

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA TRIBUTES

06SEP 2015 Celebrating the
appearance day of our
beloved spiritual master

ŚRĪLA
PRABHUPĀDA
TRIBUTES



06SEP
2015

OM VIṢṆUPĀDA
PARAMAHAMSA
PARIVRĀJAKĀCĀRYA
AṢṬOTTARA-ŚATA

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD
A. C.
BHAKTIVEDANTA
SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

FOUNDER-ĀCĀRYA
OF THE INTERNATIONAL
SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA
CONSCIOUSNESS

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PRABHUPĀDA
TRIBUTES

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All Tributes are presented in chronological order by the date of their Initiation by Śrīla Prabhupāda

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Thank you to Draviḍa Dāsa for sharing and editing many of the sannyasi and some of the initiated disciples offerings which also appear in the BBT Vyāsa-pūjā book.

INTRODUCTION

By the mercy of the spiritual master

When we think about the mercy of the spiritual master we are reminded of the famous verse *yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau*:

“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.”
(*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.23)

I recently heard the following account of the first publishing of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *Bhagavad-gītā*. I share it with you as a remembrance of Brahmānanda Prabhu and the invaluable service he offered to Śrīla Prabhupāda. I also share it with you as an instructive piece on the benefits of simply trying to serve and please the spiritual master:

It came to publishing the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Śrīla Prabhupāda was eager to publish but there was no money to print it ourselves.

Anyway, when the manuscript was ready for printing Śrīla Prabhupāda gave it to Alan Ginsberg who was very enthusiastic. Alan said yes but the publishers rejected it. He sent it to some other publishers that he knew. Again

everyone rejected it. After about six months of trying Alan just lost interest.

Then Srila Prabhupada gave the manuscript to Rayarama, who was the editor of *Back to Godhead*, and he was sending it around to academic publishers, and again everyone rejected it. And you get letters saying “Thank you very much, but this doesn’t fit into our plans.” And then Srila Prabhupada gave it to me. Anyway, by that time I had absolutely no faith, because I could see there was no commercial value in this. On every page there was Krishna consciousness. I would think, “If you’re not interested in Krishna consciousness, you won’t be interested in this.” There was no poetry or scholarly footnotes, there were no esoteric things, and so I just had no faith.

I did not know what to do. I was going to bookstores and trying to see how they were doing it, looking at how to get a book published. I was going to the library and trying to find out. I just did not know what to do.

In the meantime, Srila Prabhupada had produced the record “*Hare Krishna*,” which was doing well. There was a lot of interest. One radio station played it all night long – ten hours, over and over again. It was an alternative radio station. Also, we were advertising the record in different underground publications.

One day, an order came for the record. I used to get the mail and take it up to Prabhupada. He used to dictate a reply, and I would take notes. This particular letter came from the Macmillan Company, the book company – a big publisher, world-wide. On their letterhead there was an order for a record album with a cheque. I rushed up to Prabhupada. I didn’t know what to do. I was helpless. Prabhupada had to tell us everything. He thought for a while.

Then he said, “You bring the record tomorrow. You bring it to the person, personally, and you tell him that you have

a *Bhagavad-gita* that you want to publish.”

I said “Okay. Should I bring the manuscript?”

“No, just tell them”. And I said, “Well, okay. Do I have to say something about you as the author? Maybe I should bring some of the other books you published, from India and the books you have already published.”

He said, “No just tell them you have a *Bhagavad-gītā* you want published.”

So the next day I got dressed in a shirt and tie and went uptown to the skyscraper of the Macmillan Company. The person I was giving the manuscript to was an accountant and nothing to do with publishing. He was just adding numbers. I was sitting there and thinking “What am I going to tell him?”

We were talking about the record and the mantra and I’m sitting there bewildered. Then the door opens and in walks somebody and he said very formally, “I would like to introduce our senior editor, James Wade.” I shook hands with Mr Wade and looked him right in the face and said “I have a *Bhagavad-gītā* to publish.”

He said, “*Bhagavad-gītā*? A Swami, an Indian Swami living here in New York?”

I said, “Yes.”

“He did this himself?”

I said, “Yes.”

He said, “the complete, the entire *Bhagavad-gītā*?”

I said, “Yes.”

He said, “That’s exactly what I’m looking for to fill out our religion section. We have Buddhas, we have a *Koran* we have everything but we don’t have a *Bhagavad-gītā*. I need a *Bhagavad-gītā*. If you want us to publish it, we will publish it.”

I could not believe what was happening. He actually agreed to publish it. He had not even seen the manuscript. Everyone else had rejected it for whatever reason and he accepted it without even seeing it. I could not even believe it. I just flew back down to Prabhupāda and told him the news. I was so excited. And Prabhupāda was – it was like he was expecting it.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was evidently pleased. And, this piece of invaluable service rendered by Brahmānanda Prabhu will remain to his eternal credit.

Reading through the pages of this *Tributes* book, I am awed by similar accounts of faith, service, and glorification of Srila Prabhupada. Srila Prabhupada’s followers worldwide are preparing to celebrate the 50th anniversary of His Divine Grace’s arriving on Western soil. While we all engage in plans of how best to celebrate this momentous, historic occasion, let us keep at the heart of it the celebration of our faith in Srila Prabhupada’s words – words which transformed our lives, and the same words that continue to transform the lives of many people all over the world. It is in the words of Srila Prabhupada that we invest our implicit faith. And the reciprocation for such faith is the revelation of “all the imports of Vedic knowledge.”

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Hare Krishna.

Pradyumna Dāsa
Tributes Production Manager
Leicester, UK.

TRIBUTES
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DISCIPLES

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you!

On this sacred anniversary of your appearance day, I want to thank you, as I do every day, for your magnanimous gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. At great sacrifice you boldly came to America at seventy years of age, in ill health and with no financial or institutional support. You single-handedly established the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. You depended on Lord Kṛṣṇa, and from humble beginnings in New York City you chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa, lectured from the *Bhagavad-gītā*, gradually gained followers, and lived to see the fabulous expansion and success of your International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). Now fifty years later ISKCON is firmly rooted, with hundreds of centers worldwide and many thousands of serious followers. Your place is recognized as the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON, and you are the pre-eminent instructing guru for all the present-day practitioners of Kṛṣṇa consciousness associated with your Society.

I wish to express my own gratitude to you as one of your followers. I came to you in the beginning of your preaching, in New York City in 1966, as a lost soul. You saved me and gave me a vigorous life of devotional service. Under your personal guidance I assisted in your movement with various services over the years. I am now seventy-five years old and still enthusiastically serving you and your movement, mainly by writing and taking care of disciples. You are my best well-wisher, master, and friend. You are my eternal guide, and I pray to continue serving you in the next life.

I am your humble servant,

Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

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

Once His Holiness Bhakti Caru Swami said to Śrīla Prabhupāda that he wished he could have been with Śrīla Prabhupāda to serve him in the early days in America, “when you were all alone.” Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, “I never felt that I was alone. I always felt that my spiritual master was with me.”

Similarly, Śrīla Prabhupāda once told Rukmiṇī Dāsī that when we feel separation from the spiritual master we should “try to remember his words of instruction.” When Lord Kṛṣṇa left this world, Arjuna, His intimate friend, keenly felt Kṛṣṇa’s absence. But when Arjuna remembered the instructions Kṛṣṇa had given him at Kurukṣetra, Arjuna felt Kṛṣṇa’s presence again. Similarly, Śrīla Prabhupāda said, when we feel the absence of the spiritual master we should remember his teachings. Then “You’ll not feel separation. You’ll feel that he is with you.”

Kṛṣṇa left this world five thousand years ago, but still, Śrīla Prabhupāda said, by remembering Kṛṣṇa’s instructions we can have Kṛṣṇa’s association because Kṛṣṇa is absolute, with no difference between Himself and His words or the words that describe Him. And Śrīla Prabhupāda left this world only thirty-eight years ago.

Only! It seems like millennia. Such a short time with us and such a long time gone.

But when we remember his instructions and serve him, we will not feel that he is gone. We will feel that he is with us, always.

Aspiring for that perfection,

Jayādvaita Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti itī nāmīne*

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

Under the spell of Māyā’s illusions, and based on material considerations, conditioned souls imagine that they have become greater or lesser than others. After all, conditioned souls have come to the material world to compete with one another for supremacy—for the supreme position of God.

In her prayers, Queen Kuntī says that if a soul wants to free himself of material pride and illusion, he must take shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa and develop a feeling of dependence on Him. On the other hand, she says, there are those who are intoxicated by material consciousness and anxious for material gain, such as wealth, learning, bodily beauty, position, and power. However, they become maddened by the illusionary energy and cannot chant Lord Kṛṣṇa’s names feelingly.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.32) says that the soul is eternal, transcendental, and beyond the modes of material nature. Despite contact with the material body, the soul neither does anything nor is entangled. Since the material energy can only put the soul in illusion but not change his essential nature or eternal position, the soul remains the same in all material circumstances.

From a spiritual point of view, so-called advancement through material gain has no ultimate value. Real progress for the soul is spiritual. Everything else is simply a change from one illusory, conditioned state of existence to another. Thus a soul can choose to either orient his desires toward material consciousness, which will entangle it in illusion, or toward the true, spiritual conception of being Lord Kṛṣṇa’s eternal servant.

The way a soul orients his desires mainly depends upon what he associates with, because different types of association accord with different subject matters for hearing, chanting, and

remembering. Material association will focus one's hearing, chanting, and remembering on fulfilling material desires, whereas spiritual association focuses one on the spiritual desire to please Lord Kṛṣṇa. Indeed, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission focuses on such pure, spiritual desires, especially on the desire to become Kṛṣṇa conscious and help others achieve the same state. The greatest service a soul can render to others is to help them reawaken their real nature as servants of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Lord Kṛṣṇa's instruction to Arjuna to "just become my instrument and fight" is the same as Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's instruction to everyone to "become a guru and tell everyone about Lord Kṛṣṇa." The best position in the material world is to become instrumental to Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission. As Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura told you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, "this will do good for yourself and others."

Lord Caitanya didn't want us to tell only people we don't know about Lord Kṛṣṇa but also our family members, friends, and acquaintances. Lord Rṣabhadeva especially mentioned that anyone with a responsibility in the material world should try to free his or her subordinates from birth and death by helping them become Kṛṣṇa conscious.

If we remember such instructions from the Lord and His representatives and use our transcendental discrimination and expertise to engage everything and everyone in Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement, we'll become instrumental in changing this world from Narakaloka to Vaikuṅṭhaloka.

Your aspiring servant,

Prahlādānanda Swami

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet,

By the mercy of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, I am beginning to realize just how exalted your position is. Some may say that every disciple will naturally praise his guru as *jagat-guru*. But if we use the intelligence given by Kṛṣṇa, we will be able to objectively ascertain that you have established a spiritual institution, ISKCON, that can change the course of history. I say “can” because it will require that your disciples and other followers humbly cooperate with your desires.

I am becoming more optimistic that this humble cooperation is unfolding. It is very enlivening to see how so many are cooperating to bring up the project you so ardently wanted in Śrīdhām Māyāpur. This cooperation is required in all spheres and aspects of ISKCON if we are to do something really wonderful for your pleasure.

Otherwise, as history has shown, when the empowered representative of God leaves the planet, his followers will inevitably fight and the movement he established will become reduced to different factions.

When Lord Jesus departed, we saw the Eastern Orthodox Christians and Roman Catholics and later Protestants creating schisms. Even your Guru Mahārāja’s movement, the Gauḍīya Math, was balkanized, and what to speak of Islam, where the Shia and Sunni are even now killing each other in the name of religion.

You were fully aware of this danger and therefore taxed your brain to create an institution that could be protected from this defeat, that would remain united even after your departure. This is clear for all to see in your Last Will. I had the good fortune of being there when you signed this document in Vṛndāvana with the lawyers present.

If we are able to rise to this task of cooperating by keeping you in the center, by remaining humble in your presence, then your position as the one who had the ability and empowerment to accomplish this will be clear for all to see. Then we will begin to see your books recognized by all intelligent people, and we can expect to see your mission rapidly expand, bringing forth a change in the misdirected human race.

By your mercy and the mercy of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda, and as predicted by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, a Golden Age will begin to unfold in this Iron Age of Kali, with you as the leader of this spiritual revolution. This is your mood—*Bhāgavatam* in one hand and sword in the other. No sane person can deny that the world is in desperate need of such a revolution.

So our goal is clear: to assist you in carrying out this revolution. And all can join with us in this task. No one is excluded, except those who would minimize your accomplishments or who doubt your position as the one who is empowered to lead us in this fight.

Śrīla Prabhupāda-*kī jaya!!*

Your very insignificant servant,

Trivikrama Swami

Girirāj Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

At this time your devotees and admirers are reflecting upon your momentous departure from India and your historic arrival in America some fifty years ago. What could have motivated you to make that historic journey—and how could you have succeeded in your impossible mission?

In Los Angeles in 1968, on the disappearance day of your *guru mahārāja*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, you explained your commission:

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja... underwent very severe penances for starting this worldwide movement. That was his mission. In 1896, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wanted to introduce this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement by sending the book *Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, His Life and Precepts*. Fortunately,

that year was my birth year, and by Kṛṣṇa's arrangement we came in contact . . . Who knew that I would come to his protection? Who knew that I would come to America? Who knew that you American boys would come to me? These are all Kṛṣṇa's arrangement. We cannot understand how things are taking place.

Thirty-two years ago in Bombay, sometime around the 9th or 10th of December—Guru Mahārāja was indisposed, and he was staying in Jagannātha Purī, on the seashore—I wrote him a letter: “My dear master, your other disciples—*brahmacārī*, *sannyāsī*—they are rendering you direct service. And I am a householder. I cannot live with you; I cannot serve you nicely. So I do not know—How can I serve you?” Simply an idea—I was thinking of serving him: “How can I serve him seriously?” The reply was dated 13 December 1936. In that letter he wrote, “My dear such and such, I am very glad to receive your letter. I think you should try to push our movement in English.” That was his writing. “And that will do good to you and to the people who will help you.” That was his instruction. And then in 1936, on the 31st of December—that means just a fortnight after writing this letter—he passed away.

I took that order of my spiritual master very seriously, but I did not think that I'd have to do such and such thing. I was at that time a householder. But this is the arrangement of Kṛṣṇa. If we strictly try to serve the spiritual master, his order, then Kṛṣṇa will give us all facilities. That is the secret. Although there was no possibility, I never thought, but I took it a little seriously by studying a commentary by Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura on the *Bhagavad-gītā*. In connection with the verse *vyavasāyātmikā-buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana* [Bg 2.41], Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives his commentary that we should take up the words from the spiritual master as our life and soul. We should try to carry out the instruction, the specific instruction of the spiritual master, very rigidly, without caring for our personal benefit or loss.

To prepare for your departure to America, you engaged in intense *sādhana* and prayer to receive the mercy and power to execute your service, as recounted by the *pūjārī* at Śrī Advaita Ācārya's house in Śāntipurā. He came to your *Māyāpur Candrodāya Mandira* carrying a copy of the *Back to Godhead* article about you entitled "A Lifetime in Preparation" and related the following account:

Just recently an amazing realization occurred to me that I wanted to share with devotees everywhere. I have been the *pūjārī* and *sevaita* at the house of Advaita Ācārya for many years. I was also there back in the 1940s and '50s. At that time, I noticed that one *gṛhastha* Bengali devotee used to come to the temple quite regularly. He was dressed in a white khadi dhoti and kurta, and he always came alone. He would sit in the back of the *mandira* without speaking, and he would chant *hari-nāma* on his *mālā* very quietly and deeply. I noticed that he came on the weekends, usually once every month or two in a regular way. After chanting there for many hours, he would always thank me when he left. His presence was profound, and I became attracted to him. Since his devotions were solitary, I never spoke to disturb him. Sometimes I happened to notice that while he was chanting his eyes would be full of tears and his voice would be choked up.

Then for a very long time he did not come. However, I distinctly recall that in August of 1965 I saw a saffron-clothed *sannyāsī* sitting at the back of the *mandira*. In a moment I recognized him to be my old friend from before. Again he sat for a long time chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. I could see his beads moving, his eyes closed in concentrated devotion. He was weeping unabashedly, even more than he used to while he took the holy name. Finally, as evening came, he paid his *danḍavat praṇāma* for a long time. When he arose he came up to me and again thanked me for my *sevā* here at Advaita Bhavan. I asked him, "Who are you? I remember you from so long ago."

He replied, "My name is Abhaya Caranaravinda

Bhaktivedanta Swami. I am an unworthy disciple of His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Śrīla Prabhupāda, my divine master. I have been coming here for such a long time because my *gurudeva* has given me an impossible mission. His desire was for me to go across the ocean to the Western countries and spread the sublime teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. There are countless souls there who have never heard of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and so they are suffering greatly. I have not known how this mission of his will be successful, so I have been coming here to this special house of Advaita Ācārya, where He, Nityānanda Prabhu, and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would gather together to plan the *sankīrtana* movement. It was here that They launched the inundation of love of God that swept India and continues to this day. Thus, I have been praying very earnestly here that They will all give me Their mercy, that somehow They will empower me and guide me. I want to satisfy my *gurudeva's* desire, but I am feeling unqualified to do this."

As he was speaking to me, I saw tears falling down on his cheeks again. Then he continued, "Tomorrow I am leaving for Calcutta to go on a ship across the ocean to America. I do not know what will befall me there, but I am praying most earnestly here for help." Then he very humbly asked me for my blessings. I was indeed moved by this Vaiṣṇava's sincerity and determination as I watched him depart upon his journey.

It was a few years later that I began noticing, for the first time, white Vaiṣṇavas coming to Advaita Bhavan. They were wearing dhotis and saris and chanting on *tulasī-mālā*. I never spoke to any of them, but then one of them gave me this *Back to Godhead* magazine from America. As I was looking at the photographs, suddenly I recognized a painting of the founder-*ācārya* who had brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the West. It was a picture of my friend Bhaktivedanta Swami, who had come and prayed here so many times before. Then I realized that he had actually accomplished

that impossible mission of his *gurudeva*. I saw that it was indeed he, starting alone and without pretense, who had accomplished this glorious miracle against all odds.

As soon as I saw this, I came here to his temple in Māyāpur to tell you this information. I know that he has gone from this world now, but I thought perhaps you might want to know this story about your and my beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda.

In your talk on your *guru mahārāja's* disappearance day, you asked us to continue his mission—your predecessor's mission—in the same spirit:

I tried a little bit in that spirit, so he has given me all facilities to serve him. Things have come to this stage, that in this old age I have come to your country, and you are also taking this movement seriously, trying to understand it. We have got some books now. There is a little foothold of this movement. So on this occasion of my spiritual master's departure, as I am trying to execute his will, similarly, I shall also request you to execute the same order through my will. I am an old man; I can also pass away at any moment. That is nature's law. Nobody can check it. So that is not very astonishing. But my appeal to you on this auspicious day of the departure of my *guru mahārāja* is that at least to some extent you have understood the essence of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, you should try to push it on. People are suffering for want of this consciousness.

As we daily pray about devotees,

*vāñchā-kalpatarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*

[“I offer my respectful obeisances unto all the Vaiṣṇava devotees of the Lord. They can fulfill the desires of everyone, just like desire trees, and they are full of compassion for the

fallen souls.”] A Vaiṣṇava, or devotee of the Lord, his life is dedicated for the benefit of the people. You know—most of you belong to the Christian community—how Lord Jesus Christ said that for your sinful activities he has sacrificed himself. That is the determination of a devotee of the Lord. They don’t care for personal comforts. Because they love Kṛṣṇa, or God, therefore they love all living entities, because all living entities are in relationship with Kṛṣṇa. So similarly you should learn. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement means to become Vaiṣṇava and feel for the suffering humanity.

* * *

To prepare us, his followers, to continue his mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda taught us and nurtured us and cared for us selflessly. Once, in Calcutta, he found the temple in quite a bad state due to its being poor and the president’s having become preoccupied with a temple incense business. The president was spending most of his time in his office taking care of the business with one devotee who was his salesman, and he was neglecting the other devotees, who really had no one else to look after them. We were really poor in those days, and the devotees were living under very austere conditions. For instance, we never had milk or ghee—just rice, dal, and simple boiled vegetables. One devotee, Sudāmā Vipra, had a big, strong body, and he was feeling undernourished. So after *āratis*, after the fire had gone out from the ghee lamps, he would take the wicks and squeeze what little ghee was left on their ends onto chapatis or other *prasāda*.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived, many devotees went to him to complain about the situation. And he was concerned. After hearing complaints from so many devotees, he finally called a meeting. Practically all the devotees in the temple came to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s room, and he listened sympathetically to what each had to say; he was really concerned and wanted to improve things. So, he made a system. He named certain leaders and said that they should get together every week and discuss the problems and that whatever they decided they should write down in a book of

minutes and all sign it and then do what they agreed.

But then Śrīla Prabhupāda's mood seemed to change, and he said, "Actually, we shouldn't become too involved in such matters, because our real business is to hear and chant about Kṛṣṇa, and if we become too absorbed in making material arrangements, we will forget our real business of Kṛṣṇa consciousness." He said that it is our tendency to discuss mundane topics and that we should be careful and try to minimize the mundane talks and focus on hearing and chanting about Kṛṣṇa.

Then Śrīla Prabhupāda said that he never complained, because his policy was, "Everything for Kṛṣṇa; nothing for myself." He mentioned how he had suffered in so many ways in the course of establishing the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement; he had struggled to get passage to America and then on the way suffered two heart attacks at sea, and even when he got to America he had suffered in so many ways—he had buzzing in his ears and his head. "I cannot even describe how much I suffered," he said. "Nor do I want to." But he had never complained.

"Everything for Kṛṣṇa; nothing for myself." That is why, as a service to Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda was serving us—because his ultimate goal was to bring us back to our eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa and engage us in His service. Essentially, he was bathing us, feeding us, and dressing us—teaching us how to live as human beings so that ultimately he could bring us to the position where he could offer us for Kṛṣṇa's service.

He asked for only one thing—that we continue his mission.

In my case, he asked that I write.

In Gorakhpur, Sri Hanuman Prasad Poddar, the renowned head of the Gita Press, had invited Śrīla Prabhupāda and the devotees to stay at Shri Krishna Niketan, his large palatial estate and former residence.

There Śrīla Prabhupāda received the latest issue of *Back to Godhead*, which included an article I had written in Boston before I had left for India—"The Genuine Spiritual Master." It was the first I had written. Śrīla Prabhupāda was very encouraged by the article and called for me.

"I saw your article in *Back to Godhead*," he said. "It was very nice. You should write. This is your first business. Go on writing. We require many, many such articles about Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

So you should devote yourself to writing.”

“I will try,” I replied. “But why are you asking me? I have no qualification.”

“We require many to do this work,” he said, “and we need you also. So you travel with me and I will guide you. You come and stay with me.”

As it happened, I never got to travel with Śrīla Prabhupāda and be personally guided by him in writing, but the instruction remained.

Then, years later, on the night that Śrīla Prabhupāda finally succeeded in getting the Juhu land, after the signing of the documents and the sharing of *prasāda*, he reclined back on the bolsters of his *āsana* and remarked, “It was a good fight!” And then he added, “Someone should write a book about it.” So I always had it in my mind to write such a book, by the grace of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Later, in a conversation in June 1977, he reiterated his desire that the book be written:

Tamāl Krishna: You always came out victorious—always. I have never seen you defeated. In Bombay it was absolutely impossible. It seemed to be impossible.

Prabhupāda: Nobody encouraged—not a single man. Who could see that such a big project would come up?

Tamāl Krishna: Only you could see that—you and Rādhā-Rāsabihārī. I was . . .

Prabhupāda: Still, I was determined: “No, this place is very nice.”

Tamāl Krishna: They should write a book about that.

Prabhupāda: Yes, it is worth writing, history.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, for a fallen soul like me, such a task is impossible. I lack intense *sādhana* and prayer, I lack faith and surrender, I lack experience and confidence, and I lack humility

and purity. But I remember what you wrote when you arrived in America in September 1965, on board the *Jaladuta* at Boston's Commonwealth Pier:

I am very unfortunate, unqualified, and the most fallen. Therefore I am seeking Your benediction . . .

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 . . .

Only by Your causeless mercy will my words become pure. . . .

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.

Also, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I depend on the mercy and support of your sincere disciples and followers, and I pray to them as well.

*durgame pathi me 'ndhasya skhalat-pāda-gater muhuḥ
sva-kṛpā-yaṣṭi-dānena santaḥ santv avalambanam*

“My path is very difficult. I am blind, and my feet are slipping again and again. Therefore, may the saints help me by granting me the stick of their mercy as my support.” (Cc *Antya* 1.2)

I am sure that your and their mercy will do everything.

Your eternal, hopeful servant,

Girirāj Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I bow at your lotus feet and offer you my eternal gratitude for your supreme, eternal gifts.

One morning as we walked with you through Rancho Park in Los Angeles, you stopped to make a crucial point. As we gathered round, you dramatically presented *Bhagavad-gītā* 11.33, where Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna to “just be the instrument for actions that I have already performed.”

Dramatically playing the part of Kṛṣṇa, you said, “Arjuna, do not think that any of these soldiers will go home to their families. I have already slain them. Now if you like, you be the instrument and I will give you the credit. Otherwise, someone else will get the credit, for it will be done by My arrangement.”

This is the subtle art of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As Lord Kṛṣṇa, and you, warn us, we should not think that we are the doers, and yet you and Kṛṣṇa encouraged us to “take the credit,” and in Kṛṣṇa’s words, “gain the glory,” by enthusiastically acting as Kṛṣṇa’s instrument. In the *Bhāgavatam*, Tenth Canto, the glorious King Yudhiṣṭhira resolves this paradox when he tells Kṛṣṇa, “I want to perform the Rājasūya sacrifice, which brings great power and opulence, so that the world can see the advantage and the glory of serving You.”

Please help me embrace your transcendental offer, following in Yudhiṣṭhira’s and your footsteps. You often proclaimed the success of our mission so that people would see the glory of Kṛṣṇa and join Him. Please empower us now with preaching potency and humility so that in the right consciousness we may act as your empowered instruments to spread your mission.

Your servant,

Hridayānanda dāsa Goswami

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

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

My dearest Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

Much of ISKCON's structure comes from initiatives originally begun by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. Your order to construct a Temple of the Vedic Planetarium in Māyāpur presents an opportunity for ISKCON to complete yet another unfulfilled desire of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta— an Institute of the Vedic Planetarium.

The year 1896 was the year Your Divine Grace appeared and the year Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura inaugurated international *saṅkīrtana*, and it was also the year Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta published his translation of the *Sūrya-siddhānta*. (It was for this work that *jyotiṣa paṇḍitas*, who had seven years earlier seen early manuscripts of the book, awarded him the title of Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī at the age of fifteen). Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta said *Śrī Sūrya-siddhānta* was “the base text for Hindu mathematical astronomy.” Interestingly, 1896 also saw the beginnings of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's formation of an institute to train young men with an aptitude for mathematics to study classic texts for calculating the movements of the planets, specifically the sun and moon (essentially the central point of the *Sūrya-siddhānta*). He named it the Sarasvata Chatuspati [Institute]. It was based at the Bhakti Bhavan, home of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Members were educated in the brahminical fields of Vedic mathematics, astronomy, and *jyotiṣa*. The institute also served the Vaiṣṇava community by calculating timings for different observances, published as the *Bhaktibhāvāna Pañjikā*.

This institute also had another purpose. It was a vanguard for

challenging Western conceptions of astronomy and astrology that were beginning to gain traction in India despite contradicting the traditional Vedic astronomical understanding.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura writes in the introduction to the *Sūrya-siddhānta*:

Nowadays in India a new brand of experts has cropped up, who laud newly invented *siddhāntas* and care not for the tradition based on *Sūrya-siddhānta*. . . . Some have received from their gurus a few formulas of the Western astronomers obtained as translations, and on that basis seek honor as astronomers while thinking themselves genuine disciples of their gurus. Others, although ignorant even of solstice calculation, prefer to follow a particular independent-minded Western astronomer. I hope that by reading this original version they become submissive to their own gurus, to the predecessor gurus of Bhāskara [the original compiler of the work] and others, and to him who gave intelligence to them all, the Rishi who is the author of *Śrī Sūrya-siddhānta*.

Western scholars were taking advantage of the apparent differences between certain *ḥyotiṣa* texts and the cosmology found in the *Purāṇas*. It is said that the very publication of the *Sūrya-siddhānta* was a response to an earlier edition published by one Śrī Bāpudeva Śāstrī, commissioned by an American Christian minister, whose premise was that the Vedic understanding was “in need of improvement by Western astronomy.”

Bhakti Vikāsa Swami writes in Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta’s biography:

By thus effecting a denial of the Purāṇic worldview, Bāpudeva had collaborated in compromising Vedic culture with contemporary scientific perspectives. From 1841 he had taught both Indian and European astronomy at the Benares Sanskrit College and had published voluminously in Sanskrit and English, promoting knowledge of European astronomy and modernization of Indian astronomy. His pupils and intellectual scions dominated the astronomical scene in Benares until the end of the century, when

his conclusions and techniques were challenged by Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī at the Sārasvata Chatuspati.

At the behest of his former pupils, Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī agreed to debate with an accomplished student of the now elderly Bāpudeva, the subject being perspectives on astronomical precession. On 2 January 1902 in Calcutta, with Rāya Bāhādur Rājendra Candra Shastri, president of the Royal Society, as chairman, Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī's superior learning and power of elocution left that scholar so completely trounced that Śrī Bāpudeva Shastri—his theories and reputation having been shredded— involuntarily passed stool and urine in the assembly.

Ultimately, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, on the order of his spiritual master, Śrīla Gaurakiśora Dāsa Bābājī, ended this work to serve the critical need of the time, to leave aside all other matters and preach the Absolute Truth. The institute of bright young men studying and promoting the classic texts of Vedic astrology and cosmology halted after his withdrawal from the field.

In a letter to Svarūpa Dāmodara Prabhu written in April of 1976, Your Divine Grace gave a mandate for an Institute of the Vedic Planetarium (IVP):

Please accept my blessings.

Now our PhDs must collaborate and study the 5th Canto to make a model for building the Vedic Planetarium. . . .

Distances are also described in the 5th Canto just how far one planet is from another.

We can see that at night, how the whole planetary system is turning around, the pole star being the pivot. Each planet has its orbit fixed but the sun is moving up and down, north and south. It is not that we shall accept the theory that the sun is fixed up and the others are all going around the sun. That is not correct. Even the 7th star is rotating once around the pole star in each 24 hours.

The whole universe is just like a big tree, that is a fact. I do not think that the modern astronomers have any such idea that the whole universe is like a big tree. The planets which are full of living entities are one after another, one above the other. The relative positions of the planets is fixed up but the whole thing is turning. The sun is going north and south, it has its own orbit below the moon. So now you all PhDs must carefully study the details of the 5th Canto and make a working model of the universe. If we can explain the passing seasons, eclipses, phases of the moon, passing of day and night, etc., then it will be very powerful propaganda.

I am sending this letter to you, and you can make photocopies of it and send to our other PhDs and begin serious research into the matter in detail. But one thing, I am convinced that the universe is just like a great tree as described therein.

I hope that this meets you in good health.

Your ever well-wisher,

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

The formation of an Institute of the Vedic Planetarium (IVP) would not only continue the work of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's Saraswata Institute, facilitating devotee scholars to master the classic astronomical texts challenging Western cosmological misconceptions, but would also be the only way we will competently explain the four things directed by Your Divine Grace in the above letter. The idea is to explain how what is described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* translates into what we observe with our own eyes.

This is something our ISKCON cosmologists have been grappling with from the outset—how to reconcile the Purānic descriptions with the *jyotiṣa* descriptions (which seem more in line with physical observation). Ultimately this requires a working virtual model illustrating how they work together. This means considerable research and computation by those specializing

in Sanskrit, mathematics, and astronomy. If properly done, the finished product would make even a Western scientist's jaw drop.

Your Divine Grace said to Svarūpa Dāmodara about the *Sūrya-siddhānta*: "If it is available, get it. He [Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta] was one of the authorities about the sun's movements."

Essentially, the *Sūrya-siddhānta* is the means by which this project could be done. We may consider the titles of its chapters:

- Of the true places of planets
- Of lunar eclipses
- Of parallax in the solar eclipse
- Of the projection of the eclipse
- Of heliacal rising and setting
- Of the moon's rising and setting and the elevation of her cusps

The challenge is attracting and supporting the talent to do this complex work.

One example of the complexity Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta is referring to can be seen in the following passage.

During a solar eclipse, if we multiply the perpendicular (*kotii*) in kalas, with mean half-duration of the eclipse (*stithyardha*), and divided by the corrected half-duration of the eclipse, we will have the corrected perpendicular. If the square of the latitude of the base (*bhuja*) and the square of the perpendicular be added, and *the* square root of the sum be taken, then we would have the hypotenuse. From the half-sum of the measures of the sun and moon, if the hypotenuse be subtracted, we would have the amount of the obscuration (*grasa*) at a given time.

Or:

Using the time of rising in the pranaas (*udaypraana*) of a place, calculate the ecliptic-point longitude (*sayana*) at the end of a phase. Multiply its sine (*bhujajya*) with the sine of greatest declination (*paramapakramajya*—1,397) and divide the product with the sine of co-latitude (*lambajya*) of that place, then we will have the rising (*udaya*) at the

end of a phase. To determine the meridian ecliptic point (*madhyalagna/dasam*) using the time of rising at Lanka in praanas, if the declination (*kranti*) and the latitude of the meridian ecliptic point be on the same direction, add, else subtract them. The result is the meridian zenith distance in degrees (*natagsa*), whose sine is the meridian sine.

But there is hope. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta writes in the introduction to the *Sūrya-siddhānta*:

Persons consider that the Surya Siddhanta is so difficult that it is impossible to understand. . . . [but] If a person versed in preliminary knowledge of mathematics reads the chapter of the beginning slowly, it is not difficult to understand. Of course, one has to do a considerable amount of computation. . . .

One may ask if there is a precedent for engaging devotees in the demanding service of astronomical calculation. One of the functions of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's Saraswata Institute housed at Bhakti Bhavan was to produce an almanac called Śrī Navadwīpa Panjaka. It listed timings of Vaiṣṇava observances and was printed on the same presses that printed the Sajjani Toshani. This was done on the order of Siddha Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. The *bābājī* had advised Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura of the need for such an astronomical almanac, "for those cultivating *Suddha Bhakti*."

During my work of writing and compiling five books on Vedic cosmology, I found a number of enthusiastic mathematically-trained devotees with exactly the skills that such an institute would need. I have been humbled by the brilliance and abilities of these devotees that the Lord sent. This can be seen in some of the ground-breaking calculations and research presented in the book *Bhugola Tatva*. At our offices in South India that were the base for our ToVP-commissioned research, I saw that the right atmosphere was essential to facilitate this kind of study. My role was encouraging these young scientist-devotees to work hard in a Kṛṣṇa conscious environment that the company of a *sannyāsī* often brings. As a result of our enlivening service together, many

of these devotees still keep in touch with me and could potentially support our work at the IVP.

And we should expect many more of these young men to appear. Also from Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's introduction to the *Sūrya-siddhānta*:

Every year thousands of young Hindu men are gaining proficiency of mathematics. It is our hope that many among them would respectfully pursue with great care the indigenous mathematical and astronomical sciences.

Your Divine Grace's mandate to create a working model demonstrating the most complex aspects of subtle and gross planetary movement is truly daunting. Fortunately you taught us that through applied intelligence along with fidelity to our disciplic succession, anything can be done.

The time for the creation of a thorough virtual model is upon us, as we face the impending completion of the great temple/planetarium. When it opens, we can expect the world to come to Māyāpur, as Your Divine Grace predicted: "This will automatically be advertised. As soon as the temple is finished, people will come like anything."

You are the perfect shelter, the perfect teacher, the perfect friend. On our own, we are dancing dolls in Māyā's hands. Thank you for saving us from the mire of material existence, where we had been rotting since time immemorial and where we were destined to remain. Now we try to help others in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. However, Your Divine Grace cautioned us:

First of all save yourself; then try to save others. Or both things can go on simultaneously. The same example. If you want to save somebody who's drowning you must know that I may not be washed away. I have to remain strong; then I can save him. [Conversation, 14 February 1977, Māyāpur]

O spiritual master, kindly give us strength and courage and fulfill our prayer to be eternally engaged in Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotional service under your direction (*mahat-sevām dvāram āhur vimukteḥ*).

By your mercy, let us become proper disciples and not misuse this auspicious opportunity. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your eternal servant,

Dānavīr Goswami

Kavicandra Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*namas te sārasvate 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.”

*namo mahā-vadānyāya kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya- nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ*

“O most munificent incarnation! You are Kṛṣṇa Himself appearing as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. You have assumed the golden color of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and You are widely distributing pure love of Kṛṣṇa. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You.”

*namo brahmaṇya-devāya go-brāhmaṇa-hitāya ca
jagad-dhitāya kṛṣṇāya govindāya namo namaḥ*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the worshipable Deity for all *brāhmaṇas*, the well-wisher of the cows

and the *brāhmaṇas*, and the benefactor of the whole world. I offer my repeated obeisances to the Personality of Godhead, known as Kṛṣṇa and Govinda.”

There are thousands of devotees, past and present, to whom I should offer gratitude and beg for mercy, but that would take too long. The following prayer summarizes my feelings, and I think it is one of your favorites.

*vande 'ham śrī-guroḥ śrī-yuta-pada-kamalaṁ śrī-gurūn vaiṣṇavānś ca
śrī-rūpaṁ sāgrajātaṁ saha-gaṇa-raghunāthānvoitaṁ taṁ sa-jīvaṁ
sādvaitaṁ sāvadhūtaṁ parijana-sahitaṁ kṛṣṇa-caitanya-devaṁ
śrī-rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pādān saha-gaṇa-lalitā-śrī-viśākhānvitānś ca*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master and unto the feet of all Vaiṣṇavas. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī along with his elder brother Sanātana Gosvāmī, as well as Raghunātha Dāsa, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. I offer my respectful obeisances to Lord Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda, along with Advaita Ācārya, Gadādhara, Śrīvāsa, and other associates. I offer my respectful obeisances to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, along with Their associates Śrī Lalitā and Viśākhā.”

This year I want to share some good news about your ISKCON society.

When you gave me my initiation name, you said, “Kavicandra was a great devotee of Lord Nityānanda.” I am not a great devotee, or even a devotee, but I do realize that it is due only to the mercy of Lord Nityānanda that I have been allowed into the association of your followers, and thereby connected with Your Divine Grace.

We know that you especially desired to build the *adbhuta mandira*, the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium, in Śrīdhām Māyāpur. Now the structure is almost complete, and everything is in place to finish it. Your wonderful disciple Ambarīṣa Prabhu has gathered together many very talented and qualified devotees to complete this project.

You also especially wanted your books distributed in massive quantities. The year 2015 was the biggest year for book distribution since 1995, with India far in the lead.

You have inspired His Holiness Śācīnandana Swami with such a taste for the holy names that he has organized many *kīrtana melas* all over the world. Our ISKCON Internet news channels can barely keep up with all the pictures and videos of these festivals and *nagara-sankīrtana* parties.

Your always stressed college preaching. That is growing very fast—again, especially in India. Kālakaṅṭha Prabhu and his good wife must be lauded for their college preaching in Gainesville, Florida, “so far from Māyāpur.” I am now in Lampung, Indonesia. The *āśrama* here has many college students and has made many devotees.

And we are finally understanding the importance of agriculture and cow protection. Some very wonderful rural communities are flourishing. The most developed are under His Holiness Śīvarāma Swami in Hungary and His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami in India. Many others, big and small, are flourishing in many countries.

Thank you for allowing me to associate with the great souls who are your followers. I pray that I can accept their mercy and somehow become an instrument in your divine mission.

*kṛṣṇa tvadīya-pada-paṅkaja-pañjarāntam
adyaiva me viśatu mānasa-rāja-haṁsah
prāṇa-prayāṇa-samaye kapha-vāta-pittaiḥ
kaṅṭhāvarodhana-vidhau smaraṇam kutas te*

“My dear Lord, just now I am quite healthy, and it is better that I die immediately so that the swan of my mind can seek entrance at the stem of Your lotus feet. Now my mind is undisturbed, and I am quite healthy. If I die immediately, thinking of Your lotus feet, then I am sure that my performance of Your devotional service will become perfect. But if I have to wait for my natural death, then I do not know what will happen, because at that time the bodily functions will be disrupted, my throat will be choked up, and I do not know whether I shall be able to chant Your name. Better let me die immediately.” (*Mukunda-mālā* 33)

Your aspiring servant,

Kavicandra Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

It was in August 1971 that I got initiated by Your Divine Grace. The initiation was by letter. I had written you a letter requesting initiation and sent it along with a small collection of *guru-dakṣiṇā*. The letter Your Divine Grace wrote in reply contained my spiritual name and the basic directions for my devotional service. There was also a blessing.

What now captures my attention in this letter is your request that I “go for street San Kīrtan as far as possible.” A couple of weeks ago I was on a *harināma* party on the streets of Stockholm. It was a lively event that attracted passersby—some even danced and chanted with us.

How far is “as far as possible”? And what is impossible? You said that *impossible* is a word in a fool’s dictionary. So clearly you regarded nothing as impossible. You did what many thought impossible. You took *harināma saṅkīrtana* to the Western world, and then all over the planet. For you nothing is or was impossible. In your letter you asked me only to do street *saṅkīrtana* “as far as possible.” That feels achievable for me. You did not ask me to do the impossible. Thank you.

But for you, nothing was impossible. In the Invocation of Śrī *Īsopaniṣad*, in the last paragraph of the purport, you write:

The completeness of human life can be realized only when one engages in the service of the Complete Whole. All services in this world—whether social, political communal, international or even interplanetary—will remain incomplete until they are dovetailed with the Complete

Whole. When everything is dovetailed with the Complete Whole, the attached parts and parcels also become complete in themselves. Here you speak of dovetailing all services with the Complete Whole. Even interplanetary service. Does that indicate universal, interplanetary preaching? We could say "That's impossible!" but clearly you do not think so. Today the preaching of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is spreading all over the globe. This phenomenon would certainly have seemed impossible to someone who saw you struggling alone all those years in India, and even to the small band of followers you had when you incorporated your *International Society for Krishna Consciousness* in the tiny storefront in New York in July of 1966. So, why not interplanetary preaching? Clearly the saying "the sky's the limit" doesn't apply to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thank you.

But, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, am I even trying to do the possible?

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's song "Ohe! Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura" is all beautiful, but I especially like the last line:

Kṛṣṇa is yours; you have the power to give Him to me. I am simply running behind you shouting "Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!"

Am I even running? Am I trying to see where you went? But, for sure, you have Kṛṣṇa, so somewhere behind I'm running along calling to you: "Prabhupāda! Prabhupāda, do not leave me behind!"

For you nothing is impossible. Indeed, by your mercy everything is possible, even delivering this fallen soul. That is my conviction. Please bless me that I may be worthy of your blessings.

Your servant,

Smita Krishna Swami

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

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you once mentioned that ISKCON is your body and all of us are your different limbs, you are actually doing everything and we are all your assistants and deputies in different roles. Śrīla Prabhupāda, in my limited capacity I am trying to carry out your instructions, in particular, to go to Bangladesh for preaching.

Preaching in Netrakona, north Bangladesh, is going on well. Devotees there arranged a three day festival which they named as ‘Glorification of Śrīla Prabhupāda’. We also had a seminar on Vedānta and science in the town’s community hall, where many important persons came to attend. We had a group of devotees with us from France, Italy, Spain, Indonesia, Armenia and India. These devotees from other countries in Vaiṣṇava attire with tilak, chanting and dancing – the dancing white elephants – attracted many people. A few village programs were also arranged and many came to attend our pandal programs not caring so much for the cold winter nights. Devotees tried to distribute books and everyone who came honoured *mahā prasād*. Now, by your mercy, they have acquired a small piece of land where they are trying to establish a small temple.

Narayanganj is the city just next to Dhaka. ISKCON has a fully-fledged centre there now. The main activities there were *Bhāgavatam* lectures in the centre, and college programs. Students from the Marine Engineering and Technology Institute, Narayanganj, eagerly attended our program in the institute’s auditorium. In Dhaka, devotees arranged for a huge seminar program on 18th

January 2013 in one of the most esteemed venues, the auditorium of the National Museum of Dhaka. Early in the morning, before the seminar, devotees along with students from different universities and colleges went out for *harināma* on the campus of Jagannath University, Dhaka, which continued on the main road of the city. This attracted many students to come and attend our lecture in the Jagannath Hall inside the campus of the University. Many took books as well as *prasādam*. In the evening was the main seminar on ‘Science and Spirituality’, organized singlehandedly by Sriman Dr. Subhananda das brahmachārī amidst so many shortcomings and difficulties, along with his team of around ten young and very enthusiastic students. Beyond everybody’s imagination, the seminar had an unexpected full house audience and many more were standing, exceeding the 800 seating capacity of the hall. By the end of the seminar, around 400 books were distributed and all the participants were served *mahā prasād*. During this tour of Bangladesh we were able to distribute around a thousand books. When we see all these wonderful activities, immediately we realize that it is only because of your unlimited mercy that through our insignificant efforts we are somehow able to glorify you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

After Bangladesh, we were at the Mahā Kumbha Mela at Prayāg, Allahabad in February, coming via Mayapur, Bhubaneswar and Jagannath Puri. ISKCON had a big camp set up there and every day there was Nagar Kīrtan– *harināma*, lectures, book distribution and *prasād* distribution.

We had a good preaching tour of the north-eastern states of India during March–April this year. In Imphal (Manipur), devotees arranged for a seminar at DM College, the most prestigious in the region. From Imphal, around a hundred kilometres east, is Moreh on the border with Myanmar. Here we have a centre where a group of dedicated devotees take care of the daily temple programs. Crossing the border of Myanmar lies Tamu (a border town of Myanmar adjacent to Manipur) where devotees, mostly belonging to the Nepali community, are developing a nice temple of Gaura Nitai. In Guwahati and Silchar the main programs were lectures in the temple and house programs. Many sincere and enthusiastic devotees are eagerly taking up Krishna consciousness in this region.

On our way to Indonesia in mid-May we visited Singapore to encourage the devotees. Besides other festivals like Ratha Yātra, Janmāṣṭamī, Gaura Pūrṇimā, devotees in Singapore are now celebrating Cida Dahi festival where many devotees and well-wishers come to attend. Also they have started a regular prison preaching program which is getting good support from the government. Some set up book tables regularly at favourable places and distribute books. Others are going to the universities and schools and having programs for the students as well as teachers and we see that our devotees are getting a very positive response from all these places. Because of government restrictions it is very difficult to preach Krishna consciousness there and we are indeed able to appreciate how by your mercy newer and newer opportunities are manifesting before us. And those who are eager to serve you even to a minute extent are relishing ever new higher tastes as they discover wonderful avenues for preaching Krishna consciousness in many ways within Singapore itself. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

In Bali, Indonesia, devotees are becoming more and more enthusiastic to do *saṅkīrtan*, book distribution, *prasādam* distribution in the form of Food for Life. In Bali itself we have five fully-fledged temples and devotees from all these temples go out for book distribution and *harināma* almost every day. On Sundays devotees go to a park (Bajra Sandi) in Denpasar where people come in large numbers either for their morning walk or other leisure activities. There we take the opportunity and have Food for Life, *kīrtan* and book distribution; this also gives the devotees time to come together and perform *harinām sankīrtan*. Some devotees are actively engaged in translating Prabhupāda's books into Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia) and these are eagerly published by the Indonesian BBT. The '*Upakhyane Upadesa*' of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura, *Spiritual Master and Disciple* and *Śrīla Prabhupāda Slokas* were published this year and more are coming up. Like every year, the largest book store chain in Indonesia, 'Gramedia', invited us for a talk show on *Bhagavad-gītā As It is* where we interact with visitors and distribute books and *prasād*. Besides lectures and seminars in schools and colleges and classes in our temples, now devotees are organizing Cida Dahi festivals and Ratha yatras in most of the important cities such as

Bali, Jakarta, Jember, Batam, Medan and Kendari.

We visited Gita Nagari Baru (New Gita Nagari) in south Sumatra, a successful *Varṇāśrama* farm project under His Holiness Bhakti Rāghava Swāmī, and found it very inspiring: one hundred and fifty members serving cooperatively, every evening all the children chanting ślokas from *Bhagavad-gītā*, a government-approved primary school run by the devotees, cows in almost every house and most importantly devotees happily executing Krishna consciousness through simple living and Krishna conscious thinking, fulfilling your desire to institute *Varṇāśrama dharm*.

