇa Dāsa (Czech), Śyāmarasa Dāsa (Croatia) and his wife Maṅgalāvati Devī Dāsī (Ivory Coast), Harināmānanda Dāsa (Australia), and Bhakta Sandipanimuni (UK). When they visit a city, all the local devotees are inspired and enthusiastically swell their numbers. HR also has a popular website on Facebook called “Harinama Ruci.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, since the recent 50th Anniversary Festival celebrating your arrival in Boston in 1965, HR has visited many cities in the USA, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Fiji, New Zealand, Australia, Indonesia,

Malaysia, Philippines, and now Japan. Everywhere local devotees offer support and hospitality because they know that this group is fulfilling your desire for a World Traveling Saṅkīrtana Party. By your mercy, during this 50th Anniversary year of ISKCON, the HR party will perform *harināma saṅkīrtana* in 50 countries!

Śrīla Prabhupāda! There is also more very exciting good news! Everywhere I go I see that despite Kali-yuga's ruthless grip on people's minds and senses, the Holy Names are so powerful that there is a growing natural interactive response among people—they spontaneously tap their feet, clap their hands, and respond to the chanting. Their faces light up, and many dance with us and take books and *prasādam*. This proves that Lord Caitanya's moon is steadily rising and that His statement at *Cc Madhya* 22.107 is the plain truth:

*nitya-siddha kṛṣṇa-prema 'sādhya' kabhu naya  
śravaṇādi-śuddha-citte karaye udaya*

“Pure love for Kṛṣṇa is eternally established in the hearts of the living entities. It is not something to be gained from another source. When the heart is purified by hearing and chanting, this love naturally awakens.”

Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda! I am very fallen and unfit. An old dog like me cannot learn many new tricks. I just bark. So please, somehow or other give me a special chance to please you in the way natural for me. For the sake of all the *jīvas* rotting in the ocean of death, I beg you to please empower me to help make ISKCON more and more successful in reclaiming the fallen souls.

Thank you,

*Your humble servant,*

Mahāviṣṇu Swami

## Nava Yogendra Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories unto you, my eternal spiritual master. You are the savior of the whole world, spreading *sanātana-dharma*, the chanting of the Holy Name of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu's movement, all over the world. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, once again on your Vyāsa-pūjā day I would like to pray at your lotus feet: Please save, save, save humanity at large, because Kali-yuga is showing his real face day by day and widening the boundaries of all his irreligious activities. But Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, through His pure devotees

like yourself, is so merciful in this age that this movement of yours is the only way to get saved from the effects of Kali-yuga and return back home, back to Godhead.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, once in Vṛndāvana a profound stillness prevailed everywhere, and from a distance we could hear the sound of *kīrtana* softly floating through the serene silence of the night. You said, “This is India— wherever you go you can hear the chanting of the holy name.” You kept on speaking about the glory of this land. How fortunate are those who get the human form of life in this holy land. Even the demigods pray to Kṛṣṇa that if they have any piety left then in exchange they desire to take birth in this holy land. But at present this holy land is in a very pathetic state.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are our only hope. You have saved the whole world by giving it this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, and so please save this Bhārata-varṣa, where the atmosphere is so congenial to understanding and performing devotional service.

Please give me strength to follow your instructions strictly, to preach and follow the regulative principles strictly, thus encouraging others to follow this path of *bhakti* (devotional service).

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your causeless mercy you have opened doors for everyone to easily go back home, back to Godhead. Śrīla Prabhupāda, sometimes I feel so weak and unqualified to carry out this task of preaching, and so your mercy is very much needed. Without your mercy nothing is possible. So on this day of your appearance I pray at the dust of your lotus feet: Please give me the strength to carry on your mission with full devotion and enthusiasm.

Your appearance in this world is the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You appeared one day after Janmāṣṭamī, when all devotees were celebrating the appearance day of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Your appearance was the fruit of that devotion, a fruit Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa awarded all His sincere devotees around the world. That is why you spread this Kṛṣṇa conscious movement, which is the real benediction of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya (the *premāvatāra*) to everyone throughout the world.

O savior and master of the most fallen, please save us.

*I remain your most insignificant servant,*

Nava Yogendra Swami

## Pārtha Sārathi Dās Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Presently I am dwelling in the shade of Girirāja Govardhana Hill. By divine arrangement I have been allowed to stay here for some months, meditating on the prayer of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī containing the line *nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam*: “Please grant me a residence at Govardhana Hill.”

It is a great honor and privilege for me to be serving in your personal mission, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. For fifty years your mission has been manifested, and the whole world is benefiting. Our *guru-varga*, or line of *ācāryas*, must be so pleased with your contribution to the *sampradāya*. I humbly pray that I can continue to serve you in any way you deem fit. My ultimate desire is to gain association with you in a personal capacity. In *bhakti*, everything is personal; even the river Yamunā, Govardhana Hill, Rādhā-kuṇḍa, and the various *rāsa-sthalis* are all spiritual personalities. As



soon as we offer them appropriate prayers, they grant us their mercy.

