

ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ

Śrī Vyāsa-Pūjā
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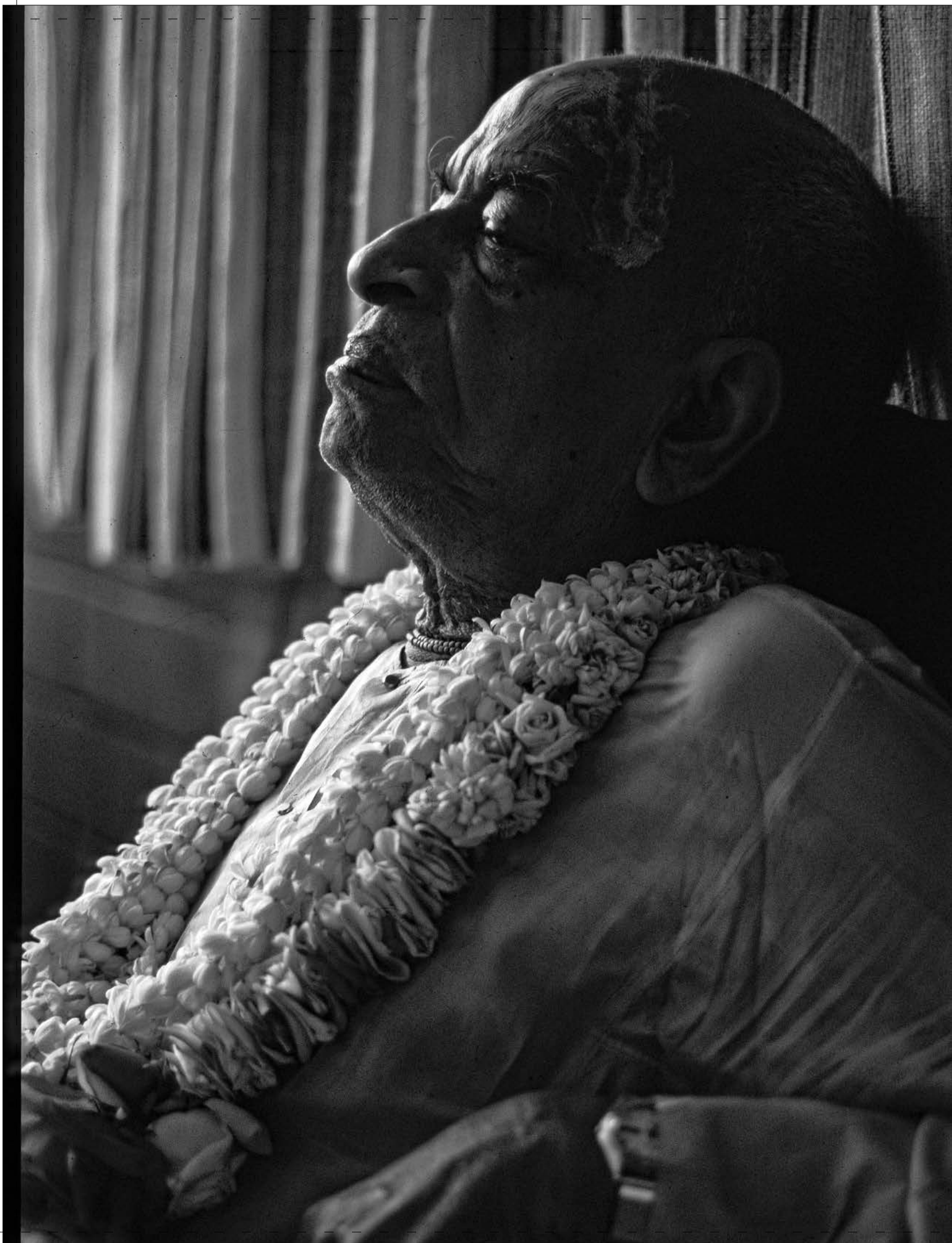
ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ

HIS DIVINE GRACE

Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-sata Śrī Śrīmad

A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness



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INTRODUCTION

Well, ISKCON 50 is behind us—but now comes a flood of Golden Jubilees of significant ISKCON events, not the least of which is the fiftieth anniversary of the first Vyāsa-pūjā book, coming in 2019. As always, in the treasure chest of devotion that is the present, 48th Vyāsa-pūjā book, a few gemlike homages shine especially brightly.

Girirāj Swami’s homage this year tells of the power of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s love and mercy working through several generations of devotees. He tells the story of Śravaṇa Dāsī, a granddisciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s who got his extensive personal attention and mercy as a child growing up on Hare Krishna Land in Bombay in the seventies. She recently lost her twenty-two-year-old son in a railroad accident, and here is an excerpt from her reply to Girirāj Swami’s condolence letter:

Thank you for your kind blessings and prayers for our son Nrsimha Guru. Due to the mercy of Srila Prabhupada, we are all blessed with our journey in Krishna consciousness. In such a situation all we can see is Krishna’s hand and how He orchestrated the whole incident. Though it is the most horrific thing I have experienced, I am at peace, as I see the Lord in it.

Such equanimity and mature Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the face of such a wrenching personal tragedy is clear evidence of the power of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mercy and love to uplift his sincere devotees. As Girirāj Swami put’s it,

I was touched and moved by her beautiful letter—by her Kṛṣṇa consciousness and her sublime realizations of your glorious, powerful mercy. Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Madhya* 19.132) states, “When the personal associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would hear of the activities of Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs, they would say, ‘What is wonderful for a person who has been granted the Lord’s mercy?’” And that is how I feel about her: What is beyond a person who has received so much mercy from you?

From Bhakti-vijñāna Swami we get some great news concerning the decades-long struggle to establish a major temple in Moscow:

After so much struggle—years and years of attempts, mistakes, and heavy lessons—we finally acquired a suitable building for the future temple in Moscow. Of course, there is still a long way to go, so our prayer to you at this moment is, “Please continue to shower your mercy upon those who are trying to do something in your service, however imperfect this service may be.”

In this vein it’s worth reflecting on the great sacrifices and struggles that the Russian devotees underwent in the seventies and eighties to practice and preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness under a repressive regime. Last year the devotees in mainland China allowed us for the first time to print their offering under the title “China” rather than “Khasadeśa.” The Chinese *yātrā* is burgeoning in the open now. But there are still places in the world where the devotees need to stay in the shadows. One such is “Ilāvṛta-deśa.” Here is an excerpt from the offering penned by a devotee there:

My dearest grandfather, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Thank you for giving us the holy *dhāmas* of Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana, and for arranging the yearly Gaura-pūrṇimā festival in Māyāpur *dhāma*. We have spent the best days of our lives



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participating in the festival, going on the *navadvīpa-parīkramā*, and associating with the other devotees there. Chanting and dancing at the twenty-four-hour *kīrtana* at the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir has changed our lives.

We hope to see the day when the devotees in “llāvṛta-deśa” feel secure enough to let us print their offering under the real name of their country.

Finally, on a personal note, I would like to thank Śrīla Prabhupāda for allowing me to edit the offerings for his Vyāsa-pūjā book for the last thirty-four years. I’ve always felt greatly purified when reading all the homages to him and serving all the Vaiṣṇavas who reveal their innermost hearts while writing of their relationship with their *gurudeva* or *param-gurudeva* in these pages. I remember many a sleepless night in the eighties and early nineties as I struggled to complete the offerings by the deadline. Until 1991 we included a list of all the devotees in the centers. You can imagine the work trying to get the spelling of the devotees’ names right, with diacritics, in centers with over a hundred residents, like Los Angeles or Bhaktivedanta Manor. The society just grew too large to make that feasible—the 1991 book was over 560 pages! Sometimes I’m a little sad that participation in the book is only a fraction of what it was in the old days. For instance, ISKCON now has 104 *sannyāsīs*, but only 58 have written offerings for the book this year. Similarly, only 70 of 650 “temples, centers, schools, and colleges” (total from “The Hare Krishnas Celebrating 50 Years” magazine) contributed offerings. Then again, there’s no way such a flood of offerings could be edited, proofread, and laid out on time, and it would be too expensive to print the few copies that we print each year.

So we have our yearly cross section of ISKCON revealing its heart to Śrīla Prabhupāda and the ISKCON world. I pray that I can keep doing this service for many years to come, and that Lord Kṛṣṇa will send someone I can train to take over this service when the time comes.

Draviḍa Dāsa
Vyāsa-pūjā Book Editor

THE MEANING OF VYĀSA-PŪJĀ

Guru in General

For those of us who wish to know the purpose of life, the creator and maintainer of the world, and our own identity, a spiritual master is absolutely necessary: *tad-vijñānārthan sa gurum evābhigacchet* (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1.2.12). The necessity arises because what we can understand of such crucial questions using only our mind and logic is limited. We can logically assume that the order and complexity of creation points strongly to the existence of an intelligent creator. With logic, we can also conclude that that creator must ultimately be one, not many. “If in this universe there are many rulers and justices who disagree about punishment and reward, their contradictory actions will neutralize one another, and no one will be punished or rewarded. Otherwise, if their contradictory acts fail to neutralize one another, everyone will have to be both punished and rewarded.” (SB 6.3.5) By observation of nature, it is clear the one creator loves infinite variety, is orderly yet full of surprises, delights in mystery and seeming paradoxes, kindly supplies beauty and pleasures beyond bare necessities, and is intelligent and artistic beyond comprehension. Further than such conclusions, however, our human thought and science cannot reach.

To know details of the personality of the creator, and what is that creator’s desire and intention, we need to access the creator directly. How to do so depends on the creator reaching out to us with knowledge of Himself and of how to attain Him. We can say it is our reaching out to Him which prompts His reciprocal grasping of our hand. As Śrīla Prabhupāda put it, “Reciprocal. If you love Kṛṣṇa, then Kṛṣṇa will love [you] more than you [love Him]. (Class on *Bhagavad-gītā* 7.15–18, New York, 9 October 1966). We can also say He reaches out to all living beings always. “[Kṛṣṇa] is giving chance always, twenty-four hours, imperceptibly.” (Class on *The Nectar of Devotion*, Vṛndāvana, 24 October 1972)

The difficulty is that a soul covered by the modes of material nature finds Lord Kṛṣṇa’s communication “imperceptible” indeed. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa reaches out through a devotee, the guru, the spiritual master, who acts as the link between us and Him.

Śrīla Vyāsadeva

In one sense, there is only one guru. As Śrīla Prabhupāda explains:

Must go to guru. Not “a” guru; “the” guru. Guru is one . . . What five thousand years ago Vyāsadeva instructed or Kṛṣṇa instructed, the same thing we are also instructing. Therefore there is no difference between instruction. Therefore guru is one. Although hundreds and thousands of *ācāryas* have come and gone, but the message is one. Therefore guru cannot be two. Real guru will not talk differently. [Lecture: “What is a Guru?” London, 22 August 1973]

Spiritual master is not that a particular man is spiritual master. Spiritual master is a truth. So what is that truth? The truth is *saṁsāra-dāvānala-līḍha-loka-trāṇāya kārūṇya-ghanāghanatvam*. The whole world is in the blaze of material pangs, threefold miseries, and a person who is authorized to deliver people from that material pangs, he is called spiritual master. [Vyāsa-pūjā lecture, Hamburg, 5 September 1969]

In the absolute world there is no distinction as me, or he, and I. Krishna and His representative is the same. Just like Krishna can be present simultaneously in millions of places. Similarly, the Spiritual Master also can be present wherever the disciple wants. A Spiritual Master is the



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principle, not the body. Just like a television can be seen in thousands of places by the principle of relay monitoring. [Letter to Mālatī Devī Dāsī, 28 May 1968]

Gentlemen, the offering of such a homage as has been arranged this evening to the Acharyadev is not a sectarian concern, for when we speak of the fundamental principle of Gurudev or Acharyadev, we speak of something that is of universal application. There does not arise any question of discriminating my Guru from yours or anyone else's. There is only one Guru, who appears in an infinity of forms to teach you, me and all others. [*The Universal Teacher*, 1936, Bombay]

Keeping the above in mind, we in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness celebrate the appearance anniversary of our founder-*ācārya* with the appellation “Vyāsa-pūjā,” meaning worship of the person Vyāsa. Truth is truth regardless of the particular institution or teacher—math remains math whether at Princeton or at the local secondary school. But we enroll in a particular school, follow that school's particular syllabus, and revere our particular teachers. “Śrīla Vyāsadeva is an incarnation of Nārāyaṇa, the Personality of Godhead; therefore there is no question about his authority. . . . [H]e is the author of all Vedic literature.” (*Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, Chapter 23: “Why Study the Vedānta-sūtra?”) Therefore, anyone in any *sampradāya* that uses the Vedic literature as authority has Vyāsa as the primary guru. Whatever individual person one has as one's guru, that guru derives authority from the Vedic literature, and therefore from Vyāsadeva. So, worship of the guru in a Vedic tradition implies worship of Vyāsa. Using the term “Vyāsa-pūjā” explicitly acknowledges the connection.

Śrīla Prabhupāda

The same principle that explains worship of the person Vyāsa—although guru is one—applies to worship of Śrīla Prabhupāda. The main demarcation of membership, at any level, in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness is appreciation of Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings and example. It is Śrīla Prabhupāda who epitomizes guru for us. It is Śrīla Prabhupāda through whom we know and understand Vyāsa. It is Śrīla Prabhupāda through whom we know Nārada and Brahmā and all the Gauḍīya *ācāryas*. It is Śrīla Prabhupāda through whom we know Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. While guru is a “truth” and a “fundamental principle,” and “not a particular man,” still it is a particular person who chooses to exemplify, personify, and epitomize the eternal fundamental principle. It is a particular person who appears in a particular time and place to teach universal and eternal principles according to the time, place, circumstance, and people. And, therefore, while in one sense Vyāsa-pūjā is about reverence and gratitude for the fundamental principle of guru, it is also about reverence and gratitude for the particular person who is guru for us.

Śrīla Prabhupāda gave *harināma* initiation to the thousands of disciples who started and nourished ISKCON centers under his personal guidance, and to many he gave Gāyatrī *dīkṣā* as well. He translated and wrote commentaries on the scriptures and works of Gauḍīya *ācāryas* that form the philosophical and practical basis of ISKCON. He personally taught his disciples how to chant the holy name, how to play traditional instruments in *kīrtana*, how to install and worship Śrī Mūrti, how to cook for Kṛṣṇa, how to teach others about Kṛṣṇa, how to visit holy places, and how to observe Vaiṣṇava etiquette. He established, directly and through his disciples, many temples, schools, and farming communities where he hoped Kṛṣṇa consciousness would be nourished by the loving exchanges—giving and receiving *prasādam*, gifts, and confidences. These ISKCON centers are meant to act as oases in the desert landscape of Kali-yuga.

Beyond all the above, Śrīla Prabhupāda is the guru because he is *śrotriyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham* (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1.2.12). He has heard with faith from his own guru, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. What he teaches is not his own speculation or concoction. It is received, revealed knowledge. He is a transparent medium for that which flows through him. He has heard and transmitted the knowledge without changing the essence, yet has presented it appropriately for us here and now. And he does not repeat parrotlike but lives what he teaches. He is fixed in the Absolute Truth. He is *jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ* (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.34), a self-realized seer of the truth. The manifestation of the Absolute Truth in which he



THE MEANING OF VYĀSA-PŪJĀ



is fixed is not just the *brahmajyoti* or the Paramātmā, or even *Vaikuṇṭhanātha Nārāyaṇa*, but *bhagavān svayam* (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.28), Kṛṣṇa, the prince of Vraja, the son of King Nanda, the form of all *rasa*, *akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrti* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.1).

Thus, while it is correct to say all gurus are one and truth is one, yet the form of truth Śrīla Prabhupāda teaches, and in whom he is personally absorbed, is theologically, logically, and experientially the most complete, attractive, and satisfying. Only with Kṛṣṇa can the *jīvas* experience all variety of relationships and bliss, fully fulfilling the innermost heart's desires of each living being.

Considering all the above, all ISKCON devotees observe with deep devotion the Vyāsa-pūjā of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the individual person who is the *śikṣā-guru* for all of us and also the *dīkṣā-guru* for many. We celebrate the festival on his appearance anniversary by the lunar calendar, not on Guru Pūrṇimā, a holy day more focused on the general principle of guru. By this choice of celebration days, ISKCON worships both the fundamental principle of guru and the person who personifies that principle for us.

Pūjā

Having considered the meaning of “Vyāsa” in the term “Vyāsa-pūjā,” we now turn our attention to “*pūjā*.” *Pūjā* means to worship, and in terms of the Vedic tradition it refers to a system of ritual offering of various items along with mantra. Incense, lamp—usually cotton dipped in ghee—water, flowers, and fans are the main items, though there can be more, such as an umbrella. In every religious system there is some ceremonial worship of the Deity, and many traditions also include worship of the spiritual preceptor.

Worship of the Lord, the Supreme Deity, indicates the worshiper's reverence, gratitude, acceptance of a subservient position, surrender, and love. Because it is only through a spiritual master that anyone can know details of God and how to connect with Him, a worshiper feels similar love and gratitude toward the guru as is felt toward God. The guru is not worshiped as God but as the messenger of God, the friend of Kṛṣṇa, and the well-wisher of the disciples. As Śrīla Prabhupāda put it, the disciples should worship the spiritual master as the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead.

Rūpa Gosvāmī explains in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* that each item of worship, after being offered, has the power to remove sins and illusion from the worshiper. Thus, when one smells the offered incense and flowers, wears the offered garlands, shows reverence to the offered flame, and sprinkles the offered water on one's head, purification follows. We worship to reciprocate with the knowledge, purification, and joy the guru brings us, and the very act of offering purifies us further! Thus, again, we offer worship to symbolically show gratitude, and become further enlivened and enlightened.

The *pūjā* is not, therefore, a ritual of unclear, unknown, or uncertain meaning. Each item expresses love already in the heart of the worshiper, and each item increases that love and deepens the relationship. The guru, in turn, accepts each item in the mood of a servant of Kṛṣṇa, much like ambassadors accept gifts on behalf of their government.

Disciples

As explained above, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave *harināma* initiation and Gāyatrī *dīkṣā* to thousands of disciples—at least *harināma* initiation to over 4,700 persons. Since he started ISKCON in the mid-60s, naturally many of those disciples have already passed away. The remaining disciples take the opportunity of Vyāsa-pūjā to reflect on their relationship with their initiator guru even more deeply than is done on a daily basis. On this day, most disciples take the time to write Śrīla Prabhupāda a letter expressing glorification, gratitude, and re-commitment. Other activities are put aside for a day of fasting, meditation, offering, prayer, and then a celebratory feast. Memories of time spent with Śrīla Prabhupāda, his personal dealings of love and instruction, and his lifework further deepen the connection. Disciples end the day feeling renewed, refreshed, and rededicated.



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Followers

Some of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples have themselves initiated disciples. These granddisciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda also accept him as guru, though as *śikṣā-guru*, or instructing guru, rather than as *dīkṣā-guru*, or initiating guru. It is their *dīkṣā-guru's* relationship with Prabhupāda that, for these granddisciples, provides the basis for the trust and love they place in their own guru. In ISKCON today, the number of Prabhupāda's granddisciples is far greater the number of his direct disciples, as a person's grandchildren generally outnumber his or her children. Indeed, in many parts of the world, Vyāsa-pūjā ceremonies for Śrīla Prabhupāda are in places he never went, and where there are only granddisciples indebted to him and carrying on his mission and mood.

And far outnumbering initiated granddisciples are uninitiated general followers and ISKCON members. Such persons help with ISKCON's mission in various ways, study Prabhupāda's teaching to some extent, and practice various aspects of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in their lives. While Vyāsa-pūjā is generally a festival of the more committed members, the general membership also finds it a day to reflect on the role of Prabhupāda in their lives, and their relationship with him.

Others

Vyāsa-pūjā, along with this book of offerings presented on that day, has been a treasure trove for scholars and those outside the tradition who wish deeper understanding. Still, the festival and book are particularly relevant for those who have, or who wish to have, a deep relationship with Prabhupāda. It's not a festival that is a prime part of ISKCON's outreach to the general public. As such, it represents a more internal, or intimate, glimpse into the hearts and lives of ISKCON's spiritual practitioners. On this day, and in these pages, one will find outpourings of love, of humility, of dedication, of confession, and of insight that are meant for sharing primarily among those who are steeped in the tradition and language not just of Vaiṣṇavism, or even of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, but of the particular culture and mood that is ISKCON. In this book and on this day one finds reflection on past and present, and hope for the future.

Conclusion

The meaning of Vyāsa-pūjā is ultimately as inscrutable as love itself. The bond between God and souls, reawakened by guru, is eternal, deep, personal, and dynamic. Vyāsa-pūjā celebrates and nourishes that love in ways the external celebrations of worship, glorifications, and banquets only hint at. May we all enter within the depths of that love.

Ūrmilā Devī Dāśī

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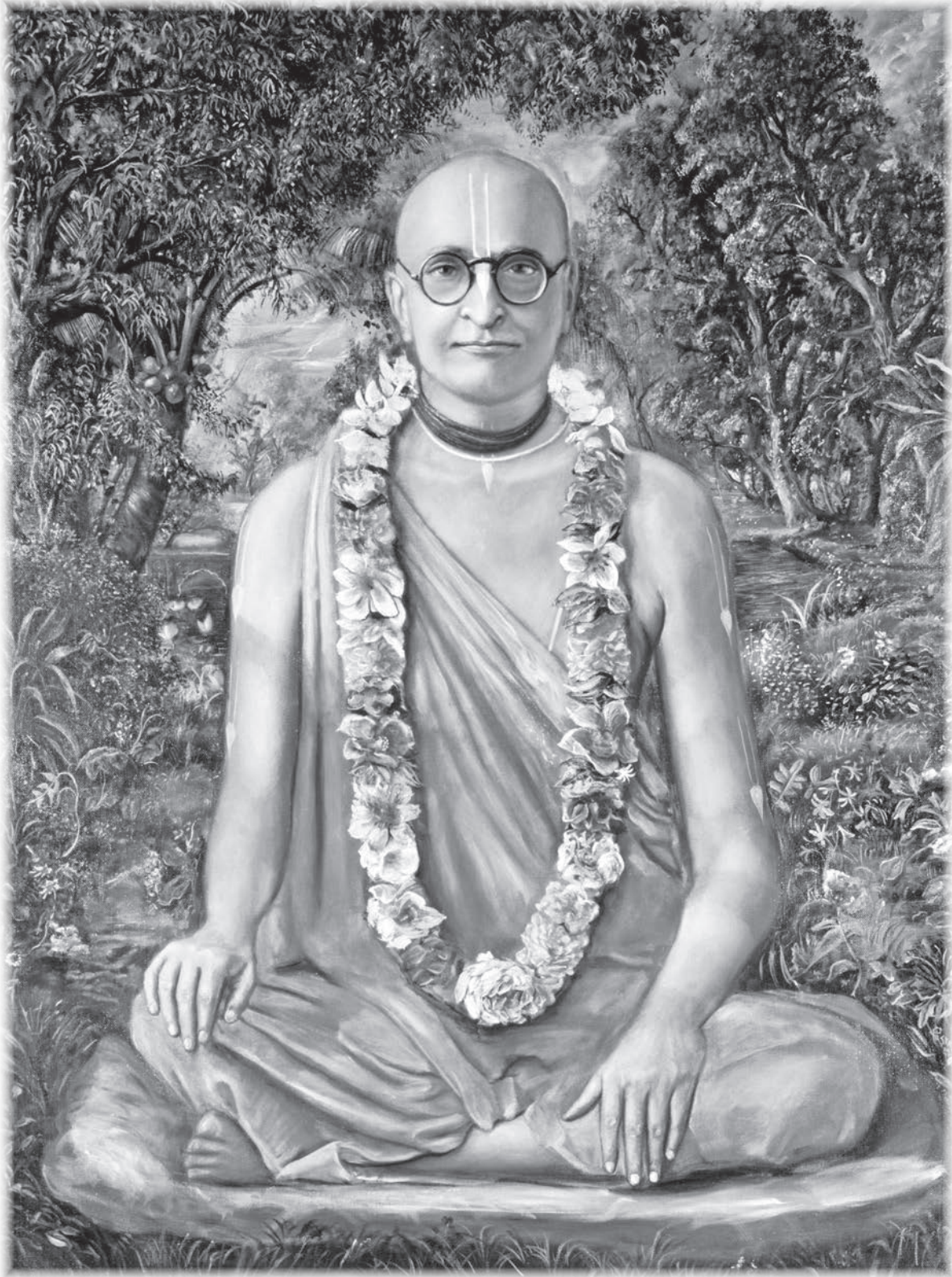


THE MEANING OF VYĀSA-PŪJĀ





ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



“ADORE, ADORE YE ALL THE HAPPY DAY”

Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote the following poem in February 1935, on the occasion of the Vyāsa-pūjā celebration of his spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. It delighted Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, especially the sixth stanza, which he felt captured the essence of his preaching against the Māyāvādīs. After reading this poem, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī was especially keen that Śrīla Prabhupāda preach and write in English.

The following version of the poem was prepared from two sources: the version Śrīla Prabhupāda included in the March 1952 edition of his *Back to Godhead* magazine, and the version he wrote by hand on the back of a letter he sent Rāyarāma Dāsa on March 20, 1969.

1.
Adore, adore ye all
The happy day,
Blessed than heaven,
Sweeter than May,
When He appeared at Puri,
The holy place,
My lord and master,
His Divine Grace.

2.
Oh my Master,
The evangelic angel,
Give us thy light,
Light up thy candle.
Struggle for existence
A human race.
The only hope,
Your Divine Grace.

3.
Misled we are,
All going astray.
Save us, lord,
Our fervent pray.
Wonder thy ways
To turn our face.
Adore thy feet,
Your Divine Grace.

4.
Forgotten Krishna,
We fallen souls

Paying most heavy
The illusion's toll.
Darkness around,
All distress.
The only hope,
Your Divine Grace.

5.
Message of service
Thou hast brought,
A meaningful life
As Chaitanya wrought.
Unknown to all,
It's full of brace.
That's your gift,
Your Divine Grace.

6.
Absolute is sentient
Thou hast proved.
Impersonal calamity
Thou hast removed.
This gives a life
Anew and fresh.
Worship thy feet,
Your Divine Grace.

7.
Had you not come,
who had told
The message of Krishna,
Forceful and bold.
That's your right,



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You have the mace.
Save me, a fallen,
Your Divine Grace.

8.
The line of service
As drawn by you
Is pleasing and healthy
Like morning dew.
The oldest of all,
But in new dress.
Miracle done,
Your Divine Grace.



Homages from
THE GBC

Anuttama Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Throughout time, many great devotees and *ācāryas* have traversed the earthly realms to awaken, educate, and uplift society. They point out the fearsome dangers of materialistic life and guide the world in attaining the ultimate goal of life: rekindling our eternal relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Due to the disqualifications we suffer in this Age of Kali, it is especially difficult now to overcome forgetfulness of God. And so Lord Caitanya descended to teach *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, the chanting of God's names, to save the unqualified people of this age.

On this day of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, we rejoice in knowing that Lord Caitanya chose and empowered you, His dearmost servant and representative, to spread that chanting all over the world. Today ISKCON members and friends around the world gather in temples and homes to glorify and remember you. We stand in awe of your achievements and your unparalleled love. We fall at your feet in gratitude for your presence in our lives.

Yet the question remains: If we feel genuine gratitude and appreciation for your wondrous gifts, what actions, thoughts, or life changes should such emotions evoke? What are we supposed to do now, and what are we to do later?

Words of praise on this one-day-a-year event are easy to recite. Trying to reciprocate with you on a deeper level, trying to somehow begin to repay you for your immeasurable kindness and mercy, is an entirely different matter.

Within the ISKCON society we have many exalted devotees who bless us with their association. We wish to serve, love, and appreciate all of them. But we must never forget that it was you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who carried Lord Caitanya's message around the world. You are the founder-*ācārya* and pre-eminent *śikṣā-guru* for all of ISKCON, for all time to come.

You brought the holy name to each and every one of us. You gave us Lord Kṛṣṇa, the divine cowherd boy. You gave us Deity worship. You gave us ISKCON. You gave us our temples. You gave us *bhakti*. You gave us *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*. You gave us the Bhaktivedanta purports and the *Bhāgavatam*, the *Bhagavad-Gīta As-It-Is*, and the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. You gave us *japa*, sixteen rounds every day. You gave us the ISKCON morning program. You gave us book distribution and the BBT. You gave us the Sunday Feast. You gave us the Māyāpur Festival. You gave us sweet rice and *halavā*! You gave us so much. You gave us life.

Remembering all these things, how can we not be grateful? How can we not want to praise you? How can we not try to repay our debt to you? But to do so, we must first get serious.

Far beyond a simple offering of words on this auspicious day, we need to consider what really pleases you. What can we do to satisfy you? Each of us, small or big, old or young, rich or poor, initiated or not, needs to think, "What can I do for Śrīla Prabhupāda?" We need to understand your desires for us and to assist you in your mission: to awaken love for Lord Kṛṣṇa in every heart.

Due to our immaturity we tend to forget that helping you by teaching or preaching on your behalf is different and more difficult than parroting your words or expressing our own sometimes self-centered advice and realizations.



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To take Lord Kṛṣṇa's message to others, you taught, is an art. It's not easy to attract forgetful souls back to Kṛṣṇa's *sevā* and Vaiṣṇava *saṅga*. It requires humility, wisdom, and a willingness to communicate to others in such a way that their hearts and minds open, in a way that inspires them to receive the transcendental message. Broadcasting a message is simple. Evoking an audience's openness and eagerness to hear is more difficult. As you ordered us, we must preach according to "time, place, and circumstances," all the while praying to the Lord that we become His puppet.

We also hope to remember, as St. Francis taught, to "Preach all day, and when necessary speak a few words." We do not serve you well if we talk high philosophy yet fail to offer practical examples for others to follow. Down-to-earth examples of God consciousness are required: To be exemplary Kṛṣṇa conscious spouses, dedicated to our families *and* your mission; to be exemplary in our work, in our communities, and in our friendships. Otherwise, how are people to learn? Following your example, we need to sacrifice our lives to become humble examples for others.

You also stressed that we cannot become Kṛṣṇa conscious alone. To try do so is "a hallucination," you taught. We need to practice *saṅkīrtana*, not just *kīrtana*. We need to love Kṛṣṇa and His devotees, not just Kṛṣṇa.

Thus, we need ISKCON—one of your greatest gifts. To serve your society requires us to invest deeply in building and expanding ISKCON's worldwide communities and structure today and in the future. To commit to building an ISKCON powerful enough and pure enough to help bring about a "re-spiritualization of the entire human society." Such an exalted mission you have called us to.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, let our words today not be hollow praise. Instead, please let the desire to teach, to set an example, and to serve your mission awaken deeply in my heart, and in the hearts of all your followers.

Your servant,

Anuttama Dāsa

Badrinārāyaṇ 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*

As I sat down to write this year's Vyāsa-pūjā offering, I considered, "What is the essence of what I am feeling? What do I really want to say?" I kept coming back to the same themes. Desiring to be succinct, so as to not lose focus or take up too much of the reader's time, I stated those themes in the form of four questions.

I then thought, "Rather than responding to these questions with my own imperfect expressions, wouldn't it be sweeter and more valuable to quote from *sāstra* and from our *ācāryas*?"

With the above as an explanation, here are those four questions and answers.

If you had not come, what would have been the destiny of this world?



HOMAGES FROM THE GBC



“O learned one, in this iron Age of Kali men almost always have but short lives. They are quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unlucky, and, above all, always disturbed.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.10)

“O King, religion, truthfulness, cleanliness, tolerance, mercy, duration of life, physical strength, and memory will all diminish day by day because of the powerful influence of the Age of Kali.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 12.2.1)

Before meeting you, what was my own condition?

“I was born in a low family, and my associates are all low-class men. I myself am fallen and am the lowest of men. Indeed, I have passed my whole life fallen in the well of sinful materialism.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 20.99)

“In this world there is not a single abominable deed I have not done thousands of times. Now that my sins are bearing fruit, and I have no place to turn, I come before You and cry out, ‘O Mukunda!’” (Śrī Yāmunācārya’s *Stotra-ratna*, 23)

Having taken shelter of you, what is my duty?

Lord Caitanya said, “I am the only gardener. If I do not distribute these fruits, what shall I do with them? How many fruits can I alone eat?” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi* 9.37)

Lord Caitanya ordered, “Distribute this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world. Let people eat these fruits and ultimately become free from old age and death.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi* 9.39)

How can I express my gratitude for the life you have given me?

“The line of service
As drawn by you
Is pleasing and healthy
Like morning dew.
The oldest of all,
But in new dress.
Miracle done,
Your Divine Grace.”
(Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Vyāsa-pūjā offering, 1935)

“My dear Lord, . . . because of my association with material desires, one after another, I was gradually falling into a blind well full of snakes, following the general populace. But Your servant Nārada Muni kindly accepted me as his disciple and instructed me how to achieve this transcendental position.

“Therefore, my first duty is to serve him. How could I leave his service?” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.9.29)

Conclusion

Given the above questions and answers, how could I ever leave your service, Śrīla Prabhupāda? Rather, let me always remember my incalculable good fortune and spend my remaining time learning the art of surrender and service from you.

Your insignificant order carrier,

Badrinārāyaṇ Swami



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Bhakti Caitanya Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you, the savior of the fallen.

Recently I had a fairly major health situation, during which I was very uncomfortable and in some difficulty. It gave me clear insights into the nature of my material body and my entanglement in this material world. The insights were clear, but not very nice. I have been caught up in this world for a long time, and I still have a long way to go to get out. I need your mercy. That is clearer than ever before.

What you offer us is a great step into another dimension. I have had so many experiences of that, and yesterday was another one. We had the first day of our four-day Ratha-yātrā festival in Durban, South Africa, and it was truly amazing. Among other things, it was an unseasonably cold day for Durban at that time of the year, around 10 or 12 degrees Celsius, but the thousands of devotees and members of the public who participated in the festival or witnessed it were transported into another world, a wonderful world of transcendental joy and inspiration. Even though I was practically freezing, sitting on Lord Balarāma's chariot at the head of the procession, still it was so heartwarming to see the happiness that was spilling out in all directions.

This is typical of the gifts you have given us, Śrīla Prabhupāda. What would my life have been yesterday if I had not received a drop of your mercy many years ago? Simply a development of the pain and discomfort I was feeling in the hospital a few weeks ago, as I struggled with my damaged body. But by your grace everything has changed so much, and even though yesterday was windy and cold, the feelings of transcendence overcame that, and everyone was in ecstasy, including many of the spectators.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you often expressed appreciation for the Ratha-yātrā festival. In 1972, at the Ratha-yātrā festival in London, you said:

Even if you do not understand the philosophy, even you do not read the books, simply if you take part in these three things—chanting, dancing, and taking part in eating the *prasādam*—your life will gradually progress in spiritual advancement of life. And if you continue this, then some day will come, even in this life it may come, that you will understand what is Kṛṣṇa. And as soon as you understand Kṛṣṇa, then after leaving this body you go back to home, back to Godhead, directly. This is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Those who have read *Bhagavad-gītā*— Lord Kṛṣṇa says,

*janma karma me divyaṁ yo jñāti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mām eti kaunteya*

Simply by understanding Kṛṣṇa—Kṛṣṇa's appearance, Kṛṣṇa's disappearance, Kṛṣṇa's activities . . . this Ratha-yātrā is one of the activities of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore to take part in the Ratha-yātrā festival means to associate with Kṛṣṇa directly. So in this way, if we associate with Kṛṣṇa's name, Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, Kṛṣṇa's qualities, Kṛṣṇa's form, then gradually we transcend this material existence.

As time goes on I continually become more amazed by you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. What you have given us defies material description. It is simply your mercy, descending from the transcendental platform to us here in this world. Please continue to give me this mercy. There is nothing else of value in my life.

Your humble servant,

Bhakti Caitanya Swami



HOMAGES FROM THE GBC



Bhakti Chāru Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this most auspicious day marking your divine appearance, I beg you to kindly allow me to become a speck of dust at your lotus feet.

Although I am totally unqualified, this year your followers have assigned me the responsibility of providing leadership for your glorious movement in the role of GBC Chairman. I am overwhelmed with this important task, and out of sheer helplessness I feel the need to take shelter of your lotus feet and seek your blessings and guidance.

You taught us that to properly represent Kṛṣṇa we have to become pure. Only then will Kṛṣṇa's mercy flow through us and enable us to accomplish anything on His behalf. In the course of time I have become aware that actual purity is synonymous with our surrender to you. Therefore, to properly represent Kṛṣṇa I have to first become your representative and try to execute your mission without any personal ambition or agenda.

As the perfect representative of your spiritual master, you showed us how to make the mission of the spiritual master one's life and soul. From the day you met your Guru Mahārāja, you dedicated yourself completely to following his instructions and fulfilling his desires. You always carried him in your heart, and as a result you became the recipient of his mercy and helped fulfill Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's prediction that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement would spread to every town and village.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's prediction can never be in vain, and He sent you to fulfill it. You performed the greatest miracle by spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world in just ten years' time. But the ultimate goal has not yet been accomplished: the movement has spread worldwide, but it has not yet reached every town and village. You left the rest of the work to be carried on by your loyal followers, functioning as your representatives. You knew that it would take generations to achieve the ultimate fulfillment of Lord Caitanya's prediction, and therefore you made the most wonderful arrangement to continue your mission after your disappearance from this planet, through the institution of ISKCON.

This magnificent work of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness could have stopped after your disappearance, just as it did in many other spiritual organizations—even your spiritual master's—after the disappearance of their charismatic founders. But your creation of ISKCON and your emphatic instruction to your followers to work collectively within its structure saved your movement from falling apart and assured its expansion throughout the world.

Your ISKCON is your greatest benediction and our only hope to save the planet from disaster. It will establish the golden age in the middle of this most degraded age of hypocrisy and quarrel, vanquishing the darkness of Kali-yuga with the brilliant light of your transcendental teachings. Dharma will be reinstated in its full glory, and humankind will achieve its ultimate perfection, reviving our loving relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And so we must realize that our only strength lies in our unity as an expression of our love for Your Divine Grace and of our determination to function within your Society.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless us so that we can create this spirit of unity, forgetting our superficial differences and casting aside our petty personal ambitions. Let us commit ourselves cent percent to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana* movement, recognizing the great need for it in the precarious condition of this world. Let us demonstrate real benevolence by offering the love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to the world's suffering multitude.

Please bless me so that I can become your genuine servant by becoming the servant of those who are serving you so sincerely.

Aspiring to remain forever at your lotus feet,

Bhakti Chāru Swami



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



Bhaktimārga Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Another year has passed,
A time that leapt so fast,
When services were covered,
When masters were smothered
With love and affection
For delivery of direction.
This thread of guidance
Holds and binds us
To the feet of the Lord,
Something no one can afford,
For it is priceless,
Being the ultimate kindness
For lifting the soul
From a deep dark hole.

Leaving the *dhāma* behind,
A new comfort to find—
It was in 1965—
The ocean you did survive
On ship, with beads n' books.
There were stares and looks
When you landed on the shore
And made that big score
In the city of fashion,
Of darkness and passion.

There was snow and cold,
But you were so bold.
There was noise and heat;
You said “no” to defeat.
The place was confused,
People being used.
You offered them freedom,
A new kind of kingdom,
Where Prime Entity rules—
Not taught in the schools.

You went from there
To destinations everywhere,
Touching a morbid heart,
Giving a boost and a start
To anyone and everyone.
Some stay, some run.
Then going beyond borders,
You intro’ed the four orders.
You pulled in the shakers,
You drew in the makers,
And those on merchandise,
Plus those simply wise.

You tell of two Lords
Who sing out Their chords,
Who dance with such grace,
Bringing awe to one’s face.
Draped in fine folds,
In blues and in golds,
They extend Their arms—
A part of Their charms.
Unknown by and large,
The Lords make Their charge,
Dispensing the Name,
Telling us the game,
To conquer the hate,
Which makes Them so great.

There’s you and the two,
On the chain of but few.
You shine in an age
When rare there’s a sage.
In a world that’s so bleak,
You stand out unique.
Keep me in the crowd
Though my faults are so loud.



HOMAGES FROM THE GBC



I beg for the chance
To make it in your dance.
“Make me dance, make me dance,
O my Lord, make me dance.”
Giving out so much,
It’s the heart that you touch.

Your servant,

Bhaktimārga Swami

Bhakti Puruṣottama Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I am a very insignificant soul who joined your movement thirty-nine years ago and have been serving you ever since. Though I never met you personally or saw you directly, I have been seeing you through your literature and through your dearmost ISKCON society. You created the ISKCON ship to take people across the material ocean. I was fortunate to get chance to board this ship, though the ride has not always been smooth. I have served your society selflessly and wholeheartedly, without any reservation, simply working for the development of the society.

You have fulfilled the prediction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu that the holy name would be spread all over the world. While you were on the planet, by your direct endeavor so many ISKCON centers were established all over the world, in many big cities. By your order my Guru Mahārāja, Jayapatāka Swami, introduced into ISKCON the Nama-haṭṭa preaching program, which was originally inaugurated by Lord Nityānanda. Through this program, ISKCON has spread the holy name to thousands of villages in India. Thus Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s prediction is being translated into reality:

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

“In every town and village on this earth, the glories of My name will be chanted.”

Recently, on the order of your dear disciple Jayapatāka Swami, we have started the ISKCON Tribal Care Initiative, whose purpose is to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness to tribal people living in the forests and mountains. Now the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa will not remain limited to cities and villages but will reach to the forests and mountains. As Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has sung, *gr̥he thāko, vane thāko, sadā ‘hari’ bole’ ḍāko*: “Whether you live in a house or in the forest, always chant the holy name of Lord Hari.”

I have a strong desire to help your movement by spreading the holy name among tribal people. Please bless me so that I can succeed in this endeavor.

Your humble servant,

Bhakti Puruṣottama Swami



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



Bhaktivaibhava Swami

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Preaching Mood

A mood is a pervading tone, spirit, feeling, etc. A mood also depends on time, place, circumstances, realization, audience, and emphasis. Śrīla Prabhupāda displayed different moods when he was preaching to journalists, scientists, religionists, parents, or his own disciples. He was expert in dealing with different people in different ways. And he had a great sense of humor.

Initially it was not easy for Śrīla Prabhupāda to present Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a country which was so far away from the Vedic culture. He had to deal with revolutionaries, challenging and drug-addicted youngsters, who did not easily accept anything unless it was genuine.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was empowered like nobody else to spread the message of Godhead to the world in such a way that people could understand it, accept it, and start to practice it in their own lives. In challenging situations his rhetorical Aikido was so sudden, swift, and final that usually the questioning ended after his answer.

Śrīla Prabhupāda displayed a unique and attractive way of dealing with different types of people. Still, he had an overall mood in his preaching of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to any audience—he preached without compromise. He did not allow the message of Godhead, handed over to him by the previous *ācāryas*, to be undermined, weakened, damaged, harmed, jeopardized, discredited, dishonored, or embarrassed.

But we sincerely serve Krishna, we are sincere servants of His Lordship, and we present things as presented by Krishna, and that is the test of our bona fide position and our bona fide presentation. [Letter to Mukunda Dāsa, 1968]

He had no interest in flattering his audience by compromising the philosophy and practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He could have attracted millions of followers right away. But because he preached so boldly and forcefully, without compromise, many in the audience did not like it, because it was a challenge to their comfort zone of sense gratification, and to their sentiment.

Character building is the groundwork for seating Krishna consciousness, and the Vedic injunction is that one can advance in spiritual life by following the rules of austerity and celibacy. We do not bluff our students that he has liberty to do all sorts of nonsense and at the same time advance in spiritual understanding. And because we are a little bit strict in this matter, we have not a very large number of followers, neither do we want any large number of nonsense followers. We want only one moon at night, and we do not care for millions of stars. [Letter to Jaya Mazo, 1968]

He never catered his preaching to the mundane expectations of his audience. He rather uncompromisingly displayed loyalty to his spiritual master and the previous *ācāryas*. Because he preached without compromise, he exposed so-called leaders of society, phony gurus and yogis, and bogus scientists and religionists. He delivered Kṛṣṇa consciousness as it is, for the maximum benefit of everyone. This is his true compassion.



HOMAGES FROM THE GBC



A doctor administers the medicine as it is prescribed. He does not dilute the medicine in any way and thus preserves its full curative potency.

You have to deal tactfully in your preaching. Do not compromise the truth, but speak palatably so he does not reject it but accepts it. That is preaching. [Letter to Badrinārāyaṇ Dāsa, 1975]

Some people feel attracted to slogans like “One who knows does not speak, and one who speaks does not know.” It might sound very interesting and esoteric. However, one who knows *does* speak, glorifying the Supreme Lord with all his intelligence twenty-four hours a day. Śrīla Prabhupāda knew the Absolute Truth, and he spoke about it tirelessly. And he still speaks to humanity in the form of his books, his lectures, and his International Society for Krishna Consciousness, without compromise.

My Guru Maharaja never compromised in his preaching, nor will I, nor should any of my students. We are firmly convinced that Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and all others are His part and parcel servants. This we must declare boldly to the whole world, that they should not foolishly dream of world peace unless they are prepared to surrender fully to Krishna as Supreme Lord. [Letter to Girirāja Dāsa, 1972]

Another feature of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s uncompromising preaching was that he always stressed the point that the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, and no other process, is the most effective process to attain liberation.

Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement stresses the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra only, whereas those who do not know the secret of success for this Age of Kali unnecessarily indulge in the cultivation of knowledge, the practice of mystic yoga, or the performance of fruitive activities or useless austerities. They are simply wasting their time and misleading their followers. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 17.24, purport]

When Śrīla Prabhupāda preached, he made it very clear what his position was and hence what his relationship was with those who were lost in this dark Age of Kali. Everyone felt not only comfortable but in fact sheltered in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s association, because he himself took complete shelter of Kṛṣṇa and certainly felt comfortable in that position.

Once a journalist mentioned to Śrīla Prabhupāda that he must encounter a lot of problems when traveling all over the world. Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, “I don’t have any problems. You have problems.” The relationship was clear. Everyone knew what Śrīla Prabhupāda expected from others, and others knew what they could expect from him—he made it very clear and unmistakable.

The entire world is eternally indebted to Śrīla Prabhupāda for the mercy and compassion he has shown the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s eternal servant,

Bhaktivaibhava Swami



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



Bhakti Vijñāna Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your feet. All glories to you.

First I would like to tell you something pleasing, something that will give joy to your heart. After so much struggle—years and years of attempts, mistakes, and heavy lessons—we finally acquired a suitable building for the future temple in Moscow. Of course, there is still a long way to go, so our prayer to you at this moment is, “Please continue to shower your mercy upon those who are trying to do something in your service, however imperfect this service may be.”

Now, after reporting this to you, I would like to ask your permission to confess to you, to reveal my heart to you and all your sincere followers. Recently the stress accumulated over many years brought me to a state of crisis, and I had to leave Moscow and take shelter in Vraja, near Govardhana. Here I am searching within my heart, trying to reevaluate everything I have been doing all these years. I see very clearly that my motivations were not pure; otherwise the stress would not have accumulated—there is no stress in selfless service: there is only bliss, nothing else. The very fact that the stress was there betrays the fact that *ahaṅkāra* was fully active. I realized that I had created a false self-image, which is now being destroyed, and my only hope and prayer at this time is, “Whatever should be destroyed, let it be destroyed, so that something real can be built on the foundation that you [it is very clear to me] laid down in me many years ago, when the first feeble faith in Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, entered my heart by your mercy. Obviously, it is time to change something in my life, but please allow me to continue serving you in whatever capacity you feel is best. I just want to keep serving the wonderful devotees—your disciples and other followers—because without this service there is no meaning in life.”

I know that I do not even deserve an answer to this prayer of mine. But something gives me hope. When I read your books, you chastise me on practically every page. It is painful, but at the same it is blissful, because it means you have not given up on me. That is my only hope, and let it remain my only hope for the future.

Your fallen servant,

Bhakti Vijñāna Goswami

Bhūrijana Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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



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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Western culture reveres as a hero one who has risen from poverty to wealth, but the ancient culture spoken of in the *Bhāgavatam* reveres the opposite: one who renounces kingly wealth for a life of poverty and spiritual pursuits.

But West, East, and in-between—members of all cultures—revere those who selflessly sacrifice their lives for the benefit of others. According to their capacity and their own depth, such souls attempt to heal the world's miseries and thus are universally appreciated. That appreciation is natural, for in a world filled with people bent on selfish pursuits, generous-hearted souls are rare.

Can we claim that those whose capacity and depth are greatest are indeed the greatest amongst these great souls? The *vraja-gopīs* make that claim, and by so doing they point directly to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as the greatest of the selfless benefactors of humanity:

*tava kathāmrtaṁ tapta-jīvanam
kavibhir īḍitaṁ kalmaṣāpaham
śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ śrīmad ātataṁ
bhūvi grṇanti ye bhūri-dā janāḥ*

“The nectar of Your [Kṛṣṇa's] words and the descriptions of Your activities are the life and soul of those suffering in this material world. These narrations, transmitted by learned sages, eradicate one's sinful reactions and bestow good fortune upon whoever hears them. These narrations are broadcast all over the world and are filled with spiritual power. Certainly those who spread the message of Godhead are most munificent.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.32.9)

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself confirms the greatness of the selfless service that the *vraja-gopīs* have described (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 14.10–15). And it is also clear, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that these words of the *gopīs* describe your life and glorify you as the “most munificent.”

The generosity of spirit and self-sacrifice it took for you to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world is remarkable: You fully lived for others; you tolerated unlimited personal inconveniences; and you managed an institution so late in your life.

And you personally guided so many sincere yet strong-minded and rebellious individuals. You captured them with your love, and they in turned loved you and sacrificed their youth for your pleasure, in your movement. Your affection-soaked association encouraged them to co-operate as they assisted you in your service of fulfilling the mission of your Guru Mahārāja.

All this you did as you carried and distributed a gift of unequalled weight—the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I would like to express my personal gratitude to you, because your gifts to the world, with insignificant me being a part of that world, are the most precious, cherished aspects of my life. Please accept the short list below as a gesture of my appreciation, since your gifts are unlimited and therefore far beyond the capacity of dwarflike me to enumerate:

You have made known to the world Vaiṣṇava *sadācāra*, guidelines for behavior of the highest ethical standards, which simultaneously is compassionate, considerate, and pleasing to all, from ants to humans, and is meant to fully support a soul's highest spiritual aspirations.

In the form of *japa*, *kīrtana*, and *saṅkīrtana*, you have spread Kṛṣṇa's all-potent holy names throughout the world. Where would any of us be without your gift of the chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy names?

Your books, headed by *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, point



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out and nourish the greatest of goals for a soul—intimate service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. And those same books systematically guide us to that most wondrous of places, Goloka Vṛndāvana. What would I do without your books?

The way of life you have given us—beginning with early to bed and early to rise, and including *sādhana*, *prasādam-etarianism*, Deity *sevā* and other *sevās*, study, and meaningful friendships—all satisfy and spiritually uplift one while forming a congenial and complete, non-dual, Kṛṣṇa-centered way of life.

What can I say of Śrīdhāma Māyāpur and Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma? Māyāpur is ever-expanding, forgiving, and generous. Vṛndāvana is an expansion of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Vṛndāvana is life-giving, sweet, and unfathomably deep. To live there or to even visit Vraja leaves upon the heart an indelible impression that forces one to return. And sweet is Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandira, which hosts Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, and Rādhā-Śyāmasundara, your *samādhi-mandira*, and your house, which simultaneously is sobering and the deepest of welcoming shelters. Thank you for bringing us all to Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana.

But, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I consider the greatest of your gifts to be you yourself. You offered us your association, and that association—association with an exalted soul, a servant of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, a servant of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and a servant of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara—was the actual magic that spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world. It was your association that turned material night into spiritual day, and crows into swans, and that awarded the lame with the strength to cross mountains.

Your presence surcharged all your other gifts, and in that rarefied, holy presence, your other gifts were also present—the holy names, your books, the association of devotees, Vaiṣṇava *sadācāra*, and the service of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara. Indeed, you also were a walking Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma.

Your gifts clearly are sufficient; my sincerity is the only lack. Staying in the soothing moonlight of your presence is my only hope.

Your humbled servant,

Bhūrijana Dāsa

Bīr Krishna dās Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Serving your mission is my goal of life. In my service to you as GBC and preacher, I am endeavoring to please you by remembering your instruction that our love for you will be demonstrated by our cooperation and love for each other.

Cooperation is not simply an external affair, just as devotional service is not simply an external affair. According to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, pure devotional service is defined as serving Kṛṣṇa by actively doing what He wants and doing it with the intention of giving Him happiness. So, cooperation means acting cooperatively, and simultaneously with one's heart loving those with whom one is cooperating.



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This is quite a challenge. Everyone has a different point of view, different needs, and different strategies for carrying out your mission. The devotees who are dedicated to your mission are individuals with sometimes radically different ways of approaching your service. Still, their love for you is unquestionable.

These different approaches to serving your mission may sometimes cause confusion and stimulate dissension and faultfinding. In this way Kali tries to enter. Kali is the personality of this age, the age of quarrel and disagreement. Without agreement, your mission will not achieve success.

You state this in a letter written in 1973:

Following in the footprints of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu:

*trnad api su-nicena taror iva sahisnuna
amanina manadena kirtaniya sada harih*

“One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street; one should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige and should be ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly.”

We must always remember this verse and be as tolerant as the tree, as we execute the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Without this mentality, we cannot be successful.

Material nature means dissension and disagreement, especially in this Kali yuga. But, for this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement its success will depend on agreement, even though there are varieties of engagements. In the material world there are varieties, but there is no agreement. In the spiritual world there are varieties, but there is agreement. That is the difference. The materialist without being able to adjust the varieties and the disagreements makes everything zero. They cannot come into agreement with varieties, but if we keep Kṛṣṇa in the center, then there will be agreement in varieties. This is called unity in diversity. I am therefore suggesting that all our men meet in Mayapur every year during the birth anniversary of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. With all GBC and senior men present we should discuss how to make unity in diversity. But, if we fight on account of diversity, then it is simply the material platform. Please try to maintain the philosophy of unity in diversity. That will make our movement successful. One section of men have already gone out, therefore we must be very careful to maintain unity in diversity, and remember the story in Aesop’s Fables of the father of many children with the bundle of sticks. When the father asked his children to break the bundle of sticks wrapped in a bag, none of them could do it. But, when they removed the sticks from the bag, and tried one by one, the sticks were easily broken. So, this is the strength in unity. If we are bunched up, we can never be broken, but when divided, then we can become broken very easily. [Letter to Kīrtanānanda Swami, 18 October 1973]

In other letters you write:

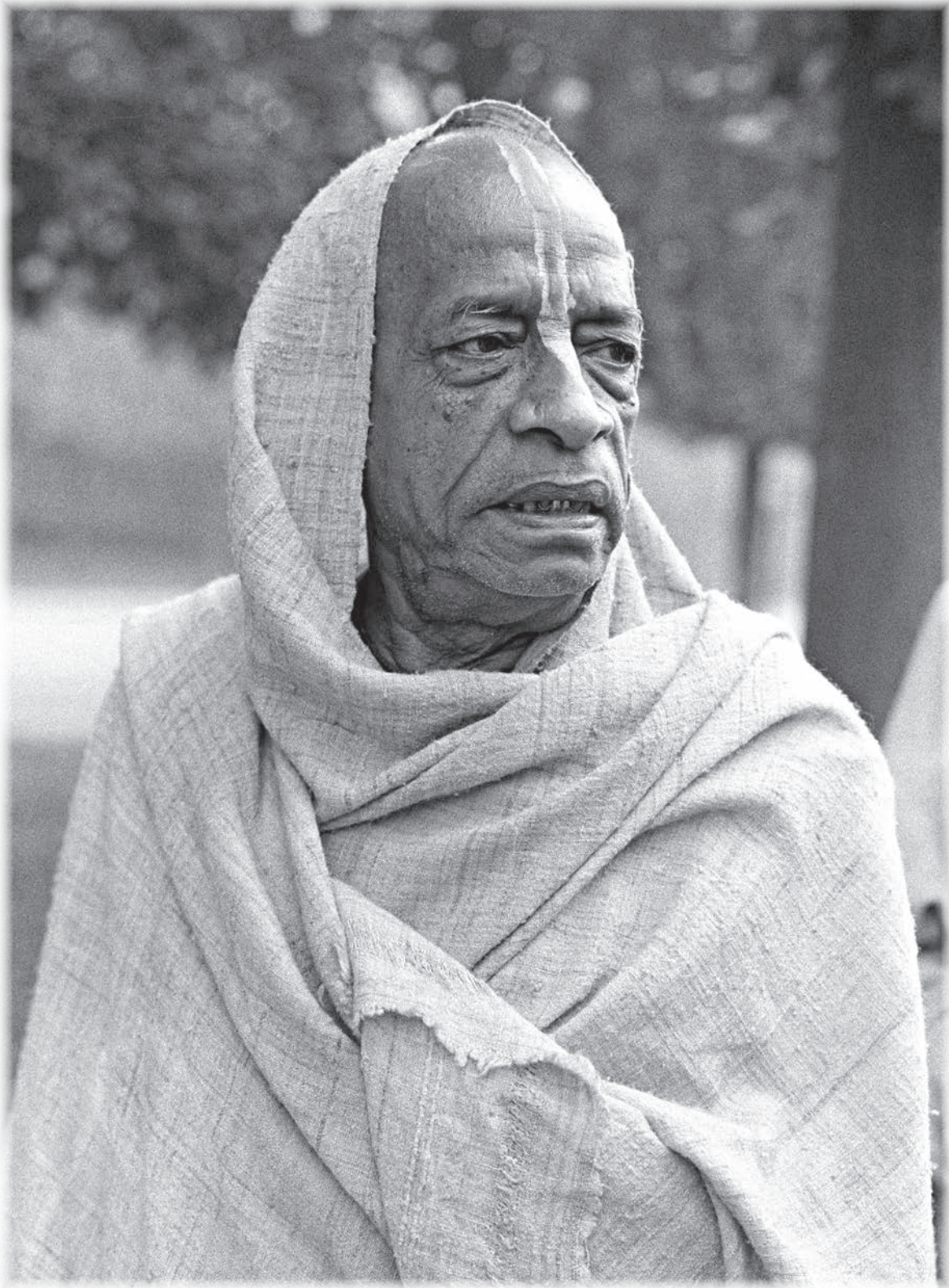
Of course, disagreements may be there, but there should not be dissension. [Letter to Umāpati Dāsa, 30 May 1968]

As individuals there may be disagreement sometimes, but that is quite natural. Even in ordinary family affairs there is sometimes disagreement, but that does not mean immediately the disagreeing members shall leave the family. [Letter to Uttamaśloka Dāsa, 7 June 1969]

In the spiritual world there is also competition, but the center is always Kṛṣṇa. In the material world there is competition, but the center is sense gratification. That is the difference. So, competition, disagreement, or even dissension, if they are there and the center is Kṛṣṇa, such disagreement is not material. Even in Kṛṣṇa Loka, there are rival parties of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī whose name



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is Candrabali, and there is competition between the two parties how to serve Krishna the best.
[Letter to Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, 3 April 1969]

In other words, we should always remain loyal to your mission and to your followers.

So, don't think the party means some opposite party. No. Everyone has got for the advanced devotee to serve the Lord in a particular way so that the Lord may be more satisfied. That is their intention. Sometimes we also have some parties in the temple: someone wants to dress the Deity in a way, another wants to . . . Of course, they are not transgressing the rules and regulation, but still, everyone wants that "I shall serve the Lord in this particular way." We cannot change the original rules and regulation, but there is variety. We are not impersonalist. Every person has got to serve the Lord in a particular way, and that is allowed. The central point is Kṛṣṇa. So although there are parties, if the central point is Kṛṣṇa, so there is no dissension. It is a competition, that "My godbrother, my godsister, is serving such a way. She is so well versed in this art. Why not try myself to do something?" This is variety. That is not this ordinary party strife if we make Kṛṣṇa the center. [Class on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 1.15, Dallas, 4 March 1975]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we can see that you expected and even encouraged diversity and sometimes competition in serving Kṛṣṇa. You recognized that we are all individuals and encouraged that individuality in Kṛṣṇa's service. Of course, diversity should not come to the point of deviating from the practices, principles, philosophy, and instructions you have given us.

To allow diversity without dissension is a challenging task. If we learn to love each other, appreciate one another's sincerity, without condemnation, your movement's progress will be unhindered.

In the purport to *Upadeśāmṛta* 4 you state:

The life of the Kṛṣṇa conscious society is nourished by these six types of loving exchange [giving gifts, accepting gifts, revealing one's mind in confidence, inquiring confidentially, accepting *prasādam*, and offering *prasādam*].

This is the method Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given us to always remain loving towards one another, regardless of differences of opinion. I pray at your lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that we may always engage in these loving exchanges with one another, appreciating one another's sincerity and devotion even when there are differences of opinion.

Your servant,

Bir Krishna dās Goswami



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Devāmrita Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Among your innumerable *cintāmaṇi* characteristics, your transcendental facet of “reverse thinking” delights me, educating my soul.

Instead of following the “normal, logical” direction of an assertion, a reverse thinker turns the direction around (or turns around an important element in that assertion), consequently revealing an unexpected outcome.

For several months I have been meditating on the following divine paradox, for both purification and exultation.

Yes, truly society is most degraded today. But instead of merely lamenting its fallen state, or even hiding away from it, your devotees should see the immense silver lining glittering within the dark cloud. The *bhakti* reality is that the more polluted humanity is, the greater the opportunity is for serving and pleasing Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This you prove brilliantly in the following example of “reverse thinking,” from a lecture you gave in August of 1974 on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.5.23, in Vṛndāvana:

So Kali-yuga, people are suffering. They’re all fallens, all meat-eaters, all drunkards, all fifth-grade, sixth-grade men. They are puffed-up, but actually they are fifth-, sixth- and tenth-grade men, not even gentlemen. Therefore my Guru Mahārāja used to say that “No gentleman can live here. The society is so polluted.”

And now for the contrarian hook, the unexpected divine reversal:

But there is opportunity of serving Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Because the society is so fallen, therefore there is good opportunity to serve Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Because Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s incarnation is to reclaim these fallen souls. So you have got the opportunity to serve Śrī Caitanya, to please Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, because He wanted the fallen souls to be delivered.

Kṛṣṇa also wanted. *Yadā yadā hi glānir bhavati bhārata, dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata.* Kṛṣṇa comes . . . This is . . . God’s business is going on like that. He’s very anxious to reclaim all these rascals rotting in this material world. Kṛṣṇa is always anxious. He comes Himself, He comes as devotee, He comes . . . sends His bona fide servant, bona fide son.

So this is Kṛṣṇa’s concern, to reclaim all these fallen souls. Therefore these are the opportunity.

O eternal father and master, you once described that a Vaiṣṇava is the greatest opportunist. Now, as an aspiring servitor of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa combined, I can more fully grasp the preciously rare reach of that *bhakti* opportunism. I beg for the spiritual strength and acumen to change my vision, so that it aligns with yours.

Seeking your unconditional service,

Devāmrita Swami



HOMAGES FROM THE GBC



Giridhārī Swami

The Greatest Devotee of Lord Hari

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

In late February I had the great privilege of residing in Vraja, near Govardhana, for just under two weeks. Govardhana's powerful and sweet spiritual atmosphere supported deeper hearing and chanting, association with dear godbrothers, and deeper meditation on you and my service to you.

One morning while on Govardhana *parikramā*, I recalled a verse very dear to your heart:

*hantāyam adrir abalā hari-dāsa-varyo
yad rāma-kṛṣṇa-caraṇa-sparaśa-pramodaḥ
mānaṁ tanoti saha-go-gaṇayos tayor yat
pānīya-sūyavasa-kandara-kandamūlaiḥ*

“Of all the devotees, this Govardhana Hill is the best! O my friends, this hill supplies Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, along with Their calves, cows, and cowherd friends, with all kinds of necessities—water for drinking, very soft grass, caves, fruits, flowers, and vegetables. In this way, the hill offers respects to the Lord. Being touched by the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, Govardhana Hill appears very jubilant.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.21.18)

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī reveals that this verse was spoken by Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī Herself—a very significant fact, considering that She is Kṛṣṇa's feminine counterpart, His own pleasure potency (*hlādinī-śakti*). Indeed, Her love for Kṛṣṇa is so great that even Kṛṣṇa Himself cannot fully comprehend it. Therefore He comes as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu just to understand the depth of Rādhārāṇī's love for Him. Still, She says that Govardhana is *hari-dāsa-varyo*, the greatest devotee of Lord Hari.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains in detail what makes Govardhana the greatest of all servants. He says that Govardhana's hard rocks become as soft as warm putty to cushion Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet and to preserve their auspicious impressions. Feeling the touch of the Lord's lotus feet, Govardhana displays symptoms of ecstasy. He perspires in the form of melting stones, his hairs stand on end as erect grass and creepers, and tears flow from His eyes as gushing waterfalls. Govardhana's waterfalls offer cool, fragrant water for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to drink and use for washing Their feet and mouths. The Hill provides liquid refreshments such as honey, mango juice, and *pīlu* juice to quench Their thirst; abundant *dūrvā* grass for making ritualistic hand wash (*arghya*); soft and delicious grasses to nourish the cows and enable them to produce abundant sweet milk; many caves to provide ideal places for Kṛṣṇa and His associates to stay, no matter how hot, cold, or wet the weather may be; soft edible roots; jewels to decorate the body; flat rocks for sitting; and mirrors in the form of highly polished stones. Thus Govardhana is a completely selfless servant, one who only gives and never takes. He has only Kṛṣṇa's interest in mind—never His own.

As my *parikramā* and meditation on this verse continued, a very strong realization came to me. Like Śrī Govardhana, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you too were a completely selfless servant. That's what made you extraordinary. You accepted all challenges and austerities to fulfill the instructions of your spiritual master. From beginning to end, your journey was never easy. But you overcame obstacle after obstacle to establish your spiritual master's mission.

Your teachings, whether in the form of your books, letters, recorded words, or actions, melted your followers' stonelike hearts, which were filled with impersonalism and voidism, and made their softened hearts into a cushioned place upon which Kṛṣṇa could rest His tender lotus feet, just as Śrī Govardhana did with His puttylike stones.



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It is absolutely essential that we, your faithful followers, study your books daily so that the purification process continues uninterrupted. If we fail to do this, the dust of impure desires will accumulate and again encase our hearts in stone.

As Kṛṣṇa did with Śrī Govardhana, He also touched you with His lotus feet—and you savored that ecstasy. As a true Vaiṣṇava *ācārya*, you generally kept that ecstasy to yourself. But sometimes it just could not be contained. On numerous occasions, as you called out the name of your Lord, your external senses became inert, your hairs stood on end, and tears filled your eyes. Kṛṣṇa answered your call. Saturated with such love for Kṛṣṇa, you were able to uplift the most fallen and also give them a small taste of that love.

It is absolutely essential as well that we, your faithful followers, connect others with you and your teachings so that they too can experience the sweet taste of pure devotional service.

Like Śrī Govardhana, you offered Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma cool fragrant water from the waterfall of your devotion. And you continue to do so as you worship Their Lordships in the form of the many Deities you established around the world. Daily They receive not only honey, mango juice, and *pīlu* juice to quench Their thirst but also six offerings of opulent foods cooked with loving devotion, all for Their Lordships pleasure and satisfaction. Beyond delicious food offerings, you also arranged for Them to be massaged with fragrant oils and pastes just prior to Their morning bath, dressing, and *ārati*. Finally, you had Them serenaded with the sweet chanting of the holy name throughout the day.

It is absolutely essential that we, your faithful followers, maintain the standard of Deity worship you established, for our own purification and to attract the hearts and minds of the conditioned souls burning in the desert of material existence.

Like Śrī Govardhana, you offered sweet, succulent grasses to nourish the cows and enable them to produce abundant milk. This you did by establishing sustainable rural communities as part of your *varṇāśrama* blueprint to re-spiritualize materialistic society.

Again, it is absolutely essential that we, your faithful followers, follow your instructions to establish *varṇāśrama* through these rural communities. The world needs to see working models of a sane, sustainable way of life, with cow protection and livelihoods that work in harmony with nature rather than against her.

Like Śrī Govardhana, you offered the caves of your many temples to shelter the Lord and His devotees. These temples are like oases in the midst of Kali's desert that provide opulent halls for holding public *kīrtanas*, discourses, and honoring succulent *prasādam*. Neither the fire of passion nor the frigid cold of ignorance can penetrate these sanctuaries, provided we remain sincere *sādhakas* and preachers.

It is also absolutely essential that we, your faithful followers, maintain your temples for the exact purpose for which you established them—to practice, taste, and distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If we follow your instructions to practice serious *sādhana*, we will certainly relish the taste of devotional service, and that taste will create a burning desire within us to distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others.

Like Śrī Govardhana, who offers abundant *dūrvā* grass used for making religious offerings of *arghya*, you offered your books as the main instruments for pushing forward Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana* movement. Today, throughout the world, many dedicated *saṅkīrtana* men and women are dancing to the beat of your *br̥hat-mṛdaṅga*; and by their tireless efforts millions are being introduced to Kṛṣṇa consciousness through your books.

It is absolutely essential that we, your faithful followers, continue flooding the world with the books you labored so hard to write and publish, for only the brilliant light of your books will dissipate the thick darkness of Kali-yuga's ignorance.

Like Śrī Govardhana, who sheltered the *vraja-vāsīs* from the torrential rains and thunderbolts of Lord Indra's wrath, you established ISKCON to shelter the world's devotees from the horrors of Kali. And much like Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who proclaimed that He and Govardhana are one, you declared that ISKCON is your transcendental body and thus nondifferent from you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is absolutely essential that we, your faithful followers, expand or at least maintain your glorious ISKCON. If we don't expand your Society around the world, what hope is there for mankind? You once told us, "The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement will go down in history as having saved mankind in its darkest hour." (Conversation, London, 1973)



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On this auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, we fervently pray to you for guidance, purity, protection, and empowerment so that we may assist you in making this prophecy of yours come true. We beg that just as Śrī Govardhana offered His full blessings and mercy to the inhabitants of Vraja, you will bestow your full blessings and mercy upon us, your faithful followers.

Begging to remain your humble servant,

Giridhārī Swami

Girirāj Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble, prostrated obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, to your powerful love, mercy, and Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Last month your spiritual granddaughter Smriti “Baby” Warriar (now Śravaṇa Dāsī) lost her son in a tragic accident at the railroad. When I wrote to offer my condolences, I was wonderstruck by her reply:

Thank you for your kind blessings and prayers for our son Nrsimha Guru. Due to the mercy of Srila Prabhupada, we are all blessed with our journey in Krishna consciousness. In such a situation all we can see is Krishna’s hand and how He orchestrated the whole incident. Though it is the most horrific thing I have experienced, I am at peace, as I see the Lord in it.

Twenty-two years ago Srimati Radharani put two beautiful Vaisnavas in my lap, and now She has asked for one back. I can only be thankful for those twenty-two years with him. I am proud that he was strong on his devotional path. He had just finished his Disciples Course and gotten his recommendation letter and was daily chanting a chapter of the *Bhagavad-gita* and *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. The morning of the accident he had been chanting his *japa*, so by Srila Prabhupada’s grace he was in good consciousness. I am proud of all his accomplishments, and now that his karma here is over, he has progressed to serving Srila Prabhupada elsewhere.

I was touched and moved by her beautiful letter—by her Kṛṣṇa consciousness and her sublime realizations of your glorious, powerful mercy. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 19.132) states, “When the personal associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would hear of the activities of Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs, they would say, ‘What is wonderful for a person who has been granted the Lord’s mercy?’” And that is how I feel about her: What is beyond a person who has received so much mercy from you?

Smriti was born on December 28, 1965, and thus she experienced your personal presence from around the age of six to the age of twelve. What happened during those years? How did you enter so deeply into her heart that even now, forty years later, she is totally absorbed in you—in your love and mercy and Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

Smriti’s parents, Shankar and Jayalakshmi Warriar, were tenants on Hare Krishna Land. “I grew up on Hare Krishna Land,” she recalls. “I was there before Śrīla Prabhupāda and the devotees came. I was one of the fortunate ones who got a lot of mercy from Prabhupāda and the devotees, because my mother and father did a lot of service. For some time the devotees had only a hut to live in, or were living on the rooftops, and many came to our house for *prasāda* or for our fan. On school days they would come in



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and lie down and have the whole house to themselves. And when the devotees came when there was no school, it was like a big festival in our house.

“My mother was a good cook, and Prabhupāda would have her make South Indian dishes; he liked *idlis*, *dosas*, *vadas*, and *sambar*. So every morning I would get a message to take the *prasāda* over to him. And rascal as I am, I used to wait for something in return. I had given *idlis*, but I wanted a sweet back. And he would tease me. He would give me back *idlis*, and I would say, ‘No, I get lots of that at home; I want a sweet.’ So very early in life I started grabbing all the mercy I could. He would tease me and offer me a piece of *idli* or *vada*, and I would say, ‘No, I want the sweet on your plate,’ and wait there until he gave it to me. Still, he would pick up the *idli* and offer it to me with an amused look in his eye, like ‘Are you going to take it?’ But I was stubborn; I wanted that sweet, and that was it. Sometimes he would tease me to the extent that he would eat all his *prasāda* while I was still waiting for my sweet—I would wait twenty minutes or more and never leave without it—and begin to put the last sweet in his mouth, and only then would he would hand it to me and let me go. And he would laugh.

“Every evening my mother would make a garland for him for the lecture, and I used to feel embarrassed because the devotees would come with beautiful thick garlands. They would buy flowers and make these beautiful garlands, and I would offer him this thin little thing that my mom had made with fragrant champak or mogra flowers from the garden. But eventually I saw that Prabhupāda would take the big, heavy ones off and leave the thin ones on, and he’d smell them from time to time.

“There were times when his servants weren’t around and I would get to pick up his shoes and help him slip his feet into them.

“In the temporary temple, Prabhupāda would distribute *prasāda* after his lectures, but after he gave me some, I would remain standing there. He would say, ‘Go away,’ but I would still stand there with my hands out, wanting more. My dad would go for *maṅgala-ārati* and evening *ārati* and definitely for Prabhupāda’s evening lecture. I used to tag along, but only for the sweet. Sometimes I would have to sit through the whole program to get my sweet. But sometimes Prabhupāda would tell a devotee, ‘Give her the sweet so she can go home and play.’

“Mālatī Devī’s daughter Sarasvatī and I used to play all day, and we would give Prabhupāda a lot of trouble. Because Mālatī was cooking, she would basically dump Sarasvatī at our house and we were supposed to babysit her. But she and I would take off and do all kinds of nonsense and get into trouble. We used to play upstairs. Prabhupāda might have been resting, writing, or talking, but we were always up there doing something, and Prabhupāda never took offense. He would always say, ‘Come sit down.’ And Sarasvatī would sit on one side of his lap and I would sit on the other side.

“One time we were up in Prabhupāda’s quarters running around and playing tag or somehow just making a lot of noise. He called both of us and said, ‘Sit down.’ And he kind of hit us lightly on our heads, to chastise us a bit, and then he told us to go downstairs and stop disturbing him. Sarasvatī was much bolder than I was, because she was traveling with him, and she was allowed to get away with all kinds of things.

“Sometimes when I took his breakfast up to his room, there were no servants around—everybody would be gone. I would look at his plate, and he would give me my sweet. But I would linger, just in case something would be left over—maybe some more sweets—and so I would be there. Then if Prabhupāda called for his servants and no one came, he’d say, ‘Get me my shoes.’ So I would get the opportunity to help him with his shoes, and he would pat me with his cane. I was six or seven years old—a little rascal.

“Whenever Prabhupāda came in Bombay, his arrival at the airport was a most beautiful time. Well before his arrival, the devotees would go to the airport and have a fantastic *kīrtana*. It would be very loud and ecstatic, and we would be jumping and dancing, waiting for Prabhupāda to come. I was so small I couldn’t see Prabhupāda when he walked into the terminal. I only knew he was there because all the devotees went down on the floor to offer obeisances, and I went down too.

“One Diwali, Mother Kāntā was in the women’s ashram above our flat and we were outside setting off fireworks. It was around 9:00 pm, and I guess she wanted to take rest, but we weren’t finished playing. So she started throwing buckets of water down on us. My brothers and I marched up to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s room. Caitya-guru caught us and said, ‘You can’t go in there—he’s resting.’ We must have made a lot of



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noise, because Prabhupāda called, ‘Let them in.’ My brothers went in and pleaded that we wanted to do fireworks, but Prabhupāda said, ‘No, it’s too noisy.’ So my brothers gave up and walked out. But I, the youngest, stood there and said, ‘But it’s Diwali—we’ve got to break some firecrackers.’ Then Prabhupāda said, ‘All right, until 10:00—but after that, no more.’ So we got permission and broke firecrackers. The next day, Mother Kāntā came with a plate of *mahā-prasāda* and apologized for throwing water on us.

“Being so close to Śrīla Prabhupāda at Hare Krishna Land, we got to associate with him in a different light.

“Sometimes in the afternoon we children would go up to the terrace when Śrīla Prabhupāda was giving *darśana* and give him garlands we had made and perform for him, doing some devotional dance. Our parents would dress us up, and my mom would put together some dance for us to perform. It was like a festival, and we were all very excited, but we were anxious too, because we wanted to please Śrīla Prabhupāda.

“My father did a lot of service, and seeing him do all that also inspired me to be a devotee and take shelter of Prabhupāda’s lotus feet. In 1975, he passed away from cancer. Six months before, the doctor said that he didn’t have much time to live. So he gave up going to work. He said, ‘There’s no use working for another six months.’ He just stayed home and chanted. During the last four months of his life he chanted sixty-four rounds a day.

“He would wait every evening for Girirāj Prabhu to return from preaching. No matter how late it was, Girirāj never missed coming to see him. He would bring a garland from the Deities and a plate of *mahā-prasāda* (which the devotees must have kept for him, knowing he would be out late). Girirāj’s generosity and inspiration made Daddy chant more rounds, so he could tell Girirāj how many he had chanted that day, and when Girirāj expressed his pleasure, Daddy’s enthusiasm to chant more increased. In his last month he sometimes chanted eighty rounds or more.

“When he passed away, the devotees came and did *kīrtana*. I think it was all Prabhupāda’s mercy that my father took the essence of what Prabhupāda had come for, to take us back to Godhead. He took that essence and realized that material things were not worth living for, so he just gave up everything and changed.

“Before he got sick, Daddy was at the temple like clockwork. He used to go to *maṅgala-ārati* and *guru-pūjā*, and then he’d go to work. And he would go for the evening *ārati* too. First we had pictures on our altar, and then Navayogendra Prabhu gave us Chaturbhuja Kṛṣṇa. So we used to have *āratis*, and every day the evening *ārati* was my job. I was the *pūjārī* at home. That was one thing Daddy had started at home, to have the evening *ārati*. By six o’clock I had to be home and take a shower, and at seven I had to do the *ārati*.

“The night before my father passed away, he was really sick and had to go to the hospital. But he said, ‘No, until Baby finishes the *ārati* I’m not going.’ So I came and did the *ārati*, and he was breathing heavily; he was really sick. After the *ārati*, he left for the hospital, and the next morning, at ten o’clock, he passed away. That was the last time I saw my dad. After I did the *ārati*, he gave me a big hug, and then he went, and that was it. If it weren’t for Prabhupāda, we wouldn’t have been doing that *ārati*. He taught us everything we knew.

“After my father passed away, Śrīla Prabhupāda told my mother to surrender everything and join the temple, but she didn’t do it. She said, ‘No, let my children decide what they want to do, what their careers will be, and if they grow up and carry on, then I’ll come.’ But she never did.

“That year the devotees booked a whole train car to Vṛndāvana for the grand opening, and we were invited to come. The trip was wonderful, and when we got there Prabhupāda personally took my mom and our family around the whole temple, which was so beautiful. It was wonderful walking with him as he told us what was in there and what was going on. He was so merciful towards my mom and all of us; I can only be thankful for all the time and all the wonderful mercy he gave us. At that time I didn’t know it was mercy—I was just having a good time—but now I can realize I must have done something in my past life to have been so close to Prabhupāda and to receive the nectar of his mercy.

“When I looked at Prabhupāda, I didn’t see him as a guru or *sannyāsī* or swami. I didn’t understand



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that aspect of Prabhupāda. All I knew was that he was very kind. I looked at him as a father, and so I wasn't afraid of him—I wasn't afraid to go ask him something or ask him to do something. Because I would take him his breakfast every morning, I'd see him every day. Sometimes he would take a stick and tap me on the head with it, blessing me. If I helped him with his shoes, he would pat me on the head or do something like that.

“He was always very kind, especially with the children, and he always had a smile, no matter whom he was talking to. If he'd see you coming, he would smile and acknowledge you. Although you were a child, you were also a person. He would see you as a person, even though you were tiny—not that you didn't exist. At the airport, everyone was there, but he would notice you. He might not say anything, but he would be with you. He would look at you and smile at you.

“When Prabhupāda came to Juhu, I would always spend time in his quarters. Sometimes he would tell me to go and get Tamāl, or he'd tell me, ‘Okay, go and do this,’ or ‘Go do that.’ So many times he made me run here and there to do things. I would hang out there, because when Prabhupāda came, that was the place to be, that's where all the action was. So I would always be there. Something or other was going on at all times. His cooks or other devotees would always be around. And all the devotees were also very kind and merciful. ‘Go do this for Prabhupāda,’ they would tell me. ‘Go to this place,’ ‘Go give this to Prabhupāda.’ A lady devotee would give me a rose to run up to him, so I would run up, and so I'd be there. And then the *prasāda* distribution would come. Prabhupāda would give out a big plate of *prasāda*. Often it was fruit. I would get in line to get my fruit. The devotees would let me be at the front of the line, but I'd go back and back and back.

“I never really got chastised or reprimanded for anything—Prabhupāda was always very kind to me. I think that's what helped me love him more and do more.

“When Prabhupāda was sick and came back to Bombay in 1977, the devotees would hardly let anyone into his quarters; he was really ill. But I was not used to that; I was used to walking in at any time. So, I came one evening, and they would not let me in. I had been bringing Prabhupāda his breakfast, and he had been there for many days, but I still hadn't been allowed in to see him. So I just stood there, crying. When Tamāl Kṛṣṇa came in and saw me, he understood the situation and said, ‘Okay, go ahead.’ He let me in and said, ‘Be very quiet; he's taking rest. Just go in and come out.’ So I went in, and Prabhupāda was sleeping, and I stood there for a few moments. I was just standing there and looking at him. He was just lying there, and I didn't see him feeling the pain. He had been saying that he was very sick and his stomach hurt, but I didn't see that. I saw him very calm and peaceful. So, I grasped his feet and then ran. I don't know if I woke him up or not, but I just grasped his feet and ran out; I just grabbed the mercy. And that was the last time I saw Prabhupāda.”

* * *

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you entered a child's heart, took up residence there, and never left. Even today you sit there, causing her to think, feel, act, and speak in many wonderful ways.

“What is wonderful for a person who has been granted the Lord's mercy?” And what is beyond a person who has received so much mercy from you?

Your wonderstruck aspiring servant,

Girirāj Swami



HOMAGES FROM THE GBC



Gopāl Krishna Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On your most auspicious appearance day I beg to offer my most fallen obeisances at your lotus feet. This year we are celebrating the 121st anniversary of your appearance in this world. Your lotus feet offer all benediction and complete shelter to all who follow your instructions.

In 2015 we celebrated the golden jubilee of your departure from India on the *Jaladuta*. You traveled in a cargo ship with forty rupees in your pocket. You suffered two heart attacks, but they did not weaken your determination to fulfill your guru's instruction.

In 2016 we celebrated the golden jubilee of your incorporating ISKCON. You opened the first ISKCON temple in July 1966 in New York. Now there are over 600 branches all over the world. Some friends suggested that you call your society the International Society for God Consciousness, but you insisted that your society would be called the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. In your seven purposes of ISKCON, you clearly stated your goals and how these goals can be realized.

In 2017 we are celebrating the golden jubilee of ISKCON's first Ratha-yātrā, which was held in San Francisco in 1967. Today Jagannātha Ratha-yātrās are held in almost every corner of the globe. In a brief span of eleven years you translated over seventy books into English. These books are available today in almost every language of the world. Our godbrother Satyanārāyaṇa Prabhu is concentrating on getting your books published in the Arabic language. By presenting word-by-word meanings, translations, and elaborate purports, you have established that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. All of humanity is eternally indebted to you for giving us the pure message of Godhead.