For the first time you visited Jakarta in 1973 and gave a lecture in a Hindu temple, 'Rawamangun Temple', which is today the campus of a full-fledged Hindu University, 'STAH'. Forty years after your visit, we are now regularly invited by the University authorities to deliver seminars in the same place where you spoke and all the students and teachers feel so much bliss just knowing that Śrīla Prabhupāda had visited their campus at one time. Now they are receiving your unparalleled mercy in the form of your books. Our devotees are invited to deliver seminars on *Bhagavad-gītā* and other topics on spirituality in schools, colleges, universities and institutes in places like Jakarta, Bandung, Gorontalo, Makassar, Jogjakarta, Denpasar, Kendari and Solo.

We had a get together at Kurukshetra attended by around 300 devotees visiting different places related to the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Some devotees later went to Macleodganj, in Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh where the Dalai Lama has his residence and did *saṅkīrtan* on the streets, distributed books and *prasādam*. Some of the Tibetan Buddhist monks, besides others, eagerly took books including *Bhagavad-gītā*; devotees later ran out of books and had to part with their own personal copies of Prabhupāda's books. With the cooperation of the local devotees, a nice Ratha yātra was also organized in the town and was very well received by all.

In mid-December I went to Indonesia to encourage the devotees who were organizing Ratha yātra festivals for the first time in the most unlikely places – Batam, Medan and Kendari. All the three Ratha yātras were very successful getting media coverage in all the major newspapers in the respective regions. In all three places the respective mayors came to inaugurate the Ratha yātra festivals. The state authorities in Batam wholeheartedly supported the

devotees by putting up large billboards inviting everyone to attend the festival; they themselves sponsored the festival pandal and also provided security arrangements to see that the festival went smoothly. The Medan festival was the biggest Ratha yātra ever held in Indonesia with around five thousand people from the city coming to take part. In Kendari, the local villagers used to throw stones at our temple at night and there was no hope of getting support from them; but after the Ratha yātra festival, the very next day, a wonderful change took place. Seeing that the mayor and the local Hindu Parishad supported the Jagannātha Ratha yātra, the villagers now come regularly to our Govardhan Ashram with offerings of fruits and flowers and happily take *mahā prasāda*. Prabhupāda, we are able to see such wonderful transformation only because of your mercy.

The most interesting part was that many locals who belong to other faiths attended the Ratha yātra and happily took *Bhagavad-gītā* and other books. In Bali, devotees organized a grand festival to commemorate your appearance and activities to which they gave the name 'Glorification of Śrīla Prabhupāda'. Bali TV, the most prominent TV channel there, made an extensive video recording of the festival which was broadcasted a few weeks later for about 20 minutes throughout Indonesia.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, only because of your mercy are we able to do these activities to glorify you and Mahāprabhu and only because of your blessings do these small activities appear wonderful.

'ebe jaça ghuñuk tribhuvana'

Let your glories and the glories of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the previous *ācāryas* spread throughout the three worlds.

You taught us that our mood of rendering devotional service is *tāḍera caraëa-sebi*, to serve the *ācāryas* and to always live in association of devotees.

'nimitta-mātraà bhava savya-sācin', please allow us to be instruments in your hands. Kindly allow us to become servants of your servants and let us always remain so.

Your servant,

Subhag Swami

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

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

It Is Your Order, and We Must Fulfill It

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Kindly accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

As I have been reading your books and listening to your lectures, it has come stronger than ever to my notice that in many different ways you requested—even pleaded with—your disciples and your audience to perfect their lives in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and spread it for the ultimate benefit of others. Your heart was filled with compassion for the conditioned souls. As your servants, we have a duty to fulfill your requests to the best of our ability.

In a *Bhagavad-gītā* class you gave in July 1966 in New York, you said:

I am old man. If you, some of you at least understand this science and take up this science, you become future hope of the, this country or the world. That is my request to you, that you should take this chance and become a spiritual master for all the people.

We tried and are still trying to follow this request. Kindly forgive all our shortcomings and mistakes in this regard. It is your order, and we must fulfill it.

Concerning Deity worship, you said at the installation of Rukmiṇī-Dvārakānātha in Los Angeles in 1969: “Always be careful. You are dealing with Kṛṣṇa. That is my request.” The GBC has established a ministry that oversees Deity worship worldwide. Much improvement has been made, but there are still many challenges. It is your order, and we must fulfill it.

In a lecture in Los Angeles in August 1970 you said, “The Deity

worship, the *kīrtana*, the street *saṅkīrtana*, distribution of literature, books. You should carry on this program with great enthusiasm. That is my request.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, in many places in the world these activities are being carried out. By your mercy, these most essential preaching activities are being emphasized throughout the world, but still there is so much improvement to be made. It is your order, and we must fulfill it.

In a lecture in Auckland in April 1972 you said, “So, you Indians who are present here, that is my request—that you can do tremendous service on behalf of your country.” The Indian *yātrā* is increasing tremendously. It is in many respects the showpiece for the rest of the world. Indian temples lead the world in book distribution, many gorgeous temples have been built, and thousands of people are joining our movement. Still, many improvements could be made, and many more Indians could step forward to offer their services. It is your order, and we must fulfill it.

In a lecture in Calcutta in January 1973, you said:

But Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, they took *sannyāsa* for preaching work, not for doing rascaldom. Preaching work. So *mukunda ahaṁ niṣevaye. Mukundāṅghri-niṣevayaiva*. Simply by serving . . . Mukunda, Kṛṣṇa, what does He want? He wants that this philosophy of Kṛṣṇa, *Bhagavad-gītā*, should be spread all over the world. You take up this determination and be steady in your *sannyāsa*. That is my request.

For many years the Sannyāsa Ministry had been offering guidance to our *sannyāsīs* and prospective *sannyāsīs*. This has resulted in much improvement in the *sannyāsa-āśrama*. What is emphasized is that the main purpose of the *sannyāsa-āśrama* is to preach. Still, the ministry needs to be further developed. *Sannyāsīs* must be steady, ideal examples for others. It is your order, and we must fulfill it.

In a lecture in Honolulu in January 1974, you said:

So you *must* have to follow these rules and regulations if you are serious. Then take initiation. Otherwise, don’t make farce, don’t make farce. That is my request. One has

to be very determined, *bhajante mām dṛḍha-vratāḥ*.

A disciple course has been developed, and now it is mandatory that one pass it before initiation. But there is still more work to be done to help candidates become qualified for initiation. It is your order, and we must fulfill it.

Before leaving for the airport in Los Angeles on July 15, 1974, you said this in your final remarks to the devotees: "If you remain solid in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the *māyā* cannot touch you. So that is my request." An important aspect for our devotees to become solid in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the establishment of *varṇāśrama*. This topic has been taken up this year more than ever before and will be effectively processed further. It is one of the greatest challenges for our movement. But it is your order, and we must fulfill it.

In a lecture in Vṛndāvana in March 1974, you said:

So this is my request, that you have come to Vṛndāvana, try to understand what is Vṛndāvana-dhāma, what is Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, but very cautiously, very, I mean to say, carefully. Then Kṛṣṇa will be pleased. And Kṛṣṇa Himself, as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, He is present here. Go through *śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu-nityānanda śrī-advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi gaura . . .* so in this way, gradually, you'll be able to understand.

Many serious difficulties have developed over the years with our devotees visiting or living in Vṛndāvana. It is urgent that we work harder to physically and spiritually protect our devotees in Vṛndāvana. It is your order, and we must fulfill it.

In an arrival address in Los Angeles in June 1975, you said:

So Guru Mahārāja was speaking to me that "Since we have got this Baghbazār marble temple, there has been so many dissensions, and everyone thinking who will occupy this room or that room, that room. I wish, therefore, to sell this temple and the marble and print some book." Yes. So I took up this from his mouth, that he is very fond of books. And he told me personally that "If you get some

money, print books.” Therefore I am stressing on this point: “Where is book? Where is book? Where is book?” So kindly help me. This is my request. Print as many books in as many languages and distribute throughout the whole world. Then Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement will automatically increase.

The GBC and BBT work combinedly to increase book distribution worldwide. Wonderful results have been reported over the last few years, but there is so much more to be done. It is your order, and we must fulfill it.

In a conversation recorded in Hyderabad in August 1976, you said:

So this is my request, that our money . . . There is nothing “our money”; everything Kṛṣṇa’s. But we are thinking, because we are asuric. So *asuras* think like that. Just like Kāṁsa, Hiraṇyakaśipu: “Hah!” Rāvaṇa: “Hah! What is Rāma?” That is *asura’s* . . . They think like that, and that is asuric. But otherwise, *īśāvāsyam idam sarvām*. Everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa. Therefore *yajña* is advised. The sooner you hand over Kṛṣṇa’s property to Kṛṣṇa, it is good for you.

As ISKCON develops massive projects, this is another great challenge: to see that all the money generated from these projects is used in Kṛṣṇa’s service. It is your order, and we must fulfill it.

In December 1968 you wrote this in a letter:

Chant your sixteen rounds daily, follow all regulations strictly, and you will have all blessings from the disciplic succession to advance nicely. So now you have this all important opportunity so I request you to take full advantage and perfect yourself in Krishna Consciousness. This is my request to all of you. This will be great service not only to yourself, but also to all the living entities with whom we come into contact.

Your instructions in this letter constitute the seed of success for

our advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is your order, and we must fulfill it.

Your eternal servant,

Bhaktivaibhava Swami

Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Mahārāja

My dear spiritual master and eternal father,

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

I first met Your Divine Grace in a newspaper article describing the arrival of the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees in London. At that time I was a student and searching for a purpose to life. Somehow I was attracted to the devotees and felt that they had something genuine to offer, although I did not really know what it was.

Shortly after that article was published, I heard a recording of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, and then a little later the Govinda record was released, both of which were singles playing at 45 rpm. It was wonderful to hear the transcendental sound vibration for the first time, and I was happy to purchase copies of the records and present them to my friends. At that time I had no idea of the deep spiritual wisdom that lay behind the music. I thought it was just another fad that had come and would soon be forgotten. But I liked it.

I was able to view the devotees chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa on the television program *Top of the Pops*, and I can remember one evening on television they showed the devotees performing their chanting and dancing in the streets of London. A devotee was shown dancing and twirling round and round, jumping up and down with both his arms raised in an ecstasy I had never before witnessed. I can remember saying, as I watched, that “I want to be like that.” I did not know how it could ever come true.

It was some months later, after I had finished my studies and taken a job, that I was to see a devotee in the flesh. He was a dark-skinned fellow of Asian origin, all alone on Portobello Road, at that time a street frequented by youth. He chanted and played finger

cymbals while dancing along barefoot, with his head shaved and his body wrapped in some pink cloth. I did not have the courage to talk with him, but his courage impressed me.

A few weeks later I found myself in a bookstore on the same street looking at a most wonderful book. It was entitled *KṚṢṆA* and had a beautiful cover picture and many other color plates inside. I felt I had to purchase a copy, and I brought it home to show my friends. The first person I showed it to exclaimed that he had another book by the same author called *Kṛṣṇa Consciousness: The Topmost Yoga System*. We saw the photos of Your Divine Grace in each of the books, and we read the caption below saying that you were the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. We had heard that there was a center in London not far from the British Museum. We had been accustomed to purchasing incense made by the devotees, and the packets all had invitations to the London temple, where there was morning and evening meditation and a Sunday feast. I had pondered visiting but had never made it. Now with the books in my hands, I was more eager to seek out the devotees and visit their center.

I had work the next day, but my friend was free, so he went to the temple and spent the whole day there. That evening he came back to my flat and told me everything that had happened. He taught me how to chant and begged me to also visit as soon as possible. I began to attend the evening programs, which began with *ārati*. The most amazing thing about the *ārati* was the *kīrtana* and the enthusiasm of the devotees for chanting and dancing. I was swept up into the dancing and chanting. I recall how there were a few other newcomers and we all abandoned our shyness and restraint to plunged into the ocean of *kīrtana*. It was an older building, and as we danced the entire block would vibrate. This caused a lot of problems with the neighbors, and eventually they succeeded in stopping our public programs, but not before the Society had established a good foundation and could relocate to a more suitable property nearby.

Looking back over those years, I consider myself fortunate to have been present during those early days of the ISKCON Society. In those days virtually all the devotees were young and bold, and we were ready to go out and distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness anywhere and everywhere. I would like to think I still have the

same enthusiasm for serving Your Divine Grace, although I am not so optimistic about my success.

Over the last forty-odd years I have seen many changes in the Society—for example, more congregation-based and fewer *āśrama* members, more devotees from Hindu families and fewer Westerners. I do have faith that we are focused on keeping Your Divine Grace in the center of all our activities. We are continuing to refine our preaching strategies, and more centers and new devotees are appearing.

It is essential that everything and everyone be connected to Your Divine Grace, because only then will our lives be successful.

Please keep me under your shelter wherever I may be destined to go, birth after birth.

Your unworthy servant,

Tridaṇḍi Bhikṣu Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha

Gunagrāhi dās Goswami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

I am writing this offering to you while sitting at my desk in your temple in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Although the meaning of *Buenos Aires* in English is “good airs,” the air is not at all very good, nor is the water, the economy, the crime rate, the education, the leaders, or the moral fiber of the people. I often hear people here say that they would love to move away from Argentina if they only had the money, and I have been asked here many times what made me choose to give up residing in the US, where everything is so much better. My answer to them is a simple one: For me “much better” means to be where my heart is—with my spiritual master, who is giving me everything I will ever need to be happy in this world and who is present where I am doing my utmost to serve his mission. My life with you, Prabhupāda, is glorious, and I would not and could not live without the shelter of your service, even if I were offered all the opulence and comfort on earth. In that

connection I submit to you this poem:

Heaven or Hell

Sometimes some thoughts from my past come to mind—
Nearly sweep me away, but I fail to find

Real meaning and joy in such recollections.
Thus I feel no desire for further reflections.

Those early days brought material pleasure,
But gone is that taste in light of the treasure

Of the Holy Name and all that It brings,
Like love in my heart, peace to my being,

Knowledge, faith, and devotion to you—
A profound transition from the times I once knew.

Some focus more on the comforts in life
And blindly ignore the impending strife

That will come as old age and disease
Turn pleasure to pain and destroy as they please.

Thus when I'm faced with a chance to be free
Of some inconvenience, I try to see

The toll that this choice would have upon me.
If it's less dedication, I'll never agree.

For changing my life for one with more ease
Is just not an option if you're to be pleased.

Serving your feet and the Holy Name:
In heaven or hell, to me it's the same.

Your unworthy disciple,

Guṇagrāhi dās Goswami

My dear *gurudeva* Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace, who is an ocean of mercy and who is very kind upon the most fallen souls of this Kali-yuga.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your appearance on this planet is most auspicious in this age because this Kali-yuga is most inauspicious and people are losing faith in real *dharma* (*sanātana-dharma*). You are always present, guiding all to the right place. You are the ever well-wisher of everyone, like the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You are doing everything for us. I am not able to do anything. Your mercy is my only hope. There are so many challenges in front of us, from within and without. To the whole world you gave pure devotional service, which is most auspicious, but the influence of Māyā is so heavy that people in general have no taste for it. Śrīla Prabhupāda, please be merciful to all living entities. Without your mercy, nothing is possible (*ohe! vaiṣṇava ṭhākura, doyāra sāgara, e dāse koruṇā kori'*).

The task of preaching you have given me is going on only by your mercy, and many souls are getting attracted to your mission. I see only your causeless mercy behind all this.

Your appearance on this planet is like the full moon rising in the darkness of night. The whole world is amazed to see your miracle—how you are transforming the hearts of people around the world and attracting them to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. By seeing this, everybody is singing your praises, declaring how magnanimous you are!

Please keep on showering your mercy so that I can continue my service unto your lotus feet with full enthusiasm, birth after birth.

Today we celebrate your appearance in this world. You came to show everyone how to live in and leave this world remembering Kṛṣṇa and go back home, back to Godhead.

I remain your eternal servant,

Nava Yogendra Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, revered Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura,

I am fortunate to again offer prostrate obeisance unto your blessed feet on the occasion of your divine appearance celebration. Always at the feet of Viṣṇu, dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, you are known as the perfect embodiment of the fusion of *bhakti* and *vedānta*, as the master (*svāmī*) of both. As the exalted servant of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, you have infused the Western lands with *gaura-vāñī*, freeing them from the confines of impersonal, empty (mis) conceptions of ultimate reality.

Your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration is always an occasion for renewed rejoicing. In particular, we rejoice in the grand flow of your luminous words in the form of your books, lectures, and conversations. Yet, for myself, as I rejoice in your enlightening words, I also wish to ponder your silences. Your moments—and sometimes longer stretches—of silence are by no means those of the impersonalist, who (with so many words) claims that words cannot reach to ultimate reality. Rather, your silences are indicators, in a variety of ways, of your deep connection with Kṛṣṇa, and reminders for us, your followers, that silence is a necessary condition for proper hearing.

There were any number of occasions on which you exhibited sublime silence. On one occasion, your silence was your refusal to descend to the level of useless argument: Representatives of a certain publisher in India, no doubt feeling threatened by the success of your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, assembled to severely vilify you, pitching one volley after another of vitriol to your face. Yet you remained completely silent throughout the tirade, and when those men had nothing further to say, and you refused to reply to them with even one word, they could do nothing but leave in embarrassed silence. Thus by your noble silence you showed your superiority to your would-be adversaries, exhibiting the sublime character of a true *sādhu*.

At other times, on more than one occasion, when you have been aware of a disciple's improper, fallen behavior, you have been silent while that devotee has been in your presence, simply allowing the person to understand for himself the need to correct

his waywardness. In a not-unrelated spirit, on a certain occasion, knowing that the intentions of a disciple to serve you were misdirected, but nonetheless were meant to please you, you silently agreed to receive a massage with sandalwood oil to encourage the (insistent) disciple who had supplied the oil, despite knowing that it would make you ill (as it indeed did).

Although on many morning walks you spoke vigorously, often debating with disciples and friends on numerous topics, sometimes as you walked you remained silent, softly chanting *japa*. One such occasion was in the summer of 1974 at Schloss Rettershof, Germany. At the time, as I accompanied you and a few other devotees through the wheat fields down to the nearest village, I felt some disappointment at your silence, only to realize my foolishness in expecting you to engage in one of your animated conversations I had heard about or heard recordings of. In retrospect, I cherish the memory of your silence on that occasion. Of course, you were not at all silent at that time. Rather, you were softly chanting *japa*, surely communing with your Lord in ways that I may never comprehend, and simultaneously teaching us the importance of meditatively chanting the holy names in all circumstances.

Indeed, on occasion, devotees witnessed you silently and unexpectedly withdraw into what could only be called *samādhi*, returning to outward consciousness after some minutes with humble words of apology. Thus—in case we needed reminding—you reminded us what a huge gulf yawned between yourself and us in terms of the level of our consciousness, putting into sharp relief the reality of our great fortune. You showed, sometimes with your silences, your patient determination to bridge the gulf for us, enabling us to also approach the Lord under your watchful guidance.

In your *Bhāgavatam* lecture just prior to giving me formal initiation, you spoke of the necessity of preparing oneself for the final test, comparing the situation of facing death to the solo flight of a newly trained pilot. Now that you are no longer physically with us, and now that you seem to be “permanently” silent, I need all the more to remember the instructions you have imparted during training—during your manifest presence. At the same time I must be self-reliant, recalling how, whenever important

decisions were to be made, you always consulted with some of your disciples: You encouraged and expected your followers to be “independently thoughtful.”

On this present occasion of celebrating your presence through your *vāñī*, I beg for your blessings to also remember your instructive, meaningful silences, praying that I may learn from you the art of attentively listening, culturing the bounty of Kṛṣṇa’s kindness through your explicit and implicit guidance in the course of my life.

Praying to be your servant, I remain

Kṛṣṇakṣetra Swami

Bhakti Gauravāñī Goswami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Half a century ago, you boarded the “Water Messenger,” the cargo ship *Jaladuta*, to take the message of the “water of life,” the sublime message of Lord Caitanya, from India to the West. This world is like a desert, a barren tract of land where all living beings are desperately looking for life-giving water. Especially those living in the blazing Western part of the desert are dying of thirst and crying in agony for relief. Even if somebody at times becomes lucky and finds a drop of water, his treasure evaporates almost instantly, leaving the hapless “lucky man” more frustrated and miserable than before.

Your arrival on Western shores in 1965 heralded a new age,

the true New Age of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, offering a veritable fountain of life-giving water to one and all. This year, five decades later, ISKCON devotees all over the world will celebrate this momentous event. The fact that the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, which you founded back in 1966, is still alive and expanding is in itself a reason for celebration. Not a narcissistic celebration of our own glory but a celebration of your transcendental genius in founding, structuring, and directing a worldwide preaching mission.

To keep a worldwide movement up and running is a daunting task, especially in Kali-yuga, where people are ready to get into a fight over the most ludicrous trifle. ISKCON, as a spiritual movement, relies entirely on volunteer workers, many of them not very well prepared, either materially or spiritually, and thus it has faced countless challenges, both internal and external, over the last fifty years. That it is still “alive” can be attributed only to the combination of the mercy of Your Divine Grace and the grace of the Divine, the *parama-karuṇam avatāras*, Nitāi-Gauracandra.

Since you were certainly aware of the difficulties involved in managing and preserving a mission like ISKCON, one of your final requests to us was to at least maintain what you had given us. With sadness you had witnessed how the mission established by you own spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, disintegrated due to internal strife shortly after his departure from this world.

Not that there haven't also been fights of this nature in ISKCON. They took place even in your presence, which was a matter of great concern to you:

Now this displeasing of godbrothers has already begun and gives me too much agitation in my mind. Our Gaudiya Math people fought with one another after the demise of Guru Maharaja but my disciples have already begun fighting even in my presence. So I am greatly concerned about it. [Letter to Kīrtanānanda, 18 October 1973]

There have been many conflicts in our society, some so serious that they brought the mission to the brink of destruction. Nevertheless, your disciples and granddisciples managed to

weather the storms and hold up the banner of cooperation. It is undoubtedly the love and gratitude your followers feel for you that has kept—and continues to keep—ISKCON together. It is extremely difficult to apply the principle of *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva* in day-to-day life and thus create unity in diversity in a world governed by duality and illusion. It is especially difficult in the Age of Kali, for, after all, Kali's main weapon is dissension. Kali divides and conquers by inspiring his disciples to pursue separate interests. But you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, inspired your followers to forgo separate interests and put Kṛṣṇa in the center, thus uniting them and enabling them to withstand Kali's influence.

During this year's leadership meeting in Māyāpur, another excerpt from the letter you had written to Kīrtanānanda in 1973 was repeatedly read to the assembled devotees:

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.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this auspicious anniversary of your appearance, I wish to thank you for giving us ISKCON, a society meant to facilitate true unity, by *sādhu-saṅga*, on a global scale. This year's *saṅga* of GBCs, gurus, *sannyāsīs* and other senior leaders showed that there are so many of your disciples and granddisciples

who are willing and determined to apply the principle of unity in diversity in their lives, thus preparing a solid basis for the future growth of ISKCON.

It is to be expected that challenges will keep coming, as this is the nature of the material world, but as long as the unity-in-diversity principle remains our guiding light in managing the affairs of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, there is hope that our movement will be successful.

Please allow me to participate in this effort.

Your humble servant,

Bhakti Gauravāṇī Goswami

Dhirasanta Dasa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

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

Recently I was asked a question: “What is humility? Can it be recognized by an external show? Can one walk with a straight back, smile, laugh, but experience humility, or is it something deeper?”

I explained that real humility is not an external show but a genuine softness of the heart due to a willingness to confront one’s pride. Therefore one can be natural and normal. Needless to say you can laugh, smile and walk with a straight back and be humble at the same time, without any difficulty.

However one should not be anxious to have the satisfaction of being honored by others but rather one acknowledges that any achievement in one’s life has come from the investment of others.

The material conception of life makes us very eager to receive honor from others, but from the point of view of a person in perfect knowledge—who knows that he is not this body—any honor pertaining to this body is useless.

We are reminded of your own genuine humility. Here are some of your exchanges you had with us in those early days;

“I hope you all pray to Krishna so I may be able to execute my duty properly.” (Letter, 28 June 1967)

“Actually I am dependent on your mercy.” (Letter, 28 August 1976)

“You cannot survive without my mercy and I cannot survive without your mercy. It is reciprocal. This mutual dependence is based on love – Krishna consciousness.” (Letter, 22 January 1976)

“Although officially I am your spiritual master, I consider you all as my spiritual master because your love for Krishna and service for Krishna teach me how to become a sincere Krishna conscious person.” (Letter, 16 December 1967)

“On behalf of Krishna I am accepting your sincere service, but on the whole, I am servant of the servant of Krishna. Therefore I may be in designation your spiritual master, but actually I am servant of the servant of Krishna, and because you are all sincere servants of Krishna, I am your servant.” (Letter, 15 February 1968)

“Actually we are all conditioned souls, so our demand from Krishna to accept us is unreasonable. From my personal point of view, I think that I am so sinful that I cannot even approach Krishna to show me any favor. But I have only one hope – my Spiritual Master – He is very kind. So some way or other He is dragging me towards Krishna.” (Letter, 10 March 1969)

Śrīla Prabhupāda you are a *nitya-siddha*, an eternally liberated devotee. In one sense, there is no need for you to accept a spiritual master, for you are already perfect. However, you presented yourself as a sinful conditioned soul dependent on the mercy of your spiritual master and your own disciples.

In a similar way your spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, although a very learned scholar of the *sastras* and the son of Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura, submissively enquired

from Śrīla Gaura Kiśora dāsa Bābājī – who by all material standards was illiterate. Gaura Kiśora dāsa Bābājī sent him home saying, “you are a great poet and scholar, how can you learn from me?” But Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati explained, “whatever I have learned, whatever I know, is irrelevant unless I submissively surrender unto you.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda you have picked me up out of the darkness of ignorance and have now given me the status of *sannyāsa* so I can increase my service to your lotus feet.

I have no humility but I am aspiring to be *dāsa dāsa anudās* – to be the most insignificant infinitesimal atomic servant and atomic particle of dust at your lotus feet. Please grant me even a drop of your humility. Please help me to always be conscious that I am simply a reflection of your great mercy.

Your insignificant servant,

Dhirasanta dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

This year's offering is being written on a train bound for Beijing from Ningbo. We have just completed the first leg of our spring Khasadeśa tour, spanning four cities and holding eighteen outreach programs. Mornings were spent with devotees at their homes, and evenings conducting *kīrtana* programs, with *Bhagavad-gītā* classes and *prasādam* distribution.

I am truly awestruck by the potency of the holy name. Doctor Ma, a general surgeon and first-time attendee at one of these *kīrtana* programs, was soon chanting and clapping with great enthusiasm. He now wants to include *kīrtana* for his patients as part of their therapy. He recognizes that the holy name has immense potency to bring them deep and lasting happiness. He walked out with a large stack of your books, along with *prasādam* and CDs with your recorded *kīrtana*.

Shang Li, a university physics professor and also a first-time attendee at one of these *kīrtana* programs, started sobbing, with tears streaming down her cheeks, about half-way through. Perhaps more amazing is that two of her young students were also moved to tears as well.

Almost without exception, all those who attend these *kīrtana* programs are moved in similar ways. Many tell us that the holy name has opened their hearts in a way they never experienced before, and they are extremely grateful. Be it a stirring of emotion, a flood of happiness, or just a momentary release of suffering, everyone has gotten a slight glimpse of the holy name and tasted a tiny drop of its nectar.

*jayati jayati nāmānanda-rūpaṁ murārer
viramita-nija-dharma-dhyāna-pūjādi-yatnam
katham api sakṛd āttariṁ mukti-darṁ prāṇinām yat
paramam amṛtam ekaṁ jīvanam bhūṣaṇam me*

“All glories, all glories to the all-blissful holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which causes the devotee to give up all conventional religious

duties, meditation, and worship. When somehow or other uttered even once by a living entity, the holy name awards him liberation. The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is the highest nectar. It is my very life and my only treasure.” (Śrīla Sanātana Gosvami—*Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.1.9)

*tuṅḍe tāṅḍavīnī ratim vitanute tuṅḍāvālī-labdhave
karṇa-kroḍa-kaḍambinī ghaṭayate karṇārbudebhyaḥ sprhām
cetaḥ-prāṅgaṇa-saṅginī vijayate sarvendriyānām kṛtin
no jāne janitā kiyadbhir amṛtaiḥ kṛṣṇeti varṇa-dvayī*

“I do not know how much nectar the two syllables ‘Kṛṣ-ṇa’ have produced. When the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is chanted, it appears to dance within the mouth. We then desire many, many mouths. When that name enters the holes of the ears, we desire many millions of ears. And when the holy name dances in the courtyard of the heart, it conquers the activities of the mind, and therefore all the senses become inert.” (Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī—*Vidaḍdha-mādhava* 1.15)

Verses such as these seem to come alive when we hold *kīrtana*. It is quite amazing actually. You personally chanted the holy name, tasted its nectar, and mercifully distributed it to the world. This, too, was the simple formula you gave us.

Chant Seriously

“One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honor yet is always prepared to give all respect to others can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord.”

Raising my hands, I declare, “Everyone please hear me! String this verse on the thread of the holy name and wear it on your neck for continuous remembrance.”

[Purport:] When chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, in the beginning one may commit many offenses, which are called *nāmābhāsa* and *nāma-aparādha*. In this stage there is no possibility of achieving perfect love of Kṛṣṇa

by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. Therefore one must chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* according to the principles of the above verse, *trṇād api su-nīcena taror api sahiṣṇunā*. One should note in this connection that chanting involves the activities of the upper and lower lips as well as the tongue. All three must be engaged in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. The words ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa’ should be very distinctly pronounced and heard. Sometimes one mechanically produces a hissing sound instead of chanting with the proper pronunciation with the help of the lips and tongue. Chanting is very simple, but one must practice it seriously. Therefore the author of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, advises everyone to keep this verse always strung about his neck. [*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi* 17.31–32]

Taste and Distribute

The characteristics of Kṛṣṇa are understood to be a storehouse of transcendental love. Although that storehouse of love certainly came with Kṛṣṇa when He was present, it was sealed. But when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came with His associates of the Pañca-tattva, they broke the seal and plundered the storehouse to taste transcendental love of Kṛṣṇa. The more they tasted it, the more their thirst for it grew. Śrī Pañca-tattva themselves danced again and again and thus made it easier to drink nectarean love of Godhead. They danced, cried, laughed, and chanted like madmen, and in this way they distributed love of Godhead. In distributing love of Godhead, Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates did not consider who was a fit candidate and who was not, nor where such distribution should or should not take place. They made no conditions. Wherever they got the opportunity, the members of the Pañca-tattva distributed love of Godhead. Although the members of the Pañca-tattva plundered the storehouse of love of Godhead and ate and distributed its contents, there was no scarcity, for this wonderful storehouse is so complete that as the

love is distributed, the supply increases hundreds of times.
[*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi* 7.21–24]

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has started performing *saṅkīrtana-yajña* in different places, and it has been experienced that wherever *saṅkīrtana-yajña* is performed, many thousands of people gather and take part in it. Imperceptible auspiciousness achieved in this connection should be continued all over the world. The members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement should perform *saṅkīrtana-yajñas* one after another, so much that all the people of the world will either jokingly or seriously chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, and thus they will derive the benefit of cleansing the heart. The holy name of the Lord (*harer nāma*) is so powerful that whether it is chanted jokingly or seriously the effect of vibrating this transcendental sound will be equally distributed. It is not possible at the present moment to perform repeated *yajñas* as Mahārāja Barhiṣat performed, but it is within our means to perform *saṅkīrtana-yajña*, which does not cost anything. One can sit down anywhere and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. If the surface of the globe is overflowed with the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, the people of the world will be very, very happy. [Śrīmad-Bhagavatam 4.24.10, purport]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me, and the world, the chanting of the holy name. If you had not sat down to chant the *mahā-mantra* at Tompkins Square Park in the midst of New York City, I shudder to think where we would be today. Please bless me to always sincerely chant the holy name, taste its nectar, and distribute that nectar to others for the remainder of my life.

Repeating the words of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, I offer you and your merciful Lord this prayer:

O Lord! This is my humble submission at Your lotus feet.

I do not ask from You sensual pleasure, learning, wealth, or followers. I do not beg for residence on the celestial planets, nor do I wish liberation from the mundane existence. Nor do I pray for the attainment of any mystic powers. Whatever birth I may obtain due to the faults of my previous worldly activities, I pray that I may sing the glories of Your holy name birth after birth. This is my only desire, O Lord, and I submit it at Your lotus feet: that unmotivated devotion to You may constantly awaken in my heart. As much attachment as I now have for worldly affairs, I pray that a similar degree of attachment may develop for Your holy feet. I pray that my love for You may remain undisturbed both in misfortune and in prosperity, and that day after day it may increase by the power and influence of Your holy name. Be my life in heaven or in hell, be it as a bird or a beast, my devotion to You always remain within the heart of Bhaktivinoda.

Begging to remain your humble servant eternally,

Giridhārī Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at the dust of your divine lotus feet on this most auspicious occasion of your 119th Vyāsa-pūjā celebration.

Several of my offerings to you over the years have been filled with the memories of my interactions with you. I wrote and published these as a book dedicated to you, which is titled “In Conversation with Śrīla Prabhupāda: Contexts and Contemplations”.

As my offering to you I have selected one of those conversations which comprises of a context, the actual conversation and a contemplation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is as follows:

The Four Stages of Sannyāsa

Śrīla Prabhupāda had been in Māyāpur since January. He often walked on the roof of the Lotus Building. The roof was forty-feet wide and 150 feet long. It was decorated with a variety of potted plants and shrubs. Śrīla Prabhupāda would circumambulate the two rooms located at the centre. The view from the roof was panoramic making it a pleasing place for Śrīla Prabhupāda to walk and chant early in the morning. He would generally be surrounded by a large group of senior men. On 11 March 1976, I had joined Śrīla Prabhupāda on one of these walks on the roof. There was a large group of devotees with Śrīla Prabhupāda, amongst whom, I recall seeing Bhavānanda Mahārāja, Gurudāsa Mahārāja, Gurukṛpa Mahārāja, Harikeśa Mahārāja, Jayapataka Mahārāja, Jayatīrtha Mahārāja, Paścadraviḍa Mahārāja, Puṣṭa Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja, Satsvarupa Dasa Goswāmi, Tamala Kṛṣṇa Goswāmi and Viṣṇujana Mahārāja. This was my first year in Māyāpur as a sannyāsī and now I had the privilege of greater access to Śrīla Prabhupāda. I offered my obeisances and was about to join the group.

Śrīla Prabhupāda kindly greeted me, “Hare Kṛṣṇa.” In the same breath, he asked, “So why you are becoming Paramahaṁsa? This is paramahaṁsa dress.” He pointed at my clothing. The whole entourage had stopped, and I was facing them all. Śrīla Prabhupāda was in the centre and I was in the limelight. I immediately realised

that the colour of the cloth that I was wearing, looked dull and faded. It was not bright saffron.

“I have to dye it today,” I said, embarrassed.

Śrīla Prabhupāda reprimanded me, “Don’t become Paramahaṁsa immediately. Paramahaṁsa is the last stage of *sannyāsa*. The first stage is *kuṭīcaka*, then *bahūdaka* followed by *parivrājakācārya* and then the final stage, Paramahaṁsa. Therefore Paramahaṁsa stage is the topmost.”

“Does the Paramahaṁsa wear white?” I humbly enquired.

Śrīla Prabhupāda resumed walking and responded, “Paramahaṁsa is not subject to rules and regulations. He is not actually in the material world. He is in the stage of *mahā-bhava*. In the *kuṭīcaka* stage, one is expected to live outside the village and accepts foodstuffs from his family. Someone with little experience lives by *madhukāri*.”

“*Madhukāra* means the bee,” Śrīla Prabhupāda explained. “He collects a little honey here, little honey there. He does not collect a lump sum of food from any one place. To any *grhastha* he can say, ‘Please give me a little piece of bread’. That is not difficult for them. ‘All right, take’. A travelling *sannyāsi* may go to many *grhasthas*, begging a little piece from everyone. So he is *bahūdaka*. Then, when he’s further experienced, preaching place to place, country to country, that is *parivrājakācārya*. And when he has sufficiently preached, he can sit down anywhere. That is Paramahaṁsa.”

The topic ended on that philosophical note. Śrīla Prabhupāda didn’t pursue it, and I was relieved to be off the hook. For some time there was silence. A chilly breeze blew across the roof, and from the main gate the sound of melodious *sahnai* became audible.

Śrīla Prabhupāda heard this and said, “In every big temple there is *sahnai*. All throughout the year, morning and night. And not only temples, but also rich men’s houses. And at night they go to bed hearing the *sahnai* and early in the morning they wake up by hearing it.”

The conversation rolled onto the idea of alarm clocks and I said, “People keep cocks and hens for waking up.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda agreed, “Yes. What is that called? Alarm? ‘Kaa-kaa-kaa, Get up please. Kaa-kaa-kaa.’ Nature’s alarm.”

The devotees were thoroughly amused at Śrīla Prabhupāda’s excellent mimicking.

I was not strictly following the right code of dress as a sannyāsī. Śrīla Prabhupāda caught me on the colour of my cloth, but used it as a reminder for everybody else that nobody is above the rules except paramahaṁsa. He used the term paramahaṁsa. Although it means “the highly elevated, perfection stage of life”, Śrīla Prabhupāda was really asking me if I was already above the rules. He wanted to know how I had achieved this stage of life so quickly. Sometimes we have a tendency to overestimate ourselves and easily fall into the trap of thinking, “I am now a sannyāsī and advanced. These rules are for the neophytes. So there is no need for me to follow the rules”. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s lesson was clear.

We must not imitate, deviate from, or neglect the rules. The rules are there for a reason and therefore they have to be followed strictly. There should be no imitation of the paramahaṁsa stages. You have to grow to get to the platform of paramahaṁsa. It is a gradual process and the rules assist you to advance through the stages which in turn facilitate growth so that it becomes possible to attain the stage of paramahaṁsa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s perfect mimicking of the cocks triggered my memory and took me back to my childhood days in the village of Aravade where the cocks were also our alarm clocks. This was also the way of life that dated back to the days when Lord Kṛṣṇa was in Dvārakā with His queens. He was woken up in the very same manner. I realised that the simple way of life using nature’s alarm was quickly disappearing.

* * *

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, these pearls of wisdom have always stayed with me and allowed me to relive my moments with you and realise that you are always present.

Your humble servant,

Lokanath Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Recently I have been studying your poem “Vṛndāvana Bhajana.” This poem has been a great source of inspiration, as by reading it one can begin to understand your deep mood of service to *guru* and Gaurāṅga and your mood of detachment from this material world.

It was written right before you took *sannyāsa*, when the material world was exhibiting its cruel form to you. As you state, “Kṛṣṇa has shown me the naked form of material nature.” You state that in spite your having many family members still around, they had abandoned you, seeing you as penniless. In your words, they were a “fruitless glory.”

In these beginning stanzas you show us the nature of material love. That is, material love is simply a business exchange. The way you state this enters directly into one’s heart and enables one to have that realization simply by hearing your words. You state, “All that is left of this family life is a list of names.”

Then you inform us of our real family in relationship to Kṛṣṇa. In other words, as you state, “All [are] your relatives, brother! All the billions of *jīvas*.” By hearing your words, we become free from the material “skin disease.”

You go on to destroy the illusion of impersonalism and voidism and then establish the topmost goal of realizing one’s eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa in one of the five *rasas*.

Then you inform us of our responsibility to the conditioned *jīvas*—the responsibility of bringing them to Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet. This service of bringing them to Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet is the way to achieve pure devotional service ourselves and realize our eternal identities. We must preach to be successful. You inspire us to become like Arjuna, fighters for Kṛṣṇa on the battlefield of *saṅkīrtana*.

You invoke our compassion, telling us that the world is now full of Jagāis and Mādhāis. The *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs* are not interested in saving the world. In the guise of *bhajana* “they simply hunt for chapatis and *dāl*.” We must rise to the *madhyama-adhikārī* platform.

In this way the sleeping world can be awakened and “the sinful can all become devotees.”

Helping us understand the fallacies of sahajiyāism, you state, “One who has the material concept that the body is the self cannot relish spiritual mellows. . . . The *prākṛta-sahajiyās* all commit adultery. Taking someone else’s wife, they go to relish ‘transcendental *līlā*.’ . . . [I]f [the conditioned soul] tries to imitate [Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa], taking on Their dress and characteristics, he becomes the plaything of Māyā. . . .”

Finally, you reveal to us that by the performance of *saṅkīrtana* (sharing Kṛṣṇa consciousness with others) remembrance of Kṛṣṇa will automatically come and one’s identity will be spontaneously “manifested in the heart.”

By meditating on this poem (which I recommend every devotee read), I can see how faithfully you have taken the words and mission of your spiritual master as your life and soul. You are never separate from Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. I wish that my heart will manifest the same consciousness in my relationship with you.

I pray to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that I can eternally dedicate my existence to your mission. Please give me the intelligence to understand how to present Kṛṣṇa consciousness according to time, place, and circumstance. Please let me imbibe your mood of compassion and dedication to the spiritual master’s order.

Your eternal servant,

Bīr Kṛṣṇa dās Goswami

Ganapati dās Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīne*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

I offer my respectful obeisances to all sincere followers of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, and humbly request you to read this with a generous heart. All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī has emphasized the principle of *dr̥g-dr̥śya-vicāra*:

Draṣṭā (the seer) and *dr̥śya* (the seen)—are we *draṣṭā* or *dr̥śya*? Whatever I have to say, my whole message is based on proper comprehension of this truth. But how few people have really understood this *dr̥g-dr̥śya-vicāra*? Kṛṣṇa is the only *draṣṭā*, and all else are *dr̥śya*, objects of His *darśana*. Rather than attempting to analyze or measure the Absolute—what to speak of exploiting His *śaktis*—one should “see oneself as the object of enjoyment of, and object of seeing by, the supreme enjoyer and seer.” The same principle of *dr̥śya* that applies to the *sevya-bhagavān* also applies to the *sevaka-bhagavān*, Śrī Guru. Just as Kṛṣṇa is *adhokṣaja*, and cannot be measured by our defective material senses, similarly, His representative the bona fide spiritual master cannot be measured by our defective senses. We cannot see him with our material vision. Therefore, the Guru is the seer, *draṣṭā*, and we must put ourselves in the position as the object to be seen, *dr̥śya*.

After hearing from, eulogizing, and rendering service to Śrīla Prabhupāda for forty-plus years, I still find him to be mystifying and incomprehensible (here I am not referring to his *svarūpa* in Goloka-līlā). This should not be surprising, for in Prabhupāda’s own words, “*Vaiṣṇavera kriyā, mudrā vijñeha nā bujhaya*: Even the most learned or experienced person cannot understand the movements of a Vaiṣṇava.” How, then, can I expect to?

Examining the original *śloka* that Śrīla Prabhupāda is here paraphrasing, we see that *vaiṣṇavera* refers to one whose *kṛṣṇa-prema* has awakened: *yāñra citte kṛṣṇa-premā karaye udaya*. It is hardly possible to comprehend the psychology and activities of even a mundane sentimentalist who has “fallen in love” with another *baddha-jīva*, what to speak of the love-imbued *mahā-bhāgavata*! Therefore, we are cautioned to adhere to his instructions

and follow in his footsteps (*anusaraṇa*), rather than to try to imitate him (*anukaraṇa*).

We can just imagine the agony of those who, attracted by the charisma of a false guru, have had to rationalize his less-than-ideal behavior in order to salvage their faith and allegiance. We are extremely fortunate that Śrīla Prabhupāda, although not bound to customary standards of regulation and moral behavior, strictly upheld them in order to save us from such a predicament.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda
—exemplar extraordinaire.

Ācārya's life an open book
—in age of hypocrites, rare.
No doubt about your character,
no blemish on your repute,
actions selfless and spotless,
no fault—you live in truth.

And yet, dear devotees, there are those who take offense with the unabashed and uncompromising way in which Śrīla Prabhupāda presented the message of the previous *ācāryas*. Fault-finders seize the opportunity to focus on his “heavy” statements. Whether we choose to call them “inconsistencies,” “contradictions,” “problems,” or just plain “mistakes,” I confess that such statements have caused me much consternation. They may be likened to the fiery component of a chutney too sweet to resist.

We are warned not to consider the *ācārya* an ordinary person. Devoid of personal aspirations, he is the external manifestation of the Paramātmā for the seriously inquisitive student. Gurudeva is *sākṣād-dhari*, but he is also a *śuddha-vaiṣṇava*—either a perfected *sādhaka* or a descended nitya-siddha *pārṣada*. *Guru-tattva* is very subtle, almost inconceivable. Only he upon whom the Guru bestows his merciful glance will have his *darśana*. It's true, I don't really need to understand Śrīla Prabhupāda in order to serve him, but . . . when that service is preaching, there arises a necessity—not simply to repeat like a parrot—but to understand the justification for his statements so as to be able to defend them. We are thus faced with an obligatory challenge: how to repeat the message

of our guru so as to not compromise or dilute the principle yet not appear like fanatics. Cultured individuals are aghast at what some mindless zealots say and do in the name of their religion and its leaders, and it is largely due to these fanatics that atheism is forging ahead in the modern world. We do not want to embarrass Prabhupāda as others have embarrassed Jesus and Mohammed.

Recently in India, an antagonistic blogger has brought Śrīla Prabhupāda's remarks about women and rape into the public forum. While these comments may not personally disturb us because we are able to view them in the wider context of his prodigious literary contributions and his ideal character, we have to admit the difficulty in communicating this context to the public. This event may come and go, but be assured, there are more on the horizon. There are many statements which we may be called upon to defend once/if Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism actually becomes relevant and threatening to the status quo. We should not hope that these comments remain hidden, nor should we simply pass them off as products of cultural or linguistic idiosyncrasies. Rather, we should be motivated to entertain the hard but important questions such as: the meaning of spiritual perfection, the difference between principle and detail, the relationship between relative and absolute, and, in general, the thorny issue of hermeneutics.

To prepare ourselves to explain and defend Śrīla Prabhupāda's statements in a sober and intelligent way is, I feel, more valuable an offering than mere flowery words and petals. Although we cannot request Prabhupāda to come personally to confront his critics, as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was requested by Tapanā Miśra and Candraśekhara, we can certainly beg him to bless us with the determination and intelligence to act in both a loyal and responsible manner. May he, as *sevaka-bhagavān draṣṭā*, be pleased to see and utilize us for this purpose.

Your servant in Śrīla Prabhupāda's service,

Gaṇapati dās Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādī-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.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

It is 3 am. I suddenly awaken unexpectedly—only a few hours rest—no alarm. A late night and poor health indicated I should have had a long sleep. But today is April 15. It is the deadline for submission of offerings to your Vyāsa-pūjā book. Yes, another alarm is going off. Something is calling within. It's an emergency and an urgency. I have to report to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. This is the most purifying and enlivening service; it cannot wait another minute.

I put everything aside—forgetting my health issues, the tiredness, the packed line-up of *darśanas* and service later in the day. This is my last chance to absorb myself fully in the nectarean soothing rays of complete association with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda—at least until next year. To hell with everything else . . . well, not exactly. No *maṅgala-ārati*, no class, no breakfast. Everything takes a back seat in preference to you. To glorify you is the essence of anything of value. My heart begins to focus on you and your unlimited gifts. I hide in the room, door locked. Nothing else seems important at this point. I forget where I am, or even who I think I am. This is perhaps the most absorbing meditation on you and reality throughout the entire year. There is no room for *māyā* or negative thoughts.

This day, Vyāsa-pūjā, is the most important, “blessed event,” unknown to the people in general and even sometimes to devotees. It squeezes in on the back of Janmāṣṭamī. Without our honoring this day in its fullness, is it possible to understand or enter into the fullness of any other aspect of the spiritual realm? How can we clearly understand the meaning of Janmāṣṭamī, or any other event, without properly honoring you?

Glorifying the Lord and glorifying the Lord’s devotees are the same. Or, rather, glorifying the devotee is more important than glorifying the Lord directly. Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura explains this fact: *chāḍiyā vaiṣṇava-sevā, nistāra pāyeche kebā*. One cannot be liberated from material contamination without sincerely serving a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. [Additional Notes at end of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.1]

What will I write? It is tough. I have no clear foundation—only now starting. With a few hours left. It’s hard at the best of times for me to write offerings on this most auspicious occasion, what to speak of at the eleventh hour. No choice. You are preparing us for death. We cannot delay.

Perhaps I can write a eulogy, or maybe remembrances, some heart-pourings, reports, realizations, an appeal, a philosophical presentation, a series of relevant quotes, a list of thank-yous? Nothing is fixed—except it is directed to you. My mind flickers back and forth.