Every day I associate with you by playing your lectures, hoping to pick up some divine instructions and inspiration in my meager attempt at practicing devotional service. Recently I stumbled upon some gems in the limitless ocean of your *hari-kathā*. What follows are excerpts of a conversation you had with Tamāl Krishna Goswami and Hari Śauri Prabhu on 16 February 1977, at Śrīdhām Māyāpur:

All of you [disciples]—you are simply born because the mission [ISKCON] was to be started. Just like in Yadu-vaṁśa Kṛṣṇa ordered all the devotee demigods to “Go and take birth there [on the earth] to help Me.” Similarly . . . you were born in Europe, America, to help this. Otherwise you were devotees in your past lives. I have explained that in my recent writings.

The first of all, *mām eti*: [when a devotee leaves his body he] goes to Kṛṣṇa, where His pastime is going on, and then they are transferred to the original. So all the devotees [are] picked up, and they were placed together where Kṛṣṇa is having His pastimes in [one] of these innumerable universes. . . . So Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes go on—this universe, that universe, that universe, that universe. In some universe He’s present. In all universes [He’s] present. That is called *nitya-līlā*.

So those who are advanced, perfect devotees, first of all they are sent there and then, further trained up, they enter—*mām eti*. Just like after passing the administration examination he’s made [an] assistant of some magistrate, and then gradually he’ll be promoted up to the high-court judge.

**Hari-śauri:** When we were in New York this last summer you said that the spiritual master also has associates who appear along with him to help him in his mission.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. Kṛṣṇa wants His assistants; the spiritual master also requires assistants. Everything is going on under Kṛṣṇa’s direct supervision. *Mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sacarācaram*: [“This material nature, which is one of My energies, is working under My direction.”]

*īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati  
bhrāmayan sarva-bhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā*

[“The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone’s heart, O Arjuna, and is directing the wanderings of all living entities, who are seated as on a machine made of the material energy.”]

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you also wrote several letters with the same theme:

He [Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura] sent to me some good souls like you unsolicited. So I accept you all as assistants or representatives of my Guru Maharaja, Who is still helping me because I am so feeble and unworthy. [Letter to Hayagrīva, 14 January 1970]

He [Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura] has been helping me in this matter by sending so many young boys and girls, otherwise who would help me in this mission while I came here empty handed and without any friend. I can only pray to Kṛṣṇa to take care of you, otherwise I cannot repay your sincere service in my mission. [Letter to Bali-mardana, 22 February 1970]

No doubt my exalted godbrothers and godsisters are in such a category, especially those sincere disciples who have passed the test and after forty years or so are still serving your instructions and mission.

Unfortunately, I am not included in such a special group. But I can pray to you and your sincere followers that one day in the near future I can have an opportunity to be counted among your associates and qualify as an actual disciple of Your Divine Grace.

In my own pathetic and stumbling way I have been trying to serve you for the last 43 years. I want to continue my service in this glorious preaching mission, but I also want to render service to you in the *aparakata* realm. Gradually this desire is becoming more pronounced. Service done here and service done



in *aparakata* Vṛndāvana nourish each other and are in a relation of cause and effect—two sides of the same coin. I am eagerly looking forward to deepening both aspects of service, and humbly pray that you can inspire and guide me accordingly.

*Your unworthy and hopeless servant,*

Pārtha Sārathi Dās Goswami

## Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī Swami

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale  
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

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

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet on this special occasion, the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Your Divine Grace’s appearance. All over the world we are also observing fifty years of ISKCON, ISKCON’s Golden Jubilee.

Today I offer the flowers of my faith to your lotus feet. Once in a letter you wrote:

As Krishna sees that you are working very seriously to bring His other children back to the Spiritual Kingdom, then He will become very pleased and will bestow all blessings upon you. Krishna is never ungrateful for our efforts to serve Him, rest assured. [Letter to Prahādānanda, 29 July 1969]

So, as a *sannyāsī* I am traveling and preaching your message to the best of my ability, with great faith in your words. I have strong faith in your words, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Books are the basis, preaching is the essence, purity is the force, and utility is the principle. I completely depend on you, Śrīla Prabhupāda—on your instructions, your blessings, your love—for my spiritual life.

Looking back at the fifty years of ISKCON’s history, we see that whatever progress has been made is due to your mercy. Now there are more than 600 ISKCON centers around the world. Your books have been published in more than seventy languages and are being distributed all over the world. There are more than seventy thousand initiated devotees worldwide. Preaching in India, Russia, and China is especially increasing.