The material world is becoming more and more difficult day by day. Terrorism and violence are increasing very fast. The only remedy is pure devotional service as presented in your books. You have presented the true peace formula in your instructions. We need to enthusiastically distribute your books and present your teachings to save suffering humanity.

On the occasion of our 50th Anniversary celebration, the President of India wrote:

ISKCON has over the years played an important role in popularizing the noble and eternal message of the Srimad Bhagavad-Gita and promoting spiritual harmony. If today the Bhagavad-Gita is printed in millions of copies in scores of Indian languages and distributed all over the world, the credit for this great sacred service goes chiefly to ISKCON. I congratulate ISKCON for its efforts to highlight and propagate the timeless teachings of Lord Krishna across the world. I also pay humble tribute to the contributions of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, who incorporated ISKCON in 1966 and whose teachings continue to resonate in the hearts of Krishna devotees all over the world even today.

On the same occasion the Prime Minister's message stated:

ISKCON's story has been the story of the determination and devotion of lakhs of devotees spread across the world. Inspired by the teachings of Lord Krishna, they spread His message far and wide. The efforts of the ISKCON family in sectors like education, publishing, and disaster relief are commendable.

Your movement is being appreciated more and more by the leaders of society.



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Preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness, maintaining big temples, and constructing temples is a very difficult task. I pray for your causeless mercy so that an insignificant fool like myself can continue to render a little service unto you, birth after birth.

Your fallen servant,

Gopāl Krishna Goswami

Guru Prasād Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble and sincere obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet, which bathe the consciousness with the pure desire to serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. All glories to your unlimited mercy, which has overflowed the entire world.

I continue my modest attempt to describe a drop from the ocean of your transcendental qualities. The next in the list of attributes of a pure Vaiṣṇava is *gambhīra*, possessing gravity.

Your display of gravity varied according to the application. Sometimes it represented the seriousness of a situation. When you dismantled the *gopī-bhāva* group, the atmosphere was weighty. You showed the same gravity, with even more severity, when dealing with devotees who desired to “transcend” your perfect instructions and example, and even our own *paramparā*.

At times your grave demeanor reflected the magnitude you desired to express in relation to Kṛṣṇa.

There is gravity of contemplation. You stated to several persons, including a writer for the *Village Voice* named Howard Smith, that there would be temples all over the world. It was not a dream but a reality separated by time, and therefore you could reflect on it as if such an achievement were just around the corner.

Another motive for your gravity was urgency. In the beginning of your preaching you had no fixed place, and even afterwards, before a relaxed crowd of inquirers, you tried to convey the pressing need for Kṛṣṇa consciousness owing to the critical condition of a contaminated society. Most of those who came sought entertainment, food, or some answers—but not commitment. While preaching in your last year physically with us, that same sense of urgency was apparent. You are insisting that everyone must take *bhakti* very seriously.

At times, your gravity was the instrument of chastisement, demonstrating to the corrected party the consequences of acting improperly or carelessly. On other occasions it was the gravity of appreciation, as when the devotees surprised you by decorating your first storefront; your gravity in that instance was an emotional recognition of how Kṛṣṇa was intervening in the lives of your disciples with His causeless mercy.

There is also the gravity of representing the most sacred and ancient truth now manifesting in the form of your transcendental movement.

In other instances, when some ecstasy overcame you, although you felt bliss, your demeanor was grave and solemn, especially when having to struggle to restrain the spiritual elation you were experiencing. Also, when seeing the Deity or in your intense meditation on the holy name, you would wear a countenance of gravity.

There is also a gravity of penetration—how you could see through the superfluous mentality of the conditioned souls. Your grave look would pierce the ego and decipher and unveil the real state of the heart.

However, the most common expression of gravity was your swanlike *paramahansa* profile as you walked or sat, revealing the stature of a pure, self-realized soul—the external evidence disclosing the presence of Your Divine Grace.



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I pray that you inculcate in me, to some minute degree, that wonderful quality of gravity that decorates your transcendental person, for that small portion would flood my heart with the seriousness I so desperately need to continue to progress in spiritual life.

Your fallen servant,

Guru Prasād Swami

Hṛdaya Caitanya Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on your most auspicious Vyāsa-pūjā day.

Your name is glorified in all ISKCON temples, preaching centers, Nāma-haṭṭa centers, and Bhakti Vriksha centers all over the world. When will the day come when your name will be glorified in all countries, in all cities, and in all villages and towns worldwide?

When, as predicted, the holy name will be chanted all over the world, then you will be recognized as the representative of Lord Caitanya who brought the holy name to the world, and your name will be chanted along with Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy name.

You are the *dīkṣā-guru* for a few thousand devotees, and you are the main *śikṣā-guru* for around 100,000 devotees. In the future you will be the main *śikṣā-guru* for millions and millions of devotees.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī had many disciples, and among all of them, you were the one Kṛṣṇa chose to fulfill the mission of your Guru Mahārāja. You explained in this context that one simply has to become as serious and sincere as Dhruva Mahārāja; then it is quite possible to attain Vaikuṇṭhaloka and go back home, back to Godhead, in one life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mission is very clear and defined; you did not waver in any circumstance from your goal. We can understand, therefore, that it was by Kṛṣṇa's arrangement that your father gave you the name Abhay, "fearless." When you left India for the first time, you weren't impressed with the achievements of the materialists. You did not adjust to social pressure or customs, nor did you go along with cultural traditions for the sake of being a good citizen. You were not afraid of politicians or impressed by the PhD scientists and their exorbitantly subsidized research work. You would not listen to idle talk for the sake of pleasing a person in order to get his favor. You did not adjust your dress for the sake of facilitating your preaching.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, while everyone else around you was in illusion, your position was very clear, transcendental, and rock solid. Out of compassion you worked hard to make us understand that we are lost conditioned souls and that we need a pure devotee to bring us back on track. Although you started with no means, to fulfill your mission you showed your compassion and love for the first devotees by cooking for them, by serving them, and by cleaning up after them. But as soon as they were able to understand, you explained to them the basics of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, including the position of the spiritual master.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when you were present on the earth, out of compassion your only concern was how



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to bring us lost souls back to our father, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Day and night you strived to make us understand that although we seem to have everything, actually we are poor, bereft of life's basic knowledge and spiritual values. I pray to be included among those who have embraced your teachings and given my best to exemplify them and help others do the same.

Your servant,

Hṛdaya Caitanya Dāsa

Jayapatāka Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances.

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

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

Previously I wrote some songs glorifying Your Divine Grace. These highlighted some of your glories and achievements. I would like to write a song detailing some of your wonderful qualities, but there is not time now and I don't know if it's possible, since your good qualities are unlimited.

I remember when you told me and others how you were always guided by your spiritual master and how he was with you at all times. I saw you praying with tears in your eyes. Who can understand your great mercy and quality of devotion?

I still remember how when my *purvāśrama* mother asked you questions you preached to her that we are not the body but are the unique living force inside the body. You are so kind and so patient; you took pains to explain Kṛṣṇa consciousness for everyone.

On this day of your appearance, I remember your unlimited good qualities and pray that I can fulfill your many instructions to me. I offer you my homage on this glorious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Your servant and spiritual son,

Jayapatāka Swami



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Kavicandra Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

We know there is no way that we can repay our debt to you, but we pray that we can keep trying. We know that your mercy is unlimited and that you appreciate even our clumsy efforts to serve you. So whatever we do to try to repay you simply increases our debt.

You have given us Lord Kṛṣṇa, and also the opportunity to give Kṛṣṇa to others. You have done this by designing and creating ISKCON, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. You were fearless when you started small, and even before starting you envisioned a worldwide movement. We have passed the “golden” fiftieth anniversary, and your movement is growing daily.

We have the guidelines you gave us—“The Seven Purposes of ISKCON”—and we pray to focus on these basics, which you first wrote down in ISKCON’s certificate of incorporation, drawn up in July of 1966:

1. 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.
2. To propagate a consciousness of Kṛṣṇa, as it is revealed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.
3. To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Kṛṣṇa, the prime entity, and thus to develop the idea within the members and humanity at large that each soul is part and parcel of the quality of Godhead (Kṛṣṇa).
4. To teach and encourage the *saṅkīrtana* movement, congregational chanting of the holy name of God as revealed in the teachings of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
5. To erect for the members and for society at large a holy place of transcendental pastimes dedicated to the Personality of Kṛṣṇa.
6. To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler and more natural way of life.
7. With a view towards achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, magazines, books, and other writings.

The last point has always stood out for me, since it seems to stress our internal conviction and practice, guiding us how to achieve the outreach.

We are trying to emphasize and facilitate the reading and discussion of your books. From that seed everything will bloom and flourish.



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You attracted special attention from your Guru Mahārāja with the poem you offered him on the occasion of his Vyāsa-pūjā in 1935:

1.

Adore, adore ye all
The happy day,
Blessed than heaven,
Sweeter than May,
When He appeared at Puri,
The holy place,
My lord and master,
His Divine Grace.

2.

Oh my Master,
The evangelic angel,
Give us thy light,
Light up thy candle.
Struggle for existence
A human race.
The only hope,
Your Divine Grace.

3.

Misled we are,
All going astray.
Save us, lord,
Our fervent pray.
Wonder thy ways
To turn our face.
Adore thy feet,
Your Divine Grace.

4.

Forgotten Krishna,
We fallen souls
Paying most heavy
The illusion's toll.
Darkness around,
All distress.
The only hope,
Your Divine Grace.

5.

Message of service
Thou hast brought,
A meaningful life
As Chaitanya wrought.
Unknown to all,
It's full of brace.
That's your gift,
Your Divine Grace.

6.

Absolute is sentient
Thou hast proved.
Impersonal calamity
Thou hast removed.
This gives a life
Anew and fresh.
Worship thy feet,
Your Divine Grace.

7.

Had you not come,
who had told
The message of Krishna,
Forceful and bold?
That's your right,
You have the mace.
Save me, a fallen,
Your Divine Grace.

8.

The line of service
As drawn by you
Is pleasing and healthy
Like morning dew.
The oldest of all,
But in new dress.
Miracle done,
Your Divine Grace.

Upon reading this poem, your Guru Mahārāja ordered that whatever you write should be published. So much spiritual genius is in every line! I pray that I can keep this poem in my mind and somehow develop more appreciation and attachment to your lotus feet and instructions. Everything you said and did was and is a perfect example for everyone.

Your humility inspires us, and we can only try to repeat your words and pray to be your proper representative, just as you so perfectly represented your Guru Mahārāja.

In the following verses from "Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma," written just after landing in America in



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September 1965, you perfectly express your utter humility:

*ki ko're bujhābo kathā baro sei cāhi
khudra āmi dīna hīna kono śakti nāhi*

How will I make them understand this message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness? I am very unfortunate, unqualified and the most fallen. Therefore I am seeking Your benediction so that I can convince them, for I am powerless to do so on my own.

*athaca enecho prabhu kathā bolibāre
je tomār icchā prabhu koro ei bāre*

Somehow or other, O Lord, You have brought me here to speak about You. Now, my Lord, it is up to You to make me a success or failure as You like.

*akhila jagat-guru! bacana se āmār
alanikṛta koribār khamatā tomār*

O spiritual master of all the worlds! I can simply repeat Your message, so if You like You can make my power of speaking suitable for their understanding.

*taba kṛpā ha'le mor kathā śuddha habe
śuniyā sabāra śoka duḥkha je ghucibe*

Only by Your causeless mercy will my words become pure. I am sure that when this transcendental message penetrates their hearts they will certainly feel englanded and thus become liberated from all unhappy conditions of life.

*āniyācho jadi prabhu āmāre nācāte
nācāo nācāo prabhu nācāo se-mate
kāṣṭhera puttali jathā nācāo se-mate*

O Lord, I am just like a puppet in Your hands. So if You have brought me here to dance, then make me dance, make me dance, O Lord, make me dance as You like.

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

I have no devotion, nor do I have any knowledge, but I have strong faith in the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. I have been designated as Bhaktivedanta, and now, if You like, You can fulfill the real purport of Bhaktivedanta.

Signed—the most unfortunate, insignificant beggar A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami.

Now my body is the age that yours was when you arrived in the USA. You grew stronger and more active, while I seem to be getting weaker. Please make me dance.

Your aspiring servant,

Kavicandra Swami



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Madhusevita Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories to your divine appearance day.
In the *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya* it is stated:

*akṣṇoḥ phalaṁ tvāḍṛśa-darśanaṁ hi
tanoḥ phalaṁ tvāḍṛśa-gātra-saṅgaḥ
jihvā-phalaṁ tvāḍṛśa-kīrtanaṁ hi
su-durlabhā bhāgavatā hi loke*

“O devotee of the Lord, to see you is the perfection of the eyes, to touch your body is the perfection of bodily activities, and to glorify your qualities is the perfection of the tongue, for it is very rare to find a pure devotee like you.”

I am so fortunate and unfortunate at the same time!

After I'd spent a childhood and youth full of misery and loneliness, tossed here and there by the waves of anguish, you picked me up and gave me the chance to see you, filling my eyes with the grace of your movements and smiles, to touch you while offering menial service, making me feel purified and cleansed of my internal filth, and to offer you affectionate words of praise, giving meaning to my whole existence: a matchless fortune.

Rati nā janmila kena tāya: I do not know why I do not get any attachment for such a nice thing. Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura laments that although the holy name has come from Goloka Vṛndāvana, he has no attraction for the chanting.

I lament that although you came from Goloka Vṛndāvana, giving me the sweetest love, compassion, and forbearance, I still don't fully belong to you, being absorbed in the blazing fire of the poison of material consciousness: a matchless misfortune.

How can I become so fortunate that the transcendental family of the *ācāryas* will take me back because of my having developed real attachment for you?

I don't see much hope, but I am not going to give up: I'll dare to hope against hope and stubbornly remain attached to serving you by chanting the holy name, following your instructions, living in your ISKCON family, and doing my duty, because I have no one but you in life.

I hope one day I'll fully realize it.

Your worthless servant,

Madhusevita Dāsa



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Mālatī Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my eternally offered obeisances at your lotus feet. Please let me serve you day after day after day, birth after birth.

I came upon the following quotations after watching a video clip of your postdeparture *samādhi* ceremony for the first time. It was the first time I'd viewed it, and probably the last. Afterward I needed the solace of your living words, and that is what I felt after reading these quotations:

My Guru Mahārāja, when he was selecting articles to be published in *The Harmonist*, if he sees simply that there is, several times the writer has written “Kṛṣṇa,” “Lord Caitanya,” like that, he passes immediately: “All right. It's all right. It is all right.” That so many times he has uttered “Kṛṣṇa” and “Caitanya,” so it is all right.

So similarly, even if we present our *Back to Godhead* or any other literature in broken languages, it does not matter because the glorification of the Lord is there. That is recommended by Nārada. *Tad-vāg-visargo janatāgha-viplavaḥ. Janatā agha. Agha* means sinful activities. If one reads one line of this literature, although it is presented in broken language, but if he simply hears there is Kṛṣṇa, then his sinful activities immediately vanish. [Lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.5.9–11, New Vrindaban, 6 June 1969]

And you, dearest Prabhupāda, appeared among us, a sinless soul. One who never forgot Kṛṣṇa. You said once that you were given opportunities to sample material sense enjoyment but that Kṛṣṇa was always there with you and thus it never happened.

Sometimes I become surprised how I have written this. Although I am the writer, still sometimes I am surprised how these things have come. Such vivid description. Where is such literature throughout the whole world? It is all Kṛṣṇa's mercy. Every line is perfect. [Conversation, Vṛndāvana, 28 June 1977]

Kṛṣṇa is perfect, and thus every line is perfect, as you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are also perfect.

Guru Dāsa watched Śrīla Prabhupāda laughing while reading his *Kṛṣṇa* book.

Guru Dāsa: Prabhupāda, you're laughing at your own books.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: I did not write these books, Kṛṣṇa wrote them! Kṛṣṇa sat here. [Prabhupāda pointed to his shoulder]. He wrote them.

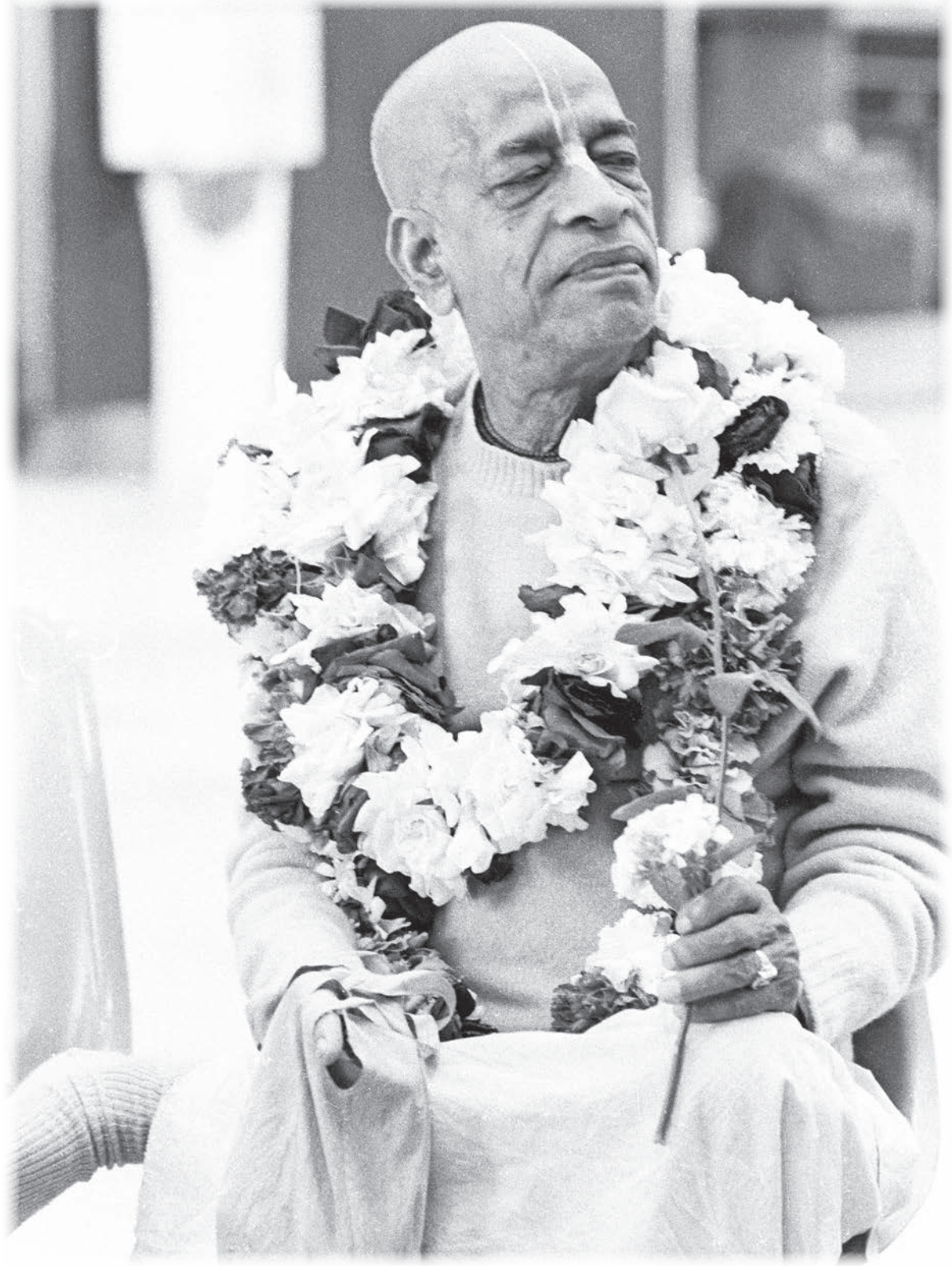
Śrīla Prabhupāda, your dearest friend Kṛṣṇa sat on your shoulder and spoke to you, just as Arjuna's dearest friend Kṛṣṇa stood before Him and spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*!

Do you know that I read my books every day. I learn something new every time I read. Do you know why? Because I did not write these books. Every time I sat down to write, Kṛṣṇa appeared and dictated to me what to write. So I am not writing; Kṛṣṇa is writing. [Conversation with Tamāl Krishna Goswami and another devotee.]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you learned something new every day by reading your own books because spiritual life is not stagnant but is every-expanding and ever-increasing. Thus when the Supreme Lord speaks, the pure devotee hears with rapt attention, imbibing the nectar with great joy and devotion.



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When Dhaniṣṭhā asked how she could know you better, you replied in three words: “Read *Kṛṣṇa* book.”

Yes! We want to know you better, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You’ve divulged a great secret, indicating where we can find you—cavorting with Kṛṣṇa and His cowherd friends, the *gopas*.

All glories to you evermore, Śrīla Prabhupāda! All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! All glories to you forevermore, our most beloved *patita-pāvana*, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

It perplexes my mind to consider that the purports you wrote came to you, the perfect transparent medium, directly from the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa! Your purports are beyond the value of all the so-called precious gems found in this temporary world. They are the purest of all touchstones, which you offered to us out of your fully cognizant compassionate mercy. I can never fathom this mercy in a billion trillion lifetimes. Even if by chance I make it back to Godhead, I’ll never understand this incredibly sublime pastime of yours.

You are not an ordinary spiritual master. You saved us, a fact confirmed in 1967 in our little San Francisco storefront temple. Kṛṣṇa dictated your purports to you, and you faithfully wrote them down or recorded them on your dictating machine, thus passing them on to us and the entire world. Many so-called gurus and yogīs come and take their followers’ money, but they cannot save anyone from birth, death, disease, and old age. You alone offered that miracle.

May my head remain bowed at your lotus feet, may my heart beat only for you, and may all people throughout the entire universe receive your compassionate message, thus pacifying their burning minds and hearts and checking the reign of Kali.

Always your dāsī,

Mālatī Devī Dāsī

Mukunda Goswami

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

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

Your well-known phrase
“Kick on his face”
Was put in writing in many a place.

One of your books in Deutschland was banned
Because in there you said Darwin was damned.

Countrymen sometimes felt anguish,
Hearing strong words you’d frequently brandish.
“Rascals and fools,” you’d often call them
’Cuz they’d set aside issues around them.



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A section of humans would always eat meat;
Uncivilized people'd never be discrete.
OK to eat flesh after cows died;
We'll give you free meat—just give us the hide.

We'll make drumheads, sandals, and shoes
With skin tanned and ready for devotional use.

Your well-known phrase
“Kick on his face”
Was put in writing in many a place.

Your servant,

Mukunda Goswami

Nirañjana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Another year has already passed since the last time I read my offering before you on this most auspicious anniversary of your divine appearance in this world. Each year brings new opportunities to glorify you throughout the year, and with that, new realizations of your infinite glories.

Last week in Ticino, Switzerland, I watched a video of your disciple Guru-Gaurāṅga Dāsa delivering an audiovisual presentation in Boston at the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of your arrival in that city. His captivating and well-researched presentation was entitled “A Most Improbable Journey.” Although I was present when he first delivered his detailed account of your journey from Calcutta to Boston, and then on to New York, it wasn't until Ticino that I looked more deeply at your diary entry of September 10, 1965:

Today the ship is plying very smoothly. I feel today better. But I am feeling separation from Sri Vrindaban and my Lords Sri Govinda, Gopinath, Radha Damodar. The only solace is Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita in which I am tasting the nectarine of Lord Chaitanya's Leela. I have left Bharat Bhumi just to execute the order of Sri Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati in pursuance of Lord Chaitanya's order. I have no qualification, but I have taken up the risk just to carry out the order of His Divine Grace. I depend fully on Their mercy so far away from Vrindaban.

I've read this before—in fact, so many times. But this time these words struck me with yet another one of the numerous confirmations I've discovered in service to you of how you were thinking then and throughout your divine *līlā* of rescuing conditioned souls. Soon thereafter you would attempt to teach each and every one of your future disciples, through your books, your lectures, and your perfect example, this very same principle of full submission to the Lord and his pure representative.



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Of course, the depth of your teachings can never be limited to only one method for realizing pure devotional service. Since you are our founder-*ācārya*, your pure example teaches all facets of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the highest degree. However, it is this particular quality in you which deeply captivates me, so much so that I find myself reflecting on it wherever I see it throughout all of your teachings.

I know only too well how unqualified I am. In order to teach us everything by your example, therefore, for our sake you consistently took the position of one who was not qualified, even though you were the most qualified. This principle, demonstrated by your perfect example, gives me hope that fully serving you, and some day even satisfying you, remains possible despite living in physical separation from you.

I remember the first time I read the Concluding Words you wrote upon completing your translation of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. You expressed that same solace you wrote about in your journal while crossing the Atlantic Ocean. I clearly remember feeling overwhelmed by the devotion, humility, faith, submission, and transparency that you perfectly conveyed to your followers:

I think that His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura is always seeing my activities and guiding me within my heart by his words. As it is said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *tene brahma hṛdā ya ādi-kavaye*. Spiritual inspiration comes from within the heart, wherein the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in His Paramātmā feature, is always sitting with all His devotees and associates. It is to be admitted that whatever translation work I have done is through the inspiration of my spiritual master, because personally I am most insignificant and incompetent to do this materially impossible work. I do not think myself a very learned scholar, but I have full faith in the service of my spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. If there is any credit to my activities of translating, it is all due to His Divine Grace.

I can no longer count the number of times I have read these Concluding Words. They are a constant reminder to me of the need to more deeply realize my own lack of qualification and thus develop an increasingly helpless dependence on everything you attempted to teach us when you were with us.

More than thirty years ago, not long after first reading those Concluding Words, when I was faced with the then daunting responsibilities I had as temple president, I discovered another very similar clue that you had given in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* for carrying out the heavy duties you entrusted to me. While reading Brahmā's prayers for creative potency in chapter 9 of the Third Canto, I read the following in your purport to text 29:

Any person authorized by either the Lord or by His bona fide representative is already blessed, as is the work entrusted to him. Of course, the person entrusted with such a responsibility should always be aware of his incapability and must always look for the mercy of the Lord for the successful execution of his duty. One should not be puffed up because he is entrusted with certain executive work. Fortunate is he who is so entrusted, and if he is always fixed in the sense of being subordinate to the will of the Supreme, he is sure to come out successful in the discharge of his work.

That one purport has always saved me in times of deep desperation. Countless times I have read this purport, and I continue to share it with devotees as a divine *sūtra* for success in all one's spiritual endeavors.

When I visited the Bhaktivedanta Archives many years ago, your disciple Rañjit Dāsa showed me the original journal you kept in 1966 in New York. The Archives had recently acquired it from one of your early disciples. I asked him if I could take it into the other room and read it for awhile. He kindly agreed, and I disappeared into the next room to scour through all of your entries. It was then that I took note of another diary entry, dated February 3, 1966:

Today there was a very nice demonstration of tape-record Samkirtan by me.

It is all Grace of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrīla Haridas Thakur said that the transcendental



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sound of Hari Nama would even purify the heart of birds and beasts. Today this statement of Thakur Haridas is corroborated. These American[s] can not understand even a word's meaning of the Sankirtan and yet they were so much attracted? It is all Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's power; there is no credit for me.

I sat there captivated, tears coming from my eyes, appreciating these words so much, as testimony to your compassion, humility, and exclusive dependence on the mercy bestowed upon you from your worshipable Lord and divine masters. I immediately returned to Rājīt Prabhu to share my discovery and then asked him for a pen and paper to write your words down for my own personal safekeeping and as a constant reminder of how to render devotional service.

Actually, this mood, example, and instruction are revealed unlimitedly by you, as well as in the thousands of testimonies your disciples have given based on what they personally heard from you and how they also saw these qualities in you. Every moment you were present with us there was an instruction and example of surrender in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You fully embodied the mood of humility in submission to the divine order coming both from within and without.

Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself declared to Arjuna:

In all activities just depend upon Me and work always under My protection. In such devotional service, be fully conscious of Me. If you become conscious of Me, you will pass over all the obstacles of conditioned life by My grace. If, however, you do not work in such consciousness but act through false ego, not hearing Me, you will be lost. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.57–58]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most auspicious day of your divine appearance, I humbly fall at your lotus feet and beg you to continue to help me always be fully conscious of you. One may ask, “Why ‘you’ and not Kṛṣṇa?” Again, because you revealed another clue that I constantly remember in the most difficult of times:

[I]f a disciple is very serious to execute the mission of the spiritual master, he immediately associates with the Supreme Personality of Godhead by *vāñī* or *vapuḥ*. This is the only secret of success in seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Instead of being eager to see the Lord in some bush of Vṛndāvana while at the same time engaging in sense gratification, if one instead sticks to the principle of following the words of the spiritual master, he will see the Supreme Lord without difficulty. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.51, purport]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my only hope. It is my realization now, more than ever, that without remembering you I will surely be lost.

In the dust of your lotus feet,

Your eternal servant,

Nirañjana Swami



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Praghoṣa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Never One to Rest

In this stringent world
I had to grow up fast.
Learning to compete,
I learned to fight, learned to win.
Never time
To stop and think.

When I had no fight left,
Or so it seemed,
A man whose false dreams
Had all deserted,
I stopped competing,
Stopped to think,
Began my search
For some lasting link.

While I always thought
I'd never be affected,
Thinking I'd never change,
Gradually I started to see
The truth being revealed
Through you,
So beautiful—
The way things turn.

So you changed my darkness into light,
And now as daylight breaks each day,
This fool's future is superbright,
And I'm always prepared, come what may.

You are never one to rest,
Never one to stress.
You overcame each and every test.
So now when times get tough,
I know I can take shelter in you
To guide me safely through.

Sitting at your feet,
I have no fear.
Sitting at your feet,



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I see everything clear.
Sitting at your feet,
I can cross this deep dark ocean.
Sitting at your feet,
I can aspire for pure devotion.
Whatever may come
And whatever may go,
I pray that your mercy
Will forever flow.

O Prabhupāda,
You are my inspiration.
O Prabhupāda,
You are my foundation.
O Prabhupāda,
I'm so humbled by who you are.
O Prabhupāda,
I'm so eager to follow your star.
O Prabhupāda,
I now know there's a place,
A place where I belong,
Serving you.

Praghoṣa Dāsa

Prahlādānanda Swami

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

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

The Secret of Advancement in Spiritual Life

What is the secret of spiritual advancement?

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (4.34, purport): “Satisfaction of the self-realized spiritual master is the secret of advancement in spiritual life.”

Who is a self-realized soul?

One who has strictly followed another self-realized spiritual master in accordance with *śāstra*:



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This first-class devotee is one who has strictly followed the rules and regulations under the training of a bona fide spiritual master and has sincerely obeyed him in accord with revealed scriptures. Thus, being fully trained to preach and become a spiritual master himself, he is considered first class. [*The Nectar of Devotion*, chapter 3: “Eligibility of the Candidate for Accepting Devotional Service”]

What does giving initiation have to do with self-realization?

An actual *guru* is *śrotriya*, one who has heard or received perfect knowledge through *paramparā*, the disciplic succession. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.5.31, purport]

Should I follow my initiating guru blindly?

[B]oth blind following and absurd inquiries are condemned. Not only should one hear submissively from the spiritual master, but one must also get a clear understanding from him, in submission and service and inquiries. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.34, purport]

How strictly does one have to follow the ācārya in disciplic succession?

Besides that, any path you follow, you have to follow the regulative principles as they are enacted by authorities. So in our disciplic succession, previous *ācāryas*, they have advised that you should have your dress like this, you should have your head like this, you . . . So we have to follow that. *Mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ* [*Mahābhārata*, *Vana-parva* 313.117]. Our principle is to follow the footprints of authorities. So these things are not unauthorized. These are being followed from time immemorial. This dress, this *tilaka*, this chanting. Everything. Just like you see the picture of Lord Caitanya, we are following the same principles. This was being enacted five hundred years ago. The same principle we are following. We are not introducing anything new. We are simply following the footprints of our predecessors. That’s all. [Lecture on *Bhagavad-gītā* 4.39-42, Los Angeles, 14 January 1969]

Can one be a spiritual master if one is not a self-realized soul?

A neophyte Vaiṣṇava or a Vaiṣṇava situated on the intermediate platform can also accept disciples, but such disciples must be on the same platform, and it should be understood that they cannot advance very well toward the ultimate goal of life under his insufficient guidance. [*The Nectar of Instruction*, verse 5]

What if there are no mahā-bhāgavatas?

A person who is [a] liberated *acharya* and *guru* cannot commit any mistake, but there are persons who are less qualified or not liberated, but still can act as *guru* and *acharya* by strictly following the disciplic succession. [Letter to Janārdana Dāsa, 26 April 1968]

What if the available guidance is insufficient?

One’s effectiveness as a spiritual practitioner and guide for others will depend on one’s sincerely trying to understand and follow the teachings of the founder-*ācārya*. Transcendental discrimination and expertise in one’s devotional service is a gift of intelligence and realization given by the Supreme Lord to those who serve His perfect servants with love and devotion.



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Your aspiring servant,

Prahlādānanda Swami

Rādhānāth Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Each morning, during the sacred hours prior to sunrise, before hearing anything else, I listen to you sing the immortal prayers *vande 'haṁ śrī-guroḥ śrī-yuta-pada-kamalaṁ . . .*

I first heard you singing these prayers in the forest of Vṛndāvana. In a small gathering you chimed your small hand cymbals with your eyes closed tightly. Those moments changed my life forever.

The next time I can remember hearing you chanting these prayers was as I listened to a vinyl record played by a phonograph. I was staying at one of your storefront temples in an alleyway of Amsterdam's red-light district. I was in a painful and disoriented state, so far away from Vṛndāvana. Yet as the needle glided on the record's grooves, your voice gave me shelter. It brought me home again.

After some time, I met you at your temple on Henry Street, in New York City. There, after hearing your class, I sat upstairs on the *āśrama* floor reading for the first time your newly published unabridged *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. In the Introduction I discovered these same prayers, *vande 'ham*. In the silence of reading, I could hear your voice resonating from each page, even in my fallen condition. Truly, you live forever in your books.

A little later, I resided in a crumbling farmhouse on a lonely mountaintop in West Virginia. You had called it a jungle. There, hours before dawn, our little *āśrama* awakened to your voice singing these same prayers, *vande 'ham*, this time from a cassette tape playing on a donated, handed down Panasonic portable tape recorder. The crackling sound of your voice from the damaged little four-inch speaker thrilled our hearts.

Nowadays, wherever I travel, my day begins with hearing your voice singing these prayers, *vande 'ham*, from a smartphone someone gave me.

Every day, with this prayer you take us on a pilgrimage to the lotuslike feet of our gurus, then through time to the generations of our *paramparā ācāryas*. Then you take us with you to your eternal home, to be with the Six Gosvāmīs in Vṛndāvana. In this soulful prayer we follow you into the presence of the Pañca-tattva in holy Navadvīpa *dhāma*, and ultimately into the abode of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Their intimate associates in the spiritual world of Goloka.

Times and places change. Yet in whatever situation we find ourselves, you are inviting us to awaken to the shelter of the spiritual world through transcendental sound vibration.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura tells us that Lord Caitanya traveled by foot through the towns and villages of India with a simple message: “*Jīva jāgo*, wake up, sleeping souls! You are sleeping in the lap of Māyā. Wake up to your eternal happiness by chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on behalf of Lord Caitanya and your Guru Mahārāja, you have traveled through



HOMAGES FROM THE GBC



villages, towns, and cities, countries and continents. All to awaken the sleeping souls with Lord Caitanya's timeless message.

This year marks fifty years since you first traveled on an airplane. For seventy years you had ridden on horse-drawn *torigas*, pedal-driven rickshaws, rickety cable trams, clunky Indian taxis, third-class trains, and a cargo ship. But now, gazing through your window as the plane flew higher, you saw the massive buildings of New York shrink down to the size of insignificant dots, soon to disappear. Through your vision you taught us that as we awaken to higher stages of Kṛṣṇa consciousness the apparently insurmountable effects of pleasure and pain, honor and dishonor, success and failure—even birth and death—become insignificant and eventually disappear.

This year also marks the fiftieth anniversary of your establishing the second Hare Kṛṣṇa temple, in a storefront in Haight Ashbury, San Francisco. For many devotees around the world, this year is being celebrated as the golden anniversary of the Mantra Rock Dance. Your heart was flooding with Lord Nityānanda's mercy when you entered the very heart of the counterculture. Rock bands blared their music at deafening volume, and hippies stoned on intoxicants were crowded in darkness lit by a wild psychedelic light show.

Yet you were calm and filled with grace as you sat on the stage. Like a loving father speaking to his own children, with no prejudice, you pleaded with each person to experience the limitless joy of awakening to the eternal love within us all through chanting the *mahā-mantra* and living a devotional life. From these events the flood of love pouring from your heart would reach all of America, and soon after, the whole world.

This auspicious prayer, *vande 'ham*, is an offering of gratitude and worship to one's guru, the saints, and the Lord. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your life is the infinite personification of this prayer, forever.

Praying to be the servant of your servants,

Rādhānāth Swami

Rāmāi 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*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, in a lecture at a World Health Organization function held in Geneva in 1974, you said:

So people do not come to us, but we are going, canvassing. This is the position. Solution is there, but they do not come to us for solution. We are going door-to-door all over the world, that 'Here is the solution, sir. Here is the solution.'

O Prabhupāda, I wish to declare
How grateful I am for all thy care.
Thou hast, by mercy and grace,
Taken me to a higher place.



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



Right from your birth you were divine.
Virtues which none could match were thine.
Later in life, on your guru's command,
You traveled far to a distant land.

Facing the West, O glorious saint,
Pure from all spot of earthly taint,
You sailed abroad to answer the call,
Carrying a message for one and all.

“Forsake, forsake your mortal lot
And gain a life that withers not.
A fickle thing is youth's brief span,
And more than all in mortal man.

Revive your eternal life and be
Pure immortal souls with me.
This temporary body does not last
It's duration, by karma, surely cast.

What is the use of working so hard,
Like a person in a prison yard
Controlled by a watchful guard,
Thinking you'll never be harmed?

Wake up and take the knowledge.
This much you need to acknowledge.
For thy future and your true self's sake,
For thine own good my counsel take.

Conditioned soul, when will you learn
It is futile to continue and yearn?
You hanker for sense gratification,
But will it give you complete satisfaction?

The material nature is a mighty force,
Hard to assail or check in course,
Powerful like a wind-tossed sea.
By thyself you will never be free.

Lord Caitanya is kind indeed.
He gave us all the spiritual seed,
Wandering all over, here and there,
Possessed of love beyond compare.

Chanting and dancing in ecstasy,
Flowing with love of God was He.
No incarnation had come before
Who freely gave what none could ignore.



HOMAGES FROM THE GBC



Such compassion had never been seen
In someone so beautiful and serene.
Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, day and night—
Everyone's heart filled with delight.

Follow Him and our future's bright,
Just like the sun's powerful light.
What more is there I need to say?
Let us go forward without delay."

This was the message Prabhupāda spread:
Humbly to take upon our head
A guru's service, must ever count
The people's welfare paramount.

Many years of hardship endured,
His success was always assured,
Skilled to observe due time and place—
Such was the power of His Divine Grace

If not for him, where would we be?
Left to flounder in the *māyā* sea.
Prabhupāda, I am fallen and low.
Everything to you I eternally owe.

Your insignificant disciple,

Rāmāi Swami

Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa

*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*

*mūkaṁ karoti vācāraṁ paṇḍuraṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī-gururṁ dīna-tāraṇam*

"A book is a mirror," observed Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, the eminent eighteenth-century German scientist and aphorist. "If a monkey peers into it, an apostle can hardly be expected to look out."



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This aphorism tends to spring to mind whenever I pick up one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and open its pages to read. For these books are the exception that proves—i.e., tests—Lichtenberg's rule. I am not alone in discovering that the books of Śrīla Prabhupāda possess a singular and quite astounding power: they can transfigure monkeys into apostles.

The books themselves convey clear and explicit directions for their own readings. In his purports Śrīla Prabhupāda repeatedly calls our attention to those directions, as he does, for instance, at the outset of his introduction to *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*:

The spirit of *Bhagavad-gītā* is mentioned in the *Bhagavad-gītā* itself. It is just like this: If we want to take a particular medicine, then we have to follow the directions written on the label. We cannot take the medicine according to our own whim or the direction of a friend. It must be taken according to the directions on the label or the directions given by a physician.

The guidance for reading or hearing Śrīla Prabhupāda's books is presented and re-presented in a simple, clear, and convincing manner. These instructions often appear in reference to exemplary occasions of effective transmission that are recorded in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* itself. Consider, for instance, this purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.44:

Simple hearing is not all; one must realize the text with proper attention. The word *niviṣṭa* means that Sūta Gosvāmī drank the juice of *Bhāgavatam* through his ears. That is the real process of receiving *Bhāgavatam*. One should hear with rapt attention from the real person, and then he can at once realize the presence of Lord Kṛṣṇa in every page. The secret of knowing *Bhāgavatam* is mentioned here. No one can give rapt attention who is not pure in mind. No one can be pure in mind who is not pure in action. No one can be pure in action who is not pure in eating, sleeping, fearing and mating. But somehow or other if someone hears with rapt attention from the right person, at the very beginning one can assuredly see Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in person in the pages of *Bhāgavatam*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda refers to *bhakti-yoga* as a science—as in expressions like “the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness” or “the science of self-realization.” The original Sanskrit word that he translates, felicitously, as “science” is *vi-jñāna*, formed by prefixing the word for knowledge, *jñāna*, with *vi-*, which functions as a kind of all-purpose intensifier. The word *vi-jñāna* denotes knowledge that is directly apprehended or experienced; Śrīla Prabhupāda often refers to *vi-jñāna* as “realized knowledge” and, appropriately, as “scientific knowledge.” Of course, ours is not “material science.” Yet as a proper science, the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is verifiable by anyone who is willing and able to adhere scrupulously to its proper procedures.

A necessary feature of such procedures is the clarification, intensification, and concentration of consciousness: the required “rapt attention.” This itself requires a pure mind, which requires pure action, which requires purity even in the most basic, animal activities of life: “eating, sleep, fearing [i.e., defending], and mating.”

Herein lies the required commitment to follow strictly “the four regulative principles,” namely no meat-eating, no intoxication, no gambling, and no illicit sex.

Most of us are disposed automatically to regard these sorts of strictures as “moral principles,” and, as such, having to do mainly with consequences of rewards or punishments, of enjoying or suffering, of heavens or hells.

But here it becomes clear that these “regulative principles” are more far-reaching than that. They are, in fact, fundamental principles of cognition, of knowledge. For this reason, knowledge, properly so called, depends upon *sattva*—on goodness—and, for its further development, on a more refined and rarified goodness called *viśuddha-sattva*.

A materialistic critic might find fault with such a claim to “knowledge” by deriding it as “mysticism,” which is attractive only to “escapists” and is utterly worthless for shining any practical light on the gross



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and palpable world that surrounds, contains, and, indeed, composes us.

That might be true of the *jñāna-yogī*, but for the *bhakti-yogī*, the world, as it were, comes back, but now disclosed as it truly is: as it is in its relationship to Kṛṣṇa.

As Śrīla Prabhupāda states in the purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.9.5, “By *bhakti-yoga* one can know the Lord, and by knowing the Lord as the Supreme, one is able to know everything else. That is the version of all *Vedas*.” When making this important point, Śrīla Prabhupāda frequently quotes a text from the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (1.3) that defines the Absolute Truth as that unique entity “knowing which, all else becomes known.” For instance, in this early lecture in Los Angeles (July 5, 1971):

So one who performs this yoga system, how to increase love for Kṛṣṇa, that’s all, then you understand everything. The *Vedas*, they confirm it: *yasmin vijñāte sarvaṁ evaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavanti*. If you simply understand Kṛṣṇa, then everything will be understood. Because Kṛṣṇa is everything. God is everything.

Our philosophy is called *sa-viśeṣa*, that is, “with varieties.” Once some of us who were members of the newly formed Bhaktivedanta Institute were accompanying Śrīla Prabhupāda on a morning walk in New Vrindaban through the summer woods. Śrīla Prabhupāda pointed out that the arboreal wood around us is really fire in another form. The tree, he explained, takes in sunlight—fire—and it grows wood. If later you harvest some of the wood for heat and ignite the wood, the fire reappears. So wood is just fire in another form. Similarly, he said, matter is really spirit in another form.

What Prabhupāda said left me bewildered, and a little later I had the chance to put my problem before him. I told him I was confused. “Right now,” I explained, “I am very involved in trying to understand that ‘I am not this body,’ that I am spirit but my body and mind are matter. So I am very engaged in discriminating between matter and spirit. But now you are saying that everything is spirit. So I am confused.”

It took me some years to fully assimilate Śrīla Prabhupāda’s response of two short sentences. He said: “We are not Māyāvādīs. There are *different kinds* of spirit.”

Māyāvāda philosophy is called *nir-viśeṣa*—that there are no varieties (*viśeṣas*) in Brahman. Our philosophy is called *sa-viśeṣa*, “with varieties.” As Prabhupāda expressed it in the last purport of *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*:

Although superficially the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the living entity, material nature and time appear to be different, nothing is different from the Supreme. But the Supreme is always different from everything.

Earlier in the same purport he noted:

Perfect knowledge of the Absolute Truth means perfect knowledge of Kṛṣṇa. If one understands Kṛṣṇa, then all the departments of knowledge are part and parcel of that understanding.

This, then, is the supreme and inclusive science, and we are to learn it, apply it in all areas, and, most importantly, guide and direct a grievously misguided and misdirected human society.

In a New York City airport a reporter began a press conference with this question to Śrīla Prabhupāda: “Why have you come to the West?” Prabhupāda at once replied: “I have come to give you a brain.”

This is our assignment, our mission. Śrīla Prabhupāda went on to explain that a normal society has a head, arms, belly, and legs, but that our modern society is headless. There are no *brāhmaṇas*. (A little later on Prabhupāda remarked, “In your society everyone is a *sūdra*, and there are a few *vaiśyas*.”)

Our special mission is to become the brain, for which Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us all that we need. We have been gifted with potent knowledge in the form of the book *Bhāgavatam*, the message of Kṛṣṇa. And Kṛṣṇa’s own messenger, the person *Bhāgavata* Śrīla Prabhupāda, bore it across the waters aboard a vessel with the portentous name *Jaladuta*, “Water Messenger.”



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The aphorism of Lichtenberg holds true. “If a monkey looks in, no apostle will look out.” The word “apostle” means messenger, and from Śrīla Prabhupāda we monkeys have been given all we require to become apostles ourselves: to assimilate the message of Godhead and to deliver that message to a world in critical need of it.

Begging for the blessings of the Vaiṣṇavas, on this auspicious day, to become the servant of Śrīla Prabhupāda and the servant of his servants,

Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa

Romapāda Swami

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

*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*

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṇḍuraṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī gururṁ dina-tāraṇam*

My dear and most respected spiritual master and eternal father,

Please accept my most humble and respectful obeisances in the dust of your most merciful lotus feet! All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

This past year has featured a series of joyous celebrations honoring the fiftieth anniversary of your founding ISKCON, after which you expanded the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in all its diversity, literally around the world in the short span of eleven years. Worldwide, the experience of honoring you in this way was simply wonderful!

Now that ISKCON 50 is behind us, those who are forward thinkers and leaders are looking to what lies ahead: putting into place that which will preserve your outstanding legacy by ensuring that the next generations will witness and celebrate ISKCON 100.

We know that the transition from one phase of an organization’s life to the next can bring uncertainty, turmoil, tests of faith, and similar challenges. History shows this to be true, not only within ISKCON but within the broader society as well. In service to Your Divine Grace, various groups of devotees working under the GBC have invested a decade in carefully considering your instructions, challenges in fulfilling them, and the best ways and means to achieve the smoothest transition from where we are today to where we want to be over the next generation of ISKCON.

Training and educating our present and future leaders in a wide range of skills is a cornerstone of these efforts. Curriculum development and systematic training at the GBC College for Leadership in Wada constitute an outstanding example. Just this year the roll-out of the Vaiṣṇava Life Counseling



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course, prepared by Ikṣvāku Prabhu, and the Devotee Care Course, created by Rasamaṇḍala Prabhu, are additional examples. Many outreach activities, starting with major increases in the “tip of the spear” activities—*harināma* and book distribution—extending to effective college outreach, innovative ways of expanding *prasādam* distribution efforts, temple construction, opening of preaching centers and other outreach outposts, etc.—these are all signs of an expanding organization.

Creating structures for training newcomers and providing a suitable “*bhakti* habitat” for them have become increasingly important tasks.

Making a smooth transition for the next generation of leaders is a priority, as well.

Taking firm incremental steps toward fulfilling your vision for ISKCON to establish *varṇāśrama* within the world is yet another essential opportunity and challenge before us.

All of these efforts, and more to come, are simply pursuant to the first purpose you stated in ISKCON’s articles of incorporation:

(a) 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.

Please empower us with the requisite intelligence, determination, sincerity, and strength to work together toward achieving these goals, ever keeping your intentions and instructions in front of us. Years of sustained and synergized efforts among sincere and serious devotees will be required.

In service to Your Divine Grace, let us work together to ensure ISKCON 100 becomes a reality. Statistical odds may be against us, but Kṛṣṇa is on our side, provided we remain loyal followers of Your Divine Grace.

The desire to serve you literally forever is deeply and indelibly imbedded within my heart.

Kindly accept my prostrated obeisances again and again.

Aspiring for your eternal service,

Your humble disciple,

Romapāda Swami

Śivarāma Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Almost forty-five years ago I decided to become a full-time devotee and become serious about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The full-time part was relatively easy, but what I thought would be the fruit of my service and surrender remained, and continues to remain, elusive.

I am fixed on the goal of my devotions: rendering service in a spiritual body to The Divine Couple in Vṛndāvana. However, the more I hear of the qualification for such perfection, the greater the chasm becomes between where I am and where I aspire to be. It seems almost hopeless. To buoy my spirits I regularly repeat a prayer by Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, a prayer that sends a ray of hope shining through clouds of despair:



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*ki mora manera sādha vāmana haye cāṇḍa hāta
vidhi ki sādha pūrābe āmāra*

“What desires I have! Although I am a dwarf, still I want to touch the moon. Will the creator ever fulfill my desire?” (*Prārthanā* 57)

I do not know the creator. And even if I did, he would not be able to fulfill this desire: it is not within his power. But for me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the creator, the one creator I know. You created the universe in which I live: Vaiṣṇava *saṅga*, temples, *saṅkīrtana*, ISKCON, *prasādam*, Deities, *Bhāgavatam*, *dhāmas*. The list of your creations is endless. So you are Vidhi, the creator. And I know that you can bridge this chasm that lies between where I am and where I aspire to be. It is within your power. Therefore, on this day, the day in commemoration of when you agreed to take birth in this world to introduce everyone to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, will you kindly fulfill my desire?

Your servant,

Śivarāma Swami

Tamohara Dāsa

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

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

Will We Follow in Your Footsteps?

You rushed against time to plant the seed
Through temples and books—our hearts were caught.
A clear path carved by your lotus feet:
We simply served as you had taught.

Your movement should last ten thousand years;
My faith is strong, but doubts have begun:
Will we all follow in your footsteps,
Or will we undo what you have done?

Generations pass, memories fade,
Instructions may be lost—one by one.
Will we strive to understand your words,
Or will we undo what you have done?



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Our hearts and minds were won by your truths;
We found the wisdom we had sought.
Will we now think there is something more,
Or will we accept what you have brought?

You gave the mantra—and sang so pure.
It has opened hearts since Tompkins Square.
But new words, new tunes, excite us now—
Will we chant as you did? Will we care?

You built one movement—ISKCON in name:
“If not to increase, at least maintain.”
Will we serve you with full surrender,
Or will we seek some personal gain?

Diverse views make preaching alive,
But with unity our faith combines.
Will we divide to show our way is right,
Or work together to harmonize?

But deep reflection relieves the doubt;
You are still with us, your words glow bright.
Answers are found on every page;
Your books can set the ship aright.

We may become lost in worlds complex;
Nothing seems easy, all out of place.
But we waver not, moving ahead,
Holding the feet of Your Divine Grace.

This movement *will* last ten thousand years.
We must stay loyal, and serve as one,
Always following in your footsteps,
To save and finish what you have done.

Your lowly servant,

Tamohara Dāsa



Homages from
NON-GBC SANNYĀSĪS

Amala-bhakta Swami

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I offer my respectful obeisances to Your Divine Grace.
 You are very, very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa,
 having taken shelter of His lotus feet.
 You are kindly preaching the message
 of Lord Caitanyadeva
 and liberating countless souls
 from the deadly diseases
 of impersonalism and voidism.
 Thank you for showering your
 infinite, incomparable, unrepayable love on me—
 a love that continuously floods my heart
 with the joyful desire to serve
 Your Divine Grace and Lord Kṛṣṇa eternally.

Your unworthy servant,

Amala-bhakta Swami

Bhakti Anugraha Janārdana Swami

My dear beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Your whole movement is remembering, glorifying, and worshiping you today as the dearmost bona fide representative of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the disciplic succession. It is that most special moment when all your sincere disciples and other followers re-dedicate themselves unto you and confirm their commitment to surrender themselves unto the Supreme Lord under your benevolent guidance.

At this year's meeting in Māyāpur during the Gaura Pūrṇimā festival, about seventy GBCs, present-day spiritual masters, and *sannyāsīs*—the seniormost devotees who are taking the responsibility for guiding your movement—concluded that if the movement is to indeed flourish for the next ten thousand years, it is of the utmost importance that all ISKCON devotees carefully study your greatest gift, the transcendental books you painstakingly wrote to save the whole world. Unless the devotees carefully and systematically



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study your books, it is doubtful whether our movement will flourish and continue to grow for everyone's benefit for many generations to come.

In his book *My Glorious Master*, Bhūrijana Prabhu recalls this pastime of yours at a *darśana* in Melbourne in 1974:

“These books are for you,” Prabhupāda said as he pointed to several of the books he had written. “Do not make it an export business. They only buy and sell to others. For themselves they have no use.” Prabhupāda imitated a devotee distributing his books, “Please take this book. It is very important.” He then took the customer's role: “Oh, it is important? What is it about?” Prabhupāda again switched roles. “I don't know; it is for you!” We all laughed sheepishly. “My only criticism of the devotees is that they think my books are for distribution and not for reading.”

The knowledge we derive from reading convinces us to surrender to the Supreme Lord and chant His holy names, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are present in your books. Indeed, you once said that as long as your books are being distributed, you will never die. Whenever we want to have your association, all we have to do is open one of your books and read it. Out of humility you also said that actually you did not write your books but that Lord Kṛṣṇa wrote them, and that you are the medium through which they became manifest. You also said that your purports are your emotional ecstasies.

You are the personification of humility, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as expressed in so many of your letters to your disciples:

It is my duty to help you always in the matter of understanding Krishna Consciousness, and whatever I am trying to bestow upon you all is the gift of Lord Krishna directly—I am just doing the work of a bearer. There is nothing of my personal contribution, and I ask all your mercy so that I may be able to distribute Krishna's message as it is without any deviation. That will make Krishna, myself, and all others eternally happy. It is so nice, sublime, and easy to perform. [Letter to Himavatī Devī Dāśī, 14 June 1968]

I thank you very much for your nice surrendering attitude by placing yourself at my disposal. Of course, I am using you already in the service of the Lord, and personally I cannot utilize your service. So whatever I demand from you, it is for Krishna's sake. Personally I am humble servant of Krishna, as you are also, but I am deputed to accept your service just to transfer it to Krishna as via media. I shall try to do this service to you and Krishna throughout my life, and I am so proud to have such assistants as you are to help me in my mission to push on the Krishna Consciousness Movement. [Letter to Dayānanda Dāsa, 1 May 1969]

I have received your description of the books sold [in Los Angeles] during three-day Christmas period, and I am very much pleased upon all of the nice boys and girls who have helped me in this way. I could never have thought it was possible to distribute so many of our literatures. Therefore I can understand it is simply Kṛṣṇa's blessing us for your sincerely working on His behalf. Actually, that is the secret of my success, not that personally I have done anything wonderful, but that because those who are helping me are sincere, they have done the work, that is the reason for our success all over the world where others have failed. A little sincerity is very difficult thing in this age of hypocrisy and bluff, but I am so fortunate that Kṛṣṇa has sent me all of you nice boys and girls who are sincerely working. Please convey to all of them my deepest appreciation. [Letter to Karandhara Dāsa, 9 January 1973]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please shower your mercy upon us and bless us to continuously follow in your



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footsteps so that we may not go astray and get lost in the quagmire of this material existence. Please empower us to become stronger and stronger every day in our practice of devotional service so that we can help others take up and practice devotional service as well. You are our only shelter, life after life, and by your able guidance many more conditioned souls will be able to cross the ocean of material sufferings and ultimately rest upon the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara.

I beg to remain your eternal servant,

Bhakti Anugraha Janārdana Swami

Bhakti Cārudeṣṇa Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. And all glories to your ISKCON and to your dedicated disciples and granddisciples.

What a great fortune—to have this glorious opportunity to write an homage to a glorious personality like you! I am surely not qualified to do so on my own, but I may try by the mercy of my *gurudeva*, Bhakti Tirtha Swami, and your other sincere disciples who have maintained your ISKCON after you left this planet. Please accept this offering as you would the praise a child just learning to talk might give his mother and father. The proper articulation of words is not there, but the child eagerly wants to express his love for his loving parents, who in return smile and embrace him affectionately in reciprocation.

On this divine occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, my strongest prayer to you is that you please grant me the vision and the knowledge to always remain under the shelter of your sincere disciples and granddisciples in ISKCON.

Please bless me to be a good devotee, not a great one.

Please bless me to be a humble and submissive devotee, not a whimsical one.

Please bless me to be a sincere devotee, not an expert one.

Kali-yuga is rapidly progressing; everything around us is degrading due to the influence of Māyā. Even the lifestyle of some devotees is now very much influenced by materialism, the demon of this age. What hope do I have to escape this influence and survive in devotional service?

If you study my life, you will not find any good thing or even a little devotion to Kṛṣṇa or you.

I only pray that you keep me somewhere in a corner of the ISKCON boat and allow me to cross this ocean of illusion and miseries.

An unqualified servant of your servants,

Bhakti Cārudeṣṇa Swami



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Bhakti Gauravāṇī Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Books change lives.

Your books have changed so many lives over the past fifty years, including mine.

Your books are changing hundreds and thousands, maybe millions, of lives at this very moment.

And your books will continue to change countless lives during the next ten thousand years and beyond.

Lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya: “By even a moment’s association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.” In reference to this statement by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, one of your disciples asked you whether *sādhu-saṅga* also applied to *reading* the words of a pure devotee. You said, “Yes,” but then qualified your answer:

Effect, of course, it requires both the things. One must be very eager to take it. Just like Mahārāja Parikṣit heard *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and there are so many others, they are also reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. So Mahārāja Parikṣit was very serious. So both should be serious. Just like the example: the husband and wife must be potent; then there is pregnancy. Otherwise there is no pregnancy. So sowing the seed, the field also must be fertile, or receptive. Then the seed will fructify. It is reciprocal. [Room conversation, Indore, 14 December 1970]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we want to be fertile. We want to receive the seed of the creeper of devotional service, plant it, nurture it, and see it fructify. We want to be receptive and let your words enter our hearts to cause a revolution in our lives.

You have written your books for all human beings, but they are especially for us, your disciples and other followers. You want us to understand the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness from all angles of vision so that we may become firmly convinced, put the teachings into practice, and be able to convince others.

Again and again you wrote about the importance of studying your books:

You should always read my books daily and all your questions will be answered and you will have a firm basis of Krishna Consciousness. In this way your life will be perfect. [Letter to Hugo Salemon, 22 November 1974]

To get knowledge is the first item for anyone who is hoping to find the perfection of his life. Therefore I advise you to read our books daily as far as possible and try to understand the subject matter from different angles of vision by discussing it frequently with the devotees. . . . In this way you will gradually become convinced, and by your sincere attitude and devotional service you will make progress. [*Perfect Questions, Perfect Answers*, chapter 8]

Now we want some men who understand all the purports of the Shastras so that they will be able to face any question[s] put to them. . . . This is a very important business, and I want all of my disciples to be thoroughly versed in this way. Our first business to every initiated devotee is to chant daily sixteen round of beads without fail, and to follow the regulative principles rigidly, and our literatures must be studied with great attention. We have presented the complete philosophy of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness in our books *Bhagavad Gita as it is*, *Srimad Bhagawatam*, *Teachings of Lord Chaitanya*, *Kṛṣṇa*, and others being printed, so the classes and personal study should be undertaken penetratingly. Please see that all the devotees are following these principles; this program is the essential basis of our spiritual advancement. If chanting and following of the



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regulation is done sincerely, without offense, all questions and doubtful points of philosophy will be cleared up by realization of Kṛṣṇa from within the heart of the devotee. [Letter to Jayapatāka Dāsa, 13 February 1970]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you dedicated your body, mind, and words without reservation to the propagation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness through transcendental literature, evidenced by your tireless effort to dictate your Bhaktivedanta purports even until your very last breath. Lying on your bed in Vṛndāvana, hardly able to move your lips, you expounded the most lucid and penetrating *Bhāgavatam* purports for the benefit of one and all. You did this because you knew that these words of yours, dictated to you by the original spiritual master Himself, had the power to change the life of anyone who heard with eagerness and sincerity.

Consequently, you showed great concern when you detected a lack of interest in reading your books, knowing what the result would be:

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. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 25.278, purport]

Reading your books means associating with you. You spoke and recorded your words. Your words were transcribed and printed. Whenever they are read, either internally or aloud, your words come alive again. You are speaking and we are listening. Of the two types of association—*vāñī* (through sound) and *vapu* (physical)—association through sound is superior because it does not depend on time and space. The *vapu* presence of a *sādhū* is there for some time and then disappears, whereas the *vāñī* presence can be had at any time and in any place. *Sādhū-saṅga*, the most important item for progressing in spiritual life, will naturally lead to *kīrtana*, *smaraṇa*, *pāda-sevana*, and all the other processes of devotional service. Your books are the perfect way to facilitate *sādhū-saṅga* at any time, in any place, and for anyone who is fortunate enough to give attentive and submissive aural reception.

While lecturing in Hawaii in January of 1974, you quoted a verse from the *Bhagavad-gītā* and then asked, “Do you remember, any one of you, this verse from the *Bhagavad-gītā*?” When the response was an embarrassing silence, you admonished your disciples:

But you don’t read. So I am writing all these books simply for selling, not for reading? This is not good! And if somebody asks you, ‘You are so much eager to sell your books. Do you read your books?’ Then what you will say? ‘No, sir, we don’t read. We sell only. Our Guru Mahārāja writes, and we sell.’ That is not good business. You must read! Why I am writing so many books? Not a single moment wasted. If you want to become successful in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, don’t lose even a single moment. That should be the first determination. *Avyārtha-kālatvam*, Rūpa Gosvāmī says. Forget sleeping, eating, mating. These are all material necessities. If you increase these things, then you cannot make any progress in spiritual life. Read *Bhagavad-gītā* thoroughly and be sincere and make your life successful. Don’t be cheater. Read, and follow, and Kṛṣṇa will help you—in this life. Don’t expect another life to prepare. Finish this business within this life. Take help from Kṛṣṇa, take help from books, take help from your spiritual master. Finish this business of birth, death, old age, and disease in this life.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I want to finish this business. And I want to help others finish this business. What better way than by making your books available? This was the first service you gave me. Even though I was not even initiated, you allowed me to translate your books into German. There I was, a twenty-one-year-old newcomer, only recently graduated from high school, without any professional training or experience in linguistics, without much knowledge of even the basics of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, sitting in



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front of the Second Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam*, “The First Step in God Realization.”

How appropriate that I took my first steps, my baby steps, in devotional service with this beginning chapter of the Second Canto. Nevertheless, it seemed an impossible task. But as you wrote,

By the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, even an inexperienced boy with no educational culture can be saved from the ocean of nescience, which is full of various types of philosophical doctrines that are like dangerous aquatic animals. . . . By the grace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu one can have real understanding of the essence of knowledge by avoiding these sectarian views and accepting the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa as the ultimate goal of life. Let us all worship Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu for His gracious mercy to the conditioned souls. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 2.1, purport]

During those pioneering years, I tried my best to translate your words into my own language, despite my obvious lack of qualification. The message comes across, no doubt, but as I read the text after forty-five years, the deficiencies are obvious. Your Bhaktivedanta purports deserve a more mature and transparent rendering. As it happens, the time has now come, and by your inconceivable kindness I have been given a second chance. Here I am again, sitting in front of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with a clear goal: to leave future generations with a legacy of all your books in German that are faithful to the original and at the same time highly readable. The task is daunting, and time is of the essence, but I am confident that it can be done. It can be done with your blessings, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the blessings of the Vaiṣṇavas, and the blessings of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

On this auspicious occasion of your appearance day, I fall at your feet and beg for your grace so that I may be able to transmit your words in the most appropriate way, lucidly and purely, without adulteration, so that all those fortunate souls who read your books in German will obtain your divine *saṅga*, experience a change of heart, and transform their lives.

Begging to remain under the shelter of your lotus feet,

Bhakti Gauravāṇī Goswami

Bhakti Mādhurya Govinda Goswami

My dearmost father, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated *daṇḍavat-praṇāmās* at your lotus feet. Taking your feet upon my head, I eternally worship you as my all in all, my everything, for indeed without your loving mercy I am simply brain-dead in every respect, devoid of all good qualities, and completely bankrupt.

I was a hopelessly sinful person before coming in contact with your divinely empowered representatives, who always carry your loving *śakti*. In this way I consider your beloved servant Upendra Prabhu to be my *vartma-pradarśaka-guru*, for he used to repeatedly invite me to the temple and in 1967 exhorted me to come to your programs in San Francisco. However, due to my mountains of sins, I was delayed by destiny in seeing you for the first time, waiting until you arrived at the airport in September 1968. Upendra invited me to the temple so many times, but I was too covered over. Besides, I was too contemptuous, for I



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falsely thought, “The Swami is always here, so I can always go and see him later.” This contemptuousness was a disaster for me, because I could have had some wonderful, intimate association with you on your walks at Stowe Lake in San Francisco’s beautiful Golden Gate Park. At that time there were only perhaps six or at most eight devotees with you on those walks—Śyāmasundara, Mālatī, Upendra, Guru Dāsa, Yamunā, her sister Janakī, Govinda Dāsī, and a few others. It is my greatest lamentation that I carelessly blew off a most precious opportunity for your most intimate association in those golden days. Oh, what a fool I was, paying dearly for my sins!

In 1967 I began my first association with devotees by coming to the now-famous Love Feast. However, by the time I came to the temple you were traveling. This came as a rude awakening for me, since, as mentioned above, I had arrogantly thought, “The Swami is always in San Francisco and I can always go and meet him whenever I feel like it.” When I found out you were traveling, I was deeply disappointed, as I finally realized I had blown it. Such is the high cost of false ego. But at least I had begun my association with devotees, hooked by the superdelightful *prasādam* your beloved disciples cooked for the Sunday Feast. The cooks were Yamunā, Mālatī, and others, and the *prasādam* was literally out of this world! Even though the devotees had trouble paying the rent for their small storefront, they cooked only in pure ghee, because they had been personally trained by you. You also had very little money in New York, but I have never heard that you cooked in vegetable oil. Although the devotees were very poor, it never crossed the mind of even one of your disciples in those early days to cook in vegetable oil; you had personally trained all of them how to cook.

In 1967 I had become friends with Guru Dāsa, who at that time was married to Yamunā. They had a small apartment not far from the temple, and I visited them there. Photography was his hobby, so the walls were literally wallpapered with black-and-white photos of you. Since I was a bankrupt person, having never met you, I couldn’t understand why Guru Dāsa had only one subject for all his photos—the Swami. My attitude bordered on offensive. Being mundane, I thought, “There are so many beautiful things in this world—why does he only take pictures of the Swami?” I couldn’t understand that it was because of his deep love for you that he had only one subject for his photos. On top of that, there was only one picture of you in the temple room—a black-and-white photo in which you were very grave, not smiling at all. In my bankrupt condition, this did not help me build faith in and love for you. By contrast, in the painting of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura by Jadurāṇī, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta was smiling munificently. Thus I was more attracted to him than the almost stern black-and-white photo of you. This was due to my profound lack of understanding, a grossly poor fund of knowledge. All of these misconceptions changed within a second, however, when I finally saw you for the first time at the airport in San Francisco. I will describe this later.

As a little devotee, the little things in your pastimes where I was personally present certainly appeared big, not insignificant. Here are some examples:

I was on a morning walk with you in Los Angeles, perhaps in 1971, in Cheviot Hills Park. Not long before, I had witnessed a hippie offer a stick to a devotee, but the devotee had rather rudely thrown the stick to the ground. Certainly the stick had no value, but I thought the devotee should at least have accepted it politely and thrown it away later. I had heard a rumor that someone had once offered a Vaiṣṇava saint some ashes and he had accepted them, just to engage the soul who had made the offering. Based on this, my mind was disturbed, because I felt that the devotee should have at least faked appreciation for the stick rather than rather obnoxiously throwing it to the ground. I wanted you to clarify this incident. But I certainly was not going to disclose to you in my question that the gift was only a stick. I inquired from you, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, if someone offers us something, shouldn’t we accept it [on behalf of Kṛṣṇa, just to engage that person in service]?” You replied, “Yes, but it should be something useful.” I certainly would never have mentioned the stick—that would have been too embarrassing—so I only brought up the principle. Your answer was significant because it elucidated multiple points. First, this small incident proves that you were clairvoyant in your manifest pastimes. You were aware that the hippie had offered the devotee something useless, and so you replied accordingly. Secondly, you wanted to cure me of my sentimental false conception, and so you did.



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Next, there was an incident in which you accepted something that should not have been offered to a saint. Soon after the opening of the Valencia Street temple in 1971 or so (the devotees had closed the old Frederick Street temple because we needed something much larger), the *prabhus* rented the medium-sized lobby of a hotel (or maybe its Hindu owner allowed the devotees to use it free for the occasion). It was a special program organized to host you, giving you the opportunity to speak before a group and offer your *darśana*. By this time (probably 1971), a few Indians were coming whenever you were in town. On Frederick Street, those who came to the temple were almost exclusively hippies, because the temple was in the heart of the famous hippie haven known as the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco.

At this program an Indian man offered you a slice of whole-wheat bread. You gracefully accepted it and took a bite! You then handed the bread back to the most fortunate Indian man, but it was now *mahā-mahā-prasādam*, remnants left by the *mahā-bhāgavata* spiritual master, which have potency far above even normal *mahā-prasādam*. Of course, this was a *deśa-kāla-pātra* special mercy exhibition by a *paramahansa*, and so it should not whimsically be imitated. Yet this incident was an exhibition of your infinite love, compassion, and tolerance.

The next seemingly minor but in truth hugely significant and instructive pastime took place in Portland, Oregon, later in 1971 (or perhaps 1972). By then I was the president of the Seattle, Washington, temple, and I had come down to Portland with a van full of devotees from Seattle and Vancouver, Canada. You went on a morning walk in a very nice Portland park, and I accompanied you along with a few other devotees. The walk was at least an hour long, but you weren't speaking. Because of your silence, except for your soft chanting, I was feeling a profound separation from your instructions and sacred words. I realized that although the *vapu*, or physical association, with the *ācārya* was very nice, the real wealth was when you spoke something—anything whatsoever, even if it was only light, informal chatting. Every word you spoke was glorious, regardless of the subject. Sometimes you discussed something that to fools appeared mundane, but it didn't matter; because it came from your lips it was transcendental. During the walk, you did say one thing. There was a bird up in a tree that was singing very prettily. You pointed at the bird and said, "That [the singing] is Kṛṣṇa." Obviously you did not mean that the bird was an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa but rather that the beautiful singing was part of Kṛṣṇa's opulence in material nature, as described in the seventh chapter of the *Bhagavad-gita*, where Kṛṣṇa says, "I am the fragrance of the earth, the heat in fire, the strength of the strong," etc.

Another instance of a minor but wonderful pastime took place on a morning walk in a Chicago park in 1975. I was standing close to you. You stopped for a moment and pointed at a tree. There were other devotees present, but you asked me to pluck a twig and inspect it. At that point it seemed to me like the most important instruction in the universe. Naturally, I immediately broke a twig on your order. You asked me, "Is it hollow?" I replied, "No, Śrīla Prabhupāda." I was disappointed that the twig didn't meet your criteria. So were you. You were looking for a toothbrush. I don't know if you ever used a plastic toothbrush, but you certainly preferred a hollow twig with strands in the middle, like the twigs in India.

Now let's return to the earlier days (I had moved into the temple just after Ratha-yātrā in August 1968). Naturally, when I heard that you would be coming to San Francisco again the following month I was very excited. At last I would meet my guru. I had accepted you, even though my faith was not superstrong. September arrived, and I jumped into a van along with a group of devotees to go and greet you at the airport. There was no security in those days, so our small band, including a few colorful hippies, pressed forward to the waiting room adjacent to where your plane would arrive. The ladies had baskets of flower petals ready to make a path for you. We watched the windows with great anticipation. After your plane arrived, we waited anxiously as passengers walked down the stairs from the door of the plane. Suddenly some devotees appeared. Anticipation and enthusiasm ran high, for we knew that the sight of devotees meant that the Swami was coming! Then you appeared, in full splendor, on the platform at the top of the stairs. You were glowing like millions of suns! You were smiling so broadly that it reached every living entity in the universe. You were covered by about five large gardenia garlands. You were very fond of gardenias, and in those days they were highly scented. With both arms raised in the air out of love and appreciation for the small band of devotees (and their *kīrtana*) who had gathered to greet you, you were



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like a massive broadcasting dish that was spreading *kṛṣṇa-prema* all over the universe. You were so exuberant that everyone present was drowned in an ocean of your divine love. I felt as if I were being struck by a tsunami of love, something never experienced before. All doubts, all fears, all hesitations evaporated instantly. I was enveloped, overpowered by your divine presence. Although I remained standing, internally I was knocked over. Though uncharacteristic of me, I burst into tears. I had never, ever had an experience like this! Instantly I understood, “Oh, he is not an ordinary living being! He is not from this world!” Although raised an atheist, I could see with my own eyes that you were from a divine realm, an *avatāra* of the highest order. I thought and felt by realization within my heart that you had descended to deliver the whole world. Although not raised in a Judeo-Christian culture, I had heard of the concept of the Messiah—the great, divine personality empowered to deliver the whole world. Within moments of seeing you I exclaimed to myself, “Oh, he is the Messiah! He is the Messiah! Of this there is no doubt!”

At that moment you entered my heart with your blazing effulgence and unconditional love, and you have stayed there ever since. In fact, you will stay there eternally. I take shelter of your lotus feet forever. Years later, in 1974–75, a little old man in the old temple room in the Lotus Building in Māyāpur used to ecstatically shout, “Whole world sunshine Prabhupāda!” May I ever dwell in that everlasting sunshine as

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.

For success in one’s spiritual search, one has to learn from a great spiritual teacher, or *ācārya*. One who is moving blindly through the valley of life, stumbling in darkness, needs the help of someone who has eyes. He needs a guru. To follow one who is enlightened is the only way out of the great muddle of material nature. Kṛṣṇa is invisible, but He become visible through the intelligence and spiritual perception of one who is in constant communion with Him, one like yourself.

There may be many teachers in one’s life, but there is only one initiating guru. In the guru-disciple relationship, a divine law is fulfilled, as demonstrated in the life of Jesus when he acknowledged John the Baptist as his guru. He alone who is God-realized and who has been commanded by God to redeem souls is an *ācārya*. One cannot be an *ācārya* merely by thinking he is. Jesus showed that the true *ācārya* acts solely on God’s behest when he said, “No one comes to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.” He gave all credit to the power of God. Jesus reminded his disciples: “Whoever receives me isn’t actually receiving me but rather Him who sent me.” Similarly, those who received you received Lord Kṛṣṇa, the one who sent you.

Fighting for Lord Kṛṣṇa

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you fought for Lord Kṛṣṇa. Your ISKCON is meant to bring about a revolution in the impious life of a misdirected modern civilization.



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Our fighting is against atheism. They say, “There is no God,” “God is dead,” “I am God,” “You are God.” We are fighting against these principles. So our fighting is very strong. Don’t think that we are sitting idly. I have come here to fight with these atheists. We go everywhere. We are fighting atheists all over the world. [Room Conversation, Indore, 13 December 1970]

Atheists may be very expert in mental speculation and may be so-called great philosophers, but they can be defeated by a Vaiṣṇava firmly situated in his conviction and God consciousness. Following in the footsteps of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, all the preachers engaged in the service of ISKCON should be very expert in putting forward strong arguments and defeating all types of atheists. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 9.51, purport]

We have to fight; otherwise what is the meaning of preaching? If you think that everything will be accepted very easily, then what is the necessity of preaching? [Morning Walk, Los Angeles, 11 December 1973]

These rascals will not understand Kṛṣṇa. Just like the owl. The owl will never open his eyes to see that there is sunlight. You may say, “Mr. Owl, please open your eyes and see the sun.”

But the owl will reply, “No, there is no sun. I don’t see.” This is the owl civilization.

So you have to fight with these owls. You must be very strong, especially the *sannyāsīs*. We have to fight with the owls. We have to open their eyes by force. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is a fight against all the owls. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class, San Francisco, 19 July 1975]

Trying to follow in your footsteps, I am distributing books and doing many programs to help many souls find a place at your lotus feet. Please bless me so that I may serve your mission until my useless body breaks into pieces.

The servant of your servants,

Bhakti Narasīṁha Swami

Bhakti Prabhāva Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

In the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.11.29–32), Lord Kṛṣṇa enumerates to Uddhava the characteristics of a *sādhū*. Your Divine Grace possesses all these saintly characteristics.

You are *doyālu*, merciful. Without your mercy ISKCON would not have been established and Kṛṣṇa consciousness would not have spread globally. Your merciful work of spreading the message of Godhead all over the world proves that you are most munificent, as the *gopīs* declare in their famous *tava kathāmṛtam* verse (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.31.9). You have the quality of *sahiṣṇu*, tolerance. You tolerated heart attacks, jet lag, and other discomforts caused by constant traveling and so many challenging situations. Another sign of a *sādhū* is that he is knowledgeable in the scriptures. You have realized all the conclusions of devotional service described in the revealed scriptures. Your Bhaktivedanta purports are the shelter for



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everyone in this world who desires relief from the prison house of material existence.

With His innumerable mouths, Ananta Śeṣa cannot fully broadcast the glories of the Supreme Lord. So how can I, an insignificant person devoid of any transcendental qualities, adequately glorify your exalted devotional qualities? I cannot even glorify a spark of your greatness to the fullest extent. But among all your saintly qualities, your surrender to the instructions and mission of your divine spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Mahārāja, is foremost. If we, your followers, can develop this one quality in relation to you, then that will give birth to all the other qualities of a *sādhū*.

Therefore, for us ISKCON devotees, the most beneficial activity is bringing others in contact with your teachings and personality, inspiring them to follow your instructions, and engaging them in your mission. That will purify them and elevate their consciousness to the platform of unalloyed devotion. I feel eternally indebted to Your Divine Grace. Since I have taken shelter of you by the mercy of His Holiness Bhakti Chāru Mahārāja, you have always protected me and guided me on my spiritual journey toward pure devotional service.

In recent months I have been traveling to various parts of the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland), trying to inspire new people and local devotees to hear your teachings and engage in devotional service. By my repeating your words and praying for your mercy, you have enabled me to inspire devotees and newcomers to surrender to your mission in Germany, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Ireland, and the United Kingdom. Giving you pleasure gives me the greatest satisfaction. But unless you empower me with the strength to bear all the trials and troubles that a traveling preacher's life entails, I will not succeed, since I am weak and foolish.

Kindly bless me so that I will become more and more focused while engaging in your preaching mission, and, if you so desire, empower me to fulfill the purport of my name, which was given to me by your dear disciple Bhakti Chāru Swami. Please enable me to preach the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa all over the world with the power and influence of devotion (*bhakti-prabhāva*). Please especially bless the *brahmacārī* residents of ISKCON Leicester, enabling them to cooperate and go out together to distribute your books, perform *harināma*, and invite new people to taste the joy of devotional service. And in addition to blessing them, please empower me to guide and inspire them. Your mercy is essential for all of us.

Your servant,

Bhakti Prabhāva Swami

Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Please allow me to reflect on some aspects of the ultimate paradigm, the revelation you have mercifully and freely bestowed upon us.

Your matchless gifts open the heavy door of illusion, thus exposing us to reality.

Back in those first days, the door to that magical storefront functioned both as an escape hatch from the chaotic NYC illusion as well as the entranceway admitting us into *Vaikuṇṭha*, the transcendence,



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ground reality. I still recall how the door to your Second Avenue apartment sometimes had a note stuck on it that read “The door is open. Come in.” This was a true enactment of the Biblical instruction, “Knock and the door shall open.”

You saw how thickly we had been covered over by the veil of illusion, or as some thoughtful modern *munis* put it, the “veil of [material] perception.” Unlike Aldous Huxley’s idea of hallucinogenic drugs as “door(s) of perception,” Queen Kuntī’s single phrase, *māyā-javanikā*, “the curtain of deluding energy,” by which we are densely *ācchannam*, “covered,” properly sums up how you encountered us, how you, with the vision of eternity, correctly diagnosed our pitiable plight. (Even from the conventional point of view we were pitiable. Confronted by my own tragic, bewildered state, you made the sound *tsk, tsk, tsk* and would soon tell my father, “There is something wrong with that boy.” But to my great good fortune, you added, “*But we can fix him up!*”)

So, it’s amazing! Our very *senses* figure as the *bars* of this prison house, this “dungeon” or “fort” of Durgā, so difficult to escape.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in this regard your special genius disciple Sadāpūta Prabhu wrote a book called *Maya: The World as Virtual Reality*. A radical proposal, but so true!

But how to fulfill the threefold Vedic injunction to “Get out of illusion and go to the eternal reality! Get out of darkness and go to the light! Stop accepting temporary material bodies and become eternal!”? First, what or who is our authority for illuminating our path? The answer is clearly given in the *Mahābhārata*: “Not by dry argument, which has no foundation, not by erudite philosophical deliberations, which inevitably conflict with one another, and not by haphazardly following diverse scriptures, but rather by acknowledging that the secret of religion, the ultimately true religious principle, is hidden in the heart of the great devotees. Therefore *mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ*—one should traverse the path followed by great personalities.”

By your unfathomable mercy we can access the only secure means of self-realization and God (Kṛṣṇa) consciousness, especially vital for this dark Age of Kali. You represent not only all the demigods (*sarva-devamayo guruḥ*) but also those universal authorities known as the twelve *mahājanas*. You have thereby so very kindly revealed the path taking us to that fundamental paradigm shift, that purifying “change of heart,” thus facilitating our release from the bondage of fruitive activities (*karma-bandhaṁ prahāsyasī*). You not only teach us how to row our most worthy human “ship” (*nṛ-deham ādyam . . . plavam su-kalpam*) toward the far shore of the ocean of nescience, but you also alert us to the importance of diligently pulling up our anchors from the muck of maudlin material attachments. Moreover, you factually engage us in the same activities to be performed beyond the ocean of birth and death, to be carried out in *hari-dhāma*, in the spiritual realm, the world *sans* material anxiety (Vaikuṇṭha)—not to speak of introducing us to that abode known only to a very few rare souls in this world, the place called Goloka Vṛndāvana!

The Four Kumāras, despite their most exalted status, had some difficulty passing through the innermost doors to the spiritual realm. However, Your Divine Grace is opening all doors, breaking all barriers, kicking away all obstacles, and ushering us in to take shelter in the sanctuary of the Lord’s lotus feet (*aṅghri-saroja-pīṭham*).

No one has done this as effectively as Your Divine Grace. Not even close. Besides you, no one has *ever* done this worldwide. Of course, being richly endowed with all the wonderful devotional qualities, you humbly assign all credit to your own Guru Mahārāja, to the previous *ācāryas*, and, of course, to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. You see yourself in the same way that Kṛṣṇa instructed Arjuna to see himself: as simply an instrument of the Lord’s plan (*nimitta-mātram*). Your deeply humble attitude opened all doors, for both you and your sincere followers.

On this earth planet, there is still potential. But by Kṛṣṇa’s mercy, let Your Divine Grace quickly become quantum-leaps more celebrated all over this world. (One great instrument for accelerating this process is the new documentary depicting Your Divine Grace’s most exalted character and activities, filmed and put together by your dear disciples Yadubara Dāsa and his highly competent wife Viśākhā-devī Dāsī, along with a team of assistants.

In the greater scheme of things, your fame is already spread all over the three worlds. Thou so great!