After a short while I notice my heart going to the same topic again and again, despite other temptations. This year is the fiftieth anniversary of your journey to the West. Yes, falling at your feet, this is what I want to thank you for, with my entire being. That event is the unwinding, the fulfillment of Lord Caitanya’s prediction. The prediction of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. You are that person who appeared in order to fulfill those statements—the *mantra-upāsaka*, the *senāpati-bhakta*.

Other than the obvious historical significance of this year, what is it that is reverberating with me so strongly? Clearly it is that fifty years ago you deposited the two most valuable assets in everyone’s account. Everyone can draw on these, no matter who they are, and get unlimited interest. What are those assets?

“*Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma*” and “Prayer unto the Lotus

Feet of Kṛṣṇa.”

I meditate on these poems—the very foundation of the mission. They are a mission statement of your heart for the whole movement—not so much in terms of the executive details, but the means to be the fulfilling instrument of the Lord’s will. In these two poems, everything is contained that is required for our Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They are priceless jewels, the guiding lights for all of us. They are the basis of success for one and all in our spiritual lives.

Perhaps for many, July 11, 1966—the fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of ISKCON—carries more weight. However, the fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of ISKCON will have no tangible meaning without the pervasive presence of the flavor of these poems. There would be no incorporation without your journey. What is the value of the form or structure of a mission without the essential substance fueling it? In these poems you have revealed that substance as clear as a bell. Surely they form the root of your movement, or should we say the life force activating it. Anything that has been achieved in this movement—be it book distribution, *naḡara-saṅkīrtana*, temples, devotees, congregational preaching, restaurants, farms, schools, *āśramas*, strategic planning, the ToVP, and everything else we take for granted in our little worlds—has evolved from the mood expressed in your first-ever writings in the Western world. To the degree our activities are based on that mood, there will be genuine success.

In these two poems I find reassurance, strength and courage, enthusiasm, humility, tolerance, mercy, total dependence, solidifying unity in the diversity around us, purity, unending love, and just about anything else a devotee may need to rise above the mire of illusion and become what he should be.

The revelation of your writings and teachings takes tangible shape in the framework of these poems. Daily I try to read these two most significant revelations, which you wrote in September of 1965 onboard the *Jaladuta* (“Prayer”) and at Commonwealth Pier (*Mārkinē*).

Devotees often ask how to maintain enthusiasm in their service. In these two poems we can find the answer. If we are feeling alone, longing for good association, helpless, or whatever state of forgetfulness we may be in, just sing these poems and

enter into their mood, enter into your association. The strength to preach boldly is found in these poems. I pray for the day when I can imbibe the message of these love songs.

In a statement similar to the one Prahlada Mahārāja made to his father, Jaḍa Bharata said to King Rahūgana: . . . *vinā mahat-pāda-rajo-'bhiṣekam*: “My dear King Rahūgana, unless one has the opportunity to smear his entire body with the dust of the lotus feet of great devotees, one cannot realize the Absolute Truth. . . . The Absolute Truth is only revealed to one who has attained the mercy of a great devotee.”

What is the inner meaning of Jaḍa Bharata’s and Prahlada’s statements? The meaning is found in these two poetic *cintāmaṇi* gemstones. You further expand upon the mood and the purpose of these two writings in your purports:

After being initiated and receiving the orders of the spiritual master, the disciple should unhesitatingly think about the instructions or orders of the spiritual master and should not allow himself to be disturbed by anything else. This is also the verdict of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, who, while explaining a verse of *Bhagavad-gītā* (*vyavasāyātmikā buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana*, Bg. 2.41), points out that the order of the spiritual master is the life substance of the disciple. The disciple should not consider whether he is going back home, back to Godhead; his first business should be to execute the order of his spiritual master. Thus a disciple should always meditate on the order of the spiritual master, and that is perfectional meditation. Not only should he meditate upon that order, but he should find out the means by which he can perfectly worship and execute it. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.24.15, purport]

And in your morning walks, lectures, and conversations:

We must not be disappointed that no one is hearing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We will say it to the moon and stars and all directions. We will cry in the wilderness, because Kṛṣṇa is everywhere. We want to get a certificate from Kṛṣṇa that

“This man has done something for Me.” Not popularity. If a pack of asses says you are good, what is that? We have to please Kṛṣṇa’s senses with purified senses. [*Prabhupāda-līlā*, Chapter 3, “A Visit to Boston, 1968”]

So somehow or other, it has begun, the blessings of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, as he wanted me, he desired me. So because he desired, my . . . I am not very expert or educated or nothing extraordinary, but only thing is that I believed in his word. That is . . . You can say that is my qualification. I believed cent per-cent in his word. So whatever success is there, it is just due to my firm faith in his instruction. So I am trying to follow. And by his grace, you are helping me. So actually, the responsibility will now depend on you. . . . So you should know it, that this movement should be pushed on. . . . When I came first in Boston, I was thinking, “Oh, who will accept these Vaiṣṇava rules and regulations? These people are after meat and wine and illicit sex, and how they will accept it?” I was hopeless: “How they will chant?” You see? So by the grace of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, at least, I am hopeful that this movement can be accepted by anyone. It is not so hopeless as I thought. [Lecture on the Appearance Day of His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, 7 February 1969, Los Angeles]

You cannot expect favorable situation. It is not possible. When I came in America, I never expected any favorable situation. I wrote that poetry in disappointment, that “Who will accept this?” That is the position. By Kṛṣṇa’s grace, gradually it will become a favorable situation, but don’t expect any favorable situation. You have to handle unfavorable situation and make favorable situation to preach. . . . So Nityānanda Prabhu, He went to preach to Jagāi and Mādhāi. There was no favorable situation. They were drunkards. They caused injury on the body of Nityānanda Prabhu. So this is preaching with only unfavorable situation. You cannot expect favorable situation. And still you have to preach. That is preaching.

They will speak like madmen, so many things. They are mad, after all. *Nūnam pramattaḥ kurute vikarma*. They have no sense. All materialistic persons are madmen. Still, by the order of superior, Caitanya Mahāprabhu, we have to do this preaching work. Actually, the American boys are fighting against so many unfavorable situations. They are sometimes beaten in the airport, you know that? Still they are preaching; that is preaching, that is preaching. “The unfavorable situation, so let me give it up,” that is not preaching. Yes, we must know that there is unfavorable situation, still I have to do. [Room Conversation, 10 August 1976, Tehran]

I look at the clock—it is now 8 am. Where am I, where have I been? Oh, I am back in the world around me, sitting in my room looking out the window at the bleak horizon. Have I been on the *Jaladuta*, a journey across the ocean, being relentlessly tossed by the waves of *māyā*? Helpless, frightened, hopeless. Somehow, in the middle of that tumultuous ocean you came as the captain of the ship to guide us to safe waters. Being fixed at your lotus feet is the only safe position. If only these moments of absorption in remembering you would never end.

I hope that this offering will inspire devotees to take shelter of the message of these two poems. If we do so, our consciousness will be transformed and we will become more effective instruments for the fulfillment of your desires to please your guru.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us a glimpse into the spiritual world, allowing us to enter into your unlimited heart to some degree. May these two poems and the message within them be my guiding force forever in my service at your lotus feet. Without the shelter of your lotus feet, I have no shelter. May our hearts continually be cleansed in submission at your lotus feet. Besides your mercy, there is nothing of value.

Aspiring to become a puppet in your hands, I remain,

Your lowly servant,

Janānanda Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

How does *bhakti* make her appearance in the heart of a conditioned soul? *Śāstra* unanimously declares that this happens only by the contact with a great soul and by his kind mercy.

*naiṣāṁ matis tāvad urukramāṅghriṁ
spr̥śaty anarthāpagamo yad-arthah
mahīyasāṁ pāda-rajo-’bhiṣekam
niṣkiñcanānām na vṛṇīta yāvāt*

“Unless they smear upon their bodies the dust of the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava completely freed from material contamination, persons very much inclined toward materialistic life cannot be attached to the lotus feet of the Lord, who is glorified for His uncommon activities. Only by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious and taking shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord in this way can one be freed from material contamination.” (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 7.5.32)

Just as electricity can be accessed only from an electric source by a power line, *bhakti* comes into the heart only through the agency of a great devotee. Only by the blessing of such a devotee will the consciousness of a fallen soul become inclined toward the Lord.

One may roam throughout the three worlds, but one will not find a greater blessing than the rare gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which frees one from the prison house of repeated births and deaths in this material world and bestows *prema*.

On your divine appearance day I would like to especially glorify your unprecedented mercy. Generally it is said that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the most merciful of all incarnations. But your mercy is even greater.

The other day I read a verse describing Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mercy:

*na yogo na dhyānam na ca japa-tapas-tyāga-niyamā
na vedā nācārā koa na bata niṣiddhādy-uparatiḥ*

*akasmāc caitanye 'vatarati dayā-sāra-hṛdaye
pumarthānānī maulim param iha mudā luṅṭhati janah*

“Now that Lord Caitanya, His heart filled with the unlimited ocean of mercy, has descended to this world, those living entities who had formerly never practiced *yoga*, meditated, chanted *mantras*, performed austerities, followed various Vedic restrictions, studied the *Vedas*, performed spiritual activities, or refrained from sins have become able to easily plunder the crest jewel of all goals of life, *prema-dhana*.” (Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta 111)

In my service as a preacher I constantly see with my own eyes how persons who previously never engaged in any spiritual practices and who never even thought of refraining from sinful activities become devotees and experience the blissful gifts of Kṛṣṇa consciousness just by coming in contact with you in some way or another.

Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura expresses his surprise about the unrestrained mercy of Śrī Caitanya, who does not consider the eligibility of the persons He blesses with *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.

*pātrāpātra-vicāraṇam na kurute na svam param vīkṣyate
deyādeya-vimarśakaḥ na hi na vā kāla-pratīkṣaḥ prabhuḥ
sadyo yaḥ śravaṇekṣaṇa-praṇamana-dhyānādīnā durlabham
dhatte bhakti-rasam sa eva bhagavān gaurah param me gatih*

“He does not consider whether a person is qualified or not. He does not see who is His own and who is an outsider. He does not consider who should receive and who should not. He does not consider whether it is the proper time. The Lord at once gives that nectar of pure devotional service which is difficult to obtain even be hearing the messages of the Lord, seeing the Deity, offering obeisances, meditating, or following a host of spiritual practices. That Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Gaurahari, is my only shelter.” (Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta 77)

Normally we find in this world that sympathy is given only to these who are qualified. When a person sees someone who is always quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, and totally disturbed, he usually avoids and even hates such a person. But you never

give up on the conditioned souls, and in this way you follow Lord Nityānanda, who even gave His mercy to the Jagāis and Mādhāis of His time.

These two qualities of yours—to give unconditional mercy and to not discriminate between the worthy and the unworthy—have totally captured my heart. More often than not I find myself lacking in these qualifications: I become selective and judgmental, even when I don't want to, and in this way stop being an agent of mercy.

To give pleasure to your heart I would like to share an almost unknown example of how your mercy is distributed indiscriminately:

During the last Kīrtana Mela in Śrīdhām Māyāpur, many local cable TV providers carried to their viewers the live broadcast of the *kīrtanas*, held in front of Śrī Pañca-tattva. One devotee had to leave the *kīrtana* in the temple to purchase some groceries in the market. He was surprised when he heard a typical ISKCON *kīrtana* in the shop. When he asked where it was coming from, the *sabjī wala* pointed to a small TV set stuck between the potatoes and beetroots. There our devotee saw the broadcast of the enlivening *kīrtana* in the Pañca-tattva temple. "I listen to your *kīrtana* all day," the man said. "Your Prabhupāda has made miracles happen by spreading *kīrtana* all over the world."

Today I am standing before your towering mercy, by which your movement is reaching conditioned souls all over the planet. I am impressed by the far-reaching influence of your *kīrtana*, which goes on so strongly. I am especially impressed by the tsunami-like expansion of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India, Russia, and everywhere else. I am so proud of you and so amazed.

Please always cast your merciful glance upon me. You have captured my heart, and all I can do is try to show my gratitude to you through whatever service you empower me to do.

Śrīla Prabhupāda-*kī jaya!*

Your thankful servant,

Śacīnandana Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

O my eternal master, my spiritual father, my best friend! I offer my heartfelt obeisance and loving service to you.

This past year, inspired by my dear friend and godbrother Vaiśeṣika Prabhu, I made a vow to read out loud forty-one pages of your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* every day. Remembering how you stressed the reading of your books as an essential part of our *sādhana*, for your pleasure I started from the preface on 6 September 2014; and today, 14 April 2015, I reached the twentieth chapter of the Canto Nine. Indeed, one who reads forty-one pages every day will finish the entire *Bhāgavatam* in just one year.

As easy, simple, and obvious as this practice seems, the result of doing it has surprised me. It has offered me a striking reminder of how profound your association is and how readily available you are through your books.

In June 1977, you spoke these stirring words:

Whatever I have wanted to say, I have said in my books.
If I live, I will say something more. If you want to know
me, read my books.

I was fortunate to be in your room in Vṛndāvana and to hear you speak the following words, just a few days before you departed from this world:

Just go on discussing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* among yourselves
and everything will remain clear.

This past Kārtika, we who yearly gather in Govardhana to celebrate that holiest of months—by reading your books out loud for five hours a day—came across the same thought enshrined in one of the final purports you dictated during those last days:

Thus the more we read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the more
its knowledge becomes clear. Each and every verse is
transcendental.

Is it any wonder then that by reading forty-one pages of the *Bhāgavatam* every day I am going through a kind of revival in my consciousness? Is it any wonder that I am realizing more and more, even after forty-three years of practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, how essential associating with you directly—by systematically reading your books, especially *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*—is to our progressive spiritual lives, individually and collectively?

It had been more than sixteen years since I'd systematically read the whole *Bhāgavatam* with your purports. Of course, I've always read your books, especially the *Gītā*, and memorized a few of the verses therein. And my service during those sixteen years of editing Gopīparāṇadhana Prabhu's translations and commentaries, and Śivarāma Swami's writings, kept me in constant contact with your books as I cross-referenced and checked the writing for fidelity to your teachings, and so on. As a result of all that, I never felt any spiritual lack.

But when I again began systematically reading the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in the mood of associating with you out of gratitude, something wonderful happened. It felt as if clouds were parting and rays of sunshine were entering my heart. I now feel renewed like a wide-eyed new devotee. In this way, you have made it clear to me that you are pleased.

Now I have made my full commitment to use whatever energy I have left in my old age to help devotees I meet revive their taste for reading your books and to teach new people coming into your society to become fixed in the basics of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, especially in reading your books out loud.

In the places I visit regularly, I have noticed a disconcerting trend: many devotees are losing their taste for reading your books and are relaxing the basics they first learned when they joined your movement.

Some older and mature devotees are concentrating on the higher topics included in your books, and understandably so after forty years of seriously practicing *bhakti-yoga*. But partly as a result, I've also noticed that new devotees tend to be brought into higher topics prematurely, before they are fixed in the basics. Anyone who regularly hears your recorded material and reads your books knows without doubt the tremendous sacrifice you made for us all

by sticking to the basics in your daily teachings the entire time you were physically with us.

Furthermore, time causes everyone to forget in this material world. No matter who we are, then, if we, as your disciples and followers, don't continue to read your books sufficiently and properly, the results, both individually and collectively, will be catastrophic to your movement in the long run.

Thus, you yourself write:

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.

This purport, coming as it does at the end of the *Madhya-līlā* of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, speaks volumes about the need for all devotees, neophyte or advanced, to continue to hear the basics of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, for those basics are sprinkled throughout the foundational scriptures you translated, from beginning to end. We must read them all continuously for the maintenance of our own consciousness and for the empowerment to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness and to properly represent you.

You also state in your preface to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

The only qualification one needs to study this great book of transcendental knowledge is to proceed step by step cautiously and not jump forward haphazardly as with an ordinary book. It should be gone through chapter by chapter, one after another. The reading matter is so arranged with its original Sanskrit text, its English transliteration, synonyms, translation and purports so that one is sure to become a God-realized soul at the end of finishing the first nine cantos.

Now, after forty-three years of practice, I've once again gone

from the beginning of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* deep into Canto Nine. And what have I found in this canto, just before the *Bhāgavatam* enters Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes? The story of the he-goat and she-goat told by Mahārāja Yayāti to his wife Devayānī! That we are not this body, that sex life is the basic principle of material existence, that happiness here in this material world is nothing but a horse egg, that the energies of the Lord are all-powerful and insurmountable by the limited strength of our intelligence and senses. All such sobering reality checks are drilled into our consciousness in a singular way in the *Bhāgavatam* by all the great personalities present in its pages and by the sparkling elucidations of your masterful purports.

You gave yourself to the world, Śrīla Prabhupāda, through your Bhaktivedanta purports. Your purports teach us how to think for ourselves spiritually so that we can choose to become completely dependent on the will of the Supreme Lord. The spiritual training you give there is unique in the history of the world.

Is it any wonder then that you emphasized so strongly the importance of hearing and distributing your books? This was your transcendental plot: to uplift human society, to re-spiritualize it by the mass distribution of your books.

You therefore define your books in terms of *kīrtana*:

These books I have recorded and chanted and they are transcribed. It is spoken *kīrtana*. So book distribution is also chanting. These are not ordinary books. It is recorded chanting. Anyone who reads, he is hearing.

I want to live in the *Bhāgavatam*, to make the *Bhāgavatam* my home, and to bring others into this transcendental abode. As Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī prays:

*asādhu-sādhutā-dāyinn ati-nīccatā-kara
hā na muñca kadācīn mām preṃṇā hṛt-kaṅṭhayoḥ sphura*

O [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*] bestower of saintliness to the unsaintly, O exalter of the most fallen, please never leave me. Always appear in my heart and my voice with pure love.

This desire of mine will be possible to attain only by your

causeless mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda. So on this auspicious day of your appearance, I fall at your lotus feet and beg you to be kind to this fallen soul so that he can assist you in your mission with his full energy.

Hare Krishna.

Your aspiring servant,

Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Goswami

Partha Sarathi Dās Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories unto you.

Due to my failing and fragile health I have spent the last five months living in Vrndāvana trying to go deeper into the ocean of *bhakti-rasa*.

During my peaceful and contemplative visit I had the opportunity to consider more deeply your contribution to our Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*.

Your main two contributions are your books and your mission. Your mission, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness is your personal contribution to the *sampradāya*. ISKCON is your body and you are the heart of ISKCON. You have established and continue to maintain a bona fide *sampradāya* in the Western countries. And all of this in only 12 years which clearly puts you in the “*śakti-āveśa*” category.

ISKCON is your manifestation to serve Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. It is your joy, it is your success and it is your life.

“So Lord Caitanya’s *sampradāya* (laughs) that is my joy, that we now have a *sampradāya*, a party of Lord Caitanya in the Western countries, that is my success, That’s all. I have no value, I am insignificant but somehow or other you co-operated and you are still co-operating as Lord Caitanya’s *sampradāya*. That is my life. Thank you very much.” (Lecture, San Francisco 7-04-1970)

As it is your joy, success and life so also it is the joy, success and life of your disciples.

As your disciples and followers our perfection will be achieved when we become “*tad-ātmā*” or “*āveśa*” with your desires. “*Tad-ātmā bhāva*” means the mood of becoming one with that object. When an iron rod is placed in a fire, it becomes red hot and although maintaining a separate identity, becomes one with the fire and performs the action of the fire.

If you feel joy, success and life from your ISKCON mission your sincere followers will also feel those same sentiments.

All we need to sustain the mission and expand is purity. As your followers, we need to become spiritually advanced. Purity is the force.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākur says:

“If there is no power in the power house, even thousands of light bulbs will not give illumination. Similarly without sincerity and purity there is no use of a big institution and thousands of followers” (*Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava*, Volume One)

Cooperation amongst the society’s members, enthusiasm to preach, maturity and deeper realisations of *bhakti* will all automatically manifest themselves as we traverse the stages of *anartha nivr̥tti*, *niṣṭhā*, *ruci* and finally come to *asakti* and then the exalted stage of *bhāva-bhakti*.

This stage of *bhāva* or as you termed it “devotional service in ecstasy” and then the next stage, *prema* is your ultimate legacy. You have left a legacy of love not law.

Through your books and your personal mission, the legacy is available to anyone. And will continue to be available for many thousands of years.

This is your gift, Lord Caitanya’s *sampradāya* in the Western countries and I humbly thank you that I can play some small part in this.

Personally I am not fit or qualified to be called your disciple but by your kindness you have allowed me to associate with my godbrothers and godsisters. In your absence those representatives of yours have become my life and soul.

Bowing down to your lotus feet and the lotus feet of your disciples and grand disciples, I remain your eternal servant,

Partha Sarathi Dās Goswami

Candramauli Swami

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

“I was born in the darkest ignorance, and my spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him.”

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

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-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.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

By your appearance in our life you have revealed our great fortune—pure devotional service unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead—along with clearly showing us the horrors of living a materialistic life, a life without service to Kṛṣṇa. Without you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, this life would have taken me on the roller coaster of sensual pursuits, only to die a pitiable death after a wasted life, then again to have to re-enter the womb of

material existence to perpetually take birth and suffer, life after life.

How can the great debt we owe Your Divine Grace be repaid? Factually, it is not possible by any means, in this life or in an accumulation of many lives. We are eternally indebted. As you have stated in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.22.47:

The word *vinoda-pātram* can be divided into two words, *vinā* and *uda-pātram*, or can be understood as one word, *vinoda-pātram*, which means “joker.” A joker’s activities simply arouse laughter, and a person who tries to repay the spiritual master or teacher of the transcendental message of Kṛṣṇa becomes a laughingstock just like a joker because it is not possible to repay such a debt. The best friend and benefactor of all people is one who awakens humanity to its original Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Although it is impossible to repay our debt to you, still, as your devoted servants we want to try by pleasing you by our practice of devotional service and our efforts to give others what you have given us.

So the situation is so difficult that . . . It is very difficult to push on this movement, but still we have to do it. [Lecture on *Bhagavad-gītā* 7.1, San Francisco, 17 March 1968]

You designed a plan to make the entire world Kṛṣṇa conscious, a plan that includes many programs and projects for spreading Lord Caitanya’s mercy. Book distribution, *harināma saṅkīrtana*, and *prasādam* distribution are powerful programs that have brought Lord Caitanya’s mercy to every continent on the globe.

As I read your books and hear your lectures and your conversations with your disciples, I understand how much you wanted us to establish self-sufficient rural communities as places for devotees to live and as a means to bring others to Kṛṣṇa and save them from the modern degraded, soul-killing, materialistic civilization.

In 1977, the year you departed from our personal presence, you greatly emphasized the part of your mission you regarded as “unfinished”:

[Śrīla Prabhupāda said:] “I have only done fifty percent of what I want to do. The farms have to be done. If they are established, *varṇāśrama* will be established.” [TKG’s Diary: 10 August 1977]

Śrīla Prabhupāda was most enlivened to hear the report of New Govardhana Farm. His Divine Grace in the last month or so has been stressing the importance of these farm projects, and said, “This is the next aspect of Kṛṣṇa consciousness which I wish to push forward. If I am able to travel again, then I shall visit the farms and make them perfect. On these farms we can demonstrate the full *varṇāśrama* system. If these farms become successful then the whole world will be enveloped by Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

“From your letter I can understand how nice this farm is. I am very happy to see fresh vegetables, fresh fruits, grains, the devotees taking sumptuous *prasādam* and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. This is the actual meaning of human life. It is a very good farm, from your letter I can understand. Whatever you build, get the building materials locally. If you can manufacture tiles locally, then your house problem is solved. Build up bamboo frame, and on it place tiles. In any event get everything locally. I wish to make a farm tour and then I shall surely visit your farm.”

I suggested to Śrīla Prabhupāda that he was the Farm *Ācārya*, but Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “Kṛṣṇa is the Farm *Ācārya*. Baladeva is holding a plow, and Kṛṣṇa is holding the calf. Kṛṣṇa advised Nanda Mahārāja not to perform Indra *pūjā* but to worship the land, Govardhana, because it was supplying all foodstuffs for the residents of Vṛndāvana and the cows as well.” So Śrīla Prabhupāda wants you to develop this farm very nicely, as it will be the future program to present to the world as the ideal of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In the cities, we are interested for preaching, but we cannot present the ideal *varṇāśrama* system; this is only possible at the farms, so they are very important. [Letter from Tamāl Krishna Goswami to Hari

Śauri Dāsa, 10 August 1977]

Vaiṣṇava is not so easy. The *varṇāśrama-dharma* should be established to become a Vaiṣṇava. It is not so easy to become Vaiṣṇava. . . . Therefore this should be made. Vaiṣṇava, to become Vaiṣṇava, is not so easy. If Vaiṣṇava, to become Vaiṣṇava is so easy, why so many fall down, fall down? It is not easy. [Śrīla Prabhupāda in a room conversation, 14 February 1977, Māyāpur]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on a morning walk in Māyāpur in April 1975 you talked about an upcoming war between Pakistan and India:

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Pakistan will start the war with India. And then everything will be . . .

Devotees: Oh! Whew!

Devotee: Pakistan will start a war . . . [devotees talking among themselves].

Just this month (April) I was reading how Pakistan has now become a great nuclear power and many of the world powers have turned their attention to the threat that Pakistan poses for India.

These signs of global turmoil indicate even more the urgency of establishing farm communities worldwide.

Last December I was able to spend a week at the Govardhan Ecovillage farm project in Wada, just north of Mumbai. The devotees of the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha Mandira, under the careful and expert guidance of His Holiness Rādhānātha Mahārāja, have done wonders in developing a rural farm project that serves many humanitarian and spiritual purposes, along with serving as a viable preaching project that is attracting many Westerners from around the world to visit it in its capacity as a retreat center for yoga and natural living.

Just a few of the programs and features at the Ecovillage are:

- Animal care (cow protection)
- Alternate energy
- Water conservation
- Soil bio-technology
- Organic farming
- Arts and crafts
- Green buildings
- A Vedic culture and education center that regularly conducts systematic study of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*
- An orphanage and school for young children, available to the neighboring villagers
- A branch of the Bhaktivedanta Hospital that administers medical care to both devotees and local villagers
- A yoga retreat center: Each year hundreds of yoga students from the US and other Western countries spend up to a month. Many are being attracted to the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- Just last year the temple of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vṛndāvana-Bihārī—full-sized marble Deities—was opened on the farm. Regulated daily worship is now taking place.
- Website: ecovillage.org.in

Govardhan Ecovillage can act as an ideal model to be adopted worldwide in providing the fourth and final phase of your mission: establishing Kṛṣṇa conscious rural communities. Entirely based on the principles of self-sufficiency, these farms will be places of education for social and spiritual development, along with a viable way to attract nondevotees to the natural, healthy lifestyle of simple living and Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your vision of self-sufficiency is gradually taking shape, yet as a worldwide project there is much to be done. Please empower us to expand it more and more.

Humbly,

Candramauli Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you, the savior of the whole world.

We have just completed a *kīrtana-mela* in Mauritius. A number of the leading *kīrtana* singers in ISKCON presented hours of amazing chanting of the holy names every day, and it had an overwhelming impact on the local devotees, practically more than anything else that has happened here before. It seems that a profound change has come over the whole *yātrā*, and no one has anything else to talk about but the chanting of the holy names. This made me think deeply about you and your mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and how you practiced and preached the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.

You have given us everything, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and you have given us everything right. A few devotees outside your movement have given Kṛṣṇa consciousness in recent years, but none of them have given it the way you have. You have made Kṛṣṇa consciousness come to life, beyond just philosophy and beyond nice stories and pastimes of the Lord. You have given Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a way that makes it practical and real and gives anyone, even very unqualified people, the opportunity to make progress in devotional service and ultimately come to the perfectional stage of pure love of God. Thank you very much for that, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Others may have a flair for different practices—for example, to speak of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *līlā* very attractively—and may even make their hearers feel they are entering special areas of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Sometimes they feel that in this way they are achieving levels of Kṛṣṇa consciousness that are not available within your ISKCON or through your teachings. But I think these presentations lack real Kṛṣṇa conscious substance. In Bhuvanesvara, on January 24th, 1977, you told some disciples:

Prabhupāda: A little progress, they think they have become a great scholar—“Now we are for *bhajana*. Here there is no chance of *bhajana*. Let us go and [do] *bhajana*.”

Ei chure pākā. Ei chure pākā, ei chure means unripe jackfruit. Unripe jackfruit has become yellow by a stunted growth. You know stunted growth?

Satsvarūpa: Something stops growing.

Prabhupāda: Yes. Growth is not there, like a dwarf, and he has become fifty years old.

Normally a jackfruit is very big and rich, but the stunted jackfruit you are talking about remains very small. Somehow its natural development becomes checked and, although apparently ripe, it is actually immature.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, if we stick to your lotus feet by following your instructions and serving within your ISKCON, we can avoid this dangerous pitfall. It is a real challenge for someone from a materialistic Kali-yuga background to become Kṛṣṇa conscious, and we must not imagine that there are some clever shortcuts. The essence of the process is service to your lotus feet, and anything else is at best a detail.

On this sacred occasion I pray to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that you will please allow me to continue in your service. Please tolerate my shortcomings and help me become the type of disciple you want me to become. Please help me become absorbed in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa as we were during the *kīrtana-mela*, and please allow me to give that chanting to others.

Your humble servant,

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

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

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

In Our Hand

I keep in my *kūrtā* pocket
A worry that you'll be forgotten,
That results of hard work done
Will be tossed like air on soft cotton.

I have a thought that
The cutting edge you brought
Will be twisted
In all that you've taught.

I have a concern that
As the clock keeps ticking
And time passes quickly,
Kali increases his devious tricking.

I have a humble opinion
That danger lurks ahead
Unless we stick to our guns,
Anchor *sādhana*, and *kīrtan* be spread.

In my other pocket—a feeling
That your mercy will linger,
Success will be proceeding
Where'er you point the finger.

I can say for certain
That fifty years have passed;
Recognition will come,
Your legacy bound to last.

I have these mixed feelings
Regarding failure or success.
Only time will tell—
Make, break, or be a mess!

Yours was the first step,
Ours is the second,
The third, and the fourth—
The deck is in our hand.

Bhaktimārga Swami

Śivarāma Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

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

Dear followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to His Divine Grace. This year my Vyāsa-pūjā offering is addressed to you all. It is about a memorable journey that I recently finished.

That journey simply began as some newly released recordings to listen to, but ended up being a rite of passage with Śrīla Prabhupāda on his final lesson. Along the way we would travel to places like Kumbha-melā, Bhubhaneswar, and Hrishikesh, returning to reside forever in Vṛndāvana.

I am referring to the complete set of recordings of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s conversations for 1977. Unlike earlier recorded

lectures, morning walks, or conversations in different places, under different conditions, and on different topics, here are recordings that are thematic and structured, one after the other.

The topics discussed were many: book publication in India, responding to deprogrammers, the completion of the Bombay temple, and more. But underlying them all was the theme of Śrīla Prabhupāda's continuously waning health. In time, all other issues became secondary to this main theme, one that would consume Śrīla Prabhupāda's life and put to the test those devotees who cared for and served him.

The unfolding of that theme was the vehicle that took me on a journey in which I lived with Śrīla Prabhupāda and his caregivers. A journey whose conclusion left me at a dead end and forced me to go back and start again at January 1977. There was nowhere else to go.

I could write more. A lot more. Why not a book? But every one of us has their own journey with Śrīla Prabhupāda. These recordings will enhance that journey and reveal many wonders. For me the most notable ones were Śrīla Prabhupāda's continuing adherence to the same spiritual principles that he had always taught us, and the extraordinary love shared between him and his disciples.

On this Vyāsa-pūjā day I invite all followers of His Divine Grace to worship the memory of his appearance, his life, and his passing by listening to these recordings. I believe that it will be a transcendental rite of passage for all who do. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your servant,

Śivarāma Swami

Varsānā Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you.

The sun is now setting. Ominous clouds roll in and a threatening wind begins to blow, reflecting our internal state of feeling your separation. Whenever the Lord or His empowered

representative departs from mortal vision, crisis is inevitable and darkness ensues. Yet both historically and practically, we see that dark shadows can never overcome light, except for relatively brief episodes of time.

When uncertainty and obscurity prevail, I turn inward to meditate on you while visiting the various places in New Vrindavan graced by your lotus feet. Treading the path leading from the elevated site in Bahulavan where you delivered your Bhāgavata Dharma discourse decades ago, I find no trace of the footprints left by the hundreds of devotees who came to hear, honor, and worship you there. Instead, the lane is marked only by the fresh hoofprints of our newest ox calves, Hari and Priya.

Stepping over those imprints, while continuing down from the sacred hilltop of Bahulavan, brings verses from the *Bhāgavatam*'s Tenth Canto to life, echoing the words you delivered at this very spot during Janmāṣṭamī 1972. Śrī Śrī Rādhā–Vrindavan-chandra had just arrived from the Old Vrindavan farm, and you had come to install Them in the new temple lovingly built by Their devotees. As the eventful day continued into the evening festivities for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's birth at midnight, devotees swarmed around your lotus feet, almost like the sages gathered to hear the same pastimes of Kṛṣṇa spoken by Śukadeva Gosvāmī to Mahārāja Parīkṣit.

Throughout the narration of the advent of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, a theme kept recurring:

“O lotus-eyed Lord, by concentrating one's meditation on Your lotus feet, which are the reservoir of all existence, and by accepting those lotus feet as the boat by which to cross the ocean of nescience, one follows in the footsteps of *mahājānas* [great saints, sages, and devotees]. By this simple process, one can cross the ocean of nescience as easily as one steps over the hoof-print of a calf.” [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.2.30]

As neophyte devotees, we had sorely experienced being tossed about by the tropical winds of our conditioning while drowning in the salty-teared ocean of our suffering. Yet in one memorable evening, you demonstrated how to calm the storms which inevitably arise in our minds. Both your person and words

kindled the living spirit of *vraja-rasa* in our consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your loving mercy bridged the infinite gap between our material consciousness and the spiritual world. “Crossing the ocean” was no longer a metaphor. As shipwrecked and stranded castaways, we saw that our hope of being rescued someday was no mirage. Your magnanimous presence delivered us as we relished the rich *līlā* contained in the advent of Kṛṣṇa. You gifted to us the experience of this truth, knowing its deeper import would take us a lifetime to realize. In those moments with you, our spiritual journey suddenly became an enticing and attractive adventure.

As the more philosophical second chapter of *Kṛṣṇa* book began, many devotees showed signs of drowsiness. You, on the other hand, with your profound taste for hearing and chanting, became increasingly radiant, alert, and absorbed. Inspired by your example and by the readings, we discovered our life stories placed within a larger picture, where Kṛṣṇa’s love embraces all souls from the ancient past to the unending future. That tiny temple room *became* the boat which transported all who were present over the ocean of nescience to the spiritual world.

For those who have accepted the boat of the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of the cosmic manifestation and is famous as Murāri, the enemy of the Mura demon, the ocean of the material world is like the water contained in a calf’s hoof-print. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.14.58]

As the evening progressed and midnight approached, we were immersed in your eager anticipation of the birth of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The final *kīrtana* and *ārati* brought the day’s activities to a crescendo. Then our thoughts turned toward the most blessed event of the next day—your divine appearance.

When the sun rose and dissipated the morning fog, a pastoral scene unfolded. Cows and calves, adorned with beautiful designs made with the varying hues of New Vrindavan clay, decorated the landscape. The stage was set for the most blessed event: Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā. Here, where I stand now, at the bottom of Govindaji Hill, you passed the ox shed where I was tending Bhūmi and Dharma—two of our very first oxen. You smiled approvingly as you boarded

Hayagrīva's Volkswagen to ascend to the hilltop, where Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara awaited to preside over the festivities.

Within that rustic hilltop pavilion where we congregated to worship your lotus feet, you captured our hearts and led them into deeper perspectives on Vraja-dhāma. As we listened, the sacramental nature of your words became evident. More than instructing, informing, or even inspiring, your words truly *became* the experience of what they told, *creating* the reality of what you were expressing. In this one transformative event, all we had seen and heard before about Guru and Kṛṣṇa now took on new meaning, depth, and vitality. We could see that although you are eternally situated in the spiritual realm, you were simultaneously here with us to train us for entrance into the supreme abode and to embody the culture of the loving relationships prevalent there.

By your divine grace, Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet became accessible and we were transferred to Vṛndāvana. We caught a glimpse of the destination awaiting disciples who attain maturity in true worship of Śrī Guru, those who honor his life and his instructions by their actions. The memory is immortalized and etched upon our hearts. It sustains us.

While the relentlessly destructive waves of Kali-yuga sweep away everything in their path, there is an alternative found in the gentle eddy of your *vāṇī*, wherein floats a majestic ark designed to arrive in due course of time at our spiritual homeland.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have enticingly urged us on board. Though storms may rage and fierce winds howl, we cling to your lotus feet to secure us on your boat, the sole means of crossing over. You are the captain bearing the torch that dispels the darkness, as well as the tender father anointing our eyes with the balm of love.

The crest jewel of the treasure chest of your enduring presence lives on in your *samādhi*, the Palace of Gold, constructed by your young inspired disciples working in a spirit of shared sacrifice, eagerly anticipating your living there. Our shock, disappointment, and shattered hopes when you departed this world passed with the dawning realization that you had indeed already taken up eternal residence there. Thus among the prominent gems you bequeathed us, we find the most priceless of these within the Palace's walls: service in separation.

Although the understanding of *vapu* and *vāṇī* remained

theoretical while you were here physically, your disappearance has forced us to mature in a bittersweet way as you show us the realities of a perennial spiritual relationship. In the Lord's pastimes, separation is considered the highest ecstasy, awarding the deepest communion. Similarly, in that internal realm, our relationship with you grows closer because nothing external can interfere any longer—our union is enhanced so long as we cling to your lotus feet by following your instructions.

Though my body lives on and I strive to go forward, my thoughts still reflect on bygone days. I turn again to *Kṛṣṇa* book, as you invited us to do on that eventful evening in 1972. The message, the hope, the despair, and the delight in the pastimes portrayed therein resonate more deeply and vibrate more sweetly with each passing year. Truly the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's words, enriched with deep remembrance of you, brings life to our soul. Descriptions of His pastimes, along with tellings of yours, carry us while we pass through this mortal world.

Now it is certainly the season for turning inward and letting go of the material attachments which anchor our lives to the shore of material existence. As we enter deeper into association with you through this memory, we find you continuing to lead us in *kīrtana*. The cries welling up from our troubled hearts become songs of gratitude, and our stumbling feet find the first steps of a dance.

In the *kīrtana* of internal life, you continue to bring new vitality to every aspect of our existence and reveal deeper wonders of reality emerging from behind the veil of ordinary existence. There forgiveness, kindness, devotion, and God are more than mere words or theological concepts. They become real and touch us at the very core of our being.

Your glories are as unfathomable as the deep ocean, yet you have mercifully come to assist us. The boat by which you have already crossed over still lingers on this side because it is part of the all-pervading spiritual realm, where time and physical limitations are conspicuous by their absence. The safe haven on the distant shore where you await our return draws closer at hand.

Now, forty-three years later, there is little evidence of the temple, the pavilion, or the community which hosted the 1972 festivities I am recounting. Still, your spiritual presence is deeply felt, and the impressions of our young oxen calves imbedded in the

New Vrindavan mud proclaim that here Dharma's four legs stand firm, holding Kali-yuga at bay. And you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, are the touchstone who reduces the vast dark and stormy ocean into the insignificant quantity of water contained in the auspicious and meaningful hoofprints of a calf.

Your servant in separation,

Varṣāṇā Swami

Devāmrita Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

The universal truth for embodied souls in this world is that, abandoning our material forms, we will all leave the present lifetime behind.

What will be my lamentation at the final moments? Hospice caregivers say that when the dying finally accept their imminent departure, usually one or more of five prime lamentations engulf them:

- Why did work consume so much of my life?
- Why did I, through the various phases of life, let key friendships slip away?
- Why didn't I allow myself to be more happy?
- Why didn't I express my real feelings more?
- Why didn't I live more true to myself rather than to others' expectations?

Owing only to your divine intervention, none of this typical departure-bed grief will assail us. Rescuing your followers from Kali's kingdom of nescience, you have bestowed upon us the divine opportunity to end our brief stay in the body with no material regrets.

Yet Vaiṣṇavas can feel purely spiritual lamentations as they exit. Mādhavendra Purī's disappearance from the ordinary vision

of this world is the paragon of nonmaterial remorse and self-reproach. His apparent expression of failure demonstrated the highest attainment of eternal, spiritual existence. *Mathurā nā pāinu:* “I could not attain the shelter of Mathurā!”

While worshipping that zenith of *prema* from a respectful distance, I seek to present to you my own major spiritual regret—accompanying me now, even before death knocks.

Why did I wait so long to come to your service?

Yes, I began at age twenty-two. But crucial years passed before I developed enough *bhakti* life-experience to wholesomely benefit others.

Why not the greater fortune of arriving at your feet earlier—say, at eighteen, intact and ready for full devotional action? Age twelve would have been even better—no roller-coaster bewilderment typical of both teenage and young adult life outside of *bhakti*'s regimen.

The ultimate benediction, in this world, though, would have been to take birth as your pure servant and from as early an age as possible exhibit full competence for executing your purposes, thus remaining fixed eternally as your menial assistant.

Whether in life or death, I beg for the strength to hold high above my head the closing words of your Vyasa-puja offering to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura:

[L]et me have this power of recollection: that I am nothing but a tiny servant of the Almighty Absolute Godhead, realized through the unflinching mercy of my divine master.

Your aspiring servant,

Devāmrita Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I would like to express my ever-increasing gratitude to you for reminding me, again and again, of your unparalleled method for distributing pure devotional service.

I had no qualification to closely observe the way you brought conditioned souls to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet during the years you were physically with us. I heard you lecture, watched you being interviewed by mindless reporters, walked behind you, closely observing how your lotus feet barely touched the ground, witnessed your pure devotion, received your momentary glance, and savored every precious moment my eyes and ears were in contact with your divine form and compassionate voice. But it was not Kṛṣṇa's will for me to be in close proximity to you for very long.

Lord Caitanya Himself declared, '*sādhu-saṅga*', '*sādhu-saṅga*'—*sarva-sāstre kaya/ lava-mātra sādhu-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." Unfortunately, I also did not have the *adhikāra* to achieve the perfection your *darśana* can bestow within "even a moment."

Still, by your divine grace, both by hearing about you and by watching the effect your method of preaching continues to have upon others, I am able to catch an occasional glimpse of your mystical potencies for attracting conditioned souls to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

Lately, I have been reading a lot about your preaching pastimes, revealed by those who witnessed them more closely than I did. Absorbing myself in thoughts of ISKCON's early days, I became captivated by the way you introduced your first Western followers to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. The first impression of those who were attracted to you—and of those who were subsequently attracted by those who accepted you as their supreme guide—was that you were genuine. A common idiom used for this is that you were "for real" or that you "walked your talk." In other words, you were

a living example of everything you spoke about to everyone you met. Even before being able to grasp the full meaning of the words “guru” or “disciple,” what to speak of “initiation,” they were already assisting you, serving you, and ready to sacrifice for you, mainly because you were so genuine.

These novices in the practices of *bhakti* had no other frame of reference for accepting you as their spiritual master. There was no one nearby to endorse you. They had not been exposed to the authorized scriptural passages from which they could draw a conclusion about your authenticity. It seemed that they were in no way prepared for, or even expecting, what was about to happen to them. You simply appeared before them on your own merit, and because Kṛṣṇa and the whole disciplic succession was behind you (though unseen by them), your instructions were heard, they surrendered to you, and you gave them Kṛṣṇa and nothing but service to Kṛṣṇa.

Without your sterling example before my eyes, I’ve been left to wonder how “hippies,” or those who were known for having rejected all forms of authority, could have come to the point of surrendering themselves to you, the pure representative of the highest authority. But teaching by example was your method for preaching, and this method was reinforced again and again, not only by your actions but in your own words:

I am very glad to note that you are seeing that the devotees are maintaining the devotional practices. This is the secret to success. Therefore I am stressing it. And, if you also stress it and show yourself as an ideal Vaisnava, then you are my representative in fullness. We are not after titles and designations. Lord Caitanya made it a principle that we must teach by personal example. This is what I have tried to do. So if all of you my disciples do this, then the future of our movement will be glorious. [Letter to Hridayānanda dāsa Goswami, 31 October 1974]

The qualities of a brahman as mentioned in BG chapter 18: sama dama tapasocam. You must teach these qualities. These qualities will naturally come out, if you just give the process purely. The information is there in my books so if

you strictly adhere to them then your program of teaching will be successful. First of all you must teach by your personal example. This is the principle of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu (*āpaṇi ācari' bhakti pracāram*). So you yourself must chant 16 rounds and follow the regulative principles and automatically they will do as you are doing. Then they will become strong Vaisnavas. [Letter to Hiranyagarbha, 19 August 1974]

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you again and again for constantly reminding me that without your example I would have no strength at all for traversing the path you have laid out before me. How can I ever forget what I must do to please you when so many of your “representatives in fullness” are here to remind me of you?

Unfortunately, I am still very weak. I need to be reminded again and again that without preaching in this way my service to you will never be a fit offering to you. It is for this reason that I must also thank you, again and again, for giving me the association of godbrothers who always remind me of you by showing me the secret to their success in being able to please you. It is they who have captured the essence of everything you came to give us, and it is through them that I am still witnessing the effects of your preaching methods today, almost fifty years since you first placed your lotus feet on Western soil.

On this most auspicious day of your divine appearance in this world, I prostrate myself to your lotus feet again and again and beg you to please teach me the ways of pure devotional service. Please give me the strength to accept all you have to offer me, and please always keep me in the association of those who know nothing but service to your divine lotus feet.

Your eternal servant,

Nirañjana Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīne*

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

Lord Caitanya said:

*ebe nāma-saṅkīrtana tīkṣṇa khadga laiṅyā
antara asura jīvera phelibe kāṭiyā*

*yadi pāpi chāḍi dharmā dūre deṣe yāya
mora senāpati-bhakta yāibe tathāya*

“Taking the sharp sword of the congregational chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, I will root out and destroy the demoniac mentality in the hearts of all conditioned souls. If some sinful people escape, going to far-off countries, then my *senāpati-bhakta* [general of the devotees] will come at that time to give them Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” (*Caitanya-maṅgala, Sūtra-khaṇḍa* 564–65)

The *senāpati-bhakta* whom Lord Caitanya refers to is, of course, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We offer our humble obeisances unto your divine lotus feet.

Thy heart was ever soft and kind,
To every creature’s good inclined.
As the moon for gentle grace is known,
As the sun has splendor all his own,

As the restless wind is free and fast,
As the earth in patience is unsurpassed,
So you have glory, with her noble fruit,
As thine eternal attribute.

Thy gentle graces won our heart.
We feel too weak to live apart,
O Prabhupāda, whom we all revere,
Our Guru, whom we hold so dear.

O greatest saint of noblest heart,
Auspicious the day you did depart
To the brilliant spiritual world above,
Rewarded for thy faithful love.

You were like sweetest herbs of grace,
Giving life to this lonely place.
You turned your footsteps to the West,
Eager to fulfill Caitanya's quest.

Armed with the highest spiritual brand,
You pressed onward to that far-off land
Through oceans where dangers lay,
On the boat you made your way,

Landing where skyscrapers stood,
Wondering how the message should
Be spread to every suffering man,
You lit the spark and waved the fan.

After a while great creepers grew
With a divine and devotional hue.
All around many people rejoiced;
"Hare Kṛṣṇa!" they happily voiced.

As Yudhiṣṭhira, good and great,
Was glorious in his high estate,
Honored by all, to all endeared,
So are you so highly revered.

In all this world there lives not one
So cursed as I beneath the sun.
So strong a net of misery I cast—
Without you I would perish fast.

No god, no bodied life, is free
From conq'ring Fate's supreme decree.
Everyone must reap the meed
Of virtue and of sinful deed.

I'm like a fish that takes the bait;
In briefest time I'll meet my fate.
My breath of life will stop when I die;
Stretched on the ground will my body lie.

The years in lengthened course have fled;
This mortal coil will soon be shed.
But now my troubled heart's consoled
By knowing you my mind controlled.

Thou hast slain my fiends in fight,
And now my mind has new delight.
Misfortunes come and burn like flame,
Then fly as quickly as they came.

O Prabhupāda, you took my hand
And showed the way to the promised land,
Saving me from the dreadful hell
Where I was fated e'er to dwell.

It's quite possible for Your Divine Grace
To liberate all from sin's embrace.
Prabhupāda, you're the world's greatest savior,
We thank you for your loving behavior.

Your insignificant disciple,

Rāmāi Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please allow me to offer you my respectful obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet.