At *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.30.8 the Lord says to the Pracetās:

*varam vṛṇīdhvam bhadrām vo yūyam me nṛpa-nandanāḥ  
sauhārdenāprthag-dharmās tuṣṭo ’ham sauhṛdena vaḥ*

“My dear sons of the King, I am very much pleased by the friendly relationships among you. All of you are engaged in one occupation—devotional service. I am so pleased with your mutual friendship that I

wish you all good fortune. Now you may ask a benediction of Me.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless your ISKCON leaders so they will follow in the footsteps of the of the Pracetās. In your purport to this verse you write, “Each and every one of the sons of King Prācīnabarhiṣat was an individual soul, but they were united in offering transcendental service to the Lord.” Unity in diversity—this is the ideal you stressed for your society.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the greatest teacher in the world, and also the best friend of all. Please bless me so that I may become completely fixed in the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness by following your instructions strictly.

*Your most unworthy granddisciple,*

Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī Swami

## Rāma Govinda Swami

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

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

Parama-pūjyā Parama-guru Śrīla Prabhupāda,

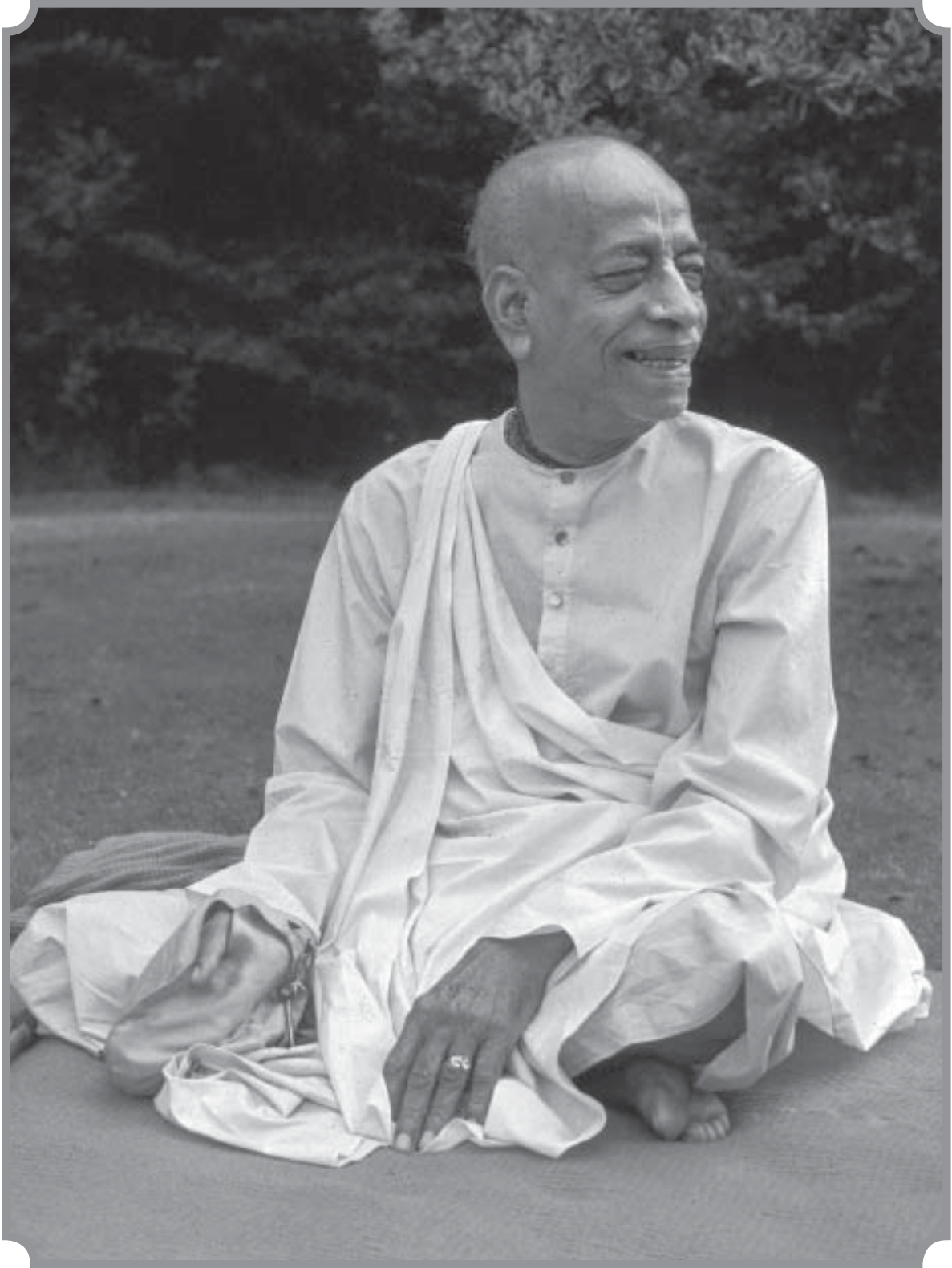
Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

Parama-gurudeva! How can a small insignificant person like me describe the glories of a spiritually elevated personality of your stature?