HOMAGES FROM THE GBC



Śrīla Prabhupāda, this disciple of yours is still affected by so many vestigial sins and *anarthas*. I brashly admit to being humble, because I remain convinced that I have so much to be humble about. Now I am over seventy years old. And the nuclear war you warned us about is ever more threatening. It is beyond words—the dramatic situation in this world of death, in this *māyā-jagat*. So I'll meekly end here.

Your eternal servant and lowly disciple,

Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami

Bhakti Rāghava Swami

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

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

om śrī surabhyai namaḥ! om śrī gurave namāh!

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this, the 121st anniversary of your sacred appearance day.

Your Complete Mission

Lord Caitanya, He has come,
Avatāra for this Age of Kali.
His *senāpati* He has shown,
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami.

The waves, they are coming,
Your mission is spreading,
The tale will be telling,
Māyā you're dispelling.

To spread the *yuga-dharma*
Of *harināma-saṅkīrtana*,
You've taught Lord Caitanya's
Sambandha, *abhidheya*, *prayojana*.

To now make your mission complete,
Let us awake from our deep sleep

To relieve your lamentation.
Four waves to your urgent mission.

You, our savior and master,
Our captain of the ship.
Your deep inspiration,
Siṁha-guru Sarasvatī.

Your *Back to Godhead* magazine
In 1944 did you begin.
Your essay “Conception of *Gītā-nāgarī*”,
Four movements did you see.

The Saṅkīrtan Movement

Holy name and holy books,
Navadvīpa in the streets.



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New York City in the park,
ISKCON's Book Distribution Ministry.

The Deity Worship Movement

Deities and temples did you envision—
Vṛndāvana and the Gosvāmīs.
New York, San Francisco, and the Swami.
ISKCON's Deity Worship Ministry.

The Spiritual Initiation Movement

Through training and education,
First initiation *harināma-dīkṣā*,
Second initiation *brāhmaṇa-dīkṣā*.
ISKCON's Congregational Ministry.

The Classless Society Movement

In devotional service to Lord Hari,
All four *varṇas* and four *āśramas*.
50 percent of your mission yet to fulfill,
ISKCON's mission is incomplete.

Global vision, the Lord's mission,
Spiritual *sva-dharma*—*saṅkīrtana*,
Deity worship, and congregational preaching.
Material *sva-dharma*—*daiva-varṇāśrama*.

The call of *saṅkīrtana*
Weekly *harināma*
Kīrtana-mela
Saṅkīrtana newsletters

Showcase for Deity worship
MI/VIHE *Bhakti-śāstrī*
Bhakti-vaibhava
Temple of the Vedic Planetarium

Ṭhākura's *Godruma-kalpataṇḍi*,
Nāma-haṭṭa bhakti-vṛkṣa
Global outreach
Yearly *sammelanas*.

Simple living and high thinking,
Farm conferences, agrarian culture,
Gurukulas and *varṇāśrama* colleges,
Cows, land, and Kṛṣṇa.

Cities our “preaching basis,”

Villages our “living basis.”
Chant, chant, chant, and plant, plant, plant.
No more can't, can't, can't.

Without your mercy
The world remains crazy.
Your Divine Grace's vision
Your complete mission

Your insignificant beggar,

Bhakti Rāghava Swami



FROM NONA THE SONYASIS



Bhakti Ratnākara Ambarīṣa Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet!

This year is historic for ISKCON Russia: we are getting the last volume of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in Russian, and finally we are getting a permanent place in Moscow that can be converted into a temple! We are praying for your mercy so we can fulfill your desire that Lord Kṛṣṇa have a temple in Moscow that can accommodate our huge congregation.

This year may also become a big test for the devotees in Russia if the government uses a new law against us. That is another reason we are praying for your mercy. Please give us the strength to overcome all difficulties and become purified so that we can extend your mercy to more and more people in Russia.

Praying to always remain the servant of your servant,

Bhakti Ratnākara Ambarīṣa Swami

Bhakti Sundar Goswami

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

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

My very dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most joyful and blessed day of your transcendental appearance, I am remembering your transcendental words and activities and in this way becoming purified. Attaining attachment to the sacred dust of your lotus feet is the goal of my life, for those lotus feet are a secure shelter for all fallen souls like myself.

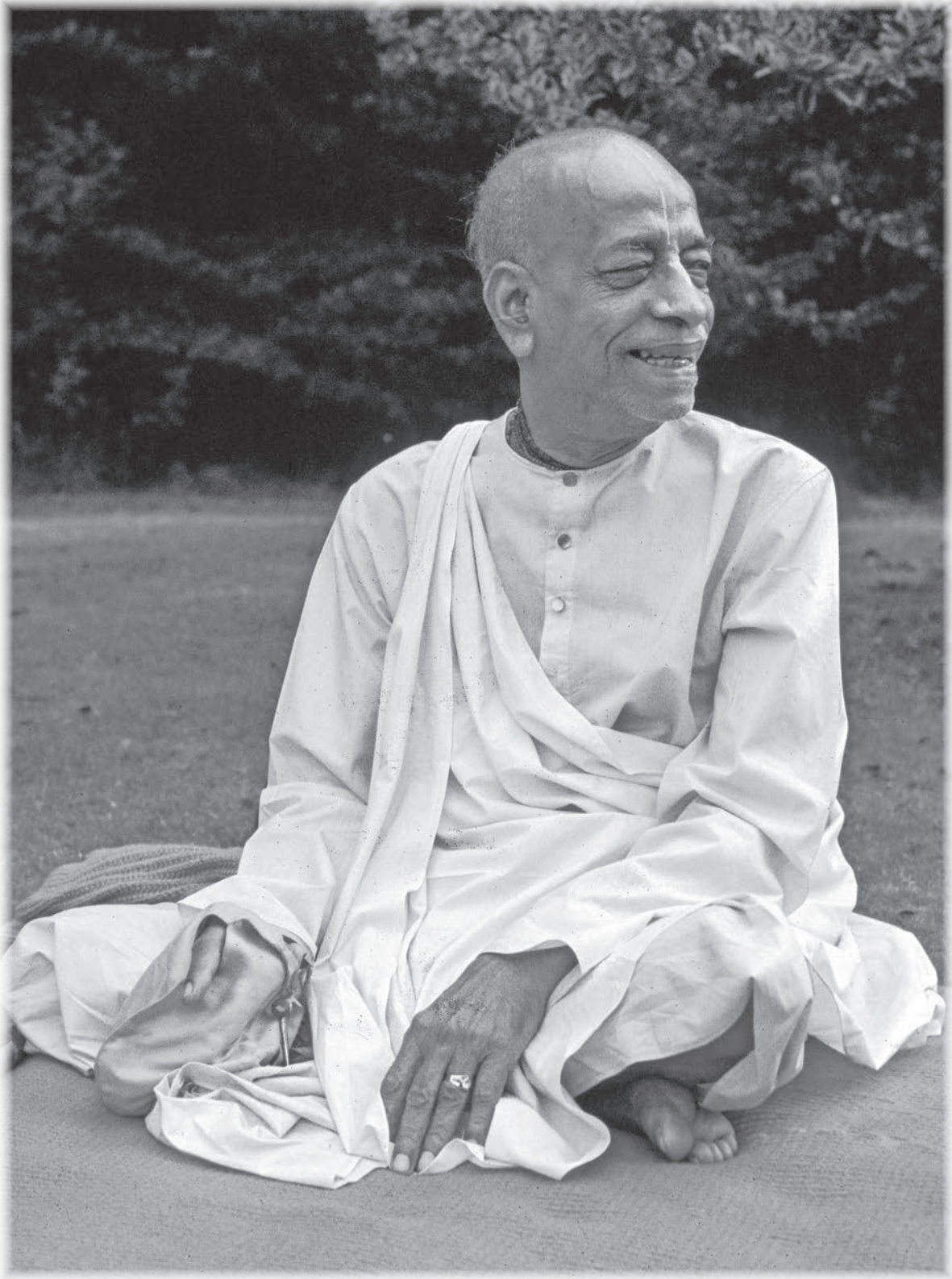
It is not possible to repay the debt of love we owe you. But we can try to please you with a humble service attitude, without any personal consideration or ambition. You once said that personal ambition can destroy everything. Then what should be our ambition? You gave us a very nice instruction in this regard in a conversation:

Our only ambition is we live among devotees and execute the mission of our predecessors, Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa. This is our ambition. [Conversation, Vṛndāvana, 27 May 1977]

Your appearance in our lives is like the appearance of the sun, making everything very clear to see. You are opening our soul's eyes by engaging us in devotional service. Your instructions are removing the fear of ignorance that covers our real identity as eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa.



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HOMAGES FROM NON-GBC SANNYĀSĪS



Although you departed to Kṛṣṇa's eternal abode almost forty years ago, we can always be in the sunlight of your divine *vāṇī*. I remember an example you once gave: "If you want to always see the sun, you have to follow the sun by traveling along its course. In this way you will never experience darkness." In the same way, by always following your brilliant instructions, we can always keep ourselves in the blissful light of your loving and divine presence.

Once Govinda Dāsa, a disciple of Śrī Rāmānujācārya, was being glorified by his godbrothers as a pure devotee full of wonderful qualities, and to their dismay and shock Govinda said, "Yes, you're right, I have all these good qualities." Rāmānujācārya was informed and called for Govinda. "It's not proper for a Vaiṣṇava to be proud," he said. "Why did you speak like that?"

"My dear gurudeva," Govinda replied, "I certainly don't have any good qualities, but if I have attained any it is due to your mercy only, and how can I deny your mercy on me? By accepting that I have good qualities, I'm accepting that I received your causeless mercy." We should always remember this instructive incident and try to avoid being falsely proud or falsely humble. We are all made of your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and we should always keep your mood of feeling ourselves humble servants of the servants of Kṛṣṇa a thousand times removed.

Your foolish disciple,

Bhakti Sundar Goswami

Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Mahārāja

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Once again I have the opportunity to thank you for your causeless mercy on this fallen soul. Your mercy is unlimited, and by some good fortune I have been able to take advantage of a small portion of it, enabling me to continue as a member of your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

In the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa, we hear how He sometimes arranges for the glorification of His devotees. For example, when Bhīṣma was leaving this world, he was able to pacify the mind of Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, who was lamenting over the deaths of the countless *kṣatriyas* killed on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra. Lord Kṛṣṇa was present at that time, but He wanted Bhīṣma to get the credit. Another example from the Battle of Kurukṣetra: Kṛṣṇa desired that Arjuna be the hero, although He could have won the battle Himself.

I am reminded of how you similarly liked to see your disciples honored. Although you could have done everything yourself, you arranged for your disciples to take the credit. When your disciple Govinda Dāsa cultivated *tulasī* plants, you praised her in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* 4.8.55, saying:

We are very much obliged, therefore, to our disciple Śrīmatī Govinda Dāsa because she has taken much care to grow *tulasī* plants from seeds, and she has been successful by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. Now *tulasī* plants are growing in almost every center of our movement.



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Then again, in a lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* 6.1.49 that you gave in New Orleans on August 1, 1975, you said:

We must be very much thankful to our Govinda Dāsī. She first of all cultivated the *tulasī* plant in Hawaii. And now our *tulasī* plants are distributed. So she has done a great service. I think I gave her the seeds, and she has very nicely done it. Now everywhere we see *tulasī* plants. It is very pleasing.

When a devotee then known as Tripurāri Dāsa was successful in book distribution and inspired many devotees to take this service seriously, you wrote to him from Bombay on November 12, 1974: “You are the incarnation of book distribution.” Another disciple, Madhudviṣa Swami, led ecstatic *kīrtanas*, and you showed your appreciation for his service by describing him as “the emperor of *samkīrtana*.” You gave the credit for introducing the singing of *bhajan*s to Acyutānanda Swami, saying that you had introduced the chanting of the *mahā-mantra* and he had introduced the singing of *bhajan*s. You also loved to sing the Vaiṣṇava songs, but you gave him the credit.

In temples around the world, each morning the Deities are greeted with the “Govindam” prayers, sung by your disciple Yamunā Devī Dāsī. You could have had your own recording played, but you liked to give credit to your devotees.

Although you are the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON and the ultimate authority on all issues, you handed over the management of the Society to the GBC and described yourself as a member of ISKCON. It is the nature of a great leader to bring others up along with him. He does not take all the credit for himself but is willing and eager to appreciate those around him. You have given us a great treasure of wisdom and culture in the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I most appreciate this quality of yours, Śrīla Prabhupāda—this eagerness to recognize the service and efforts of your disciples. By your example we can see the meaning of *amāninā mānadena*, offering all respect to others and not being anxious to be respected oneself. I can only hope that one day, in the coming crores of births I may take, I can come to understand the true meaning of this quality.

I have been fortunate to witness your transcendental exchanges with your disciples. I hope that one day I may be worthy to call myself your disciple.

Praying to remain forever in the dust of your lotus feet, I remain

An insignificant beggar,

Tridaṇḍi-bhikṣu Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha

Bhakti Vinoda Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

At a time when technologists are busy infusing machines with human quirks through “deep learning” and robots are making your *rotis* in the role of your dear chef, and when scientists are trying to capture consciousness within the domain of scientific thought, your movement stands out as an unwavering voice against the depersonalization of the lovable human soul, inviting everyone to savor the sweet taste of personalism in Lord Caitanya’s *prema-saṅkīrtana* movement. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your teachings are



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personal to the core, and hard-core materialists smell that threat!

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is rapidly growing everywhere due to its personal nature and its appeal to the deep-fried soul caught up in the whirlpool of modern-day materialism. Sometimes people say it's not growing as rapidly as other spiritual organizations. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your organization is no cheap movement glowing like a meteorite and fading away. It's here to stay, and it's making permanent changes in human society. As you always said, it's a movement that sells diamonds and not costume jewelry—a cultural movement for the respiritualization of human society. Any soul who contacts your ISKCON goes through a foundational and fundamental change from matter to spirit—a total 180 degree shift in consciousness. It is deep education, a real “deep learning” that others cannot know. This permanent change takes time and is irreversible.

ISKCON'S Faith Capital

While we have the best and loftiest of philosophies explaining life, God, and reality in the simple, crystal-clear words from of books, we have the challenge of maintaining the faith of your followers in the institution, and especially the tender faith of those who are just stepping into it, impressed with the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's powerful impact!

Our real asset is not the properties, the reputation, the international following, or the ISKCON “brand” but the devotees' delicate faith in Your Divine Grace, your books, your movement, and the genuine Vaiṣṇavas within the Society who have your teachings and your institution's purpose at heart. The faith of the souls who have taken shelter of you must be preserved, nurtured, and grown to perfection, since it is our greatest wealth. This is our foremost mandate, a mandate we can fulfill only by employing the very delicate science of love, care, and sincere nurturing. Artificial lip service does not serve any purpose, as we have seen in the history of ISKCON.

Māyā is always trying to undermine this faith and create havoc in the minds of the upcoming aspirants or even the hard-core followers. Hence we need to constantly measure our “faith capital” to see our real progress and wealth as a movement. You nurtured this faith so expertly in your disciples through your personal *līlā* with them and personally embedded *kṛṣṇa-prema* in them with love, care, and your exemplary activities. Many a time, as we struggle to maintain this faith, we succumb to Maya's ingenious tricks. In this dark Age of Kali, preserving ISKCON's faith capital is often a great challenge for gurus, preachers, and your institutional leaders.

Yet despite all the struggles, despite all our frailties and foibles, it's a sweet labor of love for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and that love is our greatest motivation.

On this auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā I pray at your lotus feet that I will be vigilant against Māyā's attempts to undermine my faith, that I will remain loyal to your teachings and free from all desire for self-aggrandizement.

ISKCON 50

As part of ISKCON 50, we began work on a large temple in Coimbatore, and the project has progressed with the support of an enthusiastic community of devotees.

A new *goṣālā* with Kṛṣṇa's darling cows is now offering milk, yogurt, and ghee to Their Lordships Jagannātha, Balarāma, and Subhadrā Devī.

In Erode and Ooty, we held Ratha-yātrās, to the amazement of huge gatherings of people, while active congregations have meetings and study your books in various venues.

On His tour of Bhārata-varṣa five thousand years ago, it is said that Lord Balarāma visited the precincts of what is now the famous Padmanabhaswamy temple in Trivandrum, Kerala. In February of this year, devotees at ISKCON Trivandrum threw open the doors of the first official ISKCON temple in Kerala, after inviting Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma to reside on the royal altar. The sweet countenances of the transcendental brothers stole the hearts of everyone! In the land of Lord Padmanābha, which was visited



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by Lord Caitanya and great devotees like the Ālvārs and other *ācāryas* of yore, the ISKCON devotees here have created a landmark after intense endeavor and overcoming varied challenges, with countless hours of preaching and book distribution—all to please you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Truly, these devotees deserve your merciful blessings, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

At the BBT in Kerala we are getting ready to release a special deluxe collectors' edition of your *Bhagavad-gītā* in Malayalam to mark the fifty years of ISKCON. New titles and a special edition of your biography have also been released in commemoration of ISKCON 50.

As a chairman of the outreach committee of the GBC's strategic planning effort, I had the opportunity in my travels around the world to see various types of preaching, much to my amazement! Devotees are challenged by a religiously apathetic populace and have devised ingenious means to attract the lost souls to pure devotional service. They have taxed their brains, enriched by the intelligence supplied by studying your preaching *līlās*. The latest generation of "digital natives," as they call themselves, embrace a vast array of opportunities for preaching the gospel of Lord Kṛṣṇa through the vibrant social media. There is, of course, a lot of indecision, debate, and even speculation on the course we should adopt in employing liberal preaching methods instead of the traditional ones. In other words, there is an ongoing debate between advocates of your "Do as I do" instruction and those of your "Do the needful" instruction. Mature and deep Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the prerequisite for getting inspired to take the necessary steps. At the outreach committee we determined that making people fortunate by giving them Kṛṣṇa consciousness is at the core of our preaching.

Succession and the Future

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, I just attended a grand celebration at Madurai, in South India, where we offered our respects to Śrī Rāmānujācārya, along with thousands of members of his Śrī Vaiṣṇava clan, on the occasion of the thousandth anniversary of Rāmānuja's appearance. It was a historic event. A special magazine on Rāmānuja was released, and a public *abhiṣeka* of a *mūrti* of Rāmānuja was conducted, with *pūjā* done to your *mūrti* side by side. Thousands of ISKCON devotees joined the event, with several ISKCON *sannyāsīs* in attendance, led by Jayapatāka Swami, who graced the occasion and gave a talk on the Rāmānuja's *līlā* and contributions. Almost all the Śrī Vaiṣṇavas addressed every respectable person with the words *ādiyan rāmānuja dāsan*, meaning "in your service as a servant of Rāmānuja." This has been the practice since time immemorial.

At this celebration I couldn't help wondering what the state of your movement would be when devotees celebrate your one thousandth appearance anniversary! You said this movement would last ten thousand years. At this point in time in your glorious movement, many stalwart devotees who have given their lives to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness are leaving their bodies, and there is concern about succession and the perpetuation of the *saṅkīrtana* movement. I know that by the force of your desire and Lord Caitanya's, and on the foundation of the devotees' purity, this movement will continue far into the future, provided we have understood Your Divine Grace's position and your teachings in the right spirit.

We are but small particles in the sands of time who by your generous mercy alone have been able to play a small role in your movement. Let me always remain an eternal servant of the servant of the devotees of your pure followers and facilitate those impacted by your books and life, helping them enter onto the path of pure devotional service.

On this auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I fall at your lotus feet again and again, and on behalf of all the devotees working with me, I beg for your special mercy so I can be your tiny instrument in spreading Lord Caitanya's mercy, and so I will always remain vigilant in following your instructions. Only in this way can I successfully push on the preaching projects you have so kindly brought into my ambit, however unqualified I may be.

A servant of your servants,

Bhakti Vinoda Swami



HOMAGES FROM NON-GBC SANNYĀSĪS



Candramauli Swami

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ 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.

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

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

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

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

Śrīmad-Bhagavatam, Canto 1, chapter 12, describes the birth ceremony of Emperor Parīkṣit—how the sages glorified his spotless character and prophesied and heralded the emperor’s future deeds, comparing them with those of the great souls of yore.

In the same mood, we are able to see how you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, possessed the character of many great sages and kings and performed activities as glorious as theirs.

At your birth ceremony an astrologer calculated your horoscope and predicted, “He will one day be a great *sādhū* who will cross the ocean at the age of seventy and open 108 temples.” Such a prediction is truly phenomenal in all respects. In the year 1965, you told a Turkish subway conductor you met on a New York park bench, “Yes I have many temples, but the time is separating us from them.” It is interesting to note that I received a letter from a person who visited our Seattle, Washington, temple. He described how this same subway conductor, by then very elderly, once came to the temple and, on seeing your *mūrti* on the *vyāsāsana*, spoke very emotionally, recalling his meeting with you. By your kind mercy, his initial skepticism had been turned into a joyful experience.

As a small lad, you wanted to visit Jagannātha Purī, and so with the help of your father, Gour Mohan, a miniature Ratha-yātrā cart was obtained and Jagannātha deities were modeled exactly like those in Purī. For many days the pastime was reenacted, attracting the participation of friends and family and other children of the neighborhood. This childhood pastime anticipated the day when you would initiate Ratha-yātrā festivals in numerous cities worldwide.

Lord Nityānanda, on the order of Lord Caitanya, approached the most fallen and sinful Jagāi and Mādhāi, and even though they injured Him, He still gave them the highest blessing, love of Kṛṣṇa. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, went to a degraded area of the world, the New York city slums, and distributed the message of love of Kṛṣṇa despite being often misunderstood, chased by a drug-crazed hippie, robbed of your possessions, and forced to live day to day without any fixed residence.

By writing the *Purāṇas*, *Itihāsas*, and other books of Vedic literature, Śrīla Vedavyāsa made the vast knowledge contained therein accessible to the people of Kali-yuga. He completed his work by presenting *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam*. How is it possible to begin to understand this great literature without



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your Bhaktivedanta purports? You are rightly known as the Vedavyāsa of the twentieth century because you translated more than eighty books of knowledge and wrote detailed explanations of the texts.

Lord Rāmacandra, to rescue His kidnapped wife, Mother Sītā, the supreme goddess of fortune, crossed a vast ocean with an army of monkey soldiers. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, also crossed an ocean, and on the shores of America you created an army of devotees of Kṛṣṇa from us monkeylike inhabitants. We dutifully followed you around the world, assisting you in recapturing the fortune stolen by the materialist nondevotees and converting them into dedicated soldiers in Lord Caitanya's mission.

Your avowed obedience and firm determination to carry out the order of your spiritual master can only be compared to Śrī Hanumān's devotion to Lord Rāmacandra as he displayed superhuman feats to save Lakṣmaṇa when he was wounded by the weapon of Indrajit and crossed the ocean to Laṅkā to find Mother Sītā.

Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura is glorified for his exceptional tolerance in life-threatening circumstances, having undergone beatings in twenty-two marketplaces. The soldiers doing the beating intended to kill him, yet Haridasa Ṭhākura showed his torturers compassion and prayed for their deliverance. When you crossed the great Atlantic Ocean, you suffered two heart attacks. You tolerated much physical discomfort for over a month. You tolerated such severe disturbances just to show compassion to the conditioned souls of Kali-yuga by bringing them to the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Lord Śiva is renowned as very munificent because he gives shelter to all, even *daityas*. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave shelter to whoever approached you, whether they were gentle or rough. You worked diligently, tirelessly training and engaging anyone who showed just a mustard seed of desire to learn or serve.

Pāṇḍava Arjuna, the great bowman, is praised as being as irresistible as fire and as unsurpassable as the ocean. And so, when speaking about Māyāvāda philosophy, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, were like a blazing fire, completely defeating all opposing arguments and unsurpassable in śāstrically establishing the Absolute Truth as Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Just as Bharata Mahārāja, son of Ṛṣabhadeva, expanded his family's name and fame and thus the earth planet became known as Bhārata-varṣa, so by traveling around the world fourteen times you made known in every country the spotless fame of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and His eternal teaching of *sanātana-dharma*.

As Grandfather Bhīṣmadeva lay on the battlefield, his body pierced with many arrows, he instructed Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja how to rule the kingdom and serve Lord Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, in your last days on this planet, although greatly physically challenged, you kept on boldly speaking the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness as well as instructing your disciples on how to preach and expand the movement more and more. This is recorded in many conversations, all the way up until the time of your glorious departure.

Your qualities and spiritual achievements are as innumerable as the rays of the sun. You are nondifferent from the benevolent sunshine that purifies and gives health and happiness to all. Your glories are relished by all who were fortunate enough to come into your association.

We have found the perfect guide, kind friend and master, and pure lover of Kṛṣṇa, Your Divine Grace.

We, your disciples, look forward to the day when the whole world will read your books and sing your glories.

I pray to live and serve more and more according to your eternal teachings.

With great happiness and a lifetime of gratitude in service,

Candramauli Swami



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Candraśekhara Swami

*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*

Dealing with differences of opinion gracefully is and will more and more become a key issue in determining ISKCON's future. There will always be those who do not have a respectful way of communicating, but whether they will be in the majority or the minority is the real question. Whether we can sculpt a path that avoids the tendency of noxious repartee is the real question.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's books bring us a wealth of information about all subjects of activity in the world, and especially about how our activity in the world will make us and the world around us more aware of the foundation of all existence, Lord Kṛṣṇa. We hear that the philosophical principles called *sat* are eternal and can never be changed, because that is the Vedic definition of *sat*. Prabhupāda also called this category of items "absolute truth." *Sat* is true for all people, at all times, and in all places.

On the other hand we have relative truth, which is not necessarily *māyā* but those things that change. Change must also be directed toward the service of the Supreme, or else it will be identical to what is meant by the word *māyā*. Change we cannot stop, and in many cases we cannot even understand the full direction of the change, what to speak of fully directing the change toward a specific outcome. Rather, what is appropriate is to adapt to the change and, where possible, redirect it. Change occurs everywhere in the universe and at all times.

To keep doing things in exactly the same way when the environment has changed is to become outmoded, hackneyed, inappropriate, ineffective, stagnant, and predictably calcified. Śrīla Prabhupāda himself was an innovator and did not accept every Vedic tradition being demonstrated somewhere in India. We find that Lord Caitanya ignored some traditions, certainly Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī ignored some traditions, and Prabhupada also ignored some traditions, because traditions are the outgrowth of *sat* but are not themselves *sat*.

Cultural traditions are inescapable facts of life; they are an important feature of relative truth, and every country in the world has them. They define the world around us and provide the furniture of social interaction. If we look around, we see that traditions are different in different places on the earth, and we see that they change over time. *Sat*, or absolute truth, is not the same as culture, but neither is it completely disconnected from culture. Culture is the raiment of philosophy.

It can also be seen that there is a degree of randomness to the ad hoc daily addition of daily occurrences into the library of culture. Proper cultural forms help us apply philosophy to social interaction. To many people, philosophy is invisible or impalpable, while culture is accessible to almost everyone. Tailoring culture to philosophy is a necessary activity. Culture shapes action and serves philosophy.

Over time, even with Vedic culture, accretions to the library of cultural forms appear. My observation is that these seem to come in at least four flavors. Some are beneficial and appropriate and deserve a place next to their venerable elders. Others are beneficial, but only in certain settings or locations. Others are neither here nor there but seem to make the chores of ritual a bit easier to enjoy, or they may add color and spice. And finally, some accretions are actually pernicious and become, if unchecked, the undoing of the very philosophy they profess to facilitate. These must be removed. Culture often shapes management policy. Both culture and management are about priorities, so some traditions and policies must sometimes give way to other, more important ones—sometimes temporarily, sometimes forever.

Every generation doing cultural modification must also examine those cultural forms that are not new



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but have been in use for some time by their predecessors. This bush of cultural hand-me-downs must be trimmed. It is being trimmed anyway, intentionally or unintentionally.

We know that *sat* cannot be changed, and we know that the relative truth must be adapted to time, place, and circumstance. The difficult part is knowing which is which. For that, we need to really scrutinize Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. There seems to be wide agreement on this, at least within the circle of senior devotees.

What has been written so far is an outline of a key project for the future, and it was spoken about this February at the SGGS in Mayapur. I mention all this because I pray that our founder-*ācārya*, Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, will look down on us and bestow on us his mercy to make this project successful. Our future as an organization surely rests on the success of this project.

But I also pray for Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy for the other half of this important picture. It is by Prabhupada's mercy that these discussions about relative truth will occur without floods of acrimony.

Unfortunately, in our mainstream world, people always discuss subjects of value, ethics, policy, and culture in tones of condescension, frivolity, name-calling, and crude language. Because these types of subjects are very important, everyone feels the need to have an opinion, and this draws throngs into the fray. We must understand that mirroring the outside world in this behavior is ruinous. But that does not go far enough. We must culture a tradition that minimizes this tendency and presents an alternative to it.

It will never be possible to adjust everyone to any cultural form or system of discussion, but if the core of ISKCON and its leadership can implement such a cultural form of respectful debate, then it will be possible to move into the future and have real dialogues about relevant adjustments to cultural details, as well as about management details in general.

Today I also pray that Śrīla Prabhupāda will look down and bless us to accomplish respectful debate.

I have written about these two points because I wish to invoke the blessings of our founder-*ācārya*, and I personally feel the weight of these two evolutions in our growth as a movement. All glories to the Vaiṣṇava devotees of the Lord.

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
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Jaya Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata (108) Śrī Śrīmad A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda kī jaya!



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My dearest Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

By the mercy of your worshipful *ācāryas*, Your Divine Grace has been empowered to transform countless suffering living beings into pure devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The world is indebted to Your Divine Grace for implanting the seed of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. It seems as if you are a personification of *bhakti*. Wherever you go—either directly or through your words, representatives, or desires—*bhakti* flourishes.

Before meeting you I was lost in the vicious cycle of *saṁsāra*. Although I am feeble in more ways than one, Your Divine Grace accepts me as a spiritual son. It is my sacred duty and pleasure to assist you in your mission. Kindly engage me as you wish.

Burning in the material blaze, I beg for your mercy again and again to save me with your torrential rain. Without your shelter, I am useless and there is no hope for me.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your eternal servant,

Dānavīr Goswami

Gaṇapati dāsa 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*

*nānā-śāstra-vicāraṇaika-nipuṇau sad-dharma-saṁsthāpakau
lokānāṁ hita-kāriṇau tri-bhuvane mānyau śaraṇyākarau*

This prayer from the *Ṣaḍ-gosvāmy-aṣṭaka* of Śrī Śrīnivāsa Ācārya glorifies the compassion and genius of his *dīkṣā-guru*, Śrī Gopala Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, along with those of his immediate associates: “They are very expert in scrutinizingly studying all the revealed scriptures, with the aim of establishing eternal religious principles for the benefit of all human beings. Thus they are honored all over the three worlds and are worth taking shelter of.” Śrīla Prabhupāda chose this stanza as the dedication to his *Nectar of Devotion*, “A Summary Study of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*.” Of course, this description is applicable to Śrīla Prabhupāda himself.

For starters, just as the Six Gosvāmīs left their homes and families to live lives of frugality and devotion, so Śrīla Prabhupāda endured demanding physical hardships at an advanced age to compose his Bhaktivedānta purports by night and organize his ISKCON mission by day. What the Vṛndāvana Gosvāmīs presented in the respected but largely inaccessible medium of Sanskrit, and what was subsequently presented by Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja and his successors in simpler Bengali, Śrīla Prabhupāda eventually translated and commented upon in English for the common man of the modern world. By delivering the subtleties of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *siddhāntas* in such an accessible manner, Śrīla Prabhupāda showed how thorough his grasp of it was, for “If you can’t explain it simply, you don’t understand it well enough.”



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Indeed, I am tempted to dub his exposition “Gauḍīya Siddhānta for Dummies,” but not without some elaboration.

Śrīla Prabhupāda made everything look and sound simple. But simple does not mean that it is in anyway deficient. By “simple” I mean “easy to understand, deal with, use.” Who can argue with this denotation? Śrīla Prabhupāda presented the eternal Vedic knowledge in a form that was intelligible for practically any human being of average intellect. Yet, his presentation was simultaneously appealing to those of philosophic or scholastic nature. He did so with unlimited patience, free from the *pratiṣṭhā* of trying to make an impression by divulging “higher topics” to those not fit to assimilate them. However, as we become fit through *sādhana* and careful study, we find those higher topics as well in his books, albeit in a nutshell.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s is a complete and self-sufficient package, taking advantage of which, anyone, according to their individual capacity, can pursue the ultimate goal of *kṛṣṇa-prema*:

And the process is very simple. You haven’t got to take difficult processes like yoga system or philosophical, speculative system. . . . Chant this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. It is given to you free. But if you want to know what is this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra through philosophy, through knowledge, through logic, we have got volumes of books. [Lecture at Ohio State University, Columbus, 12 May 1969]

Many of us, upon first reading Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books, experienced flashes of intuitive insight—intense and crystal clear—emanating from his *voidūrya*-gem-like statements. We concluded, “Here are the truths I’ve been seeking. Surely, all others reading them will have the same realizations as me.” But as time went on we learned that the jewels that attracted others were different from those that shone brightest for us. What’s more, sometimes others saw different colors than we did in the very same jewels. Even more perplexing, when we revisited the same passages ourselves, we saw newer and different colors! Gradually, the innocence of simplicity evolved into a disquieting complexity. When we began to compare one passage to others, we perceived a panorama of brilliant colors, but many seemed to clash with one another. Finally, we discovered a consoling harmony in the gem rays, as if they were the fundamental elements fused by an inverse prism to emit a simple, one-pointed, beaconlike beam. Śrīla Prabhupāda had pored over the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *granthas* and injected their essence into his own commentaries, producing an unadulterated, uncompromised, and undiffused spiritual light which illuminated our path out of Māyā’s bewildering phantasmagoria.

Proper conceptual orientation (*sambandha-jñāna*) is a necessity for fruitful achievement, so Śrīla Prabhupāda laid out the basics in a straightforward manner by repetition of his so-called *mahā-vākya*, “Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead,” coupled with Mahāprabhu’s aphorism *jīvera ‘svarūpa’ haya-kṛṣṇera ‘nitya-dāsa’*. Yet, at least for those who wish to properly represent the tradition as preachers, a thorough comprehension of the śāstric *pramāṇa* of Prabhupāda’s “simple” presentation is in order. Although it’s a fact that his books are sufficient for the aspiring *prema-bhakta*, in those books he has recommended that “the serious student would do well to attempt to go through [our *pūrva-ācāryas’ Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* commentaries] to better relish the transcendental messages.” Prabhupāda similarly directed the sincere and inquisitive disciple to other specified writings of our foundational *ācāryas*: “[T]he *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* is very famous; anyone who wants to know about the subject matter of devotees, devotional service, and Kṛṣṇa must read this book.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 5.203, purport)

In this way, within his writings Śrīla Prabhupāda has supplied numerous transcendental “links” to his source materials so that we may achieve a deeper understanding of, and appreciation for, just how loyal his purports are to the tradition, as well as how merciful he was to hand down to us the essence of *śāstra* in such a practical and satisfactory format. That his followers were so easily satisfied with his transmission was vital, for without feeling that we had a handle on the basics, how could we have abandoned our prior engagements to enthusiastically engage in *bhakti-sādhana* and the preaching mission? At the same time, by differentiating “studying” from merely “reading” his books, Śrīla Prabhupāda encouraged his disciples to dive deep into Gauḍīya theology (*śābde pare ca niṣṇātam*).



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In summary, that Śrīla Prabhupāda kept it simple for us while simultaneously inviting us to go deeper into his sources was the sign of a person who had not only understood the *siddhānta* but had mastered the art of delivering it according to *kāla, deśa, pātra*:

An *ācārya* is an ideal teacher who knows the purport of the revealed scriptures, behaves exactly according to their injunctions, and teaches his students to adopt these principles also. . . . An *ācārya* should devise a means by which people may somehow or other come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. First they should become Kṛṣṇa conscious, and all the prescribed rules and regulations may later gradually be introduced. In our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement we follow this policy of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. . . . The *ācārya* must devise a means to bring them to devotional service. [Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi 7.37, purport]

Ebe yaśa ghuṣuk tribhuvana: May Śrīla Prabhupāda's glories be proclaimed throughout the three worlds!

Gaṇapati dāsa Swami

Guṇagrāhi Dās Goswami

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

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

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

When I was a little boy, I knew nothing about the soul. All I thought was that when you die you don't exist anymore. That frightened me. Some nights I would lie awake crying after my mother had tucked me in. I would call out for her, and she would run up the stairs, hold me in her arms, and ask me what was wrong. "I don't want to die!" I repeatedly sobbed. She would rock me back and forth, patting me on the head, saying, "Everything will be all right. Don't worry. Everything will be all right." I would finally lie back down, emotionally spent, and go to sleep. But that anxiety in the depths of my heart still remained.

As I grew older, I became so absorbed in sense gratification that I stopped thinking about death. Nor was the subject ever dealt with in high school or college. When we all started experimenting with mind-altering drugs at the university, we would stay awake at night speculating about what was reality, and again the subject of death came up. But this time I somehow got the idea that we were all eternal, and that, hey, maybe we were even God Himself, or Itself. The idea of being God sounded pretty darn good! Somehow, though, it never seemed to work in my practical life. Quite the contrary: my suffering and confusion only mounted.

Then that day of days finally came! *Guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*. You lit up my life with the magic of the holy name. I had never seen or felt anything like it! Nevertheless, it was still so hard to let go of my desire to enjoy. Māyā had to beat me to the ground to get me to finally crawl helplessly through the doors of your temple. Home at last! And finally I came to understand the real meaning of death, of the self, and of God. After many lifetimes, that deep-rooted fear of nonexistence had come to an end.



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Nowadays death once again is very much in the forefront of my mind. My health is declining, and the doctors say the disease is terminal. But even if it is, the purification it has put me through has been saving my life—my real life—more than any bodily cure I ever could have found. For along with my illness you have come to purify me, forcing me to learn very hard and painful lessons I had always so stubbornly avoided. You are also so mercifully flooding me with the most wonderful support of your loving devotees. On account of the above, being faced with death has thus become one of the best things that has ever happened to me, rather than the unthinkable misery I did not know how to confront when I was young.

I am reminded of how the Fifth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* so graphically explains that it is becoming the general rule in Kali-yuga that relatives and friends of so-called loved ones who are dying are often able to think only of how they themselves will benefit from their dear ones' demise. They have neither the knowledge nor the desire to comfort and uplift their lifelong companions when they are about to leave this world. Thus multitudes are dying in loneliness, bewilderment, and despair.

There is no doubt that had I remained embedded in the culture I was brought up in, I would now be suffering the same fate. I would have had the same fears as always, not knowing where to turn for the answers and not feeling the genuine affection I would have so desperately needed. But you intervened and picked up this lost, sobbing spiritual child and held him in your arms, and you have been rocking him back and forth ever since. You have instilled within me that tranquility and faith I had always been looking for. I am at last convinced that, yes, just as my mother always said, "Everything will be all right."

Your most grateful servant,

Guṇagrāhi Dās Goswami

Hanumatpresaka Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my humble obeisances unto you, Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and will try to offer a few words in your glorification on this, your Vyāsa-pūjā day.

What comes to mind is my very recent trip to Mexico and India in an effort to promote the reading and distribution of Your Divine Grace's transcendental literature.

The trip was supposed to take twenty-four hours, from Mexico City to Delhi. I had not been to Mexico for one year, so the visit at Christmastime was very, very intense, right up to my entering the departure gate. I flew to Houston, Texas, and after some struggle made it to the far end of the airport to check in for the flight to India on Delta Airlines. They told me the flight was canceled and I had been written over to KLM. I went back to the other end of the airport, stood in line again, and when I reached the head of the queue the KLM lady gave me a boarding pass to Amsterdam instead of Paris and told me to go to the transfer desk in Amsterdam to get a boarding pass for the Delhi flight.

The KLM flight took off two hours late. Then I had to stand for two hours in a line in Amsterdam with other suffering passengers to get to the agent, who told us we had missed our flight and were "booked on a Jet Airways flight tomorrow, but we cannot give you a hotel accommodation."

After that, I had to fight with three more transfer desks, spend two nights in airports with only potato



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chips to eat, rebooking a total of four times. In the end the flight took sixty-eight hours instead of twenty-four. On the final flight, from Mumbai to Delhi, I started having heart arrhythmias, chest pains, and then they spread to my pectoral muscles, a sure sign of a heart attack. My body is seventy years old now.

I filled out the next-of-kin information in my passport and put it in my pocket, and with clarity I wrote down what I thought certainly might be my last words on earth.

Looking at everything, I estimated that, by dint of the constant mercy you showed me, like that of a father holding up a child trying to walk, I had done about seventy percent of the perfect service I felt I might have done. It was not anything great, but it was some contribution to your *saṅkīrtana* movement, made according to my nature and ability. There are certainly much greater devotees in this movement.

The visit to India was just as intense, and the *saṅkīrtana* results are there. Thank you for helping me grow. I will try to be less of a burden.

Your humble servant,

Hanumatpresaka Swami

Hridayānanda dāsa Goswami

I bow at the feet of my eternal spiritual master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who intensely desired that in each country we convince local people to join and lead our movement. He repeatedly declared that ISKCON was not an Indian movement outside of India. We hear this clearly in his own words.

In an interview cited in *The Journey of Self-Discovery*, Prabhupada told an American journalist, “My disciples that you see here are all Americans. They are not imported from India.”

Similarly, he told another reporter (in an interview dated 30 December 1968, in Los Angeles), “[T]hese boys and girls, they are all Americans. They are not imported from India.”

At a Sunday lecture in Los Angeles (19 January 1969), he said, “So many American boys and girls, they are chanting. They are not imported from India, but they have taken it very seriously.”

There are more: “Just see these boys, these girls—I have not imported from India.” (Lecture, Hawaii, 23 March 1969)

In Melbourne (11 February 1973) he said, “These boys and girls whom you see, they are engaged in the service of the Lord. . . . They are coming from your community; they are not imported from India.”

He spoke the same message in Africa—in Kenya and, as we see in the following quote, in South Africa: “Join this, our center. You come here, you’ll become Kṛṣṇa devotee. Just like these boys. They are not imported from India. They are European, American, and South African.” (Lecture, Johannesburg, 16 October 1975)

Śrīla Prabhupāda insisted that ISKCON’s ability to attract local people was the proof of its authenticity and potency. “That is the proof. . . . These boys and girls and men, they are not imported from India.” (Morning walk, Los Angeles, 5 June 1976)

Śrīla Prabhupāda stated that attracting local people was the proof that ISKCON’s presentation in a particular place had “substance,” as we see here:

This was a church, and nobody was coming here, and therefore it was sold to us. Now, you are



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all belonging to America, Los Angeles, and the church also was there. Now why it is crowded? It is not that you are imported from India to hear about Kṛṣṇa. [laughter] So if there is substance, they will hear. If there is no substance, who will hear? That is the difference. (Lecture, Los Angeles, 9 June 1976)

There are endless quotes, with Śrīla Prabhupāda always emphasizing that ISKCON is not an Indian movement outside of India. “So, it is imported from India, but that does not mean it is Indian. My students are all Americans. They are taking part in the chanting very nicely, chanting and dancing.” (*Back to Godhead* #25, “A Study in Mysticism,” 1969)

And this: “These boys and girls I have not imported from India, recruited. They are recruited here. I came alone.” (Talk with a clergyman, Detroit, 15 June 1976)

On the 121st anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s divine birth, we beg him to empower us to sustain his movement as a real international society for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We beg him to empower us to fulfill the words of the *praṇāma-mantra* he composed for us, in which he describes himself as “the savior of the Western countries.”

Let all those faithful devotees who understand these words pray in their own way to Śrīla Prabhupāda to empower us all to powerfully expand his all-important Western mission.

His servant,

Hridayānanda dāsa Goswami

Janānanda 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 prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

It was forty years ago today that you sat on your *vyāsāsana* at Bhaktivedanta Manor in London. As His Holiness Tamāl Krishna Goswami spoke of your glorious achievements, tears came to your eyes. You expressed your love for your sons and daughters. It was your eighty-second appearance day. Yes, eighty-second. (Very logically, you always counted the day you were born as your first appearance day.) You asked for an extra candle on the cake with 81. It was to be the last Vyāsa-pūjā in your physical presence. A few months later you wound up your manifest pastimes. How little advantage I took of the rarest of rare gifts—the opportunity to associate with a pure devotee—a regret I sorely carry with me.

As I make this offering to you, I am sitting in your room at New Māyāpur, France, the only remaining ISKCON property in mainland Europe that you graced with your presence. It is early morning. I am pondering what to do. Śrīla Prabhupāda, as I look at your transcendental *mūrti* I feel helpless, lonely.



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Is the New Mayapur palace maintained nicely? I like to live there. Especially my wonderful room. I like to live there. I like that New Mayapur facility. Nice vegetables, flowers, grains. This is very encouraging to have such a farm, where all problems are solved. You say that there is so much rain. That is very good. There is enough rain and people will be happy due to the sankirtana yajna. Repair all the old buildings and give all the new people who come ample accommodations. Yes, you can change to a suitable new place in Paris. We have got our real place at New Mayapur. So you can move to wherever you can find a suitable place in Paris. [Śrīla Prabhupāda, as quoted in a letter from Tamāl Krishna Goswami to Bhagavān Dāsa, 4 August 1977]

A chill goes through me as tears roll down my cheeks.

Climbing the chateau's staircase alone, musing on decades past, I recall hundreds of young enlivened devotees running up and down these same stairs that you so gracefully and victoriously walked. They were busily going about their mission of spreading the glories you brought to the world.

Now old bodies totter with the effort of simply ascending the stairs, what to speak of bursting out into the wilderness and into the blazing fire of *nāma-saṅkīrtana* and book distribution.

More than forty years ago you stayed in these same rooms, walked up these same stairs into this same temple room. You walked around the same grounds. O Śrīla Prabhupāda, I wish you were here now in your *vapu* form. Despite your unlimited presence in your *vāṇī* form, I honestly feel I am failing you. When you were here, you gave so many deep and succinct statements of direction; you saw New Māyāpur as a beacon of the preaching mission to fulfill your constitutional plans.

Certainly physical age is creeping up on me. You urge me on from within: "Please give your life":

So France is very important country. [Room conversation about GBC resolutions, Māyāpur, 1 March 1977]

Paris is a very nice city, better than London. [Letter to Madhudviṣa Swami, 29 June 1971]

So Paris is a most important city of the world. Work with great enthusiasm and make Krishna more prominent than Napoleon and Eiffel tower. [Letter to Guru Gaurāṅga Dāsa and the Paris devotees, 24 August 1973]

There is so much service to do for you here, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and so few active devotees. You have given us the opportunity to worship the most beautiful Deities—Rādhā-Parīśvara, Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, Rādhā-Govinda Mādhava, Nitāi-Śacīsuta, Gaura-Nitāi, and Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā. It is not an easy task with so few *pūjārīs*.

The people of France are as ready for Kṛṣṇa consciousness as those anywhere else. The time when we were scorned by the public has passed. Whenever we go out on the streets on *harināma*, it is wonderful. They love *prasādam*. We have thousands of books in French waiting to be distributed. If only we had more devotees to take advantage of this unbelievable opportunity to dedicate their lives to serving your mission. You have given us a most beautiful farm and temple—we just need sincere devotees to farm and serve here. We have a building in the nearby city of Tours that is used as a preaching center and restaurant, and in Paris there is a small but enthusiastic crew of young devotees eager to push your movement forward there.

France is one of the greatest challenges in our Western preaching world. You are certainly one for a challenge. Although you have brought me here, I feel devoid of qualification. This task, for a mouse like me, is daunting and beyond my petty intelligence. Why me? Surely you have no end of more eligible limbs to work through. I wish that some of them would come here and make the change that is required.

There are many devotees scattered around France and beyond. As if by a great storm, they have been separated from their spiritual family. This distraught situation has resulted in unending differences, disparity, loss of drive and direction, offenses, faithlessness, fear, and hurt. I only wish I could assist you



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in reuniting your children in your great mission. But I am a number-one rogue, and here I am, supposedly doing some service for you. I am perplexed. I am afraid I am offending many of the devotees here in the guise of helping you. I hope they forgive me. It has not been my intention to offend them.

I sometimes feel a drop of the pain you feel for the many children you have here who, for whatever reason, have either fallen by the wayside or found themselves separated from your movement and, in many cases, opposed to one another. I know this is not pleasing to you. What can I do, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to relieve you of this pain? I saw you cry for the loss of your sons and daughters. As Advaita Ācārya said,

Although the sufferings of My fellow men deeply pain My heart, I, too, being a sinner, am incapable of helping them. Therefore, O Lord, You must descend Yourself and teach them how to attain You. Only by this means will they learn to love You and thereby end their misery.

I have no real love for you; otherwise I would not maintain the desire for name and fame and selfish satisfaction. How can I possibly be of any use with this mentality? Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, if you think I am of no use here, please kick me away so I will not impede the genuine devotees in their service to you. If you want me to stay, then I beg you with whatever little sincerity I have, if I have any, to please somehow make me your instrument to do your will and kindly extirpate my insistent false ego, remove my fears and doubts, and awaken some genuine compassion in my heart. Please cleanse my heart of the cyclone of material desires and hypocrisy raging there, and of the hatred of your genuine devotees.

I pray as Prahlāda Mahārāja prayed to Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva:

O my Lord, best of the givers of benediction, if You at all want to bestow a desirable benediction upon me, then I pray from Your Lordship that within the core of my heart there be no material desires. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.10.7]

I marvel at your unending compassion toward me. You have allowed me the chance to serve despite my duplicitous motives and have somehow tolerated me. Perhaps I am merely awaiting the punishment I deserve for my wicked, deceitful demeanor. Whatever is in store for me, a glimmer of faith nourishes my strong conviction that by your mercy nothing is impossible. I implore you to please help the devotees here in France and the people of this God-forsaken country by showering your mercy upon them.

I am back in your rooms in New Māyāpur, praying for guidance. I would like to think I can be of some use to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I would like to offer you my very self, if you would kindly accept me. I really have nothing to offer other than that. May this body perish in your service. Your mercy is the only hope I have. Maybe one day I can offer you something pleasing instead of the annual desperate appeal for your mercy—mercy that is already there. Unfortunately, this rascal needs the mercy to take your mercy. May I be of some service to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, here in France.

Here in this New Māyāpur, if you simply carry on this *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto*, then all your necessities will come automatically; don't bother. [Outdoor conversation, New Māyāpur, 3 August 1976]

Your very lowly servant devoid of genuine bhakti,

Janānanda Goswami



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Kadamba Kānana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*kṛṣṇa bhuli' sei jīva anādi-bahirmukha
ataeva māyā tāre deya saṁsāra-duḥkha
(Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 20.1170)*

The conditioned souls have forgotten Kṛṣṇa since time immemorial and, life after life, are caught up in so many varieties of suffering in the material world.

We are among them, Śrīla Prabhupāda. For how many lifetimes have we been stubbornly holding on to sense enjoyment?

By your extraordinary surrender in devotional service you purchased Kṛṣṇa. And not only did you purchase Kṛṣṇa; you also purchased us by your endless endeavors to give others Kṛṣṇa, by your being approachable, personal, and human, and by your being superhuman at the same time.

You captured our hearts, satisfied our intelligence, engaged our mind, helped us conquer the senses, and gave us a new life.

You purchased many people you met all over the world.

Then you also purchased me. Although I didn't meet you in person while you were on this planet, you still took control of my life and made me your property.

Today, forty years after your departure, you continue to touch the hearts of countless people, and there is no doubt that you will continue to inspire many more for generations to come.

We cannot imagine the extent of your greatness, Śrīla Prabhupāda—your purity, your love for Kṛṣṇa, and your incredible determination to bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness to everyone all over the world. When and where will your preaching end? With this planet, or with this universe, or with other universes? How far will your mercy reach? We cannot imagine.

We bow in amazement, praying for some service in your preaching mission, knowing for certain that if we serve you, going back to Godhead is guaranteed. Thank you for your unlimited mercy.

Your servant,

Kadamba Kānana Swami



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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*

Letting Śrīla Prabhupāda Speak for Himself

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances and my deepest gratitude to you for giving us your brilliant translations of and purports to the most elevated of Vedic literatures. You have munificently given humanity access to confidential knowledge of the Absolute Truth, the intimate personal desires of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and His loving dealings with His eternal associates. You have made possible the awakening of love for Kṛṣṇa and pure devotional service to His lotus feet, the goal of human life, in the heart of anyone in any part of the world who simply agrees to hear submissively with faith your transcendental ecstasies as you glorify the Lord and the process of pure devotional service in your Bhaktivedanta Purports.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my offering to you on this auspicious day of your appearance is a kind of sequel to my previous two annual offerings, in which I glorified the daily reading of your books, especially out loud, and shared the happiness I've been feeling in doing so with devotees, many of whom have written or visited me since I wrote those offerings to say that their lives have changed permanently by reading your books out loud every day.

Last year I mentioned the survey taken at the ILS, the *saṅga* of ISKCON's second-tier leaders held every two years in Māyāpur. The survey showed that in general the leaders are not reading your books as you wanted them to, a fact that prompted the theme of my offering in 2016.

This year I attended the third biannual *saṅga* of ISKCON's top-tier leaders—the *sannyāsīs*, gurus, and members of the GBC (SGGS). The facilitators of this three-day event—Gopala Bhaṭṭa Dāsa, Vraja Vihārī Dāsa, and Kaunteya Dāsa—were able to distill the thoughts of the more than eighty attendees into what the attendees felt were the three most important issues to get right if your movement is to be passed on to the next generation intact, according to your desire. The three issues were:

Reading your books.
Substance before form.
The quality of our leadership.

I was very happy to hear these conclusions and couldn't help but see a connection between the second two and the proper and sufficient reading of your books. Interestingly, I recently learned from Draviḍa Prabhu, concerning your use of "sufficient" and "sufficiently," that you sometimes intend a little-used meaning—roughly "abundant, lavish" and "abundantly, lavishly." So when you say, "My disciples should read my books sufficiently," you may very well mean we should read them a lot!

My question is, then, Without the ongoing support of your association by the careful reading of your books, how can we give the devotees spiritual substance or quality leadership as we work to improve ISKCON together?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this auspicious anniversary of your appearance in this world, please allow me to beg your mercy. I'm convinced that you are personally present in your books. You yourself made statements indicating this: "I will never die. I will live forever in my books;" and "If you want to know me,



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read my books.” The more I read your books, the closer I feel to you. Your presence is palpable.

For example, as I write this I’m convalescing from a two-week savage fever that put me in the hospital. I got out of the hospital just a week ago. I was taking a short break from writing due to weakness, and as I wondered about my condition, I came upon this purport in my daily reading:

Sometimes if one is liberated from the material world but has no shelter at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, one falls down to the material world again. Liberation is like a state of convalescence, in which one is free from a fever but is still not healthy. Even in the stage of convalescence, if one is not very careful, one may have a relapse. Similarly, liberation does not offer as much security as the shelter of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 3.257, purport]

How’s that for personal reciprocation! Unlimited thanks to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for protecting me so nicely!

I propose that if we leaders read your books properly ourselves, not only with the intention of learning more, to make our classes and seminars more substantial, informative, and so on, but also with the intention of spending quality time with you and learning from you how to be devotees as you would want us to be—how to follow in the footsteps of the great personalities manifest in the sound of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*—and if we then teach the devotees under our care to do the same by reading your words out loud with them, letting you speak for yourself, letting you personally direct those under our care how to think, feel, will, and interact on the spiritual plane, as you want us to, regardless of our position in the social structure, then the spiritual purity of your movement will be secure.

The prototypes, the exemplars, of all types of great souls, pure Vaiṣṇavas—from the original kings and great sages, to aristocratic *brāhmaṇas* and wealthy *vaiśyas* and landholders, to simple voluntary paupers, in ancient times and in more recent times—all live within the pages of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, waiting to give us their *saṅga* and teach us how to deal with one another in true loving exchanges under all types of circumstances.

You’ve given us everything, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the ocean of your nectarean translations and commentaries. It’s up to us to mine the jewels of wisdom and proper behavior and attitudes, reform our own characters accordingly, and become exemplars of your mood and worthy members of your line of authority.

[Translation:] Haridāsa Ṭhākura replied, “My dear Lord, do not be in anxiety. Do not be unhappy to see the condition of the *yavanas* in material existence.

[Purport:] These words of Haridāsa Ṭhākura are just befitting a devotee who has dedicated his life and soul to the service of the Lord. When the Lord is unhappy because of the condition of the fallen souls, the devotee consoles Him, saying, “My dear Lord, do not be in anxiety.” This is service. Everyone should adopt the cause of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to try to relieve Him from the anxiety He feels. This is actually service to the Lord. One who tries to relieve Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s anxiety for the fallen souls is certainly a most dear and confidential devotee of the Lord. To blaspheme such a devotee who is trying his best to spread the cult of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the greatest offense. One who does so is simply awaiting punishment for his envy. [*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya-līlā* 3.52]

In this age of seminars and various ways of communicating through varieties of media, there is also a crying need for all of us to directly hear your divine instructions, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please bless me so that I can be an instrument for spreading this understanding, which is vital for the spiritual maintenance of your ISKCON.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your humble servant,

Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Goswami



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Kṛṣṇakṣetra Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

With all affectionate reverence and a hope to please you on this day of your glorious appearance, I offer you this short meditation on what could be a trailer-in-progress for a film introducing your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.¹

Off-camera narrator [extreme close-up, looking straight into the camera, eyes only, then pan down to just the mouth]: They tried everything—every in-your-face thinkable and unthinkable so-called pleasure. Trying just once—then a thousand times. It is called sense gratification. A thousand times not enough, a million times they try and try and never, ever ask why. They failed yet again to become the greatest personality. Almost there, but where? Didn't get a minister's post,² though they think they *should* have, could have, if only . . .

Director [always in silhouette, pacing back and forth]: CUT! That's okay, but look, you need to get to the point, or you will lose your audience.

Set manager [always in silhouette, seated]: Yes. No worries. This is where the Greek-style chorus comes in. First, one offstage cold, official voice: "The defendants shall rise to hear the verdict. The wise shall now pronounce the verdict." Then the chorus [several voices in unison] speaks: "We find the defendants guilty as charged—they are rascals. [Silence, then louder]: Rascals . . . RASCALS. [A single voice.] To the full extent, through and through, having tried and tried again and a million times to enjoy sense gra-ti-fi-ca-tion. And now, even though they are fed up, what do they want? [Chorus singing, then laughing]: *Brahma-varcasa-kāmas tu*³ —[single voice] to MERGE [laughter; sound of cymbal sizzle] into the effulgence of the [chorus, loudly] Absolute, [single voice] the grand blur of *luz incognito*! Hence we announce, we pronounce . . . [softer, with a soft drum roll, repeated whispers of "rascals, rascals, rascals" and the sound of moaning].

Director: Okay, okay, but where does this film trailer go from here? There has to be a clear sense of direction—not that you keep your audience guessing. It has to be fast-moving, give atmosphere and—

Set manager: No, no guessing. Now we quote Śrīla Prabhupāda. [Śrīla Prabhupāda's voice, speaking in a stadium to tens of thousands]: "The more human society engages in the exploitation of undeveloped material resources for sense gratification, the more it will become entrapped by the illusory material energy of the Lord, and thus the distress of the world will be intensified instead of diminished."⁴

Off-camera narrator [in the tone of a friendly, helpful teacher]: This is the world guru speaking, addressing all of us. You see, he's explaining a kind of mathematical linear function: as x increases—as exploitation increases—so also y—distress—increases exponentially. The y, the distress of the world, appears as disinterest in one another, [including rapid succession of fitting images, sounds of explosions, sirens] the fear behind the eyes, the vomit-laced bombs planted within the

¹ Śrīla Prabhupāda quotes within the text are indicated by underlined type.

² Lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.3.1–2, Los Angeles, 20 May 1972.

³ *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.3.2.

⁴ *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.2.37, purport



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skyscraping tower of *chakra*-vortices, the blind and blinding criminality going by any and every other name, thinking to get away with finely tuned anonymity. Hence the judgment: “rascals”—posing as righteous but way short of the baseline of being human. A protohuman, really.

Director: Fine, so then what? You quote the Swami. What more does he do or say? There’s gotta be some drama, not just judgments and pronouncements.

Set manager: Of course. The Swami will appear. Actually, he is always present, was always present. This is the point: the drama begins and ends and begins again with you and me and all of us always on the threshold of death.⁵ This is what the Swami calls us to grasp. But now the scene shifts to ancient India. A young *brāhmaṇa* boy shouts to the wind [camera from behind, boy faces out from atop a cliff into a vast gorge]: “I hereby curse this so-called king to die seven days from today!” Abrupt silence. Then:

Narrator: Parikṣit, the king cursed to die, is now on the bank of the Ganges, questioning seasoned savants: “My end approaches. Kindly guide me how to prepare.” [Sound of upper Ganges flowing.]

Off-camera narrator: [Close-ups of the books, the Sanskrit text, illustrations . . .] It is a stirring story, a great, moving story, a story of love, loss, world upheaval, social and class conflict, of inner searching, of worlds beyond worlds. It is called *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, “The beautiful story of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” The king meets one special sage, Śukadeva, who answers the king’s questions so well that when his appointed time arrives, after seven days and nights of listening intently to him, listening with every fiber of his being, seven days and nights of questioning the sage for deeper understanding, he becomes fully prepared, completely fearless—an enlightened soul.

Set manager: Next we see Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the world guru, the modern translator and commentator on the *Bhāgavatam*, in a dimly lit room, sitting cross-legged at a low desk, reading a large Sanskrit *Bhāgavatam* and speaking into a dictation machine: “On the other hand, that literature which is full with descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, form, and pastimes of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a transcendental creation meant to bring about a revolution in the impious life of a misdirected civilization. Such transcendental literatures, even though irregularly composed, are heard, sung, and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest.”⁶

Chorus, now in an upbeat tone, recites: “A revolution in the impious life of a misdirected civilization.” [Repetition, as echoes, of the key words “revolution,” “impious life,” and “misdirected civilization.”] Visuals—scenes in rapid succession—of people reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*—individuals, pairs, study groups, classrooms, lecturers in large halls, judges on court benches, workers on construction-site lunch breaks—projected on screens in hospital waiting rooms, etc. And then: scenes of slaughterhouses deserted and boarded up, of military installations being dismantled, prisons being emptied, car factories closing down; of people walking, riding horses and ox carts, farming with hand implements, cows galloping in slow motion down a hill [as in the original Hare Kṛṣṇa film], oxen pulling carts and plows; people smiling and laughing.

First softly, then with increasing volume, the sound of *kīrtana*, and fading in over the previous scenes, masses of people joyously chanting the *mahā-mantra* . . . As this sound fades, fading in we hear Śrīla Prabhupāda say, “Then I started this *Back to Godhead* magazine in 1944, on this very

⁵ *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.3.1

⁶ *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.5.11



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birthday of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, and I was looking forward for the opportunity how to implement this order of my Guru Mahārāja. Then in 1965—before that I was translating *Bhāgavatam*—and when three books were published, then I prepared myself to go to America, singlehanded.”⁷

Director: Cut. This is a take. With this footage, make the trailer. Now let’s get working on the *Bhāgavatam* film proper. The time is long overdue to popularize the *Bhāgavatam*. Long overdue.

Having recently begun this documentary film project with your blessings and for your pleasure, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we—myself and some of your granddisciples—hope to complete a film on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to assist in your mission of giving your monumental work and message to the world.

Always aspiring to be your servant,

Kṛṣṇaksetra 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 Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, commemorating the 121st anniversary of your appearance in this world! All glories to Your Divine Grace!

This humble homage is an offering of an entire book dedicated to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. This book, entitled *Bombay Is My Office: Memorable Days with Śrīla Prabhupāda in Bombay*, will be launched on the grand occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the opening of the Rādhā-Rāsabihārī temple in Juhu, Bombay, on January 14, 2018. My book title is inspired by Your Divine Grace’s repeatedly saying “Bombay is my office.” In this book I describe how your business was pure devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, and how in Bombay you pursued your mission to establish Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India. In the sixteen chapters that comprise the book, I attempt to portray you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as a spiritual ambassador, and I detail how you made your office a spiritual embassy for your mission. From this sacred office you exclusively devoted yourself to the direction and coordination of various activities related not only to Bombay and other parts of India but to the rest of your centers worldwide. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you mercifully employed me as one of your office boys in this mission to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is for this reason that Bombay has special significance for me. It was my spiritual birthplace. I was conceived at your first Bombay festival at Cross Maidan in 1971, and I was born in 1972 at Hare Krishna Land.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you always said, “If you want to remember something, write it down.” In the introduction to *A Transcendental Diary*, Hari Śauri Dāsa recalls that within two days of his assigned association with you as your personal servant, he purchased a blank notebook in order to keep a diary. He had the foresight to update his diary daily, “thinking that ten or twenty years hence I would be able to read the notes and relish the brief time spent with Prabhupāda.” Sadly, I did not have his wisdom, and I deeply regret not recording every encounter, because then there would be volumes to write about you.

Naturally, I am also inclined to reminisce about my relationship and encounters with Your Divine Grace and the priceless instructions you gave me during my founding years in Bombay. As the years

⁷ Śrīla Prabhupāda lecture, Vṛndāvana, 11 February 1974



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passed, some memories have disappeared. Such is the effect of time, especially in the Age of Kali. Please forgive my incomplete recollections. I write this book fully aware that my ability to share is compromised.

In spite of this limitation, it did not dampen my enthusiasm to recall my memories of you, or my enjoyment of them. In my early years I used to take pleasure in reading biographies of great people of the world. Imagine my delight when I arrived in Bombay and came into contact with the greatest luminary among all the people I had studied—my Prabhupāda! Initially, my admiration for such personalities was confined to reading about them. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you made it possible for me to become a part of your exemplary life and esteemed biography. Now, even I myself get to write a biography recounting my insignificant role in your exalted life—chronicled in this humble endeavor, *Bombay Is My Office*.

This project was undertaken in tandem with my godbrother Girirāja Swami, who is also writing about your days in Bombay. It occurred to me that I could surrender all my material to him, given the anticipated overlap, but he suggested that both books be written, with me providing a memoir and his book an historical account of the battle to secure Hare Krishna Land. That inspired me to make this endeavor, which I had put off for several years.

As I seriously got down to the business of reviving my memories of my encounters with you, I sifted through various events, visions, instructions, suggestions, experiences, and interactions in those initial days when it all began in the lap of Hare Krishna Land. In writing these memories, they became more meaningful and conveyed a deeper, different meaning to me than they had before. Śrīla Prabhupāda, as a result, the bonds of my relationship with you and others solidified further, and I felt more deeply situated in my relationship with you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, there are many disciples' remembrances of you in my book that wonderfully complement my narratives. Their voices add texture and authenticity to the text. Several amazing disciples are no longer with us, and my book is in part a tribute to them as well—a permanent inscription of their reflections. In particular, I included the voices of Tamāl Krishna Goswami, drawing from his prolific writings and interviews; Madhudviṣa Prabhu, the first temple president of the Juhu temple, whom you referred to as “the emperor of *kīrtana*”; Śrīdhara Swami, affectionately called “the jolly swami” and for whom you sparked a thirty-five-year spiritual journey; Surabhi Prabhu, described as the Viśvakarmā of ISKCON because he was the chief architect of the Vṛndāvana temple, the Juhu temple, and your *puṣpa-samādhi mandira* in Māyāpur; Bhakti Svarūpa Dāmodara Mahārāja, to whom you taught the scientific basis of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and that life comes from life, not matter, which gave birth to the Bhaktivedanta Institute, meant for organizing scientific presentations of Kṛṣṇa consciousness; and last but not least, Yamunā Devī Dāsī, whose melodic singing of the “Govindam” prayers plays every morning at every ISKCON temple worldwide. In this book I recall the moment when you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, selected the melody that was sung by Yamunā.

In this book I endeavored my best to recall and reflect in order to provide the most complete picture, and I know that the devotees interviewed undertook the same process. In so doing, the reader is thus allowed a real-life experience of life with their spiritual father—the kind of striking encounters everyone hankers for. By recalling these collective memories, I have tried to make these exceptional memories of you immortal.

Writing this book has increased my understanding of you and your position and enlivened my dedication and perseverance to wholeheartedly carry out your orders and serve you unreservedly. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your life and the principles you embodied have been the example by which I govern my life. Reliving your life through this book has generated within me an inspired renewal of your teachings, which I always hope to live by, with your mercy and love.

May *Bombay Is My Office* open readers to your influence and, by your mercy, rekindle their Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is the one book I have always wanted to write—and read again and again.

I remain

Your humble servant,

Lokanāth Swami



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Mahāvishnu Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

You are glorified as the lone Vaiṣṇava who, despite only a little hope of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the USA, wrote the wonderful song “Prayer unto the Lotus Feet of Kṛṣṇa” while still onboard the ship *Jaladuta* in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean on September 13, 1965.

The haunting refrain of your song is:

*kṛṣṇa taba puṇya habe bhāi
e-puṇya koribe jabe rādhārāṇī khuṣī habe
dhruva ati bali tomā tī*

“I emphatically say to you, O brothers, that you will obtain your good fortune from the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa only when Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī becomes pleased with you.”

To show us how to please Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, even at sixty-nine years of age you made the *Jaladuta* voyage to the USA to fulfill the order of your Guru Maharaja to establish the *saṅkīrtana* mission in the West, impelled by the desire of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, the other previous *ācāryas*, and Lord Caitanya Himself.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am now your seventy-two-year-old very fallen servant. I have very little to offer you except the strong desire to be accepted as a good member of ISKCON’s Harināma Ruci Party. The core devotees of that party are Viṣṇujana Dāsa, Harināmānanda Dāsa, Gaura Karuṇā Dāsa, Śyāmarasa Dāsa, Maṅgalāvati Devī Dāsī, and Bhakta Sandy. They are now about to complete their sixth annual circumambulation of the world! Other glorious devotees join the Harināma Ruci Party for short periods, as their circumstances permit.

We are not quite your original “long-cherished idea” of a World Saṅkīrtana Party, doing prestigious musical stage programs. But somehow or other, rain or shine, our group of multinational ISKCON devotees of all ages and *āśramas* keeps traveling and going out daily on the streets of national capitals and important cities, wearing *dhotīs* and saris and *tilaka*, the men with shaved heads, and with *karatālas*, *dholaks*, accordions, and a sound system. The encouraged devotees from the local ISKCON centers join us on these *harināmas*, and we distribute your transcendental books in many languages. We especially love to engage the public onlookers in chanting, dancing, and clapping with us. When we see their bright faces, we know we are getting special mercy from you and the previous *ācāryas*.

During last year’s circumambulation, we passed through various European nations, Canada, the US, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia, New Zealand, Australia, India, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. And now, after chanting in Israel, we will return to Europe. This is possible only because



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everywhere we go we find your loving family of devotees in all your ISKCON centers and temples. By their kindness and support we are able to continue on this mission of planting the transcendental seeds of the *mahā-mantra* in countless hearts.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are so grateful to you for giving us this exciting *saṅkīrtana* life to live. Please excuse us for any offenses we may have unintentionally committed, and give us your merciful glance to inspire us in our daily chanting of the holy names and the distribution of your transcendental books.

Foremost in our minds is to try to humbly follow in your footsteps and, by doing so, to somehow or other please Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, thereby fulfilling the desire of the Vaiṣṇavas:

*tāhale ānanda hoy tabe hoy digvijay
caitanyer kṛpā atīśay
māyā duṣṭa jata duḥkhī jagate sabāi sukhī
vaiṣṇaver icchā pūrṇa hoy*

“As the vast mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu conquers all directions, a flood of transcendental ecstasy will certainly cover the land. When all the sinful, miserable living entities become happy, the Vaiṣṇavas’ desire is then fulfilled.”

Your humble servant,

Mahāviṣṇu Swami

Nava Yogendra Swami

My dearest Gurudeva, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most fallen obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, who are the savior of the whole world because you are spreading *sanātana-dharma* (*harināma-saṅkīrtana*) throughout the whole world.

Today is your divine appearance day, and yesterday was the appearance day of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who since time immemorial has regularly appeared on this planet to give pleasure to His pure devotees and do away with the demonic people who disturb the Lord’s creation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, one cannot imagine what energy Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa bestowed upon you to make you instrumental in his mission of establishing the *yuga-dharma*, *harināma-saṅkīrtana*. You established a bona fide movement at the age of seventy, in a land where you had almost no support. But you were carrying your deep commitment to fulfilling the order of your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Swami Prabhupāda, to go to the English-speaking world and preach this bona fide Vedic process to civilize society and help its members attain perfection.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, established ISKCON after a long struggle and several ups and downs. Now it has completed fifty years and is still expanding day by day, as you had predicted. You said that for ten thousand years people will have a golden opportunity to join us on the way back home, to Godhead. Your hard labor has made this path easy for the weak people of Kali-yuga, who are full of *anarthas*. According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, the basis of this movement, is the best way to worship Lord



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Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is the *yuga-avatāra* and has appeared in order to deliver the most fallen souls of this age.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given us this royal path of devotional service. You have given us so many programs to keep our rascal minds engaged in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's service, programs such as *maṅgala-ārati*, book distribution, *prasādam* distribution, temple construction, and preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the whole world. But all this is possible only by your causeless mercy. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have saved us. Now we, by serving your mission, can help save other souls from the clutches of *māyā*.

Your movement is purely scientific. In this age, people generally talk of science, although they are ignorant of real science. Because you are the real scientist, you have given us a scientific movement by which we can understand God scientifically. You presented Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa so scientifically. Consequently, so many scientists around the world surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa once they read your transcendental literature, including *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and other books. So, you are the real savior of this world.

I bow at your lotus feet and pray to you to please make me instrumental in your mission of saving the bewildered souls lost in this material world because of sense gratification.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and your divine mission!

Your insignificant servant,

Nava Yogendra Swami

Pārtha Sārathi Dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you and your sincere followers.

Tomorrow is Gaura-Pūrṇimā, the divine appearance day of the Kali-yuga *avatāra*, Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Throughout your mission, this day is celebrated with great transcendental enthusiasm. Your personal contribution to the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community and your *guru-varga* is the establishment of a bona fide *sampradāya* in the Western countries:

So Lord Caitanya's *sampradāya*. That is my joy, that we have now a *sampradāya*, a party of Lord Caitanya in the Western country. That is my success. That's all. I have no value—insignificant—but somehow or other you cooperated, and you are still cooperating, as Lord Caitanya's *sampradāya*. That is my life. Thank you very much. [Lecture, San Francisco, 4 July 1970]

You also said (on 3 January 1977): "Kṛṣṇa has come down in the shape of this movement," and "This movement is not going to die."

Your personal preaching mission has all the potency to reclaim conditioned souls and prepare them for entering into the Lord's pastimes. When members of ISKCON leave their bodies, we often remark that they have taken birth in the Lord's pastimes. But actually, serving in this present Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in the twenty-first century in Kali-yuga means we are already in Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's pastimes.



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You write in your *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*,

The present Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is nondifferent from the pastimes performed by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu when He was personally present, for the same principles are being followed and the same actions performed without fail. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya-līlā* 5.88, purport]

There is a difference, though: if we had taken birth five hundred years ago in Navadvīpa or Jagannātha Purī, we could have had *sākṣād darśana* of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His *nitya-parikaras*. Instead, we have appeared, most of us outside India, some five centuries later. But if we associate with this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, we are still to be included in Caitanya Mahāprabhu's pastimes.

And your followers are blessed to have the association of the *nitya-parikaras* of Lord Caitanya because of your presence. It is my belief that your sincere followers, whether they are in male or female bodies, are your eternal associates.

Such exalted personalities have the conviction and realization that this present Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is nondifferent from the pastimes performed by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. All of this is made possible by Your Divine Grace. Just as we have, in this material world, your personal preaching mission, ISKCON, so in the spiritual world, Goloka Vṛndāvana, there is your personal *yukta*, or group, who assist you in serving the Divine Couple.

Thank you for allowing me to participate in this latter-day pastime of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Although I am hopeless, sinful, and most fallen, I have tried to do something with my godbrothers on the tip of this dark continent, South Africa. You blessed South Africa and its inhabitants by touching this soil for nineteen days in 1975. We are now seeing the fruits of your visit to this country.

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

“My Lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified. Because you carry the Personality of Godhead within your heart, you turn all places into places of pilgrimage.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.13.10)

When you arrived in South Africa in October 1975, your ISKCON mission comprised one rented house and ten devotees, mostly imported. Now by your desire and the arrangement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, we have over a dozen owned properties, including three ornate temples, and perhaps twelve hundred initiated granddisciples of Your Divine Grace.

In this way, the party of Lord Caitanya is spreading in this African country, and it's all by your desire.

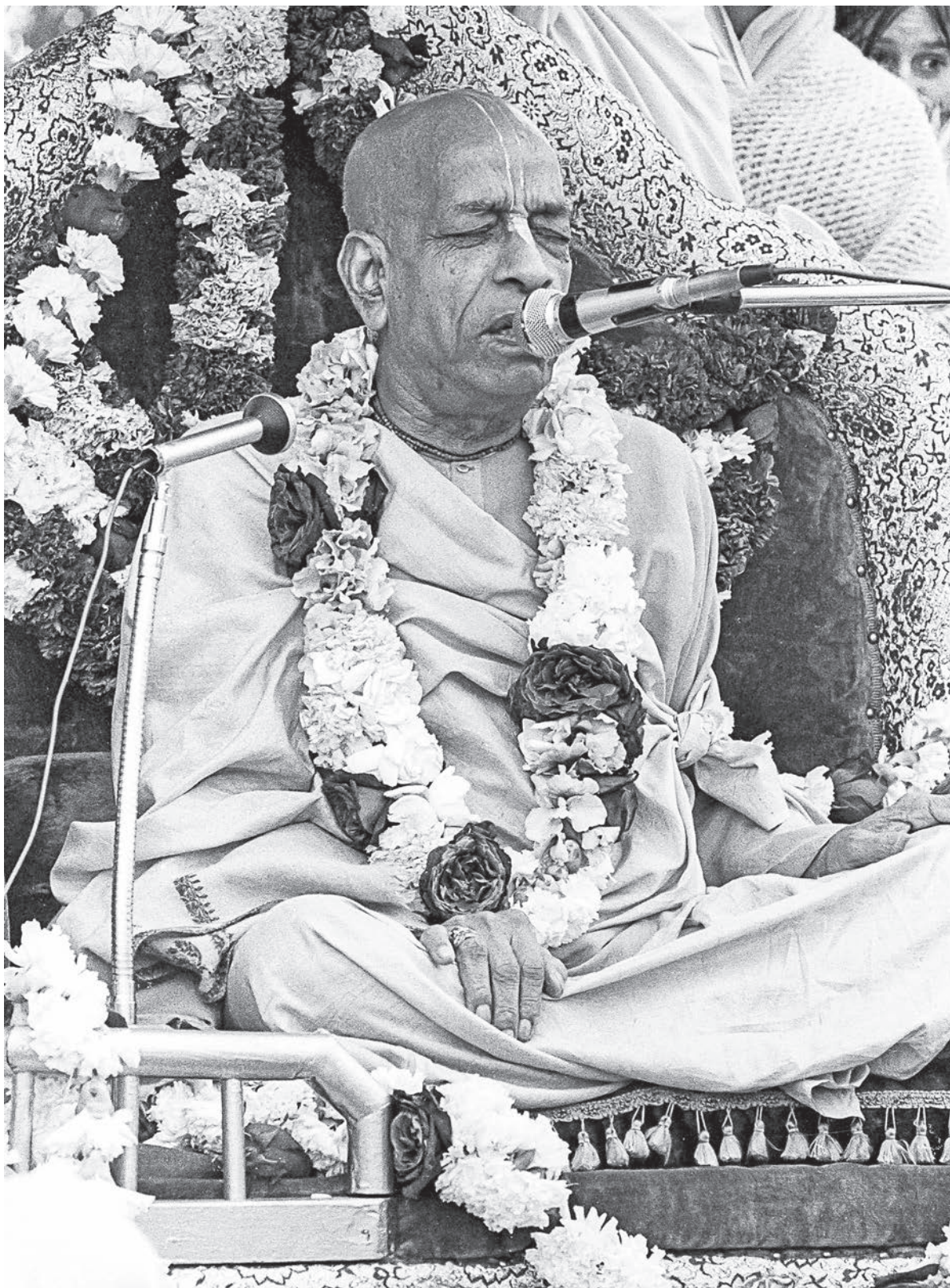
Please always keep me under the shelter and guidance of your devoted followers. With great humility and respect I bow down a million times to this mission and all of your disciples, granddisciples, great-granddisciples, and other sincere followers.

Your worthless, insignificant, fallen servant of a servant,

Pārtha Sārathi Dāsa Goswami



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Rāma Govinda Swami

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

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

Parama-pūjya Param-gurudeva,

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.

Param Gurudeva! How can a small, insignificant person like me describe the glories of a superelevated spiritual personality of your stature?

Param Gurudev! I am constantly realizing your presence and mercy, which give me strength to continue in my present *āśrama*, i.e., the *sannyāsa āśrama*. Just before Śrī Rāma Navamī, I very attentively read the section of *Śrī Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa* describing the appearance of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rāma, Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa, and Śatrughna.

While describing qualities of the four Lords, the sage Vasiṣṭha says this to King Daśaratha about Śrī Lakṣmaṇa: *bālyāt prabhūti-susnigdho lakṣmaṇo lakṣmi-varধানaḥ*. And a little later: *lakṣmaṇo lakṣmi-sampanno bahiḥ prāṇa-ivāparaḥ*.

I was trying to understand the intended meaning of the two words *lakṣmi-varধানa* and *lakṣmi-sampanna*, but at first I could not get a proper understanding. Then I started to meditate upon your teachings. Suddenly I understood, by your mercy. I understood that Your Divine Grace introduced so many wonderful services into ISKCON for the pleasure of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Gaura-Nitāi, just so that devotees can serve Them, participate in various celebrations and festivals, and progress in their devotional service (*lakṣmi-varধানa*). In this way all the ISKCON devotees come into possession of the eternal spiritual wealth of devotional service (*lakṣmi-sampanna*), which alone will please the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. And then, if the Lord wishes, He will bestow love for Himself upon the devotees.

This particular understanding of mine confirms that one should worship the spiritual master in the same way as one worships the Supreme Lord, so that by the mercy of the spiritual master one can get the mercy of the Supreme Lord: *yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*. Also, Sage Kavi, one of the Nine Yogendras, says *bhaktyaikayeśam guru-devatātmā*: “One should engage unflinchingly in the unalloyed devotional service of the Lord under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, whom one should accept as his worshipable deity and as his very life and soul.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā, which you introduced into ISKCON fifty years ago, is very dear to everyone who participates in it. No matter which faith people belong to, they all enjoy this festival—pulling the chariots, chanting and dancing, and getting the supreme benefit of receiving the mercy of Lord Jagannātha, Lord Baladeva, and Śrīmatī Subhadrā Devī. Before the Ratha-yātrā is over, people are asking “When will the next Ratha-yātrā be held?” Lord Jagannātha attracts everyone. It is all your mercy, Param Gurudeva.

Param Gurudeva! Please keep your merciful hand on my head so that I can also become part of your mission of propagating the teachings of Lord Caitanya. Without your mercy, I have nothing.

The servant of your servants,

Rāma Govinda Swami



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Śacīnandana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

As the years go by, my appreciation for you increases and increases. I foresee that this will go on as long as I live in this body.

A few years ago I committed myself to reading your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* daily, in the morning hours. From being regularly in contact with your *vāñī*, I have found it more than obvious that you are impelled by the intense desire to remove the sufferings of the conditioned souls, who are undergoing the miseries of material life due to the absence of devotional service to the Lord.

Your inner motivation for publishing your books is revealed in many passages in your writings. Here is one:

In the grim clutches of *māyā*, the first-class prisoners of this material world wrongly think themselves happy because they are rich, powerful, resourceful, and so on. These foolish creatures do not know that they are nothing but play dolls in the hands of material nature and that at any moment material nature's pitiless intrigues can crush to dust all their plans for godless activities. Such foolish prisoners cannot see that however they improve their position by artificial means, the calamities of repeated birth, death, disease, and old age are always beyond the jurisdiction of their control. . . . The third-class prisoners, being less materially opulent than the first-class prisoners, endeavor to imitate them, for they also have no information of the real nature of their imprisonment. Thus they also are misled by the illusory material nature. *The function of the ācārya, however, is to change the activities of both the first-class and third-class prisoners for their real benefit. This endeavor makes him a very dear devotee of the Lord, who says clearly in the Bhagavad-gītā that no one in human society is dearer to Him than a devotee who constantly engages in His service by finding ways to preach the message of Godhead for the real benefit of the world.*" [Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.98, emphasis added]

You are that *ācārya* who has appeared in modern times to open the tightly shut prison doors of material life.