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

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

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

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

It’s interesting to note that many old people continue to leave their bodies by the order of the Lord. If one takes shelter of Tulasīraṇī, surely she’ll help liberate and guide those who take shelter of her lotus feet.

The Generations to Come Should Never Forget . . .

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

First from the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (12.69–72):

athopavāsa-dine śrāddha-niṣedhaḥ

“Performance of the *śrāddha* ceremony is prohibited on fasting days”

pādme puṣkara-khaṇḍe—

“In the *Puṣkara-khaṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa* it is stated:

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

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

tatraiva uttara-khaṇḍe [6.234.13–14]—

“In the *Uttara-khaṇḍa* of the same literature, it is stated:

ekādaśyām ca prāptāyām mātā-pitrōr mṛte 'hani |
dvādaśyām tu pradātavyām nopavāsa-dīne kvacit |
garhitānnaṁ na vāśnanti pitaraś ca divaukaśaḥ | | 70 | |

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

skānde—

“In the *Skanda Purāṇa* it is stated:

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

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

brahma-vaivarte—

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

ye kurvanti mahāpāla śrāddham tv ekādaśī-dine |
trayas te narakam yānti dātā bhoktā paretakaḥ || 72 ||

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

Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā:

ekādaśyām yadā rāma ity ādinā upavāsa-
dine śrāddham niṣiddham | yac ca

skāndādau—

śrāddha-dinam samāsādya upavāso yadā bhavet |
tadā kṛtvā tu vai śrāddham bhukta-śeṣas tu yad bhavet |
tat sarvaṁ dakṣiṇe pāṇau gṛhītvānnaṁ śikhidhvaja |
avajighred anenātha bhavet śrāddham śikhidhvaja |
pitṛṇām tṛptidam tāta vrata-bhaṅgo na vidyate || ity ādi |

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

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

* * *

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

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

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

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

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

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

How could you be so compassionate that you accepted cooked preparations from your disciples when your digestive fire was practically nonexistent? As you said, "A young person can't eat too much, and an old person can't eat too little."

Bhakti Viśrambha Mādhava Swami

Esteemed Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. And readers, ISKCON devotees, please also accept our respects. I request your blessings that this effort to illuminate Śrīla Prabhupāda is well coordinated with the other offerings on this auspicious day of Vyāsa-pūjā.

We try to always look at your lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

We are actually very small, and we tend to look first at your gigantic left small toes. The result is that we realize how small we are and how we cannot offer much service. Maybe as we chant we can be part of a choir of grains of dust under your lotus feet in Vṛndāvana—all of your disciples in ISKCON chanting as particles of dust under your feet.

By our little lazy, self-motivated, chanting of these *mahā-mantras*, and mostly by your mercy, we hope that our chanting can actually reach Harā, Kṛṣṇa, and Rāma and be of use to Them.

We have heard that They have such unlimited desires for each other's happiness that even little particles of dust can contribute with practical value.

That's all we want—to just be situated at your lotus feet in the association of ISKCON devotees chanting the *mantras* you have given us. We feel that whatever else comes from that will be useful.

Thank you.

We hope that, by your mercy, this year will see a great radiation of the message of Lord Caitanya all over the world. Then people will become peaceful and be able to look toward their real self-interest.

Hanumatpresaka Swami

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

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

om śrī surabhyai namaḥ! om śrī gurave namaḥ!

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this, your 119th sacred Appearance Day anniversary.

I just came to Kanpur last night from Vṛndāvana to attend the up-coming ICC and IIAC meetings. While in Vṛndāvana, I took part in a two-day program called the BLISS Festival, centered on the promotion of self-sufficient, sustainable communities—all the things you spoke about in your various *varṇāśrama* talks. The response from students attending the recent ISKCON LEADS program at Vallab Vidyanagar in Gujarat was most overwhelming. All the students expressed their sincere appreciation and wanted to know more about your *varṇāśrama* mission. Due to your strong desire to introduce our Vedic model of simple living and high thinking, gradually more and more devotees are becoming interested and wish to get involved. Thank you for your insights and wonderful vision in regard to such developments.

For your pleasure, and to help fulfill your desire to establish a global *varṇāśrama* culture, our IDVM-India Ministry has launched a twelve-year global campaign called the OM Sri Surabhi Campaign, which will end on the Golden Jubilee celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of your disappearance, November 2, 2027. This celebration will help bring awareness to our own devotees and people in general about the vital importance and urgent need to protect our mother cow, the very pillar of our brahminical culture and backbone of our Vedic culture. One devotee recently shared the following verse from the *Harivamśa* (1.55.31):

*trātavyāḥ prathamam gāvah trātāḥ trāyanti tā dvijān
go-brāhmaṇa paritrāṇe paritrātam jagat bhavet*

“First of all cows should be protected. Cows thus protected will in turn protect the *brāhmaṇas*. When protection of cows and *brāhmaṇas* is thus achieved, the whole world is protected.”

Some of your disciples and granddisciples are very enthusiastic about this undertaking, and I pray that you shower your blessings for a successful campaign.

Your temple here in Kanpur is coming up nicely by the efforts of your devotees, especially by the intense desire of your faithful servant His Grace Devakīnandana Prabhu. Devotees continue to be inspired by your pure example of total surrender to the orders of your spiritual master. In *vapu* or in *vāṇī*, we must all preach the pure message of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu as you have so wonderfully demonstrated.

Now we are seeing fewer and fewer of your original disciples, as all of us are getting older and meeting with the various challenges of old age. You once said, “Don’t think this will not happen to you.” It is amazing to witness the growing level of love, affection, and indebtedness your disciples nurture toward you, something that is bringing hope and inspiration to the younger generation as well as the first generation. Most of your direct disciples are now just reaching the age when you started your worldwide preaching activities, around seventy, and we simply cannot fathom how you did what you did, and in such a short span of time. Thus our awe, admiration, appreciation and indebtedness for all you have done for us are ever-increasing. Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please allow me to be your humble servant in this body for as many days, weeks, months, or years that Kṛṣṇa ordains. Let me continue to try and serve your great mission to the best of my limited ability.

May your dream of having more and more conditioned souls take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness become fulfilled. May we take up more seriously all the orders you have given to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, especially in the matter of getting devotees to live a simpler lifestyle based on the principles of self-sufficiency. Let Mother Surabhi one day become fully protected and glorified, as she deserves. It is only when Mother Surabhi again becomes protected that a new historical chapter will begin—a new

civilization and era will be introduced. Without your continued mercy, this will simply not be possible.

Falling at your lotus feet and begging for your continued blessings, I remain

Your servant,

R.P. Bhakti Rāghava Swami

Dhanurdhara Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you!

I will write my offering this year in the form of sutra and commentary. I got the idea from intensively studying the *Yoga Sūtras* and the *Nārada Bhakti Sūtras* this year. It is a nifty way to memorize and understand a particular school of thought and I think it can also serve as a way to glorify you and to recount your accomplishments. Maybe one day someone can write a *Prabhupāda Sūtra*. For now, I will just make an offering in this way. My sūtra and commentary:

“Burqas and bead bags”

I was leading a kīrtan party of 35 Muslim pilgrims down Tarampur Road on our way to Śrīvāsa Aṅgan and the Yoga Pīṭha. I have never seen people chant with such full-hearted abandon, and only half were confirmed Vaiṣṇavas. I particularly noted one young man with a Saddam Hussein mustache and hands raised, dancing in joy as well as an older lady, an Islamic scholar wearing a hijab and blue bead bag. Her radiant smile in *kīrtan* reflected abject purity and bliss. All, however, were feeling overwhelmed by magnanimity, both from Mahāprabhu and Śrī Māyāpur Dhām, but especially from you. They came by your message and by your devotees. They seemed to clearly understand that the paradise that they had found by visiting Māyāpur, especially in contrast with the hell in which they presently reside, is simply your mercy.

On the last day of our retreat, which also spanned Vrindāvana and for some Govardhan, we met to chant and visit our favorite places within the mind. Soon they would be leaving and would merely have the option to live in a holy place, or even a temple, only in the mind. On their tour they had seen everything from the most beautiful and mystical places in Sri Vrindāvana and Govardhan to the pastoral opulence and sweet magnanimity of Śrīdhām Māyāpur. I was surprised, however, how many had chosen to revisit your Samadhi to “feel your presence and to express their gratitude.” And that older lady, the Islamic scholar, the one with the hijab and bead bag, said something through her beatific smile that I will never forget as it perfectly reflected your glory:

“For me this is Mecca!”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, the opportunity I had to serve these pilgrims and share in their fresh enthusiasm is simply your mercy. I pray to remain eternally obliged.

Humbly in your service,

Dhanurdhara Swami

Bhakti Vikāsa Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīnī*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṅtī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is my great pleasure to repeatedly recite your praṇāma-mantra, and I pray for the opportunity to do so forever, in whatever situation you may care to send me to. Janme janme prabhu sei: my relationship with you is eternal and it defines my very existence. Anything that I might do, say, or think that is not wholly and solely meant for your service is simply māyā. The

most miserable thing possible for me would be if somehow, by my own madness, I were to be disconnected from your lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you revealed to us that you were much influenced by an instruction from Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī's commentary on Bhagavad-gītā 2. 41:

“My spiritual master's instructions are my sādhana and my life, both in the beginning stages of bhakti as well in bhakti's perfectional stage. I desire only to follow his instructions, and I accept nothing else as my life's work, even in dreams. I do not care whether I am happy or distressed, or whether the material world remains or is destroyed; there is no loss for me. I simply must carry out the orders of my spiritual master.”

It is clear that you expected your disciples to imbibe this attitude in relation to yourself. You taught us why we should follow you, and you asked for total faith and commitment in our doing so, promising in return the opportunity to be admitted into pure loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Nothing less than full, unwavering faith and commitment will serve the purpose. Accordingly, I have invested everything in you.

A wise investor hedges his bets, knowing well that even the seemingly best of investments may go wrong. But you brook no ifs, buts, or maybe's. “Impossible is a word in a fool's dictionary,” you told us, and we may add to that perhaps, what if, and just in case. Nothing but complete, unmotivated, uninterrupted devotional service to the Supreme Truth Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, offered via His pure representative – yourself – will suffice.

Now that we are in what some over intelligent persons dub “the post-Prabhupāda era,” many “wise” voices warn us against accepting śāstra literally. Their reasoning goes something like this: “Rivers of mango juice and oceans of treacle just seem too fantastic. If ever such a person as Vyāsa ever existed, he was not able to avail of the gifts of scientific research and critical thinking, and was doing the best he could. His was the contribution of a genius, considering how little was known in previous times. But we have to judge all such works in the light of modern thinking. And clearly those plans for varṇāśrama and gurukulas and for

bringing whole populations into Kṛṣṇa consciousness were merely the pious fancies of an impractical dreamer.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I also could get away with thinking like that and still be counted among your followers by many who consider themselves your followers. But I will instead join you in (figuratively) kicking on the heads of all deluded intellectuals and pseudo realists (paṇḍita-mānī). I deem it a far wiser choice to remain close to you and be rejected by the savants of this world than to join them in offering you backhanded compliments and in jockeying to secure PhD’s in sophisticated foolishness.

We cannot be your followers yet also think that you are wrong. But we do not follow you blindly – which anyway is difficult to do, for your eternal occupation is the opening of eyes shrouded by ignorance.

Once we venture outside the parameters provided by guru, sādhu and śāstra, we either indulge in our own mental speculation or take shelter of the mental speculations of others. Although it has become popular in ISKCON to imitate New Age gurus, I am doubtful that they can help us, and am wary that the so-called help provided by non-devotees might divert us from our real goal. However, I am convinced of the benevolence of guru, sādhu, and śāstra, and accept their directions as an infallible guide, even though they may be unfashionable or unpopular.

Your challenge – to oppose everything that obstructs the truth – will devolve upon every generation of your followers. And in every generation, supposedly learned men will abound to assure the gullible that your mercy can be attained without having to actually believe what you say. I laugh at such people and stick tightly to your shelter. You will deliver not only me, but the whole world, back to Godhead – except those who disqualify themselves by doubting you. Such persons are doomed to disgorge sophisticated lucubrations in 8,400,000 species of life. As a dog they will bark, and as an ass they will bray, but with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we will sport and frolic in the pasturing grounds of Goloka.

No ifs or buts about it. We are with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and you will always be with us – if we actually want you to be. That is my conviction.

My relationship with you, of sevya-sevaka-bhāva (Cc 3.2.95), is my only asset, the only meaning of my existence. Everything in

this world will perish, but that relationship will continue forever. No one can take it away from me. The only way that I could lose it would be if out of madness I were to choose to turn my back on you and become grossly offensive to you and your genuine followers.

After so many years of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, I should be asking you for that sweetest prema which is the ultimate fruit of chanting. Yet it is more realistic for me to pray that you protect me from the threat of fall down, which clearly doesn't just vanish in course of time (as we unfortunately witness regularly in repeated catastrophes involving senior devotees).

I simply pray that at the end of this short and miserable existence I will be able to go before you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and truthfully say that I tried my best to live by, preach, and implement your message – and that I never changed it.

Tumi ta' thākura, tomāra kukura, baliyā jānaha more.

Bhakti Vikāsa Swami

Guru Prasād Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most prostrated obeisances in the *cintāmaṇi* dust of your lotus feet, which are like a desire tree transforming the hearts of countless souls.

I continue my tiny effort to demonstrate how you are the perfect manifestation of Vaiṣṇava characteristics.

The next quality is *mita-bhuk*, eating very little. On your first visit to Mexico, you visited the town of Cuernavaca, leaving from Mexico City early in the morning. You did a public program and smaller programs and interviews, only to return to Mexico City that night, practically without eating. Then you were presented with the option of doing another television program at midnight. The devotees were concerned that you hadn't eaten and wouldn't have an opportunity to sleep. You dispassionately replied that "We can eat and sleep tomorrow. Now we preach." You continually gave the example of the Six Gosvāmīs—*nidrāhāra-vihārakādi-vijitau*,

giving up eating and sleeping. You personified it in your last months, giving us an example of extraordinary detachment.

The next quality is *apramatta*, sanity or freedom from material inebriety. In your small lecture-turned-booklet “Who is Crazy?” you define *apramatta* as “knowing who we are and applying that understanding at every step.” After a long trip your rhythm of preaching, eating, and service was, for the most part, unaffected. You showed us how to live on the platform of the soul. *Apramatta* also means “alert,” and who could be more aware, attentive, observant, and circumspect than you? When Brahmānanda Prabhu was beguiled by a real-estate con man, you detected the scam immediately. In the financial and legal aspects of the Juhu ordeal, you could perceive every attempt to cheat the devotees. You could tell how many weeks a bird family had lived in a tree by their droppings. Insanity was the call of the day among the young when you arrived in New York, but you taught sanity by every word, action, and deed.

Only by your mercy can I hope to imbibe these transcendental attributes to an atomic degree and become sane myself. Via your compassionate instructions I have aspired to become alert to avoid Māyā’s calling. By your kindness I can be optimistic about ceasing to consume the poison of material existence. Thank you again and again, and throughout eternity, for your causeless grace.

Your fallen but aspiring servant,

Guru Prasād Swami

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

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

Last year I started my adventure in trying to reach out via the internet and as a result now I am deeper into the effort this year. I had hoped to be further along, but it seems that the technology of the internet is more “checker and variegated” than I had suspected. Moving into new projects without letting go of the previous ones is tricky.

In general Krishna seems to be giving me way more than I can keep up with, so I am praying today for you to help me cope with new projects and responsibilities. There is much to do and I am taking inspiration from others as I see devotees all over the world take on new challenges and reach out to the world’s people yet to be freed.

As always, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, help me to sincerely hear the holy name; it is my only shelter and inspiration. I heard a class given by Mahatma in Māyāpur this year during the spring SGGS meetings. Mahatma mentioned that upon being asked how to improve chanting, Śrīla Prabhupāda simply replied that one should just try to “hear oneself chanting sincerely.” At first when I heard that, it did not seem very special, but upon trying to put myself in that mood, I have found that it really does help me to chant better.

Your servant,

Candrasedkhara Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my humble obeisances to you millions of times because I am very grateful and indebted to your divine gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

For many years after your departure I felt that I had not done much substantial service for your pleasure. But then in 2002 I was afforded the opportunity to perform something substantial for your pleasure by the grace of your very dear disciple His Holiness Tamāl Krishna Goswami. The opportunity came in the form of a simple request born out of his own pleasure and happy mood, a request he made to me just a few days before he left us to join you.

On the morning of March 7, after he had arrived in the GBC meeting room and greeted all his senior godbrothers, he embraced me and told me that his disciples had written to him good things about me, that during my trip to Fiji I had helped them. He happily requested me to do this every year. His happy mood was really appealing, so I told him that now I would consider Fiji my second home and would visit there yearly.

Then on March 12, the last day of the meetings, there was a surprise agenda item concerning me. Tamāl Krishna Mahārāja was in attendance but I was not, as is the custom. But after the discussion I entered the GBC meeting room, and there was a heaviness in the air. I was informed by the GBC chairman that the proposal was withdrawn by the party who had proposed it, and that was the end of it. I was greatly relieved, because I had not even been consulted and was unnecessarily dragged in. There was a silence for awhile to observe my reaction. But I had none.

Tamāl Krishna Mahārāja got up from his chair and sat with me for two minutes. He told me not to get discouraged and that politics was not for me. But he again very earnestly requested me to visit Fiji and help his disciples.

On the morning of March 15 Mahārāja left his body and joined you. The separation I felt from him was a divine experience, just like the separation I felt when you had left us, even though at that time I was merely an early infant.

I took to heart as a divine order Tamāl Krishna Mahārāja's

request that I preach in Fiji, and especially that I help his disciples. Under that auspices we were able to witness the construction of a beautiful temple in Sigatoka town, which opened in December 2010. But I have further undertaken the project of ornamenting the whole structure for your pleasure, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I have no knowledge of how to do it, but I have pressed on with the project in a spontaneous mood. There has been a setback that has halted the progress temporarily, but regardless, we have sustained the enthusiasm infused by Tamāl Krishna Mahārāja.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, we pledge to finish the work on the Sigatoka temple and offer this spiritually edifying facility for your and Tamāl Krishna Mahārāja's pleasure next year on July 27, the fiftieth anniversary of your establishing ISKCON. I hope I may be able to taste the satisfaction described in the sixth verse of the second chapter of the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*sa vai puṁsām paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhokṣaje
ahaituky apratihata yayātmā suprasīdati*

Please accept this pledge on this auspicious anniversary of your divine appearance.

Your servant,

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

Bhakti Chāru Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this most auspicious day I pray to Śrī Kṛṣṇa that I can properly spread your glories all over the world.

I vividly remember that night in Vṛndāvana—you were not feeling well, and although it was about 1:00 am, you could not sleep. As I massaged your lotus feet and you began to lament, “There is so much to do, but I am so sick and not able to do anything.”

I tried to console you, saying, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, what you

have done is beyond anyone’s imagination. You should not feel that there is anything left to be done. Now you should just relax.”

You softly replied, “What I have done so far is fifty percent; the other fifty percent is to establish *varṇāśrama*. Not that everyone will become a devotee. For those who will not become devotees, we need *varṇāśrama*.”

You continued to explain, but at that time I could not quite comprehend the depth of that statement. But after three decades its meaning started to dawn upon me: You came to fulfill Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s prediction that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement would spread all over the world, to every town and village. You stated that you had accomplished fifty percent of that mission, and from this statement of yours we can infer two things: first, that Lord Caitanya’s prediction *will* definitely be fulfilled (fifty percent having already been fulfilled), and second, that *you* are the prime personality who will fulfill Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s prediction!

Due to your humble disposition you did not say that—you simply considered what it would take to complete that mission and what the condition of the world would be at that time. Human society will be structured through *varṇāśrama*—the system that Kṛṣṇa Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, gave to perfectly arrange human society according to one’s natural propensities. The ideal *brāhmaṇas*, situated on the *brahma-bhūta* platform, will guide society on the pure spiritual path; extremely powerful *kṣatriyas*—*rājarsis* like Pṛthu Mahārāja, Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, and Parīkṣit Mahārāja—will rule over this world, being situated at the feet of the highly qualified *brāhmaṇas*; extremely generous *vaiśyas*, under the protection and patronage of the *kṣatriya* kings, will cater to the needs of society and generate wealth for the kings as their expression of gratitude toward them; and the *śūdras*, like the youngest brothers in a family, will be guided, maintained, and protected by the other three classes.

You mentioned that not all people will become unalloyed devotees, Vaiṣṇavas perfectly situated in the mode of pure goodness (*śuddha-sattva*) and engaged in unflinching devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. Not everyone will be able to achieve that state of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For those who will remain affected by the modes of material nature and aspire for sense gratification, *varṇāśrama* will be absolutely essential so that they will be included in the spiritual

structure. Kṛṣṇa created that system as the foundation on which the perfect human society will stand.

What you achieved in just ten years is probably the greatest miracle this world has ever seen, and will probably be equaled only by the spreading of Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. *Therefore “the other 50 percent” literally means the total fulfillment of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s prediction—the spreading of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world, in every town and village, and that means the establishment of varṇāśrama-dharma all over the world.* This will naturally take a long time, at least a few generations. Therefore to continue that mission you have created the institution of ISKCON so that in your absence your loyal followers, generation after generation, will pursue that goal until the entire world becomes Kṛṣṇa conscious.

To accomplish this mission you structured your ISKCON most perfectly, establishing the collective management authority of the GBC, so that the Society would exist for a long time, and you established yourself as the permanent head of the institution, its founder-*ācārya*.

When you were asked who would become your successor, you replied, “I will not appoint anyone as my successor. I give the legacy to all my followers. Whoever follows sincerely will inherit this legacy.”

Now it is up to us: How seriously are we going to accept the responsibility of fulfilling your glorious mission?

I thank you from the depths of my heart for this wonderful gift, this incredible assignment, by which we have inherited your legacy.

Your humble servant eternally,

Bhakti Chāru Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

This is the most auspicious 119th anniversary of your most merciful divine appearance in this unhappy place known as the material world. By taking the trouble to come to this earth, and eventually sail to its Western side, you provided your direct personal presence and association for eighty-one years, the last twelve of which revealed your worldwide mission of spreading the practice and culture of *harināma* worldwide.

You are a real person, just as Lord Kṛṣṇa is a real person. You personify true greatness. You are the transparent medium to the all-great absolute Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thanks to Your Divine Grace, no one needs to take a daunting leap of faith, uncertain how and where to land. By your all-compassionate and most auspicious appearance, you have placed your lotus feet within our reach. Whether by your *vapu* or your *vāṇī*, each aspiring Vaiṣṇava had and continues to possess a tangible, clear-cut means for serving and connecting with you and for attaining the supreme goal of life.

Now, in the year 2015, there is certainly no shelter apart from surrendered service at your lotus feet, which connects us with those of Lord Nityānanda and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Otherwise, nothing makes sense in this world, which is prepared to go to hell at any moment. Such a dark hour! Yet, by the Lord's mercy, your movement of Kṛṣṇa consciousness buys more time day by day. But—what will *tomorrow* bring? Never mind. Come what may, as long as we follow your primary instruction of increasing our chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, all will be well for the soul, no matter what external turbulence or chaos ensues.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please allow me to also express my gratitude to a certain senior godbrother who recently poured forth a cascade of profuse nectar, recounting various amazing exchanges he had with Your Divine Grace. He convinced me that your stature, your greatness, is far beyond anything I could imagine. Just by my

hearing his narrations, my appreciation of your transcendental glories has been taken to a higher level. I hope to be fortunate enough to have more such opportunities to hear in detail of the personal and confidential dealings you enacted with your most surrendered disciples. These hidden gems serve to allow me to appreciate yet another dimension of the wonders of your sublime *līlās*.

Let everyone, especially your fortunate followers, grow in their understanding of and service unto Your Divine Grace! May we take increasingly full shelter in the shade of your lotus feet.

Your clear-cut mercy case, disciple, and aspiring eternal servant,

Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami

R.G. Bhakti Prapanna Parvata Mahārāja

All glories to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda please accept my humble *danḍavat pranāms* at your divine lotus-like feet.

Last year I did not write anything for your Vyasa-puja book, but I printed a few Spanish books describing your preaching activities in Mexico. These are the titles of the books:

- *Śrīla Prabhupāda "Impacts Mexico" In three parts*
- *Śrīla Prabhupāda Comes back to Mexico In three Parts*
- *Śrīla Prabhupāda Introduces the Deity worship in Mexico*
- *Śrīla Prabhupāda Introduces the Rathāyātra Festival in Guadalajara, Jal. Mexico.*
- *Installation of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Madana Gopāla in Mexico City*

Hoping you are pleased at this humble attempt to describe Your Divine Grace's preaching activities in Mexico.

We even got the Spanish *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* collection, published after many, many years but as they said – better late than never. It is a very nice printing of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. What

came to mind was when you were in your *vapu* form amongst us, and now I was holding you *vāṇī* form, which was very heavy. I am traveling to bring those wonderful books of Your Divine Grace.

What follows it is the well-known verse the first canto, chapter one:

SB 1.1.22 — 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.

The first verse, first chapter of second canto

SB 2.1.1 — Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, your question is glorious because it is very beneficial to all kinds of people. The answer to this question is the prime subject matter for hearing, and it is approved by all transcendentalists.

From the third canto:

SB 3.6 Creation of the Universal Form

SB 3.6.36 — In spite of my inability, whatever I have been able to hear [from the spiritual master] and whatever I could assimilate I am now describing in glorification of the Lord by pure speech, for otherwise my power of speaking would remain unchaste.

From the fourth canto:

SB 4.3: Talks Between Lord Śiva and Satī

SB 4.3.22 — My dear young wife, certainly friends and relatives offer mutual greetings by standing up, welcoming one another and offering obeisances. But those who are elevated to the transcendental platform, being intelligent, offer such respects to the Supersoul, who is sitting within the body, not to the person who identifies with the body.

From the fifth canto:

SB 5.5: Lord R̥ṣabhadeva’s Teachings to His Sons

SB 5.5.2 — One can attain the path of liberation from material bondage only by rendering service to highly advanced spiritual personalities. These personalities are impersonalists and devotees. Whether one wants to merge into the Lord’s existence or wants to associate with the Personality of Godhead, one should render service to the *mahātmās*. For those who are not interested in such activities, who associate with people fond of women and sex, the path to hell is wide open. The *mahātmās* are equipoised. They do not see any difference between one living entity and another. They are very peaceful and are fully engaged in devotional service. They are devoid of anger, and they work for the benefit of everyone. They do not behave in any abominable way. Such people are known as *mahātmās*.

In the sixth canto it is said:

SB 6.2: Ajāmila Delivered by the Viṣṇudūtas

SB 6.2.9-10 — The chanting of the holy name of Lord Viṣṇu is the best process of atonement for a thief of gold or other valuables, for a drunkard, for one who betrays a friend or relative, for one who kills a *brāhmaṇa*, or for one who indulges in sex with the wife of his guru or another superior. It is also the best method of atonement for one who murders women, the king or his father, for one who slaughters cows, and for all other sinful men. Simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Viṣṇu, such sinful persons may attract the attention of the Supreme Lord, who therefore considers, “Because this man has chanted My holy name, My duty is to give him protection.”

In the seventh canto

SB 7.9: Prahlāda Pacifies Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva with Prayers

SB 7.9.44 — My dear Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, I see that there are many saintly persons indeed, but they are interested only in their own deliverance. Not caring for the big cities and towns, they go to the Himālayas or the forest to meditate with vows of silence [*mauna-vrata*]. They are not interested in delivering others. As for me, however, I do not wish to be liberated alone, leaving aside all these poor fools and rascals. I know that without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, without taking shelter of Your lotus feet, one cannot be happy. Therefore I wish to bring them back to shelter at Your lotus feet.

In the eight canto, the King of the elephants spoke as follows:

SB 8.3: Gajendra's Prayers of Surrender

SB 8.3.1 — Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Thereafter, the King of the elephants, Gajendra, fixed his mind in his heart with perfect intelligence and chanted a mantra which he had learned in his previous birth as Indradyumna and which he remembered by the grace of Kṛṣṇa.

Ambarisa Maharaja perfection:

SB 9.4: Ambarīṣa Mahārāja Offended by Durvāsā Muni

SB 9.4.18-20 — Mahārāja Ambarīṣa always engaged his mind in meditating upon the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, his words in describing the glories of the Lord, his hands in cleansing the Lord's temple, and his ears in hearing the words spoken by Kṛṣṇa or about Kṛṣṇa. He engaged his eyes in seeing the Deity of Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa's temples and Kṛṣṇa's places like Mathurā and Vṛndāvana, he engaged his sense of touch in touching the bodies of the Lord's devotees, he engaged his sense of smell in smelling the fragrance of tulasī offered to the Lord, and he engaged his tongue in tasting the Lord's *prasāda*. He engaged his legs in walking to the holy places and temples of the Lord, his

head in bowing down before the Lord, and all his desires in serving the Lord, twenty-four hours a day. Indeed, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa never desired anything for his own sense gratification. He engaged all his senses in devotional service, in various engagements related to the Lord. This is the way to increase attachment for the Lord and be completely free from all material desires.

Except a butcher or one who is killing his own self.

SB 10.1: The Advent of Lord Kṛṣṇa: Introduction

SB 10.1.4 — Glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is performed in the *paramparā* system, that is, it is conveyed from the spiritual master to disciple. Such glorification is relished by those no longer interested in the false, temporary glorification of this cosmic manifestation. Descriptions of the Lord are the right medicine for the conditioned soul undergoing repeated birth and death. Therefore, who will cease hearing such glorification of the Lord except a butcher or one who is killing his own self?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: I am trying to finish the translation of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* as soon as possible, but before finishing it, I have given my readers the book Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, so that if I die before finishing the whole task, they may enjoy this book, which is the essence of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. (CC Antya 1.11, purport)

CC Antya 1.11— I am now almost an invalid because of old age, and I know that at any moment I may die. Therefore I have already described some portions of the *antya-līlā*.

Purport: Following in the footsteps of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, I am trying to translate *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* as quickly as possible. However, knowing myself to be an old man and almost an invalid because of rheumatism, I have already translated the essence of all literatures, the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, as a summary study in English. I started the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement at

the age of seventy. Now I am seventy-eight, and so my death is imminent. I am trying to finish the translation of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* as soon as possible, but before finishing it, I have given my readers the book Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, so that if I die before finishing the whole task, they may enjoy this book, which is the essence of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

Remembering your Divine Grace's *vāṇī*, on your Vyāsa-pūjā day

This lowly Tridandi-Bhikṣu

R.G. Bhakti Prapanna Parvata Mahārāja
Puerto Vallarta Jalisco, México

TRIBUTES
BY
DISCIPLES

We are in darkness,
Your Divine Grace the light
To guide us beyond
This material night.

Your Divine Grace has shown
The whole world's sleeping
With hardened heart
Against Śrī Kṛṣṇa's seeking.

Yet by Your Divine Grace
Of Lord Kṛṣṇa we can hear:
His glorious Pastimes
Give us boundless cheer!

Your Divine Grace
Has proven, beyond doubt,
The Absolute is the Person
we cannot live without.

As Acharya, Your Divine Grace
Has shown us by example
What each we are:
His infinitesimal spiritual sample.

Your Divine Grace
Has given the principle of bhakti,
The only legitimate business
Of Lord Kṛṣṇa's *jīva-śakti*.

Your Divine Grace is perfect
So what is our improvement,
Except our hearty promise
To push Lord Caitanya's Movement.

Who can sing full of that day
– Our obeisances are simply lame –
When Your Divine Grace, O!
Delivered the holy name!

Your eternal servant,

Rupanuga Dāsa

Govindasi

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Freedom Fighter and Revolutionary

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble and unworthy obeisances. All glories to your divine lotus feet!

You strode down the streets of London like a lion, yet with a look of humble victory on your lotus like face. The year – 1973. The day – Rathayātrā. London Rathayātrā. The place – Trafalgar Square – the heart of the British Empire.

Lord Jagannātha’s towering chariot dwarfed the famous Nelson’s column. And the vibrant sights and sounds of India filled the drab London air, foggy from years of sin and exploitation.

I never really understood. I was, after all, “just a child” as you would sometimes say. I was born after WWII into the lap of American peacetime luxury, and England was never very important to me. In fact, my one trip to London as a teen left me wondering why anyone would want to live in such a dreary, dingy, gray place, with tiny old smelly buildings. I never understood why it was so important to you.

Now I do. My recent exposure to the literary work known as the “Raj Quartet” and the *Jewel in the Crown*, a series written in the 60s, set in India prior to Indian Independence, helped me understand. I never really knew how cruelly the British treated the Indians. Perhaps comparable to how the southern slave owners treated their African slaves. They invaded their country, Mother India, and did their utmost to destroy the ancient culture of India,

the land of the Rishis. The land of the gods, the land of Lord Rāma and Lord Krishna – the land where the ancient language of Sanskrit was spoken while most of the Western world still lived in caves and spoke in grunts.

Not only did Britain undermine schools and colleges, not only did they torture, demean, and even massacre thousands of Indian citizens in their own country, but they made Indians into clerks and convinced them of their ineptness, stupidity and ugliness, and left a whole generation with no self-confidence or self-respect, and no vision of how to rise above the British yoke of slavery.

The *Jewel in the Crown* recently aired on public television, and it graphically illustrated the cultural condition of those years. India was the doormat of the British Raj. Even up to the days of Independence, as you often said, "...the British gave a parting kick to India by this partition."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you lived in that era, you grew up under British rule and witnessed the riots and unrest. You were even educated in a British college. You were even a part of Gandhi's Movement, until you met your guru maharaja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākur. Then you chose to be part of Lord Chaitanya's saṅkīrtana Movement. You sometimes spoke of Subash Chandra Bose. All this was your time in history. Your time, your world, your India.

And in 1973, just less than 30 years after Independence, you walked the streets of London, leading thousands of Westerners, singing and dancing to the sounds of *mṛdaṅga* and *karatālas*... *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*...while Lord Jagannātha's grand chariot rolled through London, the very heart of the British Empire! How amazing! What a miracle! You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, changed the course of history! You changed a whole nation, a whole world! Your disciple George Harrison's sweet songs of Krishna rang out all over the Western world, permeating the airwaves everywhere! And gorgeous Rādhā Krishna Deities graced the drab British Isles. How miraculous it is! You turned a whole culture around in less than 30 years, and that was just the beginning. How can anyone not see what an incredible being walked amongst us – how you perfectly fill the role of Lord Chaitanya's "*Senāpati Bhakta!*"

“*Mor Senāpati Bhakta!*” Mahāprabhu roared. “I shall send my Commander-in-Chief,” the Lord declared. “Even if they flee to foreign countries, I will send my *Senāpati Bhakta* to bring them back!” And He did. He sent you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to the most materialistic country in the world – America, to bring us back. Chanting and dancing all the way.

As you stood solemnly on that London day in 1973, gazing up at the towering Ratha Cart, with Nelson’s column in the background, eclipsed by Lord Jagannātha’s imposing presence, I cannot help but wonder what you were thinking. The expression on your face is one I had never seen before – and I knew most of your facial expressions from having served you for nearly two years. Of course, I would never be so presumptuous as to actually guess at what you were thinking, only to wonder.

I was always well aware of my boundaries. I, a tiny little conditioned soul fallen into the grips of material nature, and you, a divine personality on a visit from Vaikuṅṭha. “Just to write some books,” you would say. To guess what you were thinking would be like the insect on my desk making observations on a new computer program. I never did that. Now, I am a little older and I am becoming more aware of the timing of your visit, and how it all lines up with Lord Chaitanya’s plans for His *saṅkīrtana* Movement. I have a bit more of a glimpse of your greatness.

Famous freedom fighters of your time, like Bhagat Singh, Ramprasad Bismil, Raj Guru, Chandrasekhar Azad, Ashfaqulla Khan, Sukhdev, Gandhi, so many others who gave their lives for Indian Independence. Whose names were woven into the tapestry of British rule, a tapestry splattered with blood. Indian blood. These were the heroes of your time.

There were massacres, like Jallianwala Bagh, where thousands died – innocent unarmed men, women and children, slaughtered like pigs at the order of a British captain. There were so many such incidents. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you knew all this well. You grew up in this era of history, which reached its peak in 1947, with freedom at midnight. You knew the ghastly scenes that followed that British “kick” known as partition. Yet now I see that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are the greatest revolutionary of all! Without bullets or bloodshed, you defeated the British Empire, not only Britain, but the whole world! Indeed, you are the greatest “freedom

fighter” of all!

You led us like the Pied Piper, and we followed behind, revolutionizing the world! Before you, there was no mention of animal rights, vegetarianism, yoga, *kīrtan*. You are the greatest revolutionary of the century and your revolution is still going on! With every mantra chanted, every *kīrtan* held, every spiritual sound vibration that circles the globe, the revolution is going on! The sounds of *Hare Krishna, Hare Rāma* are drumbeats of this revolution, and your revolution will go on for the next 10,000 years! You will be glorified more and more as the “*Senāpati Bhakta*”, the gift from Lord Chaitanya for this earth planet. Your *praṇāms* will be sung by thousands of generations, and your sacred words will be read and heard and realized by the fortunate souls of this Kali-yuga.

You began a new kind of revolution, one that continues to evolve, to grow and to expand with each generation. You are the true freedom fighter, fighting for the spiritual rights of all mankind. Yours is the ultimate spiritual revolution.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I always loved you as my father, my teacher, my guru, but now, I also love you as the greatest revolutionary, the freedom fighter for the world of mankind!

Your servant, at your lotus feet eternally,

Govindasi

The Revolutionary Gentleman

In Algiers, the rocky cliffs and grassy grounds of Le Grand Phare, the Big Lighthouse, afford a good view of the Mediterranean and the ships going by. On Monday, September 6, 1965, a few citizens strolling there might have noticed among the boats a certain Indian vessel, the *Jaladuta*, plying its way westward toward Gibraltar.

To them it wouldn't have seemed any different from any other commercial craft on the busy navigation route so near their shore. One would hardly expect them to remark on it. Their conversation might more reasonably have been directed toward the ever-troubling political situation in Algeria. At that time, power there rested in the Council of the Revolution. The military regime was headed by Houari Boumedienne, who had seized power three months earlier in a bloodless coup.

On the *Jaladuta*, another revolution, of a different kind, was on the mind of a passenger. He was A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, a Bengali renunciate. The passage had been difficult for him. Turbulence on the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean had upset his system. He'd even suffered a stroke. But now calmer waters reassured him. He was able to eat. In his journal for September 6th he wrote, "Today I have taken *khichri* and *kari*. It was tasteful. And I took them with relish and this gave me a push forward to get renewed strength little by little."

He was headed for the United States. That Monday was Labor Day there. Aboard the *Jaladuta*, the Swami had earlier celebrated another holiday, Janmāṣṭamī, the birthday of Lord Krishna. He'd given an inspirational talk to the crew and passengers. The next day was his own birthday. He was now 69. And ready to turn the world upside down for Krishna.

His passage by Algiers took place 50 years ago. By the time only a dozen years after that had passed, he'd accomplished his revolution. A world that, outside India, had known hardly anything about Krishna, now was well aware of the new phenomenon of Krishna consciousness. The holy name of Krishna was being chanted everywhere.

Inconceivably, this transcendental gentleman, revered by his students as Śrīla Prabhupāda, started a worldwide mission from the smallest of beginnings in a Pennsylvania town, then a Manhattan apartment and loft and storefront, then out to “every town and village” on Earth, fulfilling a prophecy started hundreds of years earlier by Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the preceptor of a line of spiritual masters in which Śrīla Prabhupāda was the latest World Teacher, or *Jagat Guru*.

No one could have guessed that a lone Indian monk on a ship sailing by Algiers half a century ago was in fact a force so powerful. And no one today can estimate how even more influential his teachings will become, in the next half century, and more, as his spiritual revolution progresses.

Kanchanbala and Madhusudan

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

There is an anecdote by your godbrother, Nayanānanda Babaji which is so powerful and moving, written in the *Sri Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava*, and also in *Our Śrīla Prabhupāda; A Friend to All*. It illustrates the genuine sincerity and unwavering resolution you had before coming to the West.

“The last year that our gurudeva (Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura) organized and performed Navadvīpa-dhāma Parikramā, thousands of pilgrims assembled at our Cānpāhāṭi Temple. There was an entire village of tents stretching in all directions. On the afternoon of the last day one of our godbrothers arrived in Navadvīp who recently came from London by ship. He had gone there to preach, but had returned without meeting full success. That evening, during his lecture, Guru Mahārāja explained his earnest desire that Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s teachings be spread in the Western countries. He said that this was the last request of his mother, Śrīmatī Bhāgavatī Devī, to him before she left this world, and that indeed it would happen.

Consequently, he had been willing to take the lifeblood of the Gauḍīya Maṭha funds to send devotees there, yet their attempts had been largely unsuccessful.

“At that point in his talk, I noticed something mysterious happening. Guru Mahārāja had been looking out at the packed crowds of devotees, especially in the front, where all the sannyāsīs and brahmacāris in red cloth were. Then, he turned his head and looked over to his left side, where I was standing. He was looking at someone and became silent for sometime. I happened to look behind me and saw the person with whom he was making eye contact was Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu. I felt that they were looking at each other in a special way. Then, Guru Mahārāja turned and again addressed the audience in front of him and said, ‘But I have a prediction. However long in the future it may be, one of my disciples will cross the ocean and bring back the entire world.’”

...And how true that prophecy was, and still is!! Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!!

Once you asked a devotee, “Who is considered the better businessman – American or Indian? No one could answer. Then you replied, “An Indian, because they can start out with nothing and, in time, with dexterity and intelligence create a thriving business.” So, similarly, on the spiritual, Kṛṣṇa conscious platform, being totally surrendered and attached to Kṛṣṇa and guru, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, came to this godforsaken place (never having been overseas even) and arrived here with only \$7.00 worth of rupees. This was all because you only desired to fulfill your beloved spiritual master’s request to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the Western world.

Everything in this material existence is tenuous, being full of danger at every step, *padam padam yad vipadam na teṣām*, and is temporary; even the most enjoyable things must come to an end. The true understanding of peace and genuine happiness is found in loving service to you and Kṛṣṇa, chanting the holy names, and taking shelter of your sacred books; your purports being your

transcendental ecstasies. It is simply amazing that you continue to touch so many lost souls, who are searching for the Truth, through hearing the ever fresh words emanating from your lotus mouth.

“Attachment to your lotus feet is the perfection that fulfills all desires.” Meditating on this line and the whole prayer, *Śrī Guru-vandanā*, resonates with such depth and meaning of your magnanimous *vapuḥ* and *vāṇī* presence.

To think of you and to see your angelic movements while hearing you speak on DVDs, transports one to automatically be with you – a solace which knows no bounds. Listening, recently, to a *Memories* DVD, a devotee related how he was born very poor, not even knowing who his parents were, and had grown up stealing to survive. There were times he purposely got caught stealing in order to be sent to jail where he could have a blanket and food to eat. For that reason he was in and out of jail. One day, he saw your photo in a *Back to Godhead* magazine which he found in a dust bin. In that photo he became attracted – not to you – but to your gold watch. He vowed that when he was released, he would steal that watch. After he was free, and since he had no money, he walked miles and miles in an effort to find you, ending up staying and serving at an ISKCON temple. After some time, he visited the Hyderabad temple where you were giving a *darśana* and he entered that room. You saw him and called him forward and asked, “You want this watch?” and you immediately removed it from your wrist. He replied, “No.” He lost interest in the watch since he had developed love for you but, nonetheless, you insisted that he keep the watch. Such is your spiritual potency, purity and compassion! We were all just looking for pieces of broken glass but instead, by your mercy, you have given us the most valuable gift and treasure!

We are praying, “Oh when, oh when will that day be ours, to be on that platform of unceasingly remembering your unlimited kindness upon our fallen selves and we pray that you accept this humble offering at your transcendental lotus feet.

*Remaining gratefully,
Your spiritual children,*

Kanchanbala and Madhusudan

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

To my glorious infallible eternal spiritual master,
Please accept my most humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet on your holy appearance day 2015.

When I was a younger brahmacārī and book distributor in the 70s and 80s, I did not appreciate it at that time as I do now as I'm older. Thank you for that special service.

I did not write you a letter personally and I have regretted it. Please accept this Vyāsa-pūjā offering as that unsent letter to you.

I was afraid to approach you face to face due to my fallen position. Maybe sometime in another life, in Kṛṣṇa loka, I can do that and serve Kṛṣṇa forever and get out of this hellish place, only by your mercy.

In this material world, the fools, cheaters and rascals are always glorified. Up is down and down is up...everything is backwards...non-Vedic.

In religions, politics and the media, the lost souls glorify demons. Cheating gurus pose as God or others mislead fallen conditioned souls.

Your Divine Grace came to the West, In like a lamb and out like a lion. You dispelled our misconceptions about God without hesitation.

You and you alone came to the West to deliver the most fallen souls (like me).

With the mahā-mantra, prasādam, kīrtan, devotee association and your transcendental books, you established many temples, gurukulas, farm programs, preaching programs...projects.

You were the topmost general and we were your soldiers who obeyed your orders without question. Preaching was at an all-time high in ISKCON when you were here on Earth. Let us return to that mood.

You alone have given us the priceless jewels of devotional service. Pure bhakti yoga. Service rendered without motive or expectation of any material rewards.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, there are not enough words in any language to express your most important significance to me. Thanks to

you once again.

Actually, there are not enough words to show your important significance to ISKCON and of course to the entire material world. I am always meditating on what you gave to me, Kṛṣṇa consciousness and ISKCON. Life without Kṛṣṇa and His devotees would have been useless and hell to me.

The world which we see now is quickly falling apart and going to hell without God (Kṛṣṇa) consciousness. Kali-yuga has gotten much worse since the last time you were present on earth. You told us this would happen.

Preaching is the essence, books are the basis, purity is the force!

In 2015, karmīs are very covered over by māyā, technology and sense gratification. They have been lulled into a false sense of security, even as wars, joblessness, economic collapse and corruption in all spheres – in religion, politics, economy and society surround them.

Thus we see the ever powerful illusionary energy of Kṛṣṇa, Māyā Devī, completely covering people now, even as they see their world is falling apart. You boldly declared without God, (Kṛṣṇa), everything is ZERO.

It was you and you alone who came to Boston in 1965 on the order of your spiritual master to deliver Kṛṣṇa consciousness to America. Without much money and no one to help you (but Kṛṣṇa), your effort of coming to America, preaching worldwide has delayed the next world war.

Yet, the material world has since become an even worse madhouse of sinfulness and greed, more demoniac and filled with more illusion than ever before. Times have gotten worse in the material world.

The USA is now bankrupt and without a moral spiritual compass. That's why you came to the USA – to give the most fallen the most valuable gift, Kṛṣṇa bhakti. Some of us were fortunate to listen to you seriously.

Everything you warned us about is coming true. You were right about everything you told us, Śrīla Prabhupāda. No matter how politically incorrect it sounds these days, you were right and never made a mistake. Nowadays people now are much more mad than when you were here with us.

Karmīs are mad after money, power, control, sex-life. Sense

gratification is their life and soul...puffed up they rule the world. People now are intoxicated by Technology and its trimmings.

Irreligion, hypocrisy is worse now in the world than I could have imagined. What a hellish place this world is. The test of time will reveal the truth. Since you left us, ISKCON has missed you. I want to see your ISKCON become strong and healthy again. Re-establishing your pure original programs to save America and the world. You alone were the one sent to deliver pure love of God, bravely without compromise.

I want to hear your words repeated by devotees and your ISKCON revived and protected. I am revealing my heart to you, not fault finding. I care about your ISKCON and its devotees.

In the material world, we live in a society that's overrun by demons and the demonic. It has become a madhouse full of crazy people and it's high time to preach like you wanted us to – strongly. Bless me to do this for you. Please bless ISKCON with the insight and renewed commitment to do this now.

You preached like a lion. In the Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Temple, your Vyāsāsana is surrounded by lions on both sides! How fitting for such a pure devotee like yourself.

I want to see the West revived with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I want to see massive book distribution again, thriving, growing brahmacārī and brahmacāriṇī ashrams, huge harināmas and bhakta programs re-established as established by Your Divine Grace. Let them be revived and the mercy of Lord Śrī Caitanya be spread to every town and village.

Now I see a world mostly without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, crumbling before my eyes. Also there is evidence of global economic collapse. You preached to your disciples to get prepared and that's a fact. Let us all have full faith in all your words and instructions. Inspire us to do your bidding for Lord Kṛṣṇa for the good of his devotees in ISKCON.

Thus re-establishing varṇāśrama farm communities all over the world, and please inspire the devotees to return to increased book distribution, where you said Kṛṣṇa will provide all financial help. If we simply push on your book distribution Kṛṣṇa will provide. As you said Kṛṣṇa is not poor.