When I read your purports in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, or *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, I am stunned by the depth of your transcendental knowledge. Sometimes I sincerely wonder, Is it really possible for any mortal to have so much knowledge of so many scriptures—*Upaniṣads* and other Vedic literatures—and at the same time to give references from these Vedic literatures while explaining the subject matter in great depth? The fact is that it is not possible for an ordinary person. But, Śrīla Prabhupāda, Parama-gurudeva, you are not an ordinary person of this material world. You are an *āveśāvātāra* of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Only personalities like you can explain the Vedic literatures in such a simple way that anybody can understand.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your purports are infused with your transcendental energy and your blessings. Therefore anyone who reads your books is attracted to Kṛṣṇa. If they are sincere, they will inquire further about the *jīva*, devotional service, and the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. Before Your Divine Grace, and even now in other *sampradāyas*, devotees thought that *bhakti* (devotional service) is very difficult for the common man, that it is meant only for *brāhmaṇas*, people elevated in spiritual knowledge.

O Parama-gurudeva! Before you went to the West, so many so-called intellectuals and spiritualists traveled from India to the West to propagate so-called Vedic philosophy. They all preached the impersonal



aspect of the Supreme, which they felt could easily be understood by Westerners. They wanted to compromise their preaching to suit the new place and circumstances.

But Your Divine Grace never compromised the genuine principles of *bhakti*, which is based on worship the Supreme Absolute Truth as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, complete with name, form, qualities, and pastimes. In other words, *saguṇopāsanā*. Your Divine Grace taught and proved that the Supreme Lord is a person, and that He is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The entire credit for the spreading of genuine Vaiṣṇava principles and practices, i.e., Kṛṣṇa consciousness, goes to you alone. It is the first time in the history of the world that Kṛṣṇa consciousness, based on strict Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*, has been taken out of India and spread throughout the world.

Now your Society is fifty years old, and the ISKCON tree has strong, deep roots and branches spread throughout the world. All this is making the words of Lord Caitanya come true:

*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.”

Your wonderful, empowered, energetic disciples have continued your preaching mission throughout the world, with the result that now, in every part of the world, one can hear the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and the glories to Lord Caitanya.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Parama-gurudeva! It is only by your mercy that Śrī Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā, which was previously restricted only to Śrī Jagannātha Purī, is now a common sight in major cities around the world. It has become one of the most favorite festivals of people all over the world, and the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* has become a folk song. You started this preaching mission in the West, where people had no idea of devotional service or the worship of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You taught them by your example and through your many books on the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The result is that the systematic practice and preaching of Kṛṣṇa consciousness will continue all over the world forever, at least for the next ten thousand years.

Your books enable us, your granddisciples and great-granddisciples, to continue this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and preach to new generations of devotees. Without empowerment from the superior authority, no one can preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As you were empowered by your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, you also empowered your disciples to continue your preaching mission. By their mercy I, an insignificant *jīva*, also became part of this spiritual movement, which you named the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and I am trying to continue the mission begun by Your Divine Grace. Many devotees from other *sampradāyas* appreciate ISKCON for having taken up the task of spreading devotional service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa throughout the world.

Parama-gurudeva! This year we are all celebrating the Golden Jubilee of ISKCON, gaining new enthusiasm to spread this movement further into remote areas. I humbly request your kind blessings so that I can also be of some use in this great spiritual movement of ISKCON.

*A humble servant of the servants of your servants,*

Rāma Govinda Swami

# Śacīnandana Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On each one of your divine appearance days, I always stand before your *mūrti* in the temple room to read my offering to you. As I read, I always feel that you are personally present, hearing my words and the spirit behind them. And then you respond in some way: by a strong intuition, by a godbrother telling me something about you, but most often by something I read in your books that speaks to me directly. Anyone can connect with you in this way through your books, and in fact countless souls do connect with you this way and feel your presence in their lives. You have told us that we may contact you through your *vāñī* after your disappearance. As you write in your *Elevation to Kṛṣṇa Consciousness*: “Association with Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master should be association by vibration, not physical presence. That is real association.”

## A Question of Faith and Determination

In January I needed to be put under anesthesia for three hours during an unavoidable surgery. It felt like a small death. But when I woke up, there was your photo with your grave and blissful expression. At that time I took great inspiration from something you said in a lecture:

[We] have taken very serious job. In this life we want to finish this material existence for good. . . . Serious. . . . we have taken very, very responsible task, to finish this so-called lording it over this material nature. . . . [O]ur business is not to lord it over but to serve Kṛṣṇa. [Lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.3.18, Gorakhpur, 11 February 1971]

This statement addressed me directly—it cut through the lingering cloud of the distracting after-effects of the anesthesia and all the post-operative pain. It immediately empowered me with determination for *sevā* and *sādhana*.

On my return from the hospital, I opened the *Bhāgavatam* to the place where I am re-reading at present. As I began reading I saw that you were expressing the same kind of urgency in one of your purports to the verses where the Lord congratulates Brahmā for having executed penances to become qualified to see the Lord in His abode and perform his service of creation:

The Lord is more clever than any living entity; therefore He wants to see how painstaking the devotee is in devotional service. The order is received from the Lord either directly or through the bona fide spiritual master, and to execute that order, however painstaking, is the severe type of penance. One who follows this principle rigidly is sure to achieve success in attaining the Lord’s mercy. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.9.24, purport]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your actions you have given me an example of this principle on a very high level—an example that cannot fail to touch one’s heart, no matter who he is.