I am a hundred percent sure that Kṛṣṇa will come to my rescue and show me His favor due to your kindness to me. And the same is true for all conditioned souls who come in contact with you.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* there is much evidence of how an empowered *ācārya* can move Kṛṣṇa's heart and induce Him to release conditioned souls from their material imprisonment. Because of Nārada Muni's connection with Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva, Śrī Kṛṣṇa pitied the two fallen brothers. When Lord Dāmodara saw them standing as the cursed twin *arjuna* trees before His father's residence, He thought to Himself:

Although these two young men are the sons of the very rich Kuvera and I have nothing to do with them, Devarṣi Nārada is My very dear and affectionate devotee, and therefore because he wanted Me to come face to face with them, I must do so for their deliverance. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.10.25]



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Because Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva had not performed any *bhakti*, Kṛṣṇa here says categorically that He had “nothing to do with them.” But because Nārada Muni, His pure devotee, wanted the two sinners to get His mercy, Kṛṣṇa felt obliged. Kṛṣṇa’s mercy always follows His devotees’ mercy.

It is very clear that on our own we conditioned souls, who are devoid of *bhakti*, are powerless to approach Kṛṣṇa, but when a pure devotee like you asks Kṛṣṇa to save us, there is every hope.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī extols the tremendous benefit of meeting a pure devotee in these words:

*sādhūnām sama-cittānām sutarām mat-kṛtātmanām
darśanām no bhaved bandhaḥ puṁso 'kṣṇoḥ savitur yathā*

“When one is face to face with the sun, there is no longer darkness for one’s eyes. Similarly, when one is face to face with a *sādhū*, a devotee who is fully determined and surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one will no longer be subject to material bondage.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.10.41)

My favorite picture of you, which has accompanied me everywhere on my travels, shows you with a smile as bright as the rising sun. Like the sun, you have come to me and destroyed the darkness of ignorance. And you have done this not only for me but for all others who have come in contact with you and who will come in contact with you in the future.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the more I understand these good tidings with the passage of time, the more enthusiastic I am to spread your message far and wide.

Always begging for your mercy,

Your humble servant,

Śacīnandana Swami

Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I feel happy and privileged to be allowed to join my godbrothers and godsisters in writing something to glorify you. Unfortunately, my inspiration fails me, and I cannot think of something suitable to say.

I remember a few years ago Jayādvaita Swami wrote lamenting that so many years had passed since your disappearance, and his memory was failing to supply him with dear and intimate stories. But then he found hope! He turned to your *vāṇī*, your teachings. (The *vapu*, the physical presence, may diminish as time passes and we grow older, but your teachings—your books and recorded lectures—are ever fresh and ever new.) This year I remembered that joyful tribute to you by Jayādvaita Swami, in which he rediscovered your *vāṇī* (and I became joyful too). Didn’t you always emphasize your *vāṇī*? It is there in your many, many Bhaktivedanta Book Trust volumes. You are calling to us, and we only have to turn to you.

Vaiśeṣika Prabhu, an avid and profound reader of your books, has calculated that if we read only forty-one pages a day we can read the whole *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in a year. Keśava Bhāratī Mahārāja has responded that he is doing this and is opening new untold wonders for himself. I have started to do it too



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and have found a wonderful new intimacy with you, the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON, our dearmost friend.

Your eternal servant,

Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

Subhāg Swami

*nama om̐ 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,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Last year we celebrated the glorious 50th Anniversary of ISKCON worldwide. In the beginning of the year, some devotees in Netrokona, Bangladesh, asked me what my special offering to you would be for this Golden Jubilee celebration. It was then that I remembered one of your instructions to me: you wanted me to go around the world and assist you in your mission to preach in ISKCON and propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness. So I prayed to you, requesting your mercy to carry out your order this year and preach in at least fifty ISKCON centers worldwide.

My mission started from Śrīdhama Māyāpur. I stopped at Singapore, Medan, Bali, and Sydney for a few days before reaching Hawaii. There I met your old servant Śrutakīrti Prabhu, our godbrother Narahari Prabhu, and few other godbrothers and godsisters. I visited ISKCON centers on several Hawaiian islands before leaving for Canada, specifically Vancouver, Montreal, and Toronto. In Montreal there was a nice Ratha-yātrā festival, where Bhakti-rāghava Swami and many others joined in the celebrations. An old Bengali devotee, Mr. Samir Chowdhury, who was blessed with your physical association, had designed the temple there very beautifully. He took me to some of the places where you had stayed and took me to various programs in Montreal.

I then headed south and visited ISKCON temples in Alachua, Orlando, Puerto Rico, Boston, Washington, Baltimore, New Orleans, Mississippi (New Tālavan), New Jersey (two temples), and New York City (three temples). In New Jersey there was a very wonderful three-day grand opening festival for the new temple in Plainfield.

It is a miracle how in 1966 you created ISKCON in a tiny storefront on Second Avenue in New York City and how it has now grown into a worldwide confederation of more than 650 temples, 65 farming communities, 110 vegetarian restaurants, and a wide variety of community projects. Following your orders, the young devotees in the New York Harināma Ashram go out every day for hours of *kīrtana* and book distribution at Union Square Park in Manhattan.

I then spent a few days in the Middle East, where there were big gatherings of devotees in Dubai (Damodardesh), Sharjah (Shyamadesh), and Abu Dhabi (Avataridesh). Together with Bhakti Chāru Swami, I attended a nice Friday-afternoon program at Damodardesh. A few years ago, who could have imagined such big gatherings of ISKCON devotees in these regions? It is only by your mercy that we can do what



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would otherwise be unimaginable. With your blessings, your followers are giving shape to your vision. In 1966 you envisioned temples all around the world and thousands of devotees everywhere. You said that only time was separating you from them. You gave your followers the idea, and they, empowered by you, are giving shape to your vision.

Everywhere I go I see the manifestation of your mercy. You are doing everything, and your followers are the limbs of your spiritual body, acting per your instructions. When I visited Johannesburg, I saw my godbrother Nanda-kumara Prabhu opening a new temple in Sandton. I walked on a *padayātrā* in Lenasia to commemorate your visit to that city, where you had given a lecture at a hall. I also gave Sunday lectures in the Pretoria and Lenasia temples. I also visited a very nice temple and restaurant in Midrand, Johannesburg. Next I flew to Cape Town to attend a special ISKCON 50th Anniversary dinner at City Hall. It was a highly successful event, with many government officials in attendance. The program glorified the ISKCON's contribution to their community.

As you dedicated yourself to following your Guru Mahārāja's instructions, your disciples are following yours. Your followers are trying to fulfill your desires and those of our previous *ācāryas*. *Tāndera caraṇa sevi bhakta-sane vāsa/ janame janame haya, ei abhilāṣa*. If we devote our lives to fulfilling the *ācāryas'* desires, everything will be provided to us. We should aspire to become the dust of our *ācāryas'* lotus feet, and especially especially yours.

Next I went to the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rādhānātha Temple in Durban to celebrate Śrī Balarāma's appearance day, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī, and the most blessed Vyāsa-pūjā of Your Divine Grace, commemorating the 120th anniversary of your appearance. I also visited the New Jagannātha Purī Temple and the Petermaritzburg temple. Pārtha Sārathi Mahārāja was very kind to give us his blessed association in Durban.

The European part of my preaching tour started at **Villagio** Hare Krishna, near Milan, Italy. I next went to the farm project you started in France—New Māyāpur—and then to a new preaching center in Lorraine, in northeastern France. Finally I arrived at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Parisiśvara.

My first visit to the Lithuanian *yātrā* reminded me of the early days of our ISKCON movement: the *brahmacārīs* at the *saṅkīrtana āśrama* were very joyful, happy to embrace the simple-living-and-high-thinking lifestyle you gave us. The Sunday programs at the temples in Kaunas and Vilnius were filled with enthusiastic devotees. This *saṅkīrtana* movement is the prime benediction of Lord Caitanya, and your ISKCON movement is at the forefront of that.

*bhārata-bhūmite haila manuṣya janma yāra
janma sārthaka kari' kara para-upakāra
(Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi 9.41)*

You took up the mission of Lord Caitanya with full faith in your Guru Mahārāja, you taught us what your *gurudeva* taught you, and now your followers are trying to follow your footsteps.

Several times in the past I heard that thousands of devotees gather in Ukraine every year at big festivals and become very blissful. This year I personally experienced this during the Rādhāṣṭamī festival at the Kiev temple. The other temples I visited in this area were in Moscow (four temples), St. Petersburg, Stockholm (three temples), Berlin, Sofia (two temples), London (two temples), Riga, Zurich, Langenthal, and Istanbul. I also attended a festival held on the Black Sea, in Russia.

You know our past, present, and future. I remember when you went to Russia in 1971, in June, which was the mango season in India. You had told us that mango is the king of all fruits, and that during June in India thousands of varieties of mango are available. Even the poorest man can afford mangoes during that time. But when one devotee said as you prepared for your trip to Moscow, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, you will miss the mango season,” you replied, “Preaching in the snows of Russia is sweeter than any mango.” Such was your sacrifice and dedication to save the fallen souls.

When I attended the Black Sea festival, I saw how you and your disciples have transformed the lives of more than six thousand devotees. This reminded me of a statement Lord Kṛṣṇa's in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.69):



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*na ca tasmān manuṣyeṣu kaścin me priya-kṛttamaḥ
bhavitā na ca me tasmād anyañ priyataro bhuvi*

“There is no servant in this world more dear to Me than he [who preaches My message], nor will there ever be one more dear.” You are that preacher who is so dear to the Lord. You said that ISKCON is a preaching movement. You sowed a seed in Russia in 1971, and today, like a banyan tree, there are thousands of devotees in the CIS countries. You are the one who can be called *kṛṣṇa-preṣṭha*—most dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa. As Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says, *sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair/uktas tathā bhāvayata eva sadbhiḥ*: “The spiritual master is to be honored as much as the Supreme Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and followed by all authorities.” And then, most important: *kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya*. The reason *why* the spiritual master is so honored is “because he is the most confidential servitor of the Lord.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when you incorporated ISKCON in 1966 you had several things in mind. You wanted to educate the society at large about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, so that the world would become a better place. You wanted people to understand that each soul is part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. You wanted them to read *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, so that they would understand that in all that they do they should keep Kṛṣṇa in the center. You encouraged everyone to perform *saṅkīrtana*, the congregational chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, to unite all souls in the real “spiritual United Nations.” You taught that when people will ultimately surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa, everything will become wonderful and there will be real peace in the world. You blessed the fallen people of the world by teaching them real knowledge about Kṛṣṇa consciousness and by helping them receive the mercy of Lord Caitanya. Your wish was to publish books and magazines that would educate more and more people all over the world, and your desire is gradually being fulfilled. ISKCON devotees worldwide have distributed more than half a billion of your literatures. Today ISKCON has temples, schools, restaurants, and farms all over the world. Food for Life programs feed thousands with *prasādam*. ISKCON is growing globally, and it is all because of your blessings, your encouragement, that the ISKCON devotees can do so much. You are the perfect leader, and I believe that soon the day will come when the whole world will be inundated by your mercy and by the compassion of Lord Caitanya. You sacrificed a lot to create ISKCON, and your followers are trying to fulfill your mission. If all of us follow your orders and chant the holy names as taught by you, everything will become wonderful and all of us will be able to lead a simple and happy life.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Aspiring for more service,

Your insignificant

Subhāg Swami



HOMAGES FROM NON-GBC SANNYĀSĪS



Śukadeva Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my prostrated *daṇḍavats* at your divine lotus feet.

What the scriptures say is completely true: one can never repay the debt to the spiritual master. While it is said that a Vaiṣṇava is a *vāñchā-kalpataru*, a desire tree, initially we don't even know what to ask from a Vaiṣṇava. A pure Vaiṣṇava will teach us only of our eternal blissful nature, which will be obtained and maintained by devotional service. As one enters devotional service, the fine tunings, which are endless, and the realizations, which are also endless, and the joy of giving, forgiving, gratefulness, and appreciating others, along with the joy of serving, the joy of sacrifice, the fruits of patience and tolerance, the moment-to-moment dynamics in real-life situations—all are endless, and they all come from remaining loyal to Kṛṣṇa and the Vaiṣṇavas.

Before you introduced me to devotional service, life was so murky—a confusion of material wrangling, material acquisitions, material enjoyments, material relationships, and material identification (the bodily conception), which was simply a choking experience, although I sometimes felt inner longings for something deep and divine.

In this world, while I'm in this body, I find that spiritualizing everything is so ecstatic. I wonder what it will all be like in the pure spiritual realm, in the direct presence of the Lord and His associates!

Before you introduced me to spiritual life, life was so shallow, anxiety-filled, egoistic, and selfish. Although belief in God was there, whatever religion I had was all hazy and queasy, simply another version of materialistic life. But you, being the true representative of the Gauḍīya *paramparā*, could give pure devotional service to anyone fortunate enough to come under your influence. No matter what I was, you simply showered your mercy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. What a wonder it is that you could give Kṛṣṇa so easily to anyone and everyone! What a wonder it is that you could keep me hankering more and more for that experience of chanting the absolute names of Kṛṣṇa!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, despite all my understanding and my practices, I am so fallen and my spiritual life is so precarious that there is no hope that I can do it without you, without your disciples, and without your ISKCON. With all my frailties I can simply pray, O Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura, please accept whatever degree of sincerity I have and whatever service I am able to do, and allow me to continue in your service. Then I may hope that one day I can do something to your satisfaction. Whatever I am doing now is only adding to my purification—pennies and pennies put together. One day, in some lifetime, may I serve as one of your sincere followers.

Although I never met you personally, I know for certain that you are unlimitedly kind and willing to bestow your blessings on any sincere soul. What a towering personality you are! This Kali-yuga is blessed by the dust of your lotus feet. I pray to be even a small participant in your movement; thus I can maintain some hope of crossing over this material ocean. There are no words to describe your glories. The best way we can honor you is to strive to follow in your footsteps.

An aspiring servant of your servants,

Śukadeva Swami



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Trivikrama Swami

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

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

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

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

My dearest, most wonderful Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your holy lotus feet.

Recently you have kindly encouraged me in my service here in Orlando, and I feel very grateful that you are taking personal interest in such an unqualified disciple. I promise to try my best to implement your most valuable advice to me, although I am so stubborn and attached to my own ideas that it will be difficult for me.

That was your greatest quality—that you were always open to the ongoing inspiration and revelation coming from your spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa. Praying at your lotus feet, I beg you to help me curb my false ego so I can also develop this quality of full surrender to you and Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Then I may be of some small value to you in carrying out your grand mission.

Kindly also help me to do what you called “little thing . . . strictly follow.” Without our being ideal in character, how will our preaching be accepted? Therefore I pray for the strength to resist the temptation of foolishly trying to enjoy the material energy. This futile desire has kept me here in the material world since time immemorial, but by some great good fortune I have met you, who are kindly offering me an easy way out of this suffering condition. Please by all means force me to take advantage of this most valuable opportunity.

Falling at your lotus feet,

Your insignificant servant,

Trivikrama Swami



HOMAGES FROM NON-GBC SANNYĀSĪS



Varṣaṇā Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

In childhood I heard stories of long-ago times in faraway lands when God spoke through prophets to uplift fallen souls so as to include and engage them in His grand story of redemption. How I longed to have been present in such times, places, and cultures, where God's eternal agents of grace walked and talked, testifying in word and deed to the love of God and his reciprocation with mankind.

Born into a world where the distinctive religious theories and practices of generations are often inherited from ancestors, in the rural Northeast of 1950s America, I found that my family, like many others, based their beliefs on a book the community considered holy. Despite geographic and philosophical distinctions between the various contemporary religions, there is generally one crucial commonality. The vast majority believe in a series of revelations throughout the ages that point to and culminate in the appearance of a last prophet, who, in delivering the final message, concludes the series forever.

Vaiṣṇava traditions, however, offer a profoundly dynamic face to the living Word of God by honoring the ongoing commentaries, purports, and illuminations of the *ācāryas* with a respect equal to that offered to the original scripture, the *Veda* herself. This culture recognizes the contribution of the literary agency of Godhead, Śrī Vyāsadeva, who intervenes at critical stages of world history to rearrange, edit, and present the eternal message of Godhead, as you succinctly described, "in new dress." In this way the message is made comprehensible and applicable to the current generation. Vyāsadeva remains independent of historical limitations, forever compiling and editing Kṛṣṇa's message, either directly or vicariously through his perfectly conscious spiritual successors.

The cream of the *Vedas* is the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, whose message is embodied in the person *bhāgavata*, who brings the scriptures to life, both literally and figuratively. He makes the *śāstras* accessible, personal, attractive, and comprehensible through his gracious devotional dealings. Your Bhāgavata Dharma Discourses, held in New Vrindavan in the summer of 1972, made this truth self-evident.

Reading scripture alone, without the intercession of the person *bhāgavata*, will not afford one entry into the mysteries, glories, or beauty of the holy name, who is the confidential essence and goal of all the *Vedas*. A lifetime spent in empiric study of *śāstra* finds perfection only when it culminates in understanding the dire need of surrendering unconditionally to the spiritual guidance and discipleship of a bona fide spiritual master. A personal connection with the living guru is essential to developing communion with the holy name. We come to this world with so many misconceptions. The appearance of Śrīla Vyāsadeva in the form of Śrī Guru shatters all idols of mental fabrication and dispels all shadows of speculation with the dawning rays of the Absolute Truth.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as the agent of Vyāsa, you came to us as if a stranger from afar, and yet you spoke in a voice most near and dear to our hearts. Personifying both the grace and potency of the Godhead, you presented in pastime, as well as in precept, the perfect integration and harmonious adjustment of all ritualistic differences and superficial contradictions in scripture, which bewilder the minds of neophytes. As the person *bhāgavata*, you sensed our inner longings as well as our deepest fears. You touched, healed, and blessed us as only a most loving mother could. With the gentle authority of a perfect father, you evoked from a generation of prodigal children the respect we longed to offer, but for which we had found no worthy recipient. With that pairing of divine influence and grace, you granted us the holy name and initiated us with new names, confirming our adoption into your loving family of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

As the fulfillment of our deepest yearnings, spiritual affinity drew the Lord, yourself, and devotees to a truly holy place that was complementary to our spiritual sentiments. It was here in New Vrindavan, in 1972, while hearing your Vyāsa-pūjā lecture in the midst of your Bhāgavata Dharma Discourses, where I witnessed firsthand a demonstration, as well as an explanation, of the meaning of divine grace. The



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night before the celebration, while I was sitting at your feet hearing *Kṛṣṇa* book on Janmāṣṭamī, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was brought to life by your presence. It rose like the sun to dispel the darkness and mist of a secular world, restoring meaning and purpose to my life. The setting of the holy *dhāma*, invoked by your prayers, enhanced the experience like a *cintāmaṇi* gem, reflecting, echoing, and amplifying your message. To sit at the feet of God's beloved agent, to hear of God's love from one who personifies and distributes His divine grace, far surpassed the stories that had charmed me in childhood. My eyes were opened to the presence of God in the sound of His name, who inconceivably appeared in our country during my very lifetime, due only to your unlimited compassion.

On your last physical visit to your Palace of Gold, you assured your children, "I am already living here and always will be." With that statement, we felt that all our desires had found perfect fulfillment and reciprocation. Your words of gratitude for the gift of love we had offered endeared you to our hearts all the more.

In the early days, unaware of the significance, tradition, and potency of Vaiṣṇava *samādhis*, we thought that since you were the representative of Vyāsa, your primary contribution would be your translations and commentaries on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. We built the Palace as a residence for you to facilitate your literary *sevā*. The Palace has come to serve Vyāsa and glorify you in ways that would have been impossible for us to imagine at the time of its construction.

How could we have known that the structure we envisioned in our youthful innocence would become your *smṛti-samādhī*? Your Palace of Gold is truly a *yoga-pīṭha*, a place where the physical and spiritual worlds overlap, a place where our prayers and services find reciprocation with exceptional transcendental potency.

The sacramental nature of your words has become increasingly evident over the decades. It is a profound experience to discover how the inconceivable and paradoxical truths of love in separation find practical application and increasing expression in our daily *sādhana*.

This most sacred aspect of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā, the celebration of the deepest communion in the intimacy of separation, responds to the deeper voices within our hearts. In your final lesson on how to die, the seed was planted that, in time, is bearing fruit in a living relationship beyond anything we could have otherwise known. This is a testament to the joy found within the sadness of your final lesson. This mood, which is also infused in your *smṛti-samādhī mandira*, bears witness to the ongoing and expanding spirit of Vyāsa in revealing the subtler truths and sentiments of *śāstra* according to our capacity to receive and practice them.

The distillation of the jewel of service in separation is found in the pastimes and precepts of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Beyond narrating His life and teachings as they had already been recorded, you revealed new chapters unfolding even today. These chapters were left for you to fulfill by Mahāprabhu Himself, out of His love for seeing His pure devotees glorified. You, in turn, engaged us in His ever-expanding *līlā* by establishing a mission that would continue to distribute the only means of deliverance in this age, the treasure of Goloka, the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. In the *mahā-mantra*, we are entrusted with service to the sound form of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa overflowing with mercy, grace, and love. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I know little of the love of Vṛndāvana and realize even less. My shelter is found only in your lotus feet. Following in your footsteps leads me further into the realm where the sweetness of loving service and the grace of Kṛṣṇa abound.

Through your causeless mercy, you uplifted my own fragmented little stories of loneliness and pain and placed them in the larger story of Lord Caitanya's great and ongoing redemptive *līlā*—an eternal, dynamic story with no beginning or end. This narrative expands as you lead, inspire, and empower others to continue the function of Vyāsa.

May the spirit of Vyāsa, as invested in you, always resonate through the words of your successors to draw their worldwide listeners into more and more profound experiences of the vast gospel of love, grace, and hope inherent in your appearance in this world and celebrated in this most blessed event of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā.



HOMAGES FROM NON-GBC SANNYĀSĪS



The servant of your servants,

Varṣāṇā Swami

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisance hundreds of times at your lotus feet. On this occasion of your auspicious appearance, I offer my humble and prayerful heart at your lotus feet.

**Śrī-Guru-Caraṇe Rati, Ei Se Uttama-Gati
Je Prasāde Pūre Sarva Āśā**

Long ago I harbored lots of material desires in my heart. But after taking shelter at your lotus feet, I agreed to follow your instructions. Only then did you agree to deliver me. Since then I have to constantly remain attentive to your lotus feet to receive your mercy. Reminding myself of your shelter in good times and bad has given me a sense of total security as I make steady progress in rendering selfless service to please you. And, meanwhile, what has happened to those deep-seated material desires? Amazingly, they disappeared, as if they had been fulfilled!

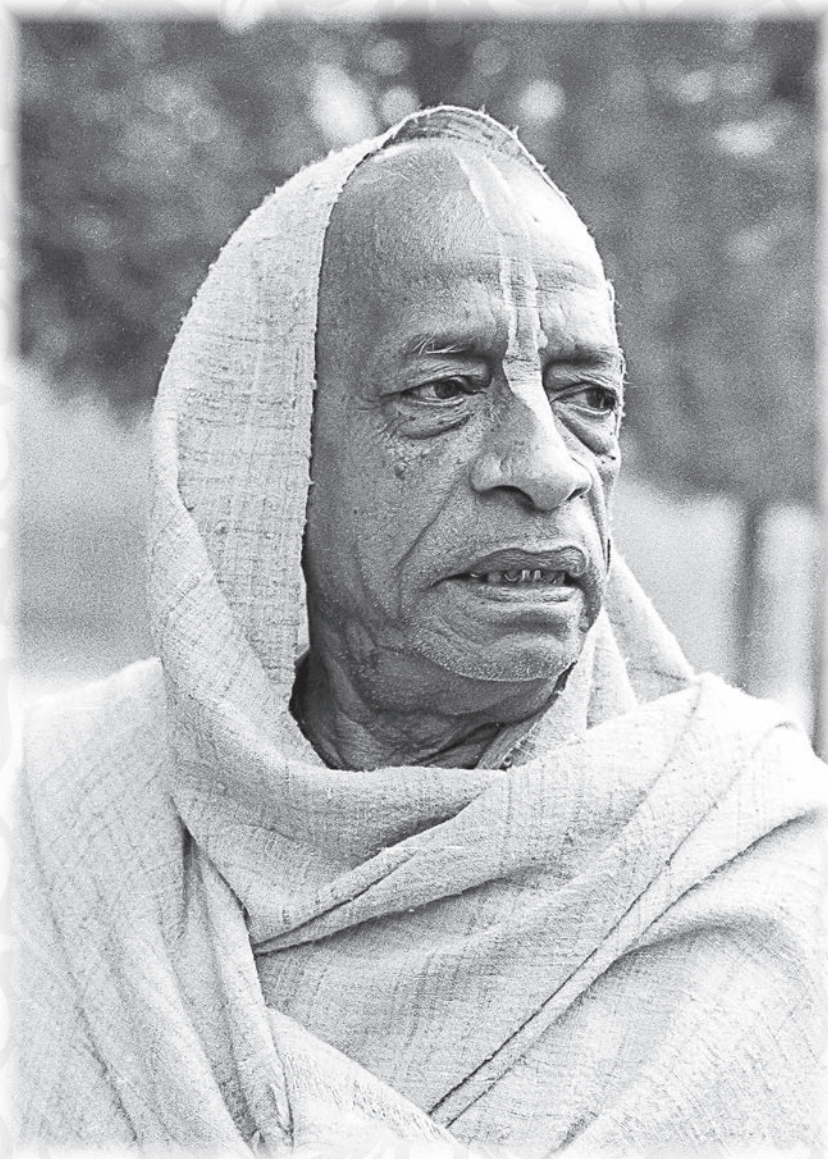
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, your connection with Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa through the unbroken chain of pure disciplic succession is the only key for me to succeed in going back home to Godhead. One does not have to fulfill one's material desires before going back to Godhead. Rather, one requires only your shelter, and then right away, without delay, these desires will stop interfering with one's progress, without one knowing how it is being done.

Thus, taking shelter of a bona fide guru in the unbroken chain of the pure disciplic succession is the key for success in this golden age of the *saṅkīrtana* movement inaugurated by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. You carefully invested all your spiritual and material potencies in your organization. So many of your sincere disciples and granddisciples who have been entrusted with your Society are systematically guiding all of humanity on the path back to Godhead. This is my little realization of your mercy. It is enough for me, no doubt, yet it is required that I learn more about your magnanimity from the Vyāsa-pūjā offerings of my senior godbrothers.

Please forgive my offenses, knowingly or unknowingly committed at your lotus feet.

Your prostrated fallen servant,

Vedavyāsapriya Swami



Homages from
ISKCON CENTERS

Abidjan

Dear *patita-pāvana* Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*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*

Somewhere on this planet, in Africa, there is a small country called Cote d'Ivoire, whose main city is Abidjan. Some poor and unfortunate souls living there are sending you a Vyāsa-pūjā offering out of gratitude for bringing life, light, and hope to that insignificant part of this universe.

As *patita-pāvana*, you extended your mercy to this place, which is a typical Kali-yuga abode of irreligion, quarrel, and hypocrisy.

When you left India in 1965 to preach *sanātana-dharma* in the West, on the instruction of your divine spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, a place such as Cote d'Ivoire was not on your agenda. But one way or another, we got your most special mercy.

You took so many risks, neglecting your comfort and your health to go to the West, where ignorance is the norm.

We know very well that we can never repay you for what you have done for us. We will carry an enormous debt, life after life.

We can only fall at your lotus feet and pray that you will bestow on us the taste for reading your books, the intelligence to understand your mission, and the courage and discipline to follow your instructions.

Your teachings are the solution to all problems and misunderstandings in this world. Please bless us so that by reading and understanding them we will know who we are.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we shudder to think what our lives would be like if you had not come. We would simply be struggling, running here and there for some useless sense gratification that dogs and pigs get for free. Your Vyāsa-pūjā today is an opportunity for us to express our joy at being freed from the animalistic concept of life.

We pray that one day we will be qualified to serve you as you want us to. Please don't reject us for our mistakes, since we have no shelter other than your divine lotus feet.

Your servants in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa.



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Adelaide

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our respectful obeisances. All glories to you and your mission on this most auspicious day!

The scriptures say that the mercy of an *ācārya* is even more available on his appearance or disappearance day than on other days.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the beloved and confidential servant of Nityānanda Prabhu! The most merciful spiritual master is Nityānanda Prabhu. Like a crazy person, He distributes the holy names due to His intoxication with *kṛṣṇa-prema*. So drunk with love for Kṛṣṇa is Nityānanda Prabhu that He runs about without any sense of propriety. Unable to distinguish between *brāhmaṇa* and *śūdra*, the upstanding and the thieves, he bestows His mercy upon all.

Nityānanda Prabhu was present on this planet recently, but we were too fallen to have been devotees at that time. Lord Caitanya has blessed us with His mercy nonetheless. We know this is true because He has sent you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who traveled all over this earth to spread the ecstatic chanting of the names of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the most beloved Lords of Nityānanda Prabhu. We offer our humblest obeisances unto you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and make this offering. Please accept it. Your mercy is our only path back home.

We are grateful and very thankful to Your Divine Grace for giving us the most precious jewel of your teachings, which have inconceivable power—so much power, in fact, that they have even transformed the lives of most fallen souls like us.

We beg to remain exclusively your servants. Let us maintain our spiritual vows and service attitude toward our spiritual masters, along with the standards of purity in our temple. Let us maintain what has been given to us and increase and spread your movement even more. Let us help you create many opportunities for other conditioned souls to engage in your service. There is no other happiness in this world. There is no other meaning in our otherwise completely meaningless lives. Thank you for saving us, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

If He so desired, Kṛṣṇa could have made the entire universe Kṛṣṇa conscious immediately. But He did not choose to do so. Instead, He sent you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, fully empowered with the mercy of Lord Nityānanda, to spread the chanting of the holy names to every town and village, with the promise of *kṛṣṇa-prema* for all takers. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you worked tirelessly to fulfill this mission. Kṛṣṇa put you into apparent difficulties so that your devotional qualities would be revealed. Now you receive *guru-pūjā* every day all over the world. How pleased Kṛṣṇa must be because of this! All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! You are the guiding force of our Adelaide Temple, and your disciples and other followers here depend on the mercy of your lotus feet.

Your insignificant servants in Adelaide, Australia.



HOMAGES FROM ISKCON CENTERS



Alachua

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

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

ISKCON Nation

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

O great *ācārya* and *senāpati* in Lord Caitanya's army, O founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, the movement you started with a few lost souls in the Bowery of New York City has grown beyond the walls of all storefronts and buildings and structures and temples. Having aroused Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the hearts of the multitudes, your movement has burst beyond any limitations of an institution. Nor is it a crusade. Not inhibited by seas or mountains, which are natural boundaries between countries and states, your movement is a great commonwealth whose cities and townships are spread throughout the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your ISKCON has now become a nation. Giving hope to the hopeless and life to the walking dead, it breaks the barriers of sectarianism, igniting a common flame in the heart, yearned for by all generations. You are the leader of a great nation that has no bounds and spreads wherever your servants, decorated with renunciation and with the wealth of knowledge found in your books, chant the *mahā-mantra* and teach what you taught. You are the founding father of the ISKCON nation, and we, your humble servants, offer thousands of obeisances at your lotus feet.

This ISKCON nation expands all over the world and stretches to every continent, from the streets of New York City to the remotest regions of Africa, from England to Germany and Australia to South America, from Canada to Japan and Hungary to China, from Russia to Mongolia and Israel to Antarctica, from Māyāpur to Vṛndāvana and from Nilācala to Alachua.

In your nation, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your books are the law and guiding light of wisdom, freedom, and justice. We pray to be empowered by you to maintain and live by the codes of Vedic conclusions you benevolently delivered to us, your fallen and dependent *praja*. With so much toil and sacrifice you brought the message of Godhead to the suffering, bewildered souls of Kali-yuga. You planted the seeds of *bhakti* in our hearts, nourishing them with the life-giving elixir of *śravaṇam kīrtanam*. Please bless us all with the determination to execute this process. It is the prime benediction for humanity at large and frees the heart from despair and doubt.

We, your disciples, followers, subjects, and citizens in Alachua, come before you as one of the many cities on your transcendental map. Worship of the Lord, established by you, goes on throughout the day and night in our temple and homes. You set in motion our primary objective—to serve Kṛṣṇa as best we can with all our heart for all our lives. Devotional service is our way of life because you taught us how to live.

We are now generations, and thus having raised our children to be your devotees, they are raising their children, increasing your family. There is birth, death, old age, and disease among us, and your initiated disciples, having spent their lives executing your order, are now leaving this world. We pray to you, dear beloved spiritual master, to bless us with your magnanimous vision. Please bestow on us the broadmindedness to accept our differences and individuality without condemnation as we appreciate the service of others. We are all different, which is natural in a great nation of infinite magnitude. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the essential condition of the soul, and though our performances may differ, we are guided by the same philosophy of the Absolute Truth.



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Your Society can be compared to a garden in which many varieties of seeds are planted. All these seeds require the same rich soil, water, and sunshine, as all devotees are required to follow the pure path of *sanātana-dharma* to grow and bloom in their own glory.

In a lecture in Māyāpur on February 19, 1976, you spoke of variety:

Variety is the mother of enjoyment. So Kṛṣṇa wants this variety. So you all are devotees. The central point is to love Kṛṣṇa and offer Him service, but that service may be of variety. You cannot claim that because you are serving Kṛṣṇa in a type, and therefore, if somebody is serving in a different—must be approved by the authorities—you cannot criticize him. Varieties. Variety is the mother of enjoyment. . . . So it is not that I'll have to do exactly like you. I'll have to serve Kṛṣṇa, but no mental concoction: following the footstep, *anuvāṇitena*. Again, you can create variety, but it must not deviate from the original authority. That is wanted.

Alachua is a melting pot of all generations of devotees. We come together and pray to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for the strength and intelligence to encourage one another in devotional service, adhering to your divine instructions. We pray to be motivated by even one drop of your fervent desire to relieve the agonized conditioned souls pitifully wandering in this merciless world. Your immense compassion is only matched by your vision of eternity and equality. In your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* 4.24.67, you give a simple and clear instruction that one should attain perfection for oneself and work for the welfare of the world.

Nonetheless, one has to continue chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and preaching the chanting of this *mantra* because such preaching and chanting constitute the perfection of life. One should chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and preach about the urgency of making this life perfect in all respects. One should thus engage in the devotional service of the Lord and follow in the footsteps of previous *ācāryas*, beginning with Lord Brahmā and others.

Dear exalted Śrīla Prabhupāda, approaching you with bunches of straw in our teeth, we sincerely ask you to accept the humble offering we now place before you, on the throne of your lotus feet.

A Jewel for Śrīla Prabhupāda

There is a jewel we all possess, no matter what our means.
Sometimes we give it uselessly, sometimes alone in dreams.
Where we choose to keep this jewel calculates our fate.
Everyone will have this choice; for some it comes too late.

With certainty, one may find a shrine in which to store it,
but in this world of faded hopes, who's deserving to adore it?
Directed by our wishful dreams and desperate for a place,
bestowed upon unworthiness will see it soon erase.

Great fortune given to a fool can lead one to descent,
like pearls to swine the value lost for whom it's justly meant.
To waste the sacred right we have, which suddenly is lost,
and like a seed blown in the wind, roots where it has been tossed.

Carried in a thousand hearts, we lay this precious treasure
at your feet—it's all we have—and pray it gives you pleasure.
This jewel we bore for so long to seek its rightful place:
we ever give our loyalty to Your Divine Grace.



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With love and devotion,

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

(written by Samapriyā Devī Dāsī)

Allahabad

*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*

Only You, Śrīla Prabhupāda

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could give up everything and take *sannyāsa* to fulfill an order you received from your spiritual master in a dream.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could make “Hare Kṛṣṇa” and “back to Godhead” household phrases.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could call modern civilization “polished animalism.”

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could make the hippies of the West dance to the *mantra* of from the East.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could call the popular *haṭha-yoga* practice “childish gymnastics.”

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could start a worldwide organization with forty rupees in your pocket.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could call the industrial revolution and technological advancement “ghastly work.”

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could make dog-eaters, drunkards, and woman-hunters into pure celibate monks who worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could call Darwin “a descendant of the monkeys” and great universities “slaughterhouses.”

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could see Kṛṣṇa's *kāla-rūpa* in the bombs dropping on Calcutta during World War II.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could call Ramakrishna an impotent prostitute-hunter.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could write seventy books that would be translated into all languages of the world.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could challenge Newton, Galileo, Einstein, and all the rest with your Bhaktivedanta purports.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could call the *bābājīs* of Vṛndāvana neophyte devotees.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could follow the Six Gosvāmīs while living in palatial temples.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could call NASA's moon mission “a childish waste of time.”

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could make Englishmen chant Sanskrit hymns to Śrī Govinda that were composed by Lord Brahmā.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could make Kali-yuga men regularly hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* like the sages at Naimiṣāraṇya—and understand it.



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Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could call the women's liberation movement "a scheme by men to exploit women" and preach to the feminists about the *Manu-saṁhitā*.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could call sex "the cause of all suffering."

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could make the jungle in Rāmaṇa Reti and the rice fields in Māyāpur into the two great citadels of the spiritual kingdom.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could take Jagannātha out of Purī and carry Him to every continent of the world without the priests and watch guards knowing.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could make a nationalist Māyāvādī *sannyāsī* into a devotee, beg land from the King of Kāśī, and start an ISKCON temple in Allahabad.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could make rascals like us surrender to the lotus feet of guru and Kṛṣṇa and want nothing else but their mercy.

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare Hare Hare

Your servants at ISKCON Allahabad, India.

(written by Śyāmānanda Dāsa)

Bhaktivedanta Manor

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

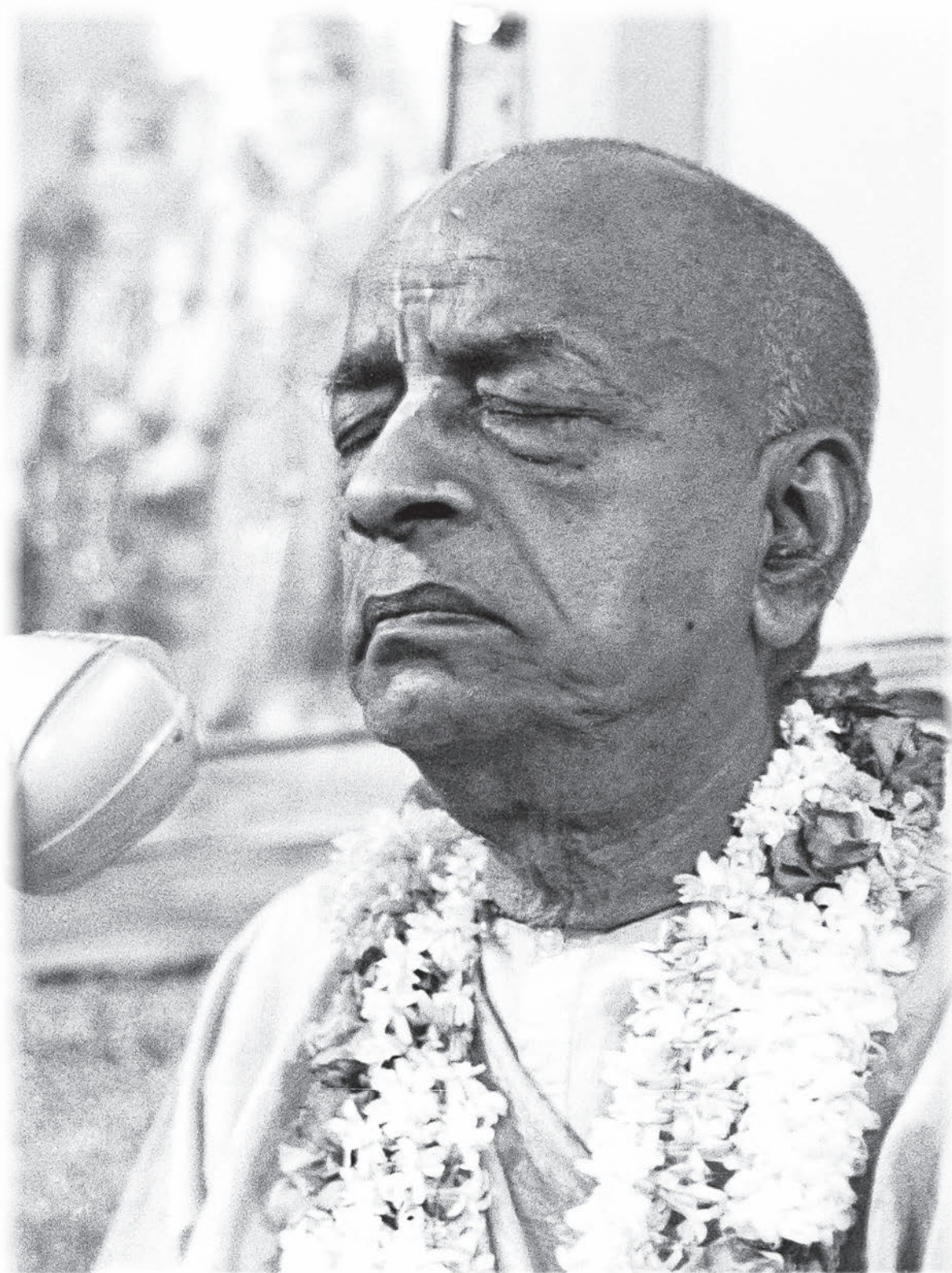
Please accept our humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet.

Here at Bhaktivedanta Manor we feel your presence all around us. Simply the name Bhaktivedanta Manor reminds us that this is your kingdom and we are your servants. If it were not for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, there would be no Bhaktivedanta Manor, and we would be lost in the kingdom of *māyā*, where suffering knows no bounds. It is impossible for us to estimate our good fortune to be serving you here at your European headquarters, where your beautifully preserved rooms are still graced with your eternal spiritual presence. At the end of your earthly pastimes, when your body was severely emaciated and wracked with pain, you made one last journey to come here from Vṛndāvana and bless us with your *darśana*. And for us you always remain here, overseeing your European mission.

By your mercy and for your pleasure, we are happy to report that the Manor community of devotees is continuing to expand, and that various preaching activities are thriving. The theme for this year has been named *atithi devo bhava*, or "the guest is as good as God." Devotees are making a special effort to take good care of every guest who walks through the doors at Bhaktivedanta Manor, in accordance with your instructions. Your books continue to be distributed en masse. Over five hundred devotees went out during last year's Christmas marathon and distributed around 160,000 books, making the Manor the number-one temple for book distribution outside of India. Two *harināma* parties continue to go out every Saturday, one in a local town and the other in London. And we are happy to inform you that our efforts to expand the guest facilities here at Bhaktivedanta Manor have taken a major step forward: planning permission has finally been granted for a grand new building, which has been given the name Shree Krishna Haveli.



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This facility will include a large *kīrtana* hall and a large *prasādam* hall, along with a number of other rooms with various functions, to accommodate the growing number of visitors to the Manor.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you said many times that we are not Hindus and that there is no such word as “Hindu” in the Vedic literature. However, because the Manor is patronized by so many people who consider themselves Hindus, it has become known publicly and in the media as a bastion of Hinduism. We accept this designation because it bestows respectability and public acceptance, thus drawing people to the Manor from all walks of life. For example, busloads of children come from many different schools to visit the Manor as part of their religious education, and politicians from the local and the central government come for festivals and give speeches here. Hence we are dovetailing the Hindu designation in Kṛṣṇa’s service by giving spiritual education to people who come to the Manor and introducing them to you through your books. As you taught us from the words of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, we should accept whatever is favorable for Kṛṣṇa’s service and reject whatever is unfavorable. May we always be guided by this principle.

While the Hinduism designation is advantageous for establishing the social credentials of Bhaktivedanta Manor and attracting a broad spectrum of people, at the same time it can also be misleading or confusing for some people who are simply seeking spiritual truth. Śrīla Prabhupāda, please guide us how to navigate the ocean of Hinduism in such a way that we can sail forward on it without becoming engulfed by it. Your sacred mission was to bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the West. We pray that Kṛṣṇa may give us the intelligence to devise new ways to attract not only Hindus but also non-Hindus, and to convince them all that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not just an Indian religion but a spiritual science meant for the enlightenment of all humanity.

May we always keep you at the heart and center of every activity here at Bhaktivedanta Manor as our guide, our inspiration, and our all. Whatever successes have been achieved so far are all yours, because you are the one and only person who sacrificed everything and risked your life at an advanced age to travel alone from India to the West and establish the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world. May we remember you at every step with love and gratitude, and may we always strive to please you and to follow your instructions. By following in your footsteps, may we use this great facility of Bhaktivedanta Manor to convince lost souls from all walks of life to take shelter at your lotus feet.

Your servants of the Bhaktivedanta Manor community, United Kingdom.

(written by Jagannātheśvarī Devī Dāśī)



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Brahmapur

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In this Age of Kali there are many so-called spiritual organizations, each teaching their own concocted philosophy. While trying to help others, they are doing the greatest disservice to humanity. We feel ourselves extremely fortunate because we have received this wonderful Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy from you. There is no philosophy in the entire world that can stand before this philosophy.

ISKCON is the strongest boat. It will continue to reclaim countless conditioned souls suffering in the ocean of material existence and take them to your fearless lotus feet. Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for accepting us into your family. Please give us the strength to serve in your mission.

This year we are giving more stress to youth preaching in colleges. For the first time, we will conduct a summer camp for children. The temple construction work is going on. We are trying to increase the number of devotees in the *brahmacārī āśrama*. Please bless us so that we can do more book distribution and spread your message far and wide.

Your servants at ISKCON Brahmapur, Odisha, India.

Budapest

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you on this special day of your appearance!

Recently I was listening to a lecture by your disciple Yamunā Devī Dāsī, in which she talked about her relationship with you. She told the story of how she first met you and tasted *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*, and how you used to personally cook the preparations and distribute them among your first disciples. At the end of one meal you asked her if the next day she could help cook the feast you were planning for her younger sister's wedding. What she said after that amazed me. I have heard many times that in the early days you would cook *prasādam* and serve it to your disciples and guests yourself, but I was really astonished and touched to learn that for that wedding, in six hours, with only some slight help from Yamunā, you cooked sixteen different preparations for forty people. You tirelessly spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, whatever it took.

If we look at the earliest Sunday Feasts from a materialistic perspective, serving a vegetarian feast to meat-eating young people who were often under the influence of drugs is not a sublime or exalted thing to do. But from your spiritually pure perspective, you understood that those people were sent to you by Kṛṣṇa to help you spread your movement. Having taken full shelter at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, you just humbly and patiently served them *prasādam* for their purification.



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Forbearance, tolerance, determination—you exhibited these qualities to an extent that is unparalleled. You personally served and trained your disciples, and you also wrote many books to equip us and all future generations with the knowledge needed to help you spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world.

This could not have happened if you hadn't had full faith in Kṛṣṇa and the process of devotional service, faith which gave you full confidence that the souls you connected to Kṛṣṇa would be purified and elevated. A sign of pure devotion is to give without expecting anything in return. You exhibited just that—showing us the perfect example. You gave yourself and Kṛṣṇa to others, despite all difficulties, troubles, and inconveniences. You are the real *ācārya* of this age.

Please empower us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, with just a drop of your purity, enthusiasm, and determination, so that in our efforts to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness we will also be able to give everything, to serve with all our hearts, aiming only at your pleasure and Kṛṣṇa's.

Words are insufficient to express our gratitude, but please accept this humble attempt. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Your servants in Budapest, Hungary.

(written by Gurūttama Dāsa)

Cape Town

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this greatly auspicious anniversary of your divine appearance, we are reminded of our duty to properly glorify and worship you. As we consider what that really means, we are drawn to the realization of our own fallen and humble position. You are without doubt the great spiritual master and *senāpati bhakta* of the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Gaurāṅga, and the founder-*ācārya* of the manifestation of that movement in the modern age, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. What could be more glorious?

While remembering your glorious position and achievements, and the personal sacrifices you underwent to establish ISKCON, we are reminded that this is a time to examine ourselves and ask, What does it mean to be your follower? It is a time for reflection and introspection. It is a time for rededication to your preaching mission, a time to endeavor to become more sincere servants of Your Divine Grace and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

We also have to ask ourselves what it means to properly worship and glorify you. Certainly it is not simply a matter of speaking flowery words of eulogy but rather of a more serious dedication to your divine service. We have all certainly heard this point many times from your sincere followers. Therefore we should submit ourselves at your lotus feet and the lotus feet of your dedicated servants and pray that by the causeless mercy of Your Divine Grace we can feel a greater urgency this year, a deeper understanding of what it means to be your followers. We must surrender to you through selfless service and rededicate ourselves to your preaching mission. We must make your mission our mission, and we have to truly establish your glories throughout the world.



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This path is laden with impediments, not least of which are our foolishness, selfishness, laziness, and pervasive impurity. We are all products of the unholy atmosphere of this Age of Kali. Nevertheless, your mercy is so sublime that it can lift your sincere followers over the monumental obstacles of this fallen age. Therefore we must endeavor to be recipients of that transcendental mercy. We must try to understand that a life of insulated comfort is a great obstacle to our spiritual development. We have to cultivate a cheerful willingness to give up a cozy life of ease and accept personal inconveniences for the sake of our beloved master and his preaching mission. This is certainly the greatest medicine and will bring us to a happy and pure life of eternal loving service at the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

We pray for the courage to willingly accept this medicine, so that we may all be purified and truly attain the shelter of your divine lotus feet. We also pray for the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas who truly love and wholeheartedly serve you, so that we may remain the servants of your servants.

Your servants at ISKCON Cape Town, South Africa.

Chandigarh

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most respectful obeisances unto your lotus feet. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and to all the loving, powerful personalities in the *guru-śiṣya paramparā*.

Once again, by the mercy of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *paramparā ācāryas*, we have the opportunity to take a look at our good fortune of having you as the captain of our ship, a ship that is taking us across the material ocean, which is becoming more and more degrading in this Age of Kali.

*tvam naḥ sandarśito dhātṛā dustaraṁ nistitṛṣatām
kalim sattva-haraṁ puṁsām karṇa-dhāra ivāṇavam*

“We think that we have met Your Goodness by the will of providence, just so that we may accept you as captain of the ship for those who desire to cross the difficult ocean of Kali, which deteriorates all the good qualities of a human being.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.22) Your purport to this verse ends as follows:

Learned men, therefore, must be cautious of this age, and if they at all want to cross over the dangerous ocean of Kali, they must follow the footsteps of the sages of Naimiṣāranya and accept Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī or his bona fide representative as the captain of the ship. *The ship is the message of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the shape of the Bhagavad-gītā or the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* [emphasis added]

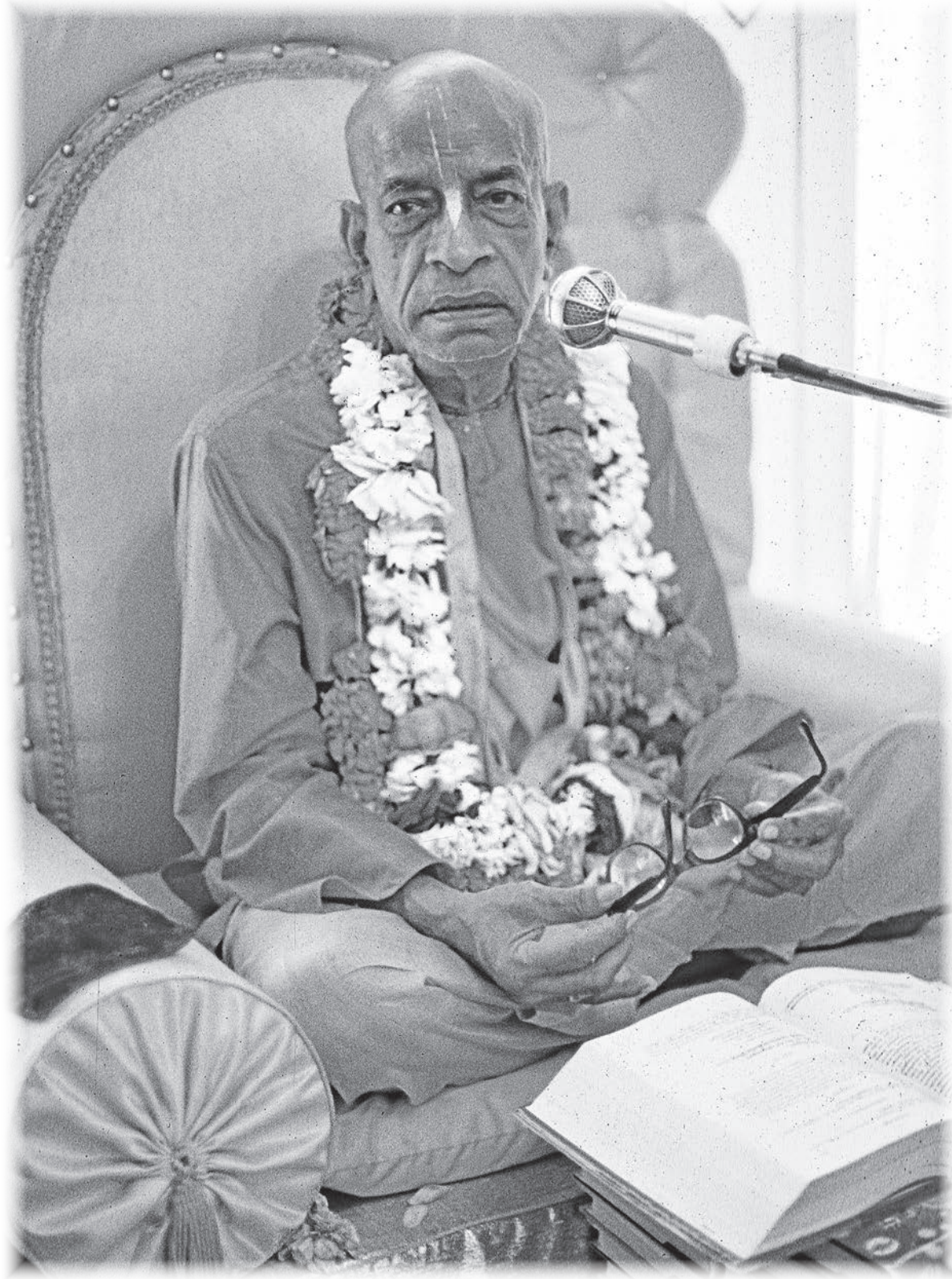
Taking your last sentence as our inspiration, we shall try to elaborate upon one of your infinite glories in this offering—the clarity of your teachings.

Although we have heard this verse quoted many times, and we feel fortunate in having you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as the captain of our ship to take us out of the material ocean, how often do we reflect on the ship that the captain is steering?

The captain takes the passengers across the ocean by means of a ship. Without the ship the captain cannot do it—he cannot take the passengers on his shoulders and swim across the ocean! At the same



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time, the passengers cannot cross the ocean in the ship without the help of the captain. Even if one finds a suitable ship, one cannot just fiddle around with the controls of the ship and expect to cross the ocean—one needs a competent captain, one who knows the ship and the way across, and who is experienced (realized) in handling the various challenges of steering the ship across the turbulent ocean.

Thus both the captain and the ship are required to safely cross the ocean.

Although elsewhere *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* refers to the human body as the suitable boat to cross the ocean of birth and death, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's instructions as the favorable breezes, and to the spiritual master as the ship's captain, at *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.22 you define the ship as the messages of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the shape of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. A little careful analysis reveals that the purport is the same: *The means to take one across the material ocean is the loving and potent messages of the Bhagavad-gītā and the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, delivered by the bona fide spiritual master.*

One cannot access the philosophy (or utilize the ship) without the spiritual master (the captain). And if we just sentimentally accept a spiritual master (the captain) without embracing the philosophy (the ship of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*), we will also fail to achieve ultimate success, i.e., crossing over the material ocean.

A teacher makes the subject matter understandable by properly explaining it to the audience. A spiritual teacher especially takes care not to leave anything vague, since the dull students of Kali-yuga would not only get confused themselves but would cause great chaos in the lives of others as well. This very mentality is predicted in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.5.15—*svabhāva-raktasya mahān vyatikramaḥ*: by nature the people of this age are inclined to cause great deviations and misinterpret spiritual teachings as justifications for sense gratification. Thus at every available opportunity you emphasize and repeat the principle of properly imbibing the transcendental teachings from the bona fide spiritual master. We see this in your purport to the following oft-quoted verse (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.18):

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

“By regular attendance in classes on the *Bhāgavatam* and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact.”

You eloquently close the discussion in the purport by giving this final comment:

The messages of the book *Bhāgavata*, therefore, have to be received from the devotee *Bhāgavata*, and the combination of these two *Bhāgavatas* will help the neophyte devotee to make progress on and on.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have awarded crystal-clear teachings to us. These teachings are the essence of all the scriptures and are easily understood. Now it is up to us to board this ship in the form of the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and thus cross over the ocean under your expert navigation. We seek your blessings to get over our laziness and craziness in not taking to these priceless teachings—not just for our personal benefit but also for becoming fit to assist you in your mission to the extent the Lord empowers us.

Once again, Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for awarding these messages to us and all the living entities suffering in the material world.

* * *

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you may be pleased to know that both congregational and youth preaching are progressing well in your center at Chandigarh. Seven BACEs are functioning at present near the engineering colleges, and eighty devotees are ready for first initiation. We conducted six major Ratha-yātrās and seven



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mini Ratha-yātrās. Last year we distributed 27,000 *Bhagavad-gītās* and *Kṛṣṇa* books in the 2016 marathon. That placed us at the top of our category (small temples). Keeping in view your invaluable instruction that education and training are essential for the stability and growth of our society, we are taking special care to conduct educational courses regularly. Fifty-two devotees received Bhakti-śāstrī degrees in 2016, and we started a Bhakti-vaibhava course, conducted by the Māyāpur Institute of Higher Education. Twenty-nine devotees are taking this course. We conducted three IDC courses, which were attended by about 150 devotees. All this has been possible by your mercy and blessings and the guidance of senior Vaiṣṇavas.

Kindly continue showering your mercy on us so that we can serve your great mission to the best of our ability.

With deep gratitude,

Your servants at ISKCON Chandigarh, India.

China

Our dear spiritual grandfather Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

As your grandsons and granddaughters, we want to express our gratitude for your causeless mercy. It is our good fortune that we are able to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness, guided by your books, our respective spiritual masters, and other devotees in your ISKCON institution. When we embraced the process of *bhakti* and accepted you as our *śikṣā* spiritual master, our lives turned into a celebration of pure bliss, with the glorious mission of awakening the dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness in everyone's heart.

Your instructions are to chant at least sixteen rounds of Hare Kṛṣṇa daily without fail, to strictly avoid illicit sex, meat-eating, intoxication, and gambling, to always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him, and to read all your books again and again. Although there are other editions of the *Bhagavad-gītā* available in China, it is often difficult, if not impossible, to understand their content. But your devotees easily grasp the essence of the *Gītā* by pointing to your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, and particularly to verse 18.66:

*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

“Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear.”

By the association of your devotees one will easily understand the true meaning of devotional service. You very clearly explain the difference between real knowledge, which can help one achieve the highest goal of life, and information in the guise of knowledge, which can distract and confuse one on one's spiritual quest. As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.2), this knowledge is the most secret of all secrets and is the purest.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave your followers the famous instruction “Chant and be happy,” and in the introduction to the *Bhagavad-gītā* you also say,

We must always engage our minds in reading [the] Vedic literatures. Just as materialists engage their minds in reading newspapers, magazines, and so many materialistic literatures, we must transfer our reading to the literatures which are given to us by Vyāsadeva; in that way it will be



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possible for us to remember the Supreme Lord at the time of death. That is the only way suggested by the Lord, and He guarantees the result: “There is no doubt.”

Today we are obeying your order to chant and be happy, and so we are feeling happiness while chanting and reading. In this joyful mood of relishing *kīrtana* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, we pray to naturally realize Kṛṣṇa within our hearts more and more. And we will keep chanting and reading in this mood of relishing the nectar, hoping for that most auspicious day when we will personally meet Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa face to face. We must keep up this blissful chanting and reading. It is simply wonderful. The more we relish it, the more we realize Kṛṣṇa.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you very much for founding the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. It is a big family, in which devotees from all over the world cooperate to serve Kṛṣṇa. All the activities of the movement, led by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and spreading your teachings widely through book distribution, are factually hari-kīrtana, or glorification of the Lord.

Today in China many of your books have been published, and devotees distribute them enthusiastically to the Chinese people and to many university libraries. Our GBCs and ISKCON gurus are also giving the Chinese devotees more attention, so we have the nice association of many senior devotees. When you were on the planet, you went to Hong Kong and hoped the Chinese people would practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness. By seeing the situation in China today, you must be very pleased.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have a responsibility to maintain ourselves and our families by working at our daily jobs, but we also have a responsibility to strictly perform our sādhana and preach to others. For most people it is not easy to accept Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and sometimes we feel we lack the strength to keep pushing. We therefore pray for your blessings so we can touch the hearts of millions of Chinese souls, be they intellectuals, laborers, teachers, leaders, or simple villagers. Everyone’s heart can melt by the chanting of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa.

We conditioned souls who have taken to the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness are just like children learning to walk: in the beginning we sometimes slip and fall. Please do not reject us for our occasional slips and falls as we learn how to walk in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You are patita-pāvana. We sincerely want to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. Please bless our sincere attempts and continue to encourage us as we master the art of walking.

Your grandsons and granddaughters in Mainland China.

(written by Pañcatattva Dāsa, Lanzhou yātrā)

Columbus

Hare Kṛṣṇa, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*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*



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*vāñchā-kalpatarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*

*mūkaṁ karoti vācāraṁ paṇḍuram lañghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī-gururam dīna-tāraṇam*

I beg for your mercy so I will have the proper words, mood, and consciousness to write this offering on behalf of the devotees in the Columbus *yātrā*.

The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.3.14) says,

*uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya varān nibodhata
kṣurasya dhārā niśitā duratyayā
durgam pathas tat kavayo vadanti*

“Please wake up and try to understand the boon you now have in this in human form of life. The path of spiritual life is very difficult, sharp like a razor’s edge. That is the opinion of learned, transcendental scholars.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, you brought the perfect medicine for humanity and repeated the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the mood of Śrīla Nityānanda Prabhu—*jīva jāgo, jīva jāgo*: “O sleeping souls, wake up, wake up!” You shook the world with a revolutionary message. You challenged so-called spirituality and spiritual leaders. You made spiritual life easy and practical in this age where everybody is struggling, confused, and misdirected. I am so fortunate to have come in contact with you and your teachings. Although I do not possess any good qualities, knowledge, talents, or skills, I was given this rare opportunity to write your 2017 Vyāsa-pūjā offering on behalf of our Columbus center.

For this occasion, so many illustrious devotees who are like swans on the path of devotional service to Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara will have written their most nectarean offerings with gratitude, respect, appreciation, and realizations. I have none of those qualities but am like a crow among those great swanlike souls. I am a granddisciple of yours associated with the ISKCON Columbus temple since 1999. You have said that the grandfather is more merciful to his son’s children than the father is. As your granddisciple, I will make a feeble attempt to glorify you and write a report from the Columbus temple’s perspective. Please forgive my shortcomings and mercifully accept it.

Out of my great fortune and your devotees’ causeless mercy, I came in contact with you in 1998 in the form of one of your books. Later I was allowed to do some service to your mission by my beloved spiritual master, His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami, and my local GBC, Mālatī Devī Dāsī, who are your dear son and daughter and your sincere disciples. Under their direction and wonderful guidance, I am trying to serve you and your mission in various ways, along with so many wonderful devotees here in Columbus.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the most magnanimous and merciful Personality of Godhead, predicted that one day His holy name would be chanted in every town and village in the world. As we all know, you are that empowered *senāpati-bhakta* who made that happen by your unflinching devotion, dedication, and compassion. This was your service to your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, what an amazing benediction your ISKCON is for this world! Somehow we are connected to you and your mission. We want to do something to please you, although we have been trying to please ourselves since immemorial. We’ve spent countless lives in this material world, wandering about performing unimaginable actions and suffering the reactions, aimlessly and meaninglessly living lives that have led to a hopeless, godless, and sinful civilization. You taught the world who a real guru is and how to approach him.

*tad-vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet
samit-pāṇiḥ śrotriyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham*



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“To learn the transcendental subject matter, one must humbly approach, as if with firewood in hand, a spiritual master who is learned in the *Vedas* and firmly devoted to the Absolute Truth.” (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1.2.12)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the ray of hope for humanity. You are so dear to Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava and are giving us the opportunity to also become dear to Them. Out of your causeless compassion you are offering pure devotional service to everyone, without any preconditions, allowing us the opportunity to serve and associate with their Lordships in spite of being filled with all varieties of vices due to the influence of the lower modes of nature. Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your endeavors to save the world and create real peace through the real United Nations—which can happen only by keeping Kṛṣṇa in the center—you visited Columbus in May of 1969 and held a program at Ohio State University. The roughly two thousand students who attended that event chanted the holy names and danced in front of you in Hitchcock Hall. At that time you said, “There should be a center in Columbus.” You saw the spark of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in those students, who were willing to take steps toward Kṛṣṇa.

Your words did not go in vain, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Devotees from New Vrindavan began regularly visiting Columbus on weekends and holding programs, and eventually they opened a permanent center. They saw the initial success and ran the temple at different locations from 1970 till the mid 80’s. Then they found the current temple building, which is very close to the OSU campus. They brought Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Naṭabara from New Vrindavan and started holding public programs on Thursdays and Sundays. Eventually Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Naṭabara were joined by Śrī Gaura-Nitāi and Śrī Jagannātha, Śrī Baladeva, and Śrīmatī Subhadrā Devī. That center flourished under different groups of devotees from the mid 80’s till the late 90’s.

At that time Mālātī Devī Dāsī, as our GBC, transformed the center into a ladies’ *āśrama*. I came to Columbus in 1999 and worked under her guidance. The temple president was Rasa-mañjarī Devī Dāsī, who worked with Narottama Dāsa, Śyāma Gopāla Dāsa, and many other devotees to increase the congregation by starting many preaching and outreach programs. By the causeless mercy of their Lordships, your mercy, and the devotees’ blessings, the temple slowly but steadily grew. Our congregation developed, and ISKCON Columbus was transformed into a congregation-based temple. Over the years, many devotees joined the congregation to help the temple grow.

Over the years we’ve heard from many visitors and volunteers that we need a big temple with nice facilities, but we were hardly making ends meet to maintain the temple we had. It was nice to hear that we needed a big temple, and we really appreciated their kind words, but the Columbus temple, from the year 2000 onwards, really grew up with students coming from OSU, taking Kṛṣṇa consciousness seriously, and practicing very nicely, but after they graduated they all scattered to different places. Also, due to the unstable IT job market, a lot of new people came, got in contact with the temple and your teachings, and eventually had to move out of Columbus to find a job.

Hence, even though preaching was going on nicely, we always found ourselves back to square one, with a few devotees managing the temple. So the words “we need a bigger temple” became a painful reminder of our frustrating situation. Still, many wonderful devotees, preachers, and volunteers have worked very hard to develop this center by establishing nice managerial structures to grow with, and by implementing successful strategies, protocols, and processes to retain devotees and encourage them to find jobs locally.

Miraculously, we were able to purchase the current temple building and moved from the renting phase to mortgage and eventually paid it off entirely. We renovated the temple building to the best of our ability, so it would hold more devotees with a few more facilities. Gradually the congregation and volunteers increased to manage the temple. Services and finances are stabilized. A real miracle happened, as if showing us a light of hope on the horizon, when Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu’s Pādukās came, along with Jananivāsa Prabhu, to raise funds for the TOVP. Though the Columbus temple congregation is relatively small, the members contributed a substantial amount to the TOVP project. That caused us to think, “If I we managed to stretch our potential to support a project such as the TOVP, why can’t we have our own local project?”

The temple leaders and volunteers met and devised a plan to get a bigger place, and eventually, by the causeless mercy of the Lord, we acquired fifty-three acres of land in a prime location. We did not ask for funds outside the congregation, but the required money came in and we bought the land without taking



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a loan. Also, architects and other people who supported this initiative came forward along with money to pay for a range of activities, beginning with the initial planning process and including the conceptual design. It's miraculous how it all happened. Seemingly out of nowhere we have reached a place now where we have a detailed plan, a schedule, and a strong desire to build this beautiful temple. Śrīla Prabhupāda, we all believe that the new temple will facilitate bringing more people to the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Nāṭabara as a pleasing service to you and your mission.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, from this brief history of ISKCON Columbus, we can see how Kṛṣṇa has perfectly orchestrated the temple's development step by step. We often reflect on how seemingly impossible it is that somehow we are connected to you and have been given an opportunity to be part of your divine mission, in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His great associates. Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your compassion is our only qualification. Please help us serve you and your mission by following in your footsteps. We aspire to have a small fragment of your determination to try to please Kṛṣṇa in all circumstances.

So many people in this world are atheists, whether declared or undeclared, but even those who believe in God are often confused and misled by so-called religious or spiritual organizations spouting concocted philosophies. You are our eternal example of following the *paramparā* and executing the instructions of your spiritual master by giving humanity a practical, simple, and sublime process to experience the divine mercy of God.

Common people's conception of God is very vague, but you clearly explained and taught the world that Kṛṣṇa is God, and you also revealed how to practice *bhakti-yoga* and achieve perfection in this very life. As you said, "Give this one life to Kṛṣṇa. You will never be the loser." So many of your sincere disciples and granddisciples exemplify your teachings and show the world how to follow in your footsteps and continue your legacy.

Most members of our congregation are second-generation followers of yours, carrying on your legacy. Exceptions include your direct disciples Mālātī Devī Dāsī, who is our GBC, Kāmagiri Devī Dāsī, who serves the Deities with her exceptional cooking abilities, Jādvācārya Dāsa, who is always encouraging everybody to take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness seriously, and Vakreśvara Paṇḍita Dāsa, whose *kīrtanas*, memories, and offerings are always uplifting. The new temple is very much needed to provide the shade of your compassion to attract so many people who are looking for Kṛṣṇa but do not know how to begin.

Actually, everybody is looking for Kṛṣṇa, but unfortunately they're looking in the wrong places and by the wrong means. Our current temple is so small and cannot host more people. Hence we hear comments like "It's not a temple but a house—no parking, no facilities" etc. Sincere people are coming to our temple, taking Kṛṣṇa consciousness seriously, and also practicing even with the minimum facilities we have. But the vast majority of the people who are looking for external facilities, which are needed in this day and age, are not coming.

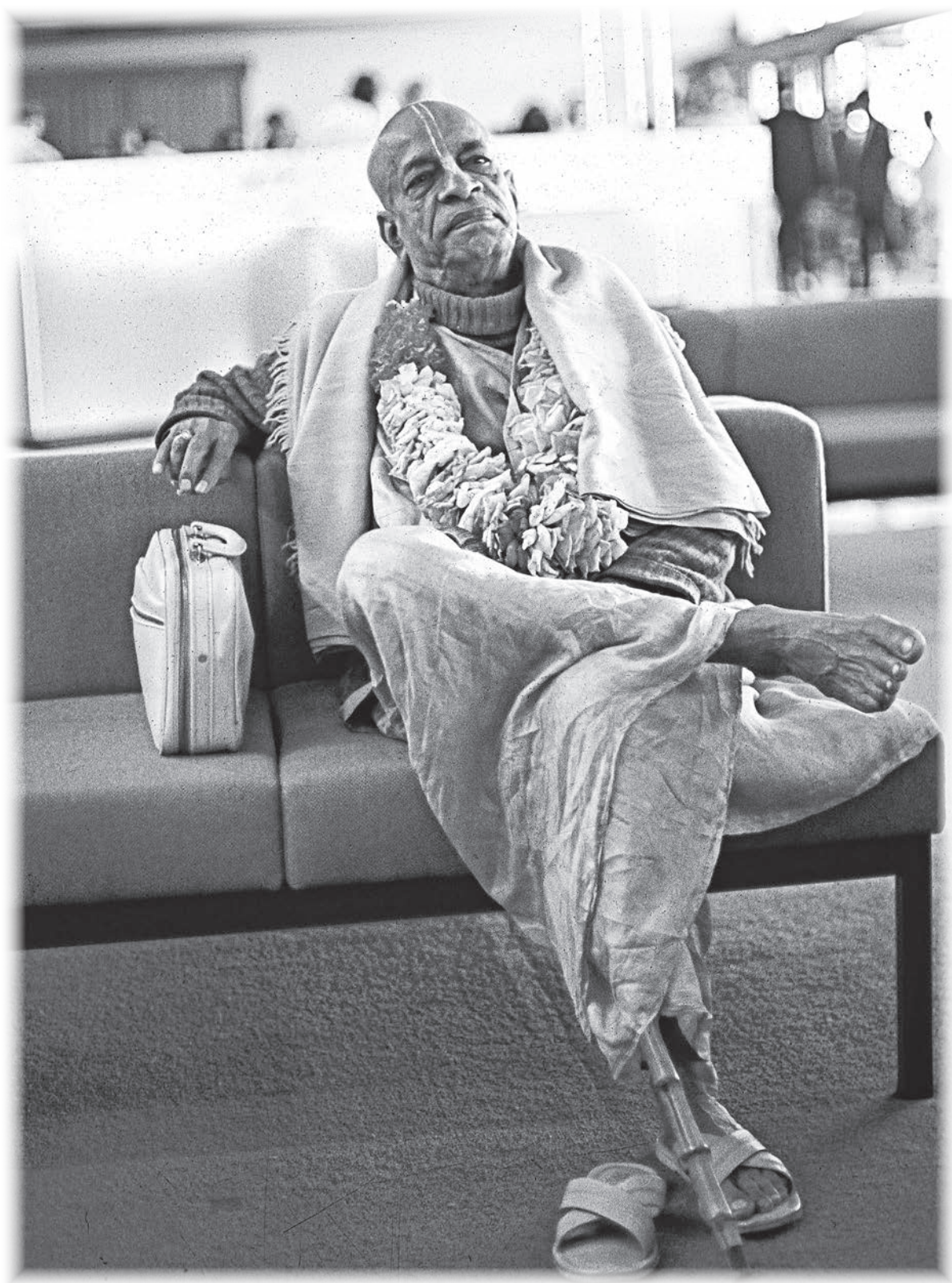
We pray that Kṛṣṇa will take our endeavor seriously and ordain the things necessary to fulfill our cherished desire, which is to build this new temple with all the facilities a common man is looking for. Then there will be no excuse for them not to come to temple, take up the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and make their lives sublime and perfect by following your teachings. We know that if we please you, Kṛṣṇa will automatically be pleased. You are very kind, and you will recommend our plea to your beloved Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī.

We all feel that this temple will create a revolution in Columbus and nearby areas. We will do anything and everything necessary to build the temple. The real test now is raising the money and inspiring people to make this happen. We need your blessings and mercy to serve your mission sincerely, seriously, and with no ulterior motives.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, what we can do together goes a long way toward the reality that needs to manifest, but if you show your special mercy, since you are pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, He will make it happen. There are so many miracles in your life that Kṛṣṇa revealed to the world time and again. You said, "Impossible is a word in fool's dictionary." And you factually took so many risks and were successful. Please help us build this iconic temple as an oasis in this material world to serve the mass of people, who are dying



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for the real water of pure *bhakti*. May it provide an opportunity for us to come closer to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Naṭabara by following your teachings.

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, help us to serve you and your mission. The new-temple planning team consists of Prema Sindhu Dāsa, Līlā-mañjarī Devī Dāsī, Navīna Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, Prema Vilāsa Dāsa, Rāma-tīrtha Dāsa, Śrīmān Ravīndranāth, Śrīmān Chandra Yedu, and Śrīmān Kīrti Agasi. All of us are trying our best. Please bless the team so that we will remain together for the rest of our lives to serve you and your mission in a favorable way, to please you and hence Kṛṣṇa. Please bless the team to grow, so that more and more devotees will become inspired, take up responsibilities in your service and your mission, and make their lives perfect. Also, there are so many second-generation devotees doing so many selfless services so nicely and inspiring many new people. It's very difficult to mention all their names now, so please forgive me.

As part of our endeavor to increase the congregation, to inspire and motivate everyone, we are doing our best even though much remains to be done, internally and externally. There are four Bhakti-vriksha programs going on in Columbus, three preaching programs at OSU for local students, one yoga group outside the campus for Americans, one monthly Mahā Satsang program, daily *Gītā* and *Bhāgavatam* conference classes, a few study groups, and also collaborative efforts with other groups such as Comfest, Asian Festival, Festival of India, International Festival, and so on—all aimed at the distribution of your books in Columbus.

We increased our congregation from 100 to 250+ in the last two and a half years. We are aspiring to increase the community to over 600 devotees by the time the new temple will be ready in 2020. If we get at least 85% of the funds needed, we will be on target. It's a humongous task. On the one hand, we feel the time has come, but on the other hand, we are scared. We have mixed emotions, thinking, "Is it really going to happen? Can we build this new temple by 2020?" One thing is sure: if you bless us, then nothing is impossible. Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, help us serve you and your mission. Help us create a facility where everybody in the greater Columbus area can come and learn, practice, and experience the perfection of religion, can feel real peace and real life, can chant the *mahā-mantra*, and can associate with and serve the devotees and your mission.

*yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanaḥ*

"Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed." Please help us become your instruments and commanders in your army, so that we may fearlessly spread the glories of the holy name to as many people as possible and make a better world as your representatives. In our opinion, this new temple will facilitate that need now and for all future generations. They also will carry on your legacy by establishing far and wide the congregational chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

The aspiring servants of the servants of your servants at ISKCON Columbus, Ohio, USA.

(written by Navīna Kṛṣṇa Dāsa)



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Czech Republic

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On August 6, 1976, at the New Māyāpur farm in France, you instructed me during my initiation to translate your books into the Czech language. You also inquired from me if the then nation of Czechoslovakia was a big country. I answered that it was not very big, and currently the Czech Republic, which split from Slovakia in 1993, has only about ten million inhabitants.

On the occasion of the 121st anniversary of your most auspicious appearance on this planet, celebrated worldwide as your Vyāsa-pūjā, I humbly submit this short report on the temples and projects of Your Divine Grace's International Society for Krishna Consciousness in the Czech Republic.

* * *

Prague ISKCON Centers (about fifty initiated devotees and sixty congregation members):

Nitāi-Navadvīpacandra Mandira—Center for Vedic Studies
Harināma Mandira
Soukenicka Govinda's Restaurant and Bhakti Yoga Center
Na Hrazi Govinda's Restaurant and Bhakti Yoga Center
Govinda's Delicious Sweets and Savories Shop
Balarama Restaurant
Zizkov Gauranga Restaurant and Bhakti Yoga Center

Devotees from the Prague ISKCON centers distributed 14,000 pieces of literature in 2016. Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, has five Hare Kṛṣṇa restaurants and offers *bhāgavata-prasādam* to more than two thousand guests a week. Devotees from the Nitāi-Navadvīpacandra Mandira perform *nagara kīrtanas* twice a week in the historic center of Prague, to the delight of millions of tourists who visit Prague during the year. It has become a tradition in Prague that tourists take part in the *kīrtanas*, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and dance jubilantly with the devotees. Each summer a Ratha-yātrā festival is held in the old city. Organized by the temple president of the Harināma Mandira with the help of devotees from all the ISKCON centers in the Czech Republic, the festival attracts thousands of people, including tourists from around the world. Tons of delicious *bhāgavata-prasādam* are distributed. The Prague municipality is very favorably disposed toward the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, and the media—TV networks and newspapers—inform the public about our Ratha-yātrā with such headlines as “The Lord of the Universe Visits Prague.”

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Krishna's Court (Krisnuv Dvur)—about thirty-five initiated devotees and fifteen congregation members.

Krishna's Court farm
Govinda's restaurant in Benesov



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Homeschooling center
Śāstra-dāna and India Festival public programs project

Devotees from Krishna's Court, ISKCON Czech's farm project, which is situated about fifty kilometers east of Prague, distributed 4,200 pieces of literature in 2016. The Śāstra-dāna and India Festival project organizes public programs and also sponsors books for schools, public libraries, and prisons. Krishna's Court farm is the oldest ISKCON project in the Czech Republic, founded in 1990 (up until 1989, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement was banned by the Communist government, and there were only a dozen "underground" devotees in Czechoslovakia). Beautiful Nītāi-Gaurāṅga Deities were installed in 2010. The farm has a small herd of cows, bulls, oxen, and calves, and two horses. Seasonal vegetables are grown on the farm, and there's a beekeeping program that yields 500 kg of honey each year. Wheat, peas, and buckwheat are processed into organic flour in a state-of-the art stone mill. Together with wheat purchased from other farms, the farm mill produces forty tons of high-quality organic flour each year, some of which is used by the Govinda's restaurants in Prague, and some of which is sold in shops that sell organic goods. Krishna's Court has a pilot homeschooling (*gurukula*) project, which has been running for five years, with parents and qualified teachers homeschooling twelve children. In the nearby town of Benesov, population 30,000, Govinda's Restaurant offers *bhāgavata-prasādam* to hundreds of guests each week.

* * *

Moravian ISKCON centers (about seventy initiated devotees and more than fifty congregation members)

Prabhupāda Bhavan
New Nandagram
Haridhāma Bhakti Yoga Center
Chakra Lutotin

Devotees from Prabhupāda Bhavan in Brno distributed 32,000 pieces of literature in 2016, more than doubling the number of books distributed by devotees from the Prague centers. Brno, the historic center of Moravia, is about two hundred kilometers east of Prague and has the most dynamic *brahmacārī āśrama* in the Czech Republic. Several devotees from Prabhupāda Bhavan also offer their support in the reconstruction and recultivation of a farm near Brno (the Gokula Project). In a few years this farm will become the first self-sufficient Vedic rural community in South Moravia. Five devotees from the Chakra Lutotin Center in Central Moravia distributed 197 pieces of literature in 2016, and eight devotees and congregational members of the Haridhāma Center in North Moravia distributed 280 pieces of literature.

New Nandagram is a large devotee community composed mainly of families with small children. It is situated in the village of Nove Sady ("New Orchards"), about fifty kilometers from Brno. The devotees produce seasonal vegetables and flowers and run a food processing company that produces and packages *bhāgavata-prasādam* in the form of vegetable crackers, dried soups, breads, etc. This *prasādam* is sold throughout the Czech Republic in health food shops and restaurants. The devotees are also planning to start a homeschooling project for their many small children. It is near this remote village that Lord Jagannātha, Lord Baladeva, and Śrīmatī Subhadrā Devī have chosen to have their forest residence, called New Nīlādri, although they travel to Prague once a year for their traditional royal parade.

* * *

Padayātrā—March for Peace

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa states in the *Bhagavad-gita* (5.29): "A person in full consciousness of Me, knowing Me to be the ultimate beneficiary of all sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Lord of all planets and



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demigods, and the benefactor and well-wisher of all living entities, attains peace from the pangs of material miseries.” The *padayātrā* uses this verse as a motto for its March for Peace, which has been going on in the Czech Republic for twenty-four years. The *padayātrā* is essentially a sacrifice meant to promote the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa in every town and village in the Czech Republic, and it is full of austerities performed for Kṛṣṇa. A bullock cart pulled by two oxen from Krishna’s Court farm, with the *arcā-vigrahas* of Gaura-Nitāi and Your Divine Grace on a decorated altar, travels from village to village, town to town, accompanied by up to sixty devotees singing in *nagara kīrtana*. The *padayātrā* devotees perform dramas for children and *bhajan*s, distribute books and *bhāgavata-prasādam*, and explain to villagers and townspeople the abovementioned “peace formula.” During the 2016 *padayātrā*, devotees from all the ISKCON centers in the Czech Republic distributed 2,000 pieces of literature in only two weeks.

* * *

Other projects

There are many other Kṛṣṇa conscious projects in the Czech Republic, most notably the annual Hare Krishna Camp, where hundreds of devotees spend a week of *kīrtana* and *bhajan*s, have the opportunity for *sādhū-sāṅga* with ISKCON *sannyāsīs* and gurus, and honor delicious *bhāgavata-prasādam*; the annual Prahlada Summer Camp for children at Simhachalam, in Germany, organized by parents and other devotees from the Narasimhadeva temple in nearby Bavaria; the Bharata Natyam dance school; and the quarterly publication of a *nāma-haṭṭa* magazine.