At this later stage in my life please inspire me to do some more service in ISKCON with sincere devotees. To say you gave your

mercy to me is a complete understatement. Once you said in New York while speaking to your disciples in 1976 that this preaching is a war declared against māyā and that we were engaged in it, by being preachers. Then after you left the planet, māyā fought back.

In New York, you declared that like in real war, devotees like book distributors serve emergency positions of leadership and that many of them would fall as 'casualties of war'. This has happened to me and to countless many others. Please forgive me.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, forgive me when I slip and fall or forget Kṛṣṇa. I ask for your mercy. You made this fallen soul fortunate. If I become unfortunate and forget your instructions, I ask you to give me your hand and pick me up to fight another day for Kṛṣṇa.

Many devotees love you. Please bless and help them in their spiritual lives. Bless the devotees inside and outside of ISKCON, we are all devotees at your lotus feet and part of Your family.

Now old-age is coming for us all. I pray to remain your humble servant until that day I leave this body and then ever after. If I'm fortunate to be engaged in some preaching for you or any devotional services in Russia, please bless me and thank you.

Wishing to be re-joined with you and your devotees and serving and preaching for Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Please accept my gratitude and heartfelt thanks once again.

I didn't know what true love was until I became a devotee in your ISKCON.

I didn't know who God was or what was the purpose of my human life.

This disciple is a fool and rascal who took birth in the material world to play God.

You opened my eyes with the torchlight of -transcendental knowledge

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for the spiritual family of ISKCON and its followers.

If I had one possibility for asking for your mercy of a blessing, may I ask you to protect the devotees in your ISKCON and everywhere, but especially in the former Soviet Union, Russia.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Thank you for everything – Hare Kṛṣṇa!

All glories to you, the most merciful and wonderful Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I beg to remain at your lotus feet in this life and for all eternity.

Your servant and still aspiring fallen disciple,

Jaya Madhava Dāsa
Moscow, Russia

Hrisikesananda Dāsa

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda! Jaya Gurudev!!
Vande Guru Śrī Charanaravindam!!!

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare
Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.*

Tavadāsanudās

Hrisikesananda Dāsa
(ACBSP: 1967)

Ranadhira Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

How can I forget you? And if I cannot forget you, how can I forget Kṛṣṇa?

You have given me so much, yet I remain willful and self-serving, preferring the company of Māyā to the eternal blissful life you continue to promise me. When I follow your instructions and chant Hare Krishna, I am satisfied, and when I do not, I am miserable. Still, despite this daily incontrovertible lesson, I refuse to give up my illusion of control and continue to pursue material satisfaction.

I am so grateful that I can still remember you at least for a few moments on the occasion of this one special day. I remember how proud I was of my first Vyāsa-pūjā offering so many years ago,

and how I thought I was going to be the next great Vaiṣṇava poet. Despite my foolishness and arrogance, you were so patient with me and even encouraged me to keep writing.

I am such a fool, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but I am not so foolish that I can completely ignore all you have done for me. My only prayer is that you will continue to remain divinely unmoved by my ridiculous shenanigans, and never leave my heart.

Your not-very-humble servant,

Ranadhira Dāsa

Bhūrijana Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīnī*

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

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Kali and his *yuga* have entranced everyone. Spiritual seekers have become trapped in a net of vagaries that equate spirituality with abject sensuality. Through impersonalism, voidism, and fanaticism, the world's population has already been mass-converted into confused devotees of matter.

In this chaotic milieu, speaking directly and honestly of true religious principles interferes with the so-called spiritual concepts of acceptance and being nonjudgmental. Yet day by day, throughout the world, degradation, fear, anxiety, and danger increase. Violence and terror increase, strange deadly diseases increase, extreme and unpredictable weather events increase, and economic collapse lurks nearby. And worse still, the solutions mankind proffers morph into still more dreadful catastrophes.

Amidst it all, you speak truth clearly and to the point. Your words pierce Kali-yuga's fog:

Actually they do not know, and they cheat others, speaking about God. That is the difficulty. All rascals are doing that. And if I say, "All rascals," it is little harsh, but it has to be said. They do not know what is God, and they speak of God. Let them say frankly that "I do not know what is God." That is answered in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *bahūnāṁ janmanām ante*. If they are sincere, then after many, many births . . . *

You speak of the processes of acquiring actual knowledge of God:

They do not know, and they do not accept *ācāryopāsanam*. The *ācārya* says, Rāmānujācārya says, Madhvācārya says, big, big *ācārya*, Caitanya Mahāprabhu . . . They will not believe them. They will speculate in their nonsense speculation. This is the difficulty. Without going to the *ācārya* . . . *Tad vijñānārthan sa gurum evābhigacchet*. This is the Vedic process, how one can know. But they will speculate.

You quote Lord Brahmā as you describe that Kṛṣṇa's mercy—not great speculative ability—is the prerequisite for knowing God. And that an ascending process can never yield true knowledge:

Ciraṁ vicinvan. Athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya jānāti tattvam . . . Athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya leśānugṛhīta eva hi jānāti tattvam na cānya eko 'pi ciraṁ vicinvan. One who has little mercy of God upon him, he can understand, but others, they can speculate for many, many births; still, they'll never be able. *Athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya leśānugṛhīta jānāti tattvam. Leśānugṛhīta eva hi. Leśa*. One cannot know God full. That is not possible because you are limited and He is unlimited. Still, if one has learned, at least if one has accepted "Here is God, Kṛṣṇa," *bās*, his knowledge is perfect. If he simply believes only that "Here is God," he can understand. They don't believe that Kṛṣṇa is God.

“Eh . . . He may be very powerful . . .,” so on. Kṛṣṇa says *aham ādir hi devānām, mattaḥ parataram nānyat*. These rascals will not believe.

After labeling nonbelievers as rascals, with transparent logic you boldly indict as a fool a beloved icon of the world:

Śrīla Prabhupāda: *Mūḍho nābhijānāti*. If they remain persistently *mūḍhas*, who can make them understand? Very difficult. Gandhi did not believe in Kṛṣṇa.

Dr. Patel: I don't know that. I think he . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You should know. You have read Gandhi's book.

Dr. Patel: He practiced Vaiṣṇavism. That is what my wife said. Always, daily, to worship.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. He mentioned that, that “My Kṛṣṇa is different imagination. My imagination of Kṛṣṇa is different.” That is his position. He imagines. “My imagination of Kṛṣṇa . . .” How he can believe Kṛṣṇa? Kṛṣṇa is preaching violence, and he's trying to draw nonviolence. The people will challenge, but he makes his own commentation, his own imagination. He said, “My imagination of Kṛṣṇa is different.” This is his word. He is the student of *Bhagavad-gītā* and in his *āśrama* there is not a single picture of Kṛṣṇa. He does not believe in Kṛṣṇa. But believe or not believe, he was reading *Bhagavad-gītā*, had respect. That will give him some profit, there is no doubt.

Despite your full conviction in Kṛṣṇa's message, you avoid fanaticism as you accept that some benefit will accrue to Gandhi despite his misconceived position. However, to the gentleman who many times walked by your side on Juhu Beach, you thrust your point forward: Simply remain faithful to Kṛṣṇa's message as it is:

Yeṣām anta-gataṁ pāpam. Everything is clearly said in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. I speak, therefore, to my disciples that “You simply repeat like parrot *Bhagavad-gītā* and follow first your life. Don’t try to become very big scholar, do interpretation. Remain foolish and believe in Kṛṣṇa. Then life is perfect.” And actually that is happening. They never try to screw out some meaning.

You alone have stressed this, Śrīla Prabhupāda. All others have “screwed out” their own meaning from Kṛṣṇa’s words:

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They do, everyone. Tilak has done like that, Gandhi has done like that, Vinod Bhave is doing that. Dr. Radhakrishna has done like that, Vivekananda has done, Aurobindo has done—everyone. Nobody would take directly, that “Here is God.” What do you think? Do they believe?

Dr. Patel: They believe in God.

Śrīla Prabhupada: No, believe in God, that everyone is doing. So what is their special credit? Why do they touch *Bhagavad-gītā* and say, “My imagination of God is different”? How cheating it is! If your imagination of God is different, why do you touch *Bhagavad-gītā* and declare yourself that “I am a student of *Bhagavad-gītā*. My life is also for *Gītā*”?

However, your incontestable deed of spreading throughout the world the name, fame, and glory of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, has undeniably proclaimed your unique position and greatness:

Dr. Patel: Even when Tilak . . . Tilak says he follows *Bhagavad-gītā* always.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Nobody says that “Here is God, Kṛṣṇa.” That is their fault. Nobody says, “Here is God.” That is,

perhaps . . . We Vaiṣṇavas say. I am preaching. Perhaps I am the first preacher to the world, that “Here is God.”

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, amidst the confusion of Kali-yuga, you are like the sun that dispels the fog, for you clearly present Kṛṣṇa as God and chanting His names as His surrendered servant as the process to attain Him. In your condemnation of non-Vaiṣṇava counterconclusions you simply do not mince words:

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Who is *ācārya* except the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*? All loafer class. All loafer class. They’re not *ācāryas*. Except these Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, who is *ācārya*? They’re not *ācāryas*. *Ācāryam mām vijānīyān*.

Dr. Patel: I read your *Bhagavad-gītā*, and after that, I read Rāmānuja’s. They are more or less the same . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Same thing. There is no difference between the *ācāryas*. Then how they become *ācāryas* if there is difference of opinion? They cannot be *ācāryas*.

* * *

Understanding reality and life’s purpose is dangerously distant from people’s consciousness in Kali-yuga. I therefore offer my humble obeisances to each of your servants who are committed to entering any of the many dangerous palaces in Kali-yuga’s kingdom in the attempt to introduce others to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the Absolute Truth.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am weak, tiny, and inconsequential, and I find myself unable to emulate your bold and potent preaching. Yet you kindly keep me in your service while making that service easy by your own heroic presentations through speech and writing. May I serve both. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your servant,

Bhūrijana dāsa

Back to Godhead

Beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

When I was eight or nine, I read a short science fiction story that has remained with me—though all the others of the day were quickly forgotten. It was about a young man who comes home to his parents' house only to find that his mom and dad have inexplicably disappeared. But that night they appear to him in a mystical vision. They explain to their son that they have entered into a new dimension of great satisfaction and happiness. They say that they miss nothing of their old life in the workaday world and invite their son to come along. The only caveat is that this is the one and only time that the door to the mysterious and wonderful world will be open. The story ends with the son fretting about whatever he must leave behind—and uncertain what lies ahead.

Dear Guru Mahārāja, indeed, this human form of life—as you have taught us—is our one shot at becoming Krishna conscious, to leave behind this material frustration and to go back to Godhead. Spiritual liberation by the grace of the Gauḍīya *paramparā* that you perfectly represent is not a dream or fantasy. We must give up material attachment and surrender to Śrī Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by your causeless mercy. Your appearance in this world and in our hearts is our one moment to make the conscious choice to follow you back to the spiritual kingdom where eternity, knowledge, and bliss await each of us, your fortunate followers. By Your Divine Grace, this is our one big chance—not a chance of a lifetime, but of uncountable lifetimes.

Pen in hand, your devotees have come forward to try to explain what you have meant to them – and to the world you have saved. We learn about your unique relationship with each of us in Siddhānta Dāsa' *Memories*. We accompany you around the world when reading Śrīman Hari Śauri Prabhu's *Transcendental Diary*. Through Mother Mūlaprakṛti's *Prabhupāda a Friend of All*, we learn about your sterling character and the sacrifices that you made for your own guru maharaja in the years before you took that historic voyage aboard the *Jaladuta*. It is no wonder that there are more books written about you by loving disciples than there are books

written by all the '60's self-styled yogis combined – businessmen in the dress of yogis who proved to be mere glow worms before your moon of *saṅkīrtana*. It was you who gifted us with “sufficient brain substance,” as you often stated, to take shelter of your lotus feet and to leave behind the good and bad karmas of millions of births.

In his remarkably personal diary *What Is The Difficulty?*, your dear servant Śrutakīrti Prabhu eloquently describes his feelings:

Vrindaban, India: “It was still light out during class. Parrots were busy getting back to their branches for the night. The monkeys were creating havoc, as usual. The atmosphere was very transcendental, except for the flies. They were buzzing around Śrīla Prabhupāda while he was speaking. It was a great opportunity for me to render service. I picked up the *cāmara* fan and stood by my guru. I twirled the fan just like a *pūjārī* performing *arotika* before the Deities. I felt so proud being able to perform such a service in front of my godbrothers. Up and down I waved the fan hardly noticing the flies were still bothering Śrīla Prabhupāda. At one point he lifted his arm and waved it across his face to chase the flies away. I was so absorbed in feelings of grandeur that it never occurred to me that I wasn't rendering any service. I never came close to solving the problem.

“Finally, the cow dung hit the fan. My spiritual master glared at me and shouted, ‘Get someone up here with some intelligence.’ I stood motionless for what felt like a year.

“Immediately a young brahmachari named Kuñjabihārī took the fan from my sweaty hand and stood next to Śrīla Prabhupāda. He was considered by some to be rather eccentric. At the time I would not have picked him for this particular service.

“I went back to my tape recorder. My mind was reeling along with it. I finally realized what it meant to be

one/10,000 part the tip of a hair. I watched Kuñjabihārī. It seemed like he could put out a forest fire with the intensity of his fanning. No fly was foolish enough to hang around as long as he was in town. Seconds later all the flies were gone. Śrīla Prabhupāda never stopped speaking to his disciples throughout this ordeal. Just as I was starting to breathe again, Śrīla Prabhupāda looked at Kuñjabihārī with a smile and nodded approvingly of his disciple's devotional service.

“All I remember was getting up at the end of the lecture and walking alone toward Śrīla Prabhupāda's quarters. Before I could get inside, a *brahmachari* came up to me and said, ‘Śrutakīrti, you are so fortunate to get chastised like that by Śrīla Prabhupāda. I forced a strained smile and said, ‘Yes.’

“It was the first time Śrīla Prabhupāda chastised me before so many. It was difficult to accept. He was so kind to have cut down my false pride. He has blessed me with that again and again over the years. He must do it because I still haven't learned the simple truth that I am “fool number one.” He keeps trying to teach me that service is for his pleasure, not mine.

“Śrīla Prabhupāda, please give me another chance to fan you. No! I am still puffed up. Please, bless me with the desire to fan your disciple, Kuñjabihārī Dāsa. He pleased you with his service. That is the way to make advancement in Krishna consciousness.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I consider myself very fortunate never to have been publicly chastised in such a way by you. Well...except for one incident when you thundered not once but thrice and in front of a hundred devotees, “*You should be killed, demon, rascal, fool.*”

Truth be told, in that one moment of transformation I witnessed the most powerful person in modern history, the guru of the world thundering before me. There in the lane of Letchmore Heath I momentarily flashed on the dozens of devotees ambling behind you. They stood frozen in their tracks, their eyes wide

open and mouths agape in astonishment. But what I saw next was more astounding than what I heard. Your Divine Grace became as brilliant as the Sun and you sort of disappeared into a blinding *chakra* of white light as all the prabhū, the trees, the lane, etc. likewise became obscured by your effulgence. Your spiritual halo was blinding. For an uneasy moment I lost sight even of your powerful finger pointing directly at me. The universe stood still as you seared your presence into my memory for all time so that by your grace I could never forget you.

And then two or three days later, while your chastisement was still sinking into my dull brain, you called me before you on the green lawn of Bhaktivedānta Manor. Seeing that I perhaps had understood, you told me, “Patita Uddhāraṇa, you have saved all the fallen souls of the Universe,” and then with absolute conviction you concluded, “and now at last you have saved my fallen soul.”

Beloved Guru Mahārāja, you are the heaviest of the heavy and the gentlest of the gentle. You are both the thunderbolt and the rose. We can only enter the transcendental realm *through* your mercy. You are at once the most powerful and the most humble, and only by surrendering to your lotus feet can we forever leave behind *samsāra* on your Back to Godhead Express.

Following in your footprints, many of your fortunate disciples have already departed, while still others are waiting in line. We are now entering old age as you told us we would, as a new generation of your grandfollowers is expanding Lord Chaitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement ever forward.

Subsequent volumes of *Tributes* by your elects will grow thinner with each passing year even as your “*sudurlabha mahātmās*” – as you kindly called us – try to find suitable words to properly sing your glories until their last breaths. Each year, the pages of this volume will become fewer until this book of eloquent tributes will narrow down to a single homage.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (SB 4.7.2) we find the following verse:

“My dear father, Brahmā, I do not mind the offenses created by the demigods. Because these demigods are childish and less intelligent, I do not take a serious view of their offenses, and I have punished them only in order to right them.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I know that my very existence is offensive. But who else in this cold and cruel world could be so kind when compassion such as you have given freely is the rarest commodity on Earth? We do not have the words to thank you, though in the twilight years of our life we are trying to find them still.

Your humble servant eternally,

Patita Uddharana Dāsa Adhikary (“Patita Pavana”)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to you and your mission. I pay my obeisances in the dust of your feet and pray to be fortunate enough to be counted as even the most insignificant of your devotees.

Now that old age is gradually creeping up, I can admire even more your coming to America at an advanced age. Not only were you in ill health, you were poor and knew no-one in this strange land.

I'm just returning from the 40th anniversary of the opening of the Sri Krishna Balarāma Mandir. Such a spiritually surcharged atmosphere. Your presence was strongly felt. Yet just one day later and I'm on the long flight back, sitting next to people eating meat and watching movies, I gradually feel my consciousness being affected by my surroundings. Then I was thinking of how you entered this realm of māyā single handedly and was never affected by the material energy! How empowered you were to not become distracted or discouraged, but to push on in spite of so many obstacles. How was it possible? It is surely only by the grace of Lord Chaitanya that anyone could have done such a feat.

So it is impossible for me to adequately glorify you or serve you, but may I continue trying. I'm amazed you could even give a rascal like me such an opportunity. May I remain eternally indebted to you, the revealer of the Lord and His *dhāma*, *līlā* and devotees.

Sincerely,

Chintamani Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīne*

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

All glories to you! Please accept my sincere gratitude for all the opportunities you have given me. I pray that I can develop proper appreciation and deep understanding of my debt to you.

Now I am the age that you were when you first crossed the ocean and arrived in Boston Harbor.

It is quite amazing that only a short while after arriving you sat on a park bench in New York, with little money and no followers, and revealed to a stranger the future existence of farms, temples, schools, and 1000s of followers.

In pursuit of that vision you founded an organization, ISKCON, in 1966. You worked hard and long to breathe life into ISKCON. You took a rag tag army of would-be spiritualists and, always conscious of the passing of insurmountable time, devoted your energy to training that army. You honored your divine master's wish and set up a system by which everything could go on perpetually, and you imparted the highest knowledge so your followers would know how to remain spiritually strong. You infused within us an aspiration to dedicate our lives to Lord Kṛṣṇa and change the world by giving others the same opportunity.

Like a mother you nurtured us. With tender care and love you tolerated and cajoled us. You watched with delight as we began to crawl, then stand, then walk, then contemplate and begin to implement what needed to be done; to take bold action on your behalf, despite our lack of maturity.

Like a father you gave us direction. You wrote your instructions in your books. You chastised us when it was necessary. You gave us the foundation on which to expand a worldwide preaching mission. You demonstrated how to be thrifty and at the same time spend millions of dollars for Kṛṣṇa, as well as how to manage time

and people. By your example you trained us in the art of devotional service and the attitude of a Vaiṣṇava. You fixed our mistakes when they were fixable and carried on despite our blunders when things were broken beyond repair. You trained us how to spread the message of Guru and Gauraṅga all over the world. You told us it was meant to be. That Lord Caitanya and our Ācāryas wanted Kṛṣṇa's name to be chanted everywhere, in every village and if we didn't get the credit for doing it someone else would because it was the Lord's desire. And we understood that it was your desire and so we wanted to do it to glorify you.

All the while you were acutely aware that the clock was ticking, and we would eventually have to do it on our own... simply dependent on your *vāṇī*. You strategized how your army of monkeys could abate the flood of materialistic society and then you left us here to show what we could do...to make you proud, to make your mission successful to connect the world with Lord Krishna.

And now most of your soldiers are the same age as you were when you first came to America; the age when you first started your mission. Some have already departed. Unstoppable time is on our heels. And yet the job is not done and the strategies for imparting this invaluable message are still under construction. The experience of descending old age is making my appreciation for what you did and are doing deeper because I can better understand the physical difficulties you faced and the immeasurable task which you took upon your head. All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda. I am forever grateful for your unflinching dedication to the order of your spiritual master. Now I too must find the strength to make my best effort to follow your example.

To truly honor and offer you something to repay my debt I feel obligated to help preserve what you've established and tell others what you did. To change the world, as you inspired us to do...I must inspire others. Śrīla Prabhupāda as I become older I realize how little I know and how far away from the holy name I am but still I beg that you continue to nurture me as a mother and guide me as a father. I pray I will remain at your feet and develop my personal spiritual determination. Perhaps then I can be of some help. That is my prayer, Śrīla Prabhupāda,,that I can assist in some way and fulfill the task of leaving your Movement strong and

healthy as it shifts into the hands of the next generation. While I am still able I will make every effort to take advantage of all that you have given and again join you in service to Lord Krishna.

Your daughter,

Laxmimoni Devī Dāsī

Caturbhujā Dāsa

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

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

“I was born in the darkest of ignorance, but my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torchlight of knowledge. I offer him my humble obeisances.”

This year’s Vyāsa-pūjā offering is especially poignant because it allows me to focus on the time and space or place when we were physically with you 46 years ago.

As my mind rolls from place to place, sitting as I am in Marley Walk in Willesden Green, London, I am aptly reminded yet again of memories of your glorious presence. Marley Walk is a short distance away from Ellesmere Road, where, on Sunday 25 July 1976, you came to our home with the devotees. Your presence graced the occasion with wonderful *kīrtan*, lectures and of course a sumptuous prasādam feast. Together we sat and ate and chattered away in conversation.

Since then more than 40 years have elapsed, and time has left its indelible mark. With every passing moment one is constantly minded of your transcendental literature, namely, your books through the translation of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, among many others. These books remain a constant one true source of solace and guidance.

From the spiritual literature that you have left for mankind, one sees the beauty, the opulence and purity in Kṛṣṇa speaking the

Bhagavad-gītā to His friend and disciple Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra. Equally one sees and imbibes the pastimes of the Lord with His devotees. May your Movement prevail and continue to spread all over the world with renewed vigour and devotion.

With the ever dwindling number of direct disciples of yours now left on the planet, it remains a fervent hope that the newer devotees of the second and third generation will take Lord Caitanya's Movement forward, wherever they may be all over the world. May that message be broadcast long and far to every reach and outpost on the planet.

Large swathes of the population never cease to be amazed by the sacrifice you made, in advanced age, bringing to mankind, the message of the Lord. My constant thinking of your wondrous pastimes in different parts of the world and in different languages is truly amazing.

Recently, Śrīla Prabhupāda, some of us have taken up Sanskrit. The language opens up different worlds. The language with its nuances is clearly significant because it is the language in which the Lord and His devotees speak in. We believe in years to come the Sanskrit language will prove to be the utmost spiritual and educational tool of value for the masses, for the kind of readers and leaders we want in the future.

Your humble servant,

Caturbhūja Dāsa

London

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

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

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

The time is 1.50am on Monday 30th March 2015 at 101, Marley Walk, Willesden Green, London. Having encouraged my two godbrothers, Caturbhuja Prabhu and Jagatbandhu Prabhu to write their Vyāsa-pūjā offerings to you, I sit down to write my own.

What immediately comes to mind is a book I wanted to write based on a Vyāsa-pūjā offering I made to you a few years back delineating some 26 times I recall having your *darśana* between 1969 and 1977 at different locations in London and Paris, at Bury Place, at Conway Hall, Holborn, at Kensington Town Hall, at our home; all the places are suddenly coming back to me as I write. So, please allow me to list all the locations as I remember them, for they have become your divine *tīrthas* for all people to take advantage of, and so glorify you more and more.

1. 6th October 1969 at Conway Hall, Holborn, London whilst giving the Śrī Īsopaniṣad lectures.
2. In your flat at Baker Street, Farley Court, opposite the London Planetarium.
3. Our Friendly Stores shop with a flat above at 85, Dudden Hill Lane, Willesden, London, NW10 1BD.
4. Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna Temple, 7, Bury Place, Bloomsbury, London, where you initiated us, as a family of five on 17th December 1969.
5. Heathrow Airport, your amazing arrival and departure scenes.
6. Our beautiful laundrette, Speed Queen Coin-wash in 1971, converted from the previous *ugra-karma* grocery store,

Friendly Stores.

7. A wooden church hall in Wembley, in 1972, where you installed our Deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda, and initiated 16 devotees.
8. London Rathāyātra of 1972, sitting on your Vyāsāsana under Lord Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā at Marble Arch.
9. July 1973, Orly Airport, Paris. You asked me from your car window, 'Where is your father?'
10. Later on, on Ekādaśī, whilst eating your prasadam, which I had cooked for you, in your rooms, at the Paris temple, 4, Rue de Soeur, you asked me, 'Have you got more?'
11. Whilst you were offering first *ārati* to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Parisīśvara in the temple room, I was assisting Śrīla Bhagavān Dāsa carrying the Lord's cāmara fan.
12. July 1973 at Bhaktivedanta Manor you were giving *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* class in the morning in the old temple room, which is now the theatre room, you said, 'Let the whole world be against you, your father, your mother, your brothers, your everyone, but, if Kṛṣṇa is on your side, then you are safe.'
13. August 1973 we celebrated your 77th Appearance Day in the new temple room at Bhaktivedānta Manor by cooking 77 preparations for you from home, and you gave a lecture in the presence of the High Commissioner of India, Upar Pantha, I believe.
14. I remember going on morning walks with you in the cornfields of Letchmore Heath, with Bhaja Hari Prabhu, Vaikuṅṭhanatha Prabhu, Śrutakīrti Prabhu and Mother Kaiśorī.
15. I recall your darsana in your darsana room upstairs at Bhaktivedānta Manor, giving me two instructions, 'So long as you are with your father, everything will be alright.' And secondly, you said to me, 'Continue your education and become Kṛṣṇa conscious.'
16. On another occasion there, you accepted my 'mud dahl', 'uncooked rice' and 'soggy *chapattis*', which I had so carefully prepared for you. I feel like such an idiot when I recall this. How could I possibly do that, unless I was such

- a gormless twit.
17. On yet another occasion, I recall going into your darśana room and receiving Gāyatrī from you. I will leave it to my book as to what happened there then.
 18. July 1973 I recall you dancing all the way from Marble Arch to Trafalgar Square on the London Rathāyātra, particularly at Piccadilly Circus, as we approached the Eros. I was carrying your walking stick, in close proximity to Śrutakīrti Prabhu and Hamsadutta Prabhu, who was leading the *kīrtana*.
 19. I recall following you up the wooden make-shift steps, with a large number of devotees, to the plinth at Trafalgar Square, where you delivered a stunning lecture to thousands and thousands of people.
 20. I recall you coming to our new home at 108, Ellesmere Road, Dollis Hill, London, on 25th July 1976 and staying with us for over five hours. Caturbhuja Prabhu later described this event as akin to Lord Rāmacandra's great home-coming to Ayodhyā, after defeating all the demons.

There are at least eight other distinct times when I recall your *darśana*, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but for fear of making my offering too long I will write about them, by your mercy, in my book.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. All glories to Your Divine Grace and may your fame be spread all over the three worlds.

Your humble servant,

Karanodakasayi Visnu Dāsa Adhikārī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Recently somebody asked me what the A.C. stood for in your name and I told the person that your birth name was Abhay Charan which, in English, means fearless. And fearless you always were and always will be because you are a pure lover of the Lord. You exhibited fearlessness everywhere you went and in everything you did. You taught us to be fearless and to always depend on Krishna for protection. I have never known anyone as fearless as you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Not only were you confident and unafraid when you boarded the Jaladuta and sailed to America alone and with no money but rather you saw it as a great transcendental adventure. You wrote in your June, 1966 letter to Brahmācari Mangalaniloy, a disciple of your godbrother Śrīpād Mādhava Mahārāja:

“I am glad to understand that you are serious for joining me in my great adventure for preaching the message of Rūpa Raghunāth in these parts of the world. I am confident to see fulfillment of Lord Caitanya’s mission in every corner of the world. His Divine Grace wanted this mission to be fructified during His presence but He was so much disappointed in the last days of His life for many of His follower’s in disciplinary activities. I do not know how far I shall be successful in this attempt but I am trying my best to do this job as He wanted me to do.”

Unfortunately he did not come to join you and in fact none of your godbrothers, nor their disciples came to America to assist you or cooperate with your mission and yet you continued undeterred – fearless.

A month after writing that letter you officially incorporated the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and launched the greatest worldwide spiritual revolution in modern history. You alone fulfilled the desire of your guru mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura, both of whom wanted that Lord Caitanya’s glories be spread throughout the world beginning with the English speaking countries. You alone took the order of Mahāprabhu on your head that:

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the personification of the name “Abhay Caraṇāravinda,” one who is fearless at the lotus feet of the Lord, you have fulfilled the real purport of the name “Bhaktivedanta,” You are the personification of the title “Swami”... one who controls the mind and senses, and you are without a doubt qualified to be known as “Prabhupāda, at whose feet all other prabhus congregate. You are *jaḡad-guru*, the spiritual master of the entire world.

Your servant,

Svarupa Dāsa

Balabhadra Dasa and Chaya Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti itī nāmīne*

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

Every Vyāsa-pūjā day we attempt to report to you our humble activities throughout the year in service to you. We remember when you would come to a temple and how you wanted to hear about everyone’s activities. It was always a day of self-reckoning.

Here is our brief report.

Several cows under our care have gone to greener pastures; Gaṅḍa – the brahminical gentleman, Gourāṅgi – with the mischievous eyes, Gaṅgā – the devoted mother who lost her only

son and Krishna the ox who charmed all the female guests. Their brave and gracious passing and the herds' compassion towards them taught us patience and courage in times of illness and death.

There was also the rescue from slaughter of eight calves and Kāḷindī the milking cow. Their brief story follows.

She was frightened. It was Sunday and the day the cows who were to be sent to slaughter were trucked away from the dairy to the slaughterhouse. She was separated from the other cows as were the unfortunate cows who were no longer producing much milk. The bull calves were also separated to be trucked away. The truck came and all the cows went away but she remained. Balabhadra, Judy, Scott, Lakshmī and Bālaji guided Kāḷindī into the ISCOWP trailer. Little did she know that she was headed in a different direction than her herd mates who went before her.

The trailer finally arrived at the ISCOWP farm and Kāḷindī was very upset. She was banging herself against the trailer in anxiety. She was foaming at the mouth. We opened the door and she hesitated to leave the trailer. She finally stepped down onto ISCOWP land and she began her life as a protected cow. First she stood quietly and then to our surprise she started running all over the yard kicking her heels in the air. It was amazing to watch her. Her milk bag was large and she kicked her hind legs so far into the sky! How she got her large body and heavy rear end up so far in the air could only be due to her immense realization that she was free from the dairy. What a joy, pleasure and privilege it was to watch her.

It was not quite the same for the eight calves saved from the auction barn a few months earlier. They also hesitated to leave the trailer when arriving at the ISCOWP farm. It was more due to physical weakness than fear. Most of them were only a few days old and were never allowed to suck their mothers' milk. They lacked the nutritional protection that comes from mothers' milk.

Each of these calves had to be bottled fed for six months. The little black calf could not suck and became weaker. We feared he would not survive. All of them had to have a few rounds of antibiotics as they contracted bronchitis which is not uncommon with calves coming from the auction barns. Not only did these calves not get the nutrition of their mothers' milk, they were also exposed to germs and were in extreme anxiety while at

the auction barn.

Each of the calves has their story of survival. Akshobhya, the once weak, black calf, is now a big, strong young ox. Meenākshī, who had water on her brain which gave her a very large head, is now a beautiful young girl. Her head has grown in proportion to her body. She was unlikely to be sold at auction due to her defect and would have been left to die if the ISCOWP staff did not save her.

There are more cow protection stories to tell of last year's ISCOWP activities. There are more stories to tell from other cow protectors all over the world. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you would be happy to hear these stories as they prove your instructions and knowledge of the importance of cow protection has influence even though you are no longer physically with us.

It has been 25 years since we took up the mission of cow protection as taught to us by you. It seems like yesterday, instead of 1990, that we incorporated the International Society for Cow Protection (ISCOWP). Your inspiration and instructions have brought us to foreign lands and to intense experiences and deep realizations. We, who have been meat eaters and have eaten the cow again and again, were turned into cow protectors by you. Who could have had such potency to inspire such a change in any human being? And then your instructions and personal potency gave us the drive through 25 years to continue the mission of cow protection.

This year we (Balabhadra Dāsa and Chāyādevī Dāsī) turned 69 years old. Seventy years old is not far away and a milestone in anyone's life. We find our bodies are not as strong and energetic as before, but our minds and hearts are even more determined than before. They are filled with the urgency to spread the importance of cow protection in spiritual life.

You are the most inspirational and glorious example of achieving great accomplishments late in life. Your life example is our guide. We can never hope to have the influence and potency you have, but we can beg you to allow us to humbly follow in your footsteps. Please guide us in our remaining years to humbly serve your mission of cow protection.

In the past 25 years we have had the privilege to protect and care for 28 cows to their natural passing from this earth. We lived with these cows since they were babies and through old age until

many of them turned 20 plus years old and left us. Their faces and personalities are a sweet memory. Presently there are 24 cows we are protecting. In the past few years we have rescued 14 calves and cows from slaughter. To watch them run and jump in joy after being listless and frightened is a deeply joyful experience that you have allowed us to have.

Compared to the number of cows that are slaughtered every day, the amount of cows we have personally rescued and protected is very small. We can be part of the protection of more cows than we can ever hope to personally save by spreading the knowledge of cow protection as you have taught it and practically helping others protect cows. We estimate we have distributed 57,000 booklets, newsletters about cow protection. These publications are available online and therefore more people can read them. Once again, this is such a small reach to the people of the world. The more literature that can be written and distributed, the more people – devotees and non-devotees – will be reached and shown the importance of cow protection. Only through your mercy can we be part of the increase in the publication of more cow protection literature.

There they go! They have been looking out the barn windows for days sniffing the warmer air. Never having eaten fresh grass they would not know what they would be missing. But their instincts prevail. With their now healthy bodies the rescued calves break through the barn gate and escape onto the small nearby lawn and pasture. They jump and run around and around in joy. Such innocent, pure joy! Kāḷindī, the rescued dairy cow, was in the same barn with the calves and also escapes. It is spring now and nearly time for grazing. We wanted to give the grass more time to grow, but the calves decided differently.

It is you Śrīla Prabhupāda who has made this joyous occasion possible. There are more similar occasions experienced by more cow protectors all due to your causeless mercy. With your blessing let us be part of more joyous occasions for the cows throughout our lives.

Ever thankful for your mercy,

Your servants,

International Society for Cow Protection (ISCOWP)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to your divine service to the *paramparā* and to Mahāprabhu's mission.

I grew up close to the first Los Angeles Temple (on La Cienaga Boulevard). During my high school years I would see devotees on *japa* walks in my neighborhood, and also see their *harināma* party in Hollywood.

Before this, in 1967, I had come to Haight-Ashbury one week after you had left there. I had seen your devotees and spent time in the Golden Gate Park, in the places where you had held kīrtans and taken your morning walks.

When I left Los Angeles to go to college in Berkeley, I would also frequently see the devotees. And as in Los Angeles, I lived at a walking distance from the temple. Thus I was always near your movement – and therefore near you – in my teenage years.

In Berkeley, with the help of a professor in philosophy, the devotees arranged to offer an accredited university course on the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. I had become intrigued by Indian philosophy so I jumped at the opportunity to take the course. I loved every minute of it and it was this course that convinced me to later become a devotee (of the 150 students who enrolled, only two became devotees).

I returned home for the Christmas holidays and immediately went to the Los Angeles temple. As soon as I stepped in, I was told you were arriving and I was invited to come along to the airport to welcome you! When I received my first *darśana* of Your Divine Grace, I was so overwhelmed that I broke down in tears. I must have known on an unconscious level that you would be giving me everything I had been looking for, taking me out of the material world, and placing me at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Seeing you solidified my resolve to move into the temple. I told my parents I would be leaving my education and dedicating my life in your service. They tried to convince me otherwise but I wouldn't budge from my decision. Disappointed and upset, and feeling that I had rejected them, they began to distance themselves

from me. This only made me more attached to you as my real father.

Some years ago, I began writing a book recollecting these and other events that brought me to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I was reminded of how Kṛṣṇa had rolled out the red carpet for me. Coming to your lotus feet had practically been effortless. And it seemed that every event in my life had prepared me to accept you as my spiritual master.

With the deepest gratitude, I reflect daily on the value of your service in my life. Like many youths of the 60s, I was looking for meaning in life and I hadn't found it until I met you, at which point everything changed. Had I not met you, my life would have been a series of disappointments and frustrations.

Whether the service you give me is enjoyable or austere, whether it brings rewards or problems, it is always "sweet and pleasing like morning dew." I therefore thank you, both for making it so easy for me to come to your lotus feet and for allowing me to continue serving you to this day.

As you wrote to Lord Kṛṣṇa when you arrived in Boston, "I guess must have some business here since you brought me to this terrible place." I also sense you must have some business for me since you made so many arrangements to pull me out of material life and keep me engaged in your service. My prayer is that you reveal to me how I can best do this and that you engage me eternally in your service.

Your service is my life.

Your aspiring servant,

Mahatma Dāsa

My Story/Ode to Śrīla Prabhupāda

Born into dense illusion, one of countless conditioned souls; doomed to endless births and deaths while playing different roles. My life a hell that made no sense, trying drugs I took my chances; searching faces on streets and buses, hoping to find someone with answers.

Religion as I knew it seemed a total farce, and the diet of dead animals weighed heavy on my heart. So trapped I studied different books, became an avid reader: Leary, Huxley, Buddhism, a small little *Bhagavad-gītā*. Though small and insignificant I searched for knowledge true. If there was a kindly God, I begged for but a clue.

The summer of '69 found my younger brother and I in Boston. Along with other seekers we'd go to Harvard Square quite often. One special day before us danced a group in orange bed sheets. Intrigued, we watched, chanted along and were given some "simply wonderful" white sweets!

Who were these people? What'd they find? What did their mantra mean? Swarūp and Manmohinī soon became two new additions to Prabhupāda's spiritual team!!

Now the how and why this Prabhupāda came is quite a blessed miracle. He melted hearts and changed the lives of even the most cynical. He understood our sorry plight with Godless lives so vacant, and pure devotees of his kind can never be complacent. And so he came from far abroad and risked his life to save us. He taught us how to speak, eat, dance, and even, renamed us!

He cut through our illusions using knowledge like a sword, explaining that as spirit souls we're meant to love and serve the Lord! Embodiment of compassion and of the purest selfless love, it seemed his every movement was choreographed from above. All moves had grace and purpose, never wasting any time, engaging every single soul in Lord Chaitanya's line. The Prabhupāda hat and two step, so charming and unique, and the cookies that he handed out were the sweetest of the sweet!

Twelve glorious years he walked and talked and lived right in our midst. Who could have fathomed a benediction such as this?! Like sheep we flocked to be near him. To please him was our passion.

To get a chuckle, nod or smile gave life's utmost satisfaction. The more we watched, obeyed and served, the more we learned and listened, the more our dirty hearts were cleansed until they almost glistened. All desperate searches ended as our lives began anew. Our love for him propelled us to do things we'd never do.

Brahmānanda said in class one day some humorous and true facts. At the beginning we were like Prabhupāda's guinea pigs, or better still, his laboratory rats.

Soon told to wed the temple cook, someone I didn't favor. I'd share the glory of opening temples and so I didn't waver. Right afterwards I called my mom to tell her I was now a married woman. When asked his 'real' name I said, "Hold on. I'll have to go and ask him". "You married him", she shouted, "and you don't even know his name? This time you've really done it. You've gone totally insane!"

Irate, she hung the phone down hard (an act that wasn't new), but actually this time I kind of saw her point of view. There was no doubt about it. Crazy was the truth. Crazy to please my glorious master. Crazy with gratitude.

Crazy with happiness to understand all facets of this life; to have and to hold the holy names which counteract all strife. Thrilled to play an active role in Prabhupāda's great mission, armed with his books that reveal all that is real far beyond our limited vision!

So hell yeah, I would dance in the streets wearing sheets and marry a guy I don't know. It's the least I could do for my beloved guru, for this Prabhupāda we all love so.

I would like to state for the record, my fervent plea is that, again and again I obtain the rare boon, to be a Prabhupāda laboratory rat!!!

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda. All glories to you. All glories to you.

Your eternally grateful disciple,

Manmohini Devī Dāsī

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

*śrī-caitanya-mano-bhīṣtam sthāpitaṁ yena bhū-tale
svayaṁ rūpaḥ kadā mahyam dadāti sva-padāntika*

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.

When will Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, who has established within this material world the mission to fulfill the desire of Lord Caitanya, give me shelter under his lotus feet?

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Krishna, 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 Caitanya deva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

Your Divine Grace has brought to the entire world this:

*rāja-vidyā rāja-guhyam
pavitram idam uttamam
pratyakṣāvagamam dharmyaṁ
su-sukhaṁ kartum avyayam*

“This knowledge is the king of education, the most secret of all secrets. It is the purest knowledge, and because it gives direct perception of the self by realization, it is the perfection of religion. It is everlasting, and it is joyfully performed.” (Bg 9.2)

What is this knowledge other than that the source of everything is PERSONAL and HE has form, personality, activities, friends, lovers, and that we who are blessed with the human form of life have this golden opportunity to know HIM and live with HIM forever...

This is far, far beyond the concept of “heaven” we learned in

church as a boy.

Everyone, everywhere wants to be happy. But, everyone everywhere is being disturbed by the variety of pains flung upon them by material nature. Even the greatest kings and the richest men end up with diseases, old age, and ultimate death although they do not want these.

Your Divine Grace, you have brought the science of Krishna to the entire world and made it easy for anyone with a tongue to get freedom from this ocean of suffering! Only you said, “Chant HARE KRISHNA mantra! Dance happily! And when you are hungry always eat Krishna *prasādam!*”

Is it difficult? Not at all. Can anyone do it? Oh yes anyone can. Why don't they? They are,

*prāyeṇālpāyusaḥ sabhya
kalāv asmin yuge janāḥ
mandāḥ sumanda-matayo
manda-bhāgyā hy upadrutāḥ*

“Oh learned one, in this iron age of Kali men have but short lives. They are quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unlucky and, above all, always disturbed.” (SB 1.1.10)

So we are indeed quarrelsome, lazy, and always disturbed. You have delivered the medicine, but we are unfortunate and instead of taking it, we have remained quarrelsome and lazy. How unfortunate are we?

Still Your Divine Grace, we have remained steadfast in our complete faith in your good self and in the process of bhakti that you have brought to us. We know our lapses are our own responsibility and we accept that we must suffer the reactions ourselves. We do not blame you, or Lord Krishna, or any other living being. We alone are at fault...

And we accept that we may be born again, and again and have to take up this process birth after birth.

*cakhu-dān dilo jei, janme janme prabhu sei
divya-jñān ḥṛde prokāśito
prema-bhakti jāhā hoite, avidyā vināśa jāte
vede gāy jāhāra carito*

“He who has given me the gift of transcendental vision is my lord, birth after birth. By his mercy divine knowledge is revealed within the heart, bestowing *prema-bhakti* and destroying ignorance. The Vedic scriptures sing of his character.” Śrī Guru vandana Verse 3

Your Divine Grace, on this, the 119th anniversary of your divine appearance upon this earth planet, I your eternal servant Bhakta Dāsa, offer my *danḍavats* at your lotus feet again and again.

My prayer is that I can remain with you wherever you are serving the dust of your lotus feet forever.

Your eternal servant,

Bhakta Dāsa

Initiated March 1970 in Los Angeles

Narottamananda das

Dear Srila Prabhupada,

You entered as the candle in the cave of our existence and became the sun of our day and the moon in our evening sky. You engaged us to assist in your grand vision, though we are insignificant facets on the jewel that is you.

You are Krishna’s dear servant and intimate associate. This truth is beyond my current capacity of understanding, but I acknowledge that it is far from ordinary. I do comprehend that each of us loves you deeply. We are somewhat of a ragtag group, though we sincerely strive in our attempts to serve you. Pure love and surrender seem easy, but in practice are not so simple, due to lifetimes of conditioning. Repeated births have lodged habits difficult to break, but our desire to please you has created the hope of possibility.

You are kind, gentle and encouraging, but also more ‘heavy’ than can be weighed. You are fixed on the goal of Caitanya’s truth and Radha Krishna lila. You are strong and unwavering in your preaching. Your aim is high, your guidance firm, but often we find ourselves limited by our imperfect service to you.

I recently returned from the 40th anniversary celebration of opening your Krishna Balaram temple in Vrindaban. We

experienced a nice mood of appreciation and inclusiveness, which was very satisfying. It takes greater love to see the good than the defects. I felt your presence more in this mood. I hope you were pleased.

I met two of your dear sons there for the first time in 30 years. They have always been a potent team and were reunited again doing their magic, Gunarnava and Surabhi prabhhus. For years they struggled to bring your dreams to fruition and what a success it has been. Sitting under the scattered trees and open spaces of Raman Reti, gradually visioning and building a temple simply because you desired it, and before anyone, Gurudas, Yamuna, and a few others dedicated themselves in spite of their lack of Hindi and the severe climate of dust, heat and mosquitoes to insure the success of your first construction project. Through the years many others played their part in this Vrindaban story, assisting in manifesting your envisioned oasis in Krishna and Balarama's playground. I know of no other person who could attract such a variegated crew to work together as if fastened by thread to the garland of your love while expressing their service in surrender.

Each of us shares a unique capacity to move the devotional effort forward according to ability and commitment. This festival highlighted our combined efforts to assist in your desire to glorify the Lord and his pastimes in Vrindaban.

The more we remember you, as well as recognize minute reflections of your qualities within us, the more we shall come together as family. A family may not be without differences of opinion, that is only natural, but a mature family has respect and positive appreciation for each member's contribution, as well as an over all feeling of love. Therefore, the more we can see the unity of what we share, the stronger we become. The more we look for differences the more divisive we become.

You are our super glue. If you are in the forefront we easily fall into formation. If individual egos come into play, things become confused, leading to bickering and division.

This festival was satisfying because everyone remembered you. We spoke about you and appreciated those who assisted in your efforts and your struggles. We remembered the challenges that were faced and how these difficulties were stepping stones or markers on our individual spiritual journeys. We observed that

the desired fruit of each devotee's service was the simple hope to witness your beaming smile and ultimate satisfaction.

Thank you for giving us a chance to serve you, for giving us each other, for our memories of you and these special years and irreplaceable moments. We may not be perfect. We may not be fully mature and as ripened as you, but we had the good fortune of being attracted by your Grace and through service we have become family.

When many of us are gathered together speaking from the heart, I am reminded of your determination, your humility, your humor, your strength, your intelligence, your practicality, your warmth, your vision, your common sense, your devotion, your elegance, your sensitivity, your wisdom and much more.

I offer unlimited appreciation to my godbrothers and godsisters for the gift of sharing their thoughts and memories of you, including those that have left us much too soon, rejoining your services elsewhere.

Your servant,

Narottamananda das

Satadhanya Dāsa

All that matters is our genuine spiritual advancement: *Krishna consciousness*—how much you actually have—and rendering sincere and practical devotional service to Śrīla Prabhupāda—nothing else—absolutely nothing else!

Not your position, not your profile, not even how many disciples you have in tow or their plaudits—the only legal tender and 24-carat currency is Krishna consciousness.

Vāstava-Vastu, what Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura called the “*really real thing*”, is Krishna consciousness. It is commonsensical and discernible by your words and actions. You may have and display everything else, but give yourself away in a split second by foolish words or actions—you cannot avoid detection by *Śāstra Chakṣus*.

We should try to be real and honest with ourselves and others,

not *pretend* to be *absolutely pure*, a *paramahansa*, or *imitate Śrīla Prabhupāda*—but to follow in the footsteps of Śrīla Prabhupāda and aspire for perfection by our sincerity of service, *sādhana* and taking shelter of the chanting of the holy names of the Lord—*pretension cannot stand!*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: It is lust only, Arjuna, which is born of contact with the material mode of passion and later transformed into wrath, and which is the all-devouring sinful enemy of this world.” (Bg 3.37)

Sensuality, the enemy of spiritual advancement, permeates our very materialistic being—it defines ‘bodily consciousness’. It’s not so easily, quickly or thoroughly given up simply by keeping up appearances—it bade us to commit a lifetime or more of spiritual practice in order to traverse corporeal bondage.