On this divine day of your auspicious appearance in this world, I sincerely request you to equip me



with the one-pointed faith and determination that are necessary to apply this principle in a way that gives pleasure to your heart.

*Your humble servant,*

Śacīnandana Swami

## Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your lotus feet.

This year, 2016, we celebrate the 50th anniversary of your founding the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. Last year the ISKCON 50th Anniversary Committee invited me to write daily Prabhupāda meditations to be posted on two websites: ISKCONnews.org/fiftieth-meditations, and Dandavats.com. I eagerly took up the assignment, but it has proved daunting. At first it was easy enough: I simply took information from *Śrīla Prabhupāda Lilāmṛta* about your three-week stay with the Agarwal family in Butler, Pennsylvania, in September-October 1965. But when you moved in with Dr. Mishra in New York City, it became different. Dr. Mishra gave you a room in his yoga studio at 72nd St., but he would not allow you to lecture to his students because you spoke strongly against his Māyāvādī teachings based on Śaṅkara. You wrote letters to acquaintances and influential people in India seeking financial support to buy a building in Manhattan that you would turn into a Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple, but you did not receive any encouragement. You worked at your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* translation and commentary. You had no followers, and it was hard for me to write of your daily activities of November, December, January, and February. You had to walk every day to Dr. Mishra’s apartment to bathe and cook for yourself and wash and dry your clothes. Not knowing what you were doing or thinking on a particular day 50 years ago, I found myself writing “timeless meditations” about your qualities, nature, and mission. “Honoring Prabhupāda’s Relationship with Us,” “The Perfect Disciple,” “Prabhupāda’s Priority,” “Prabhupāda Is in Our Hearts,” “Faith in Prabhupāda’s Instructions,” “Real Love for Śrīla Prabhupāda,” “On Separation,” “Lessons in Tolerance”—these were some of the titles to my daily meditations.

But April is coming. Soon Harvey Cohen will invite you to share his Bowery loft with a young man. Artists and musicians will start attending your *kīrtanas*. Your young roommate will go crazy on LSD, and you will decide it is too dangerous living with him. On an emergency basis you will move in with Carl Yeargens, a casual follower of yours, and his woman, who used to attend your Bowery *kīrtanas*. The woman eventually objected to your presence. Carl took you to the apartment of his friend, Michael Grant, to see if he could help. Michael found a storefront and apartment at 26 Second Avenue, and your friends chipped in and paid the first month’s rent. You started your Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evening meetings—lectures on *Bhagavad-gītā* and “transcendental sound vibration”—and things started happening. Soon the floodgates would open. I joined you, and now I can remember what you were doing fifty years ago.

But about that “silent” period when you were alone with no followers, and about which I had to write “silent meditations,” you later reminisced, “Those were happy days.” You had no one to depend upon but Kṛṣṇa and your spiritual master. As a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, you were always happy. As with Prahāda Mahārāja, your only unhappiness was to see the nondevotees suffering in *māyā* because of not surrendering

to Kṛṣṇa. I think you were happier when you had thousands of disciples and a hundred temples, and the BBT was quickly publishing your books, and your disciples were distributing them in great numbers. You wrote in the “Concluding Words” to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* that you were certain your spiritual master was satisfied to see the work of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* completed in English. And at the 1975 annual meeting in Māyāpur, you were able to tell hundreds of your followers that the prediction of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had come true: hundreds of Bengalis and Westerners were chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa together.

Of course, with the fabulous growth and success of your movement came many problems. You were taxed with management. Hence, you were able to say “Those were happy days” about that time when you were alone with Kṛṣṇa and just beginning. In conclusion, I think that as a pure devotee you were always satisfied with whatever Kṛṣṇa gave you. But you became more satisfied when you were able to realize your spiritual master’s desires for a worldwide Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

As one of your many followers, I am happy to celebrate the 50th anniversary of your coming to America and founding ISKCON, and to serve you every day in any way I can. As you wrote about your own spiritual master, “He lives forever, and his follower lives with him through his instructions.” Those were happy days when I was with you in 1966, and these are happy days when I am with you now, in 2016. Please let me always serve at your lotus feet so that I may always be happy.

*Your eternal servant,*

Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

## Smita Krishna Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In your presence, I offer my humble obeisances.

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

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

Fifty-one years ago you humbly traveled on a cargo ship from Calcutta, India, to Boston, USA. You were present on that ship. You landed in N.Y., traveled by bus to Butler, Pennsylvania, and made your presence felt there. You moved on and made your presence felt in N.Y., and fifty years ago you and your preaching made their presence felt in the form of the legal registration of ISKCON as a nonprofit religious corporation.

Since then your preaching, and thus your presence, have made itself felt over a major part of the world.