Also in 2016, we produced for your pleasure an audiobook in Czech for children from ages five to ninety-five called *Krishna Avatara*, with dramatized stories from your *Kṛṣṇa* book. It took us ten years to produce this audiobook, which has seven hours of listening time. Fifteen devotees, including children, performed in the dramatic readings. A famous actor agreed to narrate some of the stories. He had visited Vṛndāvana in 2003 while making a short documentary about India for Czech TV, and was blessed by Kṛṣṇa to participate in our project. *Krishna Avatara* is beautifully illustrated, and the dramatic readings are accompanied by devotional songs sung in Czech, traditional *bhajan*s, and an original score. It is available in bookstores throughout the Czech Republic, and can be downloaded on smartphones.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please continue to shower your mercy on the devotees of Kṛṣṇa in the Czech Republic, including this wretched servant of yours. Please bless us—your children, sons, daughters, grandsons, granddaughters, great-grandsons and great-granddaughters—so that despite our shortcomings, imperfections, and failures, we will remain faithful servants in the mission of Lord Caitanya and thus derive the highest benefit of human life—going back home, back to Godhead.

Your servants in the Czech Republic.

(written by Jayagurudeva Dāsa)



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



Detroit

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

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

Our dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most respectful obeisances at your lotus feet. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for your countless gifts to humankind, especially the Ratha-yātrā festival.

To please you, throughout this year your ISKCON is celebrating its golden jubilee of the first Ratha-yātrā, held in San Francisco in July of 1967.

Your instructions to have a Ratha-yātrā festival in all the major cities of the world came with your blessings, and as a result, whoever has put sincere effort into holding a yearly Ratha-yātrā has had continued grand success. This proves that when we follow your instructions as our life and soul, success is guaranteed.

Every year the number of Ratha-yātrās around the world increases. In Michigan we now have three, by your blessings. In this way thousands of new people are introduced to Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a systematic way so that they can be connected to your message.

In the glorious history of your Devasadan Mandira, we started holding the Ratha-yātrā in the local streets. From this humble beginning, we gradually switched to the main downtown street, and then to the University of Michigan campus and Belle Isle. Now, under the guidance of the current team, for the past several years we have successfully held Ratha-yātrā in Novi. Every year the mayor and other city officials respectfully grace the event and take pleasure in the celebration. This year, for the first time, their Lordships Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā Devī were showered with rose petals. We pray at your lotus feet to give us the ability to continue our yearly Ratha-yātrā for your pleasure.

Your sublime gift of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—is becoming very attractive to more and more souls.

We are expending more and more effort so that everyone in Michigan is approached with your books and has the opportunity to receive them.

We are also continuing to expand the Detroit yātrā under the guidance of our GBC, Her Grace Mālātī Devī Dāsī, and His Grace Śrīnandanandana Dāsa.

O spiritual master of the universe, please bless us so we can dedicate ourselves wholly to your lotus feet and keep serving you and our most merciful Deities Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kuṅjabihārījī until our last breath. Please hold our hand tightly, because we have a tendency to run away from you.

Begging for forgiveness for our offenses to Vaiṣṇavas,

Your humble servants at the Devasadan Mandira, Detroit, Michigan, USA.

(written by Jagad-guru Dāsa)



HOMAGES FROM ISKCON CENTERS



East Hartford

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to your lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

You are the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead. You are the pure servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You are the pure servant of your Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and we at ISKCON East Hartford pray on this day that we may become your pure servants. We pray that all your servants throughout the world may become your pure representatives.

When we are pure we will be able to hear the instructions of Kṛṣṇa in our hearts. We will act as instruments for you and ultimately for Kṛṣṇa through the *paramparā*. We will follow your instructions in your books, letters, and classes, and also what you tell us within the core of our hearts.

When we are pure we will be able to experience Lord Kṛṣṇa's presence in His holy names:

A pure devotee knows that when he chants the transcendental name "Kṛṣṇa," Śrī Kṛṣṇa is present as transcendental sound. He therefore chants with full respect and veneration. [*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 2.11, purport]

When we become pure we will be able to see Kṛṣṇa in the pages of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

One should hear with rapt attention from the real person, and then he can at once realize the presence of Lord Kṛṣṇa in every page. The secret of knowing the *Bhāgavatam* is mentioned here. No one can give rapt attention who is not pure in mind. No one can be pure in mind who is not pure in action. No one can be pure in action who is not pure in eating, sleeping, fearing, and mating. But somehow or other if someone hears with rapt attention from the right person, at the very beginning one can assuredly see Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in person in the pages of the *Bhāgavatam*. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.44, purport]

To become pure is to give up following our senses, to give up following the dictations of our mind, to give up acting through false ego. To be pure means to always be thinking of you and how to please and serve you.

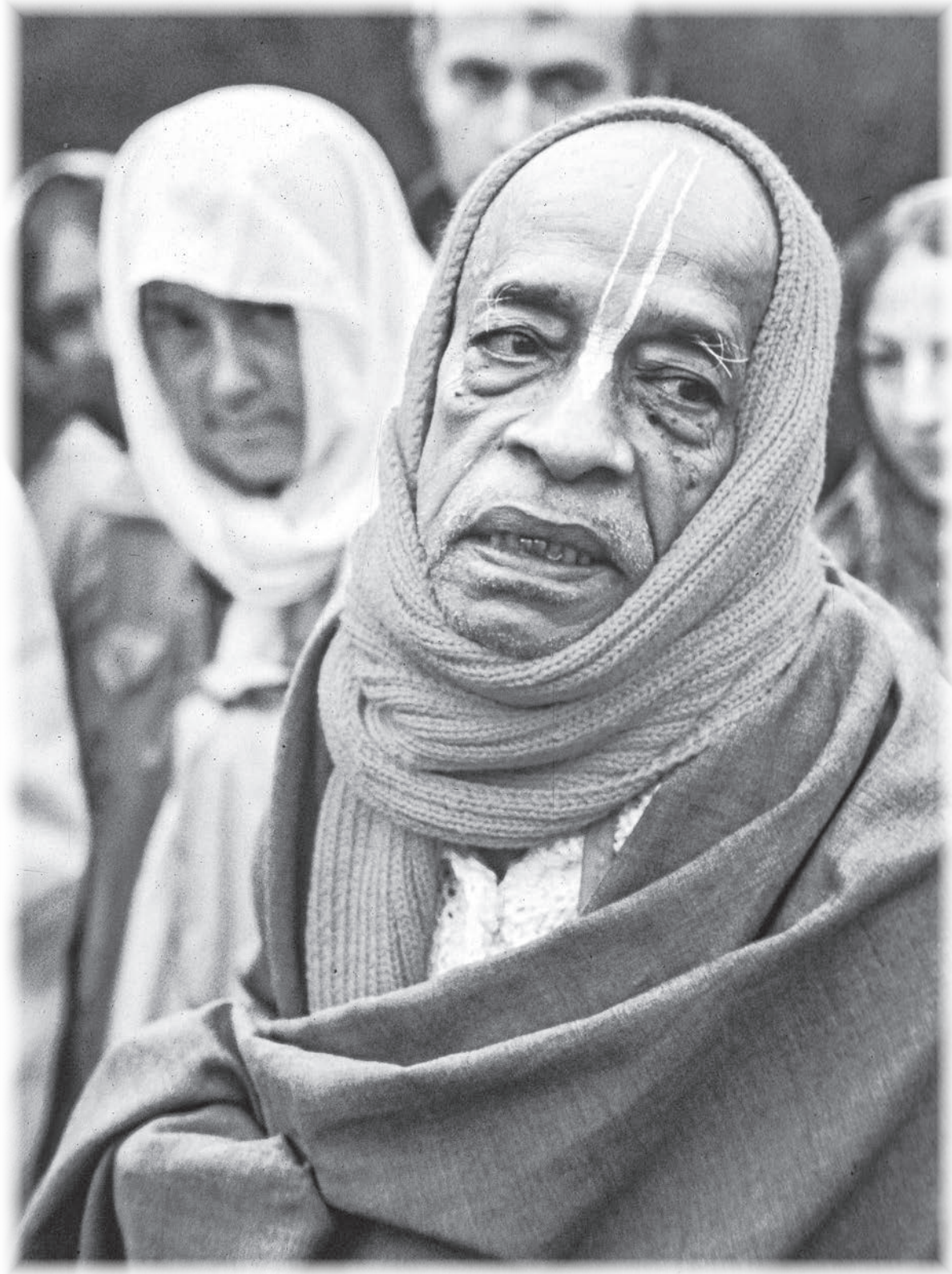
Śrīla Prabhupāda, we see from your life that you were always conscious of pleasing your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja. You were always conscious of serving him and always conscious of following his instructions. That is why you preached Kṛṣṇa consciousness outside India and all over the world. Only because you were a pure representative of your spiritual master were you successful in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness beyond even your own expectations. Even on your disappearance bed you showed us how you were selflessly absorbed in following the instructions of your Guru Mahārāja by translating *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* into English for the welfare of the whole world.

The secret to spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness is to be pure. You said, "Purity is the force." If we can give up acting through false ego and begin wholeheartedly hearing and following your instructions, we can, Kṛṣṇa willing, awaken Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the hearts of many conditioned souls. You were one person, one surrendered soul, one pure devotee, and you were able to change the direction of the world. If all your beloved followers became pure devotees, there would be no limit to how much Kṛṣṇa consciousness would spread all over the world, and so many souls would go back home, back to Godhead.

So on your Vyāsa-pūjā day, we, your disciples and granddisciples of ISKCON East Hartford, pray to you for the benediction of becoming your pure representatives so we can better help you spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your pure service, which has inspired us to make a sincere attempt at becoming pure ourselves.



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Your humble servants at ISKCON East Hartford, Connecticut, USA.

(written by Pyāri Mohan Dāsa and Jivānaṣadhi Devī Dāsī)

Gainesville

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

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

Delivering Lord Kṛṣṇa's Letters

Gandhi, fam'ly, industry,
then Jhansi, Delhi, poverty.
But when your life became unfettered,
you delivered Kṛṣṇa's letters.

As your guru had foretold,
you readied for the New York cold
by taking jacket, hat, and sweater,
sailing West with Kṛṣṇa's letters.

Doubtful if the West would hear,
you called yourself, at Boston pier,
“the most inconsequential beggar,”
carrying Lord Kṛṣṇa's letters.

Stranger in a strange new land,
how fearlessly you took command!,
yet always stayed your guru's debtor,
bade to carry Kṛṣṇa's letters.

Caring nothing for our past,
you didn't scrutinize our caste.
You simply changed our lives forever,
bringing us Lord Kṛṣṇa's letters.

“You're a soul,” Lord Kṛṣṇa writes,
“And I'm a person, not a light.
To serve Me makes your life much better.”
This we found in Kṛṣṇa's letters.



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“A human birth is rarely gained.
Love God, not dog, and chant His names.
Don’t come back as an Irish setter.”
This and more in Kṛṣṇa’s letters.

As our miseries all burned,
you only asked us in return
to help you circulate the treasures
carried in Lord Kṛṣṇa’s letters.

Surely we shall all be blessed,
delivering, at your request,
Lord Kṛṣṇa’s lasting gift of freedom,
Prabhupāda’s postal peons.

Your servants in Gainesville, Florida, USA.

(written by Kālakaṇṭha Dāsa)

Genova

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*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*

With deepest concentration I bow down flat at your lotus feet, knowing very well it is only by surrender to your lotus feet that one can achieve all spiritual perfections and attain the most elevated goal of life. Outside of the holy shelter of your lotus feet, everything is difficult and ultimately useless. As we sing daily, *yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*.

A so-called elevated devotee recently told me that all we need to do is desire strongly to love Kṛṣṇa, that we shouldn’t be afraid of desiring intimate relationships with Kṛṣṇa or his associates, and that we should go forward spontaneously without being afraid of anything. But Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda tells us in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (which you so mercifully gave us as *The Nectar of Devotion*) that any so-called *bhakti* that ignores the authorized *śāstra*, which emphasizes the absolute necessity for surrendering to and getting the mercy of a bona fide spiritual master, is only a disturbance in society.

I very happily pray to Kṛṣṇa that I may remain at your lotus feet birth after birth, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Generally we pray to the spiritual master to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but I pray to Śrī Kṛṣṇa to enable me to assist



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you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your service to Kṛṣṇa eternally. Śrīla Prabhupāda, serving you is my goal in life. At your lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I find everything I could possibly desire!

Here in Genova, Italy, Śrī Prabhupāda Dhāma, we humbly and strongly remain tight at your divine lotus feet. *Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!*

Your servants in Genova, Italy.

(written by Dayānidhi Dāsa)

Gītā-nāgarī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You sacrificed your life to bring us a mission and cause greater than ourselves. Every day, as we strive to carry out this great mandate, we are thankful for the compassion and wisdom you express in the voluminous writings you produced to guide us. Whenever material life throws us a curve or challenges our readiness to surrender to the cause of all causes, our beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, you stand ready to inspire and support us.

Some of our bodies are aging and deteriorating. Some of us are young and vibrant, with energy to spare for pushing on the struggle against Māyā-devī. All of us can count on you to “have our back.” If we cry out with sincerity, you are always there to shine a light on our path back home, back to Godhead. You are Kṛṣṇa’s representative, and we aspire to serve you to our greatest capacity.

To some of us you are father, to some grandfather, and to all of us our greatest friend and well-wisher. You have trained a generation of disciples, who have taken up the task of training another generation, who will train another, and in this way your legacy will be perpetuated throughout time. Please bless us that we may contribute to your grand gift of ISKCON as it gives refuge to the fallen conditioned souls.

You once said that we will show our genuine love for you by cooperating to maintain and expand ISKCON after you were gone. Sadly, the world is declining in values and morals day by day. Your message of hope based on developing love of Kṛṣṇa is a beacon for those who wish to be a positive force in the world. Exploitation and competition are the hallmarks of our present-day society, spreading fear and anxiety throughout the populace. Thank you for pointing a way out of this madness.

We who live in the Gītā-nāgarī community and serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara are most grateful for the opportunity to pursue our spiritual lives in the service of the devotees, the cows, and the land. We aspire to be content with a life of “simple living, high thinking.” You have provided us with the paradigm of a “village where the song of God is sung.” Please help us exemplify the teachings of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* so that all who visit your Gītā-nāgarī can be inspired to assist your revolutionary movement.

We are without qualification to pursue the lofty ideals you have laid out before us. Without your constant guidance and direction, we are lost in the quagmire of modern life. Therefore, we bow down to you and request your minute-by-minute blessings, which will carry us forward on the road to Kṛṣṇa.

Your aspiring servants in the Gītā-nāgarī farm community, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, USA.



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Hong Kong

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this most auspicious Vyāsa-pūjā day, I can find only one word to glorify Your Divine Grace—amazing. Every year at Gaura-Pūrṇimā, thousands of devotees and guests from countries all over the world visit Śrī Māyāpur *dhāma*. When I look at their joyful faces, I am amazed at how Your Divine Grace could inspire people of different nationalities, races, ages, and cultural backgrounds come together to glorify Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu with such harmony. At the beginning, when you first began the Māyāpur project, you stood in front of the window and wondered why no one was coming to Māyāpur. Now hundreds of thousands of people visit the holy *dhāma* every year during the Gaura-Pūrṇimā festivities. Isn't it amazing? I have no doubt that Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself has taken charge of everything and is fulfilling your grand plans for Māyāpur simply to honor His pure devotee.

Every time I read your purports in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, I am amazed at your rich spiritual knowledge and realization. I highly appreciate your valuable teachings, which enable us to understand Lord Kṛṣṇa through the eyes of the scriptures. There is no doubt that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu empowered you to write these books.

Another amazing achievement of Your Divine Grace is the China mission. Before you sent your beloved disciple Tamāl Krishna Goswami to China, there were no devotees there, although there were some in Hong Kong. Now, however, there are a few thousand devotees chanting the holy names all over China, even in the most remote areas.

I feel very proud of and amazed by your spiritual vision and your steady determination to make ISKCON successful. These qualities are rooted in your firm faith in and loyalty to your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. As per your teachings, there is no difference between the spiritual master's instructions and the spiritual master himself. In the physical absence of the spiritual master, his words of direction should be the pride of his disciples. It is your everlasting instructions that sustain us over time. You live forever by your divine instructions, and those who follow those instructions live with you forever.

Gāyatrī Devī Dāsī, a devotee from Hong Kong, recently visited Govardhana. She shares below some of her realizations from her visit:

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have a very dear and unique relationship with each and every member of ISKCON. Everyone regards you as his or her *śikṣā-guru*, and for some you are their *dīkṣā-guru* as well. We hope to develop a close and intimate relationship with you through listening to your lectures, reading your books, and watching footage of you. In this way we can better understand your teachings, and thus better understand you.

Recently, I came back from Vṛndāvana and Govardhana. I was very much inspired by Keśava Bhāratī Mahārāja. We joined him every day in reading the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. I realized that group reading and individual study are different, although both are beneficial. I found group reading more powerful, especially if there are some senior devotees to give us some reflections and enlightenment during the readings.

In wanting to keep this practice going, some of your followers in the Hong Kong *yātrā* aim to arrange group reading sessions each week. To begin with, we will read the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. In this way we pray to receive your mercy and blessings and those of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, the presiding Deities of Hong Kong. In addition, we pray to improve our *sādhana*, become more purified in heart, and more strictly follow your instruction to regularly read your books.

I pray to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to allow us to eternally serve you in your mission of expanding



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Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana* movement. As inspirational as your personal presence was, your writings speak of a deeper intimacy available by following your instructions. Please bless us that we can always follow in your footsteps and serve in your ISKCON Society.

Your insignificant servants in Hong Kong.

(written by Citra-vilāsini Devī Dāsī)

Ilāvṛta-deśa

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

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Writing a Vyāsa-pūjā homage for you appears to be simultaneously the easiest and the heaviest task. It is easy because writing to a grandfather does not require any special qualification. On the other hand, it is a heavy job when I try to glorify the person who plays the most important role in my life, even without a personal connection, and also when I know that with a thousand mouths I could not adequately describe your glories, pastimes, qualities, etc. Anyway, I will try my best to meditate on your wonderful personality and write, and logic tells me to choose the easy task and write to my dearest grandfather.

My dearest grandfather, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Thank you billions of times. You gave us yourself. You lived for us, tolerating unlimited disturbances to show us how to practice *bhakti-yoga*. Reading your wonderful pastimes in *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*, we deeply appreciate that your tolerance of so much travel, your wonderful management of your Society, your long-term vision for ISKCON, and so many other things. Who can sufficiently describe your glories?

My dearest grandfather, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Thank you for introducing us to the *mahā-mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. All the potency and sweetness of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava lie in the *mahā-mantra*.

My dearest grandfather, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Thank you for your deep meditation on and study of the past *ācāryas'* books and commentaries. You present all of them in your wonderful purports, and, surprisingly, there is no need to step out of your books. Simply by studying your purports, we get the best results.

My dearest grandfather, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Thank you for giving us the holy *dhāmas* of Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana, and for arranging the yearly



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Gaura-pūrṇimā festival in Māyāpur *dhāma*. We have spent the best days of our lives participating in the festival, going on the *navadvīpa-parikramā*, and associating with the other devotees there. Chanting and dancing at the twenty-four-hour *kīrtana* at the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir has changed our lives.

My dearest grandfather, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Thank you for engaging us in devotional service. Engaging in devotional service and meditating on how to do it have started us on the path to Godhead, even though we have so many material desires.

My dearest grandfather, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Thank you for everything. Who can describe the gifts you have given us? Certainly you are the most merciful grandfather in the three worlds. Thank you again and again.

Your aspiring servants in llāvṛta-deśa.

ISKCON of Silicon Valley

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our heartfelt obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet.

At *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.2 Śrīla Vyāsadeva writes, “[T]he highest truth is reality distinguished from illusion for the welfare of all.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, because you not only know this highest truth but also profusely and eloquently distribute it for the welfare of all, you are the perfect representative of Śrīla Vyāsadeva.

We have therefore humbly gathered before you today to glorify your transcendental qualities, one of which is your deep compassion and your profound ability to give mercy. Compassion is concern for the suffering and misfortune of others, while mercy is the expression of such compassion through one’s acts.

One absorbed in a material concept of life—a concept in which one identifies the eternal spiritual self with the temporary external body—thinks that mercy means to assist people (and sometimes animals) in making their material bodies more comfortable. However, because living entities are different from their material bodies, such help is misplaced.

In the *Gītā*, at 2.11, Lord Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna, who was prepared to abandon his spiritual duty out of concern for the material welfare of his relatives, “While speaking learned words, you are mourning for what is not worthy of grief. Those who are wise lament neither for the living nor for the dead.” This statement often offends those who consider the material body to be important. Transcendentalists, however, know that their bodies are important only insofar as they facilitate their spiritual advancement. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.10 states, “Life’s desires should never be directed toward sense gratification. One should desire only a healthy life, or self-preservation, since a human being is meant for inquiry about the Absolute Truth. Nothing else should be the goal of one’s works.”

In the *Gītā*, at 6.32, Kṛṣṇa opines that the best spiritual practitioner and giver of mercy is one who empathizes with the struggles of other living beings, but who also knows that the cause of their distress is forgetfulness of their relationship with God. Only such an enlightened person knows how to administer mercy. All the *bhakti* scriptures and the great masters of *bhakti* concur that mercy means reconnecting living beings with Kṛṣṇa, their real protector and maintainer. *Mahātmās*, great souls, teach people how to help themselves by taking shelter of Kṛṣṇa, who is the enjoyer and controller of everything and the best friend of every living entity.



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Because people are mostly ignorant of these truths, properly applied mercy is rare. In his magazine *The Harmonist*, in an article entitled, “The Fraud Behind Altruism,” Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura makes a clear distinction between flawed altruism and genuine altruism, which he elsewhere calls “non-malefic mercy”:

Welfare work is good, but has two defects: it directly or indirectly encourages godlessness and supports violence to animals and other living entities. Whatever attempts we make to help others while neglecting the Divinity are useless. . . .

Regarding supporting violence to animals, it is commonplace for humanitarians to provide animal flesh to the homeless and hungry. What’s more, in the name of science, presumably to help humans, researchers sometimes experiment on animals, causing them great pain and suffering.

People innately appreciate acts of compassion, and some try to express it as liberally as possible. In Fargo, North Dakota, a man risked his life to save a dog that was stranded in a frozen lake, and the story of his heroics went viral and evoked praise from people all over the world. A religious group in India meticulously teaches its followers to avoid stepping on or inhaling tiny insects for fear of harming them. Although these acts of worldly mercy are in one sense laudable, because they are done without full knowledge of the soul and its relationship with Kṛṣṇa, they are substandard.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you pointed out the flaws in such would-be altruism wherever you detected it. For example, in a response to a Ph.D. student who told you he was studying biology, you said, “Hmm, poor frogs.” In a story from your neighborhood in Calcutta, you tell of a boy who, against the orders of his parents and the family doctor, fed his cholera-stricken younger brother a *kichaurī* and thus nearly killed him. The older brother thought he was doing a good deed, you point out, but because of his ignorance he worsened an already bad situation.

On the other hand, your standard for mercy is holistic because it not only considers the welfare of every living being, including nonhumans, but also connects them to Kṛṣṇa. You’ve shown us and the rest of the world not only how to see every living being as part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, but also how one can practically help oneself as well as others to reach the goal of life by applying the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Your application of mercy, therefore, is of the highest standard, as Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta elaborates it in the *Harmonist*:

Śrī Caitanya-deva preached throughout the world for the welfare of all *jīvas*, yet the welfare work He proposed was not of the small-minded, paltry, stopgap, changeable, or imaginary, pie-in-the-sky type, like that envisaged by so-called social reformers and mundane philanthropists. The welfare work He proposed is of the highest caliber and neither temporary nor insignificant. The ways to uplift others—already invented, being invented, and about to be invented by ordinary human beings according to their narrow considerations—will in no way profit anyone, because they are all makeshift. Śrī Mahāprabhu revealed the actual means for elevating others:

vedyaṁ vāstavam atra vastu śivadaṁ tāpa-trayonmūlanam

Bhāgavata Purāṇa describes the actual subject of knowledge, which is auspicious and uproots the threefold miseries. (SB 1.1.2)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by studying your life and teachings, one discovers your unusually kindhearted penchant for distributing mercy. For example, you give this particularly dynamic definition of nonviolence, the foundation of mercy, in your purport to *Gītā* 13.8–12:

Nonviolence is generally taken to mean not killing or destroying the body, but actually nonviolence means not to put others into distress. People in general are trapped by ignorance in the material



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concept of life, and they perpetually suffer material pains. So unless one elevates people to spiritual knowledge, one is practicing violence. One should try his best to distribute real knowledge to the people, so that they may become enlightened and leave this material entanglement. That is nonviolence.

Most people consider nonviolence to mean restraining oneself from harming others. But because your heart is so saturated with compassion for all living entities, you consider that if one is not actively engaged in teaching Kṛṣṇa's message, he or she is acting violently! Elsewhere you've commented that violence means to stop the preaching of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Every day at ISKCON of Silicon Valley (ISV), we worship you by singing *Śrī Guru-vandanā*, in which we refer to you as *karuṇā-sindhu*, an "ocean of mercy." Because we continue to carefully examine your teachings and apply them, we can see for ourselves that this praise of you is not even slightly exaggerated. When we go out to distribute your books, for example, we directly observe how people's lives are improved by receiving, reading, and applying your teachings. You are bringing us, and the people of the world, a steady stream of mercy from the original ocean of mercy, Kṛṣṇa.

On this auspicious day of your appearance, all the devotees of ISV pray that we may continue to follow in your footsteps by actively distributing Kṛṣṇa's mercy to all living entities by distributing your transcendental books, *prasādam*, and Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy names.

We beg for a drop of your unlimited mercy so that we may be empowered to taste real compassion, and so that we may carry out these duties for your pleasure.

With ever-increasing gratitude,

Your servants at ISKCON of Silicon Valley, California, USA.

(written by Vaiṣeṣika Dāsa)

Laguna Beach

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances.

On this most auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, the devotees in Laguna Beach would like to take this opportunity to glorify you, to report our activities to you, and to ask for your blessings so that we can increase our service to you and your dear Lord Kṛṣṇa.

You are so glorious that even the holy *Vedas* are constantly singing your praises (*vede gāy jāhāra carito*), and here today we also desire to join in that chorus and glorify your spotless character, although we know that truly glorifying you means more than just an offering of words; we also need to dedicate every moment of our lives to following in your footsteps to the absolute best of our very limited capacity.

We would like to start by thanking you from the core of our hearts for having been so kind as to come to Laguna Beach personally in September of 1972 and July of 1975, in order to bless this city by your divine presence and also by speaking here.

One hundred and twenty-one years have passed since your divine appearance in this mortal world, and it's been almost forty years since you departed from our vision, but amazingly, even though so much



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time has passed since you departed, your ever-expanding family of followers continues to connect with you daily by following your teachings, and we (your followers here in Laguna Beach) have accepted as our life's work the task of passing those teachings on to others in this area.

Among your followers here, who are all dedicated to spreading your message, some few of us are your disciples, and we all feel extremely blessed to have had your direct association. We feel so deeply connected to you through remembering those transcendent moments when we were in your presence that they seem to exist for us in a place beyond time. This means that, in addition to passing on your teachings to the next generation, it has also become our most sacred duty (and great privilege), to pass on our remembrances of your association. It's our ardent hope that by our sharing our remembrances of you, the present and future generations of your followers will also be able to experience something of your divine personality.

We would like to let you know that the community here currently performs well over a thousand hours of wonderful service every month, doing everything from Deity worship to preaching, and that, inspired by your instructions, we have also started a farm in Escondido and begun growing produce and protecting cows. We've also started a satellite center in Long Beach—again, inspired by one of your instructions, namely that there should be ten temples in the greater Los Angeles area. In addition to these projects, the devotees here are doing so many other services, including book distribution, and we sincerely hope that each and every service performed by our community gives pleasure to Your Divine Grace.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you predicted that Laguna Beach would be the first Kṛṣṇa conscious town, and we have made fulfilling your prediction our life and soul. We are ready, willing, and hopefully able to be your instruments in making this a reality, and it's our hope and prayer to be engaged vitally in this service for the rest of our lives.

We have been taught to never ask for anything in return for our service, but we would nonetheless like to request you to make an exception to this rule, and please bless all of us with the opportunity to serve you more, and also please bless us with guidance and inspiration, so that we may serve you better.

Your eternal servants,

The devotees of ISKCON Laguna Beach, California, USA.

(written by Kṣudhi Dāsa)

Leon

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble and deep obeisances at your lotus feet.

Your servants here in Leon, Mexico, fervently desire to shout out your unlimited glories so that everyone can perceive at least a particle of them.

You are so pure and great that literally every aspect of your life is divine and directed toward the unalloyed service of your most beloved Lord and master, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

You are a perfect example of what it means to be a loyal and surrendered disciple. You risked literally everything to fulfill the order of your beloved spiritual master and the previous *ācāryas*, and thus you saved us. We'll never be able to repay even a particle of our debt to you for what you've done for us.

By your daily life you proved beyond a doubt that serving the Supreme Lord is the most blissful



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activity one could aspire for at any time, in any place, and under any circumstances.

You created an incredible Society, where one can obtain everything needed to lead a virtuous and happy life as one progresses toward the ultimate goal of existence, pure love for Kṛṣṇa. By your grace we have realized that there's no need to go anywhere else. Although you always taught us to be respectful toward all people in general and Vaiṣṇavas in particular from all around the world, you strongly requested us to never leave your divine Society. We understand that this is the most important way we can show you real gratitude. How could we be so ungrateful to Your Divine Grace, who so magnanimously gave us the most valuable and matchless gift, and leave your Society?

Within the parameters of your unique Society there's room for everyone in the world, beyond any ethnic or material consideration. The only requirement is that one sincerely desire to approach the Supreme Lord Govinda and His loyal servitors. You always taught us this, and we want to serve you by inviting all kinds of people from around the world, respecting their cultures, traditions, dress, and everything that doesn't affect the deeper meaning of devotion and that makes people feel comfortable as they practice spiritual life. It has been predicted that your ISKCON movement will spiritually conquer the whole world.

Thank you! Thank you again and again. We fervently beg you to please give us the strength, sincerity, and intelligence to always, life after life, remain your insignificant but loyal soldiers under your matchless shelter.

We and the world really, really need you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

With love and gratitude,

Your servants in Leon, Mexico.

London (Kings Cross)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupada,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

What is the most important song one should sing at the time of death? And when I find myself in front of the Yamadūtas, a likely scenario, what prayers and action plan should I have?

So I thought I should write a song (sung to the tune of "Happy Talk").

Talk about the poor conditioned souls,
Suffering and struggling with their mind,
Talk about the devotee in the *saṅkīrtana* van,
Liberating all the souls he can find.

Chorus:
Hare Kṛṣṇa is what we chant—
Spreading the rays of the benediction moon.
We got to follow Prabhupāda
With all the love we have,
And it's gonna be bliss for me and you!



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Old age has come, my hair has gone gray,
The future is bleak—what can I say?
My only saving grace, the only things I have,
Are these prayers to you, Jaya Prabhupāda!

When I'm at death's door, the Yamadūtas by my bed,
Accusations fly, it looks really bad.
Here's my last request, I just got one final thing to say:
Back off cause I'm with Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your devotees in Kings Cross, London, UK.

(written by Paraśurāma Dāsa)

London (Soho)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you and the inspiration you offer the entire world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, over the last year the devotees here in London have continued to serve you and your most beloved Lordships, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Londonīśvara, with all our hearts and determination.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, for the 50th anniversary year of your ISKCON we set a goal of at least fifty events to mark this occasion and to impress upon devotees the importance and potency of ISKCON, both locally and globally. By the hard efforts and diligence of Devakī Devī Dāśī, we managed to achieve this goal and truly set a shining example for the world by broadcasting your glories. In fact, this last year was an inspirationally surcharged year from start to finish, a year in which we truly made powerfully lasting decisions and took actions that will stabilize and strengthen the UK *yātrā* in general and the London temple in particular.

By your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have managed to increase book distribution, and in a way that is sustainable and relishable for all. We refurbished the temple's *pūjārī* department and Govinda's restaurant to a high standard suitable for your Central London temple. By the sincere efforts of Śyāmānanda Dāsa, we expanded our outreach into the Kent area, opened new centers, and started new preaching programs. *Harināmas* increased in quality and quantity, we hosted our first *padayātrā* program, and *prasādam* distribution continues to increase in quality and quantity. New *āśrama* residents joined and are seriously accepting responsibility, many devotees took first and second initiation, the newly refurbished Rādhā's Boutique is flourishing, and so much more, Śrīla Prabhupāda. In fact, by your mercy so many wonderful devotees are engaging in devotional service and making so much spiritual progress. You are truly the savior of the whole universe! Thank you!

This year, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we want to expand more and deepen the roots of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in London so the ISKCON tree will flourish here for many generations to come. We want to make ISKCON London a beacon not only for the global ISKCON Society but for society at large. We truly want to become exemplary in all our actions and activities so that the world around us starts to take ISKCON more seriously and we can begin to have more of an impact.



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The temple trustees, temple leaders council, department heads, and mentors want to all work cooperatively to please you and help fulfill your mission and the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, which is to spread the chanting of the holy names to every town and village by expanding the society of devotees. As it is said, “More devotees, happier devotees!”

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for everything you have done for us and for all the inspiration you continuously give us.

We pray to be atoms of dust at your lotus feet and to never leave your service in ISKCON.

The devotees at the ISKCON temple in the Soho section of London, UK.

(written by Jai Nitāi Dāsa)

London (South)

*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*

Your Divine Grace arrived in America fifty years ago on a cargo boat,
Leaving the comforts of Vṛndāvan to keep *dharma* afloat.
You explained to us that we are all spirit souls,
And that attainment of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* is the best of all spiritual goals.

A hundred and eight temples were established and the holy name was
chanted in every street,
Which for any human in Kali-yuga is an impossible feat.
In the materialistic West the seed of *bhakti* has been planted;
We have managed to honor this in the fifty hours that we chanted.

From the depths of India a miraculous movement has been born,
Something to glue lost pieces of *bhakti* which were torn.
This reached out to a temple of our own,
With *harināma* and *prasādam* we spread the seed that you have so tenderly sown.

Preaching and chanting were what you loved the best;
Through Saturday *saṅga* we guide our children in their spiritual quest.
We share our knowledge with those to whom Kṛṣṇa remains unknown;
By school visits and Sunday programs we spread what you have shown.



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Over fifty years have passed since this miracle took place.
We have renovated our temple, dedicated to Your Divine Grace.
Kṛṣṇa consciousness has spread from India to everywhere;
You have given us an opportunity for everyone to share.

As we pray and dedicate this poem to your lotus feet,
We hope not to have many births to repeat.
Holding our hand, take us across this ocean of misery
So that we can all experience *kṛṣṇa-prema* eternally.

Your servants in ISKCON of South London, UK.

(written by Mahima, aged 12)

Longdenville

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Even before 1970, when you gave your blessings to your beloved disciples Vaikuṇṭhanātha Dāsa and Śārāḍiyā Devī Dāsī to try to establish an ISKCON center in this twin-island republic of Trinidad & Tobago, you had been corresponding with some Hindu gentlemen here. Vaikuṇṭhanātha and Śārāḍiyā met these Hindu gentlemen, who had copies of the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Later, local devotees obtained typewritten letters from you to one of these Hindu gentlemen (Mr. Ramcharitar Rickhi), sent in 1963, that show your interest in the prospect of starting your great preaching mission in these humble islands. Those letters are in the Bhaktivedanta Archives now. Lord Kṛṣṇa, of course, eventually directed you to New York City instead, where the impact of your preaching was immeasurably greater than if you had come here, but you never lost interest in the potential you had seen for Kṛṣṇa consciousness to spread in these isles.

By your divine grace, the center in Trinidad & Tobago became one of the first ten ISKCON temples on the planet after you began the 26 Second Avenue center in Manhattan.

We are grateful and honored that you took such an interest in these tiny, insignificant islands in the Caribbean.

By your divine grace, we are still conducting *harināma saṅkīrtana* in major towns and villages all over the country.

By your divine grace, we have distributed and will continue to distribute thousands of your books.

By your divine grace, we are still organizing grand annual festivals such as Gaura Pūrṇimā, Janmāṣṭamī, Rādhāṣṭamī, Nṛsiṁha Caturdaśī, Gītā Jayanti, Rāmanavamī, Ratha-yātrā, etc., during which we distribute *prasādam* profusely.

Of course, we should not be satisfied until everyone here—Muslims, Christians, Hindus, atheists, agnostics, animals, birds, insects, aquatics, trees, etc., are touched with some aspect of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

By your divine grace, some of us may live to see the day when high court judges here wear Vaiṣṇava *tilaka*, as you desired they would. In the meantime, and to that end, we pray at the lotus feet of Their



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Lordships Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha that we may become more determined to distribute this message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the form of your books while endeavoring to improve the quality of our *japa*, *kīrtana*, and service mood, all the while following the four regulative principles, as you taught us.

Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda.
Respectfully submitted by

The devotees at the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha Mandir, ISKCON Longdenville, Trinidad & Tobago.

Malaga

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Here in our small temple in Churriana, Malaga, where you reside in the hearts of your devotees, we feel your vivid presence daily and appreciate from the innermost core of our hearts that you followed the order of your spiritual master and came to the West.

That journey was possible only for a liberated person such as yourself, a person who is one hundred percent Kṛṣṇa conscious and for whom there is neither past nor future but only an eternal present.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, we ask ourselves what would have happened to us and our lives without you. Without doubt we would have continued to be among the many people suffering in the burning desert of this material world. Without you, how could we have found the oasis that relieves one's spiritual thirst, the oasis of salvation, eternal life, light, and guidance? Through your books and by your example you act as the touchstone that the world needs to become happy.

One of our devotees once had to travel abroad, obliged by circumstance but unwilling to go. She didn't know that at her destination she would have the most important encounter of her life. Into her hands would fall a copy of a biography of a unique person, whose story would open her eyes to an extraordinary philosophy. This journey became the gold medal of the Olympic games of her life.

The unique person described in that biography was you, O most beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda. No one who reads your story can remain indifferent to you.

May you continue to change the hearts of those who are fortunate enough to come in contact with you and your movement.

All glories to Your Divine Grace.

Your grateful servants at Villa Varṣāṇā, Malaga, Spain.



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Manchester

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

We consider this day—the day commemorating your transcendental appearance in this world—the most important day of the year. Our good fortune is immeasurable. By dint of your appearance in this world, we have obtained the unparalleled opportunity to return back home, back to Godhead.

Your books are the basis by which we enter into devotional service. Your books guide us to embrace the chanting of the holy names, attend local ISKCON temple programs, and associate with your sincere followers. It is all an extraordinary miracle, especially when we consider how rare it is to get a human birth. There are unlimited miracles going on in this world, but you are the best of all miracles because you are giving every one of us the miracle of loving devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa!

To the people at large all over the world, the concept of God is either vague, distant, or intangible. Sometimes it is sentimental, philosophical, or completely incoherent. The mainstream religions try their best to inculcate the message of God into the hearts of the people. However, their efforts are seldom able to awaken unflinching faith in God in their hearts. Due to the influence of populism, mainstream religions try to convince the people that it is not necessary to be God conscious or God-centered in all aspects of their lives. This effort has brought further complexities and confusion, creating a vacuum to be filled by religious radicalism and the misinterpretation of mainstream religions. Thus religious radicals have seized this opportunity to further political aims by fostering separatist ideals and hatred in the name of God consciousness.

It is only through Your Divine Grace's teachings that we can actually distinguish "the woods from the trees." You have succinctly described all aspects of a God-centered life from all angles of vision, and your teachings have nurtured a depth of understanding by which we can defeat all other conceptions. You have provided a springboard or foundation from which we can explore the existence of God as inseparable from real human life. While through your teachings ISKCON respects the authenticity of mainstream religions, your teachings do provide a much wider, universal perspective on creation and eternal existence, a perspective that has never before existed outside India. The genius of your works is that they are easily understandable in modern times and provide illuminatingly clear spiritual direction in a time of dense darkness.

You have arranged for the hearts and minds of all kinds of people to be emancipated. For example, world leaders, intellectuals, humanitarians, environmentalists, egalitarians, and those following so many other "isms" can take advantage of your teachings so that they may see unity in the world's vast diversity under the shelter of God. You have elucidated the ultimate expression of individualism and freedom. We are indeed unlimitedly fortunate.

At ISKCON Manchester we continue to humbly try to build our vision in order to establish a *varṇāśrama* community, set on farming land, that can become self-sufficient over the next decade. Our desire is to create a place of worship that integrates farming, cow protection, health, community, and education, and which creates sustainable work opportunities for devotees—all in conjunction with engaging in relationships with well-wishers who can support our long-term plans to purchase land. We recognized the need for a larger base of trained devotees to facilitate sustainable growth, and we have set out our objectives below for the next twelve to eighteen months. These objectives are meant to increase our devotee congregation in a more structured manner:

1. Develop targeted outreach programs to grow the devotee congregation with serious devotees eager to make progress in spiritual life.



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2. Increase the number of active preachers from the current congregation.
3. Establish devotee groups into five categories and meet their training needs: beginners (for their first twelve months), intermediates, youth, aspiring, and initiated.
4. Proactively ensure that every member of the congregation is engaged in temple service.
5. Turn ISKCON Manchester into one of the centers of excellence for *prasādam* distribution by catering regularly through a variety of significant food distribution events and serving *prasādam* of the highest quality.

We pray for your kind mercy and blessings so we will be able to achieve the above objectives and progressively march toward a substantial ISKCON mission in Manchester.

To conclude our offering, we would like to draw on a verse from *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* that very nicely encapsulates your sacrifice in the service of your great spiritual master. In *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* 8.7, a chapter entitled “Lord Śiva Saves the Universe by Drinking Poison,” a great personality is defined as follows in text 44:

It is said that great personalities almost always accept voluntary suffering because of the suffering of people in general. This is considered the highest method of worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is present in everyone’s heart.

We can see that this verse describes your mood of selfless service: everything for Kṛṣṇa and nothing for yourself. You are the epitome of sacrifice in love and compassion. Your lifetime of sacrifice has created for everyone the opportunity to enter the kingdom of God within this lifetime. That is your eternal legacy, something for which we will always be eternally indebted to you and deeply grateful.

Your insignificant servants at ISKCON Manchester, UK.

Maple

*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*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this day it is so very important to reflect
How your arrival in 1896 had such a profound effect.

When we think of you, our hearts tremor with emotion;
You have brought into our lives the true aim of devotion.

We are living in times where the material world is getting tougher;
We are conditioned to think that this mundane world will give us pleasure.



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But you explained that our existence here is temporary;
Living in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a life more exemplary.

You gave us a spiritual universe in which we can all live;
Dovetailing activities for Kṛṣṇa makes everything more attractive.

While others listen to the top hits on radio stations,
You provide the nectar of *kīrtan* vibrations.

While others watch mindless television,
You give us the beauty of Deities to satiate our vision.

While others read novels of falsities and fiction,
You provide pages and pages of Vedic wisdom.

While others verily eat sin by consuming as gluttons,
Devotees are able to relish sumptuous *prasādam*.

While others blaspheme and spend time in *prajalpa*,
Vaiṣṇavas listen to *kṛṣṇa-kathā* and chant *japa*.

While others need to get drunk to celebrate holidays that have no meaning,
You introduced so many festivals to glorify the Lord that are so appealing.

You have given something so immeasurably valuable to society;
You have compassionately revealed what is the real purpose of humanity.

You wanted to save us from the cycle of 8,400,000 species of life,
Pulling us out of the sludge of suffering and strife.

You have gifted us the essence of realization—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*;
You have kept us engaged through *harināma-saṅkīrtana*.

Everyone is in a rat race, working 24/7, but to what end?
Simple living and high thinking is what you recommend.

People are realizing that they are not getting satisfaction;
They want to find answers, and those are available in your ISKCON.

Because of you there is the possibility of taking advantage of this real knowledge;
Lord Caitanya's message is now available in every country, town and village.

Many are seeking fame and recognition,
Not realizing they are really unknown beyond the realm of their own notion.

Some are trying to impress and be VIPs and chiefs,
But like innumerable grains of sand, they will soon blow away like fallen leaves.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you always knew what to say and how to answer,
Providing practical, balanced, Vedic instructions and candor.



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There should be no doubt
That your *vāṇī* holds ultimate clout.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is you who hold all devotees within ISKCON together;
Despite differences and disagreements, devotion to you remains at the center.

You are a pure devotee and have led by example,
Showing that being equipoised in dealings is fundamental.

You emphasized that in devotional service pleasing Kṛṣṇa should be the only motivation,
And that there is no benefit if material profit is one's aspiration.

All of your instructions are so very important;
As time passes by they should certainly not be forgotten.

Providing cures for our bodies is a doctor's goal,
But you provided true relief—medicine for our soul.

More and more devotees are learning of your glories
Through association, stories, and your transcendental diaries.

You are an absolutely pure and genuine guru;
You are the epitome of flawlessness and virtue.

Because of you, we are witnessing the growth of ISKCON;
All this is because you established a solid foundation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, "Your ever well-wisher" is what you would sign;
Bringing neophytes back to Godhead would absorb all your time.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you brought us the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa so sublime;
For everything you have done we cannot repay you, even lifetime after lifetime.

Please continue to shower your mercy upon us;
We wish to not waste this human life so precious.

Thank you, thank you, thank you!
Because of you we are some of the fortunate few.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your humble, faithful servants at the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara temple in Maple, Canada.

(written by Mīnākṣī Devī Dāśī)



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Mauritius

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet!

We are very much enthused to relate to you how things are going here at the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandira, ISKCON Vedic Farm, Bon Accueil, Mauritius. Since your visit to Mauritius in October 1975, this island country has never been the same. There have been so many changes that we don't know where to begin. We are definitely very much indebted to His Grace Śrīniketana Dāsa and His Grace Arjuna Dāsa, two spiritual sons of yours who are perfectly leading us toward achieving the goals you set for your devotees here. But like grandsons who are eager to sit on the lap of their grandfather and describe every detail, we are also so much indebted to you that we want to thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, from the very core of our hearts. The ISKCON you have given us as a legacy is a treasure house for hundreds of devotees here. You have disproved the English proverb "Out of sight, out of mind," because your books, with their invaluable purports, your lectures, your audio recordings, and your videos have worked miracles by making us feel your presence everywhere we go.

Recently there has been a rapid expansion in the number of preaching centers, and senior devotees have to distribute themselves around these centers to propagate the mission of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, leaving behind big responsibilities on the shoulders of newer devotees. But by your unlimited mercy the mercy of your direct disciples, the tasks are being carried out successfully, establishing the fact that ISKCON has only one backbone, and that is *you*, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Through the constant emphasis of visiting *sannyāsīs* and the temple presidents, every devotee here is very much attached to *you*, dear Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the epitome of *bhakti*. You have shown us how to see God, how to love Him, and how to serve him. You have made us realize that God is a person, the Supreme Person, and that He has unlimited names. You have taught us that Kṛṣṇa is His original and most powerful name, and that it attracts all devotees. Through your books you have taught us how to approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, through the disciplic succession, step by step. You have shown us that the Lord cannot be approached directly but that we must serve the servants of the servants of the servants of the Lord. In an age when everyone is crazily involved in the money-making business and engrossed in materialism, you have shown us the practicality and universality of the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and their importance in our day-to-day life. In an era when people have almost forgotten God, you have activated the thirst for the spiritual quest—so much so that people of all spheres are attracted to the genuine philosophy you presented in the most sublime yet simple way, with utmost scholarship. No other *ācārya* has presented the Vedic system of life to the outside world in such a scientific way, so that the whole world can embrace it with full confidence. At the same time, you never compromised the criteria for joining your spiritual movement. By strictly insisting that your followers adhere to the four regulative principles and chant a minimum of sixteen rounds, you won the hearts of genuine disciples and made the world realize that this movement you established is a real gem, available only to those who can pay the price by gradually developing real *bhakti* for Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, there are unlimited reasons to thank you for the causeless mercy you have bestowed on us. Nonetheless, what we are still beginners. In order to remain steady in our endeavor to return back to Godhead, we constantly need your mercy and attention. Please give us the courage to constantly increase our *sādhana* so that we are always protected from the influence of *māyā* and can progress toward our spiritual destination. Please bestow on us the power to tolerate the differences among devotees and work in cooperation, with utmost humility, for your pleasure, so that at the end, even if with our strongest efforts we lack the strength to reach the supreme goal, you will extend your merciful hand and haul us toward the supreme destination, which is our real home.

We beg to remain the faithful servants of ISKCON. All glories to your appearance day, Śrīla Prabhupāda!



HOMAGES FROM ISKCON CENTERS



Jaya Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma! Jaya Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandira.

Your servants at the ISKCON Vedic Farm in Bon Accueil, Mauritius .

(written by Viśvanātha Dāsa)

Mexico City

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this glorious day of your transcendental Vyāsa-pūjā, we consider ourselves extremely indebted to you for the many wonderful things you have taught us and shared with us. We feel you have helped us—your followers—improve our lives in every way, and that you have saved us from the terrible influence of the Age of Kali.

Thanks to your auspicious appearance in this world, there is hope for us and all of humanity—a chance to reach the highest and most sublime of goals and ideals to which living beings can aspire.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we long for the eternal refuge of your divine lotus feet. We yearn to be eternally engaged, by your mercy, in the transcendental loving service of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā–Madana-Gopāla. Filled with gratitude, we surrender our lives unto you; you can do with them whatever you consider appropriate.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your humble servants at the Śrī Śrī Rādhā–Madana-Gopāla Mandira, Mexico City, Mexico.

Miami

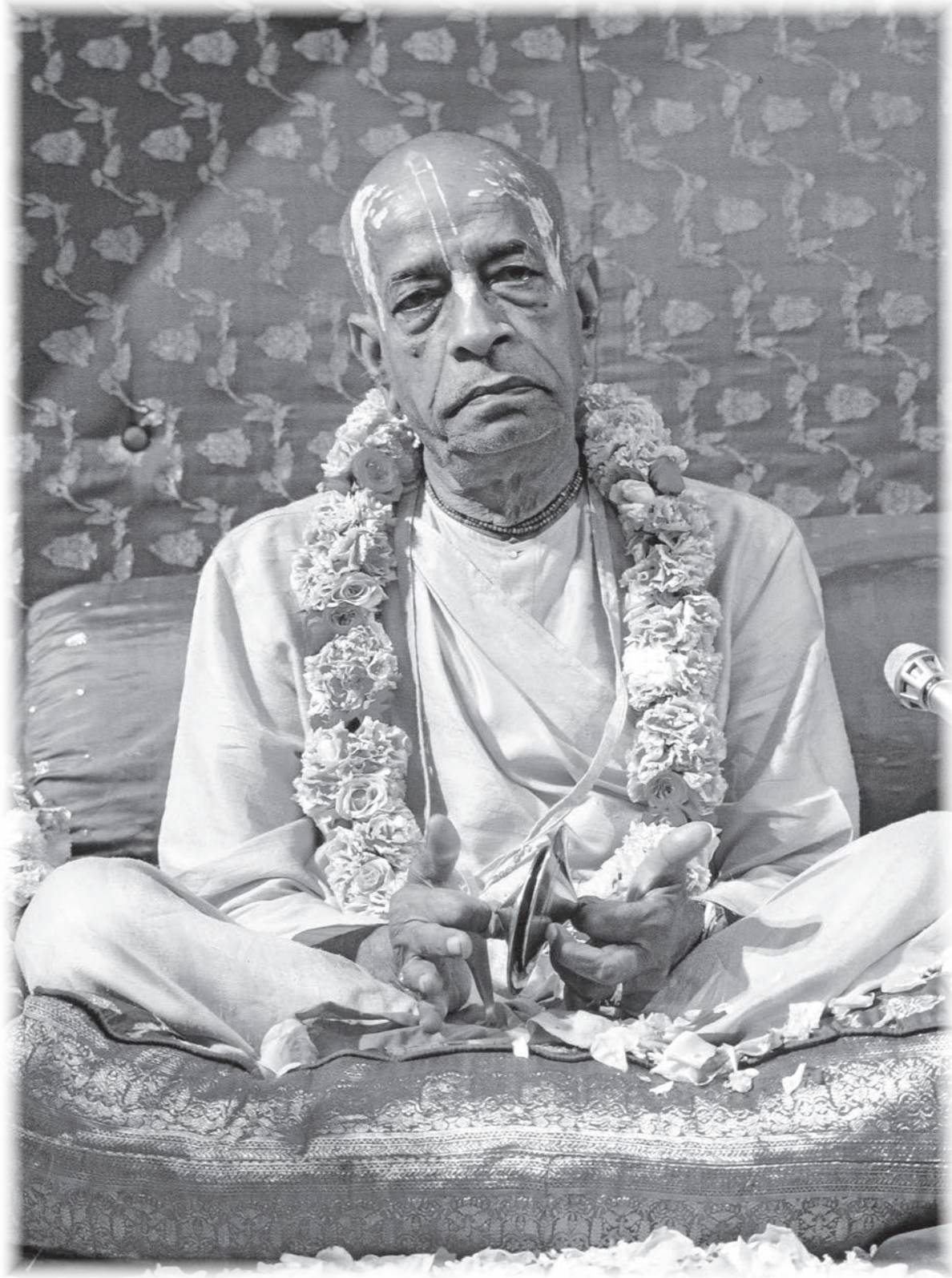
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

From the very day you established The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, you very much encouraged your disciples to study and teach the Vedic philosophy you had presented in your Bhaktivedanta Purports.



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In the founding documents of ISKCON, the first of the “Seven Purposes of ISKCON” is:

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.

As early as 1969 you were already encouraging your senior disciples to develop and institute regular examinations based on your books. Your plan was as follows:

Bhakti-śāstrī: *Bhagavad-gītā*, *The Nectar of Devotion*, *The Nectar of Instruction*, *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, *Arcanā-paddhati* (Deity worship), and *Easy Journey to Other Planets* and all the other small books available at the time.

Bhaktivaibhava: All of the above, plus the first six cantos of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Bhaktivedānta: All of the above, plus the second six cantos of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Bhakti-sārvabhauma: All of the above, plus the entire *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

You told us that before a devotee could be offered second initiation, he or she needed to pass the Bhakti-śāstrī exam. You wanted that your spiritual sons and daughters not only take the exam once and achieve a passing grade, but that they take it again every year in Māyāpur. In this way you wanted to ensure that at least the initiated members of ISKCON were well versed in *śāstra*. You saw this as vital because you were well aware that even some of your senior disciples were falling down due to an insufficient understanding of *śāstra*, and, at least in India, *brāhmaṇas* and *sannyāsīs* were often criticized for not being sufficiently knowledgeable of *śāstra*. You did not want ISKCON to be known in the world as another so-called spiritual movement with no real substance.

You were so optimistic about the idea that members of ISKCON should and could become learned in *śāstra* that in 1969 you proposed the following:

I want that all of my spiritual sons and daughters will inherit this title of Bhaktivedanta, so that the family transcendental diploma will continue through the generations. Those possessing the title of Bhaktivedanta will be allowed to initiate disciples. Maybe by 1975, all of my disciples will be allowed to initiate and increase the numbers of the generations. [Letter to Haṁsadūta, 3 January 1969]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, now we are in 2017, forty-eight years after you revealed your grand and optimistic desire. Although in ISKCON there have been various institutions established that teach Bhakti-śāstrī, we are still far away from the standard you desired. Therefore, we pray that you will bless us so that in ISKCON we will continue to strive to satisfy your desires and that we at ISKCON Miami will become an integral part of achieving that goal.

Your humble servants at ISKCON Miami, Florida, USA.



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Monterrey

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances.

On this day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, we want to thank you for everything you've done in our lives. Although we never met you in person, you've given us your legacy and teachings. Thanks to you, we've had the great fortune of finding a bona fide spiritual master who strictly follows your teachings, just as you wanted. Thanks to you, we can read all the books you translated as if they were letters written especially for each of us, with just the right instructions. Your books are marvelous. With each reading, we feel as if each word has entered our hearts and filled us with transcendental knowledge. Through your books you've taught us the absolute truth. You taught us how to execute devotional service to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and that this is the ultimate goal of our lives. Every time we perform devotional activities, we feel very happy.

We feel your presence every time we perform services like book distribution, *harināma*, and *prasādam* distribution. You are our main motivation for performing these activities, and because of you our lives have meaning. Every time we chant the *mahā-mantra*, we do it with love and we remember you, because without you we would have never had the great fortune of listening to and chanting those sweet names.

We are very grateful to you for transforming our lives. If it weren't for you, we don't know what would've become of us. We'd still be living in the deepest ignorance, without ever knowing of Lord Kṛṣṇa and devotional service. But you were like a ray of light for us. Please bless us so that we can continue to expand your movement and inspire more people to join it. In this way, more people will know about Kṛṣṇa, and the suffering in the world will decrease. We promise you we will make our biggest effort to make the preaching and your movement grow in Monterrey.

Your servants at ISKCON Monterrey, Mexico.

(written by Draupadī Devī Dāsī)

Montreal

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

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



HOMAGES FROM ISKCON CENTERS



O Śrīla Prabhupāda, we offer our respectful obeisances
unto your lotus feet on this most auspicious day of your appearance.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is very difficult to understand the mind of a pure devotee. Many try to go deep into their Kṛṣṇa consciousness while absorbed in the mood of Vṛndāvana; you, on the other hand, while residing in Vṛndāvana, were deeply immersed in meditating on the spiritual salvation of America.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, the American dream is simply a dream based on lust and greed, a dream of exploitation that can never make us happy. The soul's real hankering is for devotion to Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual realm, called Vaikuṇṭha.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, the time had come for the highest to come to the lowest. Only you could fulfill Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's prediction. America had to be pulled out of the hole it had dug for itself. The American dream was producing hippies, not happies. Who would do it? Who could do it? The world was waiting for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, you suffered that terrible boat ride, including a heart attack, armed only with a few *Bhāgavatams* and a typewriter. Lord Kṛṣṇa would certainly help with the lifting. Fully confident that you were authorized by the *paramparā*, you would speak about Lord Kṛṣṇa, and if the Americans would hear, their hearts would be changed.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, what an extreme act of loyalty, of compassion, the likes of which had rarely been seen in this world! Śrīla Prabhupāda, when we look back fifty years, it is as amazing now as it was then. For you, *impossible* was a word in a fool's dictionary.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, how could such unqualified souls pay attention to your message? That it did indeed resonate in our consciousness remains a mystery. We can only conclude that your sacrifice forced Lord Kṛṣṇa to recruit us and build a *saṅkīrtana* squad to spread His glories.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most auspicious day of your appearance, with tears in our eyes, full of gratitude, we beg to remain inspired by your words, loyal to your instructions, and dedicated to your mission.

Inspired and dedicated, we remain

Your servants at the ISKCON yātrā in Montreal, Canada.

(written by Lakṣmīnātha Dāsa)



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



Mumbai (Chowpatty)

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I have been listening to some of the classes you delivered on festival days like Janmāṣṭamī, Rāmanavamī, and Nṛsiṃha Caturdaśī. One thing that strikes me is that in all your festival classes you say something that is very relevant and uplifting to the audience. Today most devotees tend to tell a lot of pastimes in classes on festival days. But you were so concerned about convincing your audience to turn toward Kṛṣṇa that you would speak many philosophical points, even during festival classes. Mostly you would speak in Western countries, where the audience was culturally very different from Indian audiences. And so you would focus on some philosophical points to bring them closer to the Absolute Truth. That was more important to you than relating some pastimes of a personality they were likely unfamiliar with. You had a unique ability to present astute philosophical points in an appealing manner.

This quality of yours always strikes me—how you always chose to speak something that would challenge and uplift your audience, and how you were often quite revolutionary in what you said. You always spoke in ways that would draw your listeners closer to Kṛṣṇa—sometimes a single step closer, and sometimes, in rare cases, miles closer.

A *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verse always comes to mind when I think of your quality of always endeavoring to save the lost souls from the ocean of material existence:

*svayaṁ samuttīrya sudustaraṁ dyuman
bhavāṇṇavaṁ bhīmam adabhra-sauhṛdāḥ
bhavat-padāmbhoruha-nāvaṁ atra te
nidhāya yātāḥ sad-anugraho bhavān*

“O Lord, who resemble the shining sun, You are always ready to fulfill the desire of Your devotee, and therefore You are known as a desire tree [*vāñchā-kalpataru*]. When *ācāryas* completely take shelter under Your lotus feet in order to cross the fierce ocean of nescience, they leave behind on earth the method by which they cross, and because You are very merciful to Your other devotees, You accept this method to help them.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.2.31)

In the purport to this verse you write:

The duty of the guru is to find the means, according to the time, the circumstances, and the candidate, by which one can be induced to render devotional service, which Kṛṣṇa accepts from a candidate who wants to be successful in going back home, back to Godhead.

This line captures your mood perfectly, the mood of a guru trying to induce the confused conditioned souls to somehow or other render devotional service to the Lord, service that is accepted by Kṛṣṇa simply because it is rendered according to the guidelines of the compassionate *ācāryas*.

You further write in the purport:

The *ācārya* gives the suitable method for crossing the ocean of nescience by accepting the boat



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of the Lord's lotus feet, and if this method is strictly followed, the followers will ultimately reach the destination, by the grace of the Lord. This method is called *ācārya-sampradāya*.

You are one such great *ācārya* who has given the fallen souls of Kali-yuga "a suitable method for crossing the ocean of nescience." Every time I hear you speak, I am reminded of your compassionate concern for the upliftment of every single person on this planet and beyond.

The last line of the purport reads:

One must worship the lotus feet of the *ācārya* and live within the society of devotees. Then one's endeavor to cross over nescience will surely be successful.

We at ISKCON Chowpatty pray that we continue to worship your lotus feet and live within the society of devotees, considering each of them your representative. With this hope we will continue our meager efforts to serve your mission in the material world.

Your servants at ISKCON Chowpatty, Mumbai, India.

(written by Nanda Dulāl Dāsa)

Mumbai (Juhu)

Our dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

We are continuing to develop the guesthouse plot on the Talasari farm: the swimming-pool-cum-water-storage-tank is being completed, additional guestrooms on the first floor are being readied, and we are in the process of making an overhead water tank and a water heating system powered by solar panels. Kindly guide us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for the successful completion of the guesthouse at Talasari.

In addition to cow's milk, from your Talasari farm we are harvesting organic vegetables, fruits, and flowers for the Deities and devotees.

Under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project, we are able to help the Talasari neighborhood create bore wells and biogas plants.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we've completed the renovation work on the second-floor terrace in the old *gurukula* building. On the ground floor, work is progressing on a kitchen complex for Food for Life, a sweet stall, a bakery, and an extension for the Deity kitchen. In addition to building a rainwater harvest chamber, we've constructed a new ground-level water tank providing potable water.

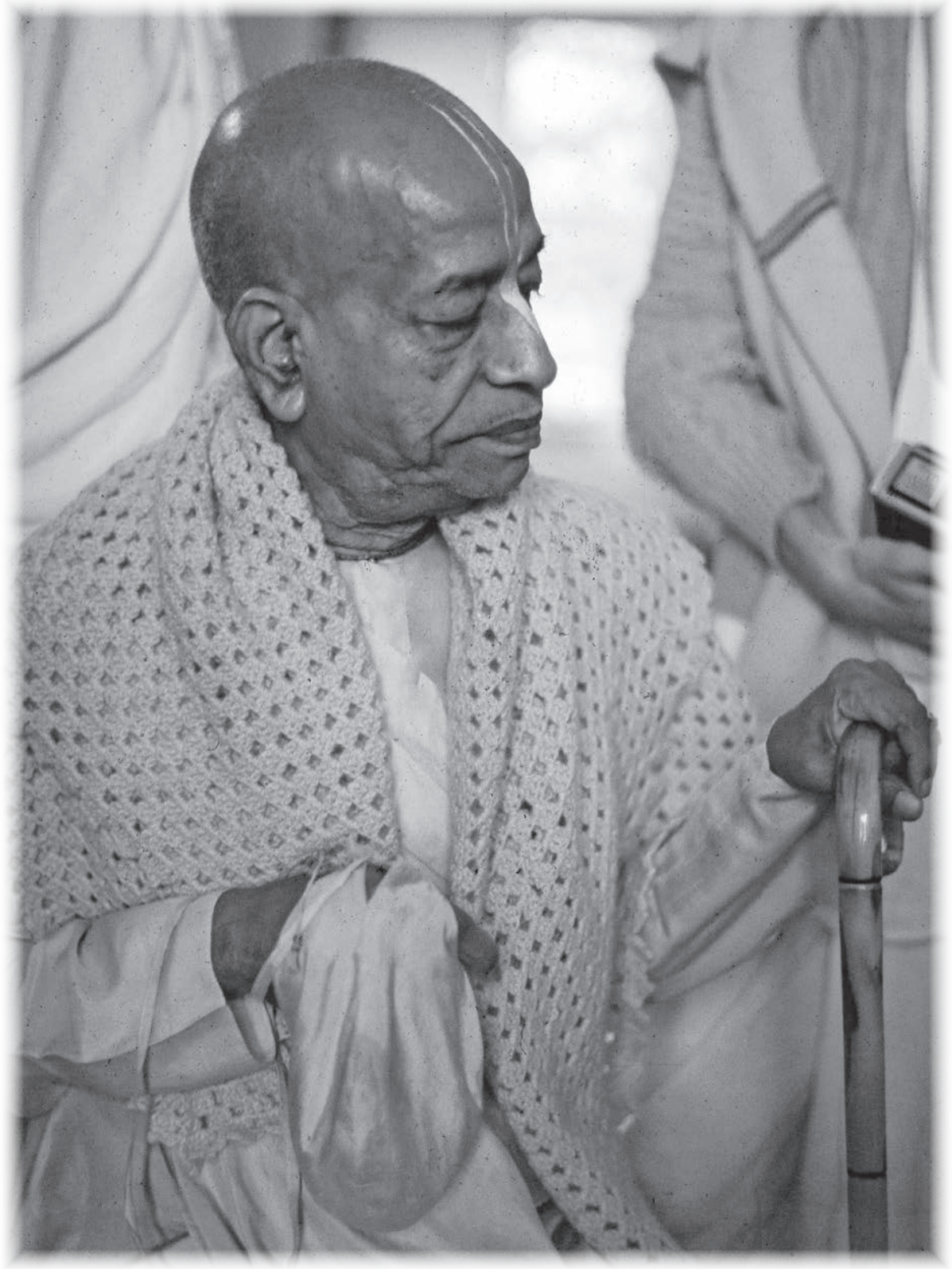
As renovation of the old *gurukula* nears completion, we plan to install solar panels on the elevated structure on its terrace. Please give us the intelligence to do it properly.

During the book distribution marathon in December 2016, we scored 391,925.50 book points, second highest in the world. The total includes 188,394 *mahā*-big books. Our total book score for all of 2016 was 521,318.75, third highest in the world. By your divine mercy, may we distribute more books for your pleasure.

By your divine grace we were able to settle the legal dispute with Ajmera, who relinquished his claims on your school plot at Oshiwara. Please give us the intelligence to properly use this property in the service



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of Their Lordships Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadra.

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

Your insignificant servants at ISKCON Juhu, Mumbai, India.

Mumbai (Mira Road)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

In his *Kalyāna Kalpataru*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes:

kali-kukkur-kadan jadi cāo (he)
kali-yuga-pāvana, kali-bhaya-nāśana,
śrī-śacī-nandana gāo (he)

“If you want to be rid of the menace of the doglike personality of Kali, then just sing the glories of the beautiful son of Mother Śacī (Śacī-nandana). He is the savior of the Kali-yuga (Kali-yuga-pāvana), and He is the destroyer of all fear caused by the age of quarrel (Kali-bhaya-nāśana).

Similarly, one should just sing the glories of Śrī Rajani De Nandana—the son of Śrī Rajani De—you, Śrīla Prabhupāda—for by giving us the *mahā-mantra* and your books you are purifying us and making us fearless and immune to the effects of Kali-yuga.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, just by taking your *darśana* we get the *darśana* of all the *sampradāya ācāryas*, namely Śrīpād Madhvācārya, Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya, Śrī Viṣṇu Svāmī, and Śrī Nimbārka Svāmī.

Since this year marks one thousand years since the appearance of Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya, let us see some similarities between you and him:

Awakened dormant love of Godhead in the hearts of many thousands
 Connected his followers to a bona fide disciplic succession
 Accomplished his spiritual master's mission
 Renounced everything to serve the Lord
 Yearned to bring everyone to the shelter of the Supreme Lord's lotus feet
 Authored divine books

Śrīla Prabhupāda, both you and Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya awakened love of Godhead in thousands of hearts by spreading Vaiṣṇavism and uprooting Māyāvāda philosophy.

Whoever came in contact with Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya got connected to the Śrī-sampradāya and to the bona fide disciplic succession of *ācāryas* therein. Similarly, whoever came in contact with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, got connected to the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya-sampradāya and to the bona fide disciplic succession of *acaryas* therein.

Both of you possessed the outstanding quality of deep compassion:

Śrī Goṣṭhīpūrṇa, one of Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya's gurus, was upset when Rāmānujācārya revealed the sacred eight-syllable mantra to everyone, although Goṣṭhīpūrṇa had warned him not to divulge it. Replying to his angry guru, Rāmānuja said:



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If my act of revealing the mantra saves the whole world from the horrendous clutches of karma, and for that act I am cast into hell, I have absolutely no objection.

From this we see the compassionate nature of Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya, who was ready to go to hell for the welfare of others.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are compassion personified, for you dedicated your every breath to spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, resting only a few hours every night to keep body and soul together. Indeed, you expressed compassion in all your activities. Out of compassion you left your peaceful life in Vṛndāvana and came to America. Out of compassion you wrote your books, battled the atheists and Māyāvādīs, and reprimanded your disciples. Out of compassion you tolerated no interference in the flow of Kṛṣṇa's mercy to the living entities. Because of your extraordinary compassion, Kṛṣṇa consciousness has taken hold in the West and throughout the world.

Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya fulfilled his guru Śrī Yāmunācārya's desires by delivering many discourses and thus spreading the message of pure devotional service throughout India. Secondly, he wrote the *Śrī-bhāṣya* commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtra*. Thirdly, by giving the name Parāśarabhaṭṭa to the son of his prominent disciple Kureśa, Rāmānuja urged him to write a *bhāṣya* (commentary) on the well-known *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma*. Śrīla Rāmānujācārya established the highest principles of Deity worship in Kanchipuram and Tirupati, and he made his headquarters at the Raṅganātha temple in Śrīraṅgam, with a focus on keeping the attention of all the devotees fixed on the worship and service of Śrī Raṅganāthaji.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you fulfilled Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's desires by writing more than sixty volumes of spiritual literature on the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, sleeping only a few hours a night. You founded the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT) in 1972 to produce your books. By 1976 more than fifty-five million 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. You established 108 temples on six continents, installing the Deity of the Lord 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 spanning 1970 and 1971. You inaugurated the Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā festival in major cities around the globe, in effect bringing the temple to the people.

Both of you renounced family life due to your wife's mistakes.

Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya's wife did not respect two of his gurus because of their low caste. She threw away Śrī Kāñcīpūrṇa's remnants, which Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya was eagerly awaiting. She also disrespected Śrī Mahāpūrṇa's wife with harsh words, leading Mahāpūrṇa to leave Rāmānuja's home. Thus being deprived of his guru's association, Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya decided to take *sannyāsa*.

Your wife, Śrīla Prabhupāda, was less devoted to spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness than you were, and her tea-drinking was another source of displeasure. When she traded your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* for some tea biscuits, you left your family, and later you took *sannyāsa*.

Both you and Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya respected everyone:

Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya was unwilling to walk up Tirupati Hill, regarding it as the holy body of Ādi-śeṣa, so out of respect he crawled up the hill. Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya was the first *ācārya* who took the revolutionary step of admitting Harijans into the temple of Thirunarayanapuram Melkote. Thus this extraordinary multifaceted genius recognized no caste distinctions for those on the path of God,

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you also respected all living beings, seeing them as parts and parcels of your beloved Lord Kṛṣṇa. You treated everyone you met with the utmost respect. Once a disciple caught a bug and asked you what he should do with it. You said, "Put him out the window." Once someone asked you if they could get rid of the cockroaches in the temple by spraying them. You replied, "No. The cockroaches are there because you are too lazy to clean. Instead of cleaning, you leave the place dirty and kill the cockroaches." Unless it was an extreme emergency, you didn't want to kill pests. Someone asked you, "Can we kill mosquitoes?" You replied, "If they are biting you, you can kill them, but otherwise you shouldn't."

Both you and Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya yearned to bring everyone to the shelter of Supreme Lord's lotus feet, although neither of you got any institutional support.



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Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya underwent an exile, traveling east and west between Melkote and Śrī Raṅgam, because the *chola* king who was ruling then was a devout Śaivite and wanted to convert everyone into Śaivaites. But he was unsuccessful due to the strong impact of Vaiṣṇavism propagated by Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya. So he tried to murder Rāmānuja. Here we see how Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya was not supported by the king and had to struggle. But this did not stop him.

The 1950s were difficult times for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You had to leave your League if Devotees building in Jhansi because the governor's wife insisted it be used for a ladies' club. With no place to stay and no real support, you left Jhansi, but you didn't abandon your plan for a worldwide association of devotees. After Jhansi you moved from place to place—from an *āśrama* in Delhi to different godbrothers' *maṭhas*. You lived the life of a mendicant, staying here and there for a week at a time in various temples or in the homes of wealthy, pious people who would receive you. Nobody was ready to give you substantial support. But this did not stop you.

The books by Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya are the *Vedānta-saṅgraha*, *Śrī Bhāṣya*, *Gītā-bhāṣya*, *Vedānta-dīpa*, *Vedānta-sāra*, *Śaraṇāgati Gāḍya*, *Śrīraṅga Gāḍya*, and *Śrīvaikuṇṭha Gāḍya Nitya-grantha*.

The books by Śrīla Prabhupāda are *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*; *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*; *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*; *The Nectar of Devotion*; *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*; *Easy Journey to Other Planets*; *Kṛṣṇa Consciousness: The Topmost Yoga System*; *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*; *Perfect Questions, Perfect Answers*; *Dialectical Spiritualism—A Vedic View of Western Philosophy*; *Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahūti*; *Transcendental Teachings of Prahāda Mahārāja*; *Teachings of Queen Kuntī*; *Kṛṣṇa, the Reservoir of Pleasure*; *The Science of Self-Realization*; *The Path of Perfection*; *Life Comes from Life*; *The Perfection of Yoga*; *Beyond Birth and Death*; *On the Way to Kṛṣṇa*; *Rāja-vidyā: The King of Knowledge*; *Elevation to Kṛṣṇa Consciousness*; and *Kṛṣṇa Consciousness: The Matchless Gift*.

As an offering for fifty golden years of ISKCON we have:

1) Started a devotee care leadership program, wherein fifty devotee care leaders have been nominated to take care of the devotees associated with ISKCON Mira Road.

2) Ratha-yātrās were conducted at Mira Road, Thane, Bhayender, Nallasopera, and other places.

3) 5 major events by NICE for ISKCON 50

1. 2,500 children appeared in the ISKCON 50 Śrīla Prabhupāda book review contest.

2. 5,000 children from different schools visited ISKCON Mira Road for Brahmotsavam.

3. Held summer camp at 50 places with turnover of 700 students.

4. 100 models were done by a total of 150 children. The theme of the exhibition was based on the 5 most powerful *bhakti* principles, which were instructed by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

5. 50 /50 campaign participated in by 50 NICE staff.

Other departments:

1. Food for Life done in schools every week.

2. Bhisma department has undertaken the task of cultivating life members.

3. Youth boys festival “Upasana” and youth girls festival “Sandesh” are attended by a good number of young boys and girls.

4. Seminars are conducted for students in colleges and schools.

5. Around 200 devotees are engaged in the Deity worship department, wherein special flower outfits are offered to the Deities on all 3 altars during all festivals.

5a. Deity kitchen: for the pleasure of the Deities, *bhoga* is offered 6 times a day with love and devotion.

5b. Special Vaiṣṇava Bhajans/Prayers, like *Śacī-sutāṣṭakam*, *Brahma-saṁhitā*, *Vrajarāja-sutāṣṭakam*, *Rādhikāṣṭakam*, and *Jagannāthāṣṭakam*, are offered every day before *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class, depending on the upcoming festival.



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5c. 12hr *kīrtana* every Ekādaśī.

6. For the 2016 Marathon, 30,000 books were distributed. Throughout the year, every day book stalls are put inside the temple to distribute books for the new visitors.

7. Govinda's Restaurant has been attracting a huge crowd every weekend.

8. An information center has been started to connect visitors to different programs.

We need your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for we are planning to start Bhaktivedanta College to scrutinizingly study your divine books.

Queen Kuntī prays at *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.8.42:

*tvayi me 'nanya-viṣayā matir madhu-pate 'sakṛt
ratim udvahatād addhā gaṅgevaugham udanvat*

“O Lord of Madhu, as the Ganges forever flows to the sea without hindrance, let my attraction be constantly drawn unto You without being diverted to anyone else.”

On this most auspicious day, please bless us so that we will be attracted to Lord Kṛṣṇa in the way Queen Kuntī prays for. Please be merciful to us and allow us to serve your mission without any personal interest. Bless us so that we can perfect our existence by becoming your servants and truly surrendering ourselves to your lotus feet.

Your servants at ISKCON's temple on Mira Road, Mumbai, India.

Nagpur

*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*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We, your grandsons and granddaughters at ISKCON Nagpur, have worked together this past year trying to please you and Lord Kṛṣṇa in many ways. It has not been without conflict, complications, and discomfort, but somehow or other, by your mercy, we have managed to stay united and serve together, actually achieving some results unprecedented in the history of ISKCON Nagpur.

On November 16, His Holiness Lokanāth Swami signed the agreement for the five acres of land for your new lotus temple. It will be a most spectacular and unique temple, both in terms of architecture and preaching facilities. It will be the highest lotus temple in the world, with a spire rising more than 130 feet, and the educational facilities will be amazing. We began construction on the first day of February this year and will not rest until it is completed, some five years from now.



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Many devotees here have already invested time, money, and energy into the construction of the lotus temple, and with your mercy all the Nagpur devotees, as well as all the other people of Nagpur, will have a part to play in establishing this great and beautiful institution for worship and education, an institution you so much wanted. It gives us immense inspiration and energy to know that you once put your lotus finger on a map and said, “At Nagpur there should be a big temple.” We feel very privileged to be involved in making your desire come true.

Last year we had the best December marathon ever in the history of ISKCON Nagpur. We distributed more than 20,000 *Bhagavad-gītās*, and everyone in our *yātrā* went out, even our children, who distributed many books during *harināmas*. Gauri, one of our young girls, repeatedly went out and presented *Bhagavad-gītā* to the locals here, and till today she attends all the street *harināmas* and distributes your books. In the next year-end marathon we will double this year’s score to try to please you even more.

Our youth preaching group is also doing very well, and a growing number of youth are being enrolled in ISKCON. We have two teams, one for college boys and one for local youngsters connected to the temple. We already feel the difference in the spiritual potency when all these enthusiastic youngsters chant and dance in ecstasy. Now we just need to keep things steady, and by your mercy we will keep growing.

Our congregational preaching is also going on stronger than ever. We have set up our preaching and care system, and by cooperation and education we are trying to increase our numbers as well as “boil the milk,” i.e., carefully train the devotees who have already joined. We have begun a special leadership program to ensure that our leaders are well situated and equipped to give all your new grandsons and -daughters the care and attention they need to stay committed to you and Kṛṣṇa for the rest of their lives.

Lately we have also been asked to expand our preaching activities to the nearby Bālaḥ temple at Betul, Madhya Pradesh. To that end we are looking for a way to begin the preaching at this very potent location, just a few hours’ drive from Nagpur. More than 100,000 people visit this temple every month, and so the scope for book distribution and preaching in Betul is immense. We pray for your mercy to make this happen.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, our biggest challenge is still sticking together as we serve your mission, and so we sincerely pray for your mercy so that we will have the purity, understanding, humility, and tolerance we need to continue striving together to serve you and the mission given to you by your Guru Mahārāja.

Hare Kṛṣṇa, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your grandsons and granddaughters at ISKCON Nagpur, India.

New Biharvan

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*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*



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Please accept our humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you and to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Baṅkebihārī, the presiding Deities of Boise.

Last year we celebrated the Golden Jubilee of your founding ISKCON in New York. It was celebrated worldwide, with mega events highlighting and glorifying your contributions to the world. In Boise we celebrated fifty years of ISKCON and thirty years of the ISKCON Boise temple by doubling the size of our temple from three thousand square feet to six thousand. In the new Krishna Cultural Center, we built the Bhaktivedanta Cultural Hall, the Kaliya Krishna Wishing Fountain, a Vedic library, and Tulasī Kuṅja.

Our celebration of ISKCON 50 was not a mega event by world standards—only a very small and insignificant contribution to the efforts to expand Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement—but it was a mega event for devotees in Boise, showing the power of Guru and Kṛṣṇa in overcoming all the stumbling blocks that Māyā-devī will put in front of us, even for this small effort.

A question we are often asked is how we were able to build this center. People of other faiths tried to do similar things and ran into stumbling blocks they could not overcome.

We found the answer in a letter you wrote to Kṛṣṇa Dāsa on September 9, 1972:

You mentioned that your pathway has become filled with stumbling blocks, but there are no stumbling blocks, I can kick out all those stumbling blocks immediately, provided you accept my guidance. With one stroke of my kick I can kick out all stumbling blocks.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we also stumbled over many stumbling blocks that at times appeared like mountains, but they all gradually disappeared like grains of sand in a storm. Looking back, we realize it was all due to your causeless mercy that the center was built.

At the start of the project, our next-door neighbor, Boise State University, chose to condemn (and thus automatically acquire) the very land the center was to be built upon. What bigger stumbling block could Māyā-devī place in our path? We miraculously stumbled onto the finest lawyer in the state, who helped us remove the block.

But Māyā was not going to give up. Soon after the construction started, the contractor was jailed and his assistant took over. Though he was a staunch Christian, Kṛṣṇa inspired us to make sure he had a daily dose of *mahā-prasādam*, which quickly melted his heart. As a result he went above the call of duty to finish the construction.

The center was built in an election year in the USA, one that was poisoned by political candidates with messages of hatred and discrimination against people of a different ethnicity and religion. As our lawyer told us, “There are plenty of high-level people in town who would love to see you go away.” This may have been true, but we saw no evidence of this attitude on our construction site.

From the architect and contractor all the way down to the hourly worker, all put their best into the project. The *mahā-prasādam* performed miracles. If the center is ever torn down, people will see the *mahā-mantra* scribbled on wood in the foundation, along with “Jesus,” *om* signs, and the Star of David. We asked our congregation’s children (and adults) to write the *mahā-mantra* on sections of the foundation. Soon the construction workers also got into the spirit and wrote the name of Jesus and the Star of David as well.

Insufficiency of funds always threatens to be a stumbling block for any project. But as you told us, wherever there is Lord Viṣṇu, there will also be Lakṣmī Devī. Almost everyone in the congregation contributed, many beyond their capacity. Donations came from all sectors of the Boise community. For example, the workers pledged their labor to build the Kaliya Krishna Fountain for free, as their contribution to the project!

The last possible stumbling block was the opening event itself. The devotees banded together as never before to pull off a spectacular weeklong event. Śrī Baṅkebihārī even put one family on a plane from Singapore to help us with the event—all paid for by his employer.

The event started with a fire sacrifice and a wonderful dance dedicated to Your Divine Grace, depicting your perilous journey to the USA and reminding us of your determination to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness despite all obstacles, how puny our obstacles were, and how we should never lose faith in Guru and Kṛṣṇa.



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We were amazed when Lt. Governor Brad Little agreed to open the center. The governor couldn't make it but wrote a glowing tribute for the work the temple has done. So did the president of Boise State University.

The Lieutenant Governor, along with Badrinārāyaṇ Swami and Hanumat-preṣaka Swami, performed the ribbon-cutting ceremony to the cheers of more than six hundred devotees and Boise citizens. The Lt. Governor was supposed to spend only fifteen minutes at the center, but he liked everything so much that he spent almost an hour. During the tour of the temple, he spent several minutes looking at your *mūrti* and listened intently as we described your contributions to the world. We presented him with a *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and a *Kṛṣṇa Art* book, both of which he deeply appreciated. He intended to taste just a little bit of *prasadam*, but liked it so much that he ended up eating everything on his plate and requested another full plate to take home for his wife. During the tour he misplaced the books. All of us forgot about them, but he didn't, and as he was leaving he asked about them and had us run off to find them, which we did and then returned them to him. He left the center in bliss, loaded with Śrī Baṅkebihārījī's grace and your mercy.