“The embodied soul may be restricted from sense enjoyment, though the taste for sense objects remains. But, ceasing such engagements by experiencing a higher taste, he is fixed in consciousness.” (Bg 2.59)

“Unless one is transcendently situated, it is not possible to cease from sense enjoyment.” (Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purport)

Śrīla Viśwanāth Chakravorty Thakur in his *Mādhurya Kaḍambinī* says it necessitates a protracted and determined *declaration of war on Māyā*, wherein sometimes you win and sometimes you lose. Whereby you could become the victim of the very thing you are fighting against or trying to renounce.

Rūpa Goswāmī states that: “Unless and until one is situated beyond the bodily concept of life, one can fall down at any time.”

One must first and foremost understand and gradually be established on the platform beyond the bodily concept of life. Not by separate endeavor but by *Krishna consciousness* and *Harer Nāma*. Like it or not, it’s a prerequisite to the rest: *Nāma, Rūpa, Guṇa, Līlā!*
Don’t become a clown and naive to imagine you are now

entering into *rāgānuga bhakti* or have become a *rasika bhakta!* Don't jump like a monkey—first be factually free from monkey propensities—Sex.

“It is not giving up sex which is the ultimate sacrifice, but giving up the prospect of ever having it” (preface by Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura).

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura said: “There is nothing so easy as for the small to think he has become big.”

Humility is indicative of palpable spiritual progress—it's the safest and genuine path.

These are incontrovertible truths and Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*. So why do we, oftentimes, act so surprised, immature, holier than thou or downright react with inexorable rancor when a *sincere devotee* is defeated by the senses in any instance—that also infrequently or for a short period of his life?

*api cet su-durācāro
bhajate mām ananya-bhāk
sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ
samyag vyavasito hi saḥ* (Bg 9.30)

“Even if one commits the most abominable actions, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated.”

PURPORT

“... Sometimes, however, it may be seen that a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness commits some act which may be taken as most abominable socially or politically. But such a temporary falldown does not disqualify him. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is stated that if a person falls down but is wholeheartedly engaged in the transcendental service of the Supreme Lord, the Lord, being situated within his heart, beautifies him and excuses him from

that abomination. The material contamination is so strong that even a yogi fully engaged in the service of the Lord sometimes becomes ensnared; but Kṛṣṇa consciousness is so strong that such an occasional falldown is at once rectified. Therefore the process of devotional service is always a success. No one should deride a devotee for some accidental falldown from the ideal path, for, as is explained in the next verse, such occasional falldowns will be stopped in due course, as soon as a devotee is completely situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

Are you, albeit holding a *high post* or finding yourself *routinely glorified, unequivocally beyond the bodily concept of life*—quite frankly, I, for one, doubt it!

So, if applicable: please get real in one’s assessment of one’s self and one’s spiritual advancement, and please do not lump everyone together and rush to condemn and continue to condemn others to perdition. You just may find that by chanting the holy names of the Lord, such an unlikely candidate has developed Vaiṣṇava qualities and realization equal to or than yours!

Let us together, in truth, transcend the bodily platform of life—and by so doing become *immortal*—that will empower us to effect real and indubitable *cooperation, devotee care, devotional service, Krishna consciousness and most importantly to please Śrīla Prabhupāda—in the true sense of all these terms!*

Your Servant,

Satadhanya Dāsa

Mahātmā-Śrīla Prabhupāda

All credit goes to Śrīla Prabhupāda
for awakening the world,
Granting us the power of the Lord's holy name

Cleansing our hearts and purifying the spiritual desires,
This is the mission for which you came

Bold as can be and finding no hurdle too high,
Sending your army to all places

The mahā-mantra changed our lives and put smiles
On all our faces

Taking nothing for yourself but giving all you had,
Showing the example of highest devotion

Kindly taking all of us fallen souls beyond
The miserable material ocean

All glories to you with your heart full of compassion
Spilling out to all mankind

Such a *mahātmā*, personally sent by the Lord Himself,
Is the greatest treasure one could find

Akuti Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My obeisances unto you who has given us a chance to perfect our lives and reach the highest destination of Goloka Vrindāvana.

Recently in Vrindāvana we celebrated the 40th anniversary of your opening the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple. Why was the temple built? In one of the last purports you wrote before leaving this world you said, “In Vṛndāvana there is a place where there was no temple, but a devotee desired, “Let there be a temple and sevā, devotional service.” Therefore, what was once an empty corner has now become a place of pilgrimage. Such are the desires of a devotee. SB 10.13.50 By your desire only so many devotees sacrificed their own desires for health, wealth, comfortable living, etc. to perform austerities in huts in the hot summers of Vrindāvana just to build your Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple.

By your desire only we are all here today still trying our best to serve you. Your instructions are all we have. In my initiation letter you gave me six instructions: chant at least 16 rounds, follow strictly the regulative principles, read and study all your books, do Deity worship, preach and be always engaged 24 hours a day.

Now my concentration is to write books for your pleasure and for the pleasure of the Vaiṣṇavas. We are begging your mercy to be determined to spread your message through these books. We thank you for protecting us always from so many obstructions, distractions and deviations. Let us always be open to receiving your mercy in whatever way it may come. In a second letter to me you gave me instructions on how to carry out my service to you. Three things are most important: I should work sincerely, enthusiastically and cooperatively with the devotees. In a third letter you emphasized determination and sincerity. So by your mercy we are determined to finish the whole *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* with a picture for every verse as soon as possible. We hope this pleases you since it is by pleasing the spiritual master then Lord Kṛṣṇa is pleased.

Once when we were pūjārīs in Calcutta, you called my husband and I up to your Vyāsāsana after *darśana āratī*. You said, ‘thank you very much for worshipping the Deities so nicely’. Afterwards one

sannyāsī told us something that you said while we were offering our obeisances. You said, “Be blessed.” I understood that you were pleased with us, but then again on the next day I knew that we had to again earn your blessings. So now again I am trying to earn your blessings. Please remember me and let me always remember your instructions and try to carry them out to the best of my ability.

Your servant,

Narayani Devī Dāsī

Kirtiraja Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace, our eternal master, father and friend.

I’ve been given the opportunity and responsibility to write this year’s Vyāsa-pūjā offering to you on behalf of your disciples, grand disciples and great grand disciples here at your New Raman Reti Community in Alachua, Florida. Actually, here in New Raman Reti, there are two little girls who are your great, great grand disciples, fourth generation ISKCON devotees. We are all deeply honored and privileged, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that you have brought us into your Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava family. We are eternally indebted to you for having saved our lives and for continuing to save our lives as you guide us along the path back home, back to Godhead. Unfortunately, sometimes it’s necessary for us to be dragged along that path and you so kindly do that as well.

It is said so many times, that you have built a house in which the whole world can live. We see living proof of that here in New Raman Reti. Devotees have come here from more than 30 countries to take shelter of you, the Deities and each other. Together, under your guidance and because of your inspiration, we worship the Deities, put on fantastic festivals, distribute your books, teach the children, distribute *prasādam*, share the *darshan* of Lord Jagannātha during numerous Rathāyātras and in general, try to spread your message wherever we go and to whomever we meet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have instilled in us, the importance of serving Krishna and the importance of getting others to serve Krishna too. Sometimes it's not easy to live together with so many members of our extended family with so many varied cultural backgrounds. But, you have taught us Krishna culture and when we truly endeavor to keep Krishna and Your Divine Grace in the center of our lives and everything that we do, living together in this ever-growing family becomes transcendently rewarding, enlivening, fulfilling and, hopefully, most important of all, pleasing to you.

When my family and I moved here in 1991, there were only forty devotees in the immediate area. Now your community here has grown to almost one thousand devotees and has become the largest Vaiṣṇava community in the Western world. You have provided a shelter for us all and we are eternally indebted to you for that. To see our children teaching our grandchildren about Krishna and to hear those grandchildren telling others, including their grandparents, about Krishna is truly transcendently rewarding.

So many of your disciples and grand disciples from around the world have gathered here and we are trying our best to offer some meaningful service to you and to further develop our dedication to and love for you as we approach that ultimate test. Hopefully, we have learned what you have attempted to teach us and that we will pass that ultimate test at the time of death.

As time passes, we see so many of our family members and friends leaving this world. They serve as examples to us of how to prepare for death. Actually, they show us how to prepare for life, real life, not a life of illusion. They show us by their lives and by their dedication to following your instructions and your example, how we can prepare for eternal life in the service of Rādhā and Krishna. The time of death is just a transitional stage for us to pass through on our way into real life, an eternal life of serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The passing from this material body is necessary for us to attain our spiritual body. Without leaving behind the old, we cannot take up the new.

As we're all starting to feel more and more the pangs of disease, old age and in increasing numbers, death, we are having direct experience of what you've been telling us for the last forty and fifty years. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have taught us how to live a life

absorbed in Krishna consciousness and you've taught us how to pass on at death to engage cent percent in the Lord's pastimes. No one in this world except you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, has ever spread these teachings of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu to such far-flung corners of the globe and to so many unqualified individuals. While we see them and ourselves as unqualified, you see us as qualified recipients of your mercy because we are all part and parcel of the Lord. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given us an opportunity like no other. Your compassion knows no bounds.

Writing this offering to you reminds me of an analogy you've often given. This feeble attempt to glorify you is like offering a conch shell full of Ganges water to the mighty Ganges River or like offering a ghee lamp to the blazing sun. Your qualities are unlimited, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and even if we had unlimited mouths and a great intelligence, we could not glorify you sufficiently befitting your position.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, our debt to you is eternal, it can never be repaid. How can we EVER repay you for having given us everything? You have taught us everything and in many cases, you have had to re-teach us so many things that we've been taught incorrectly, being products of this material conditioning. And, you continue to teach us every day, through your books, your lectures, your example and through your sincere followers, no matter how old or young they may be.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, so many of us struggle to become Krishna conscious. But, you've taught us that even if we fall, we should get back up, brush ourselves off and continue to serve Krishna. You taught us to understand that being in this material world we're not in a healthy condition, but that we should try to get well by continuing to take the medicine that you have prescribed for us; chanting, dancing, reading your books and honoring *prasādam*, all in the association of others who are also endeavoring to become healthy. You've taught us that our spiritual health should become our primary concern.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have brought us into a family with such a rich and vibrant tradition of devotion and service to the Lord, something that is lacking in this world. You used to tell us that there are so many educational institutions but there is not one department for teaching us who we really are. You have created not

only that department, but you've created a worldwide educational institution to teach everyone who they really are, no matter their race, color or creed.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you've taught us about the nine processes of devotional service and that we can become fully Krishna conscious by perfecting all nine of them or even just one of them. You saw in each one of us a spark of Krishna consciousness because you saw us as eternal loving servants of the Lord who had lost our way. You fanned that spark of Krishna consciousness and you've given us everything we need to perfect our lives in the service of the Lord.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you always taught us to see the good in everyone and everything, not from a sentimental perspective but from the realized perspective that everyone and everything is part and parcel of the Lord and that everyone and everything can be engaged in the Lord's service.

I pray to you that we may all unite and bond together for your service and for your pleasure and that we may all learn from each other how to truly become Krishna conscious.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, how can words convey your glories? Who you really are, your importance to the world and how much you mean to us. I always find myself at a loss for words when it comes to express my gratitude to you. Sometimes I feel the only way to say "thank you" is to prostrate myself before you and ask for your help, guidance and blessings to become worthy of being called your disciple.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Kirtiraja Dāsa

Mahamaya-Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Please allow me to be a viable instrument in fulfilling your mission. To be faithful to your instructions is one level

of commitment, but to actually be useful and please you is my ardent prayer.

This year since Your Divine Grace's last Vyāsa-pūjā celebration has brought so many changes in my life. First was the auspicious birth of my first grandchild, Kānāi Govinda Dāsa, on November 12, 2014. Please bless this 3rd generation devotee who promises to be a soul surrendered to your lotus feet.

And along with birth also came death: my dear husband of 37 years, Jñānagāmya Dāsa, departed from this earthy plane on February 17, 2015. It was his fervent desire that he leave his body in Māyāpur, and he got his desire fulfilled. You promised that we'd have another ISKCON in the spiritual sky, so I hope my husband is sitting right now at your lotus feet. He was truly a loyal and devoted servant of Your Divine Grace (described by many as a "Prabhupāda man"—what greater honor is there?) and I ask that you also bestow your blessings on him as well.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have been meditating on the fact that you observed your 69th birthday while on the *Jaladuta*, coming to the West to start your mission. We were so young when you warned us about impending old age, "Don't think this won't happen to you," and old age seemed so very far away. Yet with a snap of the fingers, here it is! I am about to turn 69 myself! Wait a minute! Wasn't it just yesterday when you said that? Seems like it was! Maybe it just was a senior moment... Anyway, I pray that I can perform devotional service with enthusiasm, following your extraordinary example.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am so grateful for all the mercy you have given me. On this auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I pray to feel your presence every minute of every day of my life. Please empower me to successfully execute the role you want me to play in fulfilling your mission.

Your servant,

Mahāmāya-Devī Dāsī

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

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

With each passing day
I come closer to the age
Fifty years ago this year
You stepped on the world stage

With bold determination
Leaving everything familiar
You embraced all challenges
With full faith and surrender

Powered by extraordinary love
And depth of compassion
You journeyed alone
With Śrī Krishna, your companion

You entered without fanfare
No one to greet you
Pure *bhakti* was your compass
And the light to lead you

To wanderers like me
You brought undeserved treasure
Dispatching the darkness
In undeserved measure

Sitting here in comfort
Within your ISKCON sheltered
I am awed by your fortitude
Amidst the hardship you endured

I am so deeply indebted
For the kindness you showed us
I simply pray to remain
Always fixed in your service

Your unworthy servant,

Pancharatna Dāsa

Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my fallen obeisances at your lotus feet. I join with so many others to praise you for your abounding mercy, and especially on this occasion to beg you for a drop of it, needed now more than ever.

Last summer I became a septuagenarian. Old age is, of course, one of the four inevitable sufferings (*janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhiduhkha*). But still, it's not so bad considering the alternative. So I'm happy to have reached this marker.

Of course, one misses one's body that used to work so well. And one realizes that things are only going to get worse from now on out.

(And I can't depend on my mind so much. Too often, when I try to recall a proper name, it seems to sprout wings and flutter away.)

The shock and alarm sent by this particular birthday for me came from remembering where you were on your own seventieth birthday: aboard the cargo-ship *Jaladuta*, sailing unaccompanied to America.

"I'm the same age now as Prabhupāda was when he came to America!" I repeated to my self—in amazement—and, rather too often, to anyone else in range.

To us you seemed *so old*, born as you were in the 19th century, under the reign of Queen Victoria. (You were, in fact, the same age as my own father's mother.)

And yet you went on to accomplish such extraordinary works, such wonders—all during what you more than once called "the

fag end of my life.”

Many of your Western (or at least American) followers didn't understand what you meant by “fag end.” We knew the term as somewhat dated slang for “cigarette butt.” But you used the term in the older sense, meaning (Oxford English Dictionary) “the last part of a piece of cloth,” “the untwisted end of a rope,” hence, “the last part or remnant of anything, after the best has been used.”

In your case, you disproved the final part of this definition: “the remnant, after the best has been used.” In your case, the best by far was yet to come.

You endured so many challenges and hardship, overcame so many obstacles. You are tangible proof of the power that Lord Caitanya bestows upon those who sacrifice everything to relieve Him of His anxiety:

“I am the only gardener. How many places can I go? How many fruits can I pick and distribute? It would certainly be a very laborious task to pick the fruits and distribute them alone, and still I suspect that some would receive them and others would not. Therefore I order every man within this universe to accept this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and distribute it everywhere. 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* 9.34–37).

You took it up. Following the first and last order you had received from Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, you took up his mission, as a faithful *sārasvata*, at the very point that it had floundered, and carried it on.

Then, when the bountiful *prema-phala* produced by the gardener named Caitanya (*caitanya-māli*) began to be savored around the world, you shared your thoughts about this “miracle” to your disciple Sudāmā in a letter dated December 23, 1972:

Yes, from the very beginning I went to New York because I thought that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the most important idea in the world, so let me go to that place, New York, which is the most important city in the world, and if I am

able to do anything for Kṛṣṇa and my spiritual master, even I am at the fag-end of my life, at least let me try for it there. So my dreams have all come true, and all of you nice boys and girls are getting the credit. When I was alone in your New York, I was thinking, who will listen to me in this horrible, sinful place? All right, I shall stay little longer, at least I can distribute a few of my books, that is something. But Kṛṣṇa was all along preparing something I could not see, and He brought you to me one by one, sincere American boys and girls, to be trained-up for doing the work of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Now I can see that it is a miracle. Otherwise, your city of New York, one single old man, with only a few books to sell for barely getting eatables, how he can survive, what to speak of introducing God-consciousness movement for saving the humankind? That is Kṛṣṇa's miracle. Now I can see it.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your life is a testimony to the power of discipleship. For me, this is your most important, most relevant lesson. I beg you for your mercy and your blessing that by your grace I may follow in your footsteps, and that you will make the fag end of my life a testimony to your greatness.

Falling at your feet, I am

Your unworthy servant,

Ravīndra Svarūpa Dāsa

Saptaratha Dāsa

A Prayer to His Divine Grace,

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

You have taught us so much, but my mind keeps ignoring Your Divine Grace's merciful instructions.

I pray that someday soon I will get a small inkling of the value of your words.

Until then, I will continue to struggle for fame, prestige and sense gratification, all of which keep me tightly bound to this world,

far away from my soul's true destination, eternal service to you.

You have shown us, through your splendid example, how to live a successful spiritual life even while we are in this hellish world.

It is by your mercy alone that I can truly regain my humanity.

It is by giving to others, as you have so kindly given to us, that I might recover from my selfishness and have a meaningful life.

Your eternal servant,

Saptaratha Dāsa

Suresvara Dāsa

DISTURB THE COMFORTABLE,
COMFORT THE DISTURBED

“Ministry means to disturb the comfortable and to comfort the disturbed.” When a dear Dominican nun surprised me with that epigram a few years ago, I couldn't help but think of Śrīla Prabhupāda and how often he did just that. Take Prabhupāda's first visit to Chicago.

Back in 1893 Chicago had heard the first Indian swami to come West say that everyone was God, including the loitering poor. *Daridra-nārāyana*, “poor God,” who had made his infamous debut at Chicago's World Parliament of Religions, was still roiling in the collective memory of Western clerics when Prabhupāda came to town.

It was July 1974 when His Divine Grace arrived at the Chicago temple for *guru-pūjā*. Hundreds of local and visiting devotees packed the temple room, thrilled to worship Prabhupāda in person, many seeing him for the first time. A thunderous *kīrtana* erupted as devotees sang and danced with abandon for “the master at whose feet all masters sit.”

Grave as granite, Prabhupāda presided from the *Vyāsāsana*, deftly playing *karatālas* while scanning the scene, aloof yet all-pervasive in the hearts of his followers. As the *kīrtana* began to build, I noticed that some devotees were starting to boogie—a twist here, a bugaloo there—and I started boogying, too. Soon

everyone was rockin' with the rhythm. Monkey see, monkey do.

Much like a maestro Prabhupāda raised one finger in the air and dropped it down. In an instant the kīrtana hushed, many dancers caught in boogie tableaux. Prabhupāda looked beyond the crowd to a wall painting. Gesturing to the Pancha Tattva singing and dancing, His Divine Grace commanded: "Dance! Dance like Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu!"

Mercifully disturbed, we gratefully complied.

Since he had come from Melbourne and was headed for Los Angeles, Prabhupāda had gone far out of his way to attend Chicago's first Rathāyātra. As we awaited his arrival by the tall carts, I was thinking I didn't want to bow down in the filthy street when Prabhupāda arrived. Suddenly Prabhupāda pulled up in a yellow Volkswagen bug, got out, saw Lord Jagannāth on His cart, and spontaneously bowed down in the filthy street. We all bowed down, mercifully disturbed.

Palms pressed in devoted *pranāms* before the deities, Prabhupāda was eager to ascend to the elaborately decorated cart, where he would ride with the procession. But there was no ladder, so under the fierce midday sun Prabhupāda patiently waited while devotees ran to a hardware store to get one. At last he mounted the cart and sat on the Vyāsāsana. In the *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*, Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswāmī describes what happened next:

"Although several policemen on motorcycles led the procession, their mood was hardly that of the King of Orissa, who had traditionally led the Rathāyātrā procession in India. Each year the king would present himself as a menial servant, leading the parade by sweeping the road before Lord Jagannātha with a gold-handled broom. The Chicago police, however, seemed intent only in getting the parade over with as soon as possible. With stern anxiety they dedicated themselves to keeping open the flow of ordinary automobile traffic. They acknowledged that the devotees had an official permit for the parade, but they continually prodded them to pull the cart faster, threatening to terminate the parade entirely."

Riding atop Subhadrā Mahārāṇī's cart, myself and a few

brahmacārīs were tossing peanuts ‘n’ raisins *prasādam* to the multitudes on both sides of State Street. It was great sport running to the cart’s corners, pitching the packets, and cheering the catches.

Thinking of Prabhupāda riding on the same cart below, I wondered if he were preparing some greater kindness for the occasion. It had been fourscore years plus since that impersonalist swami had given Westerners an erroneous first impression of Vedic *siddhānta*. Had Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu now sent his confidential servant thousands of miles out of his way to set the record straight?

Still hustled by the police, the devotees at last pulled the cart off State onto Civic Center Plaza. A microphone made its way through the throng up to Prabhupāda’s Vyāsāsana. “Ladies and gentlemen,” Prabhupāda began with divine grace, “I thank you very much for attending this, our Rathāyātra festival.” I closed my eyes and listened closer, straining to filter out the Chicago din. “In the *Vedānta-sūtra* it is said, *janmādy asya yataḥ*. ‘The Absolute Truth is that from WHOM everything emanates.’”

The way Prabhupāda highlighted the word *whom*, it was clear he had come not only to set the record straight but to truly “comfort the disturbed,” to introduce everyone to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who can give everyone absolute shelter at His lotus feet. Though brief, Prabhupāda’s speech was historic and compassionate.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, as you continue to dispatch me round the ISKCON world with your Founder-Ācārya seminar series, please help me comfort the disturbed by reminding them of the Absolute shelter available at your lotus feet. And if that means disturbing my comfort, then so be it. In this uncomfortable material world, our only solace is your selfless service.

Your aspiring servant,

Suresvara Dāsa

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Before I got your shelter I was a lost and confused counter-cultural youth. I had a desire to bring happiness to this suffering world but I had not a clue as to how to have it myself, what to speak of giving it to others.

By your causeless grace I now possess genuine happiness and the means of making the entire world happy. The purpose of my life is to become a pure devotee of Krishna, fully qualified to see Krishna face-to-face and in co-operation with the devotees of your International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) to make the entire world Krishna conscious.

I am prepared to take birth after birth in this material world to accomplish this mission if this is what Krishna desires of me. This purpose of life, which you have bestowed, gives me the greatest happiness and satisfaction because this is what you desire of me.

Please bless that I may eternally remain as your servant.

I can never thank you enough for saving me.

Your lowly servant,

Sankarshan Dās Adhikārī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you!

This past year, by your grace, we have been absorbed in creating a documentary film about your life and legacy, intended for a non-devotee audience. Thank you for kindly allowing us to do this service. We are most grateful to be delving into your activities and teachings and trying to make these understandable to newcomers.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, what you did and how you did it is amazing – confounding, actually. What you did and how you did it defy reason and probability. Yet even more amazing is your humble mood about your vast impact and accomplishments.

May we remain always grateful to you and fully absorbed in your service.

Your servants,

Yadubara Dāsa and Visakha Devī Dāsī

Advaita Acharya Dasa

Prabhupāda

You are the lighthouse in the storm
A refuge for those whose lives have been torn

Good role models are very rare indeed
Someone to help is plant the good seed
From this illusion we can be freed
Ignorance, lust, hatred and greed

The blind leading the blind
I think this is what you'll find
Life can be so very unkind

Sail toward the light of love
With patience and faith you will prevail
With the wind in your sail
Dedicate your life to him, you cannot fail

Gurudev your love is so strong
Please help us somehow to hang on
Chanting this wonderful transcendental song...

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda

Atmananda Dāsa

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my eternal obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to your unfathomable and inconceivable devotional service to your beloved guru-mahārāja, and to Śrī Pañca-tattva!

Yet again, I am further captured and entangled in the net of your compassionate engagement in the service to the servants of your ever-expanding *saṅkīrtan* mission.

In 2004, we hosted the Satvatove Institute's self-realisation seminars here in Auckland, New Zealand. In doing that I started to realize that I had found the best way for me to serve and please you. That realization has grown, and expanded, ever since – and as of yet, I see no ceiling. In all of my 45 year career in your Movement, I have never been so wholly engaged – and so fulfilled in that engagement. And the ways that I can further surrender, along with practical possibilities to engage others, arise on almost a daily basis! All due to your selfless and caring munificence.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for putting me in touch with such a 1st class, “souled-out to you” Vaishnava, as Dhīra Govinda dāsa Prabhu (and his assistant, Māliṅī Devī Dāsī). For selfish reasons and weakness of heart, I have not shared this so openly before. And yet I know you know my heart.

I want to be more courageous in standing up, stepping out, and taking any and all personal risk, if that will forward and expand your glories: your most wonderful personality, qualities, and guidance, in the form of your example and instructions. I pray that you continue to help me with this, particularly in taking complete responsibility for accepting that you have already given me *everything* I need to be a pure, transparent medium for your benedictions upon whomever I meet.

Every day I pray to be more aware of the unlimited potency that Lord Chaitanya has invested in you, to bless each and every sincerely progressive soul to join and expand the flood of the *sañkīrtan* ocean, and turn the tide of this hellish Age of Kali. I beg that I may drown in that ocean, forgetting everything, except to gratefully and greedily look for ways to attract everyone to dive in as well, drawn by your irresistible golden attraction.

Your struggling and committed disciple,

Atmananda Dāsa

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Of all the blessings I have received in this lifetime, (and there have been many) the blessing of meeting you and having the good sense to hear from you and take your teachings to heart, is far and away the paramount blessing.

It is not an earned blessing; not the result of pious activities or other good works. It is only the direct result of Kṛṣṇa's causeless mercy. Why I am the recipient of Kṛṣṇa's causeless mercy, I do not know. I surely do not deserve to have met you and heard from you and become your disciple, but for whatever unfathomable reason, Kṛṣṇa, seeing me squander the gift of a human life, allowed me to meet your devotees in a little house in Tucson, Arizona in 1971.

Thus, even as I fought to continue trying to enjoy the material world I was swept up in the tidal wave of ISKCON that you had initiated six years earlier in New York with no resources other than your unflagging faith in Kṛṣṇa and your guru's instruction.

For those who are fortunate, Supersoul directs from within and the spiritual master directs from without. I pray to be eternally grateful and faithful to you.

Life is short; how much more salient that sentiment becomes as we, your disciples who were once young and blithely "philosophical" about old age, disease and death, advance toward those as reality. I hope that before my next death, I have immersed my mind in your teachings so that in my next birth I will continue in your service.

Privileged to be your daughter,

Mahasini Devī Dāsī

To His Divine Grace, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,
Please accept our humble obeisances.

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.*

Līlāmañjarī Dāsī and I have tried to serve you by having a Kṛṣṇa conscious family. Our two children, Cittahārī Dāsī and Govinda Gopal Dāsa, also became devotees, and gave Kṛṣṇa four grandchildren (Śrīvas, Nimāi, Nitāi Priyā, and Bhakta Anthony) who are all Kṛṣṇa conscious. I pray you will also give them the opportunity to serve you.

You blessed us with your appearance and association. Sometimes I feel bad knowing new disciples will never have the experience of sitting in your presence and experiencing your energy of conviction.

And that is our goal, to meditate on your unwavering conviction in this life and the next.

Your disciples,

Padmanabha Dāsa and Lilamanjari Devī Dāsī

Adideva Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your lotus feet and your glorious mission spreading the light of Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world.

There I was, a pizza delivery boy with stars in my eyes for art and life. There I was a walking hollow man wondering what it is all about – shouting for help in the night, the night of total darkness – a fool clothed as a college graduate.

There I was with the draft wanting a piece of me – chasing mirages of macrobiotic buddhists. A heart welded shut with an acetylene torch – a head spinning from too many paths leading to

who knew where?

Then you came, Nitāi's representative, a branch from the Pañca Tattva reaching out for me. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the decoder, the eye opener, the direct line between darkness and light. You are the noun and the verb; the Truth and how to get there, with stacks of adjectives to define the way.

Your character is impeccable; your line is unblemished. You invited me, you invited this broken, filthy wretch to climb aboard your roaring transport. To catch the wind and ride rainbows. To break with the past – to never go back – to never return.

Never return – that's what's painted in large letters on the side of the bus headed beyond the stars. No, we are never returning – returning to what?

Lying politicians in suits and ties, feeding a carnivorous machine with tentacles everywhere, devouring the word "freedom", then spitting it out, covered with poisonous saliva. So that if you find "freedom" in the street (or better yet, in a magazine ad) it will offer you a plastic replica suitable to sit on your desk in your cubicle as you stare at your computer and worry about pimples, student loans or mortgage payments.

Cheating religion, cheating scientists, cheating political systems are covering us with the false hope of a place "free" from disease, old age and death – the kingdom of God without God.

You came – you had answers – you have shown me the way out. You are a friend, a master, a gift. I was lost but you have given me a chance. Please don't let me blow it.

Your servant,

Adideva Dāsa

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

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

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Fifty years ago you observed the anniversary of your birth, alone and without celebration, while on board the cargo ship *Jaladuta* bound for New York City from India. Although sixty-nine years of age, you traveled with no institutional support, a mere handful of rupees, and no long-term plan or guarantee for your comfort or even residence.

It was not the ship, really, that carried you on that arduous journey across the Atlantic. What sped you forward was your intense desire to fulfill the order of your Guru Mahārāja, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who instructed you to preach the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the English language.

At the end of that month-long journey, during a short stop in Boston Harbor, and after spending just a few hours onshore with the ship's captain, you wrote a beautiful poem entitled *Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma*. In that poem you revealed your mind, your intense desire to share the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness with the forgetful souls of this age, and your total dependence upon Lord Kṛṣṇa.

As we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of your historic journey and look forward next year to the fiftieth anniversary of your founding of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, I know of no better way to appreciate and glorify you than to remind the Vaiṣṇava community of the most beautiful words you expressed on that day in Boston. These words express not only your heart but also the consciousness and mood we need to cultivate in order to follow in your footsteps. Without doing so, we will fail to become true Vaiṣṇavas, true Prabhupādānugas, and true well-wishers of

every living being, as you were, and as you are.

You are our master, our guide, and our founder-*ācārya*. I pray that during these two anniversary years, and beyond, your entire society will become infused with your determination, your compassion, your love, and your transcendental anxiety to be an instrument in the Lord's mission to bless the forgetful souls of this age.

Your humble servant,

Anuttama Dāsa

Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, You are so kind upon this useless soul, but I do not know why You have brought me here. Now You can do whatever You like with me.

But I guess You have some business here, otherwise why would You bring me to this terrible place?

Most of the population here are covered by the modes of ignorance and passion. Absorbed in material life, they think themselves very happy and satisfied, and therefore they have no taste for the transcendental message of Vāsudeva. I do not know how they will be able to understand it.

But I know Your causeless mercy can make everything possible because You are the most expert mystic.

How will they understand the mellows of devotional service? O Lord, I am simply praying for Your mercy so that I will be able to convince them about Your message.

All living entities have come under the control of the illusory energy by Your will. And therefore, if You like, by Your will they can also be released from the clutches of illusion.

I wish that You may deliver them. Therefore, if You so

desire their deliverance, then only will they be able to understand Your message.

The words of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam are Your incarnation, and if a sober person repeatedly receives them with submissive aural reception, then he will be able to understand Your message.

[Here Śrīla Prabhupāda quotes Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.17–21]:

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramātmā [Supersoul] in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted. By regular attendance in classes on the Bhāgavatam and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact. As soon as irrevocable loving service is established in the heart, the effects of nature's modes of passion and ignorance, such as lust, desire, and hankering, disappear from the heart. Then the devotee is established in goodness, and he becomes completely happy. Thus established in the mode of unalloyed goodness, the man whose mind has been enlivened by contact with devotional service to the Lord gains positive scientific knowledge of the Personality of Godhead in the stage of liberation from all material association. Thus the knot in the heart is pierced and all misgivings are cut to pieces. The chain of fruitive actions is terminated when one sees the self as master.

He will become liberated from the influence of the modes of ignorance and passion, and thus all inauspicious things accumulated in the core of the heart will disappear.

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.

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 engaddened 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.

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 Bhaktivedānta, and now, if You like, You can fulfill the real purport of Bhaktivedānta.

*Signed—the most unfortunate, most insignificant beggar,
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami,
on board the ship Jaladuta, Boston, 18th September 1965*

Vaninatha Dāsa Brahmachāry

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are everything to me...my savior, my redeemer, my salvation, my reason for being. Everything I have I got from you and I place it all at your feet along with my very self.

You can kindly use me as you wish. Hare Krishna.

*The humble servant of your servants,
Vaninatha Dāsa Brahmachāry*

My dear most merciful spiritual father and eternal master,

Please be so kind as to accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet.

I am writing this in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Just as Śrīla Jagannātha das Bābājī danced upon the uncovering of Lord Śrī Caitanya’s birthplace, so you brought your disciples to this holy place and by your spiritual potency you made manifest to us the spiritual world. You ecstatically circumambulated the Lord in the temple room, your disciples following you and dancing in bliss. The height of the ecstasy that even we as neophytes experienced was when you rang the bell and set our hearts ablaze with a raging affection for our beloved master. Who can describe the wonderful pastimes you allowed us to witness. It seems presumptuous to say that one such as myself could actually profess to have experienced affection for the most exalted Vaiṣṇava, the Lord’s personal representative but I know no other way to describe it. Though lacking in purity, still we find some hope to continue trying to follow, spurred on by such magic moments when the curtain of *māyā* seemed to be drawn back for a micro second in time. Still, upon reading your purports, we enter again into reality and no longer identify with worldly paradigms, be they related to so called knowledge, ethics or morality. Your words and your presence are our guiding light and the association of those who have dedicated their lives to serving you – serving Lord Caitanya’s mission; they are the desirable association for which we always hanker.

I have just read the book that your Achyutānanda Dāsa has written. It was a wonderful relief to hear the sentiments and detailed descriptions of your instructions and comments to a disciple who received your sublime association in so many interesting circumstances. The book is called *Blazing Sadhus*. The title seems to refer to some of the bogus impersonalist so-called sadhus he met who used cheap tricks to impress people with what appeared to be an effulgence. In contrast, it highlights the true illumination you possess and which you shone upon our ignorant minds and intelligence, giving us true knowledge in such uniquely understandable discourses and personal conversations

you conducted with those you met in the course of preaching, as well as instructions to your disciples. That illumination is still present in the world through your books and recorded lectures. Your presence is still the light of hope in this God forsaken civilization. Whatever happens in the course of our lives and development in this Krishna conscious process, we have your words and example to help us to surrender and depend upon Krishna. You have given everything that is needed and by your grace, even though we struggle and are slow to come to realization and that surrender we may know of conceptually, somehow that light of faith in you, Śrīla Prabhupāda evokes remembrance of the things you taught us. Even in the midst of sorrow or lamentation, we hear the voice of your sage instruction, described in śāstra as the external manifestation of the Supersoul.

One inspiring thing I read in Achyutānanda Prabhu's book was something you told him about sons of the father and sons of the mother: "Prabhupāda explained to me that in a spiritual mission, there are sons of the mother and sons of the father. Sons of the mother are disciples attracted to the material assets of a mission, in properties, finances, and so on. (The 'mother' church.) That is one kind of service. Sons of the father are attracted by the message of the spiritual master." Achyutānanda describes:

"In the eleven years we knew him, his every word or action pushed on the Krishna movement in all its dimensions. Many people became Krishna conscious by having seen Prabhupāda only once or having heard a few words that ignited the fire of devotion in their hearts."

This description feels very fitting a meditation for me as I realize how precious it is to associate with those who worship you, the person who gave us the book, *Bhagavat* and you who are the highly exalted "person *Bhagavat*."

Although there are many devotees I respect and admire, I hanker only for the association of those whose minds are seeped in the nectar of your worship. At the end of the book to which I've referred in this humble offering, the author writes something that is deeply meaningful to me:

“*Preme bhakti, rāga bhakti, bhāva bhakti* must have the comprehensive knowledge of the science of Krishna’s unlimited incarnations. It is not just idly talking only about His love *līlā* with the gopīs. It is the love that inspires a penniless seventy year-old holy man to take a thirty five day freighter voyage to an unknown country and start a worldwide mission from nothing.”

Oh, let my stone like heart be saturated
with the love in separation
of those devotees who have pleased you

May I glimpse for a second
your golden head as you climb the stairs,
your triumphant and radiant smile
as Krishna responds to your request
for him to receive our worship
in His Deity form,
your purely transcendent circumambulation
during which all hearts burst with happiness

A happiness stamped forever in our being
though we trudge through *anartha nivṛtti*
The Lord and Thee on the same tree
forever waiting for us to turn our backs
on this material illusory world
of fame in a list of names
to seek our only true birthright –
eternal life of servitorship
without a sceric of self-centredness

You are the centre of life,
your service all that enlightens
and enlivens us
I beg that I might be the true daughter of the father
and be of some use, serving the true son in the mission

Praying always for the shelter of your service,

Sarvamangala Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All Glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You, who are like the magnificent sun in a darkened world.

Once again we are afforded the opportunity to reflect upon and take stock of where we are on our spiritual path. Thank you for your glorious Vyāsa-pūjā day!

Our biggest realization is that after 40+ years, we feel even more unworthy to be amongst your disciples. We are so thankful for the blessings of their association and for the fact that we still aspire to become devotees of Lord Krishna. Though our desire may take many millions of lifetimes to fully realize, we are simply content to just be your servants.

As each day passes, we hear your words and understand a little more of what we didn't fully comprehend in our youth. We had such energy and vigor then, but little realized knowledge. Our faith was strong by your mercy only. So we are concluding that the gift of age is to understand more deeply, more completely and more sincerely just who you really are and what great good fortune has befallen us, through no qualification at all on our part.

You are the ocean of mercy that has washed over this entire world drawing to it the most unqualified souls. We are praying to always remain near to you and in your eternal service. Words are so empty in expressing our deepest gratitude to your Śrīla Prabhupāda for turning on the lamp light of real knowledge. You are the possessor of real compassion and love and by your perfect example you are showing us daily more and more how to love the Lord. May we always hold your memory, your words, your activities and your example deeply in our hearts forever.

Your unqualified servants,

Gostabihari Dāsa and Mahavisnupriya Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti itī nāmīne*

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

Material energy decays and delays in a
maze of magnificent displays
I am mesmerized, surprised, euthanize
by the twinkle of Māyā's eyes
Confused, defused, amused, and used
by the lure of bodily pleasures
You appear as the most dear in a material
ocean of impossible measure

Wound and bound by the cacophony of ordinary sound
Your voice chases, erases, graces all the familiar noises around
The world's greatest singer is a ringer
for the bells that toll for thee
You came to America to make me and everyone
who hears the call, really free

In *Bhagavad-gītā* two sixty-nine, Krishna
speaks one line, so fine, sublime
“What is night for all beings is the time of awakening
for the self-controlled, and the time
of awakening for all beings is night for the
introspective sage” who is brave, grave, saved
As you said, “Save yourself, then you can save
others,” mothers, sisters, brothers, friends,
acquaintances, lovers – all who are enslaved

You delivered the message; God is sentient. He
has eyes and ears, fingers, and toes.
Before you came, nobody knows. They were closed

until you showed Krishna's *tri-bhaṅga* pose
Purports you composed made information about
God disclosed to those who could hear
Śrīla Prabhupāda is the most dear, a pioneer, a
brigadier, an enthusiastic volunteer year after year

This Vyāsa-pūjā day is a way to pay
respects to you and what you say
"Do as I am doing" means to put a special effort on display
As you observed the appearance day of
your guru with such devotion
Now we are doing with that somewhat of that same notion

Prabhupāda said that he could only think big, not small
That was good for us, a plus for one and all
His example was an infectious luminescence
inviting transcendence
Disciples soon became apprentices of his inspirational ascendancy

At 69, Prabhupāda left on his great adventure
With Krishna at his back, he kept his
guru's instructions in the center
Arriving in America, he carried on his mission – sedition,
abolition, nutrition, tradition, opposition, juxtaposition
He was a patrician, magician, logician,
musician, spiritual physician

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda
All glories to your service, deterrence, insurgence
Please bless me that I can someday become more than worthless
And fulfill my appointed purpose

Your aspiring servants,

Nrsimhananda Dāsa
Director, ISKCON Television

Nitya Manjari Devī Dāsī
Co-director, ISKCON Television

Bhavatarini Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga.

I don't have words good enough to praise you. They fall way below the mark. Yet I must praise your qualities. It is astonishing how you lit the entire space wherever you went. Your words took us all to the spiritual plane and your glance infused us with love of Kṛṣṇa. Although this was explained as a shadow attachment and when you left the room or drive or airport or wherever you were we sometimes plunged back into material existence again, today, I want to thank you for everything you have done for me. You have lifted me from despair to a life of hope. I pray that I may serve your lotus feet eternally.

Your aspiring servant,

Bhavatarini Devī Dāsī

Jaganiya Devī Dāsī

All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances

*(1) gurudeve, vraja-vane, vraja-bhumi-vasi jane,
suddha-bhakte, ara vipra-gane
ista-mantre, hari-name, yugala bhajana kame,
kara rati apurva yatane*

*(2) dhari mana carane tomara
aniyachi ebe sara, kṛṣṇa-bhakti vina ara,
nahi ghuce jivera samsara*

(3) *karma, jnana, tapah, yoga, sakalai ta karma-bhoga,
karma chadaite keha nare
sakala chadiya bhair, sraddha-devira guna gai,
yanra krpa bhakti dite pare*

(4) *chadi' dambha anuksana, smara asta-tattova mana,
kara tahe niskapata rati
sei rati prarthanaya, śrī-dāsa-gosvami paya,
e bhaktivinoda kare nati*

TRANSLATION

1) (1) The Divine Master (2) Śrī Vṛndāvana (3) The residents of Śrī Vṛndavana (4) The pure Vaiṣṇavas (5) The brāhmaṇa section (6) The worshipful mantra (7) The holy name (8) A yearning to serve the Couple Divine: I adore these eight with utmost dedication.

2) O dear mind, I implore thee at thy feet. Already we have learned the essence: nothing but Lord Kṛṣṇa's service dispels the soul's illusory experience.

3) Duty, knowledge, penance, meditation – all are really exploitation: none can free us from action and reaction; Cast them all aside, O my brother, sing the glory of good faith, our mother whose grace alone bestows pure devotion.

4) Banish your pride forever, O my mind, your eight goals remember: adore them with a heart that is sincere. Aspiring for that devoted heart, at Śrī Dāsa Goswāmī's feet this Bhaktivinoda makes his prayer.

Your servant,

Jaganiya Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Vedas sing of your
transcendental qualities

*vede gay jahara carito
vedāḥ stuvanti gayanti Prabhupādasya param gunaih sarvatra
nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī iti nāmīne*

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-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.

**“Let us try to understand my spiritual master who is always in
blissful Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Let me meditate on him being
enthused as he enthused us.”**

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Vedas sing about your transcendental
glories everywhere,

vedāḥ stuvanti gayanti prabhupādasya param gunaih sarvatra

You spread the chanting of Hare Krishna all over the world
and took it back to spread it all over India again. Now they
are chanting *japa* too. You restored their faith and pride in
Krishna consciousness.

“Everyone who is chanting Hare Krishna is getting benefit.
Sanātana Gosvāmī says that one should not hear from an
avaiṣṇava, or non-Vaiṣṇava. So people who are imitating are
hearing from a Vaiṣṇava. They are not *avaiṣṇavas*, because

the Hare Krishna mantra is introduced by us only into the Western world, so whatever they have heard is from a Vaidṇava.”-SPL72-04-02.

Student: You are the only real resident of Bhārata varṣa. No one else has fulfilled that...

Prabhupāda: At least historically it be proved. Morning walk, Māyāpur, 1976.

It is unimaginable good fortune that you invited us into your transcendental adventure. We could never had thought of such a wonderful event, meeting such a wonderful personality like yourself, not in our wildest dreams. There are no words to describe your mercy to make us participate into your activities and make us fortunate.

Student: How come we come to you?

Prabhupāda: Well, that is another thing, but first of all we have to know who is spiritual master. The spiritual master is he, *samit-pāñīḥ śrotriyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham* [MU 1.2.12], one who is exclusively servant of God, he is spiritual master. Otherwise anyone will come and say, “I am spiritual master.” Anyone will come say, “I am incarnation of God.” So there is standard. That we have to find out.

Devotee (1): Most of the people are still ignoring God. They are so weak-willed. They are so weak-willed that they are easily swayed by, you know, when somebody comes and claims that...

Prabhupāda: Well, if one is weak, he may be infected by some disease. It requires some resisting power. Therefore **Caitanya Mahāprabhu** said that, your answer, that “**Only the fortunate person, they can get the shelter of bona fide spiritual master.**” *Kona bhāgyavān jīva*. Not all, *kona*. *Kona* means some.” 1975, Mexico.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I see the following verse from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.4.18) as a prediction about yourself,

*kirāta-hūṇāndhra-pulinda-pulkaśā
ābhīra-śumbhā yavanāḥ khasādayaḥ
ye 'nye ca pāpā yad-apāśrayāśrayāḥ
śudhyanti tasmai prabhaviṣṇave namaḥ*

“Kirāta, Hūṇa, Āndhra, Pulinda, Pulkaśa, Ābhīra, Śumbha, Yavana, members of the Khasa races and even others addicted to sinful acts can be purified by taking shelter of the devotees of the Lord, due to His being the supreme power. I beg to offer my respectful obeisances unto Him.”

You purified all the races by your preaching travel all over the world; this description fits perfectly in your activities and qualities.

Prabhupāda: ...the Prabhupāda and Viṣṇupāda, the same thing. Viṣṇu is prabhu. *Prabhaviṣṇave namaḥ*. Māyāpur, 02/03/76.

Everybody is taking shelter of Your Divine Grace, Prabhupāda, the representative of the Supreme Lord, the powerful Viṣṇu, Krishna.

You graced our City, our Country, our planet with your divine presence. You walked through those ancient trees in Chapultepec Park, through the City of Ever Spring, Cuernavaca, to that paradise-like place of Puerto Vallarta, where you ate mangoes and mosquitoes did not bite you. What can we do but remember Your Divine Grace again and again.

‘Graced’, the dictionary definition is as follows:

Theol. a) the unmerited love and favor of God toward mankind b) divine influence acting in a person to make the person pure, morally strong, etc. c) the condition of a person brought to God’s favor through this influence d) a special virtue, gift, or help given to a person by God

There are no words and no way we can repay you Śrīla

Prabhupāda, only we can try to serve you.

ācāryavān puruṣo veda

“One who approaches a bona fide spiritual master can understand everything about spiritual realization” *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (6.14.2)

“Vedic knowledge preached freely, it acts as a powerful force. Held in high esteem it acts as a benefactor of humanity like a leader. It acts as a thunderbolt completely annihilating the usages and practices of a sinner. It acts as a conquest-loving hero throwing light on all topics.” (*Atharva* 12.5.18-19)

In the *Smṛti-śāstra* it is said:

*guru-prasādo balavān
na tasmād balavattaram
tathāpi śravaṇādīś ca
kartavyo mokṣa-siddhaye*

“The spiritual master’s mercy is most important. Nothing is more important. Still, in order to attain liberation one should certainly hear the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and serve Him in many ways.”

“So we have got this message from Kṛṣṇa, from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, from the six Gosvāmīs, later on, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Bhaktisiddhānta Ṭhākura. And we are trying our bit also to distribute this knowledge. Now, tenth, eleventh, twelfth... My guru mahārāja is tenth from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, I am eleventh, you are the twelfth. So distribute this knowledge. People are suffering. They are simply fighting on some false thing, *māyā*. They should be given the real fact of happiness.”-
Arrival Lecture Los Angeles, May 18, 1972

*I simply offer my obeisances unto your lotus feet repeatedly,
feeling very insignificant,*

Nandanandana Dāsa.

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I pay my obeisances to you on your glorious Vyasa-puja day.

You are the light of the world that has come to save us fallen. What hope would we have had without you coming into this darkness. Back in 1971, December 27th, I received from a friend the book I had been searching for. The moment I held it in my hand I knew deep down that this was the moment that would change my life. In fact I heard myself saying, like in a dream: “This is the book I have been looking for.” – It was one of these magical moments.