Today it is fifty years later, and today it is roughly a hundred years since Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda started his Gauḍīya Maṭha preaching.

As I write this offering, I am aware that this day is in the past in relation to when I will actually read it for you on your Vyāsa-pūjā day. And then that time will be in the past and another year will have passed



by. One day, another fifty years will have passed, and there will be a celebration of ISKCON's centennial.

And then it might be that we can celebrate 108 years of your large-scale presence in the world. And then we can count another round on our beads. We might then enter the eternity of celebration after celebration in your eternal presence.

May I be eternally present in the presence of your lotus feet—a presence that expands as the preaching expands around the world.

*Your attempting servant,*

Smita Krishna Swami

## Śukadeva Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated *daṇḍavat praṇāmas* at your divine lotus feet.

This year your ISKCON movement is celebrating its Golden Jubilee, or fiftieth anniversary. Spending fifty years of life chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, at least half of one's existence in this world, is proof enough that one can chant everlastingly. As we chant we become purer, and as we become purer we become more enthusiastic and more convinced of our identity as spirit souls, part and parcel of Lord Kṛṣṇa. When life becomes simple, one gives up all negative traits, which impinge on others. We begin to appreciate others, become sympathetic to others. One is then at home anywhere and with everyone. All this proves that under the common fatherhood of Kṛṣṇa people can transcend all material designations based on the body and feel *vasudhaika kutumbam*, that all living entities are members of one family belonging to Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as you always said and as Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the beginning of the ninth chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, His teachings are the ultimate knowledge, His teachings are universal, His teachings constitute the most confidential part of Vedic knowledge, and His teachings constitute the purest knowledge. As such, His teachings can uncover the innate purity of the soul and enable one to get out of the clutches of the three modes of material nature. Kṛṣṇa's teachings are the supreme knowledge, there being nothing more to be known beyond this knowledge. Kṛṣṇa's teachings are practical, not theoretical, which means that anyone can directly experience the results from putting this knowledge into practice. In other words, the practices of *bhakti-yoga* taught by Kṛṣṇa Himself are easy and joyful to perform and are everlasting.

You said it is foolish to think that one can clear the debt owed to the spiritual master. Imitation is the best compliment. We have to just follow in your footsteps. You have also said that what would most please you would be that we become pure devotees. Becoming a pure devotee implies that one will be decorated with all twenty-six qualities of a Vaiṣṇava. Such a devotee performs welfare activities for all living entities. Engaging in pure devotional service brings the pure devotee glory and victory, though the devotee doesn't want them.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, what was hidden in the scriptures, what is the most difficult attainment in life—self-realization—you have made fun to achieve. By inducing us to sing the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and dance with abandon, you have made the attainment of spiritual perfection fun, simple, and easy. The whole world is reeling in the grip of *māyā*, but you have given us an easy method of transcending *māyā*, as easy as crossing over the puddle in a calf's hoofprint. *Harināma-saṅkīrtana* causes the sun of Kṛṣṇa to rise

in our hearts, Śrīla Prabhupāda, thus showing us the truth of your slogan on *Back to Godhead* magazine: “Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, during this Golden Jubilee of your ISKCON, I pray that you let me be glued to the dust of your lotus feet. Let me cling to the lotus feet of your direct disciples who are serving as your representatives. Let me never leave ISKCON, which is the society of devotees of Kṛṣṇa where there is no confusion: There is one God, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead; there is one mantra, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*; there is one scripture, the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*; there is one work, devotional service for Kṛṣṇa, which includes working for everyone’s benefit.

Your movement is candy from the beginning to the end, Śrīla Prabhupāda: wherever we go, whatever we do, it is done in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Śrīla Prabhupāda, because you are Kṛṣṇa’s pure representative, an instrument in Kṛṣṇa’s hands, your name is as good as His.

*Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!* All glories to you! All glories to ISKCON, your body. Let your movement endure as long as life exists in the material world, delivering one and all. Your ISKCON is truly a boat that can enable everyone to cross this ocean of material existence. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

*An aspiring servant of your servants,*

Śukadeva Swami

## Trivikrama Swami

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble and repeated obeisances at your holy lotus feet.

I was always amazed at your tolerance. Even your own disciples were often challenging your authority. Sometimes you would say how preaching was a thankless task. Nevertheless, you went on making disciples and never took a break from preaching. Even in the last days, while lying in your bed in Vṛndāvana, you continued to preach to us personally, and to the whole world via your Bhaktivedanta purports.

How was it humanly possible? The only way to understand it is to see how you have such intense compassion for the suffering conditioned souls. That, along with your full faith and conviction that the message you were delivering was the only remedy able to mitigate their suffering. Therefore your preaching never stopped.

Nor has it stopped since your departure from this material world. By your expertise you have created an institution that is carrying on your mission. We have personal experience of how you continue to get directly involved in the lives of your sincere followers, through dreams, direct communications, and of course your books, lectures, conversations, and letters.