Everyone who attended the event received a copy of your condensed *Līlāmṛta* and a *Higher Taste*. The local newspaper, *The Idaho Statesman*, covered the event. Below are some excerpts from letters received from local dignitaries paying tribute to ISKCON.

The Governor of Idaho, Butch Otter, wrote:

The Kṛṣṇa Cultural Center has been a cultural hub and place of worship for 30 years. It is a place of unity for all Treasure Valley residents. . . . It showcases local and traditional Indian art and architecture, and is a great place for the public to experience and learn.

The Center has given thousands of free meals to local shelters, offering a helping hand to those in transition within the community. . . . The Center is a cultural jewel in the Treasure Valley that will be even more lustrous with this new expansion.

The mayor of Boise, Dave Bieter, while proclaiming the first day of the festival Krishna Cultural Center Day, wrote in the proclamation:

The Boise Hare Krishna Temple is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, which is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its founding in New York by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. . . . The Temple serves as a significant cultural resource for Boise by hosting school and university classes, organizing cultural festivals, conducting educational tours, and participating in interfaith programs.

And the president of Boise State University, Bob Kustra, wrote:

The Center has been a welcome neighbor, and I am pleased to see it continue to expand. . . . I have seen the Boise landscape evolve in numerous positive ways in my time here. There is no doubt that the Krishna Cultural Center has been a vital component in enriching the cultural heritage of this community and is a welcoming place for all.

Once again, as we think back, we realize that this all became possible because with one stroke of your kick you kicked out all the stumbling blocks. All the blocks turned into bouquets. All glories, all glories to Your Divine Grace!

It was out of extreme kindness that you, like a merciful grandfather, kicked out all the stumbling blocks even when we often fell short in accepting your guidance.

On this most auspicious Vyāsa-pūjā day, we request that you please kick out all the stumbling blocks in our hearts that have accumulated from time immemorial and that are keeping us away from pure service to Guru and Govinda.



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Your stumbling devotees in Boise, Idaho.

(written by Anantarūpa Dāsa)

New Delhi

*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*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

The *Gurv-aṣṭaka* says that we should offer obeisances and glorification to the spiritual master three times a day. In fact, we should do so at every moment, considering the causeless mercy you have showered on all the hopeless conditioned souls of Kali-yuga. But Vyāsa-pūjā is a special day to express our deepest gratitude by glorifying you (your divine pastimes, qualities, etc.), submitting a report of the services we rendered the previous year as an offering unto you, and begging for your mercy and empowerment so we can offer even more committed services at your lotus feet in the coming year. The more we think of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the more we realize how great you are and how small we are.

We feel as Arjuna did when prayed to Lord Kṛṣṇa after having a vision of the universal form. His prayers are recorded at *Bhagavad-gītā* 11.40–42:

*namaḥ purastād atha prṣṭhas te
namo 'stu te sarvata eva sarva
ananta-vīryāmita-vikramas tvam
sarvaṁ samāpnoṣi tato 'si sarvaḥ*

“Obeisances to You from the front, from behind, and from all sides! O unbounded power, You are the master of limitless might! You are all-pervading, and thus You are everything!”

*sakheti matvā prasabham yad uktam
he kṛṣṇa he yādava he sakheti
ajānatā mahimānam tavedam
mayā pramāḍāt praṇayena vāpi*

*yac cāvahāsārtham asat-kṛto 'si
vihāra-śayyāsana-bhojaneṣu
eko 'tha vāpy acyuta tat-samakṣam
tat kṣāmaye tvām aham aprameyam*



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“Thinking of You as my friend, I have rashly addressed You ‘O Kṛṣṇa,’ ‘O Yādava,’ ‘O my friend,’ not knowing Your glories. Please forgive whatever I may have done in madness or in love. I have dishonored You many times, jesting as we relaxed, lay on the same bed, or sat or ate together, sometimes alone and sometimes in front of many friends. O infallible one, please excuse me for all those offenses.”

Just as Arjuna begged forgiveness from Kṛṣṇa for perhaps offending Him, we also beg your pardon for any offenses we may have committed in our meager attempts to follow your teachings and serve you. In the future, also, we may unknowingly commit many offenses due to our conditioning. Please forgive us and allow us to continue serving you. You built a house for the whole world to live in. Quite undeservedly, many of us stay here, realizing we are totally dependent on your mercy. Kindly empower us so that we may act as your instruments in reducing the burden of sinful activities on this planet, especially in India’s capital, and not become burdens on this society.

Beginning in 2015, we began celebrating a series of fiftieth anniversaries. In 2015 we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of your departure from India to the West, and then last year we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of your establishing ISKCON. This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of your celebrating ISKCON’s first-ever Śrī Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā in San Francisco. All three anniversaries, in fact, are of great importance to ISKCON devotees all over the globe.

Regarding the Golden Jubilee of Ratha-yātrā in ISKCON, because of your efforts, every year the Lord of the Universe comes out of His temple and bestows His causeless mercy on millions of celebrants and onlookers across the globe. Thus it is you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, Lord Jagannātha’s true representative, who have manifested His presence in every major city of the world. We can see that you, through your international society, have truly served Jagannātha by inspiring your followers to stage His Ratha-yātrā every year in all the major cities of the world, including Delhi.

We’re writing this humble offering in one of the places in India where you struggled to establish this preaching movement—Delhi. It was to this city that you traveled from the holy land of Vṛndāvana in a third-class Indian Railway coach in order to print your *Back to Godhead* magazines and the three volumes of the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. And it was on the streets of this city where you personally went to distribute them. It was here that sunstroke and being gored by a cow couldn’t diminish your transcendental enthusiasm. And it is here that your efforts have resulted in hundreds of thousands of your books being distributed every year!

As residents of Delhi, we understand we have so much responsibility—to distribute your books to one and all, to secure all your pastime places in the city, and to reach out to the influential class of society, which you so ardently wanted us to cultivate. The places in Delhi where you performed wonderful pastimes are legendary in the *saṅkīrtana* movement and in ISKCON as a whole, and are verily the heritage properties of your ISKCON. By your mercy, over the past year the devotees at ISKCON Delhi distributed over half a million copies of your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and many thousands of small books!

Before the Deities we read out the achievements of 2016, which we were able to accomplish only by your causeless mercy. His Holiness Gopāl Krishna Mahārāja was emphasized that all these achievements had been made possible due to your mercy. You are the real preacher, and you continue to preach all over Delhi and beyond. We have ever-increasing numbers of devotees joining as resident *brahmacārīs*, and there are many BACEs established, centers opened, Ashraya, Bhakti Vriksha and Nama Hatta groups active, and more are always being newly formed. All the wonderful festivals put on here, when all the Delhi devotees congregate at the temple of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Pārtha-sārathi, are but testimonies to your spirit of sacrifice and surrender.

Just as Rukmiṇī Devī was attracted to Lord Kṛṣṇa not by seeing Him but just by hearing His glories from Nārada Muni, so, aside from a few elders who are your direct disciples, we are attracted to you because of having heard your glories from those who’ve served you and seen you personally. As you explain in your books, the Lord sometimes empowers His devotees to display pastimes that appear even more magnificent than His. Unlike Kṛṣṇa’s unmanifest pastimes, which only the most advanced liberated devotees can participate in and experience, your pastimes are fully manifest to all, and everyone can participate in them, from a neophyte devotee up to your foremost disciples. This is your causeless mercy!



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This year the world is celebrating one thousand years since the appearance of Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya. You glorified Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya many times in your books and teachings. You once said that Lord Caitanya refrained from preaching throughout the globe so that you could do it. Just as Lord Caitanya laid the groundwork for your worldwide preaching mission and made you His *senāpati-bhakta*, so Śrīpād Rāmānujācārya and all the other great *ācāryas* also helped lay the groundwork for your preaching pastimes. You completed their work!

There is so much to write about you and your pastimes, since your glories are unlimited. Please bless us so that we may continue to serve you under all circumstances. The more we become conscious of you, i.e., “Prabhupāda conscious,” the more we’ll become Kṛṣṇa conscious.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we pray that your glories and teachings will be taken more seriously by all as the days pass by, and that we may become better instruments in your mission to propagate your teachings and please Their Lordships.

We beg that, just as you entered into the heart of Western materialism, New York City, emancipated the hippies, making them into happies, and worked tirelessly to deliver the Westerners from impersonalism and voidism, kindly, if you so desire, enter our hearts, which resemble the hippies in terms of our *anarthas*, and extinguish any vestiges of impersonalism and voidism. Please fill our hearts with pure loving devotional service unto Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and inspire us to always act as your humble instruments in pushing on Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement.

Śrīla Prabhupāda-*kī jaya!*

All your servants at your Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Pārtha-sārathi Mandir, ISKCON New Delhi, India.

(written by Mohanarūpa Dāsa)

New Dvārakā

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Since you are the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, it is naturally understood that in the most profound and meaningful sense you founded all ISKCON temples, centers, communities, and projects. However, this understanding is particularly applicable to the temples you personally opened, such as ISKCON New Dvārakā.

Not only did you personally open this center, you returned here many times, and stayed here for long periods of time.

Your personal quarters are preserved as they were when you last visited. Your BBT is still located in this community. These and other factors contribute to your presence being very keenly felt here on a daily basis. One such contributing factor is the focused attempt of New Dvārakā’s managers to keep you in the center of this community and to follow your instructions and guidance as closely as possible.

In a letter to Kīrtirāja Prabhu you stressed the importance of distributing your books:

I thank you very much for taking so seriously to helping me fulfill the order of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati to distribute Krishna consciousness literature to the whole world masses. What strength our Movement has now got is due in large part to the enthusiasm we have had to distribute our



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literatures profusely throughout the world. I have got very, very encouraging reports how my books are being distributed vigorously in San Francisco and Los Angeles. [Letter to Kīrtirāja Dāsa, 2 January 1972]

New Dvārakā's managers continually strive to improve and increase the distribution of your books for your pleasure. Their efforts result in New Dvārakā remaining at the top of book distribution in North America and near the top worldwide.

You made numerous statements as to why you established temples and what these temples are meant to accomplish. For example, in a *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* lecture here in New Dvārakā you said:

The whole world is moving in different qualities. Therefore the quality of goodness, that has to be acquired in human form of life. This temple is meant for the persons who are in the quality of goodness, those who are after the essence of the world—*paramahansa*. And this our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is also meant for the *paramahansas*. Not for the crowlike men but swanslike men, those who are white swans, trying to live in a very nice place, clear water, nice tree, nice fruits. [Class on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.1.19, Los Angeles, 15 January 1970]

New Dvārakā's property manager and his assistants work very hard to maintain this type of atmosphere for your pleasure.

In another *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* lecture, in New York, you said:

So this temple, we are inviting everyone to live here, to live with us, and practice *tapasya*. Then your life will be advanced. Then you'll understand what is your constitutional position; what is God, or Kṛṣṇa; what is your relationship with Him; what is the aim of life; how to execute it; how to make life successful. These things are taught here. This is called *tapasya*. And in the *Vedas* it is said that those who are executing the regulative life of *tapasya*, they are *brāhmaṇas*. [Class on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.1.11, New York, 25 July 1971]

New Dvārakā's managers set a wonderful personal example of attending the temple programs and following the principles of *bhakti-yoga*, and they encourage all of the community's residents to do likewise.

You designated New Dvārakā as your Western World Headquarters, and you wanted the standard of Deity worship here to be very high—a standard that other temples would want to emulate. You said:

Therefore, for the common man, this chance is given. This temple is meant for that purpose, that people will come, see the Deity. The Deity is Kṛṣṇa. Don't think otherwise. Kṛṣṇa has agreed to be dressed by you. [Class on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.25.26, Bombay, 26 November 1974]

New Dvārakā is blessed to have a team of well-trained, devoted *pūjārīs* who maintain a very high standard of worship of Śrī-Śrī Rukmiṇī-Dvārakādhīśa, Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, and Śrī Śrī Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā. The *pūjārīs* consistently dress the Deities in such a way that many are attracted to take Their *darśana*, both in person and via the internet.

Ultimately, you established this temple to deliver the message and mercy of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In a speech in Māyāpur you said:

That is the greatest achievement in this movement, that everyone forgets the bodily conception of life. Nobody thinks here as "European," "American," "Indian," "Hindu," "Muslim," "Christian." They forget all these designations, and simply they are ecstatic in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. So kindly what you have begun, do not break it. Continue it very jubilantly. And Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the master of Māyāpur, He will be very much pleased upon you, and ultimately you will go back to home, back to Godhead. [Address, Māyāpur, 15 January 1976]



HOMAGES FROM ISKCON CENTERS



By following your directives and engaging enthusiastically in book distribution, *prasādam* distribution, and distribution of the holy names through regular street chanting, the New Dvārakā community attracts people from a wide variety of racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds.

We beg for your continued mercy so that we may all achieve the ultimate destination.

Your servants in New Dvārakā, ISKCON's devotee community in Los Angeles, California, USA.

(written by Arcita Dāsa)

New Gokula (Australia)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

We few devotees of the Hunter Valley Yātrā are sincerely trying to hold on to the lamplight of your precious instructions, which are given in your books and recorded lectures, as well as by the bona fide spiritual master, your representative.

We can say we are definitely perceiving a glimpse of the gentle rain of your mercy in many ways.

By the mercy of Their Lordships, several talented devotees have committed to our *yātrā* in recent years, bringing new, enthusiastic energy to rebuild the vision of farm preaching in this region of Australia.

Most significantly, in the nearby city of Newcastle devotees have established a very promising facility where conditioned souls are eagerly receiving *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*, hearing the Lord's holy names, and gradually being attracted to your Kṛṣṇa conscious ISKCON family. His Holiness Rāmāi Swami domiciles on The Bhakti Tree grounds in between preaching engagements. His presence adds a wealth of wisdom and experience to the *yātrā*.

At the New Gokula Farm, devotees enjoy the simple routine you prescribed: rising early for worship and *sādhana*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class, and *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* (replete with *garam dhud*). In one statement about Kṛṣṇa conscious rural life, you explained that although the farm regimen may be a little difficult in the beginning, devotees would inevitably find farm life more convenient than city life for executing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. To enjoy the benefits of rural life, however, you emphasized the necessity of keeping cows and growing food, as well as sourcing building materials locally. Basically, devotees need to rely as much as possible on their own initiative and not on the commercial world of commodities.

We can say, "Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are keeping cows and trying to grow vegetables and flowers. We are also experimenting with alternative building techniques to reduce financial obligations. Friends in our congregation are responding enthusiastically and helping with funds and service.

Rural life is a wonderfully enriching existence—fortifying our appreciation of nature's gifts, instilling gratitude for devotee association and for the treasure of time saved, and nourishing our appreciation for the cows.

As you promised, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a great transcendental adventure.

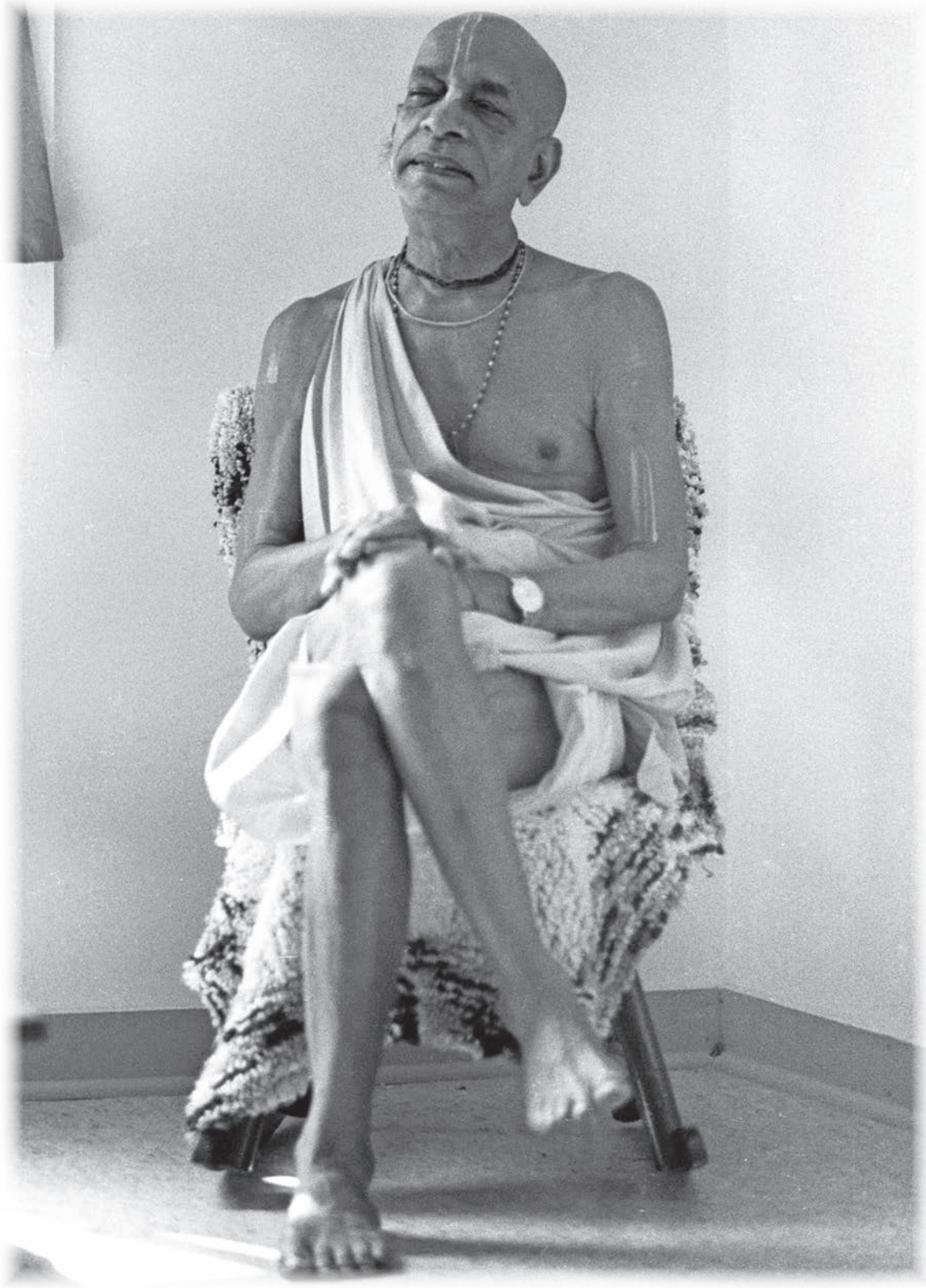
We aspire for your blessings so we can continue to find the ways and means to fulfill your desire for rural Kṛṣṇa conscious communities based on the principles of *bhāgavata-dharma*.

With unlimited gratitude,

Your aspiring servants at New Gokula farm and The Bhakti Tree, New South Wales, Australia.



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New Goloka

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace on the occasion of your appearance day!

Every year we, the residents of New Goloka Dhāma, honor your most holy appearance day by remembering your divine qualities and great achievements in the service of your *gurudeva* and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. No other Vaiṣṇava before you had ever preached the message of Caitanya Mahāprabhu to people on every continent on this planet. No other Vaiṣṇava introduced *harināma saṅkīrtana* to cities in far-flung lands like the USA, Great Britain, France, and countries in Latin America, Africa, and Australia. And what Vaiṣṇava in the years before your appearance could have imagined that Ratha-yātrā chariots would rumble down the streets of London, New York, San Francisco, and Sydney?

You have done so much for us and given so much to the world. What can we do for you in return? You give us a hint in a letter you wrote to Guru Dāsa Prabhu in 1968. There you write that “a qualified disciple increases the importance of the Spiritual Master.” You tell us that we can glorify you by sincere endeavors in preaching, and by our good Vaiṣṇava behavior, and that this will please you and encourage you. You further tell us that we should be humble and appreciate the service of our godbrothers and godsisters. Finally you assure us that Kṛṣṇa will bless us for our noble attempt.

We, your disciples and granddisciples at New Goloka Dhāma, rededicate ourselves to you this day and pray that we may increase your glories by distributing your books, further developing our temple community, and bringing the Lord’s holy names to more and more conditioned souls in North Carolina.

Your humble servants at New Goloka Dhāma, Hillsborough, North Carolina, USA.

(written by Dr̥ṣṭa Dāsa)

New Govardhana (USA)

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

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



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

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

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

We are so fortunate to have the opportunity to glorify you and spread your mission in San Diego and its outlying areas. Through your mercy we are trying to carry on the work you began so many years ago, and we continue to be inspired by your example. It has been over fifty years since you came to the shores of this hellish country and offered your prayers to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, begging Him to make you act as His puppet. Today we continue to do as you asked us—to distribute your books, to maintain and improve our Deity worship, and to devote our lives to devotional service.

We very recently held our Ratha-yātrā, giving the *darśana* of Lord Jagannātha, Lord Balarāma and Śrīmatī Subhadrā Devī to the residents of San Diego. There was much chanting, dancing, and distribution of *prasādam*, as well as your books. By your grace the event was well-received, and many thousands of people heard the holy names and received *prasadam* and books that day!

Your presence continues to change the lives of the devotees in our community, inspiring them to take on more service and to form strong relationships with one another. Our Bhakti Cakra groups are growing. We will soon be adding a new Saturday morning group in Encinitas. Our Night of Kirtan programs are going strong in North County, inspiring many devotees through the congregational chanting of the holy names. And inspired by your devotee Kaṇāmṛta Dāsa, some devotees have begun a Vandana Saṅga program, in which they study the process of prayer through the medium of your books.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is our fervent hope that you will continue to allow us to be of service to you and to Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gīrīdhārī, and that you will continue to bless us with your mercy so that we can more successfully preach the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to the people of San Diego. We cannot adequately express our deep gratitude to you and our love for you. We thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us back our lives, for showing us the proper use of our will, and for allowing us to serve you, though we are so unqualified to do so. May we serve you always, until every *jīva* is back home, safe within the arms of our dearest Lord Kṛṣṇa!

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

(written by Jhaḍu Ṭhākura Dāsa)



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New Māyāpur

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

You are the benevolent hand extended by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to the inhabitants of this world. You have most favorably influenced the destiny of millions of people, and in the coming ten thousand years you will change the course of humanity. By your powerful Kṛṣṇa consciousness you have raised a multitude of radiant devotees whom you scattered around the globe, carrying your instructions, thereby surpassing the sun, whose light always leaves half the planet in darkness.

Even to this day, your servants here in New Māyāpur have the exceptional privilege of being able to walk in your footsteps, in both the literal and figurative sense. You are the soul of this project, the one who gives life to this gigantic body. In a conversation you had here on July 31, 1976, you said that this first-class place is conducive to establishing *Vaikuṇṭha* because Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is residing here. You also declared that the future of this project would be brilliant, being a place of great potential.

Although New Māyāpur's potential has not yet fully manifested, we should understand that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the guarantor of the success of your divine plans, is simply waiting for us to become qualified. He is waiting for us to work together more harmoniously, to be more constant in our communion with Him, to more humbly respect your divine instructions, and to begin working solely to spread your glories and for the conditioned souls' salvation. To illustrate this point, during a class you gave here on August 3, 1976, you pointed out that if we simply put into practice Lord Kṛṣṇa's *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto* instruction, everything we will require will come automatically—no need to worry. And in order to give us renewed faith and enthusiasm to carry out your plans, you invited Śrī Balarāmajī, whose transcendental strength can make everything possible, to take up residence on the altar.

Everything we need to succeed is here in New Māyāpur, including you, because you never actually left. By your loving reciprocation you take care of the devotees' needs and bring success to their endeavors.

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṇḍurā laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī-gururṁ dīna-tāraṇam*

In *guru-kṛpā* lies all success, and serving you is itself success.

O lord and master, we are impotent without your mercy; our existence depends on you, as the sun-rays depend on the sun, the rain on the ocean, the embryo on the father, and dharma on God. Whatever we accomplish in this life is actually accomplished by you through us. Just as an ordinary copper wire becomes useful when conducting electric current, so insignificant conditioned souls can free universes by your divine grace.

May we live only to see your wonderful efforts in spreading the consciousness of Kṛṣṇa bear fruit, and may your glories be sung eternally throughout the three worlds.

Seeking shelter at your lotus feet, we remain

Your servants at New Māyāpur, ISKCON's rural community in France.

(written by Nitāi-Śacīsuta Dāsa)



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New Nīlācala (Guadalajara)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble *daṇḍavats* under the dust of your divine lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when you visited Mexico City in June 1972, one Sunday afternoon there were a lot of people in the temple room and you went back to your room. Then all the people started chanting “*Jaya Prabhupāda! Jaya Prabhupāda!*” They became very ecstatic, and it seemed like the temple walls were going to come down. You said, “What is this? *Kīrtana*? They are making so much noise.”

Citsukhānanda Prabhu said, “They are chanting your name, Prabhupāda. They want to see you.”

You said, “Well, let them come in.”

Citsukhānanda Prabhu immediately arranged for the people to enter your room in groups. When they were in front of you, they said in Spanish, “Your Divine Grace, Your Holiness, please bless us. Give us your benediction.” You asked Citsukhānanda Prabhu, “What are they saying?”

“They are asking you for a benediction, Śrīla Prabhupāda.”

Then with the forefinger you were holding outside your bead bag you pointed to them and said, “Hare Kṛṣṇa.” They were all very happy.

All of them wanted a benediction from you because they knew that you were a very great saint, and that if they got your benediction they would be happy in this life and the next. It is very rare to get the association of a pure devotee like you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, so all these people were very, very fortunate to get your association and your benediction, because it meant that they would very soon finish the cycle of birth and death.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please always be merciful to all of us here in Mexico, because without your mercy we cannot get the mercy of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu and Lord Nityānanda Prabhu. We need you to go on preaching the message and teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Jaya Patita-pāvana Śrīla Prabhupāda, the savior of all souls in Kali-yuga!

Hoping to some day become your real disciples, we remain

Your most fallen servants in New Nīlācala Mandira, Guadalajara, Mexico.

(written by Premānanda Dāsa)

New Tālavana

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to your most glorious devotional service.

Please accept this humble offering at your benevolent lotus feet.

We are very fallen,

But you have delivered us.

Amazing when considering the state of our affairs.

On the order of your spiritual master

You managed to perform the miraculous.



HOMAGES FROM ISKCON CENTERS



How is it possible to convert crows to swans, snakes to *devas*,
or *mlecchas* to Vaiṣṇavas?

Only the power of a pure devotee can perform such a miracle.
Our debt is unrivaled,
Certainly very great!
Yet you collect no interest,
Although our payment is so small.
You have no material interest.
You are pleased to see us loving
The all-opulent Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Full of all good qualities like Him are you.
On the other hand, we are only neophytes,
Bound by human toil.
We are full of meager and shady qualities.
Seriously you accepted a great toll,
Always encouraging us.
You shared your service
And thereby enthused our lives.
Really service to you is our true wealth.
Without you we are fallen fools.
You gave us Kṛṣṇa consciousness,
Made our good fortune

Crows never become swans,
Nor do *mlecchas* and *yavanas* become Vaiṣṇava *brāhmaṇas*.
But Lord Gaurāṅga's powerful devotees can deliver everyone.
It is Gaurāṅga's mission indeed.
His bona fide and powerful representative without a doubt
Are you.

No one can deny your potency.
You are like the sun and full moon together,
Or like a vast ocean with innumerable waves,
Yet accessible to numberless creatures.

O holy monk, we thank you many, many times
While always serving,
For devotion to you is our greatest estate.
Accept our scrawny, meager offering, inspire us, show us your mercy.
Do not neglect or ignore us.
Although your position is completely beyond our own,
You have never let that slow you down
From showing mercy.
It is a privilege to engage in your Lord's service.
May we never try to charge you.
After all, that was our nature.

How did you convince us
To selflessly serve?



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It was an amazing act,
 Pure ministerial potency—
 Selfless compassion, infinite kindness, true love, and powerful influence.
 We didn't have any qualifications
 Or special relationship with you.
 You showed us favor only because
 We reached out to you,
 Offering humble service,
 Expecting only divine mercy,
 Praying for help.
 Free us from bondage;
 Make us pure again;
 Help us become transcendental.

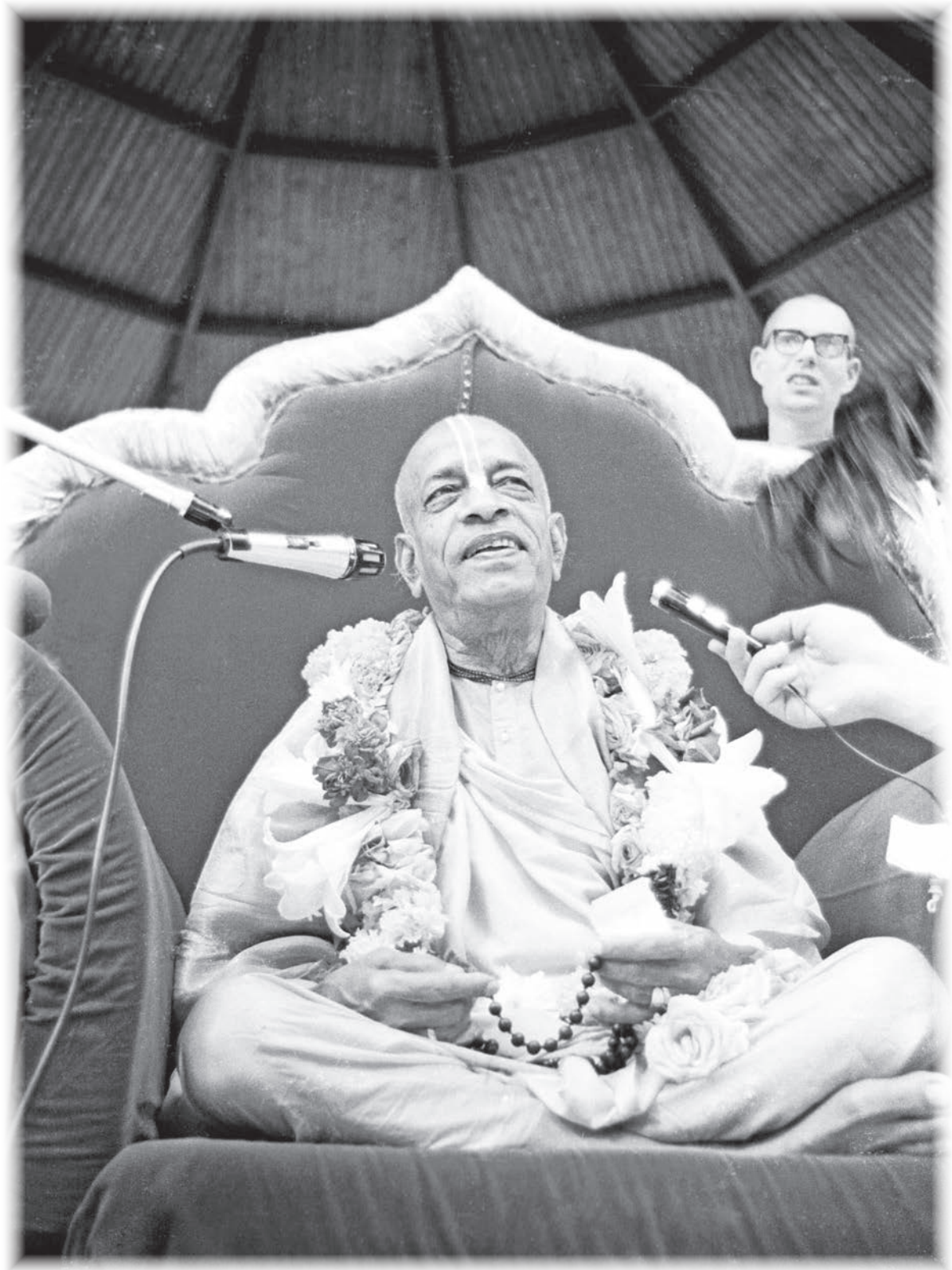
Eons ago our conditioning began.
 Only you had the potency to aid,
 And you did—
 Unconditionally, without charging a cent,
 Yet always maintaining body and soul together.
 Expertly and lovingly you gave solid Kṛṣṇa consciousness
 To uplift the most inadequate or most puffed up indeed
 And all those between to a status of pure loving
 Devotional duty anyone can see.
 You tamed the untamable,
 Made the mad sane,
 And left everyone appreciating your saintliness.

Don't leave us behind, Śrīla Prabhupāda.
 We have no standing
 And are completely dependent
 Upon your transcendental order,
 Gurudeva!
 May we never ever forget you,
 Always admire, love, and honor you,
 Stand up for your reputation, and accept responsibility for your
 Mission:
 Saving humanity by giving everyone
 Pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness
 As you gave it to us—
 Systematically, intelligently, reasonably.

Thank you again, Śrīla Prabhupāda.
 God's bona fide representative you are.
 We are your disciples.
 Your devotional service is a boat
 You have kindly left behind
 For crossing the dangerous ocean of this quarrelsome irreligious time,
 Eventually arriving at
 Śrī Goloka Vṛndāvana Dhāma.
 Thank you.



HOMAGES FROM ISKCON CENTERS





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Your servants in New Tālavana, ISKCON's rural community in Carriere, Mississippi, USA.

(written by Yogīndra Vandana Dāsa)

New Vraja Dhāma

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you on this most auspicious of days.

*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*

I am writing to you as one of the many members of New Vraja Dhāma. Here we are striving to realize your vision for a self-sufficient Kṛṣṇa conscious farm community. We have many activities going on here—twenty *pūjārīs* engaged in the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara, a *gośālā* where we look after fifty cows, oxen, and bulls, a *gurukula* and kindergarten catering to the needs of the fifty children in our community. There are also departments for book distribution, preaching, maintaining our gardens and fruit orchards, *prasādam* distribution, and many other services.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a festival in which you have engaged us.

There are unlimited ways to be engaged in the Lord's service, and Krishna Valley is proof of that. Recently I heard my spiritual master, His Holiness Śivārāma Swami, say that we will be successful if we strive to fulfill your desires. We may have many creative ideas to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but your desires are the most important. He said that your plans will always be successful because, due to Kṛṣṇa's love for you, He will make them succeed. So, putting our individual ideas aside, we are making it our central focus here at New Vraja Dhāma to realize your vision for your farm communities, where one can live off the land very simply, devote one's time to practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and thus show people in general that this is the best way to live.

The gift you have bestowed on us and society in general is unprecedented—such high teachings at such a degraded time! It is surely a miracle. If it had not been for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, an empowered missionary from the spiritual world, who could have perfectly seen how to apply these teachings according to time, place, and circumstance? How could it possibly have been done? How could we souls, addicted as we were to the meat-eating, intoxication-fueled, materialistic ways of the West, have been engaged in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa?

You are the weapon in Kṛṣṇa's hands, and what a sharp and effective weapon you are!

Kṛṣṇa is full of compassion for the suffering of his parts and parcels in this material world, and you took on the responsibility of representing Him to us, the fallen souls of this age.

If we look at the history of the world, we can see how rare an opportunity this is. We know that Kṛṣṇa comes once in a day of Brahmā, or every 4.32 billion years, as does Lord Caitanya. How long have we been rotting here in this world? In how many species have we been vainly eating, sleeping, mating, and



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defending? Now, by your mercy, we have some knowledge. And with knowledge comes responsibility. Now we see what a great need there is for Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the world at large.

It is urgent!

And the opportunities are unlimited!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have all had so many wonderful experiences representing you on the preaching field, experiences that we feel very fortunate to have had. We eternally want to be engaged in the mission of Lord Caitanya. This doesn't always mean, however, distributing books on the front lines. Cooking for the Deities, managing the accounts, raising Kṛṣṇa's children, and countless other activities are all indispensable parts of the mission. All of these activities work in a synergistic way—not one of them can be left out.

Here in Krishna Valley we have a community-wide spectrum of activities happening, and we see many miracles around us: children leading ecstatic *kīrtanas*, cows giving milk without birthing calves, and guests queuing up to see our devotees getting married. The wonders of the golden age are unfolding here in front of us. You are present here in many ways, and we're sure you are aware of the proceedings. You said that ISKCON is your body; it is nondifferent from you.

Every day, by your mercy, we also have the opportunity to take the beautiful *darśana* of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara and to engage in Their personal service. Just as Kṛṣṇa sent you down from the spiritual world to deliver us, so you brought Kṛṣṇa here in various forms, one of the most important being His Deity form.

How can we repay you for giving us the opportunity to see the Lord? We would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for giving us these gifts. We would like to thank you for trusting us to continue preaching this mission. And we would especially like to thank you for saving us.

On behalf of all the residents of New Vraja Dhāma, I want to say that we are praying to be engaged in your service, to realize your desires for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, to create a perfect community that will show a positive alternative to the members of today's misdirected civilization, and to become purified in heart, so that one day we can join you in the ISKCON in the spiritual world.

Your devotees at New Vraja Dhāma, Krishna Valley, Hungary.

(written by Taruṇa Kṛṣṇa Dāsa)

New Vrindaban

Our dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 19.1, we find this verse:

*vr̥ndāvanīyāṁ rasa-keli-vārtāṁ
kālena lup̣tāṁ nija-śaktim utkaḥ
sañcārya rūpe vyatanot punaḥ sa
prabhur vidhau prāg iva loka-sṛṣṭim*

“Before the creation of this cosmic manifestation, the Lord enlightened the heart of Lord Brahmā with



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the details of the creation and manifested the Vedic knowledge. In exactly the same way, the Lord, being anxious to revive the Vṛndāvana pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa, impregnated the heart of Rūpa Gosvāmī with spiritual potency. By this potency, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī could revive the activities of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana, activities almost lost to memory. In this way, He spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world.”

In 1970 you wrote the following in a letter:

Now I am hopeful that our New Vrindaban will be an exact replica of Vrindavan in India. I think that it was ordained by Kṛṣṇa that you went there, took your sannyasa order of life in the presence of Rupa Goswami and Jiva Goswami, and now you have the opportunity to execute their will.
[Letter to Kīrtanānanda Swami, 18 February 1970]

From these two passages, it appears that Rūpa and Jīva Gosvāmīs had a desire for a “New” Vṛndāvana, and it came to us through you.

We residents of the New Vrindaban community are so grateful to you for what you have given to the world, and especially to us here. Your vision for everyone to become happy by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious is the highest welfare work, and your desire and intention to create a replica of Vṛndāvana here in the West will provide an opportunity for millions of conditioned souls to discover Kṛṣṇa, devotional service to Him, and their own unique individual relationship with Him. May we someday soon realize the necessity of fulfilling these desires of yours.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your instructions, teachings, compassion, and personal example guide us. Our desire to please you motivates us to serve. Our greatest impediments come from within, and the obstacles are contributed by Kali himself. Our only possibility for success is if we can receive the Lord’s grace, which comes through you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your grace and compassion we inmates of New Vrindaban have been able to accomplish some meager tasks this past year that we hope and pray actually please you, and thereby satisfy the transcendental senses of Śrī Śrī Rādhā–Vṛndāvana-candra Themselves. Our desire is to work together more and more, in the hope that this spirit of cooperative service will attract your blessings and those of the previous *ācāryas*, the entire *paramparā*, and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī Herself. In this way our lives can become successful.

It is only by your causeless mercy and grace that all living entities have the opportunity to know and serve Kṛṣṇa, through you and your sincere representatives.

You are the ideal, and real, example of a true leader. Through your spoken words, writings, and countless examples, we all have a master plan to guide us through the chaotic mental battlefield of Kali-yuga. Every day we recite the following words, part of the translation of *Śrī Guru Carāṇa-padma*: “He opens my darkened eyes and fills my heart with transcendental knowledge. He is my lord, birth after birth. From him ecstatic *prema* emanates; by him ignorance is destroyed.” We have no need for any other shelter but your lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda. By your strength you have created a house suitable for all to live in, and you have spread the universal mantra throughout the entire world: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for your courage and selflessness, thank you for bringing Kṛṣṇa into our lives, and thank you for making the long trip across the ocean into the unknown to try to teach us the truth of the spirit soul. Without your personal sacrifices, this world would be entirely lost to Kali, engulfed in even more terrible works meant to destroy everything sacred.

Thank you for all you are giving to us, and thank you for your protection. May we receive more and more.

Your humble servants in New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA.



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New York City (Brooklyn)

*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*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa on this earth, having taken shelter at His lotus feet. 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 my uncomprehending inner self, my dear brother mind, I humbly prostrate myself before you. Taking hold of your feet, I beseech you, please give up all pride and surrender fully to Śrī Guru, to the spiritual abode of Vraja-dhāma, to the residents of Vraja, to all the Vaiṣṇava devotees of the Lord, to the *sāttvika-brāhmaṇas*, to the holy name of the Supreme Lord, and to the ever-fresh youthful Divine Couple of blossoming beauty, Śrī-Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and in this way quickly develop sublime attachment to Them.” (Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā 1)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your awesome, transcendental reservoir of absolute truth and realizable wisdom, your most famous *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, remains the greatest matchless gift of divine mercy ever bestowed with spiritual compassion upon the billions of unfortunate, suffering, miserable souls, Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *jīvātmās*, imprisoned on this island of doom and gloom known as Mother Earth, Bhūmi-loka. Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for truly being the greatest transcendental messenger of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s wisdom and divine love to ever traverse this world, the field of activity, where pure *bhakti-sevā* is prescribed in *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* to be the real panacea for elevation to Śrī Govindadeva’s eternal abode of truth, Goloka Vṛndāvana, the topmost paradise, Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma, where you eternally reside with your eternal friend, Śrīla Govindadeva, O most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda. All glories to your transcendental lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

I owed a magnificent day to the Bhagavad-Gita. It was the first of books; it was as if an empire spoke to us, nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent, the voice of an old intelligence which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions which exercise us. The Bhagavad-Gita is an empire of thought and in its philosophical teachings Krishna has all the attributes of the full-fledged monotheistic deity and at the same time the attributes of the Upanishadic absolute. [Ralph Waldo Emerson]

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to your sacred divine lotus feet on this best of auspicious celebrations, your Vyāsa-pūjā, your most blessed appearance anniversary.

He reasons ill who says that Vaiṣṇavas die,
When thou art living still in sound!
The Vaiṣṇavas die to live, and living try
To spread the holy name around.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you always taught us that we must hear from Kṛṣṇa conscious authorities, especially from the supreme authority, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. We look to Lord Brahmā as a primary example of such



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an authority, for he underwent great *tapasya* for a hundred years, and then Lord Govindadeva, being pleased with him, showed him His eternal transcendental form and explained *ātma-tattva* to him (*brahmaṇe darśayan rūpam avyalyāka-vratāḍṛtaḥ*).

So as Lord Brahmā learned *ātma-tattva*—what is Kṛṣṇa, what is Bhagavān Śrī Govindadeva—from Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, we insignificant *jīvātmās* also have to learn from Bhagavān Śrī Govindadeva, especially by reading your Bhaktivedānta purports and all your transcendental publications. In this way we will indeed learn from Śrī Govindadeva, as you so wisely remarked, Śrīla Prabhupāda: “Kṛṣṇa told me what to write in these books.” As Govinda is teaching Arjuna about Himself, we also try to understand Govinda as Arjuna understood. Therefore we can directly learn what is taught by Kṛṣṇa by reading *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*.

In a lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.1.2, given in March of 1974 in Vṛndāvana, you state:

Apasyatām ātma-tattvam: those who cannot see *ātma-tattva*, the science of soul, they are busy only in this material body. *Grheṣu grha-medhinām*. So *grhamedhī* and *grhastha*. *Grhastha* is good. *Grhastha* is interested in *ātma-tattva*. Just like our students, although they are *grhasthas*, they are interested in *ātma-tattva*. They are not *grhamedhīs*. But those who are not interested in the science of soul, *ātma-tattva*, but they are interested only in the science of body and mind, they are *grhamedhīs*. . . . They are not *grhasthas*. So my point is that our philosophy, Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy, is meant for understanding *ātma-tattva*.

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayam
brahmeti paramātmetye bhagavān iti śabdyate*

We are interested in that *tattva*, that *ātma-tattva*, soul ideal.

So to understand this *ātma-tattva* one has to become just the opposite number of these materialistic persons. The materialistic persons, they are interested only in sense gratification or mental speculation. . . . There are so many big, big so-called *sādhus*, saintly persons, simply busy on mental speculation. They are not perfect. And those who are busy in understanding the bodily concept of life, they are also materialistic. The difficulty is that these materialistic persons, in different forms, they are accepted as the leaders. They are accepted as leaders, as politicians, as sociologists, as philosophers, mental speculators, or so-called incarnations of God, and magicians, *yogīs*, so many things. They are leading the whole society at the present moment. Therefore people are in a chaotic condition.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in today’s world the blind are misleading the unfortunate blind victims of Māyā’s illusion, and the miserable fools are constantly suffering from Māyā’s threefold miseries. Invariably everyone appears destined to fall into a deep dark ditch on the road of *samsāra*, on the path of illusion ultimately leading to a hellish destination, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

That is, until such unfortunate, suffering, conditioned misled souls, by the mercy of the Golden Avatāra Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, find the good fortune of your divine blessing, of your divine mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, especially in the treasure house of the divine Bhaktivedānta purports, which reveal your true leadership, your true wisdom, and your true enlightenment, O most dear Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

There are two types of spiritual masters, Śrīla Prabhupāda: the *dīkṣā-guru* and the *śikṣā-guru*. As you explain in your purport to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi* 1.34:

[A]nyone who gives spiritual instructions based on the revealed scriptures is accepted as a spiritual master. Although others give help in showing the way to beginners, the guru who first initiates one with the *mahā-mantra* is to be known as the initiator [*dīkṣā-guru*], and the saints who give instructions for progressive advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are called instructing



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spiritual masters [*śikṣā-gurus*]. The initiating and instructing spiritual masters are equal and identical manifestations of Kṛṣṇa, although they have different dealings. Their function is to guide the conditioned souls back home, back to Godhead.

Your Divine Grace is both the bona fide *dīkṣā* and *śikṣā* spiritual master for all your fortunate *dīkṣā* disciples, and the *śikṣā-guru* for millions of fortunate *jīvas* who, by the mercy of Śrīla Nityānanda Balarāma, are now being properly guided by your bona fide leadership on the sacred path known as the *bhakti-mārga*.

So our aim is how to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, Śrīla Prabhupāda. And you have explained that to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, it is best to follow the perfect examples of the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana (*śrī-rūpa śrī-sanātana bhaṭṭa-raghunātha śrī-jīva gopāla-bhaṭṭa dāsa-raghunātha*). We are aspiring followers of those great and wonderful Six Gosvāmīs. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you explain that these self-realized Six Gosvāmīs are not ordinary, titular *gosvāmīs*. Titular *gosvāmīs* are different. Such titular *gosvāmīs* make a profession of *gosvāmī*. A real *gosvāmī* standard of behavior is exemplified by the pure-devotee Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. How, then, can we become interested and inspired in our pursuit of such awesome *ātma-tattva* realizations? That example is revealed by the behavior of the great *ācāryas*, the Six Gosvāmīs of *vraja-dhāma*. When we speak of the so-called *gosvāmīs* who are indulging in sinful activities, that does not refer to the real *ācāryas*, the six sacred-heart Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Real *gosvāmīs* cannot take up sinful activities, Śrīla Prabhupāda. It is not possible. But still, there are many so-called *gosvāmīs* who are taking up sinful activities; and still they are passing themselves off as *gosvāmīs*. So when we speak of real, sincere, and exemplary *gosvāmīs*, we mean the authentic *ācāryadeva* Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana and their sincere followers.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Your Divine Grace is our eternal and worshipable *vraja-dhāma ācāryadeva gosvāmī*. Therefore please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, deliver us always to the most blissful destination of the soothing moonlike shelter of your transcendental lotus feet. Please bless us, Śrīla Prabhupāda—these foolish, imperfect, and insignificant servants of yours—with causeless pure devotional service at the divine lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindadeva, birth after birth. Keep us engaged in your transcendental service forever, if you would so kindly allow us such a great matchless blessing. Śrīla Prabhupāda, please never kick us away, O most merciful and magnanimous Guru Mahārāja.

Your Divine Grace is our dearest friend, our eternal master, and our ever well-wisher. We are eternally indebted to Your Divine Grace for such an unlimited matchless gift of love and devotion to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The path of perfection is our highway back home, Śrīla Prabhupāda, traversed perfectly by following your self-realized infallible guidance. Pure devotional service for Śrīla Nityānanda Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindadeva is our ultimate transcendental goal of goals. The supreme destination where *bhakti-sevā* is offered at Their Lordships' divine lotus feet is our greatest treasure of hope, that great treasure which you delivered to us so kindly while undergoing so much sacrifice and tribulation to extricate us, your insignificant, fallible servants, from the painful clutches of this dark, ignorant, and painful prison house known as *Devī-dhāma*.

By your causeless mercy and love, Your Divine Grace can elevate us to the topmost platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Although we are only your insignificant fools and rebellious rascals, yet we are just the type of unqualified suffering souls whom Śrīla Nityānanda Rāma loves to deliver, thereby utilizing Your Divine Grace as His most potent instrument for transmission of pure *bhakti*, devotional *sevā*, into the hard desertlike hearts of the most hapless, the most helpless, and the most fallen unfortunate *jīvas* in this chaotic age of quarrel and hypocrisy, Kali-yuga.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are transforming such hard and barren hearts into potential temples of divine *kṛṣṇa-prema* by engaging us in surrendered and selfless pure devotional service to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. With a broadminded mood of magnanimity and generosity you are thus spreading the great rays of Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva's white lotus of good fortune and Kṛṣṇa consciousness mercy throughout society at large, freely and widely, like an unbiased downpour of nourishing rain from a beautiful newly riven bluish-black monsoon cloud. All this will insure the continued growth, strong health, and expansion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mercy during this great, divine *saṅkīrtana* mission of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, the golden age of the Golden



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Avatāra Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva, forevermore, Śrīla Prabhupāda, banishing the sleep of ignorance and illusion forevermore, Śrīla Prabhupāda, forevermore.

You raise your arms and implore everyone: “Just chant the holy names and all will be freed from this theater of illusion! Just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.”

We are honored to close with this simple and sublime mission principle of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, summed up in these sweet words of Your Divine Grace in San Francisco in 1968, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I am sure you remember this interview fondly, Śrīla Prabhupāda:

So everyone who actually wants to give some service to the society, to the humanity, they must study this philosophy and get prepared to meet anyone—scientists, philosophers, poets—and talk with them, and he can give answer to all their questions. But our method is very simple. We call everyone, even to the child, “Come, sit down, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.” And then gradually he realizes. But if anyone wants to understand this philosophy through knowledge, through books, through philosophy, logic, we are prepared. But for the mass of people we give the simple method. Hare Kṛṣṇa. Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare, and he realizes. All these boys, they’re not philosophers. They’re not very highly learned. But they’re developing simply by chanting. This is so nice. It is for the greatest scholar, and it is for the innocent boy. Therefore it is universal. Even for the animals. Yes. We have seen. Sometimes dogs, they also dance to this Kṛṣṇa consciousness chanting. Yes.

Gaura-Nityānanda *bolo! Haribol, Haribol!* Thank you very much, our dear Guru Mahārāja. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most blessed occasion of your most blessed Vyāsa-pūjā *mahā-mahotsava*.

His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda-*kī jaya!* We beg to remain your servants forever.

Your unfortunate, unqualified, and insignificant servants at Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindadeva Mandira, Brooklyn, New York City, New York, USA.

(written by Rāmabhadra Dāsa)

Noida

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

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

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



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Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances in the dust of Your Divine Grace's lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace. All glories to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindadeva, the principal Deities here in Noida, India. All glories to Your Divine Grace's Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā.

On this most auspicious occasion of Your Divine Grace's Vyāsa-pūjā, I humbly fall at your lotus feet and seek your kind mercy and blessings so that may I be able to write at least a few words glorifying your divine self on behalf of the devotees of ISKCON Noida.

Every day during *guru-pūjā*, when we stand in front of your *mūrti*, we personally feel your presence and kind supervision. A few weeks ago a congregational devotee shared an amazing experience he had had. He was sitting in front of your *vyāsāsana* around 3:30 am, chanting *japa*. No one else was in the temple. He fell asleep while chanting, and right away Your Divine Grace appeared to him in a dream. You rose from your *vyāsāsana* and chastised him severely, saying *ye koi bakawas nahi hai* ("This is not any nonsense!") You instructed him emphatically to chant attentively because it is the only way to go back home, back to Godhead. The devotee woke up suddenly, astonished, and immediately offered his full obeisances unto you.

We bow down at your divine lotus feet again and again, Śrīla Prabhupāda, realizing how extremely fortunate we are to be able to sing and dance in front of you, and remembering with deep appreciation your tremendous efforts and the many hardships you underwent to build a home where the whole world can live and practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

This year Govinda Dhāma and Bhaktivedanta Academy—ISKCON Noida—is celebrating its third anniversary with great vigor. By your causeless mercy, and under the kind guidance and sincere efforts of your very dear disciple His Holiness Lokanāth Swami, we have come a long way in our efforts in the last two years. Our Bhakti Vriksha program is growing very healthily, with many new branches added to it over the last year. Now, in addition to the many *brahmacārī* preachers in our temple, we have many dedicated *grhastha* couples who are doing a pioneering job of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness at the grass-roots level. Not only do they themselves very actively engage in various services at the temple, but they also engage and guide newcomers and other devotees in the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindājī. There are now thirty Bhakti Vriksha leaders preaching in the Greater Noida area.

Every weekend a *harināma saṅkīrtana* party goes out and distributes the nectar of the holy name in various places across the city. These parties attract more people to attend our Sunday love feast.

During the December marathon, the centers in Noida and Greater Noida distributed more than 20,000 big and small books for Your Divine Grace's pleasure. In the course of the marathon, ISKCON Noida organized a *Bhagavad-gītā* talent search for schoolchildren, in which about 5,000 children from various schools across Noida and Greater Noida participated.

We are glad to inform you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that on the auspicious occasion of Gaura-pūrṇimā we held the grand opening of the auditorium in Govinda Dhāma. As you can tell by its name—Bhakti-kalā-kendra—the aim of this auditorium is to promote your vision of Vedic culture for today's society through music, drama, dance, cinema, and other arts.

Also, Śrīla Prabhupāda, this year for the first time ISKCON Noida began preaching in a local prison. A group of devotees went to the Dasna, Bulendshehar, Badau Jail and distributed 1,500 *Bhagavad-gītās*, performed *harināma saṅkīrtana*, and invited one and all to join in and relish the nectar of chanting the holy names of the Lord. We distributed chanting beads to the prisoners and taught them how to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.

The Bhaktivedanta Academy is organizing many enlightening programs for schoolchildren and adults. A "Vedic Wisdom" contest was held, in which more than two hundred schoolchildren participated. Also, a rejuvenation program was held, where devotees got the condensed nectar given in a series of lectures by many senior Vaiṣṇavas.

Commemorating ISKCON's 50th anniversary, ISKCON Noida organized a fifteen-day *padayātrā* from Noida to Vṛndāvana. This *padayātrā* was a great success, with hundreds of books distributed, much *prasādam* distributed all along the way, daily *harināmas* in the villages, and evening programs with video shows to cultivate the villagers.



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From the inception of ISKCON, you always showed a keen interest in preaching to the youth. For your pleasure, IYF Noida has organized Umang youth festivals every two months. Apart from Umang, we have Madhuram for girls and Tarang for newly married couples. This is all in addition to various seminars held at different colleges.

ISKCON Noida further organizes several Bhagavat Kathas during the year.

Your glories are unending, and whatever we are able to achieve is only because you have sent your empowered disciples and granddisciples to guide us and show us the path of perfection in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

We simply pray at your lotus feet that our insignificant efforts magnify intensely and that we can please you and serve you to the best of our abilities in the coming years.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us everything we need to go back home, back to Godhead. We will forever remain indebted to Your Divine Grace. Our most ardent prayer at your lotus feet is that you always keep us engaged in your divine mission and that we may be able to meet your expectations in pushing forward the movement, so that one day the whole world will take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

All the activities I described above are our humble offering at your lotus feet. Indeed, all of them together are nothing compared to what you have done for us. Hence we daily pray at the lotus feet of the Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindadeva to eternally engage us in your service, which is the highest perfection of our lives. We pray at your lotus feet to enable us to please you by expanding the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, which is the service closest to your heart.

Your servants at ISKCON Noida, India.

Nuremberg

Hare Kṛṣṇa, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, every morning at the time of *guru-pūjā*, before we sing “Guru Vandana,” we recite the translation: “The lotus feet of our spiritual master are the only way by which we can attain pure devotional service. We bow to his lotus feet with great awe and reverence. By his grace one can cross the ocean of material suffering and obtain the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.”

Today we are thinking, “How can we apply this verse in our own spiritual life and devotional practice? If it is the only way to attain pure devotional service, then how can we utilize this great opportunity to practice that devotional service which was given to us by the mercy of your lotus feet and the mercy of your sincere followers? Especially now, when you are not present with us physically.”

We can find the answer to this question, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your words:

The *ācārya*, the authorized representative of the Supreme Lord, establishes these principles, but when he disappears, things once again become disordered. The perfect disciples of the *ācārya* try to relieve the situation by sincerely following the instructions of the spiritual master. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.48, purport]

Among your followers we find good examples of devotees who follow this principle. We ourselves also



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have a golden opportunity to follow it: we have a spiritual master, we have the association of devotees, and we all have services to do. Unfortunately we do not have strong (enough) faith to be able to receive your mercy and the mercy of your real followers. And only your mercy and theirs can save us from material suffering and give us the nectar of devotional service.

We humbly pray at your lotus feet to empower us to become worthy of receiving those mercies. I really want to be useful in service to your lotus feet and to all other devotees.

*sa vai puṁsāṁ paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhokṣaje
ahaituky apratihataḥ yayātmā suprasīdati*

“The supreme occupation (dharma) for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendent Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.6.)

Your unworthy followers and servants at ISKCON Nuremberg, Germany.

Osaka

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Here in Japan your direct disciples are continually giving us mercy and spiritual guidance. They sincerely pass on your teachings to us. As your grandchildren, we can get a realistic picture of your glory through our gurus. We always get inspired by their strong will and action to please you.

One devotee in Osaka has a lot of enthusiasm for conveying the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā* to many people. Another devotee passionately wants everyone to taste *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*. Another devotee concentrates on improving the Sunday Feast program, for his guru encouraged them to do it by saying that this service would evoke the mercy of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda. Another devotee distributes the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* by teaching *haṭha-yoga* followed by *kīrtana*. There is also a devotee who began distributing your books after meeting an older devotee who had been distributing your books for many years. And another devotee engages in website maintenance.

We beg you for your mercy so that we, your grandsons, can continue practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness and serving your lotus feet.

Your servants at ISKCON Osaka, Japan.

(written by Satsvarūpa Dāsa)



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Pandharpur

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our respectful prostrated obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this glorious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā!

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

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

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

By the mercy of Guru and Gaurāṅga, our youth preaching in Pandharpur *dhāma* is flourishing. Many students are joining our temple and experiencing the spiritual bliss of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The more we open branches, the more I feel encouraged. These branches are like *the oasis in a vast desert*. In the desert there is no water, but occasionally if one is fortunate he may come in contact with an oasis and he is saved. Similarly, in this material world we are drying up due to lack of spiritual knowledge. Our ISKCON centers are meant to give relief to the dried up conditioned souls who are searching after the nectar of joyful life. [Letter to Bhagavān Dāsa, 18 December 1970; emphasis is Śrīla Prabhupāda's]

Congregational preaching is spreading in the area around Pandharpur, in cities and villages like Akulj, Malshiras, Manglwedha, Sangola, Kurdawadi, Mohol, Khardi, Karkam, and Tungad. Many people in these and other locales take part in our weekly programs, where they learn the philosophy of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Every year all devotees in the area come together and very enthusiastically celebrate such annual festivals as Kṛṣṇa-janmāṣṭamī, Rāma-navamī, and Gaura-pūrṇimā.

The Śrīla Prabhupāda Ghat is the major project being built in Pandharpur *dhāma*. It is the prime attraction for all the devotees who come from around the world. Next year we plan to have a glorious opening ceremony of the Śrīla Prabhupāda Ghat.

Pandharpur *parikramā* is one of the most successful events in Pandharpur *dhāma*. Many devotees take part in the *parikramā*. There is an ancient tradition of doing *dhāma parikramā* in Pandharpur. For the last three years we have been conducting this event successfully.

Free *prasādam* distribution is one of the main activities of our ISKCON temple. Every year ISKCON Pandharpur does a Food for Life program on the day of Śayanā Ekādaśī, and during the festivities held the next day, about 1.2 million people visit Pandharpur *dhāma*. On that day ISKCON Pandharpur distributes more than a hundred thousand plates of *prasādam* to visitors.

In the Vedic tradition, cows are worshiped as mothers. A civilized man is therefore expected to give all protection to the bulls and cows. But today people are becoming more and more uncivilized, and thus they are neglecting such instructions. To counter this trend, the ISKCON Pandharpur *gośālā* maintains



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and feeds thirty-five cows. Daily we get sufficient milk for the needs of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Pandharināth and Their devotees.

Organic farming is another aspect of ISKCON Pandharpur. We use only natural fertilizer and are getting very good results. We harvest sufficient sugarcane, grain, vegetables, and flowers to meet the temple's needs.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless us so that we can continue maintaining and expanding all these preaching programs for your pleasure.

Your servants at ISKCON Pandharpur, India.

Paris

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

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

Where Is My Jaladuta?

When Vasudeva was sustaining the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead within his heart, he appeared just like the glowing sun. . . . [T]he eternal form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead with full potencies was transferred from the mind of Vasudeva to the mind of Devakī, exactly as the setting sun's rays are transferred to the full moon rising in the east. [*Kṛṣṇa* book, Chapter 2]

In 1922 our Śrīla Prabhupāda received from *his* Śrīla Prabhupāda the order to spread the glories of Kṛṣṇa throughout the world, and this order was later repeated as an instruction to preach in English and to print books. Painstakingly, years later, now an old man, our guru, whom his followers would first come to know as Swamiji, collected funds to print his magazine, *Back to Godhead*, and then to print books, and finally he begged a free passage to America on a cargo ship. He boarded the ship in August 1965, almost lost his life when he had two heart attacks, and somehow, completely alone, made it to New York. And he struggled on. We have read this glorious history, spoken of it, written about it, quoted accounts of it, and seen it printed in many Vyāsa-pūjā offerings, which we read aloud. We always consider Śrīla Prabhupāda's extraordinarily heroic acts as exemplary. Now we need to assure that this history will be duly passed on to future generations of devotees.

In 1968 Śrīla Prabhupāda had Collier Books print his abridged *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. There was no Sanskrit; three, four, or more verses were often presented in a row, without commentary; whatever purports there were were shortened; and its price was \$2.95.

Śrīla Prabhupāda made sure that the names of the great masters of our line were there for all to read before they delved into the words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The Introduction ended like this:



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THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION

“Evam parampara praptam imam rajarsayo viduh” Bhagavad Gita, ch. IV/2. This Bhagavad Gita As It Is is received through this disciplic succession:

1, Krishna; 2, Brahma; 3, Narada; 4, Vyasa; 5, Madhva; 6, Padmanabha; . . . 28, (Baladev) Jagganatha; 29, Bhaktivinode; 30, Gour Kishore; 31, Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati; 32, Sri Bhaktivedanta Swami.

We came to know Śrī Bhaktivedanta Swami—Śrīla Prabhupāda, as he was introduced to us newcomers in 1969—from our older godbrothers and godsisters. They had us follow the method of hearing and chanting; besides hearing and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, most of our hearing and chanting consisted of reading Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books and quoting from the same. This hearing and chanting provided the solid ground on which to base our spiritual life, which also included the discipline of strict regularity and practical cooperation in service. Our master’s letters were read to us by their various recipients. All were signed “Your ever well-wisher, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami.”

Soon I asked for initiation. In my letter requesting initiation, I wrote of a truth I was not really conscious of at that point: the eternal ties between the guru and the disciple. Initiation was when I took my first step to board my *Jaladuta*.

Kṛṣṇa plainly declares at *Bhagavad-gītā* 4.34: “Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. . . . The self realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth.” The qualities of the spiritual master were clear: he had to be self-realized, a seer of the truth. What about the disciple? Arjuna was the model. Before surrendering to Kṛṣṇa, his guru, he was confused about his duty, he had lost all composure because of miserly weakness, and he could find no way to drive away the grief drying up his senses (*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.7–8). In this condition he surrendered to Kṛṣṇa and asked Him to tell him for certain what the best course of action was. I needed to take so many steps up that very steep gangway onto my *Jaladuta*.

On the original *Jaladuta*, Prabhupāda had books, a trunk full of the three volumes of the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, from which I read every day when I first joined:

[by] Whom even the great sages and demigods become illusioned as much as there is illusory representation of water in the fire or land on the water and so on. It is on account of Him only the temporary manifestation of the material universes made by the reaction of the three modes of nature appears to be factual although it is unreal.

My mind was stretched beyond its limits. That very first verse of the first chapter of the First Canto got me to take the first step onto my *Jaladuta*, as I meditated on the Truth surpassing all other truths.

In Prabhupāda’s *Bhāgavatam* Introduction we were able to read an outline of the life and teachings of Lord Caitanya. But Prabhupāda wanted us to have more of Lord Caitanya’s life and teachings, and so in 1969 he published *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*. I read this book during my days in London—a dark-blue hardbound book with a picture of Lord Caitanya on the cover, dancing with arms raised. Even before the Introduction we encounter “Lord Caitanya’s Mission,” mostly consisting of the *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, eight verses capturing the mood of the highest devotion, and the only texts written by Mahāprabhu.

This *saṅkīrtana* movement is the prime benediction for humanity at large because it spreads the rays of the benediction moon. . . . It increases the ocean of transcendental bliss, and it enables us to fully taste the nectar for which we are always anxious.

This I had actually experienced. But then, at the end,

I know no one but Kṛṣṇa as my Lord, and He shall remain so even if He handles Me roughly by His embrace or makes Me brokenhearted by not being present before Me.



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How to keep one's balance between the two apparently opposed statements? Awe only, and one more step onto my *Jaladuta*.

We were soon expecting another book, *Śrī Īśopaniṣad*. I do not recall exactly when I had the book in hand, probably a few months after getting *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*. The sound and rhythm of the Sanskrit mantras went straight to my heart.

The Personality of Godhead is perfect and complete. . . . Whatever is produced of the complete whole is also complete in itself. And because He is the Complete Whole, even though so many complete units emanate from Him, He remains the complete balance.

And in the purport:

The Complete Whole must have everything, both within our experience and beyond our experience. Otherwise He cannot be complete.

More spiritual food to chew on in meditation, and another step onto my *Jaladuta*.

Whenever she had the time, Śrīmatī Yamunā Devī Dāśī read to us from an unpublished manuscript: *The Nectar of Devotion*. She was proofreading. But only when the book was printed and I had my own copy could I try to make some sense of it beyond wonderment. Under the heading of “Great Hope,” a subsection in the chapter entitled “Character of One in Ecstatic Love,” I read a prayer composed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī:

[T]he process of *bhakti-yoga* . . . is also lacking in me. . . . I am not even born in a nice family. . . . I simply wish and hope that some way or other I may be able to approach Your lotus feet, and this hope is giving me pain.

And Prabhupāda explains, “[O]ne should continue to hope against hope that some way or other he will be able to approach the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord.” My mind could not immediately adjust, but gradually I began to grasp the deep meaning of these statements through meditation and the opening my heart—some more steps onto my *Jaladuta*.

Another book we impatiently awaited was *Kṛṣṇa, The Supreme Personality of Godhead*. Finally in the summer of 1970 it arrived.

Mother Yaśodā then threw away her stick. In order to punish Him, she thought to bind His hands with some ropes. . . . Mother Yaśodā was thinking that Kṛṣṇa was her tiny child; she did not know that the child had no limitation. There is no inside or outside of Him, nor beginning or end. . . . In this way she connected all the ropes available at home, but when the final knot was added, she saw that it was still two inches too short. . . . In attempting to bind her son, she became tired. She was perspiring, and the garland on her head fell down. Then Lord Kṛṣṇa . . . agreed to be bound up by the ropes.

The opening of a wide window onto the spiritual realm, once more pushing further the limit of my heart—more steps onto my *Jaladuta*.

How wisely and tenderly Prabhupāda had given us all this knowledge! He had printed the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* India, before he left for New York. He printed the *Bhagavad-gītā* in 1968, *Śrī Īśopaniṣad* and *Teachings of Lord Caitanya* in 1969, and *The Nectar of Devotion* and *Kṛṣṇa* book in 1970.

Recently I read an article entitled “Initiation Into Spiritual Life.” It was written by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura and printed in his paper, *Sajjana Toshani*. I found the following sentence very revealing: “Faith in the Scriptures can alone help us in this otherwise impractical endeavor—believing in the Preceptor



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with the help of the Shastras while understanding neither.”

I am still taking steps onto my *Jaladuta*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda—truly a Divine Grace (see *paramparā* list above)—gave us the essential scriptures in the most authentic Vaiṣṇava tradition, namely texts with *paramparā* commentary. At first we had no true understanding of even the importance of the spiritual master, the scripture, or the Vaiṣṇava tradition. But through his efforts alone, all became manifest in our hearts.

When Vasudeva was sustaining the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead within his heart, he appeared just like the glowing sun. . . . [T]he eternal form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead with full potencies was transferred from the mind of Vasudeva to the mind of Devakī, exactly as the setting sun’s rays are transferred to the full moon rising in the east. [*Kṛṣṇa* book, Chapter 2]

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s servants in Paris, France.

(written by Ilāvati Devī Dāsī)

Perth

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our respectful obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this most auspicious day of your appearance in this world.

You appeared 121 years ago. You did so much that no one had done in the past, no one is doing currently, and no one will be able to do in the future to spread the message of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

You built a house where the whole world can live, and we can see how true this is: everywhere conditioned souls like us can take shelter at your soothing lotus feet.

A sojourn in this material world is never easy, but for those who have taken shelter at your lotus feet, you never turn them away.

You gave us the very simple and sublime formula of chanting, dancing, and feasting, but still we find it difficult to take to the process. This is the most unfortunate part of our lives. So, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have to give us a special concession. You said, “I have the key for the back door to the spiritual world.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, please consider our claim first.

Here in Perth, the second most isolated city in the world, which you blessed by placing your lotus feet here, we are trying to spread the message of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. We are regularly going on *harināma* in the streets of Perth and its suburbs, performing mantra meditation and *kīrtana*.

We are also trying in a tiny way to distribute your books, and in the last year some enthusiastic devotees have been able to distribute a few *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* sets and other books at various festivals. Of course, we can improve a lot.

We are also trying in a humble way to distribute *prasādam* at various venues such as our local market, where it is well received.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the biggest concern for us is our temple project, and somehow it is taking too much



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time—much more than we anticipated. There are many delays. So, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we need your special mercy to get this project off the ground. We are trying our best to get this project started, or at least to prepare the necessary paperwork by the time of your Vyāsa-pūjā so we can offer it to you on that day. Please bless us so that we can be united in our efforts to please you and to do some insignificant service. To do this we need all the mercy we can get.

Your aspiring servants at ISKCON Perth, Australia.

Philadelphia

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this most glorious day of your appearance!

As your spiritual children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren at the ISKCON Philadelphia *yātrā*, we humbly offer you our heartfelt gratitude for allowing us to be part of your mission to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this city. When you visited Gainesville, Florida, in 1971 you famously described it as “a remote corner of the world, so far away from Śrīdhām Māyāpur.” We’re quite certain that in July of 1975, when you visited this city of Philadelphia, you felt it was just as remote a corner of the world as Gainesville. Some of us in this congregation were born in this remote corner, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and some of us traveled far to settle here. Somehow or other, by Kṛṣṇa’s grace, we have all been joined together as one spiritual family in order to assist Your Divine Grace with spreading your ISKCON movement—a spiritual movement you worked so hard to begin and grow. In all humility, we fall at your lotus feet and beg for continued guidance so we may please you in our endeavor to serve together as one united congregation.

On this day we are reminded of your telling us that we will show our love for you by how much we cooperate with one another after you are gone. Therefore, in order to please you our congregation continues with great enthusiasm to expand our *kīrtanas*, preaching programs, classes, and book distribution. Together as a community we are working earnestly to improve our standard of Deity worship by requesting our *grhastha* families to come forward and take part in worshiping our presiding Deities, Lord Jagannātha, Lord Baladeva, and Śrīmatī Subhadrā Devī; Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śaradbihārī; and Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi. We continually strive to offer more opulent feasts to Their Lordships, prepared by our householder teams as well as our *brahmacārīs*, and to distribute more and more *prasādam* to our increasing number of guests at our Sunday feasts and festivals. We are especially pleased to report to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that we are distributing over five thousand plates of sumptuous *prasādam* at our Ratha-yātrā festival every year, and we are hoping to soon surpass this number—by your grace.

Together as a community we are preparing for our 11th continuous Ratha-yātrā festival, still walking a route similar to the one that was taken when you personally attended our Ratha-yātrā celebration in 1975. Now Lord Jagannātha, Lord Balarāma, and Śrīmatī Subhadrā Devī each travel on Their own beautifully decorated chariot to the Philadelphia Art Museum, where you spoke on the steps so many decades ago. Some of us remember that momentous day when you transformed the museum park into Goloka Vṛndāvana with your transcendental presence and lecture. Following in your footsteps, we continue this festival each year so that thousands of souls will be spiritually uplifted by hearing and chanting the *mahā-mantra* and receiving the merciful glance of the Supreme Lord.



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In further hopes of pleasing you, our teachers in our long-running Hare Krishna Sunday School remain dedicated to our Kṛṣṇa conscious educational program. We are now teaching our second generation of children, and after twenty years we continue to average sixty children in four classrooms, from pre-kindergarten through high school. Many of the children we taught years ago are now grown with children of their own and have become committed members of our congregation. We pray this pleases Your Divine Grace.

Finally, your followers at ISKCON Philadelphia are presently constructing a grand temple room to accommodate the many new guests who wish to participate in temple functions and festivals. Several devotees are working tirelessly to complete the building, and many householder families have generously sacrificed so that the doors of the new temple room will open this year. Please empower us to touch the lives of each and every person who walks through the doors of this new temple. Please help us bring more and more souls to your lotus feet at ISKCON Philadelphia in the years to come. Just as you saved us, please bless us with the ability to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others so that they too may be saved. With folded hands we ask that we may each become your instruments to use in whatever way you see fit.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this auspicious day of your appearance, we, as a congregation, fall at your lotus feet to re-commit ourselves to your mission. You were totally selfless in bestowing your gifts upon this world, and so we pray that we may also become selfless in our desire to please you by helping you spread Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement. Please allow us to assist you in this life—and for all eternity.

Your humble servants at ISKCON Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.

(written by Saṅgītā Devī Dāsī)

Phoenix

Our dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*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*

Please accept our most humble obeisances, eternally prostrated in the dust of your lotus feet. On this auspicious occasion of your appearance, we have another occasion to remember you and all the wonderful things you taught us. Before meeting Your Divine Grace, we knew nothing; but on the basis of higher authority you have revealed everything, first about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then about His representative, and finally about ourselves.

You not only taught us about Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master, but also how devotees should relate to one another—in love and trust. You formed an organization, ISKCON, and called it your body, and you ordered us to work cooperatively for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. As you famously said, “You will show your love for me by how you cooperate with each other after I am gone.”

ISKCON is not meant for any purpose other than facilitating our love and trust of one another, as you



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yourself did. If there is no love and trust, everything is finished. Legislation will have no effect, resolutions will be useless, and meetings will be but occasions for political maneuvering. We can kick men out (you said any idiot can do that), but can we create Vaiṣṇavas? That is the test. That is dependent on *bhakti*. This is the *bhakti* cult, and *bhakti* must begin in our own house; otherwise we are also in for another “festival of flowers.”

On this auspicious day, we would like to reaffirm our loyalties to your spiritual instructions. You taught us that there are two ways of associating with the spiritual master—through *vapuḥ* and *vāṇī*, his personal form and his words. *Vāṇī* is more important. In dedicating the First Canto to your spiritual master, you stated, “He lives forever by his divine instructions, and the follower lives with him.” I pray for your mercy so that my love and devotion for your instructions will develop and increase unlimitedly. We pray that we may never deviate from your instructions.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* of the highest order. You are a part of Lord Caitanya’s own spiritual family. You are the personification of determination. You struggled against all odds to establish this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in order to guide humanity in this dark Age of Kali. You gave us the spiritual foundation and the managerial framework to run the Society. It is by your potency that this movement is growing and increasing daily. You taught us that the Supreme is a sentient being and not an impersonal force, thereby giving us Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa worship. You taught us how to worship the Lord’s *arcā-vigraha* form. You gave us translations of and Bhaktivedanta purports to Śrīla Vyāsadeva’s, Rūpa Gosvāmī’s, and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja’s works. Prior to your appearance on this planet, their works were not available in the English language. Your books will be the sole guide for humanity for the next ten thousand years. You taught us the importance of *saṅkīrtana*. You emphasized the importance of book distribution as a means of purifying the fallen souls of this age. Just as Caitanya Mahāprabhu cured the leper *brāhmaṇa* Vāsudeva, you have cured millions of the abominable diseased condition of material suffering. Your books have been converting millions of crowlike men into swans. You have not only cured us of the disease called materialism but also given us a very happy life to live.

You once stated that the disciple can never repay the debt to the spiritual master but can attempt to do so by preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You taught us that to be recognized as a devotee by Kṛṣṇa one must seriously take to preaching. Because of your tireless efforts, the entire world has now been given a chance to be saved from the horrible onslaught of repeated birth and death. You created so many wonderful Vaiṣṇavas, who are sincerely following your instructions and in turn producing so many first-class grandsons. You gave us the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra as our most important business. The sound of *karatālas* and *mṛdaṅgas* is familiar in cities all over the world. Your gifts cannot be listed. You were perfect and complete in everything you did.

Thank you millions of times for showing us the path of devotional service. O most lovable grandfather, please forgive us for our offenses, considering us your grandsons. Please bestow your mercy so that we can go on working with devotees to spread this great movement you started. Your causeless mercy is all that we are made of.

Your humble servants in Phoenix, Arizona, USA.

(written by Govinda-bhakta Dāsa)



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Radhadesh

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We, the residents of Radhadesh, beg you to kindly accept our humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet.

There is no counting the blessings Your Divine Grace has bestowed upon us. The following incident may give a glimpse:

Once a visitor asked a Radhadesh resident, “What brings all of you people together here anyhow? I bet you all are just a bunch of ex-drug addicts and have no place else to go!” Taken aback, the devotee replied, “I need to reflect on what you are asking and get back to you.” The answer that gradually came was “Kṛṣṇa.” It is Kṛṣṇa that attracts devotees to come together and to stay together.

The simultaneous reflection is that we would know nothing about Kṛṣṇa without the unlimitedly merciful intercession of Your Divine Grace. When Sanātana Gosvāmī joined Lord Caitanya in Benares, the Lord said to him, “My dear Sanātana, Kṛṣṇa has saved you from Mahāraurava, life’s deepest hell. He is an ocean of mercy, and His activities are very grave.” Sanātana replied, “I do not know who Kṛṣṇa is. As far as I am concerned, I have been released from prison only by Your mercy.” We feel the same way toward you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for it is you who have released us from the prison of material life.

Because of your profound faith in and devotion to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and the predecessor *ācāryas*, you have not only saved us from “life’s deepest hell” but have revealed life’s ultimate treasure, the abode of all beauty, love, sweetness, and shelter. You have made it possible for us to aspire and endeavor for the purity to approach and have intimate contact with Kṛṣṇa and His entourage. All you ask is that we seriously and sincerely apply ourselves to the *bhakti* process and to also help others have the same opportunity.

In this beautiful *dhāma* of Radhadesh we have unlimited opportunities to carry out these simple instructions. Kindly bless us with the intelligence to give ourselves fully to you, as you have given Kṛṣṇa fully to us. It is the very least we can offer you. We know that we can never repay our debt to you, but we pray to keep trying throughout the eternity you have made available to us.

Aspiring to give you satisfaction and pleasure,

The servants of your servants at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha in Radhadesh, Belgium.

Saltillo

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our *daṇḍavats* at your lotus feet.

O great spiritual master and founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON. On this glorious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā we ask you to please allow us to serve you faithfully and purely within your sacred Vaiṣṇava *saṅga*, ISKCON. As you emphasized in following in the footsteps of the previous *ācāryas*, the devotees of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu are innovative in creating many means to attract the souls asleep on the lap of Māyā and forgetful of *kṛṣṇa-sevā*. As you always taught us, *bhakti* is not something stereotyped but is dynamic.



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So we are fighting hard in this area of northeastern Mexico, where it has been very difficult to attract the sleeping souls to surrender to Kṛṣṇa. Even though there is a Hindu community here, only a few are interested in attending the temple. Therefore, we pray that you please empower us. Please bless us so that we become your sincere and pure followers and that all our preaching programs, including our “bridge” programs, attract many souls to become Kṛṣṇa’s devotees and make their lives happy. Please inspire us to serve your mission cooperatively, without malice, so that your sacred Vaiṣṇava society, ISKCON, will flourish here.

Your humble servants at ISKCON’s Rādhā-Govinda Mandir in Saltillo, Mexico.

(written by Hare Kṛṣṇa Dāsa)

San Antonio

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

As years go by in our humble attempt to continue pushing on your mission here in San Antonio, Texas, we are beginning to realize how Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the only solution for all material miseries. Building a temple is not an easy feat for us, yet it becomes a breeze when we put you and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the center. As Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvami confirms in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 14.1):

*kathañcana smṛte yasmin duṣkaram sukaram bhavet
vismṛte viparītaṁ syāt śrī-caitanyaṁ namāmi tam*

“Things that are very difficult to do become easy to execute if one somehow or other simply remembers Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. But if one does not remember Him, even easy things become very difficult. To this Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu I offer my respectful obeisances.”

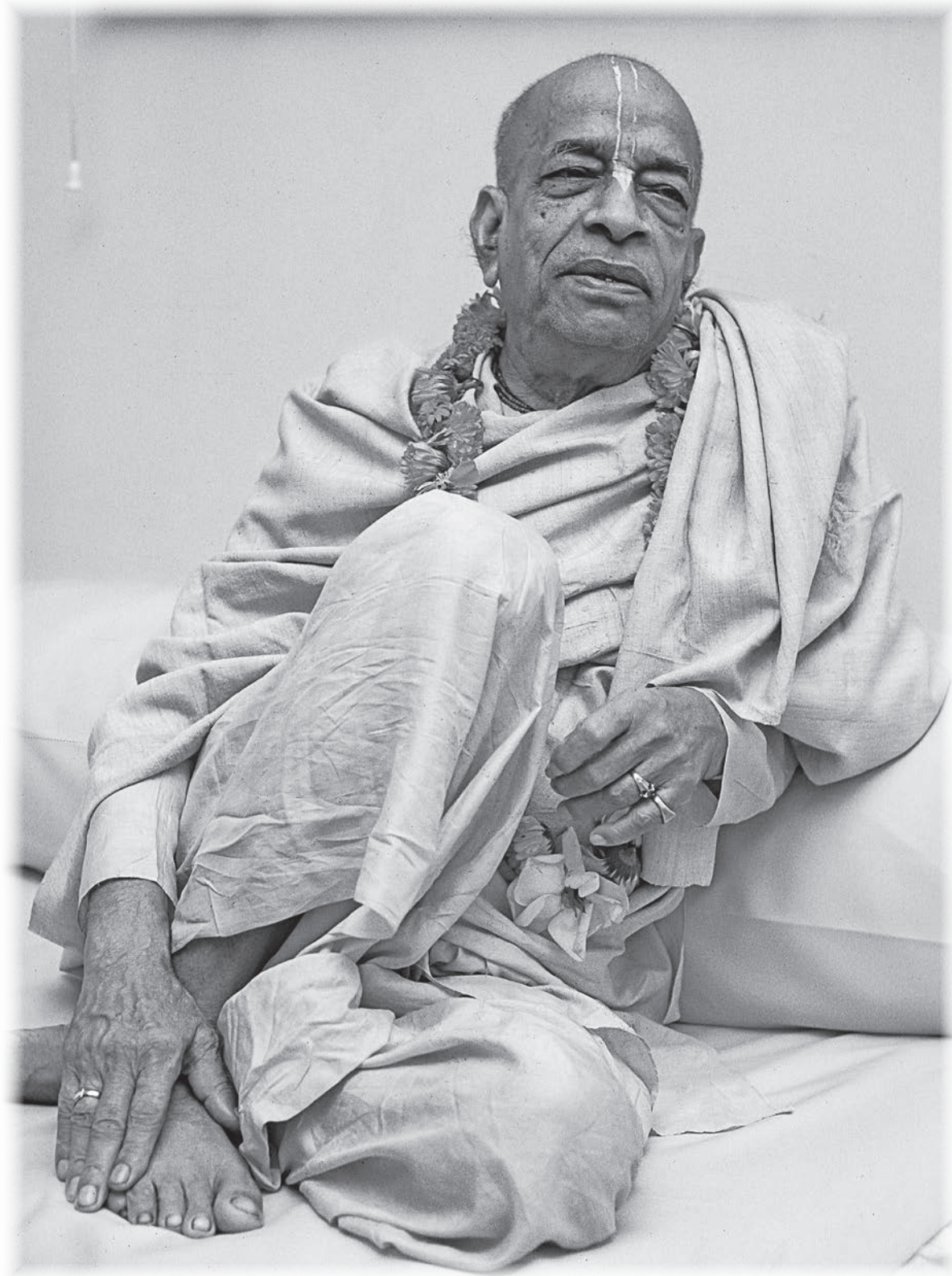
The amount of tolerance and compassion you showed in starting ISKCON, managing it, writing your books, and traveling and preaching for the last twelve years of your physical presence on this planet is insurmountable in this material world. As aspiring devotees hoping to spread your mission, we are eternally indebted to you for allowing us to participate in Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement.