I read that book – Śrī Īsopanishad – overnight. What I read was the perfection of all I had been thinking about up to then. In fact it felt like the capstone was lowered down from the high to complete my arch. It was like a diamond that had come down from above, to illuminate my brain. I knew that I had reached the end of a long road. This was it: God had come to save me.

Indeed years later on a morning walk in Paris you told me: “I have created your good fortune.” And that was so, and is.

I was 25 back then, now I am 69, I am getting old. But still I have not left you and am battling away and will do so – Krishna permitting – all the way to the end.

Thank you so much, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given us the most precious gifts: the holy name, your books, *Bhagavad-gītā*, Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, *Chaitanya Caritāmṛta*, devotional service, Deities, farms, *prasādam*, Vrindāvana, Māyāpur, the association of devotees, Tulasī, Govardhan, and service for the rest of our lives...the list is long.

Thank you for saving my life.

Your humble servant,

Prithu Dāsa

All glories to Your most Divine Grace, my eternal spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please accept my most humble obeisances.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

How I was allowed to have you for my spiritual master will always be unfathomable to me, but it gives us a glance of how Lord Chaitanya's mercy can be.

You have given us Krishna. As we grow in Krishna consciousness, the immensity of what this means increases more and more and my gratitude knows no end. Without You Śrīla Prabhupāda, we would not know Krishna, and be wandering eternally from place to place in the universes, utterly lost.

Once, by your inconceivable grace, we start remembering, we realize that hell is not knowing Krishna, or you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You have given us in this life, which would have been doomed and wasted, the opportunity to serve Krishna by hearing, chanting, rendering devotional service and be so engaged in activities that are no different than the ones in the spiritual world, and should we keep following your instructions, never should we take birth in another material body again.

You have instilled in me the desire and love for the service you have so expertly given me, Taking care of your quarters, and making clothes for the Deities. I had the chance to make them for Vṛndāvana, Bombay, Los Angeles, Dallas, Australia, Africa, Mañipur, even for the temples of Dwarka and Tirupati, which only could be possible by your inconceivable potency Śrīla Prabhupāda, coming from our background it would have been totally impossible.

I also wanted to express my deepest gratitude, because of your mercy bestowed to all, my daughter is also engaged in making dresses for the Deities and other temple decorations, so the service is passed down to our children.

Everytime I walk past where Śrīmatī Morarjī's house used to be, I stay there for a while and meditate on how at an advanced age, you took that journey to fulfil the orders of your beloved spiritual master and accomplish what you did. It is staggering! (I wish we could have got that house, so it could be a place of pilgrimage

and inspiration for the future generations. The last time we went there, we came across Śrīmatī. Morarji's grandson who lives in the apartment building they had built on the site of the house they sadly demolished, and he was building some sport facility. What a wasted opportunity I thought).

There is an anecdote that I remember Śrīla Prabhupāda which was in your rooms right after the Vṛndāvana temple opened, and you were instructing us on how to be, and what to do in the new temple. The subject of speaking Hindi came up and an Indian gentleman called Mr. Dubey who could be over zealous and forever displaying his 'know-it-all' attitude (albeit well-meaningly so of course). He was about to speak up, and as I anticipated his volunteering to teach us, I heard myself say at loud, "We already have a teacher Śrīla Prabhupāda who comes every day to teach us, and we can all read now" to which you asked: "and can you speak as well?" I answered, "No Śrīla Prabhupāda," at which point you burst out laughing, and said: "So you can read but cannot speak?" I realized how foolish it was – what was the point of reading if I did not know what I was reading – always academic and no practical sense. So you said I must learn to speak it.

I think of this moment from time to time as it illustrates the point that it is not enough to know, but I need to apply myself more into developing the qualities which will allow me to better serve and please you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I am certainly undeserving of any mercy, but beg of you to never let me stray from the shelter of your lotus feet.

I beg for forgiveness for all my offences at your lotus feet, at the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas, the Deities, and the *dhāmas*, so I may be allowed to remain there eternally.

*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvayata eva śadbhiḥ
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

The spiritual master is to be honored as much as the Supreme Lord, because He is the most confidential servitor of the Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and followed by all authorities. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances

unto the lotus feet of my spiritual Master who is a bona fide representative O Śrī Krishna.

Your eternally fallen spiritual daughter,

Vishvadevi Devī Dāsī

Ali Krsna Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my divine master, please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I am sitting on the floor of our temple room, in Villaggio Hare Krishna, and I meditate on my unexpected good fortune.

I see our most beautiful Deities, I hear the devotees playing *mṛdaṅgas* and chanting the holy name and even my heart, cold and lonely, warms up. Where I would be now if Your Grace hadn't come!

Sometimes elated sometimes depressed, I go up and down like on a merry-go-round. Many times I stumbled and then rose again, but Your mercy on me never failed! If I hadn't met you, or better, if Your Grace didn't rescue me, I would have spent my days in despair.

Life flies off like a swift thought, but the encounter with Your Grace is forever. Somehow or other I was allowed to grasp the essence of knowledge: the precious association with the Ācārya in both form, *vāñī* and *vapu*. Without you, what a miser I would have been!

I had everything I desired: material well-being and spiritual opportunity. What else I could aspire for? Now Your Grace's pleasure is everything to me. Without you, I would have been controlled only by selfishness and ingratitude.

So much time spent in futilities, so many useless words said and listened. Now, not many interests are left, only the desire to focus on your mission. Without Your Grace my consciousness would have scattered here and there, following fleeting nature.

Mind and senses order me around and too long I have obeyed them; now their clutches are wearing out and, finally, only the hope to reunite with Your Grace is left. Without you, I would have

lost my human form!

Many years have past: how many months and days I have devoted to you and how many to myself! I am weak and negligent, but Your Grace did not give up on me and kept me in his service. Without you, what an insignificant life I would have lived!

In all these years I have been taking a lot from Your Grace, offering little in exchange, nevertheless you kept filling up my existence with beautiful spiritual experiences and realizations. Oh, how much appreciative you are for this lazy servant's service!

Old age and disease come closer and closer, discouragement assail me, now it is time to face reality: my senses grow weak, the mind wavers, everything fades away. O master, take me with you in the crucial moment; without Your Grace I am lost in darkness.

I meditate on how much Your Grace did for me and I am speechless, my eyes are glistening with tears, the heart beats faster... but it is not ecstasy, it is just a drop of that endless gratitude that all of us should feel for you.

Your humble servant at your lotus feet,

Ali Krsna Devī Dāsī

Somewhere wild weeds have doubled so thickly
they cannot be mowed down nor uprooted

Elsewhere rearguard struggles slow their swift spread

What to do but burn or flood the estate?

Whence comes the fierce fire or monsoon torrent?

When thorny thickets invade the heartland

one must lie low or flee or fight and die

Then God's great gales, unforeseen in fury,

arise from fire's despised but sinless soil

assailing the once smug from ev'ry side

spoiling sinful collectors' secret schemes

until all are drowned in your love's tempest

You alone, O holy guide of the world,

know how nonsectarian names conquer!

Anand Kishore Dāsa Bābājī

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Krishna, 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.

Śrī Krishna Caitanya, Prabhu Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita, Gadādhara, Śrīvās ādi gaura bhakta vrinda.

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for coming to the West. It has been 50 years since you came and spread your ISKCON society all over the world. Being such a young Movement there have been growing pains in our very early pioneering stages and frankly we are still in our pioneering years, after all it has only been a mere 50 years.

Along the way, there have been difficulties of both the Society and individuals. However, this can only make one's faith in your wonderful teachings stronger – as long as one never leaves your ISKCON Society no matter what they have done or how fallen they have been in the past. The Society and individuals must eventually learn from their mistakes. We have the wonderful story of Ajāmila in the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and the difficulties of the Gauḍīya Math as examples.

Actually by delving deeply into your teachings without speculation, one will eventually overcome personal and collective difficulties and find the answer to all problems. As you have told us, everything is in your books.

At present the eyes of the world of ISKCON is on the TOVP, and it has greatly inspired many devotees and aspiring devotees and attracted the curiosity of the non-devotees. Even though it will not be finished until 2022 it has generated enormous interest in Vedic cosmology and the Krishna consciousness Movement.

The beginning in Australia

There was an explosion of devotees around early 1972 in

Australia. The communes we went to up North were full of hippies at that time. We chanted through the forest areas and like the Pied Piper, hippies as young as 14 were coming out of the forest to follow us singing Hare Krishna.

There were hundreds of them at a place called Kuranda which is in Northern Queensland. It was truly amazing, and I have not seen anything like it since. Even today, 43 years later, if you stand on that steep hill in Kuranda where all those hippies once gathered and chanted Hare Krishna, and if look down over the beautiful forest you can still see where the high water mark of transcendental bliss reached in the early 70s.

Before this, devotees had never visited anywhere outside of Sydney or Melbourne. We were the early pioneers at the very beginning of Lord Caitanya's Golden Age in the West in Kali-yuga.

We celebrated Janmāṣṭamī at a Buddhist colony not far from Kuranda. We loaded as many hippies as we could on the double decker Hare Krishna bus, all chanting Hare Krishna and dancing 'on the bus' to the excellent blissful kīrtans with Madhudviṣa leading. It was very special.

The following day was Vyasa-puja and Madhudviṣa had lit a candle near Śrīla Prabhupāda's photo. The aura, love and security from that photo permeated the entire bus with an amazing mood of reverence, bliss and Krishna consciousness. All of us were 'Prabhupāda conscious' and were thankful Prabhupāda, Krishna's dear servant gave us Krishna the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

They were amazing times and there was a childish innocence about those days. In fact we thought Madhudviṣa was old (he was 25, Chittahārī was 23, Kṛṣṇa Caitanya was 24 and Balarama was 29). The rest of us were still teenagers. I don't think the present generation realizes how young we were in those beginning years of ISKCON.

There was also no hanky panky going on. Everyone was sincere, dedicated and attached to Prabhupāda. We only ate offerings from the Deities and absolutely nothing else. If it was not prepared on the bus we would not eat, except on rare occasions at an Indian's home as we did in Armadale (where we had a beautiful picture of the Pañca-tattva with a photo of Prabhupāda at Their feet to offer the preparations), no one even dreamed of eating anything unprepared by devotees or even drink soft drinks

in those blissful days.

So kind and merciful is Śrīla Prabhupāda, who gives even the most degraded a chance to become Krishna conscious. Most of us were just teenage boys and girls back then – sincere seekers of truth.

I also remember the program at the Melbourne Town Hall in April 1972 and the wonderful kīrtan led by Śrīla Prabhupāda. It was remarkable; everyone was totally fixed on hearing Śrīla Prabhupāda chant *Jaya Rādhā Mādhava*, and we all danced in total ecstasy. Never before or since have I heard such a beautiful kīrtan.

When we all returned to the Temple at 14 Burnett Street, St. Kilda in Melbourne. (It is a place of pilgrimage and I still go there every few years to remember Prabhupāda.) I was assigned to stand in front of Prabhupāda’s room and even sleep there after the programs. My job was to bring Śrīla Prabhupāda prasāda, clean clothing ready for the next morning, and guard his room. Some amazing conversations went on in Prabhupāda’s room. Some nights he would call devotees in and preach until the early hours of the morning. I saw so much of Prabhupāda.

One night we went to a Franciscan monastery. As Śrīla Prabhupāda made his way to the monastery, the monks greeted him with a long table full of different fruits. This was very artistically arranged and Prabhupāda was very pleased.

I immediately went and preached to a middle-aged monk, but stopped and sat down in front of Prabhupāda with the other devotees. Prabhupāda called over Vegavān Prabhu, who then came and tapped me on the shoulder. He whispered in my ear, “Prabhupāda wants you to continue preaching to that monk, such preaching is more important than even associating with the spiritual master.” So I got back up and went back to preaching to the monk.

Back then, Śrīla Prabhupāda did not eat until after he came back from a program. He then ate a hearty meal of prasāda while listening to a recording of his lecture. Afterwards Prabhupāda discussed Krishna consciousness with Śyāmasundara Dāsa, his secretary, Nanda Kumar Dāsa, his personal servant and excellent mṛdaṅga player, and Hanumān Dāsa.

There were only four of us in the room. I stayed in the room for about an hour and listened to them discuss the Town Hall program. Prabhupāda found Hanumān to be a very humorous

character. Hanuman was also very excited about taking sannyāsa from Śrīla Prabhupāda the following Sunday.

The next morning, while I was half awake outside Śrīla Prabhupāda's room, I noticed two small feet gently walk past me without making even the slightest sound; I sat up immediately and paid my obeisances. Prabhupāda was a little jolted on his way to the bathroom by my obeisances and said softly to me, 'Hare Krishna not so loud'. Over the years, Śrīla Prabhupāda always acknowledged me. When I drove the Hare Krishna Temple bus, he asked me if it was mechanically sound. The bus could never go faster than 60 mph.

In April 1972, before the explosion of devotees in Australia, when Prabhupāda came to Melbourne there were only 12 of us living in the Temple. For five days we had very close association with Śrīla Prabhupāda. Every day I went to his room to take his nicely ironed clothing and stayed sometimes for hours. You see, there were not that many devotees around, as most were in Sydney. I relish those early days.

I remember one time when a devotee, Dhoumya Dāsa, threw water over me in play and I chased him through the Temple, running past Śrīla Prabhupāda's room. We were being very noisy. Śrīla Prabhupāda heard the thunder of our feet running past and came out to find out what was going on. He said to Śyāmasundara, 'Who was that running past?' Prabhupāda walked up the hall and went into a room to find me wrestling with Dhoumya who was trying to hide in a cupboard. On seeing Śrīla Prabhupāda, we immediately paid our obeisances, he immediately started to laugh.

Those early days with Śrīla Prabhupāda were very special and I pray I remember them when it is time to leave this troublesome body.

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda who is so merciful to his sons and daughters.

Your fallen servant,

Gauragopala Dāsa

Victoria, Australia

O Humble Servant

Can shallow hearts begin to understand
the beauty of God's true servants
who only live to serve His perfect will
the Golden Lord's desire is theirs
to carry forth His precious gifts
in their trusted hands
to bring down into the world of sorrow
the bounty of divine grace
and start anew His golden age
of pure love and brotherhood for all
from among Mahāprabhu's worthy messengers
the humble servant of His servants
Abhay Charan, His fearless acolyte
has been sent to show the world
the power and beauty of divine love
with all its glories and miracles
to give mankind a new beginning
towards God's eternal loving service

His humble servant does carry
from on high the flood of mercy
to extinguish our fiery affliction
Karunāvatār's ceaseless downpour of true nectar
to fill our weary hearts with hope
that our heavy struggles
will soon meet their end
so that we can again attain
the hidden gates within our hearts
where purest love stirs up again
upon receiving the divine call
from His humble servant's luminous words
holding high the torch of knowledge
the great light of *divya-jñāna*
to help reveal the inner course

beyond the labyrinth of doubts
towards unseen worlds of selfless love
where the Lord shares His sweet splendour
in loving pastimes of purest delight

His humble servant has labored with love
to build the bridges of bhakti
which alone can help us all
cross beyond this world of ruin
and progress towards life's perfection
embodied before our searching eyes
in your majestic meekness
with unshakable determination
spreading the Lord's glories
to light up the invading darkness
with Krishna's name and fame
O humble servant we pray to thee
that we may take to heart your gifts
of sweet surrender to God's will
and hold on tight to your sure hand
which can take us back to Him
Who alone can fulfil
our heart's endless search
for His pure love
which abundantly flows from you
His true humble servant

Gokulananda Dāsa
ISKCON Montreal

Janmanalaya Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet!

Conditioned and confused – that is ours, the *jīvas'* situation in this world. But we humans have a specific gift with which we can perceive the hidden wholeness, that in which all its parts

and varieties rest. Deep in us lies an inner longing for a personal relationship and guidance to that hidden entity, God, Krishna. But our relation to Him is covered and misguided by our self-centered view of this world. Therefore we are solely depending on the grace of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the messenger from the spiritual world. You came from India on the *Jaladuta*, which translated means 'Water messenger', though I say 'Vaikuṅṭha messenger.' And what was your message? *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* – India's message of peace and good will. You carried Vaikuṅṭha's message of hope and joy. We grouped around you and heard your message, we got a glimpse of the spiritual world and the relationship between Krishna and His dear devotees. Like Vāmanadev, you cracked open a hole into the layers of the universe, into the layers covering my heart and flooded it with Krishna *kathā* and *harināma*. Beyond my forgetful dreaming I could glimpse my real identity and nature: *Krishna dāsa*, *Rādhā dāsa*, *dās dās anudās*. There is a picture given which shows the dependency of the disciple on his spiritual master: A lotus is growing in a pond. The lotus stands for the disciple while the water of the pond represents the spiritual master, and the sun shining above is Krishna. If there is no water in the pond, the very sun, which naturally nourishes the lotus, will instead burn it. So without you being present in my life, there is no Krishna there, or He might be there in a very, very, far distance, not defined. What a wonderful future awaits me if I am faithful in following you. All these ingredients of a life which is dedicated to Krishna, will transfer from you to me. I will be able to grow in my Krishna consciousness in a very natural way, and I will carefully avoid prematurely jumping to a platform too high for me.

You are the exclusive source of my spiritual nourishment and my ever loving well-wisher, and I hope you accept my small and insignificant service, however trivial and remote.

Your servant,

Janmanalaya Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus-like feet, the cooling and beautifully golden, ever-refreshing shelter for all souls.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am in awe because I am seeing how your Kṛṣṇa consciousness Movement is spreading literally to every town and village where so many different dialects are spoken. During the classes in your temples, there are clusters of devotees from these different countries grouped together eager to hear, and in each group the class is being translated into their different languages. How pleased you must be! More and more persons from different cultures are now engaging in devotional service to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, dressed in the attire of the spiritual world, chanting and dancing in the streets of the most mayic situations, enthusiastically giving Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. How so many people from different walks of life are pouring out their hearts to you in love and devotion and gratitude, even though they joined this Movement long after you left this material world and therefore had never even met you! How they are appreciating your books, also in countless languages. Your Movement is the real United Nations! This is all happening, Śrīla Prabhupāda, because of your causeless and ceaseless love and mercy. Like you yourself said, "I am not for India. I am for the whole world."

It is almost 50 years since you began your worldwide Movement. Who could not be excited seeing how everything is growing, how the preaching is increasing, how the book distribution – the backbone of your Movement – is increasing, how everyone is trying harder to work together in a cooperative spirit and who are now globally fulfilling your desire for the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium? No outsider can understand how all of these things are being done in your so-called absence. But we know.

We all remember how you came at an age that is even more advanced than ours and how you tirelessly and selflessly brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the shores of the most degraded of places – America. How you did what you did – which was inconceivable – in those few short years. It was possible because of your complete dependence on Lord Kṛṣṇa. Now, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we, your

disciples, are turning gray and are starting to bend over from age. Grandfather time is showing himself in our wrinkling faces. Diseases are setting in and many have already left this world. Those of us who are still here are lining up in the queue wondering what our number is. And many have come and gone from this Movement – and some are even returning – but none have ever forgotten you. You’ve made an indelible impression deep within our hearts. You have taught us everything: how to live and how to die and everything in between.

Please bless me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, so that I may become serious in my practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, so much so that I will always remember you and at the time of death be able to have your *darshan* when I leave this material lump of flesh and bones.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, what I find simply amazing is that this one tiny, insignificant soul – myself – has been able to continue on the path of devotional service. I have no desire, but know that this is simply because of your unlimited kindness upon me. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am continually tripping and falling, but I am always trying to land at your feet. I therefore place my lowly head at your soft lotus feet and beg that I may someday do some little service that will please you.

Your forever grateful and indebted daughter,

MadanMohanMohini Devī Dāsī

What are the chances

In the verse:

brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja
Madhya Līlā 19.151

Sometimes one tries or attempts to give an idea about how a soul can become really fortunate. A turtle coming up for air through the knot hole in a board floating in the ocean but even that seems to underestimate the chances. The real thing is that you have come! If there are seven billion people on the planet now, then, would you be 1 in seven billion, but to come in contact with That One, what are the chances? The message you bring is most astonishing, no-one could ever come up with that (Kṛṣṇa, flute playing youth, with Rādhārāṇī, as the source of everything, the Original Person, and prove it) even if they had all the time in the world. It is beyond the human capacity, being not man-made. Still, who is qualified to be that humble postal person, with absolute compassion enabling you to enter everyone's heart. To travel at such an advanced age showing beyond a doubt that you are running on spiritual energy, only those who are blinded by insincerity cannot see that. Now, for me, to just simply hear for a long time what you came to say, I know that will forever be the best possible thing for me. What are the chances that this would happen to me? You have answered everything and more than I could be interested to know and showing all it is not what you know but who you know.

Thank you.

Your disciple,

Madan Mohan Dāsa

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we thank you

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

*namas te sārasvati-deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

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

*saṁsāra-dāvānala-liḍha-loka-
trāṇāya kārūṇya-ghanāghanatvam
prāptasya kalyāṇa-guṇārṇavasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

“The spiritual master is receiving benediction from the ocean of mercy. Just as a cloud pours water on a forest fire to extinguish it, so the spiritual master delivers the material afflicted world by extinguishing the blazing fire of material existence. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.” *Śrī Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam*, verse one.

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi
dhyāyaṁi stuvaṁsi tasya yaśas trisandhyaṁi
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

“By the mercy of the spiritual master one receives the benediction of Kṛṣṇa. Without the grace of the spiritual master, one cannot make any advancement. Therefore, I should always remember and praise the spiritual master. At least three times a day, I should offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master.” *Śrī Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam*, verse eight.

We thank you for that debt we owe, which can never be repaid.

We thank you for everything which has come down from you, be it from your transcendental literatures, walks, talks, from your beloved disciples, or from personal realizations from you within our very hearts.

Vāñī (words) is more important than *vapu* (physical) association. By your mercy, we know this to be true. In addition, the order of the spiritual master comes automatically with the concomitant, power required to fulfill those orders.

*guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete koriyā aikya,
ār nā koriho mane āśā
śrī-guru-caraṇe rati, ei se uttama-gati,
je prasāde pure sarv asa*

“Our only wish is to have our consciousness purified by the words emanating from your lotus mouth. Attachment to your lotus feet is the perfection that fulfills all desires.” *Sri Guru Vandana*, verse two.

*cakhu-dān dilo jei, janme janme prabhu sei,
divya-jñān hrde prokāśito
prema-bhakti jāhā hoite, avidyā vināśa jāte,
vede gāy jāhāra carito*

“He opens our darkened eyes and fills our hearts with transcendental knowledge. He is our Lord birth after birth. From him ecstatic *prema* emanates; by him ignorance is destroyed. The Vedic scriptures sing of his character.”- *Śrī Guru Vandana*, verse three.

You taught that the disciples (*dīkshā* and *śīkshā*) can never separate themselves from the orders of the spiritual master. In fact, they are our very life and soul. Therefore, how is it possible for some unfortunate, suicidal fools to leave your lotus feet for someone else?

Eagerness to begin to serve those orders, begins the assured fulfillment of said orders, and will culminate in success for both said service, and for our own Krishna consciousness, eventually blossoming, producing fruits, and filling the world with its

honey-like fragrance.

It is then that Guru and Krishna will bestow all Their mercy on us, fulfill our spiritual lives, and bestow the highest achievement – Kṛṣṇa *prema* – unalloyed love of God.

So, we thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda for your causeless mercy in distributing widely the mahā-mantra, the great chanting for deliverance – the holy names of God, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

We thank you for the *nava-ratna* – nine gems – the nine processes of devotional service.

We thank you for delivering us from the jaws of certain death by bestowing on us regulative principles of freedom; and the easy process of chanting 16 rounds of mahā-mantra on *japa mala* daily.

We thank you for all your ‘*apauruṣeya*’ – teachings which are infallible and directly from Sri Kṛṣṇa.

We thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving us so many of your divine books available in Chinese now; and we thank you for sending your beautiful ‘*mahātmās*’, touchstones each, to distribute the all-merciful mercy of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, and Sri Nityānanda Prabhu to the Chinese people.

We thank you for the joy and fearless freedom in Krishna *kīrtan*.

We thank you for the surrender and mercy of *harināma saṅkīrtana* in Xi Men Ting – West Gate District. We thank you for Sri Rathāyātra Festival, and we thank you for delicious Krishna *prasāda*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please help us to realize and understand your life, mission, mood, and philosophy as the very foundation of our lives.

We pray Śrīla Prabhupāda, that under your guidance and by your mercy our iron-like hearts may be melted and forged in the crucible of Sri Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya’s *saṅkīrtan* Movement.

We thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda again and again, and with every breath we pray a million times, thank you.

Begging to remain your eternal servant,

Sevananda Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

As I reverently bow before you I am once again trying to find words to express my gratitude toward you. I am only beginning to realize the magnitude of the unlimited mercy which you have shown me and the entire material world.

Out of love for guru and Krishna you have selflessly put everything, all of your energy into saving the entire world from the dark suffering of ignorance. You have brought true, pure love into a world where love was only a vague concept. You demonstrated Krishna *prema* in your every word and activity giving us proof that real love truly exists and you gave us hope that we too can have it if we accept your loving guidance. What a truly wonderful thing to witness! You are a true savior, a ray of Viṣṇu.

As the ever well-wisher of all living entities you put the very best of yourself and all of your unlimited love into the transcendental purports of your books thus giving the world the knowledge needed to achieve pure love of Godhead. In your books you are mercifully giving the reader Krishna Himself. It is not just the words, nor the style of writing that gives your books their potency so much as your heart felt desire to elevate the consciousness of the readers to the point of actually re-establishing their lost relationship with God. You can distribute pure love of Godhead because you have pure love of Godhead.

Your pure Love for Krishna translates into pure love for all living entities as well. We can still feel your love Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your love is still present not only in your books but in your wonderful ISKCON. The purpose of ISKCON is to continue to fulfill your mission of distributing pure love of Godhead to the fallen conditioned souls trapped in this material world. Thus we distribute your books profusely, distribute *prasāda* generously,

distribute the holy name constantly while living the devotional, loving way of life that you have taught and continue to teach us.

I pray that someday I can learn to reciprocate, to love you and all other living entities in the way that you love us. The beginning of this quest is for me to surrender my life totally to you in the form of loving service without self-interest just as an instrument surrenders to the musician. To the degree that I can completely abandon self-interest I can more completely understand your interest, your mood and your mission. My life has no other purpose.

I feel so indebted to you that I beg you to engage me in your service eternally. Please use me as you would like. The more I realize the love you have shown me the more I feel an ever increasing desire to please you. Please empower me to act on your behalf and represent you properly with only your desire in mind.

Your unworthy servant,

Jivananda Dāsa Vanacārī

On the road in your service, El Paso, Texas

Krsnanandini Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful and grateful obeisances. All glories to you! On the occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, 2015, I am offering the following:

Prabhupāda, you are an ocean of auspiciousness! You come from a long line of superheroes! Of powerfully advanced supermen who by their depth of wisdom and loving commitment to devotional service, have set an unwavering example of high thinking and simple living in the pure service of Lord Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa!

These supermen join together as a divine ever-expanding instrument of Lord Caitanya's mercy. How fortunate are we all in this International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness in particular, and the world in general, to be connected to such an awe-inspiring disciplic line. And you have single-handedly linked all of us – your

disciples and granddisciples to this superlative pathway, back home, back to Godhead.

From the six goswāmīs, headed by Śrīla Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana to Śrī Jagannāth dās Bābājī, lauded by his followers as the Commander-in-Chief of the Vaiṣṇavas and the one, who though well over a century of age, danced and chanted in ecstasy in the holy land of Navadvīpa *dhāma* as a validation of Lord Caitanya’s authentic place of His divine appearance.

To Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākur who rose to destined prominence as a powerful spiritual leader and magistrate, sending transcendental books to universities and libraries around the world.

To Śrīla Gaura Kishora dās Bābājī Mahārāja, renunciation personified, always absorbed in deep love for the Supreme Person, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

To Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, the erudite “lion guru” who tolerated no nonsense in the reestablishment of Śrī Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* Movement.

To finally where we are today—taking shelter at the lotus feet of your good self. You have linked us up with this group of transcendental supermen and all have set a standard for excellence in behavior, study, cleanliness, charity, truthfulness and integrity.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, O foremost *ācārya* and pure representative of the Lord, please bless us to follow in the footsteps of our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* – these superheroes – and exemplify their instructions.

Please bless us with an ever increasing taste for the holy name (*nāma ruci*), with ever-expanding compassion for the fallen conditioned souls (*jīva doyāl*) and an unlimited desire to serve the Vaiṣṇavas (*vaiṣṇava seva*). In this way, may we fulfill the real purport of our name, Kṛṣṇanandinī Devī Dāsī.

Praying to be always engaged in your service,

Kṛsnanandini Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My humble obeisances again and again.

Please hear my prayer.

Please, like a puppet master, make me dance to please you. I have no abilities of my own. I am completely dependent on your mercy.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have no separate interest from your spiritual master or from the Supreme Lord. You came to the West on the order of your spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī and your prayer is to dance according to Kṛṣṇa's desire. Kṛṣṇa is the ability in man and He empowered you to preach.

Please deliver me from my false ego and any lingering envy that might obstruct my path. Help me be humble and free from offenses so I can chant the holy names constantly and purely.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are a pure spiritual being sent just to help conditioned souls like myself. You have no false ego or desire to enjoy separately from the Supreme Lord. When you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa is present on your tongue and your association awakens us from our slumber of ignorance, forgetful of who we really are.

Please help me to see in such a way that I always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, never forget Kṛṣṇa for a moment and you are never apart from Him.

Please help me to truly hear you and realize to the depths of my being the transcendental knowledge and love that you are giving: of the self – that I am a spirit soul and not this body, that I have an eternal relationship with you and with the Supreme Lord, that there is a process to realize all of this, and there is a goal – to go back home to the spiritual world filled with *Kṛṣṇa prema*.

Please help me to “Just take it” and to make others fortunate as you are making me fortunate.

Please help me to realize that you are never away from me and that in service in separation you can be even closer than at any other time.

Please be merciful and give me the qualification for pure devotional service culminating in pure love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Please help me to transcend the modes of material nature so I

can be like you.

You are never affected by the modes of material nature, so lust, anger, greed, passion, ignorance, fruitive activity, and mental speculation never touch you.

You are the embodiment of what you preach, teaching by your example, and just by your association one's dormant love for God begins to awaken.

You are a pure devotee of the Supreme Lord engaged in unalloyed, unmotivated, uninterrupted pure devotional service. Whether you are in the spiritual world serving the Divine Couple or are somewhere in the material world helping to deliver fallen, conditioned souls like myself, you are still always transcendently situated in pure love of Kṛṣṇa.

May I always be engaged in your service.

Your servant,

Karlapati Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances.

You gave us the world, our true heritage as spirit souls, with your wonderful books. You are always with us. We remember your humble and glorious efforts to begin distributing the knowledge of the Vedas. Your enthusiasm and faithfulness to your spiritual master created a shelter for all of us. We were simple, lost souls. You gave us a lifeline with your books and lectures. You gave us a way of life. We remember the spiritual practices with glorious chanting and dancing to begin a day. How could there be anything other than happiness and joy at the memories of our spiritual beginnings!

As we continue our spiritual lives without your earthly presence, we struggle. The struggle forces us to take shelter of the holy names, the wonderful mahā-mantra gifted to us from you. Your books show us a pure world, and chanting Hare Krishna is the flame that reveals their beauty and knowledge. We are grateful to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for what you have given us. We beg for your mercy and help to develop our talents in your service. Your life showed us that aging is not an end to using talents, but can be a glorious beginning.

Your grateful disciples,

Svaksā Dāsa and Prishnigarbha Devī Dāsī

His Divine Grace, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Our Founder-Ācārya.

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bestow upon me the ability to adequately glorify you on this most auspicious occasion of your appearance day, Sri Vyāsa-pūjā.

You are our founder-*ācārya*, Śrīla Prabhupāda! At the advanced age of 69 years old, you came to the West and undertook the mission of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu as ordained by your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. You faced a host of insurmountable difficulties, notwithstanding having very little money and encountering a fallen and sinful population in a strange land. By the grace of Guru and Kṛṣṇa, you achieved a monumental success and founded The International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

You are our founder-*ācārya*, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Our *dīkṣā*, *śikṣā* and *vartma-pradarśaka-guru* all embodied in one. From you we have received initiation, instructions, and by reading one of your books you introduced us to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. All of your sincere disciples accept your exalted position; we know unequivocally that it is only by Your Divine Grace alone that we have received the benediction to fully engage in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and have the opportunity to go back home, back to Godhead. You empowered your direct disciples to assist you in fulfilling your mission. Presently your granddisciples and all sincere followers can be equally empowered by you, providing that they also accept your elevated position.

You are our founder-*ācārya*, Śrīla Prabhupāda! It should be clearly understood, that without you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the present society of Vaiṣṇavas under the banner of ISKCON and any

other outside group as well, would be completely non-existent. Only because of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the lofty message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has been successfully disseminated all over the world! The many years you spent at the Rādhā Dāmodar Temple in relentless spiritual practices, coupled with your prolific writings and commentaries on the esoteric teachings of the great previous *ācāryas*, paved the way for your expedition to the West. It should be duly noted by everyone that you had no need to come. You had already achieved the greatest attainment of life, love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. By your unfathomable compassion for the conditioned souls and the commitment to the order of your spiritual master, you made the most unparalleled contribution to all of mankind, Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

On this auspicious day of your divine appearance, and on every day of our lives, we express our gratitude for all of your books which guide us in our spiritual life; your many lectures which enlighten us with wisdom; your letters which rekindle your tailored advice to us; your videos which capture your pastimes and inimitable grace; your photos which remind us of your radiant beauty; your schools which educate our children to become Vaiṣṇavas and Vaiṣṇavīs; your farms which teach us self-sufficiency; your temples which provide the association of devotees and worship of the Deity; your sumptuous *prasāda* which gives us full satisfaction; your blissful kīrtans which make us fully jubilant. And all of this is only but a microscopic drop of the vast ocean of your sublime legacy. This legacy serves as our salvation, for that of posterity, and for all future generations of Vaiṣṇavas to come. We are eternally indebted to you and can never conceivably imagine how to repay you for your “matchless gift”. You are our founder-*ācārya*, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your unworthy disciple,

Vaisnavananda Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I am temporarily residing at your ISKCON temple Abentheuer Goloka, Germany. Last weekend I had the opportunity to teach the ISKCON Guru Disciple course of the year 2012 to over thirty students, and next weekend will be the 40th anniversary of the appearance of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā Madan Mohan in Germany.

These visits to your temples are always a welcome opportunity to refresh my relationship with you. What role do you play in my life? Is my relationship to you becoming solidified? It is said that after the spiritual master leaves the planet, his *vapu* or physical association is lost to his disciples, and they continue their devotional service by following the spiritual master's instructions. This is called *vāñī*. Whereas the *vapu* association with the spiritual master is temporary, the *vāñī* relationship is eternal.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my *vapu* association with you was very short. I met you no more than four times in my life, and you only spoke two sentences to me directly. Still I don't have the feeling that I ever lacked your *vapu* association. The many biographies written about you and your recorded classes and conversations are successful in my experiencing you vividly.

Now that already many of your disciples who associated with you directly have left this mortal planet we are becoming aware that your felt presence has to be preserved for the future even in the absence of persons who were with you personally in order to make sure that ISKCON survives the coming 10,000 years. ISKCON devotees take initiation from a living spiritual master, but you remain their main *śikṣā* guru. There are always many *śikṣā* gurus in a devotee's life, and amongst them you are the predominant and determining one. In fact, you once said that you yourself are a member of ISKCON and that there is another ISKCON in the spiritual world. This is the reason why devotees feel your presence as much as the presence of the contemporary *śikṣā* gurus. ISKCON devotees of all future generations will be focused on you as if you were still living in person.

In my own life, I feel your presence in ISKCON even more now than during the time you lived on this planet. I wish the same for all the devotees who joined after your demise in 1977.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray to you that you keep engaging me in your service so that I may evermore experience your divine presence.

Your lowly servant,

Vaidyanath Dāsa

Bhojadeva Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept these simple rhymes,
‘That I might glorify your life and times.

The Great Journey

You left the sweetness of Braj, on call the of your master,
To save all willing souls, from pending disaster.
But you didn’t really leave, and with
the Lord of your heart,
You sailed towards the West, matchless gifts to impart!

You alighted in Boston, and thus blessed the piers,
A revolution to start, which begins when one hears!
At first you didn’t know, to turn right or turn left,
But you were willing to dance – firm
and graceful each step!

In Tompkins’ Square Park, you revealed what you knew–
That the soul is Brahman – not Hindu or Jew.
That God lives within – is the source of all knowledge;
The essence of truth – one won’t find in college!

You arrived with pure mercy, no anger, no fear,
Still somebody crazy, stole your typewriter dear.
You came during wartime; screaming
hawks hating doves,
With the shining pure message:
there's no peace without love!

But not love of illusion of the shadow reflection,
To love the Supreme, is the heart's perfection!
You then graced San Francisco, psychedelic its arts;
And blew everyone's mind, with Jagannāth's carts!

Soon a new world HQ, not far from the beach,
Where Rukmini is queen, with Her king, Dwarkadish.
You came bearing treasure, priceless books to be sold;
To know God and oneself, much more precious than gold!

You spread Gaura's mission, giving the highest of truth:
That matter and spirit all flow, from a loving blue youth!
But no ordinary youth, you made sure we would know;
This Godhead's all bliss, from His flute to His toes!

Your message was clear, He's ecstatic, He's home,
He wants us to join Him; why enjoy all alone?
You gave us your mercy, a plan and a way,
To find divine love, by chanting each day!
Your airport arrivals put us all into trance,
Your every word was a song; your gait was a dance!
Your empowering love, still inspires our hope,
Your books and instructions; our method to cope!

To love means to serve – there's nine different ways,
This truth can spare all, endless cradles and graves!
“Please get up and chant” you implored us with haste,
Time is a currency, not to foolishly waste!

Teaching, “Life comes from Life” – the science of spirit;
Faulty senses researching – have no means to peer it!
On topics of science you were skilled, sometimes rough,

But when meeting professors, you were kind, never gruff!

You've passed down the strategy: "Stand up and fight!
Slay dark mental demons; serve the Source of all light!
For behind that pure light – an all-attractive young Boy;
The life of the Gopīs; Rādhā's bounty and joy!

But don't jump ahead – all's revealed when one's ready,
The best course for now – just be humble and steady!
Be steadfast, be loyal, and respond to His call,
By surrender and service, God gifts you His all!"

Now our eyes try to trick us, and tell us you've gone,
But our hearts know much better;
you've been here all along!
We thank you and love you, for your heart so sublime,
Taking on saving the world – kindly, one at a time!

Only a fool would cry, "He's no more", or "He's gone";
Your divine presence in spirit, stands strong, and lives on!
You've made the great journey, leaving the vessel behind,
To ferry the faithful – to that place beyond time!

You've made the great journey, 'round
the world and beyond;
Yet you still reach out kindly, to this frog in a pond.
This frog's pond is small, in a well dark and deep,
Please grant this frog shelter, at your two lotus feet.

Bhojadeva Dāsa

Wonderful Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Yesterday I stood for a time in the pouring rain in Briggate St., Leeds, with a young man named Tommy. Neither of us minded the rain because we were talking about your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. The *harināma* party was behind us. I want to live in that moment for ever, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Tommy purchased the book.

How wonderful is your Movement; how wonderful are your books, your devotees, your temples. Lovely Prabhupāda, you came to the West and performed a miracle that is still going on. Without you, the world would be empty.

I was listening to a class one day in my kitchen and you paraphrased a song. You said, 'Had I wings, oh I would immediately go!' Had I the wings of a dove, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I would immediately fly to wherever you are. Yet, the wings are your books. You are in them, patiently instructing us how to get back to where you are.

So much nectar is in your books, and in the footage of devotees talking about you, their realisations and their memories of you. It's no surprise that Lord Chaitanya has organised this 'information age' in which we are living, so that all of us – your children in ISKCON – can have access to your teachings and to the bliss of Krishna consciousness wherever we are.

Lord Chaitanya organised everything for you. Even the dastardly British Rāj played a part in that it caused Śrīla Bhaktivinode, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta and yourself to learn English – the via medium of world preaching.

An expression has come into the English language. If you say that someone has 'smashed it', it means they have been unquestionably successful. Many learned English, many were called by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta but only one was Lord Chaitanya's dearest chosen one. Most glorious Śrīla Prabhupāda, only you 'smashed' the spreading of Krishna consciousness as per the heart's desire of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī.

So many fortunate, blessed souls have attained your shelter. Let me now, after a lifetime of hopping from tree to tree, fly to your

books every day and there meet you and take shelter.

I beg for the strength to chant *harināma*, distribute your books and hold *nāma haṭṭa* even in my own town. If more devotees were visible I am sure that would please Your Divine Grace.

Your fallen servant,

Govardhana Devī Dāsī

Badarayana Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I stand here today with immense pride in you and your mission, the extraordinary feat you have accomplished and inspired others to accomplish: the widespread distribution of Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the entire earthly mundane realm. Incredible progress has been made, from the 108 that existed during your time, there are now over 550 temples/centers, farm communities, restaurants, hospitals, and schools all over the globe. Your books have been translated into well over 60 languages. The second generation has also been inspired to take up your mission in earnest. What joy this must bring you!

I see here in the New York area, an amazing hot-bed of variegated preaching activities going on. Wherever you turn there is the distribution of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in some form or fashion – from daily *harināma*, to inspired temple programs and festivals, exciting and progressive lectures almost every night of the week, workshops, transcendental book distribution, *prasāda* distribution, yoga communities coming to the path of *bhakti*, corporate preaching, college preaching – it’s a real post-modern Hare Kṛṣṇa explosion!

And then there are the challenges. These obstacles are not new to our time. You saw them – pointed them out during your manifest stay. They brought you much pain. They are the usual suspects: inability to harmonize and work together as a unified whole in the mood of **unity in diversity**. These usual suspects stop up the abundant mercy of Lord Caitanya and His associates from

freely flowing. They are m̄yā's greatest weapons, as they strike from within. You stated that this movement cannot be stopped by any external force, but only from dissension/disharmony within.

There is that all too familiar tendency to find the faults in others and their unique styles of preaching, whilst justifying that position on the basis of "Śrīla Prabhupāda said this and didn't do that". It's all too easy to be separatists, as it strengthens our seemingly justified sense of 'rightness'. But how did you approach this anomaly Śrīla Prabhupāda? You spoke of it many times, as you saw its ugly face threaten the well-being of your worldwide mission on many an occasion. It is most interesting to note this in the following statement:

"I am therefore suggesting that all our men meet in M̄yāpur every year during the birth anniversary of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. With all GBC and senior men present we should discuss how to make 'unity in diversity.'"

"We have so much work to do, we cannot lose our solidarity. Do not cause a crack there with any fighting spirit or competition. Whenever I hear complaints or disturbances in our centres my mind becomes [. . .] disturbed and I cannot properly translate my books. So please spare me from such disturbance by cooperating all together, godbrothers and godsisters." – Śrīla Prabhupāda letter to M̄latī, 7 January 1974

"You have dedicated your life for Kṛṣṇa and therefore you should be ideal. We are introducing Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement for the harmony and good will of humanity. But if you yourselves are suffering from the very ills we are trying to remove, how can the people be influenced favorably? Stop this fighting, tolerate." – Śrīla Prabhupāda letter to Trivikrama, 1 May 1974

"Only after exhausting every possibility of peaceful solution shall we fight anyone. Just like Kṛṣṇa. He did not call for fighting until after every chance for

settlement failed.” – Śrīla Prabhupāda letter to Balavanta, 13 December 1972

“Material nature means dissension and disagreement, especially in this Kali-yuga. But, for this Krishna consciousness movement, its success will depend on agreement, even though there are varieties of engagements” – letter to Kīrtanānanda, 1973

“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 materialists without being able to adjust the varieties and disagreement make 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.”

“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....

Pita: “At one point all the devotees were with Śrīla Prabhupāda in his room. Bhavānanda, Girirāj, Jayapatāka Mahārāja, Satsvarūpa Mahārāja, Jayādvaitya, etc, they were all there. Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “Of my disciples, I see no one who has my qualities. But if I look at this or that disciple, I see some qualities. And if I look at a group of them, some percentage of qualities is certainly there. So I have some hope that this movement can continue. The test of your love for me will be shown in how well you work together.”

You displayed so many traits, innovative and progressive as

well as strict and cautious. No one can embody all of them. But together we may. One thing is certain: you were always willing to try and encourage whatever it took to bring souls to the lotus feet of your sweet Lord Kṛṣṇa.

This was your persistent theme. On at least five occasions, you spoke this same statement before your departure from this world – “your love will be tested by the degree of your cooperation amongst each other to spread this mission”. You could have said, “Your love will be tested by how many books you distribute, by how many temples you open, by finding the most advanced devotee on the planet and hearing from him/her, by chanting all of your rounds and following your vows, by the absorption in my books...etc.” No, you said it simple and clear – learn the art of cooperation and it will please me the utmost.

Unity in diversity. How can this become a reality if by our words and actions we undermine the efforts of others, who are sincerely doing their best to present your message? Maybe it’s not our style, maybe it’s not how we saw Śrīla Prabhupāda do it. Maybe this, maybe that...or maybe it is I who am not seeing clearly. Śrīla Prabhupāda himself stated; “Kṛṣṇa has given everyone something extraordinary and to serve Kṛṣṇa with one’s extraordinary talent means successful life.” (letter to Śukadev, 1973)

Unity in diversity means that we celebrate the diversity – honor its expression whenever and wherever we see, as you did Śrīla Prabhupāda. Of course, there are guidelines that you established O Gurudev within the Vedic paradigm, but they are broad and brilliant like the smile of a loving parent. They are not restrictive and narrow as some may purport. That was the mood of Bhaktivinode, Bhaktsiddhānta and of Śrīla Prabhupāda. I have heard it said, “This is the real Krishna consciousness, that over there is just sentiment.” Or, “this person is the real deal, and not so and so”. Can we be so small minded as to take that line of reasoning? Are we the judge and jury? Does this harmonize with Śrīla Prabhupāda’s statements quoted above?

We are all in this together for your pleasure Śrīla Prabhupāda. I humbly and deeply pray that we can rise to the occasion, especially here in New York – for whatever is going on in the Big Apple, the whole world follows.

Just imagine if everyone appreciated the service of all the other

devotees, and celebrated that. And from that appreciation sprung a desire to assist and be of service whenever and wherever needed, despite our so called affiliations. To coin the inimitable Louis Armstrong and Sam Cooke, "What a wonderful world it would be."

That's the world you hoped for us Śrīla Prabhupāda. You bled for that vision and cried when it was tampered with or shattered. That's the Vaikuṅṭha model. You are a Vaikuṅṭha man like no other. That's what you wanted, more than anything, for us to strive for. I am therefore simply begging for the inspiration, strength, vision and courage, that as individuals and a collective whole, that we to not let you down.

Begging to remain eternally in your divine service despite my innumerable faults,

Badarayana Dāsa

Rukmini Priya Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Not just today do we worship you, but every day is a celebration or your life. Your legacy that you have given us is priceless and the matchless gifts you have bestowed upon us can never be repaid.

You give all credit for your achievements to your guru maharaja and we give all the credit to you for bringing Vaikuṅṭha to us.

I pray that you will be forever in the forefront of my mind.

Your eternal servant,

Rukmini Priya Devī Dāsī

I bow my head to the lotus feet of our beloved *gurudeva* His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, whose feet are my only shelter.

I beg forgiveness for my lateness and pray I am not too late. I do want to be included though I have such a meagre offering. This has been a very hard year for me. My husband has been in the hospital since early February. I am feeling such shock from losing my dear godsister Nandalāl Dāsī and pray she is continuing her service to you. Now I too am suffering health problems with breathing.

I now so realize how close to death that big doorway and final exam is in my life. I pray to always find shelter at your lotus feet.

Your rascal servant,

Anavadyangi Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

With the passing of the time, the Krishna consciousness Movement is growing more and more. Here in India, many books are being distributed. This year the Vrindāvan temple distributed 1.15 lac books in the Prabhupāda marathon.

There are many pious souls left in Kali-yuga. Many people are coming to the Vrindāvan temple from all over the world. They take darshan of the Deities, hear the kīrtan, chant and dance with us. We are ever grateful to Your Divine Grace for risking your life and reputation to spread the message of Lord Chaitanya.

We find so many quotes and stories of how low class persons are elevated to first class Vaiṣṇavas. The idea that Westerners cannot become *brahmins* or *sannyāsīs* is not correct. Why did you do something against the *śāstras*? Many criticized you for this, but you did not care.