Thank you for giving us a chance to remember you on this most auspicious day of your holy appearance.

Begging for a place at your lotus feet,

*Your unworthy servant,*

Trivikrama Swami

## Varṣāṇā Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Early on in your movement, even in your presence we barely understood your glories as the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON, the incarnation of Lord Nityānanda’s mercy, and the ambassador of Goloka Vṛndāvana. Yet we were deeply confident of your love, and thus we trusted your guidance. We developed a favorable impression of the Supreme Father due to the loving manner in which you represented Him.

Arriving in the United States, you found a generation of lost souls. Our well-meaning parents strove to provide better for us materially, but still we were not happy. There was an insurmountable chasm, making it impossible for us to relate to them, our teachers, our government, and even our religion. We were convinced society needed to be reinvented, that something critical was missing. Intuitively, we knew the vacancy was spiritual in nature.

I, like many of my peers, felt myself a spiritual orphan. Even though my parents offered a stable, loving home and nurtured us to the best of their capacity, spiritually and materially, it was not sufficient.

I longed for a spiritual father who would walk patiently with me, empathize with me, and consistently point me in the direction of God. You became that perfect father. Recognizing this, some parents—like my own, who had initially felt hurt that they could not provide what I needed—gradually came to appreciate you for filling that void. Achieving your protection saved us from seeking fulfillment elsewhere. For the pioneers of ISKCON, seeking your approval became foremost in our lives, rescuing us from the danger of seeking applause and acceptance from the temporal world.

With a deep sense of gratitude, indebtedness, and longing to reciprocate your infinite kindness, we began constructing a living space for you in New Vrindavan. We hoped that here you would be able to finish your translation and commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* uninterrupted. As the modest country retreat we had planned for you has transformed into the *yoga-pīṭha* of your Palace of Gold, memories and testimonials of your presence have become enshrined within its walls. Here, the spiritual and material worlds overlap, inviting pilgrims to enter more deeply into a relationship with you. Among the cherished items in that treasury of remembrances, your visit to the Palace in 1974 and the revelation you shared with us then holds a place of great prominence.

While you circumambulated the portico path, you halted repeatedly to tap your cane on the solid walls, indicating where you desired windows to be installed. You insisted on “natural lighting, not artificial.”

When our *parikramā* halted at the portal to the inner chamber (now the temple room), we members of the Palace construction team wondered whether you would request this room to have natural lighting as well—a potentially complicated operation that would pose significant challenges. As you glanced throughout the room, Bali Mardana (who was visiting for the occasion) articulated what the construction crew had been contemplating. Speaking on our behalf, he said, “This room will be illumined by jewels in the columns, just like Kṛṣṇa’s palaces in Dvārakā.”

Your gaze turned from the unfinished concrete columns to the devotees standing among them. Sweeping your cane upward in an arch which encompassed all of the devotees present, you offered us a glimpse into the perception of an *uttama-adhikārī* by responding with utmost humility, “These devotees are my jewels.”

Your words are sacramental, empowered to create what they convey. In your presence, the devotees became effulgent by reflecting the various hues of your blessing. Seeing the devotees become bright-faced, you beamed, thus revealing the most natural illumination of all. We, your “jewels,” beamed back, inviting you to begin the process of polishing us to fully uncover the spiritual luster you saw within all of us.

We had never seen each other that way, as jewels. You were the first to value us for something worthy and inherently spiritual, and in turn we were able to truly value one another. Standing shoulder to shoulder,

we experienced unprecedented affection, appreciation, and respect for one another.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the *cintāmaṇi* jewel, the touchstone who fulfills all desires, transforming and enriching the nature of those who accept your divine grace. The reciprocal relationship between the crest jewel and its surrounding gems is ever-increasing. The brilliance of this loving exchange, enshrined within my heart, dispels the darkness and gloom of this material world.

Greater than a touchstone, which produces only what its owner desires, you reveal the life and love of Vṛndāvana to those of us who had neither the understanding that such a wonder existed, any conscious desire to attain it, nor even the capacity to comprehend its significance.

Following that memorable occasion, I took up residence in the unfinished servants' quarters in the Palace in order to serve as night guard. In the early morning hours, my *japa* was enriched by the feeling of your enduring presence. I began conducting *maṅgala-ārati* to a picture placed in the space that became your altar.

Today, forty-two years later, I continue attending *maṅgala-ārati* at your Palace. Your jewels are found there every morning. On some evenings, devotees congregate in the inner chamber to share remembrances and appreciations of you and your followers. Even recollections of those who are no longer with us continue to reflect your effulgence and contribute their part to the stock of luminous jewels that have accumulated over the years—the natural lighting you requested. As we grow older, we reflect on those memories with deeper fondness and richer gratitude. In this way our devotional lives are continually enriched.

After attending *maṅgala-ārati* at your *smṛti-samādhī*, I return to the shelter of New Vrindavan's Govardhan Hill. As I gaze back toward the Palace, the rising sun offers a dazzling backdrop. The illumination from within the Palace filters through the ornate patterns of stained glass windows, revealing a treasure chest overflowing with gems of every variety and color.