As of May 1, 2017, we were in our new temple for exactly one year. After our previous center closed in August 2015, we began preaching out of a yoga center on Sundays for the next nine months. We had no funds, instruments, or books. In due course, after much outreach, these things manifested due to your mercy. Over the past year we have had many ecstatic outreach programs, including two very successful festivals funded by this city. We also started our own cable TV show and distributed your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* to the mayor and the Green Party presidential candidate. We again have a college program at the University of Texas branch in this city. Although our preaching center has been undergoing renovations for quite some time, we are now starting to see light at the end of the tunnel.

There have been many obstacles during this period, but we have remained determined to make this center into a place of understanding the real value of life—to become Kṛṣṇa conscious and to share Kṛṣṇa consciousness with others. The preaching is now beginning to gain some momentum. We have just started a bakery named Gopal’s Gourmet Baked Goods. We have two *brahmacārīs* currently residing in the



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temple, and possibly a new devotee entering very soon! His Holiness Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami is based here as well. We also continue to take guidance from His Holiness Guru Prasād Swami, and have had quite a bit of help from His Grace Rasikendra Prabhu out of Houston. We are blessed to be so supported and encouraged by such exalted Vaiṣṇavas. Actually, we would be lost without them, and words cannot express our gratitude.

There is an unlimited amount of service to be done, and it is a blessing to stay absorbed in transcendental activities on a moment-to-moment basis. We are in this for the long haul and realize that any setback or test is only meant for us to learn to manage things more intelligently.

We have huge plans for the coming year. We hope to continue with our outreach and expand all over the city very strategically. There are many artistic endeavors currently in the works, including a novel, two films, some music videos, screenplays, festivals, and music albums. We are hoping these endeavors will not only glorify Kṛṣṇa locally but also inspire devotees and attract newcomers from around the world.

Our top priority is to cultivate a real spiritual community in San Antonio. We wish to create a loving family environment in which each *jīva* can serve according to his or her natural inclination. We are hoping to serve in such a way as to develop a sense of spiritual camaraderie with no less a goal than satisfying Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servants in San Antonio, Texas, USA.

(written by Bhagavān Nārada Dāsa)

Seattle

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you!

Lord Caitanya says in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 22.54):

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

“The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment’s association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.”

It can save our lives!

By making the instruction of your guru to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness your life and soul, and by understanding the urgency and seriousness of how people are suffering and in need of spiritual enlightenment, you gave your life to the service of guru and Kṛṣṇa so that people all over the world could be saved. This is real love! You are an embodiment of real love, Śrīla Prabhupāda. By such unalloyed surrender to preaching, you became empowered to make Vaiṣṇavas not only in India but all over the world! This is confirmed in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

One example is my own grandfather, to whom you gave the name Harivilāsa Dāsa. It took only a day’s visit with you for him to become so convinced that for the rest of his life he has remained committed to



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you and Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* mission. That is the power of Your Divine Grace!

Seattle has been blessed by that "moment's" association because you have given him and other devotees the spiritual strength and the faith in Kṛṣṇa to steadily persevere in their efforts to keep Kṛṣṇa consciousness active—so much so that it has resulted not only in a new, grand temple being built in ISKCON's name, just as you instructed, but also in a farm with cows, weekly *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, regular programs for youth and adults alike, beautiful Deity worship, and most importantly, *sādhū-saṅga*.

Here on the farm my mother and siblings are endeavoring to follow your popular motto "Simple living, high thinking" by sustainably living off the land, growing our own vegetables, and training oxen. After the recent addition of two magnificent gheer cows, Lakshmi and Narayana, my mother is now training Narayana so that he can start plowing the fields one day. Thank you for giving us a higher understanding of how to properly and happily be God conscious and live our lives in a nontoxic way when everything around us is, in fact, toxic.

Thank you for bringing us Kṛṣṇa! Most people are not aware that they are actually suffering.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have brought us something so incomparably special and beautiful, something so refreshing. It is as if we were parched and dehydrated, stranded in the desert, and then suddenly, in a moment, a dark, heavy storm cloud appeared, ready to pour down torrential rains! Through your surrendered servants you have mercifully touched our hearts and refreshed us with the downpour of nectar called *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.

I personally thank you with every single ounce of gratitude I have in my heart. You made my life meaningful and made it so easy for me. I will never have to go out searching in vain for something higher, because now I have it all in my own palm. Thank you for all the moments of your association. We all pray to always remember your invaluable gifts and remain humble in any services we may do.

Your servants at ISKCON Seattle, Washington, USA.

(written by Bhaktin Amina)

Taichung

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace. All glories to your Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā.

I'm deeply honored to have the opportunity to write the offering to you on behalf of the Taichung *yātrā* in Taiwan.

Lord Caitanya says:

*kona bhāgye kāro saṁsāra kṣayonmukha haya
sādhū-saṅge tabe kṛṣṇe rati upajaya*

"By good fortune one becomes eligible to cross the ocean of nescience, and when one's term of material existence decreases, one may get an opportunity to associate with pure devotees. By such association, one's attraction to Kṛṣṇa is awakened." (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 22.45)

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura explains that really fortunate pious activity is called *bhakti-unmukhī sukṛti*, which means activity awakening one's dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and which is attainable only when one comes in contact with a devotee. However, most people in the material world are looking



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for something that appears like good fortune but that really only at best gives temporary relief from the unbearable pain of material existence. Such “good fortune” is like a painkiller: it may give temporary relief but can’t eradicate the cause of one’s pain. Similarly, no material remedy can end our suffering. We suffer because we have forgotten our relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

My beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, it’s astounding to me that despite my disqualifications I have had such good fortune as to be able to come in contact with your amazing spiritual warriors (devotees) and your profound, complete, and crystal-clear teachings of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, both of which carry the unlimited mercy able to extinguish the blazing fire of our material existence. Your torch of transcendental knowledge really opened our eyes, penetrated the cloud of false ego, and drove away a variety of misconceptions and impurities that misguide people in this Kali-yuga. I was in this danger and was not even aware of it until I encountered the difficulties of preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness to people in Taiwan, where there are all kinds of cheating religions and so-called spiritual practices.

“You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.” Your mission here in Taiwan is the same, even if we may not realize that the Taiwanese are highly influenced by *nirviśeṣa-vāda* and *śūnya-vāda*. The liberation of losing one’s identity and merging with the Supreme, promising as it does freedom from the miseries of material entanglement, is highly attractive for people who have suffered so much from endless heart-breaking experiences in their lives. But you kindly spread the stainless process of pure devotional service, which derides even liberation. Except for pure love for Kṛṣṇa, nothing can permanently eradicate all suffering, fulfill our deepest desires, and nourish our heart.

At *Bhagavad-gītā* 2.8, Arjuna helplessly says, “I can find no means to drive away this grief which is drying up my senses. I will not be able to dispel it even if I win a prosperous, unrivaled kingdom on earth with sovereignty like that of the demigods in heaven.” Your gift to us is the ultimate solution to cease such grief and emptiness permanently. You teach us that the goal of life is to awaken our dormant love for Kṛṣṇa by engaging our impulsive senses and turbulent mind in devotional service. You teach us that genuine nonviolence means not to put others into distress. People in general are trapped by ignorance in the material concept of life, and they perpetually suffer material pains. Thus if we don’t elevate them to spiritual knowledge, we are practicing violence. You exemplified your teachings and were dedicated life and soul to spreading spiritual knowledge. Your teachings will continue for thousands of years to deliver unlimited people from the real violent prison of ignorance. We are eternally indebted to you for your enlightening teachings.

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, at *Ādi* 14.1, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja writes, *kathāñcana smṛte yasmin duṣkaram sukaram bhavet/ viśmṛte viparītaṁ syāt*: “Things that are very difficult to do become easy to execute if one somehow or other simply remembers Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. But if one does not remember Him, even easy things become very difficult.” Similarly, without your mercy, modern scientists cannot understand even the basic fact that life comes from life. The material civilization is based upon the false theory that life comes from matter, and thus it only creates more complexity in life. More and more sense enjoyment has led to more and more depression and emptiness; more and more time-saving facilities have resulted in less and less time for loved ones; more and more hospitals and pharmaceuticals have resulted in more and more serious diseases; more and more “knowledge” has produced but more and more confusion; and more and more cheating religion has resulted in less and less peace, happiness, and compassion.

Merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are preaching *bhāgavata-dharma*, the teachings of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu as they are, and thus you make difficult topics easy to understand. This *saṅkīrtana* movement of Caitanya Mahāprabhu is giving out freely the treasure of *śuddha-bhakti*, pure love for Kṛṣṇa. It is the only hope for delivering the people of this age from hypocrisy and war. I pray that I can constantly bear your teachings and instructions in my heart so I can access even one drop of your oceanlike mercy and be engaged in your service as a servant of your servants.

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, you conquered my heart the first time I read your historic Bengali poem *Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma*, which you wrote upon arriving in Boston, carrying within your heart the



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instructions of your spiritual master and unflinching faith in the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Everything beautiful in the material world becomes pale in comparison with the beauty of your pure and compassionate heart. Your poem is a breath of fresh air from the spiritual world. I'm especially touched by the following stanzas:

Somehow or other, O Lord, You have brought me here to speak about You. Now, my Lord, it is up to You to make me a success or failure as You like.

O spiritual master of all the worlds! I can simply repeat Your message, so if You like You can make my power of speaking suitable for their understanding.

Only by Your causeless mercy will my words become pure. I am sure that when this transcendental message penetrates their hearts they will certainly feel englanded and thus become liberated from all unhappy conditions of life.

O Lord, I am just like a puppet in Your hands. So if You have brought me here to dance, then make me dance, make me dance, O Lord, make me dance as You like.

Again and again I sincerely meditate on the moonlike cooling devotion and humility you reveal in this poem, which is the crown jewel of the whole universe. By your mercy, I aspire to taste the mood of surrender you reveal in this poem.

At *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.10 the sages of Naimiṣāraṇya say to Sūta Gosvāmī:

*prāyeṇālpāyusaḥ sabhya kalāv asmin yuge janāḥ
mandāḥ sumanda-matayo manda-bhāgyā hy upadrutāḥ*

“O learned one, in this iron Age of Kali men almost always have but short lives. They are quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unlucky, and, above all, always disturbed.”

The above verse is the portrayal of the present age. At any moment something insignificant can easily cause serious quarrel and destroy the harmony and peace among people, even devotees. Anyone sincere about spiritual life should be very careful to curb the tendency to commit offenses against devotees, which destroy everything precious. One of the last things you said before you left this world was “Your love for me will be shown by how you cooperate with each other after I am gone.” It seems you predicted one of the most serious obstacles for our *saṅkīrtana* movement: conflicts among devotees. In a book of your Guru Mahārāja's aphorisms we find these gems:

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

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.

You fully assimilated these truths and set the perfect example for us to follow. Cooperation can be achieved only by applying such axiomatic principles in our life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, principles that reveal the essence of *bhakti*. Where there is sunshine, there is no darkness. Only when we practice the chanting of the holy names while carefully avoiding all offenses to the holy names and to others is there hope for us to make the desired progress and penetrate our obstinate false prestige and selfishness based on false ego and finally attain the reality of the spiritual kingdom—“unity in diversity.” The more we progress on our spiritual journey, the more we will face subtle tests. In the beginning you created our good fortune despite our disqualifications. Now, please, I earnestly beg you to bestow your causeless mercy on us so we can acknowledge the darkest, deep-rooted *anarthas* in our hearts, all the while patiently suffering the reactions of our past misdeeds resulting from our ignorance, with a humble and tolerant state of mind.

At *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 12.3.51, Śukadeva Gosvāmī says to Mahārāja Parīkṣit:



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*kaler doṣa-nidhe rājan asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta-saṅgaḥ param vrajet*

“My dear King, although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age: Simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom.”

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, please keep me bound in your love for Kṛṣṇa by blessing me to become an eternal humble servant of the servants of your servants in Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mission, within our big spiritual family of ISKCON. “Gurudeva! By a drop of your mercy make this servant of yours more humble than a blade of grass. Give me strength to bear all trials and troubles, and free me from all desires for personal honor.” Gurudeva, I sincerely pray that I will always serve your mission and fulfill your desire as a resolute soldier in Lord Caitanya’s transcendental army, of which you are the commander in chief.

Your servants in Taichung, Taiwan.

(written by Śyāmasundarī Devī Dāsī)

Taipei

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

One more year has passed, and now we again assemble at your divine lotus feet, trying somehow to express our appreciation and gratitude for all that you have done for us.

You changed our lives. You made us fortunate. Where would we be if we had not received your boundless compassion?

In 1976 you instructed Tamāl Krishna Goswami to go to China and preach. As a result, he and other devotees started preaching in mainland China. Devotees also began preaching in Taiwan, and a small center was opened in Taipei, the capital. Your ISKCON society still has a presence in the form of a center and devotees in Taipei.

We are trying to give your mercy to the people of Taiwan, in the form of *harināma*, distribution of your books, yearly Ratha-yātrā and Janmāṣṭamī celebrations, a weekly *Bhagavad-gītā* study group, and the regular Sunday Feast programs. We are painfully aware of our limitations in this regard. There are so few devotees here, and yet we are doing our best to reach out to the conditioned souls. Please give us your mercy so that we can properly reach out to the people here, who are suffering from so many material miseries. Please give them your mercy so that some may become devotees and assist us in our preaching efforts.

We are attempting to give shelter to all the fortunate souls who come to the ISKCON temple. *Māyā* is very strong, and so very few people manage to come, and even among those who visit us, many find it very difficult to accept the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. They fail to understand the importance of spiritual life and thus go away. This is very painful for us to witness.

Please bless our power of speech so that we can convince people of the urgency and importance of spiritual life.



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Māyā is so strong that many times our own minds are covered and we ourselves struggle in spiritual life. We thank you for giving us your temples, your books, and the association of your devotees, without which we could not have survived the onslaught of *māyā*.

For ourselves, we are happy with our small center because this way we know all the devotees by name and have a family atmosphere. A part of me does not want to lose this intimacy with devotees. But we also feel for the suffering souls in Taiwan, and so we beg for your mercy so that we can expand our preaching and reach out and help as many people as possible.

We sincerely hope that more people join us. Then we can increase our preaching and build a big temple for your pleasure and the pleasure of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

People are in ignorance in the material world. Without your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we would know nothing about devotional service. For your gift of pure devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa we are eternally indebted to you.

You built a house in which the whole world can live. May we be capable instruments helping to fill this house for Your Divine Grace.

Your servants in Taipei, Taiwan.

(written by Kṛṣṇa Bhāvana Devī Dāsī)

Tokyo

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you on this auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā. All glories to your mercy, and all glories to your divine presence, which we experience through your disciples.

In this fifty-first year after you founded ISKCON, which also is the fifth year after the founding of the new temple in Funabori, we humble devotees at ISKCON New Gaya Dhāma, Tokyo, would like to take the opportunity to express our sincere and heartfelt gratitude to you for your efforts in purifying this Land of the Rising Sun.

As per the fond memories shared by His Grace Satyadeva Prabhu, one of your senior disciples, from his initial days in Japan, we have learned many interesting facts about your love for Japan and how the first temple was established in Japan under Your Divine Grace's direction and mercy.

It was in December of 1967 when you first set your lotus feet in this Land of the Rising Sun. You spent a night in a hotel at the Tokyo airport on your way back to San Francisco after recuperating in India from the stroke you suffered in May of that year.

In late 1969 you mercifully sent His Grace Sudāmā Dāsa, your personal servant in San Francisco, along



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with Bali Mārdan Prabhu, who was your right-hand ISKCON manager, to establish a temple in Japan. We do realize your special mercy in sending your most beloved and dear disciples on this mission. The first temple in Tokyo was established in Shibuya in that same year by those empowered devotees. Later your mercy continued to flow in Japan in the form of more of your disciples—Her Grace Cintāmaṇi Devī Dāsī, His Grace Bhūrijana Prabhu, His Grace Satyavrata Prabhu, and His Grace Amogha Prabhu.

In August of 1970 you kindly set foot again in Tokyo, Japan, and visited the new temple along with some of your senior disciples. At that time you installed Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindajī in the temple. Your presence in Japan enabled the signing of the publishing contract with the Dai Nippon Printing Company, which agreed to print the *Kṛṣṇa* book authored by you. During your two-week stay in Japan, your senior disciples spread your and the Supreme Lord's mercy in the form of daily *harināmas* in Ginza, the shopping capital of Tokyo.

Devotees associated with ISKCON New Gaya feel greatly indebted to you and bow down at your lotus feet. We are extremely grateful to you for giving us this facility to spread the holy names in the Land of the Rising Sun. Though Japan is materially very progressive and advanced, people still lack the basic understanding of the purpose of human life. Ignorance of the Supreme Lord is deeply rooted in the society, and the urge to ape the modern Western culture is one of the major reasons.

By your mercy, the number of devotees in Japan is increasing. We are very fortunate to regularly receive the blessings of elevated souls in your divine army, such as His Holiness Kavicandra Swami, His Holiness Bhānu Swami, His Grace Vaiśeṣika Prabhu, and His Grace Satyadeva Prabhu. They all guide us and enable us to progress on the path you have so mercifully shown to the whole world.

ISKCON New Gaya Dhāma was officially established in Tokyo in 2011 in Funabori. The presiding Deities are Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, Śrī Śrī Nitāi-Guarasundara, and Śrī Śrī Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā.

Last year we established a team of senior devotees called the “Temple Vision Team” to project and realize the vision for the Japan *yātrā*. The devotees on this team come together every month and discuss various aspects of spreading the *saṅkīrtana* movement.

Please help us fulfill the vision you had when you first placed your lotus feet on this land.

More devotees are getting involved in the temple *sevās* and celebrating the Vaiṣṇava festivals; all this is helping them confirm their relationship with the Supreme Lord.

We organized a fund-raiser last year, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of ISKCON and the 5th anniversary of the founding of the new temple in Funabori. The response was very good, and many guests came to help the temple and the devotees.

Regular *harināmas* and *kīrtana-melas* organized by the temple are involving more and more people in the chanting of the *mahā-mantra*.

Local devotees are busy translating *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *The Nectar of Devotion*, and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* into Japanese. They are working to complete the translations as soon as possible. With your blessing, we will soon have more Japanese books for distribution and be able to reach out to a wider range of people.

Though the number of devotees here is limited, we see your causeless mercy being extended to all the devotees, and this motivates them to do more and more *sevā*.

Had it not been for your mercy, we would have wasted this lifetime hankering for material pleasures. Every word that came from your mouth was for our benefit. You were always filled with love, with loyalty to your spiritual master, and with a perfect service attitude.

We, the devotees at ISKCON New Gaya, Japan, are trying to render whatever little service we can by your mercy in the effort of spreading the holy names.

Please engage us eternally in service to your mission and that of our *ācāryas*, namely spreading the *saṅkīrtana* movement. We strive to make this lifetime meaningful by spreading the holy names in Japan and glorifying the supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

We remain always at your service,

Your devotees at ISKCON New Gaya, Tokyo, Japan.



HOMAGES FROM ISKCON CENTERS



Tucson

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

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

Divine Glances

Prabhupāda, my whole life is yours,
Since '74, when I came through the doors
To see if I was blessed by chance
To receive your all-merciful glance.

New and raw and so much in need,
I heard the principles and readily agreed,
Surrendering fully, no thought of finance,
All to witness your beneficent glance.

I was soon trained up and out in the lots,
Approaching souls, my stomach in knots.
By performing such sacrifice, I'd advance,
Just to get your sympathetic glance.

You were the focus where we put our attention,
Carrying out your instructions our only intention,
Simplicity and surrender our only stance,
Mercy received by your powerful glance.

Your leaving so soon caught me unprepared
And left me alone, and somewhat scared.
Would I still be inspired to chant and dance
Without your personal radiant glance?

Persevering despite the great loss,
I knew that progress comes at a cost.
Not following purely is taking a chance
Of missing out on your magnanimous glance.

But recalling your words, I held to my heart
The divine instructions you did impart,
The preaching field our service to enhance,
For I knew I'd still have your encouraging glance.

Let me take shelter in all you have given.
Inspiration through example keeps us quite driven
To love Lord Kṛṣṇa in full divine trance,
Just by receiving your sweet loving glance.



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.9.7 you observe that “Persons destined to live in deserts are understood to be sharing the reactions for the sin of *brahma-hatyā*, the killing of a *brāhmaṇa*.” How is it, then, that our Tucson temple, deep in Arizona’s Sonoran Desert, has been such an oasis for the guests and residents of this region for the past thirty years?

There is only one answer, Śrīla Prabhupāda: Your ever-fresh glance, —inspiring us to distribute your books, Govinda’s *prasādam*, and the Lord’s holy names—is what allows us to survive and thrive. Your mercy is what we live for.

Your servants in Tucson, Arizona, USA.

(written by Sandāminī Devī Dāsī)

Ujjain

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances on this most auspicious occasion of your divine appearance for the benefit of fallen souls all over the world. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

As time is unfolding, the world is becoming even more materialistic and sinful. At the same time, however, your International Society for Krishna Consciousness is saving more and more conditioned souls from descending into hellish life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, with the passage of time we are becoming more and more aware of your glories. We are realizing that if we simply glorify Your Divine Grace and always keep you in the center as the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON, then all our endeavors will become meaningful and successful.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are humbly trying to serve Your Divine Grace under the kind guidance of your very dear servant His Holiness Bhakti Chāru Swami, who is the GBC for the Ujjain temple and has also been elected chairman of the GBC for this year. We seek your kind permission to present a report of some significant events that took place in the temple during the past year, by your causeless mercy.

Their Lordships Śrī Jagannātha, Śrī Baladeva, and Śrīmatī Subhadrā Mahārāṇī arrived at our main temple from the place where we were running the Midday Meal Program. To welcome Their Lordships, under the kind guidance of His Holiness Bhakti Chāru Swami and His Holiness Candramauli Swami we had a grand Ratha-yātrā festival in your divine presence as you sat on the chariot. Now we have a total of five grand, worshipable altars, one each for Śrī Śrī Rādhā–Madana-mohana, Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, Śrī Śrī Jagannātha-Baladeva-Subhadrā, Śrī Śrī Prahlāda-Nṛsiṃhadeva, and Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi.

On the occasion of the seventy-first anniversary of his appearance, His Holiness Bhakti Chāru Swami had us celebrate a Śrīla Prabhupāda memorial festival in your loving memory. On this occasion, more than three thousand devotees from all over the world assembled in Ujjain to glorify Your Divine Grace. Also, His Holiness Bhakti Chāru Swami launched his book, *Ocean of Mercy*, a memoir of his life centering on the association and instructions His Holiness received from Your Divine Grace.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is going to spread to every city, town, and village all over the world. Accomplishing this monumental task may require many generations of devotees, so we should have a succession plan through which one generation of leaders can prepare the leaders of the next generation. To implement that in Ujjain, we recently changed our management structure. Many young, intelligent devotees were given responsibilities in different areas, including in top management. Śrīla Prabhupāda, we humbly beg Your Divine Grace to please shower your blessings upon us so that we can lead ISKCON Ujjain to great heights.



HOMAGES FROM ISKCON CENTERS



Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have taught us that devotees should always get very nice *prasādam*. To ensure this, we built a new, more spacious *prasādam* hall for devotees and guests, along with a spacious new kitchen.

Last year we started our new devotee-training program, and by your causeless mercy more and more young boys are joining your sublime movement. Now we have more than ninety full-time resident devotees.

To train and inspire these devotees very nicely, we conducted a *bhakti-śāstrī* course, taught by senior devotees in the temple. By your causeless mercy, the first group of devotees graduated this year and the second group is now studying hard.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have an Āyurvedic clinic called Arogya Niketan. Through that arrangement we have a wonderful opportunity to serve your beloved servants who come for treatment. Many of these devotees, your direct disciples, gave the prime of their youth for spreading your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Some of the senior devotees who graced the facility the past year are His Holiness Candramauli Swami, His Holiness Jayādvaita Swami, His Holiness Bhakti Vidyā Pūrṇa Swami, His Grace Bhūrījāna Prabhu, and His Grace Nareśvara Prabhu.

By your causeless mercy, we have also opened a new Avanti School of Excellence, a Govinda's restaurant, and an Āyurvedic clinic outside the temple premises to increase the participation of the larger community in our activities.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your causeless mercy more and more souls are becoming connected with ISKCON Ujjain through youth preaching, congregational preaching, and book distribution.

In youth preaching, we have started organizing monthly youth festivals. The young boys especially appreciate our drama performances.

In congregational preaching, your Sunday Love Feast program is helping us inspire more and more people. We also hold *harināma-saṅkīrtana* every evening. The local people in Ujjain, who once thought of ISKCON as a foreign society, are becoming connected to us, and we see an increased participation among the local people in our grand celebrations during festivals such as Janmāṣṭamī, Ratha-yātrā, and Gaura-Pūrṇimā.

In book distribution, we are continuing with our two traveling bus parties, Śrī Śacīnandana Traveling Saṅkīrtana Party and Śrī Nityānanda Traveling Saṅkīrtana Party. They are carrying on your most sublime program with ever-new enthusiasm.

More and more of the people who have accepted your books have begun chanting and following the four regulative principles. They also visit our temple during our annual summer camp and during festivals, and thus they are becoming more closely connected to ISKCON.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your transcendental pleasure we are planning to undertake the following services in the coming year. We sincerely beg for your causeless blessings so that we can please Your Divine Grace through our humble endeavors: the Mid-Term GBC Meeting; the Śrīla Prabhupāda Memorial Festival; the Annual Youth Retreat; and increased book distribution, youth preaching, and congregational preaching.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we beg for your blessings so that in the coming year we can benefit more and more people by inducing them to accept your most precious gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We completely depend on your causeless mercy to be able to maintain and develop our projects and take very good care of our existing devotees, so that they can increase their appreciation for this most cherished gift you have so magnanimously given us, without considering our disqualifications.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we beg at the dust of your divine lotus feet to allow us to become humble instruments in your service to the mission of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Prabhupāda-*kī jaya!*

Your humble servants at ISKCON Ujjain, India.



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



Villaggio Hare Krishna

Beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Knowing that I was one of the pioneers of ISKCON Italy, devotees often ask me to relate the story of the beginning of our movement in this country and Your Divine Grace's visit to Rome.

The story begins when Dhanañjaya Dāsa and his wife, Bāla Gopāla Devī Dāsī, came to see you in your room at Bhaktivedanta Manor and asked your permission to start a center in Rome. You opened your eyes wide and your face lit up with a big smile: "Yes," you said enthusiastically, "go to Rome, find a house, and write to me. I will come and stay with you."

Not long after that conversation, you honored your promise: we started the center in Rome in October 1973, and a few months later, in May of 1974, you came to stay with us.

The house was small: the temple room was in the basement, with a simple altar and small Gaura-Nitāi Deities installed on Lord Narasimhadeva's appearance day, a couple of weeks before your arrival.

The house was in a busy part of Rome, and your bedroom/office faced a crossroads from where the sound of the traffic and the horns of the cars was very intense. Dhanañjaya apologized for the noise and said he hope it didn't disturb you too much.

"Not at all," you replied, "that means the house is located in a very central section of the city. Thank you for establishing a center in this very important city. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu will take you by the hand and bring you back home, back to Godhead." Your words left us astonished and speechless.

We had prepared your room on the mezzanine floor. Just opposite was the kitchen; next to your room was the *brahmacārīṇī āśrama*, which became the room where your servant and secretary stayed, and in front of it there was your bathroom. Everything was extremely simple: the furniture consisted of a low table with a lamp, a basic iron bookcase, and a modest bed. The door of your room did not even close properly!

You didn't mind the inconveniences and the noise coming from the streets and the kitchen, and you stayed undisturbed for a whole week, enthusing your disciples, preaching to the guests, going out for conferences, and keeping up with your usual translation work.

After a full preaching day and a little rest—at around midnight, when everything around was silent and the air cooler—you used to switch on the light in your room, and I knew that you were absorbed in the timeless wisdom of Vedic knowledge.

In fact, we *brahmacārīṇīs* were sleeping on the terrace-roof of the house, and from up there we could see the light coming from your window illuminating the garden. I would then envision Your Divine Grace at the desk translating from old Sanskrit books and passing down to us your beautiful purports, which have been enlightening my life all these years. With that vision in mind I would fall asleep under the clear and warm night sky.

You looked very happy in Rome. You liked the city and the weather, and each morning you went out for a stroll in the beautiful parks of the capital, such as Villa Borghese. One day the devotees brought you to see the Coliseum, and in front of that huge ancient amphitheater you commented, "Where is now the big, big Roman empire? Only some ruins and a few stones are left!"

As soon as we had gotten the news of your arrival, we rushed here and there to organize for you a nice public preaching program, and with the help of some friends we booked the hall of the prestigious hotel known as "Parco dei Principi" (Princes' Park), with more than six hundred seats, in the center of Rome. To advertise the event, we printed many black-and-white posters with your picture and name and pasted them all over the city, inviting the people to attend your lecture on the 25th of May, free of charge.

Since up till then we hadn't noticed much interest in Indian gurus and philosophy among the Romans, we were afraid that hardly anyone would attend and the program would be a flop. However, when we



HOMAGES FROM ISKCON CENTERS



entered the hall on the evening of the program to join you on the stage, we were amazed to see people sitting on the floor and standing in the corridors and in the back of the hall, since all the seats were filled. The hall was packed! More than eight hundred people came to hear you that evening, and while you lectured on a *Bhagavad-gītā* verse they all listened silently and respectfully. After your talk you answered many questions, and after the program you expressed your appreciation to us, saying that Italians took the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness very seriously.

The program was a great success. Some of the boys and girls who were present became full-time devotees, and lots of people came to visit our center. By visiting Rome, Your Divine Grace inaugurated a new era in the consciousness of the Italian people, and the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement spread like wildfire all over the country.

Once, when someone asked if you were able to manifest some mystic power, you answered that you had the power to transform material consciousness into spiritual consciousness. That power is actually the greatest, and you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, fully displayed it during that public program in Rome.

When the time came for you to leave Rome and travel to other destinations, you turned to us neophytes, with all our defects and shortcomings—you even had to go to the kitchen to show us how to cook—and with folded hands you thanked everyone, apologizing for any inconveniences you had caused!

When we heard such humble words, our eyes filled with tears and we were unable to speak. Once more you astonished us with your grateful attitude and great compassion.

May I always remember those incredible moments with you, and the miracles you performed in front of my eyes. May I always acknowledge your presence in whatever has been accomplished by devotees here in Italy and throughout the world.

Without your mercy and constant help and guidance, I wouldn't be able to even pronounce a few words of glorification in your honor! May the desire to please you expand more and more in my heart, because to be an instrument in your hands is the key to overcoming all obstacles and in the end being reunited with you.

Your servants at Villaggio Hare Krishna, Bergamo, Italy.

(written by Āli Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāśī)

Vṛndāvana

Our dearmost Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances unto your lotus feet. All glories to you on this most auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

After evolving through many species of life, by the Lord's mercy we received this very valuable human form. Now by your blessings we have been awarded the privilege and opportunity to serve in your grandest temple of all, here in Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma.

You appeared in this world to give us the three greatest riches of life. In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 20.143, Lord Caitanya says to Sanātana Gosvāmī:

*veda-śāstre kahe sambandha, abhidheya, prayojana
kṛṣṇa, kṛṣṇa-bhakti, prema,—tina mahā-dhana*



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017





HOMAGES FROM ISKCON CENTERS



“In the Vedic literatures, Kṛṣṇa is the central point of attraction, and His service is our activity. To attain the platform of love of Kṛṣṇa is life’s ultimate goal. Therefore Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa’s service, and love of Kṛṣṇa are the three greatest riches of life.”

Your every thought, word, and activity was meant to give us these most valuable and rarest of all gifts. You lived for us—to bring us to the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara and Their Vraja-dhāma. You are a selfless puppet in Govinda’s hands, and you saw yourself in that way.

Your sincere servants here at the Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir have come from different parts of the world, with different upbringings and backgrounds. But since our only aspiration is to please you, the *guru-paramparā*, and Their Lordships, somehow you have created an atmosphere of cooperation and respect among everyone. We are all striving to fulfill your desire to have a place where devotees of the Lord can visit or reside and experience a Kṛṣṇa conscious environment unparalleled anywhere else in the world.

Our main focus in serving here is to give the pilgrims a favorable Kṛṣṇa conscious experience they will remember for the rest of their lives. Though we have various departments in the temple, we all try to work together to fulfill your vision for Vṛndāvana ISKCON. The result is that many people who visit tell us that they feel right at home and well cared for.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* lecture you gave here on the 10th of December, 1975, you said, “Vṛndāvana life means attachment to Kṛṣṇa. So if you can create that central attachment to Kṛṣṇa, then you can create Vṛndāvana anywhere.” With your blessings and mercy, may we create that attachment to Kṛṣṇa in the hearts all the devotees who visit us here in Vṛndāvana and thus make our lives perfect.

May we increase our most heartfelt gratitude toward you and faith in you, for these will give us enormous strength to fight the onslaught of the material energy we face in our daily activities. May we be able to appreciate more and more the contribution you gave to human society so people may be saved from being barbarians. May we imbibe from you the dedication and faith you have for your Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. This is the only way we can receive the full blessings and mercy of the Supreme Lord. May you continue to shower your mercy upon us, for this will guarantee us the engagement of serving you and the *paramparā*. This will enable us to also engage others in the same process mentioned in the Vedic literatures. May you continue to empower us to make a difference in the hearts of everyone who comes and has *darśana* of your *mandira* and your most worshipable presiding Deities.

Please forgive us for any shortcomings and for any offenses committed knowingly or unknowingly while serving you and your devotees.

May your glories spread all over the three worlds. We take shelter of your lotus feet birth after birth. You are the savior of the fallen souls.

Śrīla Prabhupāda-*kī jaya!*

Your most undeserving servants at Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir, Vṛndāvana, India.

(written by His Holiness Bhakti Anugraha Janārdana Swami)



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



Wiesbaden

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we offer our humble obeisances unto you and thank you for your wonderful deeds. You have changed our lives forever. Thank you, thank you, thank you, from the bottom of our hearts. Thanks to your mercy, we were able to take shelter at the feet of our Guru Mahārājas. Thanks to your mercy, we were able to get a bit closer to Kṛṣṇa. Thanks to the temple your disciples built, we have the opportunity to serve the Vaiṣṇavas. There are no words in this world suitable to fully express our thanks to you.

Kṛṣṇa brought us to your lotus feet.
Now in old age we are very touched by this indeed.
During our present lives and forever,
There would have been no hope, ever.
We wanted to be big leaders,
But your mercy keeps us small and eager.
Your lotus books are so transcendental.
This is how you gave us life eternal—
A life full of meaning.
This is what you gave us, indeed.
You brought light into our darkness.
Thank you for your kindness.

“How did you do it? How did you get them to shave their heads? How did you get them to wear *dhotīs* and *kurtās* and *tilaka*? How did you get the girls to wear saris?” These were some of the questions news reporters used to ask you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You explained that although there had been many editions of the *Bhagavad-gītā* in English, it had not been presented “as it is,” and therefore there had not been any programs to train students to follow its principles. Although there were so many branches of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan—both within and outside India—and although they were disseminating books, there was no program for training young men and women to become followers of Vedic culture. Books were required, and training was also required. And you gave both.

These are some of your many valuable instructions we are trying to follow at ISKCON Wiesbaden’s Hari Nāma Desh.

Thank you for caring so much for us. We hope that we will always be able to be true followers of your instructions.

Your insignificant granddisciples at Hari Nāma Desh, ISKCON Wiesbaden, Germany.



Homages from
THE PUBLISHERS

Bhaktivedanta Book Trust

(Far East / Middle East)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances beneath the dust of your divine lotus feet. All and infinite glories to Your Merciful Divine Grace!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it seems that in order to write an offering about your true glories we must first truly understand you. Yet this is innately impossible, as your true glories and eternal position will ever remain utterly inconceivable to us. We may use so many words, yet if we had to put it all into one word, whatever we say seems to always come down to this: You are *amazing*!

Just how many times can we use this word, this concept, in relationship to you?

The answer, of course, is *unlimitedly*!

Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself describes in His great *Gītā* that this is just what we *jīvas* do in regards to the soul. Some of us see the soul as amazing, some describe him as amazing, some hear of him as amazing, while others, even after hearing of him, cannot understand him at all.

But here the Lord is referring to, if we can say this, “normal” or “ordinary” *jīva* souls.

If this is so, then how could this possibly be describing you, Śrīla Prabhupāda? You are that *most special soul* of all, a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra* of the Lord, a *paramahansa* pure unalloyed devotee, the true *ācārya* of the three worlds who was sent directly by the Lord Himself to deliver the rest of us ordinary souls suffering throughout the material world!

And therefore, Śrīla Prabhupāda, how infinitely more than just “amazing” are you?

So, like toddlers, we will continue to try to express our so-very-limited understanding of your glories, and of course this attempt will forever fall infinitely short of the reality of your divine position.

You who so mercifully came to this sad and temporary world from another realm, a realm of eternal sweetness, just to save us and bring us back to our real home.

You who, when you finally appeared before us in those magical years 1966–77, so overwhelmed us with the inconceivable spiritual power of your *vapu*, of your causeless love for us, that it forever changed our lives in an instant.

You who then delivered to us your transcendental *vāñī*, to set us on the correct course for the rest of our lives. And who continue to inspire us to distribute those same pure teachings to others, no matter who or where they may be.

And now, wonderfully, by your divine grace we see Muslims in traditional dress dancing blissfully along with *harināma* parties worldwide, and grasping tightly onto your books translated into their own beloved Arabic language. Book distributors are very excited and are sending us images and incredible *saṅkīrtana* stories now from all over the world, which can be seen here: <https://www.facebook.com/bbtfeme>.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we hope, we beg, and we pray for your divine blessings so that this miracle may only increase more and more. Please allow us to be an instrument in your divine lotus hands!

All glories to Your Most *Amazing, Amazing, Amazing* Divine Grace, and to your causeless mercy for saving all of us, along with the entire planet and beyond . . .

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servants at the offices of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, Far East / Middle East.

(written by Satyanārāyaṇa Dāsa)



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (North America)

*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,

You have written that the book scores are the only solace in your life. We hope to give you some solace here from the North American BBT (NABBT).

In the last eight years, book-sale remittances at the NABBT have increased by 220%, culminating in remittances for 2016 totaling \$2,058,394. A total of 1,339,736 books were distributed last year, including 174,335 hardback books, 468,814 medium books, and 696,587 small books. That includes a total of 229,292 softback *Bhagavad-gītās* and 35,348 hardback.

In 2016, 1,224 *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* sets were distributed, and 465 *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* sets, keeping up with the temple pledges. Also included are the sales totals for all books for the last eight years, showing a very steady increase of 134% over that period.

The exciting, ongoing, and very close relationship between the BBT and the GBC/Temple Presidents of ISKCON in North America is the main reason for the substantial increase in sales. There is a great trust and reciprocation between the two entities, and this Kṛṣṇa conscious cooperation is forged in the deep desire to please you in the most intimate way.

One very exciting trend is that more and more individuals and small groups of devotees are distributing significant numbers of books, which we tally in our “Miscellaneous” category. Many entities that were in that category last year have now graduated into full-fledged ISKCON Temples or Preaching Centers. Among them are Yuga Dharma, Minneapolis; Krishna Village, Delaware; Ypsilanti, Michigan; Farmington Hills, Michigan; Mantra Lounge, Pennsylvania; Richmond, Virginia; and Team Yamuna Mayi, California. There are about fifty other individuals and congregations who purchased over \$45,000 worth of books this year and are on the verge of turning into new preaching centers and temples. *Ṗṛthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma*—book distribution is spreading to every town and village! All glories to the *saṅkīrtana* devotees!! All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!!

Your servants at the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust offices in North America.

(written by Sura Dāsa)



HOMAGES FROM THE PUBLISHERS



Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (Northern Europe)

*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*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I saw a poem, written by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, which described Kṛṣṇa's qualities starting with each letter of the alphabet. The poem was written in Sanskrit, but it gave me the idea to glorify your qualities also by starting with each letter of the alphabet.

A – Abhay, your name, which means “without fear.” To take a ship to an unknown land, surely one would have to be without fear, and so “fearless” is part of your name. The letter *a* also stands for *ācārya*. You are the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

B – Bona fide. You are part of an authentic disciplic succession—recognized, real, and genuine; this is “bona fide.” A bona fide spiritual master you are, and bona fide knowledge is what you gave us. The letter *b* also reminds us of the books you wrote, which include your translations and purports. These books are your pride, your gift to humanity. And the letter *b* also reminds us of your BBT, which you created for the publication of your books.

C – The letter *c* reminds us of consciousness, as in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but in order to describe your qualities, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I would like to use *c* to describe your charm. Everyone describes being captivated by your charm. Charm is a quality that makes others feel attracted to someone; it is the power to please others. Śrīla Prabhupāda, many people who met you speak of your charm. This is certainly a remarkable quality of yours.

D – Devotion, determination, dedication—these are all yours in the greatest measure.

E – Eternal. May you live eternally in our hearts.

F – Faith, such as in your faith in your Guru Mahārāja. You are the living example of faith in action. Everything you did was carried by the strength of your faith in your Guru Mahārāja and Kṛṣṇa.

G – Genuine. You are a genuine person, sincere and honest, who taught us genuine knowledge, unadulterated and real.

H – Hero. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a hero.

I – The letter *I* is a synonym for the false ego, or “I-me-mine.” Thanks to your teachings, we now understand the difference between the real “I” and the false “I.” Thanks to your teachings we now understand that everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa and that “I-me-mine” is illusion.

J – This letter stands for us, the *jīvas*, wandering in the material world since time immemorial. By your causeless mercy you have delivered countless *jīvas* from the clutches of the material world. *Jaya!* All glories to you.

K – K, of course, is for Kṛṣṇa. You are Kṛṣṇa's dear devotee eternally.

L – The letter *l* is for love. We do not understand what love is, but you have demonstrated love through your dedication to alleviating the suffering of souls in the material world. Love without expectation of return, which only gives and is without personal interest—that is love. You are, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, are the best example of love for Kṛṣṇa and love for all suffering souls—for all time.

M – The *mahā-mantra*. Lord Caitanya appeared on earth and gave all beings the *mahā-mantra*. You continued Lord Caitanya's mission by spreading the *mahā-mantra*'s glories in the Western countries. *M* is



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



also for the mercy you showed conditioned souls. It is by your mercy that we receive the *mahā-mantra*.

N – Navigation. Transportation in the 1960s was not what it is today, but you made the voyage from India to America by cargo ship, navigating the Atlantic Ocean. The letter *N* also stands for noble, which means honorable. If we would give out the Nobel Prize, it would go only to you.

O – *O* reminds me of the word “objective.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, you never deviated from your objective. You were also open-minded and could adapt to a land where the habits were different from your own. You deviated from working to accomplish your mission, focused on your objective, in every circumstance.

P – as in “Prabhupāda,” which means “the master at whose feet other masters sit.” *P* is also for the regulative principles you taught us, which are a source of peace for body, mind, and soul. *P* also stands for *prasādam*, the wonderful and succulent meals you cooked for your disciples and taught us to prepare in turn, and how to offer them to Kṛṣṇa.

Q – People talk about their IQs and like to measure their intelligence. But such measurements are only material. What is the use of a high IQ that vanishes with the body at the time of death? The real IQ is to understand the science of God. One who understands the science of God has a high IQ. Śrīla Prabhupāda, when you were on the planet, you were the person with the highest IQ.

R – as in “renunciation.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, after taking *sannyāsa*—already a sign of having renounced family attachments—you renounced your land and familiar environment in order to fulfill your spiritual master’s desire.

S – This letter is for the spiritual world. You told us of another world, the spiritual world—the world from where you came—and showed us how to go there.

T – as in “transcendental,” a word that is now part of our daily vocabulary. Transcendental you were, beyond ordinary and supernatural.

U – the first letter of USA, the land where you chose to launch your mission. U is also for UFO—something that comes from another planet. You came from Vaikuṇṭha.

V – for “victorious.” You are victorious in the battle against the material energy, and you taught us how to win, too, and remain above the modes of material nature.

W – as in “wonders.” Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is a wonder that in only a few years and at an advanced age you could travel to countries around the globe and open centers in every major city on the planet.

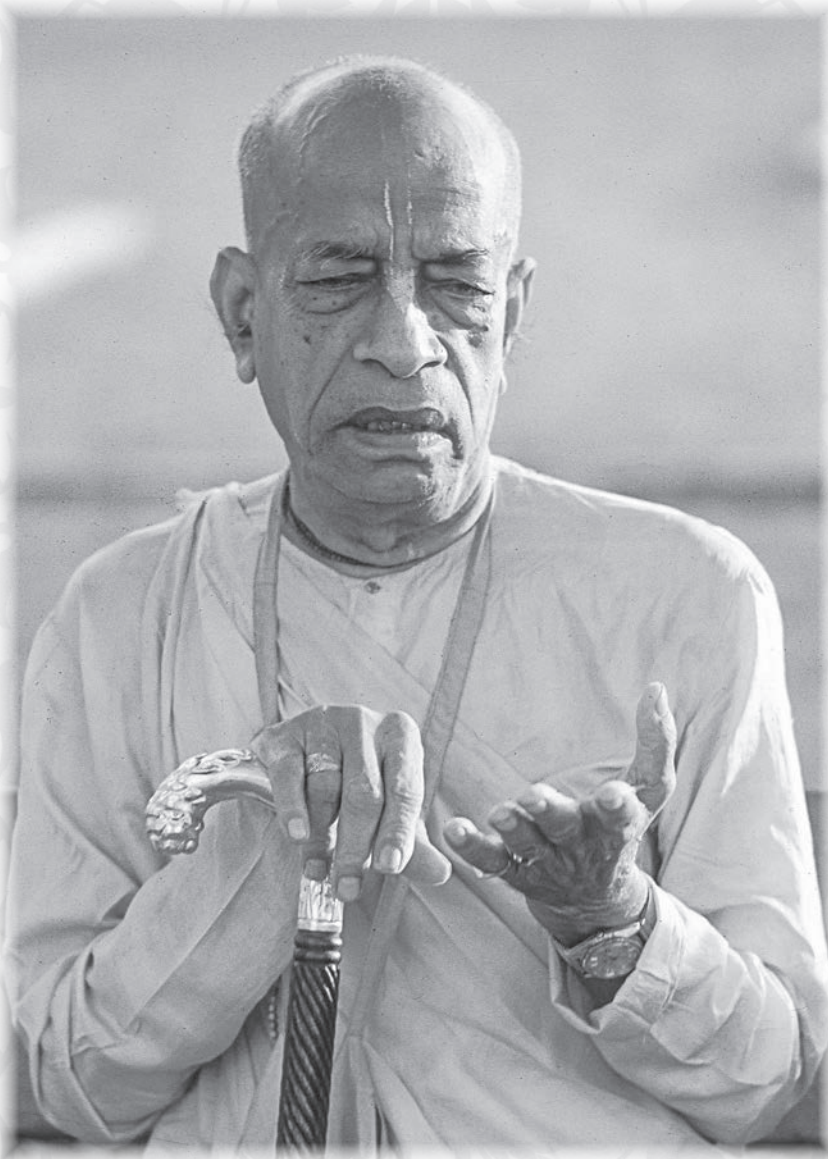
X – as in “expertise.” How expert you were in managing your movement on five continents!

Y – as in “you.” You came to the West. One could easily say, “Someone else could have done it,” but the truth is, you came.

Z – The letter *z* reminds me of your saying that if we put a one before the zeros, everything becomes perfect. This means that the material world is zero as long as Kṛṣṇa is not there. Śrīla Prabhupāda, all the knowledge we have now comes from you. Before coming in touch with Your Divine Grace, we did not know right from wrong. Śrīla Prabhupāda, thanks to your endeavor, your dedication, and your determination to cross the ocean, from A to Z our life is now different.

Your servants at Bhaktivedanta Book Trust offices in Northern Europe.

(written by Nārāyaṇī Devī Dāśī)



Homages from
MINISTRIES

ISKCON Daiva Varṇāśrama Ministry (India)

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ 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.”

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.

This is a short offering from the ISKCON Daiva Varṇāśrama Ministry (IDVM-India) summarizing a few of the accomplishments during last year.

The Golden Jubilee year of 2016 brought a rare opportunity to every temple and every single member of ISKCON to remember your matchless accomplishments and to render some service in honor of the landmark of ISKCON's 50th anniversary.

At IDVM-India we were able to complete the pledge we had taken to travel to 108 villages, remembering your long-cherished desire to visit as many villages as possible, understanding that the villages are the backbone of the Vedic culture in India. Our devotees were thus very enthusiastic to spearhead the Śrī Govinda Go Gram Prachar Yātrā.

I had the rare opportunity to attend a few programs, and the atmosphere was most congenial and inspiring to all who participated. In all 108 villages we performed *go-pūjā* to Mother Surabhi, held *nagar-saṅkīrtana* with the local villagers, had *pravacana* covering both the spiritual as well as the material aspects of *sanātana-dharma*, and distributed your books and *prasādam*. The reception was very good, and our devotees are presently doing follow-up on this program, with many people having taken up the chanting of the holy names. We sold many of your *Bhagavad-gītās* to people who could barely afford to buy them, yet they were so impressed and touched that they managed to get your books.

In addition to this ecstatic program, our ministry was also able to publish a weekly interview and PowerPoint on the topic of *varṇāśrama*. Many of the testimonials were very inspirational, so much so that we decided to transcribe all 53 interviews, and we printed a book entitled *My Spiritual Lamentation*. We also came out with a smaller book entitled *Yātrā Guide—Village Outreach*, which summarizes our method of preaching in the villages.

We are continuing to promote the twelve-year OM Śrī Surabhi Campaign, and this year, the beginning of our third year, our emphasis is on making tangible advancement toward promoting and establishing Varṇāśrama Colleges in as many places as possible, for which we have been working on a website dedicated to the subject matter: www.global-varnasrama-college.com

.We are also committed to launching a global membership drive with the help of a special app.

Some new members have joined our ministry, and the work of establishing *varṇāśrama* is taking on new dimensions in countries like Canada, Indonesia, and the US.

On behalf of all the devotees serving at IDVM-India, I pray that the *varṇāśrama* mission may soon become a major area of interest to many more devotees.

Always seeking your guidance and blessings, we remain

Your humble servants at the ISKCON Daiva Varṇāśrama Ministry (India).

(written by Bhakti Rāghava Swami)



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



Padayātrā Worldwide Ministry

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, our dynamic inaugurator of ISKCON Padayātrā Worldwide,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet. Our beloved founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness-*kī jaya!*

We are aware that through some transcendental channels you already know everything of our activities. Nonetheless, we are extremely happy to share with you the enlivening news of the achievements of the Padayātrā Ministry during 2016. To commemorate ISKCON's Golden Jubilee, we appealed to everybody, far and wide, to assist us in reaching our goal of fifty *padayātrās* from Gaura-pūrṇimā 2014 to the end of 2016. The response was so overwhelming that we surpassed our own expectations and are able to offer Your Divine Grace a total of 64 walks.

All-India Padayātrā, aptly known as the mother of all *padayātrās*, completed its sixth tour of the country at the beginning of last year. The team is currently traveling in the state of Tamil Nadu. It is remarkable that this team has been on the road, non-stop since 1984. Since Rādhāṣṭamī 2009, members of the group have been under the expert devotional leadership of Ācārya Dāsa. This party of around twenty young men is really enthused about distributing your books. They undergo many physical austerities and sometimes even risk their lives for the pleasure of Śrī Śrī Nitāi-Gaurasundara and Your Divine Grace.

The Andhra Pradesh/Telangana bullock-cart party was on the road from the end of 2012 to the end of 2015. A few months ago they resumed walking.

Out of the 64 walks, there are 11 annual ones, 5 of them in India and the rest in various countries around the world. The two most important ones take place in the Czech Republic and Slovenia. Please pour your mercy on the Czech team, headed by Muni-priya Dāsa and his son Nṛsimha Caitanya Dāsa, who are very exemplary devotees in many respects. In 2015, within two weeks they distributed 2,000 books. Following this success, in 2016 they were further inspired to double the figures and aimed to sell at least 4,000 books. After extending the duration of the walk by one week and securing enough books, they worked tirelessly to engage a sufficient number of book distributors—experienced as well as new. Members of the congregation were approached to sponsor books, which would then be distributed in their name. They received sponsorship for 1,382 books. By unleashing an absolute *saṅkīrtana* madness in the party, they managed to distribute 5,141 of your books by the end of the walk. Through intense Facebook advertisement throughout the year, they increased their programs and festival attendance from 1,200 to 1,800. Another innovative technique that was used by the Czech team was questionnaires. They collected contact information for people who had serious interest in future programs and events. In only two months after the end of the summer *padayātrā*, they had organized several successful lectures, concerts, and cooking courses. Your Divine Grace would be pleased to note that they motivated the devotees in neighboring Slovakia to revive the tradition of the Slovakian Padayātrā and actively participate in it. They have already commenced with their preparation for the 2017 *padayātrā*, with an incredible vision to yet again “Double It!” Since Gaura-pūrṇimā in 2014, 66 *padayātrā* parties, large and small, have been spreading the holy names and the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This totals 25 in India and 41 in the rest of the world. We hope it pleases you to know that half of *padayātrā* voyages were undertaken by oxcart.

The success of *padayātrā* is due to some of our heroes in various parts of the world who have walked tirelessly across difficult terrains amid challenging circumstances. The first is Bhaktimārga Swami, who is fondly referred to as “The Walking Monk.” This year he embarked on four one-man treks from coast to coast across his native Canada. Mahārāja walked through rain and intense heat. Sometimes, to avoid the heat, he opted to walk during the night when it was cooler. He also did some walking in the US, completing the first part of that walking tour in honor of ISKCON's Golden Jubilee Celebrations at a place called Seward, Nebraska. Part two will commence in May 2017 and end in September in San Francisco. He prefers to let people come to him, whom he then befriends and shares Kṛṣṇa consciousness with.



HOMAGES FROM MINISTTRIES



Then there is Yasodā-dulāl Dāsa, who traveled for one year in New Zealand with a horse-cart and then on foot, accompanied by a *mṛdaṅga*, a small bag, his mammoth faith, and a beaming smile, depending on Kṛṣṇa's mercy and the goodwill of those he met. He then continued to the exotic lands of Fiji and Assam. Being well over sixty, he is demonstrating that the soul is always young and joyful, thus following in your glorious footsteps.

Another unalloyed *padayātrī* is Nārada Dāsa of Russia. After leading an energetic fund-raising campaign to raise sufficient *lakṣmī* to get the vehicles and the devotees on the road, he led a blissful and colorful party of seventy devotees for four months, performing *harināma* and distributing thousands of books and magazines through 29 Russian cities, covering a distance of 16,000 kms.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in 1953 you organized a *padayātrā* from Jhansi to Chirgaon. ISKCON Jhansi organized a 30-kilometer walk from Jhansi to Chirgaon in the spirit of honoring your own 3-day *padayātrā*.

After ten long years, we have finally completed *The Padayātrā Story*. Due to the sheer volume of the book, it would have been quite a challenge compiling it all in one volume, or even in two. So now we are posting its entire contents on the Padayātrā website. A former Padayātrā America leader, Abhay Dāsa, is currently working on getting the book to a manageable size while also giving it a format that will make it attractive and compelling reading for everyone. Gaurāṅgī Devī Dāsī, who has worked assiduously on this book, is now working with a team of French devotees on another book on oxen and cows, which will, of course, talk about the amazing *padayātrā* oxen.

Our vision and prayer is to get all the ISKCON farms to hitch a few of their oxen to a cart and do regular *padayātrās*, at least around their farms and in their immediate area. With the concern for the environment and animal rights increasing, it is high time that devotees preach strongly about cow protection and ox power by practically demonstrating how useful these animals are. With that goal in mind, we are encouraging oxcart *padayātrā* organizers to work with animal rights groups. We are also suggesting to the organizers of World Holy Name Week that they have devotees do *harināma*, partially or entirely, in conjunction with a *padayātrā*.

I cannot say how many more years Kṛṣṇa will allow me in this body. I just hope and pray that during the rest of my lifetime the Padayātrā Ministry can be strengthened by the ministry team, with the help of ISKCON leaders. It is my heartfelt desire to see the coming generation in ISKCON adopt *padayātrā*, adapting it in as many ways as they deem necessary. Ideally with bullock carts, of course! I am constantly reminding all *padayātrā* co-ordinators that Your Divine Grace wanted millions of such carts all over the world. You further noted in this regard that the word "impossible" is found only in a fool's dictionary.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless us to have great determination and enthusiasm to always continue Padayātrā Worldwide until the holy name reaches every town and village

Your servants at the Padayātrā Worldwide Ministry.

(written by Lokanāth Swami and Gaurāṅgī Devī Dāsī)



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



Vaiṣṇavī Ministry

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

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

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet on your Vyāsa-pūjā. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

On your Vyāsa-pūjā day your followers glorify you and offer their thanks for your mercy and compassion. In this Age of Kali, suffering is so common that it often goes overlooked. Battered women, abused children, and elders dying of cold and hunger can be left helpless even in the most materially advanced countries. But you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, underwent great personal sacrifice to bring real shelter to everyone in the world.

You brought knowledge of the Absolute Truth to every kind of person, inviting people of every race, caste, gender, and background to participate in your movement. You educated us so we could understand that our real nature is something beyond the bodies we identify with so completely.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is merciful to us. He provides what we lack and preserves what we have. For every step we take toward Him, he will take a hundred steps toward us.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is even more merciful than Lord Kṛṣṇa. He has broken open the storehouse of love of God and freely distributes the contents to everyone despite material disqualifications. But you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are even more merciful than Mahāprabhu because you have brought His mercy to every town and village. In this way you have allowed all the world the chance to find shelter from the harsh realities of this age.

Although we are not qualified for the highest platform of spiritual life, you have given us the path to such qualification. As you explain in your purport to *Bhagavad-gītā* 9.32, anyone, regardless of birth, can attain perfection through devotional service to the Lord. Similarly, you noted in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.4.18 that one taking up the process of devotional service is not limited by the body.

The conclusion is that the Lord, being all-powerful, can, under any and every circumstance, accept anyone from any part of the world. . . . [A]nd [Lord Caitanya] Himself declared, to teach us, that He does not belong to any caste or social order of life, but that He is the eternal servant of the servant of the Lord who maintains the damsels of Vṛndāvana (Lord Kṛṣṇa). That is the way of self-realization.

Thus, out of your unlimited compassion you have shown us that we need not be limited by our present material conditioning. Rather, we become purified by following your instructions, and we can serve the Lord in various ways as we progress.

Everyone should be allowed to render service to the Lord to the best of his ability, and everyone should appreciate the service of others. Such are the activities of Vaikuṇṭha. Since everyone is a servant, everyone is on the same platform and is allowed to serve the Lord according to his ability. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.5.12, purport]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we cannot express our gratitude for this wonderful gift of spiritual opportunity



HOMAGES FROM MINISTTRIES



and spiritual community. You have given us both the highest spiritual practice and a family to support us as we undertake our journey back home, back to Godhead. In an age of suffering, you have shown us the only real shelter we can find.

We pray that we will always appreciate the gifts you have given us. We pray that your mercy spreads. We pray that we be allowed to help in distributing your compassion. We pray that each soul is welcomed into your family and is able to offer their unique and personal service to Your Divine Grace and to our Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. We pray to be engaged in your service, life after life.

Your servants at the Vaiṣṇavī Ministry.

(written by Rādhā Devī Dāsī)



Homages from
OTHER SOURCES



HOMAGES FROM OTHER SOURCES



Aguascalientes Preaching Center

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble and respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for teaching us the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which fills us with joy. Each day we recognize your unlimited good qualities as we endeavor to learn from your perfect example. How wonderful it is to serve a spiritual master like you!

We pray that you grant us the mercy that will enable us conditioned souls to follow your instructions. Please bless us with the courage to continue preaching this philosophy you have taught us.

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi
dhyāyan stuvāṁs tasya yaśas tri-sandhyam
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

Without your mercy, we cannot receive the blessings of Kṛṣṇa, nor can we make any progress. Let us remember and honor you throughout our lives and eternally take refuge of your lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please shower your mercy on the devotees who are working hard to maintain and expand this preaching center. Out of your boundless mercy, please empower us so that the souls we approach receive your blessings, surrender to you, and take up the process of devotional service to Śrī Gaurāṅga and Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Your most fallen and humble servants in Aguascalientes, Mexico.

(written by Rādhikā Devī Dāsī)



ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ 2017



The Australian Society for Krishna Culture

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your holy lotus feet on this occasion of your 2017 Vyāsa-pūjā.

So keep this *paramparā* system. This Vyāsa-pūjā is *paramparā* system. Vyāsa-pūjā means to accept this *paramparā* system. Vyāsa. Guru is the representative of Vyāsadeva because he does not change anything. What Vyāsa-pūjā . . . What Vyāsadeva said, your guru also will say the same thing. Not that “So many hundreds of thousands of years have passed away; therefore I will give you a new formula.” No. There is no new formula. The same Vyāsa-pūjā, the same philosophy. Simply we have to accept it, then our life will be successful. [Lecture on the disappearance day of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Hyderabad, 10 December 1976]

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and you are the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead. This is confirmed in *śāstra*:

Only out of His immense compassion does the Personality of Godhead reveal Himself as the spiritual master. Therefore in the dealings of an *ācārya* there are no activities but those of transcendental loving service to the Lord. He is the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead. It is worthwhile to take shelter of such a steady devotee, who is called *āśraya-vigraha*, or the manifestation or form of the Lord of whom one must take shelter. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 1.46, purport]

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the “the basis of the impersonal Brahman” (*Bhagavad-gītā* As It Is 14.27). Śrī Kṛṣṇa is indeed the basis and origin of everything that is, and you are not only the foundation stone of ISKCON but also the very basis of our lives and existences. We are willingly and ecstatically lead by Your Divine Grace, just as bulls are directed by the ropes and rings attached to their noses.

Your rendering of the *Ṣaḍ-gosvāmy-aṣṭaka*, glorifying the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana and recorded at Schloss Rettershof, near Frankfurt, Germany, in June 1974, is so mystically attractive and fascinating (CD01-1)! I did not directly participate in the recording, but at the time, Schloss Rettershof was the *saṅkīrtana* book distribution base for me and a group of godbrothers. It should be noted that the German word *Rettershof* means “the place [literally ‘the court’] of the savior.” In other words, your place, the place of Your Divine Saving Grace. I also remember how Haṁsadūta Prabhu used those gray cardboard egg-holders as sound-proofing material, as can be seen on the cover of the album.

During your visit to the Schloss in June 1974, you kindly gave me *harināma* initiation, and the magazine *Stern*, which had sent a reporter to infiltrate and spy on the devotee community, published a full-page picture of me dancing in *kīrtana* after the fire sacrifice. It should be noted that the reporter managed to follow the ISKCON devotee schedule for only one or two days and nights. Then Kṛṣṇa forcibly ejected him. Sinful persons are definitely excluded from Kṛṣṇa’s and His devotees’ association, just as water and fire cannot mix and are mutually exclusive.

The rhythmical, sweet, repetitive triple *ding* of the *karatālas* at my initiation *kīrtana* eternally resounds in my heart. If my memory serves me well, Cakravartī Prabhu played the *karatālas*, Haṁsadūta Prabhu played the *mṛdaṅga*, and you played the harmonium. You have a very special and characteristic Prabhupāda way of playing the *karatālas* as well. The sound of your playing *karatālas* alone can attract one to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Just as the fragrance of the *tulasī* leaves offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet attracted the four Kumāras, anything you ever do, even the most insignificant thing, can attract one to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.



HOMAGES FROM OTHER SOURCES



You once told us your Guru Mahārāja was “a Vaikuṇṭha man.” Similarly, you are also a great, transcendental Vaikuṇṭha man, Śrīla Prabhupāda, well beyond our furthest conceptions and imaginations. You are the greatest well-wisher, benefactor, and lover of mankind.

How can one fail to be attracted to Kṛṣṇa consciousness when one studies Your Divine Grace? *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.1.4 answers this question emphatically: *pumān virajyeta vinā paśughnāt*. You explain this phrase in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.24: “Mahārāja Parikṣit said that only the animal-killer cannot relish the transcendental message of the Supreme Lord.”

When you speak, you are always “fired up.” It is your doubtlessness and clarity of vision that convince the hearer. On one occasion, at question time, a man openly confirmed just that—the potency of your no-nonsense, to-the-point, strong presentation. You humbly thanked him for his compliment. I searched but failed to find the transcript of lecture, though I heard a recording of it once. I think it was in the UK. Because you are the world teacher, you deliver many of your classes in a declamatory tone, thus defying and challenging anyone to put forward a better philosophy. We know this is not possible! You deliver other classes, however, such as your class on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.1.66 given in Vṛndāvana on September 2, 1975, in a calm and conciliatory mood.

And you do this out of love for mankind. This is your only motivation. There is no other motivation! Therefore you are as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the supreme father, who, out of love only, tries to bring the fallen, Māyā-bewitched conditioned souls to their senses.

Above all, your message subscribes to the rigors of scientific analysis. “Religion without philosophy is sentiment, or sometimes fanaticism, while philosophy without religion is mental speculation.” (*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, 3.3, purport).

Your message is intelligent, reasonable, structured, consistent, unchanging, strong, stern, sometimes forceful, but always respectful of our freedom to choose, just as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, after speaking the *Bhagavad-gītā*, gives Arjuna his freedom of choice:

*iti te jñānam ākhyātāṁ guhyād guhyataraṁ mayā
vimṛśyāitad aśeṣeṇa yathecchasi tathā kuru*

“Thus I have explained to you knowledge still more confidential. Deliberate on this fully, and then do what you wish to do.” (*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, 16.63)

Your message is also liberal; enjoyable; benevolent; sustained; thoughtful; well thought out, prepared, and observed; humorous; the product of a genial, super-topmost, God-surrendered brain—and free of charge as well.

You are both the wisest and the nicest, Śrīla Prabhupāda! But we are such fools and rascals that we are not always able to take full advantage of your message and association, as we would like to do.

Through your own elaborate plan and actions, the joyful Kṛṣṇa conscious revolution is already in progress. A perfect example is the yearly Sacred Sound Festival, presided over by His Holiness Indradyumna Mahārāja and associates both here at ISKCON New Govardhana, New South Wales, Australia, and in North Carolina, USA.

You are the greatest *sāṅkhya-yogī* because if you hadn’t analyzed the phenomenal world so carefully, how could you explain so well the Supreme Brahman, along with His diverse energies? “Only the ignorant speak of devotional service [karma-yoga] as being different from the analytical study of the material world [Sāṅkhya]. Those who are actually learned say that he who applies himself well to one of these paths achieves the results of both.” (*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* 5.4)

Your expertise and maturity of realization in presenting the Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy are astounding! So is your thorough grasp of the philosophy and your knowledge of the Sanskrit *ślokas*. If I possessed only an atom of your spiritual-master-ship, I would become a useful tool in your hands.

Intensive traveling all over Australia-dvīpa for the purpose of book distribution is an undertaking of gigantic proportions. It is a limitless enterprise! New shopping centers are erected continually. I usually see my customers once a year. Physically, mentally, and emotionally, it is a little taxing. Chapter five



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of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* is called “Karma-Yoga—Action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” I may say that I see plenty of action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, to the point where I periodically collapse and need to remain inactive for some time to recuperate. I usually distribute 4,000–5,000 pieces of literature per year. Due to age, I might have to adjust my schedule or, perhaps even better, change my style of distribution and distribute even more books. As you explain in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the aging body loses its physical strength. This fact is also common-sense knowledge. I do not know how I have managed to survive to this point. It is only due to your kind and benevolent mercy and the mercy of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and my clinging to it under all circumstances. Of course, making planet earth Kṛṣṇa conscious, as you have personally undertaken, is a much more gigantic enterprise. We also note that some of your exalted disciples and granddisciples—mostly *sannyāsīs*—travel all over the world, steady as clockwork: more gigantic enterprises!

A living entity who is specifically empowered by the Lord with knowledge or strength is technically called *āveśa-rūpa*. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 7.11), *kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*: Unless a devotee is specifically empowered by the Lord, he cannot preach the holy name of the Lord all over the world. This is an explanation of the word *āveśa-rūpa*. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 20.165, purport]

In the early days, the saying was “Work now, *samādhi* later.” We absolutely love the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead under your personal direction, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Still, we may at times ask the question “Where is *samādhi*?”

Dreams of achievement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness may not be instantly realized. Sometimes we find there is a twenty-year gap between the preaching dream and its practical realization. In your own life, we see that it took several decades to achieve your ultimate and grand success. The main thing is to keep our hopes always very high, and that should not be very difficult, since our hopes are pinned on Kṛṣṇa, the highest and most elevated personality. In other words, the greatest and infallible positivity and win-win arrangement is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

There are seemingly mundane expressions of beauty that cannot fail to remind us of Kṛṣṇa, as per His words at *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* 10.41:

*yad yad vibhūtimat sattvaṁ śrīmad ūrjitam eva vā
tat tad evāvagaccha tvam mama tejo-'mśa-sambhavam*

“Know that all opulent, beautiful, and glorious creations spring from but a spark of My splendor.”

In this respect, my other dream it to see the Canadian singer Celine Dion sing for Kṛṣṇa, just as George Harrison sang for Kṛṣṇa. She has a very dynamic personality, is an excellent singer, and has sung for Christ in the past. So why not sing for Kṛṣṇa as well? Her wonderful God-given talents would make the effort a great success.

Your message remains as relevant as ever. In 1975, while traveling by airplane to Chicago, you read the *Time* magazine article “Crime: Why and What to Do?” On January 7, 2017, the BBC reported that more people are murdered now in Chicago each day than are killed in the Afghan and Iraqi conflicts combined.

Back in 1975 you commented as follows on the Chicago crime wave:

Yes, bring. We shall take this opportunity to preach. “Crime, Why and What to Do?” We shall give all solution. We can arrange big, big meetings on this point, “Crime, Why and What to Do?” A very suitable heading it is. *Harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇā*. Unless he’ll take to God consciousness, all this rascaldom, so-called advancement of civilization, all condemned, everything. All rascals. So why we will not . . . will there be crime? There must be. This is the result of modern civilization, crime. You cannot check it unless you take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They are all violating the



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laws of nature. Nature brings you from evolutionary process to the human life, and if we misuse, then we suffer. This life is specially meant for understanding God. *Athāto brahma jijñāsā*. This is the only business. *Jīvasya tattva-jijñāsā nārtho yaś ceha karmabhiḥ*. *Jīvasya tattva-jijñāsā*.

I did not receive many personal instructions from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Nor was I ever part of your direct entourage, like one of your personal servants, such as His Grace Hari Śauri Prabhu or His Grace Śrutakīrti Prabhu. Nor was I ever one of your assistant managers, such as your GBC deputies.

These days, as a personal service, I often fit your bead bag into your hands at the beginning of a *japa* session. Thank you very much for this service opportunity!

However, the most important and most inspiring instruction you have ever given to me came in a letter dated May 2, 1977, and addressed to “Sriman Yadavendra Das Brahmācari.” The instruction reads as follows:

There is no difference between study and management in Krishna consciousness. I am studying books and writing also, and at the same time attending to your letter. And there is so much management to look to. So I am doing both because there is no difference.

Your secretary at the time, His Holiness Tamāl Krishna Goswami, added:

Srila Prabhupada is the Acarya and showing us the example by doing both management and study. You should follow in His footsteps and do the same. There are nine types of devotional service, and of the nine “arcanam” includes management. If one takes part in any one of these nine types of devotional service, he can make his life perfect. So do not see any duality in any service, which you have to render to Krishna. Besides this, it is advised:

tad viddhi pranipatena
pariprasnena sevaya
upadeksyanti te jnanam
jnaninas tattva-darsinah

Rendering of service is essential in Krishna consciousness. Therefore you should perform your daily routine activities with as much enthusiasm as you study Srila Prabhupada’s books.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, if the *śakti* to carry out the orders of the spiritual master comes with the instructions of the spiritual master, then I may petition you herewith: Please give me your special blessings *now*! After some 45 years of trying, I think I might be ready for them *now*. I think I might be able to handle them *now*. I have always wished to practice and live by your instructions 24/7/365. They have already transformed my mind. They have set it right. They have already transformed my life.

Bhakti means “devotional service.” Every service has some attractive feature which drives the servitor progressively on and on. Every one of us within this world is perpetually engaged in some sort of service, and the impetus for such service is *the pleasure we derive from it*. [*The Nectar of Devotion*, Preface; emphasis added]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am yours without reservation and for eternity, and I enjoy the Prabhupāda-sambandha, also called Prabhupāda-rasa relationship, very much. So be it. Thank you very much!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank His Holiness Rāmāi Swami, the ISKCON Co-GBC for Australia, for his green light to feature our humble offering from the Australian Society for Krishna Culture in your international Vyāsa-pūjā book, under the heading “Vyāsa-pūjā Homages from Other Sources.”



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The first publication was last year, 2016. This acknowledgement is therefore overdue. Mahārāja, please accept my humble apologies for this tardiness, and thank you very much for your broad-mindedness! All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servants at the Australian Society for Krishna Culture, Brisbane, Australia.

(written by Yādavendra Dāsa)

Back to Godhead Magazine

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On October 23, 1966, you wrote in your diary. “Back to Godhead published again today.” Last year marked the 50th anniversary of the publication of the magazine in the West. You were very concerned that the magazine be of the highest standard possible, and over the next eleven years, till your departure, you took great interest in the publication. In one of your early letters regarding the magazine, written on December 13, 1969, you wrote to Satsvarūpa Dāsa:

I was very much pleased to see one of your articles which you picked up from Dakṣa yajña. The articles should be very scrutinizingly published. We want to make our BTG an authorized, first class magazine, and the writers and students should be equally responsible.

In one of your final letters regarding the magazine, you wrote to Śrī Govinda Dāsa:

I am glad to hear you are enlivened at becoming editor of Back to Godhead magazine. This magazine must be edited very carefully. Nothing irresponsible should be printed, because in the future the articles in Back to Godhead will be taken as Vedic evidence. I am asking the GBC members to also concern themselves with the content of the magazine to assure that it meets the standards I am describing.

Mindful of your desires, in 1985 the devotees compiled *The Back to Godhead Handbook*, which contains all your instructions from letters, conversations, and other sources. This has been the guide for all the publishing to date. The quality of the articles, the editing, and the layout of the English edition have remained faithful to your standards.

During the 1970s when you were with us, the English-language magazine was printed in huge quantities, but we have not been able to keep this up. However, in India the combined print run in Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, and Tamil has reached 150,000 per issue monthly.



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Devotees involved in the production and distribution of the magazine are always meditating on your dedication and perseverance—how you struggled to publish despite all kinds of difficulties just to please your spiritual master. It is our hope that you are pleased with our efforts and that our lives become purified by this association with you through your magazine, the magazine of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

At the Kumbha-melā in Allahabad in 1971, you said in a lecture:

Our only objective is how to glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead. We are writing books, we are publishing magazines, we are preaching, we are going everywhere—just to glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. That is our only business. This process is recommended here, *citta-śodhaka*. If you sit down and write some article on Kṛṣṇa, that means you have to concentrate on Kṛṣṇa's activities or Kṛṣṇa's devotees' activities, and that very process will purify your heart.

And in a letter to Cyavana Dāsa on December 26, 1971:

And you must all study very scrutinizingly all of the books so that when the need arises you can repeat in your own words their purport. Also I will be very pleased if you contribute articles to BTG. By writing regularly, what you read will become realized.

All devotees who have some propensity for writing can participate. In a letter to Dāmodara Dāsa on May 26, 1975, you wrote:

Regarding your writing, this is very much wanted, but I think that it is better if you write articles, not books. Write articles that can be printed in our Back to Godhead magazine. That will be very nice.

These words of yours are a great encouragement to us to continue this legacy and tradition of ISKCON. Please bless us to continue and expand the preaching.

Your servants at Back to Godhead magazine.

Bhaktivedanta Archives

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

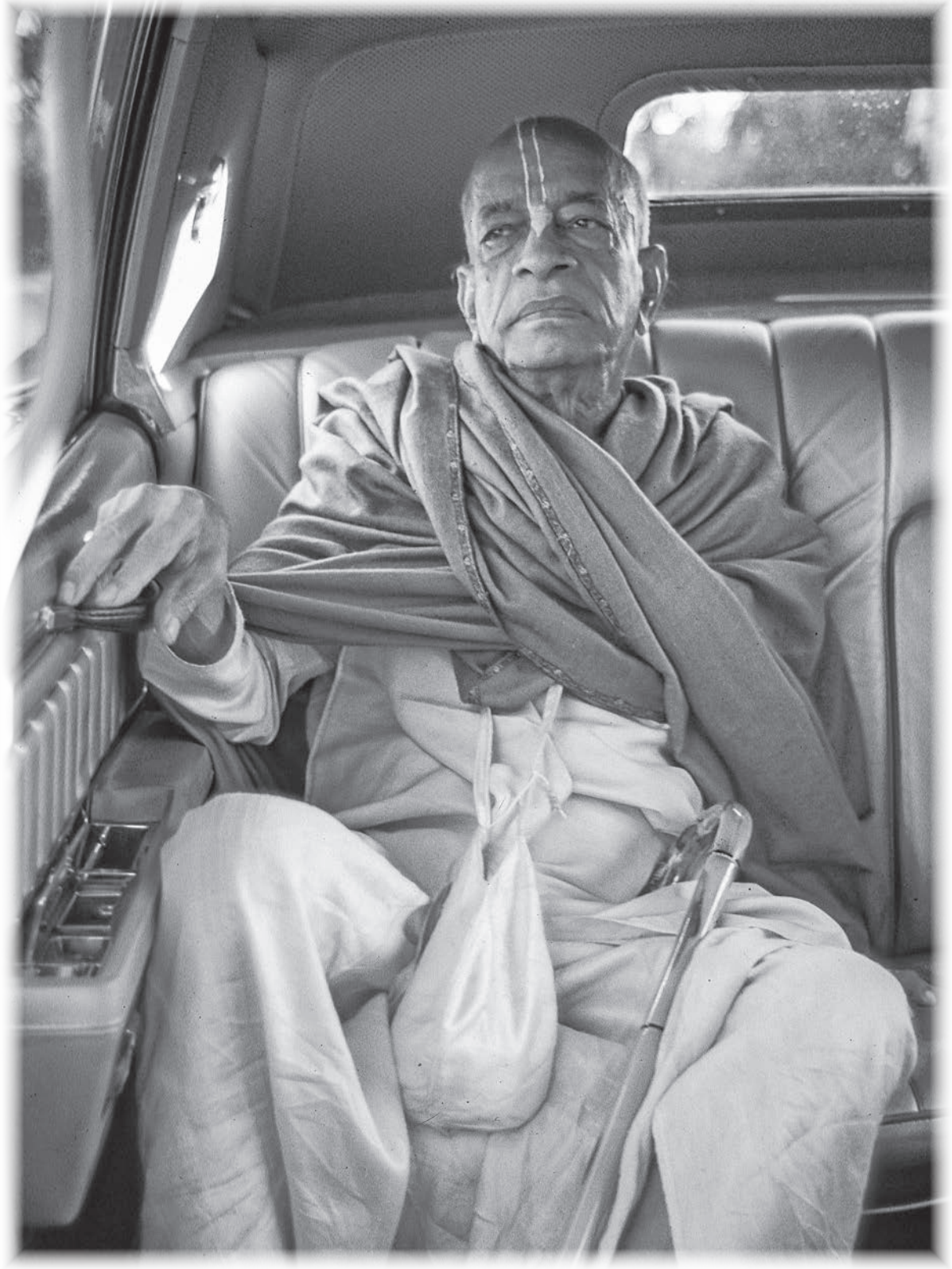
*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most auspicious day, your Vyāsa-pūjā 2017, we come before you with folded hands and prostrated hearts. All glories to you and to the disciplic succession you have made us part of.



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The Bhaktivedanta Archives was founded on your *vāṇī*, initially the sound vibrations that emanated from your lotus lips. We therefore are especially keen to remember the many examples you gave emphasizing the importance of hearing properly from the right source. Indeed, your very own Guru Mahārāja noted, “This boy is interested to hear me.” And you confirmed the result of this. “Because I was serious about hearing, now I am serious about *kīrtanam*—means speaking, or preaching.”

By this simple example of hearing attentively, you imparted to us and future generations the key to understand our temporary place in this world and our natural place in the spiritual world.

We should hear “just as Arjuna heard from Kṛṣṇa,” you would often say. So, hearing transcendental knowledge and following the example of Arjuna by metaphorically letting the bow of false ego slip from our hands, we can receive your words, these transcendental vibrations, into our hearts.

You further elaborated in a letter:

First the student must be able to repeat exactly the words of the guru and then after some time he may be qualified to apply the principles he has learned word-for-word to personal situations. It is not that we are a dry philosophy of dogmas and slogans. No. The language of Krishna Consciousness is ever-fresh and we can explain everything by it, just like my Guru Maharaja once lectured for three months on one verse from Srimad-Bhagavatam. But every precaution must be taken to preserve our basic guiding principles as they are and not change them because we want to hear something new. [Letter to Bhakta Dāsa, 20 November 1971]

We thank you with deep conviction for allowing us here at the Bhaktivedanta Archives to conserve and preserve your images and your *vāṇī* in the form of your writings and especially your spoken words so that others will be able to take advantage of them for generations to come. As you once so eloquently put it, “If one has heard nicely, then he will speak nicely”.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and to the words you left us, spoken so “nicely.”

Your aspiring servants at the Bhaktivedanta Archives.

Bhaktivedanta College (Hungary)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Usually my Vyāsa-pūjā offering to you is an account of the events I find most important in the life of the Bhaktivedanta College Hungary during the previous year. As the rector of the College, I have to choose my words so that I do not claim credit for the successes that may have been achieved. At the same time, it would be false modesty if I said I have nothing to do with them.

I encountered this dilemma recently when I gave an interview for a book presenting successful Hungarians. I was asked what I consider the secret of my success. My quick answer was that whatever success I enjoyed was due to endeavor, genetic endowment, karma, and, in the final analysis, Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. In this way I fulfilled mundane expectations but also told the truth from a theological point of view as well. Still, after the interview I wondered what the secret of my alleged success is, and who this success really belongs to.



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It is always risky to talk about success among devotees, especially if it is about one's personal success. If someone is not humble enough, he or she may easily fall into the trap of identifying with their body to some extent under the influence of false ego and claim credit for the results of their actions, even though they are theoretically aware that everything is the result of the mercy and arrangement of guru and Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa disperses this illusion at *Bhagavad-gītā* 3.27, when He says to Arjuna:

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ
ahanikāra-vimūḍhātmā kartāham iti manyate*

“The spirit soul bewildered by the influence of false ego thinks himself the doer of activities that are in actuality carried out by the three modes of material nature.”

This truth is made even clearer at *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.20.11, when Lord Viṣṇu says to Pṛthu Mahārāja:

*udāsīnam ivādhyakṣarīṁ dravya-jñāna-kriyātmanām
kūṭa-stham imam ātmānam yo vedāpnoti śobhanam*

“Anyone who knows that this material body, made of the five gross elements, the sense organs, the working senses, and the mind, is simply supervised by the fixed soul is eligible to be liberated from material bondage.”

Therefore the merit of the individual is limited to desiring the result and directing the action, but its performance and outcome is entirely dependent on Kṛṣṇa.