The luster of this scene rescues us from the lies we had believed and the truths we had denied, setting us free to celebrate life with those we love as your worthy representatives. In that celebration, you infuse all we say and do with a joy that neither ignores nor denies our residual fears but rather integrates them with a growing love that dispels all misgivings. This gives us hope that you will bring us home before darkness engulfs the world at the twilight of the Golden Age.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, may all generations come to know you as their loving spiritual father lest your institution become a machine that loses its sense of confidence born of family support and relationships. Grant that we may forever come together in *saṅkīrtana*, the only place where there is true unity, harmony, sanctity, and strength in the single conception that we are a family of servants, striving to enthuse and bring joy to one another for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure and deepen our commitment to the chanting of the Holy Name.

Kṛṣṇa reveals your glories, Śrīla Prabhupāda, through the illumined hearts of those who love you. As your jewels serve you in spreading the Holy Name to every town and village, their preaching is effective inasmuch as they individually reflect your effulgence, devotion, and humility through their dedication. As the priceless jewel of service in separation, that treasure which you have so graciously bequeathed to us, grows ever-brighter and sheds light on the path back to home, back to you, please bless us to retain that radiance you saw in us. Thus your legacy will forevermore endure and expand.

*Your servant,*

Varṣāṇā Swami

## Vedavyāsapriya Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

On this auspicious day of your appearance, I am submitting my realizations of Your Divine Grace for your glorification. As a yearly duty, your disciples and granddisciples glorify you in relation to how your divine *vapu* or *vāñī*, or both, have impacted their lives. I feel that this impact of your divine association is the life and soul of their resolve to continue your mission. Your association is pure and spiritual, and therefore your followers' resolve to keep your movement alive and progressing is also spiritual.

Still, in my travels I encounter many unusual situations arising among devotees that bring out impurities and immaturity and are against standard Vaiṣṇava behavior. These encounters cause my mind to reel, but remembering Your Divine Grace reminds me that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is in control and that the mitigation is promised if we follow your instructions for spiritual management. I need to always remember that there is a silver lining to every thundering cloud.

Therefore, when I encounter disturbing incidents I should not become judgmental but should rather more intensely take shelter of your lotus feet. Taking shelter of your divine lotus feet is a prerequisite for my taking shelter of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, the *mahat-padam*. By your and Kṛṣṇa's combined mercy I am confident of overcoming the perplexities of material nature. Otherwise, on my own or with the help of others or by voting on the merits of materially influenced opinions, I will remain always disturbed.

The all-knowing Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa has only one purpose for putting us through adversities, and that is to inspire us to take shelter of Him more utterly than before. You have been so kind to me that you have given me that shelter. Therefore, I sing your glories, meditating on your lotus feet three times a day.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

## Yadunandana Swami

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

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

*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*)

Beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

As soon as you met your beloved Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, for the first time in 1922, he instructed you and your friend Naren to preach the message of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu all over the world. You were deeply touched by the two-hour-plus exchange you had with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta and immediately accepted him in your heart as your eternal spiritual master.

Afterwards, you intently listened to him whenever there was an opportunity for his personal association. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta “marked” you for your impeccable listening and empowered you with the *kṛṣṇa-śakti* required to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. Your faith in his words was so deep that you were ready to go through any extreme austerities and difficulties for his pleasure, in order to alleviate the sufferings of the unfortunate conditioned souls who had forgotten Śrī Kṛṣṇa, their very source of life and joy.

During the last twelve years of your stay in this world, you compassionately and tirelessly traveled around the world, inviting everyone you met to partake of the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. By doing this you practically abandoned any privacy for personal *bhajana*. Instead, you made your *bhajana* and your intimate transcendental realizations available to the world in many ways, especially through your Bhaktivedānta purports. Thus you taught us, your fortunate followers, that *kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, the congregational chanting of the holy names of the Lord, is more important than individual chanting in seclusion.

Now the *saṅkīrtana* movement you spread all over the world is well rooted in many countries. In Spain, my *prabhu-datta deśa*, the government is seriously considering our movement for a special type of recognition awarded to religious communities that are well rooted in the country. An official representative of a government foundation that dialogs with well-established religious communities attended our last Ratha-yātrā festival in Madrid, and his visit indicated that the national government is casting a favorable eye toward the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Still, there is a lot of substantial work to be done to ensure that the *saṅkīrtana* movement is given a prominent position in the world, in order to correct the imbalance of values in society and diminish the people’s suffering.

I want to become a useful instrument in the hands of the Lord for this noble cause. I pray to you and to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu that, as you received the *kṛṣṇa-śakti* to successfully spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement from Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, I may also be empowered by you and your empowered servants to contribute to solidly establishing the *saṅkīrtana* movement in every province of Spain, and wherever else I go as your representative.

With heartfelt gratitude, I pray to remain

*Your eternal servant,*

Yadunandana Swami