The *karmīs* refuse to take account of this fact, because if they did they could not claim credit for the result, and thus they could not enjoy it freely; and the *jñānīs* do not really want to act because of the uncertainty of the outcome.

Only devotees know the way out of this impasse. Only devotees can see without illusion and still remain active, because they are acting in devotional service. All their actions serve Kṛṣṇa's satisfaction, and they offer Him all the results of the same. In this way their actions become transcendental and do not tie them to the material world through the laws of *karma*; rather, their actions strengthen their relationship with Kṛṣṇa. In addition, the devotees do not have to worry about the results of their deeds, since such results are dependent on Kṛṣṇa's decision anyway. All they have to worry about is monitoring and purifying their own motivation to act.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, all this about human deeds we know from your books and personal example, without which we would have no chance of ever acting sensibly and attaining the goal of human life.

My “successes” are related to you in a more personal way as well. Our institution, Bhaktivedanta College Hungary, was named after you not only because we teach Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism based on your interpretations and books, but also because, in a way perceivable to more or less all the devotees serving at the institution, you are personally present with us. Your support and blessings can be felt in a mysterious way that shines out of all our efforts like an effulgent diamond on black velvet. Thus, if I have any personal “success,” it is that I rely on your support and try not to get in the way of the mercy you shower upon the College.

Your servants at Bhaktivedanta College in Hungary.

(written by Mahārāṇī Devī Dāsī)



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Eger Nāma-haṭṭa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It is such honor to write our offering and greet you on the day of your appearance! We devotees of the Eger preaching center in Hungary would like to tell you how grateful we are for receiving Kṛṣṇa consciousness, thanks to your traveling to the Western world.

The fact that our community exists and has been developed year by year is due to your mercy. It is you who inspire us to do our best and get involved in more and more services.

Our new temple building and Govinda's restaurant are really popular among the people of Eger, and among tourists as well. As part of our Food for Life program, we distribute *prasādam* to the students at the local university every day. Some of them have become interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and so we established Club Govinda, which meets weekly at the school. Each program ends with us distributing *prasādam* to the participants.

Our festivals are really famous: devotees come to Eger from all parts of the country, and the atmosphere is always so magical. Whether at the slow and meditative *bhajans* or the vibrant *kīrtanas*, everyone is transported by the holy name. You very often emphasised the importance of receiving knowledge by the process of hearing attentively from the right source. During our lessons and festivals we experience the great potency of transcendental sound.

But our most important service is to read and distribute your books. Our 2016 marathon was a great success: we sold 343 books.

As we learned from the booklet "This Is My Request," a compilation of quotes from you concerning book distribution, you were especially keen to have your books placed in libraries. So we started to distribute your books in the local city library and in the library of the local university as well. We have also launched a "Hotel Gītā" project, distributing as many *Bhagavad-gītā*s as possible to as many hotels as possible.

We also take part in the Vanipedia project, which enables a lot of people to read your books and listen to your words worldwide on the internet in their native language. You set the example of taking advantage of modern media to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which in the seventies meant television. Today this especially means the internet, and we like spreading your Kṛṣṇa conscious movement although this medium.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for your ever-inspiring books, with their limitless lessons and explanations. Your example of being enthusiastic for every aspect of Kṛṣṇa consciousness helps us in our everyday services and reminds us to be alert at all times. The spiritual leader of the Hungarian *yātrā*, your disciple Śivarāma Swami, gives us a great deal of support. By serving him we know we are serving you and Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

As you wrote in a letter to Trai Dāsa on 27 December 1972:

That is advancement in Krishna consciousness, to stick tightly to the desires or orders of the spiritual master; because my Guru Maharaja ordered it, and I am also ordering it: Go on preaching, spread this Krishna consciousness all over the world. . . .

Your grateful servants at the Eger Nāma-haṭṭa, Hungary.



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Festival of India

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

As I try to glorify you on this most important day of the year, your appearance day, in my endeavors I'm like the worshiper of the Ganges offering the Ganges a palmful of Ganges water, or like one who wants to please the sun by offering a ghee lamp. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have taught us everything, even how to glorify you, and our enthusiasm to do so is rooted in remembrance of your lotus feet.

This year on the Navadvīpa Maṇḍala Parikramā 79 different countries were represented. Devotees from all over the world assembled in the holy *dhāma* to fulfill Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's prophecy of a *harināma* party in the *dhāma* composed of devotees from all over the world glorifying Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Due to the preaching effort, every year the number and variety of devotees visiting Māyāpur are increasing. We are now seeing more Chinese Vaiṣṇavas coming to Māyāpur. The first one ever was Yeung Pak Hei, brought in from Hong Kong by Bhūrijana Prabhu in 1974 for the Gaura Pūrṇimā festival. He became Yaśomatisuta Dāsa after he took initiation from you, and now there are hundreds of Chinese devotees visiting the holy *dhāma* every year, all due to the selfless dedication of sincere Vaiṣṇava preachers who are thirsty for your mercy. We hope to become strengthened by serving them.

Last year's North American BBT remittances totaled more than \$2 million, quite a jump from the preceding year's total, which was around \$1.7 million. This is a healthy sign of the continuing revival of book distribution in North America.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you once said that the chanting of the holy name is so transcendently powerful that the benefits are shared by everyone, even those who are unaware of it. Nowadays there are so many *kīrtana melas* in the world besides the regular street *harināmas*, and even though they often occur indoors among devotees, they still increase the all-around auspiciousness because it is the recommended sacrifice for the age and Lord Kṛṣṇa is pleased by such performances. You also said that this movement was started by chanting; you explained that you would go to Tompkins Square Park with your first devotees and chant for three hours, and that from this humble beginning the whole Society grew. All glories to your divine example! You will always be the revered *ācārya* who spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement worldwide. We are all attempting to follow in your footsteps, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and will do so for the next ten thousand years.

It is stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that literary works such as the *Bhāgavatam* that glorify Lord Kṛṣṇa will create a revolution in the hearts of the present misguided civilization, and you once said that one day the historians of the world will recognize that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement saved the world. You also explained that this revolution would be a cultural one, addressing all the needs of a human being. In other words, *bhāgavata-dharma* teaches one how to fulfill one's material needs in a regulated way and focus on realizing oneself as an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. In the very unstable present condition of human society, you suggested that your followers make a showcase of self-sufficient villages based on cow protection and sustainable food production and guided by the *varṇāśrama* model for human society. Of course, it will require quite a bit more time for our pioneering Society to accomplish that goal. Still, for your pleasure some humble attempts in that direction are being made in a few favorable settings around the world.

In conclusion, as we members of the North American Traveling Festival of India preaching tour enter



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our 39th consecutive year with renewed enthusiasm, we rededicate ourselves to constantly striving to please Your Divine Grace, and we beg for your mercy so that we can successfully complete our humble preaching attempt for the year 2017.

Your servants on the Festival of India Tour.

(written by Gosh Thakor Dāsa)

GBC College for Leadership Development

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Your grand vision for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness across the globe continues to manifest as your empowered disciples and granddisciples go on opening new temples, farms, preaching centers, Kṛṣṇa lounges, etc., in different parts of the world. Foreseeing exponential growth of your ISKCON, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you recognized the need for organization, standardization, and unity among its leaders, as evidenced by the following statement in a letter emphasizing leadership training:

Personally I wish all the existing GBC may be trained up so perfectly that in the future in my absence they can manage the whole Society very nicely and strongly. That is my desire. [Letter to Hamsadūta, 29 September 1974]

Pursuing your vision, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the GBC body established the GBC College for Leadership Development with the prime objective of training current and future ISKCON leaders. On March 8, 2015, the College opened its doors for the first training session in its present location—the scenic and serene Govardhan Ecovillage near Mumbai, India.

By your grace, the GBC College is now in its third year of operation. Nearly sixty Zonal Supervisor candidates have graduated from the college, and another twenty-five are currently undergoing training. In addition to the four-week residential training course spread over two sessions, the candidates take a dozen online courses on edX, a platform used by many top universities around the world. By way of an Action Learning Project (ALP), the candidates also get hands-on training in their own geographical zone of service, for which they receive regular feedback and coaching via WebEx, an audio/video conferencing system.

Training the candidates to be your followers (Śrīla Prabhupādānugas) is the primary focus of this year-long program, which covers several key management skills grounded in spiritual principles. The emphasis is on application so as to improve your leaders' effectiveness in the personal, interpersonal, and organizational contexts. By your mercy, the college is endowed with dedicated trustees, advisors, faculty, course coordinators, administrators, and staff, all of whom serve selflessly to pursue your vision of training an army of leaders who will manage your ever-growing Society very effectively in the years to come, as per your desire.



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With your blessings and oversight, we are hopeful that the college will continue to expand its offerings in multiple languages and for multiple levels of leadership. It is our earnest prayer that Your Divine Grace may please continue to allow us to serve in your transformational education hub, the GBC College for Leadership Development.

Your servants at the GBC College for Leadership Development.

Govinda Valley Project

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you made “Hare Kṛṣṇa” a household word. When one of our devotees went home to Holland, he found your picture standing next to the TV at his parents’ place. “He is always with us,” his mother said, without knowing you and what you have achieved.

Your books are in so many households, and people read them or at least wonder how to understand them. For laymen it’s not easy to understand transcendental knowledge, but just having your books at home will purify them.

Prasādam is served in so many restaurants, cafes, and Food for Life outlets, and at hundreds of festivals and events. Millions have tasted *prasādam* in this way. “*Koftas*” has become a household word!

Walking *harināmas* and sitdown *kīrtanas* are regular sights for people around the world. Countless people sing and dance with the devotees, and those experiences multiply when their photos and videos go viral online!

People practice yoga and chant Sanskrit mantras as if it’s a common thing; they hardly know what they’re saying, but in this way they prepare themselves to one day receive real transcendental knowledge from your books.

All this is part of the *saṅkīrtana* movement, of which you are the Chief Executive Officer; without you the world would simply be in darkness.

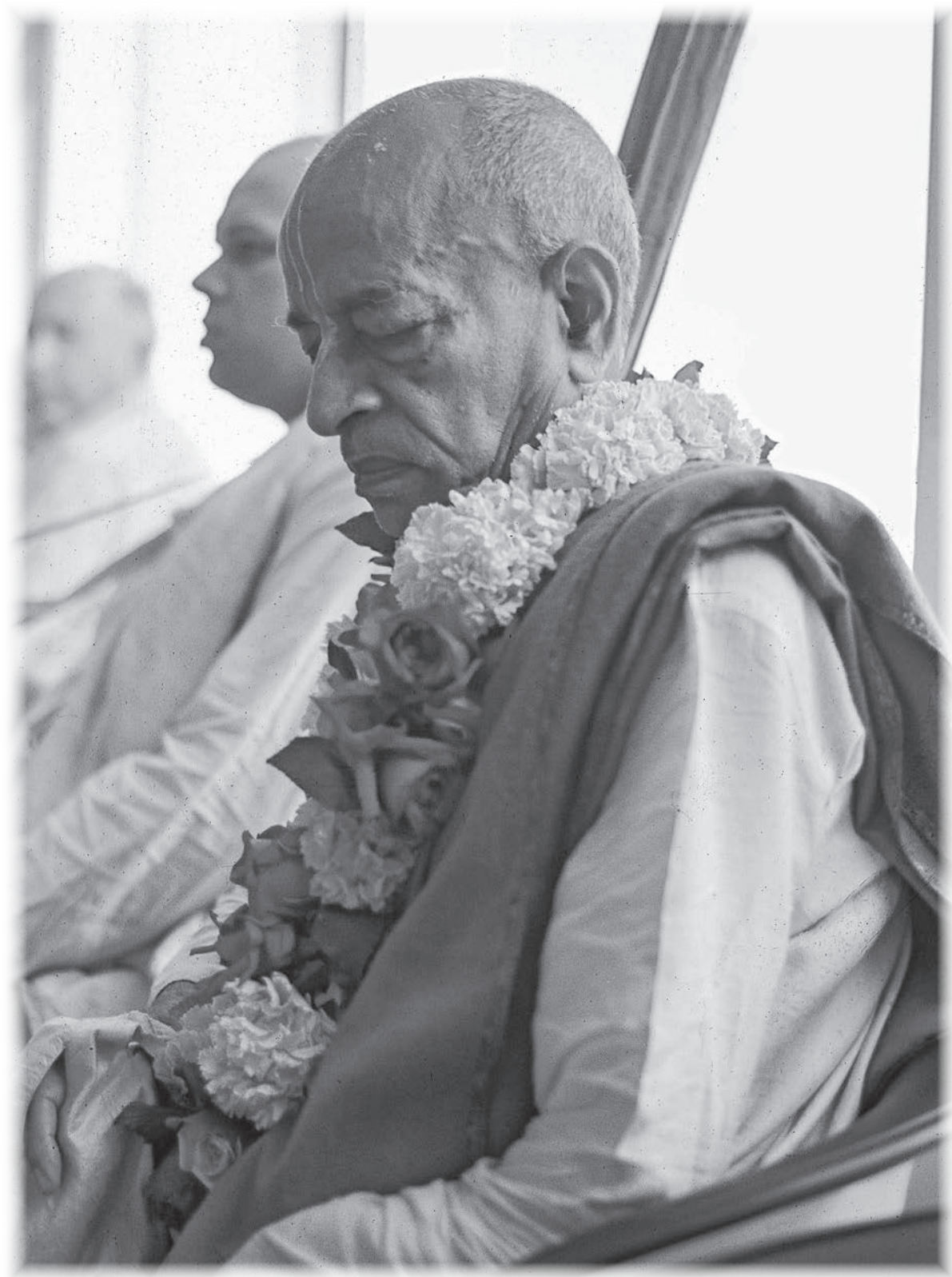
Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us the recipe for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Now let us combine the ingredients well and execute your mission.

Your servants at the Govinda Valley Project, Sydney, Australia.

(written by Padmanābha Dāsa)



HOMAGES FROM OTHER SOURCES





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The International Society for Cow Protection

*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*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you, our beloved spiritual master.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for the mercy and strength to complete yet another year protecting cows. This is the twenty-seventh year we have been protecting cows through ISCOWP (The International Society for Cow Protection). We are reporting to you some of our activities of the past year, which you have made possible.

Last year was a joyous one, with the addition of four new members to the herd. Dhruva Laddhu and Kalyan Tamal were the first to come home to ISCOWP. Since Keshava and Madhava, two oxen weighing in at two thousand pounds each, are thirteen years old now and in retirement, we thought it was time to save another two oxen from slaughter. In December, to replace Keshava and Madhava as a trained oxen team, we went to a dairy farm to look for two male calves.

Reality struck hard as we approached where the calves lived. Each calf was in a little hutch not much bigger than the calf himself. There the male calves existed until sold for the price of meat at the horrific auction barn. Instead of drinking milk from their mothers, they drank milk through an automated drip. Taken from their mothers a few days after being born, they lived out their days far from motherly love.

You have written in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.17.3:

But in the Kali-yuga, the calves are separated from the cows as early as possible for purposes which may not be mentioned in these pages of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The cow stands with tears in her eyes, the *sūdra* milkman draws milk from the cow artificially, and when there is no milk the cow is sent to be slaughtered. These greatly sinful acts are responsible for all the troubles in present society.

There were rows and rows of hutches, each containing a calf. A sad little concentration camp.

What we found sadder was that the owners of these calves were not outright horrible people. They helped load Dhruva Laddhu and Kalyan Tamal into our van in a kind and gentle way. Yet they were responsible for their living conditions and the eventual horrific deaths of all the calves in all those hutches.

Ignorance. But for your grace we could be these people—liking animals but making a living from them, treating them like products and not recognizing them as living beings because that is what the “norm” is in their world. The norm of ignorance.

In the same purport you write:

People do not know what they are doing in the name of economic development. The influence of Kali will keep them in the darkness of ignorance. Despite all endeavors for peace and prosperity, they must try to see the cows and the bulls happy in all respects. Foolish people do not know how one earns happiness by making the cows and bulls happy, but it is a fact by the law of nature. Let us take it from the authority of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and adopt the principles for the total happiness of humanity.



HOMAGES FROM OTHER SOURCES



To think we were once part of this torture of Mother Cow and her children! We took milk from cows who watched their babies taken away from them so we could have their mother's milk; we ate the meat of those baby calves, thereby facilitating the ongoing torture and killing of Mother Cow and her children. To think that once we were murderers!

You have told us in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.7.37:

He says that in the act of killing an animal there is a regular conspiracy by the party of sinners, and that all of them are liable to be punished as murderers exactly like a party of conspirators who kill a human being combinedly. *He who gives permission, he who kills the animal, he who sells the slaughtered animal, he who cooks the animal, he who administers distribution of the foodstuff, and at last he who eats such cooked animal food are all murderers, and all of them are liable to be punished by the laws of nature.* [Emphasis in original]

Then came RS/390 (now known as Sri Vasanti). Beauty and grace personified. A Gir cow with long, pendulous ears, she was about to be branded with a hot iron and dehorned. Both very painful processes. Instead, she is home at ISCOWP, happily associating with Dhruva Laddhu and Kalyan Tamal.

The last, yet to come, is RS/394 (named Draupadi Amba by ISCOWP members). As of this writing, she is scheduled to arrive next Monday. A beautiful red-and-white-speckled Gir girl with the same adorable ears as Sri Vasanti, she too was about to be branded and have her horns cut off.

Again, the owner was affectionate to his animals but yet was branding them and dehorning them. Therefore, he was responsible for the suffering of every cow that he ever had under his care.

On our YouTube channel we discuss life on a commercial dairy farm with people like the owner of the Gir cows. Many of them say they have mixed feelings. Affection for the cows—and then branding and dehorning them, cutting their tails, and eventually slaughtering them. Yet they are so trapped in their culture, where this is the ignorant norm, that they do not ask why they are experiencing the mixed feelings.

The other day we let Dhruva Laddhu, Kalyan Tamal, and their friend Sri Vasanti out of the barn after they had safely passed through their transition period. Dhruva Laddhu and Kalyan Tamal had been bottle-fed for a month and half, and neither was very healthy when they first came. Sri Vasanti was quite shy and frightened at first.

They ran onto their private pasture, jumping in glee. Dhruva fell, rolled over, and immediately got up running. Again and again they were running and running and jumping and bumping into each other and us. Such joy! For Dhruva Laddhu and Kalyan Tamal, it was their first time in a pasture. That same day the rest of the herd met them for the first time. Curiosity prevailed, and there was much sniffing and licking.

This is how a cow's life should be. This is how you describe the life of cows in your *Kṛṣṇa* book.

No life in this material world is perfectly happy. Every soul is destined to have a certain quota of suffering. However, the suffering of Lord Kṛṣṇa's most beloved animal, the cow, in both the dairy and meat industry is unacceptable to those who read your books.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for saving our souls. Thank you for taking us out of ignorance so we can see reality. Thank you for giving us a solution to that reality. Thank you for teaching us about cow protection. Thank you for changing us from meat-eaters to cow-lovers and -protectors.

Certainly you are the most exalted, transcendental magician. Changing a meat-eater into a cow-protector in less than one lifetime. Now it is our duty to emulate you and help others see the cow as a sacred, sentient being and stop eating her flesh and consuming her milk as she watches her babies taken away and sold to the meat industry. Please give us the strength and intelligence to bring people your message of compassionate cow protection, which provides *ahimsa* milk and engages the males (bulls) in work that utilizes their natural, dharmic propensities.

You explain the importance of cow and bull protection in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.16.18:

The bull is the emblem of the moral principle, and the cow is the representative of the earth. When the bull and the cow are in a joyful mood, it is to be understood that the people of the



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world are also in a joyful mood. The reason is that the bull helps production of grains in the agricultural field and the cow delivers milk, the miracle of aggregate food values. The human society, therefore, maintains these two important animals very carefully so that they can wander everywhere in cheerfulness.

Your servants at the International Society for Cow Protection (ISCOWP), Florida, USA.

ISKCON Child Protection Office

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have charged us with a great responsibility: caring for Lord Caitanya's associates and devotees taking birth in Kali-yuga to take part in your mission.

When you were preparing to leave this world, you instructed His Holiness Girirāj Swami: "This movement will go on with organization and intelligence." With this instruction in mind, we have made it our goal to strengthen child protection through greater organization, structure, and enlisting support globally. This will bring consistency to our actions and empower devotees to confidently and enthusiastically serve the Vaiṣṇavas in your beloved ISKCON.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, one of your most important and famous instructions is the one you gave to His Holiness Bhakti Chāru Swami shortly before your departure: "Your love for me will be shown by how you all cooperate with each other after I am gone." Following this instruction has proved quite challenging for us at times, due to the issues we must deal with. Among the six loving exchanges between Vaiṣṇavas, revealing one's mind confidentially is one. When considering the long-term impacts of child abuse, confidentiality is essential. In the service of handling confidential matters, misunderstandings of facts, conjecture, and differing personal opinions arise among the greater community of devotees. As we strive to handle each case with sensitivity and observe Vaiṣṇava etiquette, I pray that we can engender trust and confidence in the services the Child Protection Office offers your global mission.

At present we are engaging local devotees across ISKCON to take up the vital service of keeping your Society's children safe from abuse. By your mercy, we are making progress, and awareness of the importance of this issue is growing day by day. We have held numerous training events and are arranging many more for the coming year. Effectively implementing this knowledge, however, requires a substantial amount of cooperation, organization, and intelligence, and it is an ongoing challenge to maximize these.

As we endeavor to follow your instructions and example, please bless our efforts and empower us to establish a standard that is exemplary in how devotees of Kṛṣṇa care for and protect the most vulnerable among us, the children, who are the future of your movement.

Your aspiring and dependant servants at ISKCON's Child Protection Office.

(written by Kamalesh Kṛṣṇa Dāsa and Lilāśuka Devī Dāsī)



HOMAGES FROM OTHER SOURCES



ISKCON Student Center (Bangkok)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

On this auspicious day of your appearance, I feel privileged and honored to glorify your divine Vaiṣṇava qualities and your contributions to the salvation of the conditioned souls of Kali-yuga.

A few months back I went to the U.S. to present a research paper that is part of my Ph.D. work. I took the opportunity to visit Tompkins Square Park in New York, where you started chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and delivered so many hippies. I also visited ISKCON temples in New York, Los Angeles, and few other cities.

During my visit I was reminded me of a poem written by His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami for Your Divine Grace. A few stanzas follow:

yadi prabhupāda nā haita tabe ki haita . . .

*pāścātyera yata pāpi durācārī
śūnyavādī māyāvādī
tādera uddāra karibāre mana
hena kon dayānidhi*

*tādera nikāṭe kon janā āsi
bilāita harinām
sabhya jīva rūpe gaḍite tādera
ke haita āguyān*

“If Prabhupāda had not come, what other compassionate person would have endeavored to deliver the Westerners, who include sinners, impersonalists, voidists, and gross materialists? Who else would have come to give us his association and distribute the holy name? Who else would have come forward to give us a cultured spiritual life?”

Before going to the West in an effort to fulfill the instructions of your spiritual master, you would pray and cry for the Lord’s mercy, saying your guru had given you an impossible task. Most of the people in Bombay who knew of your plan said you would suffer severe cold and would starve because the Westerners eat only meat. However, you were determined and said, “I will live on bread and potatoes.” You were determined that even if you suffered and died, you would die trying to fulfill the instructions of your spiritual master: to propagate Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement in the West in the English language.

Your surrender to the instructions of your spiritual master, your faith in the holy name, your adherence to the mission of Lord Caitanya, and your compassion for the fallen souls of Kali-Yuga—all are unfathomable, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Our years of effort with little success, the innumerable problems and shortcomings we face while trying to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the local Thai youth—these have all made me appreciate you even more. Under the guidance of His Holiness Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Mahārāja and ISKCON Thailand GBCs His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami and His Holiness Kavicandra Swami, we have been helping run the ISKCON Student Center in Bangkok for around ten years. Several university students with Thai citizenship stayed in the center for a few years and practiced Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with their studies. But after graduation they all got married, got a job, and moved away. Moreover, dealing with young students is quite a challenge, especially since we ourselves are not so fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I appreciate how you must have dealt with many hippies and compassionately taken care of them and trained them up so nicely to become exalted Vaiṣṇavas. However, recently several new local



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students have joined the center and are practicing and preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness; thus our rays of hope have been re-ignited. Many of these students are children of parents who are favorable to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and are cultured and stable. The new devotees have helped organize several successful preaching programs in different universities in Bangkok.

Please bless us and give us strength, faith, proper vision, and discretion so that we may be able continue serving you and the *saṅkīrtana* mission of Lord Caitanya under the guidance of your disciples and ISKCON representatives.

Your servants at the ISKCON Student Center in Bangkok, Thailand.

(written by Antaraṅga Gopāla Dāsa)

ISKCON Television

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my respectful, most humble, and fallen obeisances at your divine lotus feet. By your causeless mercy, you are delivering the whole world from impersonalism and voidism. You are forever the nectar counteracting the poison of this material world.

O Prabhupāda, you are freely distributing pure love for Kṛṣṇa, which is as bountiful as the fruits of the *kalpa-vṛkṣa* tree, as fresh as a newly offered *tulasī* leaf, as clean as the taste of water in Goloka. You are the flood of His grace that flows from the streams of Goloka. You are the glow of the light that is His transcendental body.

O Prabhupāda, when all was darkness and my life had not yet begun; when my back was turned and I blindly followed my own elusive shadow; when I sat on the stool of forgetfulness and denounced the One beloved; when I plunged down Māyā's steps to the outstretched arms of her embrace; when I reached the bottom of the uncountable fathoms of nescience . . . you, Prabhupāda, you picked up this most fallen soul from the ocean of death to breathe, to sniff, to taste, to touch, to perceive for a moment what is so close in heart and so far in desire. Through layers upon layers of coated dust, you came singing and dancing, calling and prancing upon the sublime chanting of the Holy Names, Holy Names. Holy Names, Holy Names: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. They are the perfection of music, as you are the perfection of man. *Harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam*. They are God's glory, as you are the glory of God. *Kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva*. They are life's deliverance, as you are the deliver of life. *Gatir anyathā*. They are the means and the end, as you are the end of all meaning.

O Prabhupāda, you are personified truth; you are the most pure of *sādhus*—for where can there be illusion, where can there be mistake, where can there be cheating, and where can there be imperfection where there is you, the dispeller of fear, the fructified plant of Him Who is Most Dear?

Prabhupāda, somehow let me fix my mind on your lotus feet; let me watch your eyes glisten in delight and your toes wiggle in spiritual trance. Like the soft flutter of the *pūjārī*'s handkerchief, like the soothing breeze of the peacock fan—that is you, Prabhupāda. You are in the tingle of the bell. You are in



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the fragrance of the rose. You are in the sprinkle of the water. You are in the light of the fire. In the sound of the holy conch, I hear your sacred name, Prabhupāda. It speaks your fame.

O Prabhupāda, your lotus eyes glance over the spectacle that is stumbling humanity dancing to the wrong music. And you chant the Holy Names into wax-filled ears. And you stretch your graceful arms in ecstasy as they tumble dumbly down the steps of illusion. And all you ask is that we make the unfortunate fortunate, that we make the unhearing hear, that we make our selves sincere by being sincere.

O Prabhupāda, you are the sweetness of a simply wonderful; you are the spice of the dahl; you are the richness of the ghee; you are the cream of the milk. The taste of your mercy has no limit; the radiance of your jeweled heart has no bounds.

*catur-vidha-śrī-bhagavat-prasāda-
svādv-anna-tṛptān hari-bhakta-saṅghān
kṛtvaiṣva tṛptim bhajataḥ sadaiva
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

Ahaṁ brahmāsmi. Sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ. Janmādy asya yataḥ. Ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam. Sanātana-dharma.

O Prabhupāda, may I someday be able to offer you one leaf of sincerity, one flower of devotion, one fruit of pure goodness, one tear of love.

O Prabhupāda, O spiritual master, may I inquire from you submissively? May I render service unto you? May I approach you with bowed head and folded palms and ask that you, by your infinite mercy, by your unlimited kindness, by your endless compassion, by your most sanctified grace, accept me as your wretched, most fallen, unworthy disciple who reluctantly begs—with less than a particle of sincerity—to become your eternal, undying, ever-existing servant of the servant of the servant of the servant, ad infinitum? By your causeless mercy, may I forever, always, unceasingly be in your service . . .

Hari hari bol!

Your servants at ISKCON Television.

(written by Nṛsiṁhānanda Dāsa)

ISKCONResolve

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

There is no offering that can adequately thank you for having given us back our souls, and there are no words sufficient to describe the miracle of your achievements. Still, we first-generation disciples who serve in ISKCONResolve have memories of our time with you, memories we can share with granddisciples and others who follow you today.

We remember you as an innovator who made spiritual life relevant. You presented Kṛṣṇa consciousness as neither a sectarian religious tradition nor a yogic panacea for reducing stress, but as the eternal nature



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of life itself and as a dynamic force for change. When discussing how to apply Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the world, you were quite clear: devotees should strive to become the “head” of the social body, a class of intellectually astute mentors capable of advising government, religious, and private-sector decision-makers. Whenever you spoke with representatives from these sectors, you emphasized the need for such a spiritually qualified class to guide policy decisions and inspire good governance.

In May 1974, for instance, you spoke with Mr. C. Hennis from the International Labor Organization (ILO) in Geneva. His organization was incorporated into the United Nations in 1946, with the goals of eradicating worker exploitation and creating safe workplace standards worldwide. While appreciative of these goals, you counseled Mr. Hennis that workers are exploited by more than ruthless bosses and unsafe conditions. Because they are unaware of their higher identity as eternal servants of God, workers risked misusing their ILO benefits. You recommended that if Mr. Hennis’s agency wanted to achieve a lasting outcome, the ILO should invite input from a spiritually educated advisory board. Such a board would not only help employers achieve their corporate goals but would also instill in them a sense of higher purpose: to educate workers about their real self-interest, God consciousness. Otherwise, you argued, greed would continue to guide management policies, and the results of the ILO’s efforts would always be temporary.

After Mr. Hennis left, a disciple asked you, “During your conversation with this gentleman, you mentioned that nowhere is there any sanction by God for heavy industry. Does that mean that if people want to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness they must stop working in factories and industry?”

“No,” you replied. “Our recommendation is that whatever position you are in, you can chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Workers can chant; what is the difficulty? Even in factories they take some leisure hours. So why not sit down for five minutes and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa?”

“But eventually,” your disciple asked, “must they stop their industry work?”

“No,” you repeated, “there is no question of stopping. If that is their livelihood, how they can stop it? That is not possible. But they can add this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra chanting. Then things will be adjusted. It is not possible to stop different methods of livelihood. If he is attached to this industrial activity because he is thinking ‘I am getting more money for wine and woman and meat, let me enjoy,’ that is imperfect, but if he chants Hare Kṛṣṇa his consciousness will be purified, and eventually he will become not interested in this kind of work.”

To encourage a *bhakti*-friendly workplace, on several occasions you recommended that businesses dedicate space where employees can congregate for free *prasādam* accompanied by *kīrtana*. When workers realize that management is concerned for their spiritual as well as material well-being, you pointed out, they will gladly give the company their best efforts.

The brilliance of this strategy, of course, is that it does not tear down factories or overthrow any existing structure but rather reforms from within with increased spiritual as well as material results. We remember your stance on improving working conditions, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and honor your memory.

That same week in May 1974—more than forty years before the efforts by the current administration to foster economic isolationism and draconian border tariffs—you commented to Professor Richard Webster from the Societa Filosofica Italiana, “Why trade should be taxed? This is unnatural. Let there be free trade. The general public wants the best things at a good price. So if Japan or Germany can supply goods at cheaper price, why should they be restricted? Let the people take advantage of it. We say everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa. We are all sons of Kṛṣṇa. Let us live peacefully and utilize Kṛṣṇa’s property. The so-called politicians and leaders are saying, ‘No, you cannot enter here, no immigration.’ But there is enough land, enough water. Now utilize them and produce food grain, let everyone eat nicely, live peacefully, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and go back to home, back to Godhead. This is our philosophy.”

Once again you advocated a position that did not ignore the issues but rather proposed a solution that would benefit people both materially and spiritually. We remember your stance on tariffs and immigration, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and honor your memory.

You applied a similar strategy in discussions with religious leaders, acknowledging the value of all true religions but forcefully arguing for improvement. In particular, you urged religious leaders to recognize consciousness in animals. This was critical, you stressed, not just for ontological reasons (the symptoms



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of life are found in both animals and humans) but also because human rights are linked to animal rights. Religions will never make a lasting contribution to a peaceful, nonviolent world if they continue to believe that only humans possess eternal souls. You insisted that it is the duty of religious leaders to imbue their followers with respect for the dignity of life in all its forms.

In France, you spoke strongly on this point with Cardinal Danielou. On the drive back to the Paris temple, a disciple asked why you so often emphasized this point with religious leaders who would have preferred discussing higher principles of religion.

“If they cannot understand the basics,” you replied, “where is there question of higher principles? First let them accept that the symptoms of the soul are there in animals. We eat and the animal eats; we sleep, we mate, and we defend, and so do animals. The soul is there. How can we discuss higher principles if they have not understood this basic point and continue to sanction animal slaughter?”

We remember your stance on interfaith dialog, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and honor your memory.

When it came to the rights of women, you declared that subordinate roles historically imposed on women have nothing to do with spiritual reality and that misogyny and discrimination are condemned by enlightened souls. You acknowledged the traditional roles of women, often advocating that women should be protected. Yet you gave priority to the equality of all living beings and urged us to honor everyone regardless of sex, race, religion, or ethnic origin. How tragic that this simple truth of your teachings has been marginalized and ignored. We remember your insistence on the equality of all people, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and honor your memory.

You pointed out the risk posed by scientists who downgrade consciousness to an accidental interaction of inert particles and blind forces. While political despots exercise a short-term capacity to intimidate, manipulative scientists posit a more nuanced, longer-lasting form of intimidation: scientific evidence purporting to show that life is a senseless tragedy, made worse by people of faith who insist on investing it with meaning.

“We should not even see their faces,” you once commented, underscoring the criminal nature of such dangerous declarations. “They are not even gentlemen. A gentleman would be ashamed to speak such nonsense. A gentleman thinks twice before saying anything.”

Then you pointed to your scientist disciples and said, “You must write very strongly, vehemently. Even if it is a little offensive, these rascals should be taught a good lesson. They are misleading others. As soon as you say ‘God created,’ immediately they become arrogant. That is our protest. We don’t deprecate their intention of advancing in knowledge, but we protest against their defying the authority of God.” We remember your strong objection to scientists with atheistic agendas, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and honor your memory.

It is understandable, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that your positions have not received wider attention. Heads of state today attend exclusively to increasing material appetites. They demonstrate no interest in helping citizens with “simple living and high thinking.” Your comments concerning a previous U.S. president and the criteria for someone fit to govern are worth revisiting.

“The head of society,” you cautioned, “must be of ideal character. Otherwise the whole society will be spoiled. Just like in America, the president [Nixon] is charged with so many offenses. Generally, politicians have got a particular motive, and when they cannot pull on, they declare war. They are creating this situation because they are not honest, they are not clean—and the poor citizens are suffering. That is due to these rascal leaders. They do not know what is the ideal of life, what is the aim of life. They are creating hodgepodge civilization and putting the mass of people in chaotic condition. This is the sum and substance. I do not know whether you’ll agree with me, but this is my study of the whole situation.”

Without naming him, you condemned the head of state as a selfish, ill-mannered demagogue dedicated to manipulating the law through cronyism, intent on erasing controls to human greed (and by extension eliminating safeguards to destruction of the environment), and restricting civil and political rights. You had the courage to speak of devotion to the Supreme Being as the linchpin that would expose such harmful so-called leaders.

We remember you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as the visionary who elevated universal concerns to a place



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above manipulative politicians, confused religious leaders, and atheistic scientists. We remember you as a pragmatist, who asked with a full heart, “This Kṛṣṇa consciousness makes you happy, so why don’t you take it?”

We remember you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as the person who raised our vision to the heights of personal and societal progress that can be achieved through intelligent application of your teachings. We are carried aloft by that memory, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and it is a memory we hereby once again pledge to honor.

Your unworthy servants at ISKCONResolve.

(written by Yogeśvara Dāsa)

Radio Krishna Centrale

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

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

Most beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most respectful and humble obeisances in the dust of your divine lotus feet.

You are our adored spiritual master, our eternal well-wisher, the munificent visible manifestation of the Lord in the heart, the perfect representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Our one and only longing is to become somewhat useful disciples—obedient, sincere, respectful, fully surrendered servants of your transcendental will. Even with our foolishness and inadequacy, we long to be able to bring some pleasure and satisfaction to Your Divine Grace.

Please, despite our unworthiness, do not turn away your sunshinelike merciful glance from us. Your mercy is truly all we are made of. Without it we would perish and cease to exist.

You, as the manifestation of Śrī Nityānanda Rāma, are the one who is purely injecting an unending stream of genuine spiritual strength within this transcendental movement. Only by perfectly attuning our own desires with yours can we embed and reverberate part of such spiritual strength, thus becoming instrumental in keeping ISKCON strong and effective in spreading pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, pleasing the Lord, and consequently bringing an end to the dreadful suffering of the fallen conditioned souls.

We, as your disciples, know with absolute certainty that any so-called individual strength we may be able to show, if is not spiritual strength infused by you, in the long run (more often short) will just create a disturbance, and the materially polluted resulting work, no matter how impressive, will be exposed as a farce.

You are nondifferent from the Supreme Lord residing in everyone’s heart as *caitya-guru*. He gives knowledge from within, and you are guiding us from without. Unlike advanced, pure devotees, we cannot expect to hear the Lord talking to us directly from within our heart; nonetheless, He sent Your Divine Grace, the expression of His causeless mercy, to reclaim us through your flawless instructions.

By our good fortune we have been able to surrender to you with “no ifs, ands, or buts,” and by your



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kindness you have in turn accepted us as your disciples. Please keep sustaining us with your strength so that we may forever feel our enthusiasm to serve Your Divine Grace with “no ifs, ands, or buts” intensify ad infinitum.

Real spiritual enthusiasm, steadily rising from humbly doing our best to serve you under any condition, is what we aspire for, not the so-called enthusiasm that gushes out only when we are the main acclaimed characters at the center of the action—or, at any rate, coming from an easy-going life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As you said, “an easy-going life and Kṛṣṇa consciousness go ill together.”

Although we are very wretched and fallen, we are really ready to go to any extent to please you.

If we become fixed up in this resolution—that “Whatever we have heard from my guru, the representative of Kṛṣṇa, I must execute. I do not care for my personal convenience or inconvenience. This is my life and soul”—then your life is perfect. . . . If I make some amendment, addition, alteration, in the name of Kṛṣṇa, guru, then it is spoiled. [Class on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.08.48, Māyāpur, 28 October 1974]

[Kṛṣṇa said to Sudāmā Brāhmaṇa:] With great compassion our gurudeva said, “My dear boys, it is very wonderful that you have suffered so much trouble for me. Everyone likes to take care of his body as the first consideration, but you are so good and faithful to your guru that without caring for bodily comforts you have taken so much trouble for me. I am glad to see that bona fide students like you will undergo any kind of trouble for the satisfaction of the spiritual master. That is the way for a bona fide disciple to become free from his debt to the spiritual master. It is the duty of the disciple to dedicate his life to the service of the spiritual master. My dear best of the twice-born, I am greatly pleased by your acts, and I bless you: May all your desires and ambitions be fulfilled. May the understanding of the *Vedas* which you have learned from me always continue to remain within your memory, so that at every moment you can remember the teachings of the *Vedas* and quote their instructions without difficulty. Thus you will never be disappointed in this life or the next.” [Kṛṣṇa Book, Chapter 80, “The Meeting of Lord Kṛṣṇa with Sudāmā Brāhmaṇa”]

[Kṛṣṇa said to Sudāmā Brāhmaṇa:] As the Supersoul of the living entities, I sit in everyone’s heart and observe everyone’s activity in every stage and order of life. Regardless of which stage one is in, when I see that one is engaged seriously and sincerely in discharging the duties ordered by the spiritual master and is thus dedicating his life to the service of the spiritual master, that person becomes most dear to Me. [Kṛṣṇa Book, Chapter 80, “The Meeting of Lord Kṛṣṇa with Sudāmā Brāhmaṇa”]

Beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the center of our lives. Our whole existence revolves around you, just as miniscule particles of light wrap around the golden sun.

We are aware that you are here, making your active presence vividly felt, always maintaining our Kṛṣṇa consciousness with your everlasting instructions, so that we will never feel alone, bereft of your transcendental life-giving personal association.

The Spiritual Master is present wherever his sincere disciple is trying to serve his instructions. This is possible by the Mercy of Kṛṣṇa. In your attempts to serve me and in all your sincere devotional sentiments I am with you as my Guru Maharaja is with me. Remember this always. [Letter to Bhakta Don, 1 December 1973]

Please always try to remember me by my teachings and we shall always be together. Just like I have written in the first publications of *Srimad Bhagavatam*, “The spiritual Master lives forever by His divine instruction, and the disciple lives with him,” because I have always served my



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Guru Maharaja and followed His teachings I am now even never separated from Him. Sometimes Maya may come and try to interfere but we must not falter, we must always follow the chalked out path laid down by the great *acharyas* and in the end you will see. [Letter to Cidānanda Dāsa, 25 November 1973]

You have established this wonderful embassy of the spiritual world, where the spiritual souls, originally Vaikuṇṭha citizens, can find refuge.

In a sane, fully Kṛṣṇa conscious environment, the materialistic mentality cannot resist: either it gets quickly burned to ashes by the blazing fire of pure devotional service, or in no time it forces an insincere person to spontaneously leave the place. By the intensity of unadulterated Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the habitat will retain its *āśraya* (shelter) property, automatically leading to the eradication of the impure element and preventing the *āśrama* and all its residents from getting infected.

But when somewhere within ISKCON'S body, in the name of "progressive innovation," "liberalization," "time, place, and circumstance adaptation," or some kind of so-called "better alignment with the tradition," the cancerlike pollution of the material atmosphere starts to become predominant, even the balancing, native, self-healing capacity of an authentic spiritual movement begins to weaken.

And if, in order to restore the intensity of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, proper action is delayed, then the whole place may see its all-attractive feature dwindle, followed by an increased risk of losing the association of many sincere souls, whose very presence contributes to strengthening this movement by encouraging the mutual uplift of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness and who, finding themselves scattered, will be strained in the struggle just to maintain their own purity.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please grant your Governing Body Commission (GBC) the required intelligence to see where real deviations are taking root and to take proper action, thus making sure that no alien, external, or extravagant idea, with all its intrinsic contaminations, may find its way into this ISKCON society.

For the benefit of all, in spite of all the complexities arising from managing an ever-growing international movement, please inspire the GBC with the ability to keep the ISKCON structure as simple as possible, solidly based on your clear vision and instructions, so as to avoid being stigmatized by the well-known "Prabhupāda said: 'resolutions, dissolutions, revolutions and then no solutions.'"

It can be considered a worthy sentiment to want to establish a variegated environment in which to offer all kinds of people not yet ready to surrender completely the chance to gradually get closer to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and little by little find their way to devotional service. But it should be done according to Your Divine Grace's specific directives, not by introducing contaminations according to some whims, and certainly not at the expense of displeasing those who wish to put an immediate end to their state of materialistic (un)consciousness, seeking refuge at the lotus feet of the pure devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. One should never deprive such seekers of the chance to experience a purely devotional atmosphere in the association of other like-minded devotees. Such an atmosphere must be free from any kind of gross or subtle contamination, no matter how much such contaminations may be regarded as insignificant or of no consequences from someone's point of view.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, let us be properly inspired by your instructions on how to avoid mistakes and correctly maintain this wonderful association of pure devotees, where anyone who wants to get quickly cured from the material disease and in this very lifetime return to his full original Kṛṣṇa consciousness as a pure servant of the servant of the servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa can find a secure shelter under the wholesome protection of your divine lotus feet.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are the perfect spiritual master, the unique powerful *ācārya* able to deliver the whole universe from the clutches of *māyā* and bring everyone back to the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

This is the test of guru. Guru does not become Kṛṣṇa Himself, but he canvasses door to door to induce that "You become devotee of Kṛṣṇa." This is sign of guru. *Vande gurūn īśa-bhaktān*. [Class on *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 1.1, Māyāpur, 25 March 1975]



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Nobody preaches about Kṛṣṇa. Nobody says what Kṛṣṇa wants. *Sarva-dharmān parityajya*. Kṛṣṇa wants this, but they are misinterpreting in different way and diverting the attention of the people most foolishly. . . . In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa is the center. So this is going on. You know; you are coming all from foreign countries. *Bhagavad-gītā* is popular in your country, at least amongst the scholars and theosophists and theologists, going on, for the last two hundred years at least. But nobody understood Kṛṣṇa. That is the difference. Now for the last, say, five or ten years, because we are presenting Kṛṣṇa as it is, it has become very easy for you to accept it. Unadulterated Kṛṣṇa.

Before this, everything was presented adulterated. Therefore there was no effect. So if you push on this movement, unadulterated Kṛṣṇa, it will go on. It will go on. And as soon as you adulterate Kṛṣṇa, it will not go on. It will not be effective. You may be very good scholar or very good politician or this or that, but you'll never understand what is Kṛṣṇa. [Class on *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 1.1, Māyāpur, 25 March 1975]

Guru also does not think himself that he is Kṛṣṇa, but he collects the devotional services of the disciples to offer to Kṛṣṇa. This is the process. We cannot approach Kṛṣṇa directly. We should approach through guru. *Tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam*. That is the injunction of the *śāstra*, that one should approach the guru who can transfer the service from the disciple to the Supreme Person. . . . Therefore the first offering is guru, *vande gurūn*.

Then guru creates many devotees. Guru's business is to canvass on behalf of Supreme Lord. That is guru's business. Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*, so, "You give up all material engagements." *Sarva-dharmān* means in the material world we have created so many so-called duties. This is our material disease. People are interested in material engagements, and they have created different varieties of engagements. Sociology, communism, and this "ism," that "ism," philanthropism, altruism, internationalism, nationalism—many, many duties they have created. That is all material. [Class on *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 1.1, Māyāpur, 25 March 1975]

So the Kṛṣṇa's business—He comes here. He has no business to come here because His agent, *prakṛti*, is doing everything. But still, out of compassion He comes in His original form, Kṛṣṇa, or in His incarnation as Kapiladeva, and He says the same thing: "My dear sons, My dear rascal sons, you are suffering so much on account of this material contact. Please come to Me, take shelter of Me, and you will be happy." This is going on. And Kṛṣṇa's representative says the same thing, that "You rascal, you take shelter of Kṛṣṇa and be happy." This is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We are going from door to door of all rascals. I tell it, declare it publicly: anyone who is not Kṛṣṇa conscious, he is rascal number one. I declare it. Come, any intelligent man. I shall talk with him. I shall prove that he is rascal number one if he has no Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That's a fact.

So this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant for the rascal number one, and we always canvassing, soliciting, "Please take to this." Not that we have invented something. [Class on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.25.41, Bombay, 9 December 1974]

Beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is all-attractive. Nonetheless He is attracted by pure love manifested in the form of His pure devotee. Therefore as the embodiment of pure love for the Lord, you are most attractive. And so is your transcendental movement if we continue to keep Your Divine Grace at the center of all our activities, not just as a slogan but as a fact. Nothing else is needed.

O most magnanimous Lords, Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, You are the source of unlimited causeless mercy. With all the humility we are capable of, as fallen, worthless conditioned souls, we beg Your Lordships to fulfill this sole request: please let us remain forever attracted by our divine spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please do not ever let us fall into forgetfulness of His Divine Grace, even if we have to remain in this dangerous place life after life. Please grant us his eternal association. Please let us remain fully absorbed in the service of His lotus feet, so that wherever the tossing



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waves of this fierce ocean of material existence will throw us, we will always realize His Divine Grace's personal presence and never feel lost and alone.

Śrīla Prabhupāda-*kī jaya!*

Your menial, respectful servants at Radio Krishna Centrale, Italy.

(written by Narakāntaka Dāsa (formerly Tridaṇḍi Dāsa))

Temple of the Holy Name in Prabhupāda Village

*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*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

On this auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, we want to thank you for everything you have given us and for your showing us how to become Kṛṣṇa conscious by your pristine example (*vapu*) and your ever-inspiring words (*vāṇī*).

Śrīla Prabhupāda, one year ago we installed very large, exquisite Deities of Gaura-Nitāi, and we are now in the process of completing the temple. You always impressed upon us the importance of Deity worship, and how if we serve the Lord with love and respect we would receive His mercy. How true these words are, for we are seeing how Śrī Śrī Parama Karuṇa Nitāi-Gaurasundara are taking care of Their servants and providing everything for Their worship. They are sending just what and who are needed, at just the right time. Just by seeing Their picture, so many have stepped forward to serve Them in so many ways. It is simply amazing!

If it weren't for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we would know nothing about Deity worship and would therefore be unable to have *darśana* of Their beautiful Lordships each day. And there is such a variety of services one can offer. Because of the high standard of Deity worship you gave us, many temples in India are following suit. Their general worship, *śṛṅgāra*, and cleanliness standards have vastly improved. This verifies Kṛṣṇa's words at *Bhagavad-gītā* 3.21:

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

Who would not want to emulate your example, Śrīla Prabhupāda? Only the fools. You are the emblem



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of sincerity, peacefulness, happiness, loving kindness, and compassion, what to speak of Kṛṣṇa consciousness—everything wonderful!

Other aspects of Kṛṣṇa consciousness you stressed are cow protection and growing our own food. This is sattvic life, a life that allows us to be free from dependence on outside sources, who are only motivated by lust and greed. Our community is situated in the beautiful countryside, and because we have this natural setting, we are seriously trying to fulfill your desire for cow protection and agriculture. This takes sincerity and careful organization, and we know that if we carefully follow your instructions, take advice from those who have first-hand experience, and work cooperatively, we will succeed. Just as through the intensity of your desire to please your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, you accomplished everything, we know that if our desires are pure, we can also please you. Following the perfect master gives perfect results, which means we will receive your blessings to make advancement in our Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless us so that we may make your desires ours and become successful in our attempts to establish these next phases in your ISKCON movement.

Your servants at the Temple of the Holy Name in Prabhupāda Village, North Carolina, USA.

The Ultimate Self-Realization Course

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

We cannot even begin to calculate how much we are indebted to you for the ocean of causeless mercy with which you have flooded this universe. This is why you are known as *jagad-guru*, the spiritual master of the entire universe. Even though Kali-yuga was rapidly advancing, completely obliterating all the pious qualities of this world's human beings, you appeared in this world by the grace of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa to bless suffering humanity with the return of true spiritual culture and saintly qualities.

It is only by your merciful guidance that we are able to make any endeavor to pay you back for your unlimited mercy. Therefore even in our attempts to repay you we are simply becoming more and more indebted to you. This means that for all of eternity we will simply become more and more entangled in our indebtedness to you. In this material world, to be heavily in debt is certainly an anxiety-ridden position, but in spiritual life such indebtedness is the cause of our liberation. So we must thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for totally entangling us in debt to you.

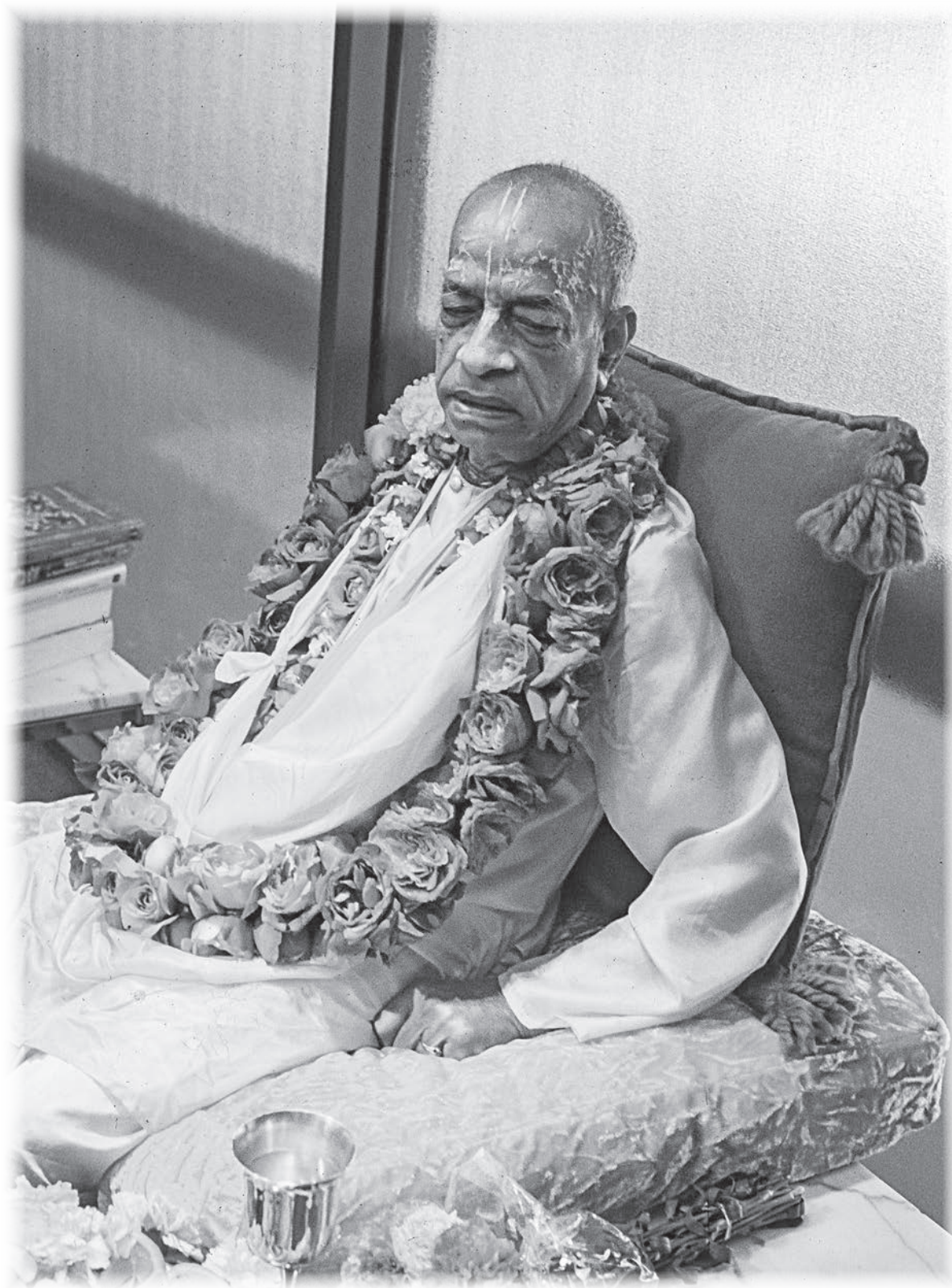
And thank you very much for sending more than 23,000 subscribers to our e-course, The Ultimate Self-Realization Course, which teaches the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness strictly according to your teachings.

Your grateful servants at The Ultimate Self-Realization Course.

(written by Saṅkarṣaṇa Dāsa)



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Vṛndāvana Samādhī Mandir and Museum

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

With a nod to Alan Ginsberg, we can only exclaim, “What intelligence, what compassion—to transplant an entire Vedic civilization onto foreign soil!”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, under the shade of the lotus feet of Rūpa Gosvāmī in Vṛndāvana, you planned out your strategy to relieve Lord Caitanya’s anxiety caused by His trying to find enough people to distribute the fruits of love of Godhead to. Lord Caitanya transplanted the storehouse of love of Godhead within your heart, and you personally distributed the fruits of love of Godhead globally, to millions of people in countless towns and villages. And whoever came into contact with those fortunate recipients were “infected” with Kṛṣṇa consciousness and were likewise impelled to distribute the fruits in other towns and villages. And the “epidemic” is spreading further and further, to this day.

How you did it is inconceivable. One devotee expressed his amazement to you: “Śrīla Prabhupāda, we were just loitering in the street.”

“Oh,” you said, “but when I called, you all came running.”

And, oh, did we run! And we are still running, as in a never-ending Olympic relay race, passing the flaming torch to the next runner, and the next runner, and the next runner.

You singlehandedly conquered the whole world, Śrīla Prabhupāda, which was once completely ruled by a single great emperor, Bharata, for whom the whole planet was known as Bhārata-varṣa. In one sense you didn’t actually transplant but rather re-awakened a very, very deeply hidden and long-forgotten inner reality, which had been obscured for thousands of years by material conditioning. And the result, as you said to Guru Dāsa in London in 1973, is that “One day scholars will note how this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement saved the world in its darkest hour.”

And with the job at hand set perpetually in motion, you returned home to Vṛndāvana to take up residence in your eternal resting place. And now you are the Emperor of the World, managing still from Vṛndāvana, ruling from your capital city, your Hastināpura. You sit in command in a specially gorgeous Rajasthani hand-carved white marble palatial twin-bridged duplex that challenges the beauty and wonder of “The Eight Wonders of the World,” fashioned with intense love by your servants Surabhīr-abhipālayantam Swami, Harīsarūpa Dāsa, and Acyuta Dāsa under the guidance of Gopāl Krishna Goswami, the GBC, and funded by hundreds of book distributors and donors worldwide.

You rule the world from this sublime bastion of your Samādhī, with newer and newer sentries everywhere and anywhere, who find places to distribute those unlimitedly increasing fruits of love of Godhead by means of music, book distribution, going to the media, colleges, and libraries, by dramas, dioramas, light shows, Sunday Love Feasts, Deity worship, grand festivals like Ratha-yātrā and Janmāṣṭamī, by writing for adults and for children, by opening *gurukulas*, farm communities, and preaching centers of all varieties, by chanting in the streets and in the temples, by Kārtika pilgrimages and *parikramās*, by meeting people in offices and enlisting them as life members, by keeping chaste to your program of *maṅgala-ārati*, *tulasī-pūjā*, sixteen rounds of *japa*, *guru-pūjā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class, evening *ārati*,



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and *Bhagavad-gītā* class, by intensive VIHE and MIHE study courses and off-shoots, which have caught on everywhere to produce Bhakti-śāstrīs, Bhakti-vaibhavas, and hopefully Bhaktivedāntas. Above all, preaching is the essence.

It's a miracle. You allowed and still allow us to participate in the great takeover of the universe. You have graciously entered your Samādhi in Vṛndāvana, the cornerstone of all fourteen worlds. Thousands of ISKCON devotees and busloads of pilgrims come to see you all day, every day. No one comes here to your Samādhi without feeling your presence in a very practical sense. In Vṛndāvana, we are so fortunate to be able to sit with you, sing for you, pray to you, take refuge under the very comforting shade of your lotus feet, and design presentations to remind people of your mood and mission in your Samādhi and Samādhi Museum. Recently we replaced the huge streets signs to remind people that the road from the highway is called Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg.

We run to your Samādhi *maṅgala-ārati* every morning, and we broadcast it all over the world daily. Devotees gather together from everywhere, once a year or even once in thirty years, because the strength of your presence is available so palpably in your Vṛndāvana Samādhi. You are the *raison d'être* for everything in our lives.

By sitting here in *samādhi*, you have given us the stunning opportunity to serve your *vāṇī* and your *vapu* simultaneously. You told us that your disease is that you could only think big. This is too big. We didn't fall in love with Kṛṣṇa; we fell in love with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and there are so many things we want to do, you want us to do, to serve you. The list is endless. We're hoping for your mercy so that we will live long enough to complete our service to you as you communicate your desires to us while we sit before you in your divine resting place. If it is your pleasure, then it is our pleasure.

So many instructions, so little time; so many obstacles, so many opportunities. You have offered us inconceivable mercy. I pray that I have inconceivable sincerity to take that mercy and give it to unlimited numbers of others while I serve you in your Samadhi Mandir and Museum.

The servants of your divine Samādhi Mandir/Samādhi Museum Complex in Vṛndāvana, India.

(written by Pārvatī Devī Dāsī)

Yashodapura Ashram

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

*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*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, first I would like to express our deep appreciation for the opportunity to compose this Vyāsa-pūjā offering for you. I feel very blessed.



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Śrīla Prabhupāda, Your Divine Grace is so merciful to everyone. Your presence has been bringing light into this world of darkness for many decades. We don't know what we would be without your mercifully teaching us Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Your Divine Grace's devotion to your spiritual master's instructions is so intense. Being empowered by him, you performed the miracle of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness worldwide. Countless people of different nations now take shelter in this movement.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, which you brought to us, teaches us our real dharma as servants of the Supreme Lord. Your compassionate efforts have reminded people of the science of love of Godhead, just as an alarm clock causes a sleeping person to regain consciousness. *Jīva jago jīva jāgo gauracānda bole.*

The anomaly of the materially conditioned human beings is that they are not interested in glorifying the Lord's holy names and pastimes, which are like nectar. Instead, they glorify everything else, which is just like poison. Your Divine Grace is like a doctor who gives the medicine of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the suffering people of this so-called advanced era. This medicine is now available almost everywhere in the world. But people are so unfortunate that they are not interested in taking that medicine.

Your Divine Grace often shared your vision for re-establishing the Vedic culture. This culture is not only about spiritual life but also about material life. Your Divine Grace has shown by example how to use everything in Kṛṣṇa's service. Your Divine Grace's vision is that the Vedic way of life, centered on *daiva-varṇāśrama*, will enable people to live in the mode of goodness, which makes practicing devotional service much easier.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Your Divine Grace's mercy is just like the sunshine. The sun spreads its heat and light everywhere, without discrimination. In the same way, Your Divine Grace has distributed the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to people from all parts of the world, without discrimination. It is only because our intelligence is covered by the cloud of ignorance that we are reluctant to take this mercy. We are so dull spiritually that we do not fully appreciate your nectarean instructions on Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your determination is like river flowing into the ocean. It can never be checked by any means. It just flows and flows on its journey under all conditions. The water flows even in the most difficult situations. Eternally inspiring is Your Divine Grace's determination to satisfy your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, by taking the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness from India to the English-speaking countries.

Cambodia is one of the countries in Southeast Asia that previously embraced Vedic culture. The presence of the magnificent Angkor Wat temple strengthens the understanding of dedication to Lord Viṣṇu as the Supreme Lord, one of the *guṇa-avatāras* of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus genuine spiritual life was very prominent here at one time. Somehow or other, as time advanced, things changed to such an extent that the Vedic culture virtually disappeared and is now mostly forgotten. In this land the divine practice of performing sacrifice to Lord Viṣṇu, which is the only way to get free from bondage to the material world, has sunk into the very depths of Kali-yuga. It has all but disappeared. Only a physical building remains, but people are no longer aware of its purpose, i.e., cultivating a culture of devotional service to the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu.

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, which Your Divine Grace started, is very suitable to re-establish this culture. Your Divine Grace's teachings, being empowered by the previous *ācāryas*, hold the key for Cambodia to regain its glorious era of spiritual culture. We have faith that large numbers of the Khmer people will one day take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness, since they have actually been waiting for it for a long time. Unfortunately, now they are still very reluctant to accept this path. We pray to Your Divine Grace that we will be serving here in Cambodia to witness the people here become happy by taking up the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

In our base camp here in Siem Reap, Yashodapura Ashram, we have been doing small services to help spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness according to our capacity. We are a very small number of devotees here conducting *harināma*, *prasādam* distribution, home programs, etc. In addition, we have another community project called Yashodapura Eco Village. We are not expert in many ways, but we hope to be



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able to learn from Your Divine Grace's preaching activities and follow in your footsteps.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we pray to Your Divine Grace to kindly send us some local Cambodian devotees so that this Cambodian *yātrā* can spread more rapidly. If they are local and speak the Khmer language, these devotees will more easily understand the feelings of the local people, and in this way they will be able to more easily approach them and convince them about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Also, please kindly bless us so that more devotees in our society become aware of our small efforts here to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. There is a great need for more devotees to come and serve here in Parama Vishnu Loka, Siem Reap, Cambodia.

Finally, we would like to deeply thank Your Divine Grace for being so merciful to all of us so that we have shelter in your Society.

Your servants at Yashodapura Ashram, the ISKCON preaching center in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

(written by Kumudākṣa Dāsa and others)

Yashodapura Eco Village

*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*

Dear Vaiṣṇavas,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

On the occasion of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, we would like to share our experience in Cambodia for the glories of Śrīla Prabhupāda, who has saved millions of souls around the world.

We are presently in the town of Siem Reap in Cambodia, also known as Parama Vishnu Loka, or the Supreme Abode of Lord Viṣṇu, where the largest Viṣṇu temple in the world, Angkor Wat, is located. Unfortunately, at present this huge temple is no longer being utilized to worship Lord Viṣṇu because the general mass of people have forgotten the way of devotional service to Lord Viṣṇu. Although the Deity form of Lord Viṣṇu is in the temple, it is no longer in the center. It is being kept simply as a stone monument without proper worship.

By Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy, we have been preaching in Siem Reap for almost ten years now. Our main purpose in coming here was to serve Śrīla Prabhupāda's mission of helping reestablish the Vaiṣṇava culture through the worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa. The social culture of worshipping Lord Viṣṇu is mentioned in Śrīla Prabhupāda's commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as the *varṇāśrama-dharma* system:

In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (3.8.9), the great sage Parāśara Muni has recommended:



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

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, is worshiped by the proper execution of prescribed duties in the system of *varṇa* and *āśrama*. There is no other way to satisfy the Lord.” In the land of Bhārata-varṣa, the institution of *varṇāśrama-dharma* may be easily adopted. At the present moment, certain demoniac sections of the population of Bhārata-varṣa are disregarding the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. Because there is no institution to teach people how to become *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, and *śūdras* or *brahmacārīs*, *grhasthas*, *vānaprasthas*, and *sannyāsīs*, these demons want a classless society. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.19.19, purport]

Varṇāśrama education is one of the most important aspects for helping to fulfill Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mission, and in order to gradually establish the *varṇāśrama* education, we have started to develop the Yashodapura Eco Village project. Yashodapura is the ancient name of the community in Angkor Wat. In the same way that the Cambodian people in the past established this community at Angkor Wat, we also desire to establish a Vaiṣṇava community by the name Yashodapura Eco Village. The project is located in Chub Village, Chub Te Traw Commune, Angkor Thom District, some forty kilometers from the town of Siem Reap. Our main goal is to train local people to live happily and opulently by serving Mother Cow, Mother Bhūmi, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in the following excerpt, establishing *varṇāśrama* is very important because without proper execution of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, society will always become degraded:

No one is being trained to act according to the principles of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, and thus people are becoming increasingly degraded and are heading in the direction of animal life. The real aim of life is liberation, but unfortunately the opportunity for liberation is being denied to people in general, and therefore their human lives are being spoiled. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, however, is being propagated all over the world to reestablish the *varṇāśrama-dharma* system and thus save human society from gliding down to hellish life. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.19.19, purport]

At the end of February 2017, Yashodapura Eco Village successfully secured 108 acres of agricultural land. The devotees serving in Cambodia would like to dedicate this project as their offering for ISKCON’s Golden Jubilee Anniversary. We know that in many of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books, lectures, letters, and conversations His Divine Grace expresses his strong desire that we take serious steps to establish ideal farm communities, the most important aspect of which is cow protection:

Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, directly advocates *go-rakṣya*, the protection of cows. Civilized men who follow the system of *varṇāśrama*, especially those of the *vaiśya* class, who engage in agriculture and trade, must give protection to the cows. Unfortunately, because people in Kali-yuga are *mandāḥ*, all bad, and *sumanda-matayaḥ*, misled by false conceptions of life, they are killing cows in the thousands. Therefore they are unfortunate in spiritual consciousness, and nature disturbs them in so many ways, especially through incurable diseases like cancer and through frequent wars among nations. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.8.11, purport]

Yashodapura Eco Village has two pieces of land close by, one being 90 acres of dry land and the other 20 acres of wet land. Just recently we also acquired a piece of land in the local village where our volunteers can stay. Now a few families are working on the land under an agreement of rule and regulation of land use. Gradually these local families are being introduced to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and we are regularly conducting *go-pūjā* with them and other local villagers. Recently His Holiness Bhakti Rāghava Swami came to visit during our *go-pūjā*, and Mahārāja explained to the villagers who attended the program about the importance of Mother Cow.



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Bhakti Rāghava Swami has been traveling extensively all over the world, introducing the twelve-year Om Śrī Surabhi Campaign. The main objective is to promote cow culture as the main foundation of brahminical culture, and to move toward the establishment of *daiva-varṇāśrama* communities based on self-sufficiency and sustainability, all centered on land, cows, and Kṛṣṇa. Mahārāja mentioned to us on his last visit that the establishment of *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma* is the 50% of Śrīla Prabhupāda's mission that has not yet been accomplished.

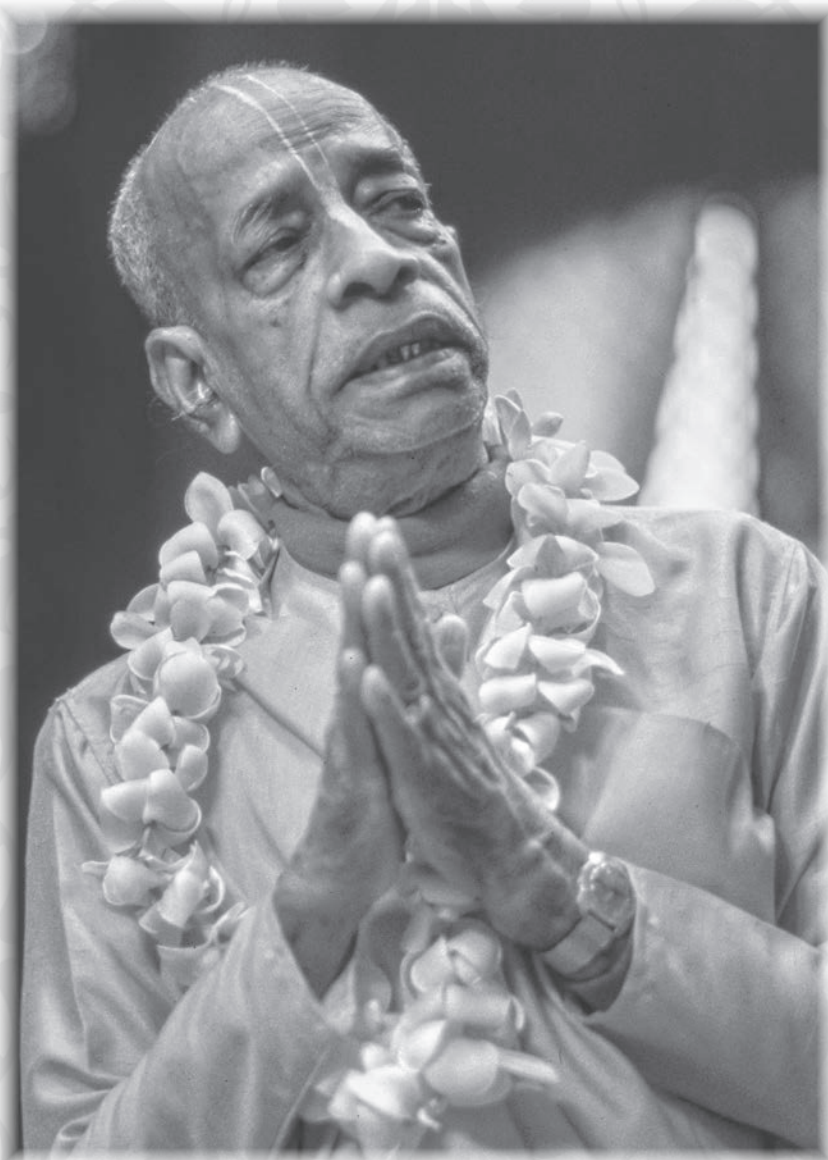
Fifty percent is a serious matter, but unfortunately not so many devotees understand the importance of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, although Śrīla Prabhupāda mentions it so many times in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other books. So Mahārāja explained that if we want to preach the whole mission of Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have to establish these communities by preaching to the people in the cities to adopt this more natural lifestyle. Śrīla Prabhupāda made two major statements about cities. He said that our cities should be our preaching basis but that the country should be our living basis. Śrīla Prabhupāda also stated that one day the cities would collapse because of not being based on principles of sustainability. Another reason the cities will collapse is due to sinful activities, especially cow-killing.

In the town of Siem Reap we have a center where people can come for our Sunday Feast program. The center serves as a base for our devotee preachers. Some local people are gradually taking interest in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One Cambodian devotee from Canada is already initiated, and we pray that more will also become initiated. We hope to get some devotees to stay permanently on the land in order to help fulfill Śrīla Prabhupāda's complete mission.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Śrīla Prabhupāda's servants at Yashodapura Eco Village, Siem Reap, Cambodia.

(written by Guṇāvatāra Dāsa)



Prayers from
ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA TO LORD KṚṢṆA



Prayer unto the Lotus Feet of Kṛṣṇa

written by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
on September 13, 1965, while on board the ship *Jaladuta*, four days before reaching Boston.

1. (refrain)

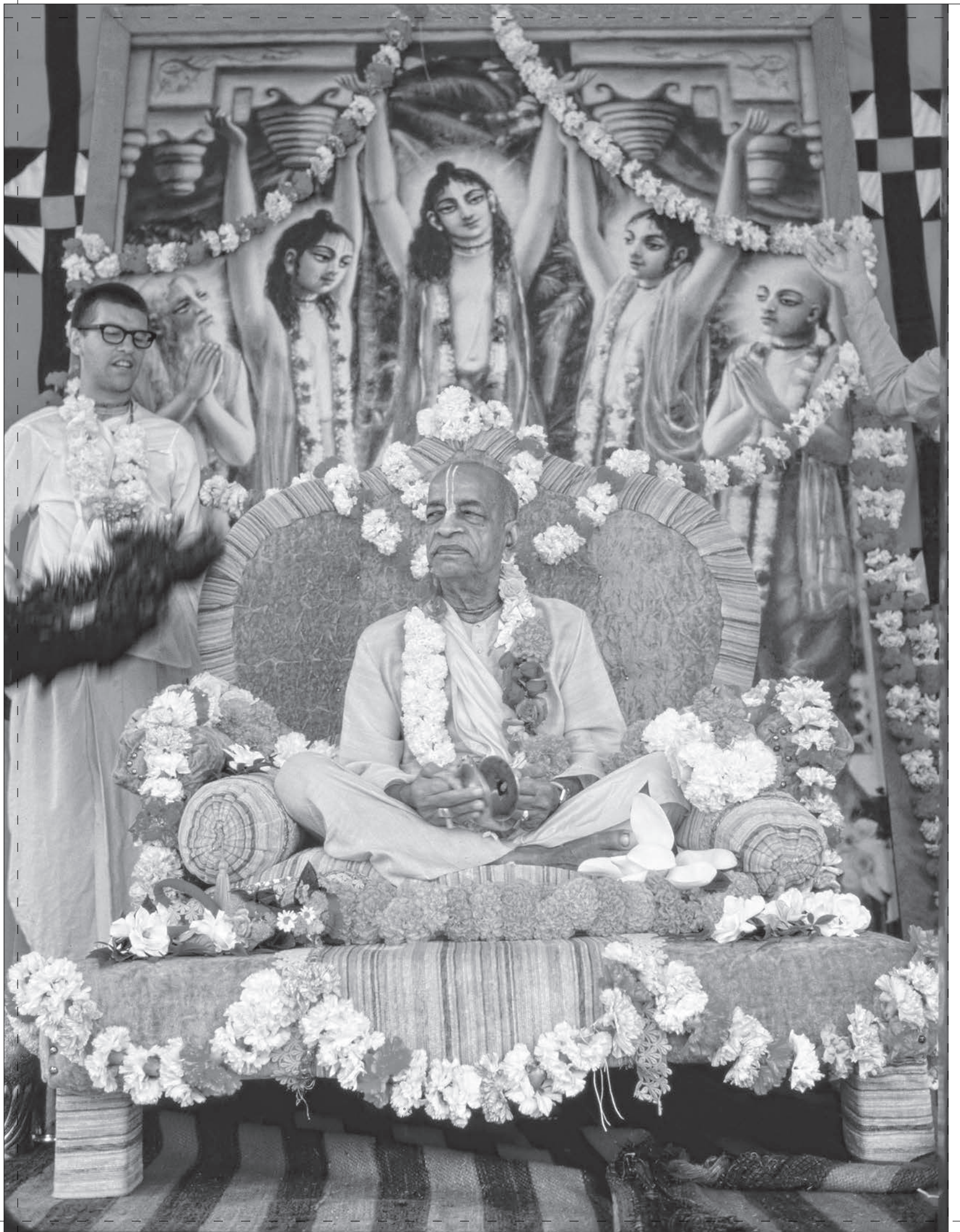
kṛṣṇa taba puṇya habe bhāi
e-puṇya koribe jabe rādhārāṇī khuṣī habe
dhruva ati bali tomā tāi

O brother, Kṛṣṇa, I emphatically say to You that when You perform
this pious act Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī will surely be pleased with You
and You will achieve great piety.

2.

śrī-siddhānta sarasvatī śacī-suta priya ati
kṛṣṇa-sebāya jāra tula nāi
sei se mohānta-guru jagater madhe uru
kṛṣṇa-bhakti dey thāi thāi

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who is very dear to
Lord Gaurāṅga, the son of Mother Śacī, is unparalleled in his service to
the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is that great saintly spiritual master who
bestows intense devotion to Kṛṣṇa at different places
throughout the world.





PRAYER UNTO THE LOTUS FEET OF KṚṢṆA



3.

*tāra icchā balavān pāścātyete thān thān
hoy jāte gaurāṅger nām
pṛthivīte nagarādi āsamudra nada nadī
sakalei loy kṛṣṇa nām*

By his strong desire, the holy name of Lord Gaurāṅga will spread throughout all the countries of the Western world. In all the cities, towns, and villages on the earth, from all the oceans, seas, rivers, and streams, everyone will chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

4.

*tāhale ānanda hoy tabe hoy digvijay
caitanyer kṛpā atīśay
māyā duṣṭa jata duḥkhī jagate sabāi sukhī
vaiṣṇaver icchā pūrṇa hoy*

As the vast mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu conquers all directions, a flood of transcendental ecstasy will certainly cover the land. When all the sinful, miserable living entities become happy, the Vaiṣṇavas' desire is then fulfilled.





PRAYER UNTO THE LOTUS FEET OF KṚṢṆA



5.

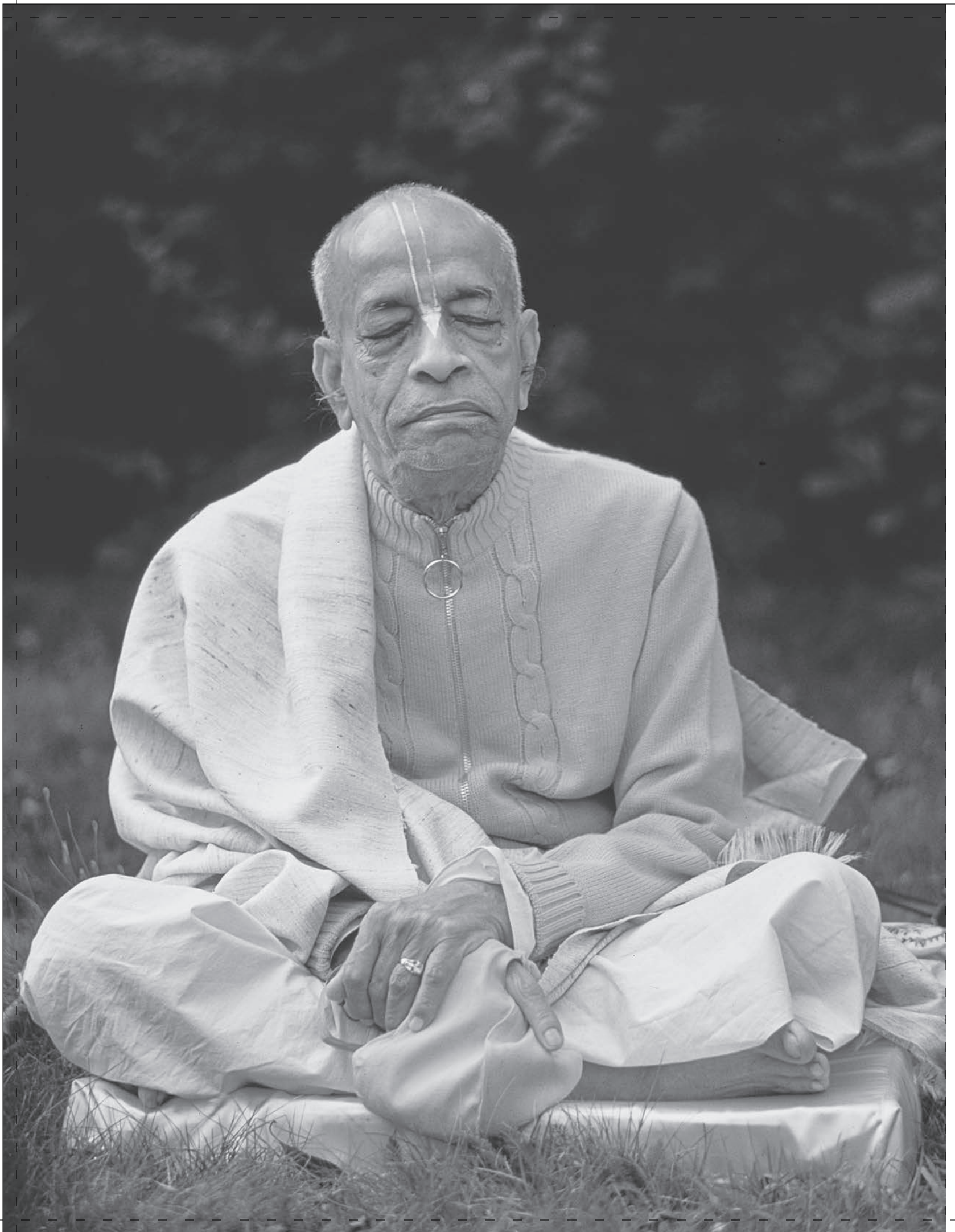
*se kārja je koribāre ājñā jadi dilo more
jogya nahi an dīna hīna
tāi se tomāra kṛpā māgitechī anurūpā
āji numi sabār pravīṇa*

Although my Guru Mahārāja ordered me to accomplish this mission, I am not worthy or fit to do it. I am very fallen and insignificant. Therefore, O Lord, now I am begging for Your mercy so that I may become worthy, for You are the wisest and most experienced of all.

6.

*tomāra se śakti pele guru-sebāya bastu mile
jībana sārthak jadi hoy
sei se sevā pāile tāhale sukhī hale
taba saṅga bhāgyate miloy*

If You bestow Your power, by serving the spiritual master one attains the Absolute Truth—one's life becomes successful. If that service is obtained, then one becomes happy and gets Your association due to good fortune.





PRAYER UNTO THE LOTUS FEET OF KṚṢṆA



7.

*evaṁ janāṁ nipatitaṁ prabhavāhikūpe
kāmbābhikāmaṁ anu yaḥ prapataṁ prasaṅgāt
kṛtvātmasāt surarṣiṇā bhagavan grhītaḥ
so 'haṁ kathaṁ nu viśṛje tava bhṛtya-sevām*

“My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, because of my association with material desires, one after another, I was gradually falling into a blind well full of snakes, following the general populace. But Your servant Nārada Muni kindly accepted me as his disciple and instructed me how to achieve this transcendental position. Therefore, my first duty is to serve him. How could I leave his service?”

[Prahāda Mahārāja to Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.9.28]

8.

*tumi mor cira sāthī bhuliyā māyār lāthi
khāiyāchi janma-janmāntare
āji punaḥ e sujoga jadi hoy jogāyoga
tabe pāri tuhe milibāre*

O Lord Kṛṣṇa, You are my eternal companion. Forgetting You, I have suffered the kicks of *māyā* birth after birth. If today the chance to meet You occurs again, then I will surely be able to rejoin You.



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9.

*tomāra milane bhāi ābār se sukha pāi
 gocārane ghuri din bhor
 kata bane chuṭāchuṭi bane khāi luṭāpuṭi
 sei din kabe habe mor*

O dear friend, in Your company I will experience great joy once again.
 In the early morning I will wander about the cowherd pastures and fields.
 Running and frolicking in the many forests of Vraja, I will roll on the
 ground in spiritual ecstasy. Oh when will that day be mine?

10.

*āji se subidhāne tomāra smaraṇa bhela
 baro āśā ḍākilām tāi
 āmi tomāra nitya-dāsa tāi kori eta āśa
 tumi binā anya gati nāi*

Today that remembrance of You came to me in a very nice way.
 Because I have a great longing I called to You. I am Your eternal servant,
 and therefore I desire Your association so much. O Lord Kṛṣṇa,
 except for You there is no other means of success.