You are telling the masses what is what and who is who. Going against the modern scientists who do not know the facts, they spend so much time and energy in research to try to find out what Śrīla Vyāsadeva has already described in the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam – that there is life on every planet. A living being cannot come from dull matter or chemicals. Also, you said that they never went to moon.

We thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving us the real life of bliss and knowledge. Krishna consciousness is simple living and high thinking.

You said, “Chant 16 rounds, follow four regulative principles your whole life and you will go back home back to godhead”. May we continue in this way, so we can develop our love for Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Krishna – Vraja *prema*.

Hare Krishna.

Your servant,

Bhubaneswar Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I bow down to your lotus feet with great awe and reverence. Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you on your Vyāsa-pūjā day!

As an offering this year, I want to report to you what progress I have made by reflecting on my service to you and what lessons I have learned from you this past year.

The most joyous part of my *seva* has been to distribute your books and to try to give those fortunate souls a chance to take more steps on the path of *bhakti* through ‘Fortunate People’. Many have become my friends on Facebook and they regularly see Krishna conscious posts on my timeline and on the Fortunate People site. Some are in regular contact with me.

In 2014 for your pleasure, I distributed 497 *Perfection of Yoga*, 567 *Chant and Be Happy*, 2107 *Higher Taste* cookbooks, 313 *Science of Self Realization*, 3956 soft bound *Bhagavad-gītās*, 641 hard bound *Bhagavad-gītās*, and 2080 *Library of Vedic Culture*, at total of 10,161 of your glorious transcendental literature. I began last year with the desire to increase the amount of books distributed by 20%. By your mercy, I increased 50% over last year and I ranked #8 in the U.S. for book distribution.

This year I want to distribute even more and I was thinking: “I distributed as many as I can last year...how am I going to increase?” But guess what, so far for the first two months I have increased by 58% over 2014 and am ranking #2 in the U.S....this is certainly only by your grace! I’m also so happy to report that I am now distributing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1!

Another ecstatic development over the last year is that our son Rāmachandra is now chanting 24 rounds a day and will be up to 25 by May 15th which was requested by his Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Ācāryapāda, from whom he aspires to take initiation. Also my daughter, Navadvīpa, is now regularly chanting five rounds a day! The greatest happiness for parents is to see that their children are taking shelter of your lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

One thing which has impelled me to become more serious is the passing of my very dear friend, Manorūpa Devī Dāsī,

who by her example through her life and upon her leaving this mortal world showed us all how to reach the goal by seriously following your instructions. I am one year closer to the death of this body. It is definitely time for me to become serious about becoming purified and serving you cent per cent. The last time I was ill in December, I really gave in to *māyā*, and became very depressed. It was quite a struggle to get back on my feet and get back to my *japa* and service! So since then, I made up the three weeks of *japa* I missed and have so far not thrown in the towel when this body gives some difficulty. Instead I am just tolerating whatever is the problem and continuing with my service. I know there will probably come some malady that is more serious, but I am praying that I can try to stay Krishna conscious and not just give in to ignorance. I saw this firmly exhibited in Manorūpa's case. In a letter you wrote to Yamunā and Harṣarāṇī, January 15th, 1968, "Physically and mentally we may be disturbed sometimes, but we have to stand erect on the spiritual platform. I may inform you in this connection that I am at the present moment physically unfit. I'm having always a buzzing sound in my brain. I cannot sleep soundly at night, but still I am working because I try to be on the spiritual platform. I hope you shall try to understand me right and do the needful. Hope you are well." Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us the guidance how to deal with these material difficulties by your own example. I pray that I may always cling to your instructions.

For a long time, I had wondered about the mentality a devotee is supposed to have regarding one's performing service for the sake of serving, not desiring to go back home, back to Godhead, not caring where Krishna sends us, just as long as we can be engaged in service to His lotus feet. Being so beaten up in this material world, I always have had a difficult time to get this consciousness. Well yesterday I listened to a class by Vaiṣeṣika Prabhu where he said we "serve to serve" and we are the "servant of the servants". Somehow today it has become somewhat clear to me. The nectar is *in* the service! It is a supreme privilege to serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Krishna and Their pure representative, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Doesn't matter where I serve, just as long as, somehow or other, I can serve you! You stated in *Caitanya Caritāmrita*, Madhya Līlā, Chapter 8 Text 229, in your purport:

“One is fully satisfied by rendering service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Rādhā and Krishna.”

Of course, you’ve always been instructing us in that way. But I feel very happy to actually have a little realization about it.

I am so grateful to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for “doing whatever it takes” to bring Krishna consciousness to the fallen souls around the world. You are *cintāmaṇi*. You are turning us broken pieces of glass into gemstones to offer at your Lord’s lotus feet.

By your causeless mercy only, you accepted me, a poor ignorant fool, as your disciple. You have given what no-one else can give... pure devotional service untinged by mental speculation or desire for any gain...just to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I pray that I may somehow please you with my service and that I may serve you eternally.



Begging to remain fixed at your lotus feet,

Your servant,

Mohanasini Devī Dāsī

All glories, all glories, all glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Jai Nīmāi Nitāi!



O Prabhupāda, dearest friend of the Supreme Lord, please accept my most respectful salutations.

From your elevated position among the closest associates of our Lord, you inspire your servants to pursue the mission of saving the conditioned souls. Impregnated by the seeds of transcendental knowledge, your disciples adapt to the realities of this ever-changing world. They voluntarily move in the direction you propose, just like obedient marionettes in the hand of a puppeteer. I am delighted to admire their achievements which they offer at your feet with love.

Serving you according to their capacity, although sometimes separated by the distance, they all strive in one direction to augment the receptivity of this Age of Kali to welcome the message of Lord Caitanya. I pray that I may remain part of this elected group of committed collaborators.

May you always glance at us with your loving feelings as our spiritual father so we can feel that we are progressing in our ambition to please you.

Your humble servant,

Praghosa Dāsa

Montreal

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

*namas te sārasvatī-devē gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādī-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace! All glories to you who continue to awaken conditioned souls to their pure consciousness through your divine instructions.

Life in the material world means encountering endless struggles, problems, difficulties, sufferings, disagreements and, ultimately, defeat. This realization is reinforced greatly when we go out into the public to distribute your books, for then we vividly see how the world is merely an ocean of these faults. At such times we become more resolute to not take birth here again.

Unfortunately, due to our conditioned natures and material vision, even when we are in the association of devotees, we find such things as disagreements, struggles, quarrels, problems, and the like occurring. Our natural reaction is to whine and complain, to point fingers, and even to retreat from association and become separatists. The only medicine for this disease is to take shelter of Your Divine Grace's lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the book *Yamunā Devī: A Life of Unalloyed Devotion*, the following instructive pastime is described in Volume One, pages 402-07:

Viśākhā Devī Dāsī recalls how you arrived at the Calcutta temple in the fall of 1971 "to be welcomed by a barrage of disheartened devotees." They would argue about "money and books and life members and position and behavior..." You called for an *istagosthi* the next morning and listened to the thirty devotees air their complaints. You responded not by talking of the particular difficulties the devotees were facing but of the attitudes that created them. You stressed cooperation, tolerance and humility,

and pointed out that godly qualities would manifest by evoking spiritual consciousness. In this way only could the devotees transcend the troubles of this material world. You then spoke of the Vaisnava spiritual legacy and told of trials from your own life, assuring the devotees they could also rise above disturbances if they practiced clear thinking, enthusiasm, confidence and patience.

Giriraja Swami recounts you saying in that *iṣṭagoṣṭhī*, “Actually we shouldn’t become too involved in such concerns, because our real business is to hear and chant about Kṛṣṇa, and if we become too absorbed in making material arrangements, we will forget our real business of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

Girirāja Swami: Then Śrīla Prabhupāda said that in his life he never complained, because his policy was always, “everything for Kṛṣṇa and nothing for me.” He mentioned how he struggled to get the passage to America, and then on the way he suffered two heart attacks at sea. And even when he got to America, he suffered in so many ways; he had some buzzing sound in his ears and in his head. “I cannot even describe how much I suffered—nor do I want to.”

Yamunā Devī relates: He said that we were all here because he had followed the instructions of his guru maharaja and come to the West. And then he added with great emphasis, “Do you think it was easy for me to leave India all alone and come to America?” And none of us had ever really thought like that—whether it was easy or hard. We had just assumed that he had done that by Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. Then he continued, “Do you think it was easy for me when I was in Butler, Pennsylvania, and I opened the refrigerator, and there was cat food next to my vegetables? Do you think that was easy?” And all the devotees almost began to cry, because they began to understand what Prabhupāda did for us, and it wasn’t easy. He came from a place where his mother was carried in a palanquin from one house to the

other. He was from another culture, almost like another planet; and he yet came to the West with a trunk full of books and seven rupees... So he told us to try to just understand that Kṛṣṇa consciousness will not always be easy...

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you taught how to truly please guru and Kṛṣṇa by applying Śrī Caitanya's "success formula," *ṭṛṇād api sunīcena taror api sahiṣṇunā amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*, and Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī's advice to execute devotional service with enthusiasm, confidence and patience. We have difficulty following your example, and thus continue to suffer difficulties and struggles, only due to our contaminated hearts.

In the Fourth Canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (4.22.26), Sanat-kumāra says to Pṛthu Mahārāja, "Upon becoming fixed in his attachment to the Supreme Personality of Godhead by the grace of the spiritual master and by awakening knowledge and detachment, the living entity, situated within the heart of the body and covered by the five elements, burns up his material surroundings exactly as fire, arising from wood, burns the wood itself." In your purport you explain that the five elements can refer to the five kinds of material attachments, namely ignorance, false egoism, attachment to the material world, envy and absorption in material consciousness. You write, "Unless one takes shelter of a bona fide spiritual master and advances one's attraction for Kṛṣṇa by the spiritual master's instructions, the five coverings of the living entity cannot be uncovered from the material heart."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, seeing these material attachments still affecting my life, I am feeling in a hopeless condition. On my own I haven't the strength to overcome them. Therefore, I bow down at your lotus feet and beg for the sincerity and seriousness needed to embrace your instructions so that I may catch the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu which you are distributing.

My prayer is that I may always follow your example of perfect surrender to guru and your policy of "everything for Kṛṣṇa and nothing for me."

I remain always grateful to be your servant,

Prthusrava Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you for shining the light of the *śāstras* into my life.

You have explained that this material world is compared to an ocean and the human body is a boat designed especially to cross this ocean. With the guidance of a good navigator, in the form of a (bona fide) spiritual master and favorable winds in the form of instructions from Kṛṣṇa, there is every chance for the soul to achieve the true goal of human life.

I was not consciously seeking spiritual information when I became a devotee, or at least I didn't recognize that I was, but Kṛṣṇa knows the psychic movements of all living entities and he led me to you. Somehow, I have been given all these blessings: a vessel, favorable winds, and you as my captain.

Thank you forever for giving me the chance to leave this material world and go back to Godhead. Please forgive me for being such a distracted fool. I will try to do better.

In gratitude,

Kadamba Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

Recently, I came to remember how even though there was great distance between us, and I hadn't yet met with you personally, in 1973 at the beginning of my joining the Movement in Buenos Aires, Argentina, you came to me to protect me. There were just three of us at the temple, including acting GBC the sannyāsī Hanumān, and along with my sister, Bhakta Dāsī, we were the first disciples.

Being the person that registered the society in Argentina, I was the public face, due to Hanumān Mahārāja being a 'foreigner'. One day I was taken by the secret service to interrogate me. I was in isolation for three days. The reason I say you came to me is that my answers to the interrogators were astonishing. I felt that the words actually weren't mine, but yours. You made me fearless, even though my life was threatened. You showed me that when related to preaching, the flow of *bhakti* cannot be stopped. Like you mentioned in 1972 during a morning walk:

“Super soul is omniscient and omnipotent, so is the spiritual master.”

As the years go by, I am not only struck with awe by your astonishing qualities but more so evident that you always have been my ever well-wisher and best friend. I thank you a million times and more for coming so far to save me. Please, I want to, to the last breath to be allowed to be a speck of dust at your lotus feet, forever being the servant of your servant. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

Your insignificant servant,

Nrhari Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble obeisances.

I am offering you this simple Vyāsa-pūjā letter unto your lotus feet.

You are the personification of all that is auspicious in this world and the external manifestation of The Paramātmā. As such, you revealed the most confidential knowledge about the Absolute Truth and the true mission of our human lives.

All the Vedic scriptures describe the glories of such liberated souls who, with nothing personal left to achieve in the dreamland of material realm, dedicate their time for awaking the sleeping consciousness of the conditioned living entities.

This uninterrupted, selfless and loving devotional activity of yours, rendered each and every feature of your existence all attractive! The way you spoke, the way you walked, the way you interacted with your disciples, your vision, your genuine character and behavior simply illuminated us all. Thus, your saintly personality opened the doors of receptivity to many hearts and administered the medicine to change us from within.

There were many “dreams” going on in this world when you moved to the West to carry the order of your guru mahārāja. There was the American dream, the hippies’ dream, the communist dream, and many others. I was in the Greek dream trying the hippy dream when I had the good fortune to meet you – first through your books and disciples – and afterwards personally.

When I realized the value and import of such fortune, I felt thrilled to be present on the planet at the same time with your presence! This feeling has not disappeared since and my gratitude to you and the Lord, who arranged such a blessed meeting, is ever increasing!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, how is it possible that in just a few years of missionary activity in this world, you achieved such huge results in the form of lives saved from illusion unless you were empowered by the Lord who used you as an instrument to expand Lord Chaitanya’s Movement into the Western countries and the rest of the planet?

Using an aged body, with diseases and weaknesses ever

present, you ventured to unknown and unfriendly materialistic countries, without any financial or physical assistance, risking death, tolerating pain and accepting extreme mental, psychological and social hardships exclusively as a matter of duty and service to your guru, Krishna, and us all!

How will I ever repay you for the treasure you so liberally bestowed upon me?

I was loitering in the lower modes of nature, lost in the labyrinth of the complexities of the material energy when I started reading your translated books and suddenly all started falling into place and making sense!

But it was only with the help of your ISKCON society that I was able to put these teachings into practice! Such a nice arrangement for association and opportunity for practical application of this ancient Vedic philosophy presented for the modern Age!

From all your gifts, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the most relishable is the mahā-mantra!

It is just sublime! There is no particular time or place in order to chant, no strict rules of pronunciations like with the other Vedic mantras, and no need for particular paraphernalia for the chanting. Performed with the muscle of the tongue which is the only one after the one of the heart, which never feels fatigued! So easy!

Thanks to the faith you instilled in me, I took to the chanting. And this initial faith has led me to discover gradually the treasure of the transcendental dimension you were talking about, which seems to be without limits!

On this journey, your words and teachings are the favorable winds which are pushing me to be more and more part of that spiritual reality and always less a citizen of the external illusory realm.

This *saṅkīrtana* Movement is being carried on through the media of sound and as long one is in contact with this sound, he is moving forward to the esoteric dimension. In your Movement many purified devotees are producing beautiful transcendental sounds while simultaneously deriving pleasure in listening to them. This is the life of all transcendental knowledge! Your words, chanting and glorification of the Lord are still the most powerful for me! Free from any trace of pride, false ego and desire for material gain, these words still constitute the most fertile seeds ready to

heal, cure and fructify within any soul who offers submissive and inquisitive hearing.

With the help of the *gāyatrī* mantra, at least three times a day, there is this nice experience of linking with you through meditation. And fortunately, through the agency of digital revolution, all your work, classes, books, articles, videos, *bhajans*, photos and nectarine memories from your disciples are now easily available and relishable at any given minute!

Thus, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you remain established in the center of my life and I hope it will not be long before I can see you again personally. I can try to imagine you, situated now in the glory of your spiritual body, immersed in the constant loving service of the Lord, hopefully still intermediating to Him for the acceptance of your disciples and their services.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you woke me up for good from the slumber I have been fallen into, and now, with a loving heart and favorable mind, I am chanting this vibration, like I did back then while you were seated upon your Vyāsāsana.

This chanting is so sublime, and the only way to thank you appropriately is to chant it back:

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

All glories to you! All glories to the *saṅkīrtana yajña!*

Thank you millions of times!

Your aspiring servant,

Citraka Dāsa



A personal declaration of inadequacy.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

In spite of more than 40 years of conviction in relation to the teachings you have so kindly brought to the world, I shamefully admit I still maintain strong ties with the corporal concept of life. My conditioning is obvious as I am being haunted every now and then by the lower forces of nature as a result of my association with the ordinary. As such, the real story of my life is that my Krishna consciousness has really never been balanced or mature.

How long have I traveled up and down in these material universes, away from home, away from the bliss of pure service, and how long will I still have to endure this constant test of sincerity, a test I have failed again and again? What is the use of a mad-man being tested in a sobriety test? Something has to happen Śrīla Prabhupāda; a divine intervention, maybe a temporary denial on my right to free will...anything that would bring me nearer to you and could save me from my lower self. You have already done brilliantly – the best a soul can do to save another soul, but it's me Śrīla Prabhupāda. It's this damn conditioning that refuses to give me a break in order to do justice to the gift of love you have shown, a quality of love unheard of in this land of mediocrity called the material world.

I beg you, please Śrīla Prabhupāda, take away all my misconceptions, inject in me the sincerity I need to qualify as a real disciple, take away from me anything I consider important that you know is useless and make things happen for me so I can end up swimming in the pure waters of the holy name, your company and the company of your pure devotees.

Your servant,

Havi Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances at your lotus feet, now and eternally.

On your Vyāsa-pūjā day when your mercy is abundantly available, I only have one request. Please engage me in some kind of service, anything that pleases you, whatever you require, no matter how small. I have no other request. I only want to serve you Śrīla Prabhupāda, for whatever days, weeks, or years remain in my life. Your sweet service is the only thing that I have found that will not deteriorate along with my body, and the one thing that has touched my heart like nothing else ever can. Serving you will carry me from this birth to the next, where I hope to pick up where I left off and be born as a more refined, efficient servant, more suited to such a glorious master. So, before another death occurs, I pray to be accepted as your eternal servant wherever I am born and always find shelter at your lotus feet.

Praying for your mercy,

Sarva-drik Dāsa

Arjuna Dāsa

My dear Srila Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to your divine lotus feet!

With great awe and reverence I emphatically declare that you are absolutely the most transcendently amazing, pure, wise, loving, merciful and compassionate personality that ever roamed this earth, and this very fact is becoming more evident with each rising and setting of the blazing sun!

In your *Teachings of Lord Caitanya* it is written:

“When Lord Caitanya finished His instructions to Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, Sanātana, being empowered and enlightened, was so transcendently pleased that he at

once fell at the feet of Lord Caitanya and said: “I am born of a very low family, and I have always associated with lowly people; therefore I am the lowest of sinners. Yet You are so kind that You have taught me lessons which are not even understood by Lord Brahma, the greatest being in this universe.

“By Your grace I have appreciated the conclusions which You have taught me, but I am so low that I cannot even touch a drop of the ocean of Your instructions. Thus if You want me, who am nothing but a lame man, to dance, then please give me Your benediction by placing Your feet on my head.”

Thus Sanātana Gosvāmī prayed for the Lord’s confirmation that His teachings would actually evolve in his heart by His grace. Otherwise Sanātana knew that there was no possibility of his being able to describe the Lord’s teachings. The purport of this is that the *ācāryas* (spiritual masters) are authorized by higher authorities. Instruction alone cannot make one an expert. Unless one is blessed by the spiritual master, or the *ācārya*, such teachings cannot become fully manifest. Therefore one should seek the mercy of the spiritual master so that the instructions of the spiritual master can develop within oneself. After receiving the prayers of Sanātana Gosvāmī, Lord Caitanya placed His feet on the head of Sanātana and gave him His benedictions so that all His instructions would develop fully.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most blessed occasion I sadly and piteously submit that this wretched pathetic soul has done absolutely nothing to please you nor can I ever do anything to inherit and merit your blessings. I am nothing – a tiny speck and an insignificant beggar! So at this present moment alone with my thoughts and aspirations, what I seek desperately from Your Divine Grace is an act of pure transcendental mercy upon my head to have all Your instructions become fully manifest within my heart and in turn may I become simply an instrument in

your holy mission.

Shamelessly I throw and submit myself hoping to remain forever prostrated at your lotus feet!

Your aspiring disciple,

Arjuna Dāsa

Mahaman Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept the prostrated obeisances of this lowly servant of yours.

It is difficult for me to even begin to understand, leave alone describe your glories. Even Lord Krishna Himself does not reach the limit in glorifying His devotees. Yet it is the duty of every disciple to glorify his spiritual master, always, and especially on his Vyasa-puja.

By the wish of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, in order to fulfill His prediction *pr̥thivīte ache yata nagarādi grāma sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma*, three especially empowered personalities made their divine appearance.

The first personality was Om Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura who formulated through his numerous writings and activities a plan to systematically and in organized manner to propagate the mission of Lord Chaitanya globally. He also developed and promoted profusely the concept of *nāma-haṭṭas*.

The second personality was our param guru mahārāja Om Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, who, amongst his other numerous achievements, advanced this mission and opened sixty four temples in India and abroad.

The third personality is Your Divine Grace, the most worthy and deserving servant of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura.

The whole world, including atheists, is wonderstruck at your achievements, which is the greatest miracle of this world.

By the divine potency of ISKCON, love of Godhead is made available in each and every town and village, indeed in every home.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is beyond our ability to conceive how, single-handedly, without any financial or manpower, etc. resources, you gave the world the most precious gift of Krishna consciousness. Without even an iota of desire for self-aggrandizement, you established the greatest Movement for all times to come. The present as well as future generations will recognize you as the saviour of the world, with the unlimited compassion of a truly saintly person.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have no qualifications or devotion, but I feel myself indebted (much as the entire world should) to you.

There is no way that we could be exonerated from the debt that we owe to you – we simply prostrate at your lotus feet and beg one benediction – that you engage us eternally in your divine service.

May we never ever forget or leave your lotus feet.

*yadyapi āmāra guru caitanyera dās
tathāpi jāniye āmi tāñhāra prakāśa (C.C)*

“Although I know my spiritual master as the servant of Sri Chaitanya, I also know him as His manifestation”

Begging forgiveness for offences committed knowingly or unknowingly at your lotus feet, and thanking you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, My koṭi koṭi daṇḍavats to you.

Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servant,

Mahaman Dāsa

I offer my respectful and grateful obeisances unto you, who has opened my eyes with the torchlight of knowledge.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, a few months ago I was writing lyrics to go with a melody of the song “Any Dream Will Do” from the musical *Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

I ended up with a glorification of you, which made me very happy.

As English is not my native language I always send my writings to a few devotees with the request to check the grammar and suggestions to improve the song.

My godnephew, Deva Deva Dāsa, an accomplished songwriter, supplied many lyrics and helped me with the form. This song includes a children’s choir.

Hare Krishna.

Your grateful servant,

Parividha Dāsa

When we were young
And very careless
Our lives so hopeless
Without a clue

Here in the West
Our hearts were burning
For a guru yearning
To bring the truth

And in the East
You were preparing
For someday sharing
All that you knew

The sound of drums
The holy name
The world would never be the same
Rays of love shine through the darkness
All because of you

May I return
Back to Godhead
Where Krishna's feet tread
And dreams are true

There you and I
Will be so peaceful
And ever blissful
As my dreams come true

Ramanya Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you coming to America to save us, and the entire human race.

My eternal father and Gurudev, divine Spiritual Master,

Please accept my most insignificant obeisances at the dust of your divine lotus feet on this most glorious event; the day of your divine Sri Vyāsa-pūjā celebration.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, for me you are the most merciful spiritual master who ever existed on this earth planet. You yourself mention Śrīla Prabhupāda, that by following very strictly and very rigidly the instructions of the spiritual master is the secret for success in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

It is so amazing that we are celebrating all over the world your holy appearance day just after Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī. To me, this is very, very significant, important and amazing. You established your International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) all over the world. Fifty years ago, your divine and beautiful lotus feet for the first time touched and purified the Western countries, particularly the USA and the City of Boston.

Only by the divine mercy of your dear guru maharaja, and your kindness for coming in 1965 for the first time – a great devotee of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa; *gauḍīya* Vaiṣṇava, the great *ācārya* of the *sampradāya*.

Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda, by coming to America, you purified the entire world, and only you could transform *caṇḍālas*, *mlecchas* from all over the world into pure Vaiṣṇavas. This is a miracle you in Rishikesh, India in 1977. In a humble way you told us that the truth has to be spoken and that your miracle has never been done before.

Another amazing miracle that you mention Śrīla Prabhupāda, is that there are so many different editions of the *Bhagavad-gītā* in the West, but there is not one single Vaisnava being made. But due to our *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, there are so many Vaiṣṇavas all over the world. And this is because you are the most amazing powerful preacher who ever existed on this planet. Thank you!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, divine *Gurudeva*, our ever well-wisher for the entire society of Vaiṣṇavas. Please help us to preserve everything you so kindly gave us.

Śrīla Prabhupāda on this auspicious year, we are celebrating your 50 year anniversary of coming to America, the 40 year anniversary of the famous Sri Sri Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Temple in Vṛndāvana, and 40 years since you so kindly visited Mexico City. Every place and temple you visited, you purified the place so many times, and in fact you purified the entire planet. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please give me blessings to always meditate on your lotus feet, and not to identify with this gross material body. You so many times explained, in so many different ways, “you are not this material body,” and still we continue to identify with the body in so many different ways. Divine Spiritual Master, you are the first to teach us real Vedic knowledge – as it is. And this is a great meditation (*bhūta śuddhi*) that every Vaiṣṇava is recommended to perform every day – to purely worship the Deities and chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra. In the first ISKCON temple in New York, on a piece of paper, in your nice handwriting, you posted on the wall a list that every devotee initiated by yourself should follow the four regulative principles; rise early in the morning and attend the *maṅgala āraṭi*, and chant

16 rounds minimum every day. You repeatedly asked your followers, even in 1977 in Vṛndāvana *Dhām* when you were very ill and laying on your bed, to get up early in the morning, take a shower, attend *maṅgala āraṭi*, and in this way we will be always in the mood of goodness.

*nāhaṁ vipro na ca nara-patir nāpi vaiśya na śūdra
nāhaṁ varṇī na ca gṛha -patir no vana-stho yatir vā
kintu prodyan nikhila paramānanda-pūrṇāmṛtābdher
gopī-bhartuḥ pada -kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsah*

In an incredible lecture in Vṛndāvana, you told us to be ‘... one thousand times, servant of the servant of the dust of the lotus feet of the gopīs. You said not to try to become a gopī... *sahajiyā* tendency, but become servant of the servant.

In the same lecture you keep destroying whatever false ego we have, saying that if we think we are a great *brāhmaṇa*, or a great *sannyāsī*, this is still material, and qualifications are temporary. In another lecture you mentioned that even if one thinks he has become more advanced than our guru maharaja because we know some Sanskrit, or because we might have some material knowledge – big P.hD, or by ABC, even if we are thinking like this, please don’t show your foolishness in front of your *guru*. You should become very, very humble in front of the ācārya. This is Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s teachings:

“I’m not a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya or śūdra; Not a brahmacārī, householder, vānaprastha or sannyāsī. I’m the servant of the servant of the servant of the master of the gopīs Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is an ocean full of transcendental bliss.” (Padyāvālī 74)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, divine Gurudeva. Please protect and help all of the devotees who are following your divine instructions, and especially the Vaiṣṇavas who are working so hard to build the ToVP in Sridham Māyāpur.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for everything you so kindly have given us.

Om Viṣṇupāda Paramhaṁsa Aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad His

Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jay*.

Our eternal ever well-wisher of ISKCON and his sincere followers.

Aspiring to try to be your servant,

Ramanya Dāsa

Sravanananda Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to you and all that you have done to save all the unworthy souls such as myself whom continue to waste their time in the illusory energy.

You had written in 1958, in Vrindāvana:

“Like the froth on the sea water mixes again in the sea, Māyā’s samsāras play is just like that. No one is mother or father, or personal relative, Just like the sea-foam they remain but a short time, Just as the froth on sea water mixes again in the sea, The body made of five elements meets with destruction. How many bodies does the embodied soul take in this way; His relatives are all simply related to this temporal body.”

Yet I continue with the illusion of misidentification like the cave dwellers of Plato’s treatise. Their excuse was they had been born in darkness and had never seen the light. I have no excuse as I have seen the light and especially your light and I still demand to remain in darkness. You continue to give your brilliant effulgence through your books, audio and other instructions. Yet I remain adamant to hold tight to the temporal. By your mercy you showed me the pain and temporary nature of this material body in August 2012 while I was in the Bhaktivedānta Archives helping to build a vault for your treasures; you revealed a large cancerous tumor that was only revealed by your mercy and would not have been

found without your tender loving hand, yet I still hold onto the shadows as reality.

What will it take to be free from all this illusion? We have free will, you have given us all the tools to pry ourselves free yet we remain attached. Since I have no power to do it myself you have continued to slowly but steadily show me with your intervention that all the attachments that I have held dear, are like froth on the sea.

You have revealed in the first paragraph your realisations of all the fruitless attachments and how you laughed as they were revealed to you in 1958 in Vrindāvana.

“I am sitting alone in Vrindāvana-dhāma In this mood I am getting many realizations. I have my wife, sons, daughters, grandsons, everything, But I have no money so they are a fruitless glory. Krishna has shown me the naked form of material nature, By his strength it has all become tasteless to me today. *yasyāham anugrṇāmi hariṣye tad-dhanam śanaiḥ* “I gradually take away all the wealth of those upon whom I am merciful.” How was I able to understand this mercy of the All-merciful? Everyone has abandoned me.”

You have never abandoned me and it is only by your love that I have been able to understand the mercy of the All-Merciful!

Since I have not been able to do any of this process on my own you have facilitated it for me by your kind mercy.

It is being revealed by your mercy and for that I know you are still here very much present in my life.

Since I have been weak and so fallen you have always been there to pick me up and help me continue the struggle. Every time I am slammed by Maya and she reveals her most brutal but merciful form to me you are there to explain why it is happening and give me the realisation to continue to fight.

How can I thank you for your unlimited mercy. I am so undeserving. I see so many godbrothers and godsisters doing so much service for you. So much they are doing. You have made a pledge to me and you are more than fulfilling it. I have made a pledge to you and I am not fulfilling it.

I do pledge that I will continue to glorify you every day that I live and try to share you with whomever I meet. I will continue to give out books wherever I can.

Until my last breath I will try to do something that will please you...as you had written in letters to me in the past. You told me it was not very difficult to always remember Krishna and never forget Him. But it has been. **Yet it is not very difficult to remember you and never forget you.** I feel your presence always and whenever I fall you pick me up. How can I forget you? I never will. Because everyone else who has abandoned me; you have not...you show your deep love for me like no-one I have ever known. You have been there for me since I was 19 and you still continue to be there for me as I just turned 62. I love you and can never love you as you love me.

I have been shown by you who is Krishna and it is by your love that I can understand anything to do with Śrī Krishna.

Śrīla Prabhupāda it is not that I miss you, because you have continued to be here for me since the day I first met you.

I will continue to try and please you because that is the only way I can show my love and appreciation.

Thank you forever and ever for giving me the strength to be with you and your followers.

Your worthless servant,

Sravanananda Dāsa

Vithhalesvara Dāsa

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

*namas te sārāsvatī-deve gaura-vāñī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Kṛṣṇa is known as Uttama Śloka, and His unalloyed servants also receive similar such glorification. They do not seek it out, of course. It naturally follows them just as water naturally flows to the lowest point. It is a concerted outpouring of love and appreciation

that springs forth unchecked from the hearts and minds of those **so** moved. And you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, are the qualified target and cause of it all. By hearing and speaking on your books, we become teleported to the transcendental realm. This we have practical experience of. Only through you do we have any bona fide access into the import of the great literature. You are the key which unlocks it all – that’s a fact. Thus it is imperative that we connect with Your Divine Grace via the *paramparā* system – not only we, but everyone. Your books are “specifically” the standard law books for mankind, now and far, far, into the future. As you stated, “I have to choose my words very carefully. I am writing for the next ten thousand years.” In this and in other ways, you are immortalized in transcendental sound. (“I shall live forever in my books. I shall never die”). I would not be surprised in the least if in generations, and even creations to come, people will be hearing from and about our Śrīla Prabhupāda. This is not just some sentiment on my part, it is the realization of many exalted devotees. Your contributions are so significant that it could not be otherwise. Just as we take seriously the statement, “Your fame is spread all over the three worlds”, in the same way, this is not something far-fetched. Even some *karmī* scholars acknowledge your special place in history and your powerful books, etc. “This is not ordinary”, they say. And that is **so** correct. You are anything but ordinary. By being brought close to you through śikṣā and *dīkṣā*, we again connect with Kṛṣṇa. That is the real mark of progress and success in life. Śrī Arjuna became the medium for delivering *Bhagavad-gītā* and Maharaja Parīkṣit became so for *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Now you are their vehicle by which they, their messages, travel to us. This is the *paramparā* way, replete with your Bhaktivedanta purports. Thus everything is made perfectly suitable for our understanding and deliverance. One has to be empowered by Kṛṣṇa; others simply cannot do this. You are like Sūta Gosvāmī sitting in on talks between Śukadeva Gosvāmī and Parīkṣit Mahārāja. Just as he, Sūta Gosvāmī, carried those talks to Naimiṣāraṇya, you carry the same and more to us. You sit in as he did, via the *paramparā*; a front row seat. When Sūta arrived there, the sages were eager to hear him. They insisted that he also give his own sweet realizations, not that he only repeat like a parrot. They had full confidence that he was bona fide. And we will “forever” insist on your own

sweet realizations, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your purports, classes, talks, letters, etc. are permeated with them. Without them, proper understanding and realization simply doesn't arrive. Thus we declare our total dependence on and love for you.

Clasping to you tightly and permanently, our divine master and savior, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your poor excuse for a disciple,

Viththalesvara Dāsa

PS: You once said, "This initiation means that you are now at the point of deathlessness. Now do not foolishly go back."

This is real love.

Mahadyuti Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept my humble obeisances and please forgive my multitudinous offenses against you. All glories to you!

While describing his previous life, Śrīla Nārada Muni says (*Bhāg.* 1.6.26): "Thus I began chanting the holy name and fame of the Lord by repeated recitation, ignoring all the formalities of the material world. Such chanting and remembering of the transcendental pastimes of the Lord are all-benedictory. So doing, I traveled all over the earth, fully satisfied and free from pride and envy."

That's an excellent description of what *you* did, Śrīla Prabhupāda. In the purport to that verse, you elaborate: "The life of a sincere devotee of the Lord is thus explained in a nutshell

by Nārada Muni by his personal example. Such a devotee, after his initiation by the Lord or His bona fide representative, takes very seriously chanting of the glories of the Lord and traveling all over the world so that others may also hear the glories of the Lord. Such devotees have no desire for material gain. They are conducted by one single desire: to go back to Godhead. This awaits them in due course on quitting the material body. Because they have the highest aim of life, going back to Godhead, they are never envious of anyone, nor are they proud of being eligible to go back to Godhead. Their only business is to chant and remember the holy name, fame and pastimes of the Lord and, according to personal capacity, to distribute the message for others' welfare without motive of material gain."

Again, this describes *you*, Śrīla Prabhupāda a pure devotee of the highest order.

Furthermore, you inculcated in your disciples the desire and ability to live their lives in a similar way. By your grace, they have continued saving materially conditioned souls from the horrors of sense indulgence, mundanely motivated religious pursuits, academic speculation, and so-called meditation on emptiness and nothingness.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for taking on yourself, at an advanced physical age, tremendous risk and inconvenience to deliver to a largely ungrateful world the uncompromising Absolute Truth – which no one else had done before or has done since. May we continue to gain greater and greater realisation of how extraordinary a person you actually are and the incalculable debt we owe you.

All glories to you!

Your servant,

Mahadyuti Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda.

On this Vyāsa-pūjā day, I am allowed to look into my heart and see what gifts I have accepted from Your Divine Grace and how much gratitude I am showing you by my actions, words and thoughts.

I remember when first finding your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and after reading it three times, I knew I had to surrender to a bona fide spiritual master. There was no doubt in my mind than you, the author, were the bona fide spiritual master. Although besides the list of gurus in our disciplic succession, which included your name, you never came out and said it, I wanted to give you my life and be accepted as your disciple.

From any and every angle, from any verse glorifying the symptoms and behavior of a pure Vaiṣṇava and guru, you fit the bill.

In the *Padma Purāṇa*, the characteristics of the guru, the bona fide spiritual master, have been described:

*mahā-bhāgavata-śreṣṭho brāhmaṇo vai gurur nṛṇām
sarveṣāṃ eva lokānām asau pūjyo yathā hariḥ*

“The guru must be situated on the topmost platform of devotional service. There are three classes of devotees, and the guru must be accepted from the topmost class. The first-class devotee is the spiritual master for all kinds of people. It is said, *gurur nṛṇām*. The word *nṛṇām* means “of all human beings.” The guru is not limited to a particular group. It is stated in the *Upadeśāmṛta* of Rūpa Gosvāmī that a guru is a *gosvāmī*, a controller of the senses and the mind. Such a guru can accept disciples from all over the world. *Pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt*. This is the test of the guru”. SCC *Madhya* 24.33 purport.

I feel most fortunate that you created the desire for spiritual life in my heart, that I had not looked for or been deceived by any bogus guru or so-called spiritual teachings. As you once said, “I created your spiritual qualifications”. This is certainly true for me in the beginning and 43 years later. Any credit I have or any

inspiration anyone may receive from me is simply YOUR mercy.

You worked tirelessly writing your books thus giving us everything anyone could possibly need in devotional service – from *śraddhā* to Krishna *prema*. When boiled down to the essence we understand your desire for us all: “Chant Hare Krishna and be happy”.

It is so simple, but I am so dull and crooked I need the ocean of instructions you left us so that I can daily purify myself by hearing and repeating the science of devotional service you have given us.

An important aspect I have been focusing and working on this year is to be the servant of your servants. Aspiring for and cultivating humility is a prerequisite for fully embracing this important aspect of Lord Caitanya’s teachings. Sanātana Goswāmī in *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta* says: “One should endeavor to develop utter humility with every deed, word and thought.”

You set the perfect example in this and in all other ways. Being guru of all human beings means being the servant of all human beings. This is possible only by one who is completely humble. Of course, you taught by word and example that true humility is following the orders of the spiritual master as one’s life and soul.

I want to endeavor to the best of my ability to be your bona fide disciple. I pray to you daily to not let the false bodily identification and all the material desires that accompany embracing the false ego, to block your mercy for myself and my ability to share your mercy to others. I see your answer to my prayers manifesting daily. I just hope that I can continue to desire and endeavor to accept your blessings, the blessings that you are offering to everyone. Please grant this wish. Let me become your instrument, let my life and whatever I possess be used in your service to help others.

You truly are doing everything in the manifesting and spreading of this Krishna consciousness Movement. You are just looking for those who will help you and get the credit. Please keep me in the company of such great souls and allow me to serve and encourage them to the best of my limited ability.

Begging to remain your insignificant and grateful disciple,

Rajendranandana Dāsa

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

*namas te sārasvatī-deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-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, 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.

It's not that the great teachers of devotional service (*ācāryas*) don't struggle. In fact, it is the righteous struggle that a devotee undergoes in practicing and spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness that reveals his or her greatness.

Lord Brahmā, for example, is famous for the great *tapasya* he performed to please the Lord; and Śrīmatī Kuntīdevī is renowned for her steady devotion to Kṛṣṇa even in the face of calamity.

And of all the gifts that His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda has given the world, his personal example in serving his spiritual master and Lord Caitanya – against all odds – is foremost.

In the *Gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that the people of the world observe and then follow the actions of the great souls in this world:

“Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.” – *Bhagavad-gītā* 3.21

Even in modern times, people are aware of this truth. In *Psychology Today*, for example, a business management expert writes about the power of leading by example:

“It's so obvious; you don't need to make the argument at

any tedious length. Let's just say you'll never go wrong leading by example. There aren't too many things in life I can guarantee. But this is one of them." (*Psychology Today*; Victor Lipman; *You'll Never Go Wrong Leading By Example*)

In the same vein, theologian and philosopher, Albert Schweitzer, resolutely states:

"Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing."

Indeed, at Kurukṣetra Lord Kṛṣṇa gave his orders to Arjuna, and Arjuna followed them, thus inspiring us all to do the same.

The author of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* writes about the impact that Kṛṣṇa's instructions to Arjuna have had on the world:

"Kṛṣṇa is so merciful that simply by aiming His instructions at Arjuna, He has given protection to the whole world." – *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Madhya līlā 22.56

And as it is true that Kṛṣṇa was merciful to the whole world by aiming his instructions at Arjuna, by the same token, it is also true that Arjuna gave the world the greatest gift by faithfully receiving them. By humbly following Kṛṣṇa's instructions, Arjuna has also given shelter to all the people of the world by his example.

Surely, there is no lack of spiritual instruction in the world. There is however, a dearth of spiritual heroes who set an example for the world by following those instructions. With the onslaught of Kali-yuga, people not only need to hear pure spiritual instruction, but – and perhaps even more importantly – they also need exemplars of those instructions.

Here are the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*'s clear and perfect instructions:

"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." – *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 12.3.51

“Those who are actually advanced in knowledge are able to appreciate the essential value of this Age of Kali. Such enlightened persons worship Kali-yuga because in this fallen Age all perfection of life can easily be achieved by the performance of *sankīrtana*.” – *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.5.36

“If a person unaware of the effective potency of a certain medicine takes that medicine or is forced to take it, it will act even without his knowledge because its potency does not depend on the patient’s understanding. Similarly, even though one does not know the value of chanting the holy name of the Lord, if one chants knowingly or unknowingly, the chanting will be very effective. – *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.2.19

Despite the simple clarity of these teachings, however, one who hears them might think them impractical and therefore, hesitate to follow them. After all, along the spiritual path there are many obstacles, and when the goal seems too risky or out of reach, one may hesitate to pursue it. It’s human nature to stay in one’s comfort zone.

As the champion of Lord Caitanya’s message, Śrīla Prabhupāda, has removed this dilemma. Even though bereft of material support and facility, he was successful beyond anyone’s expectation by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. He showed us by his example that the only real risk in life is *not* taking shelter of Kṛṣṇa’s holy names.

Śrīla Prabhupāda believed in this principle and taught his disciples how to apply it.

In a purport, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

“This advancement in spiritual life does not depend on any kind of previous education or qualification. The method itself is so pure that by simply engaging in it one becomes pure.” – *Bhagavad-gītā* 9.2; purport

Applying this standard, Śrīla Prabhupāda encouraged inexperienced young men and women, with scanty facility, to travel throughout the world to spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness

Movement. He told them to depend on the chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy names. They did; and they were successful.

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

“Any devotee who believes that the holy name of the Lord is identical with the Lord is a pure devotee, even though he may be in the neophyte stage. By his association, others may also become Vaiṣṇavas.” – *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Madhya-līlā 15.106)

In the same vein, Śrīla Prabhupāda quotes this verse from the *Garuda Purāṇa* in one of his purports:

“Even the worms, birds and beasts are assured of elevation to the highest perfectional life if they are completely surrendered to the transcendental loving service of the Lord, so what to speak of the philosophers amongst the human beings?”

And in yet another example of his emphasis on the power of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes the following to an aspiring disciple:

“The conclusion is that one should learn the art of chanting the holy name of Krishna 24 hours a day and that alone is the remedy for all problems of material existence...So I cannot give you any better advice for your problem, simply chant Hare Krishna and everything will be alright.” (Letter to Susan Beckman; August 29, 1973)

Not only did Śrīla Prabhupāda speak and write about this principle, he also personally applied it and thus made it tangible.

For example, Śrīla Prabhupāda tells how his business in India was “dismantled”; how, by circumstances, he was obliged to come to America without money or connections; how, after arriving in America his health was shaky; and how even some of his own godbrothers back in India maligned him for his effort to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West.

History shows, however, that in spite of these and many other trying circumstances, Śrīla Prabhupāda went on chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and by so doing he was successful in all aspects of his life and in his mission to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world.

By his example, Śrīla Prabhupāda has shown the people of the world, for all time, the value of Lord Caitanya’s essential teaching: that one who humbly goes on chanting Kṛṣṇa’s holy names, despite the challenges of life, will be victorious.

param vijayate śrī kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtanam

“All victory comes to those who chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.”

As we celebrate the divine appearance of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmi Prabhupāda, may we remember his example and go on chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, come what may.

*The servant of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s servants,
Vaiśeṣika Dāsa*

Madhusevita Dāsa

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

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

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmi 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.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories to you, the founder-*ācārya* of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and of my real life.

Yes, you are the founder of my real life because you revealed to me my identity as Kṛṣṇa’s eternal servant, and you are the *ācārya* of my real life because you have introduced me to the eternal associates of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, you are teaching me how to serve Kṛṣṇa through them, and you are protecting me from the onslaught of the *nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi* disease.

This terrible disease has chameleonic variegated features, and nowadays it has pervaded not only the Western countries but the whole world. One new form of it has appeared as the latest magniloquent, aulic proclamation from the host of the misguided scientists: the announcement of Tolcapone, a new drug that lets you sense other people’s pain. It’s known as “the compassion drug” because it produces feelings of empathy, kindness, and egalitarianism.

Besides the name of the pill, which is strikingly similar to that of a notorious American criminal of the ’20s (and which is indicative of these scientists’ proclivity), the mad assertion that a pill can evoke compassion and kindness is just another aspect of the *nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi* disease: the idea that the living being is nothing but a product of the body’s neurobiological system. In other words, the basis of the new drug is the assumption that we are nothing but matter, and that our feelings and sentiments like empathy and compassion are therefore also material, with no basis in spirit, and we can manipulate them to our liking.

Probably the next product will be “the gratitude drug,” a pill that makes you appreciate the empathy you receive from someone who’s taken “the compassion drug.” These so-called scientists remind me of a group of witches and sorcerers who make potions and philters to subdue the minds of the innocent.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have revealed to the world that our real identity is spiritual and that we possess it because we are parts and parcels of the Supreme Truth, who is the supreme identity, that we are sentient conscious beings because He is the

supreme conscious being, and that our thoughts, emotions, and feelings, including love, compassion, and gratitude, are based on the Supreme Person's possessing these transcendental, eternal qualities in fullness and perfection.

By following your impeccable instructions we can get rid of the *nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi* disease once and for all and rediscover the blissful life of transcendental emotions in the realm of loving exchanges between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Your role in this process of deliverance is unfathomable and unique.

Lord Caitanya came with the most merciful attitude to deliver the fallen souls of this age, but Lord Nityānanda had to check Him from killing Jagāi and Mādhāi when Gaurasundara saw the violence they had perpetrated against Nitāi. Only when Nityānanda Prabhu pleaded for mercy were the two brothers delivered.

You are Lord Nityānanda's mercy personified because you are pleading for mercy in favor of beings who are truly lower than Jagāi and Mādhāi, who are victims of an unprecedented, systematic, malicious attempt to "scientifically" eradicate the Supreme Person and the spiritual nature of the living beings from human culture.

If you hadn't pleaded for Gaura-Nitāi's mercy upon this fallen human race, by now the world would have fallen into irreversible catastrophe.

Please protect your movement from all dangers, and please protect me with regard to the new course my life is taking.

I will devote myself to helping to maintain for all generations to come your absolute position as the founder-*ācārya* of both the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement and of our real lives.

Your insignificant servant,

Madhusevita Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Every day I am either bombarded by the material energy or witness the material energy's assault on others. These moments are an impetus to remember my great fortune: being your disciple. Prior to taking shelter of your lotus feet, these assaults by the material energy would fill me with anxiety and sadness. I always felt powerless.

Now, however, after receiving your shelter I feel very much empowered to withstand these assaults and to help others do the same. By engaging in devotional service under your direction, everyone, including myself, can be freed from all the anxiety caused by the material energy. It is only by your inconceivable mercy that I can now feel this way. This is why distribution of your books and publicly chanting the holy name is the best remedy for all the misery that the world has to offer.

Please allow me to remain in the association of devotees who are eager for your mercy. Their association will keep me on the right track. Also please engage this fallen soul in the service of your Lord Krishna.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving me your mercy and for the ability to give your mercy to others.

Your servants,

Purnamasi Devī Dāsī and Kṛṣṇadasa Kaviraja Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. This special year is the fiftieth anniversary of your arrival in America. I wrote an article on this theme for *Back to Godhead*, entitled “Reflecting on Half a Century”. It will appear in the November 2015 issue. An excerpt is my homage this year.

Tattvavit Dāsa

Who was Śrīla Prabhupāda, new in America fifty years ago? A hero. Who is he now for me?

In Tim Parks’s story *Reverend*, I read about a sixty-year-old Englishman looking back thirty years to recall his deceased father, a clergyman: “He didn’t feel like doing research, putting his father’s name into Google or delving into archives. . . . What he wanted, rather, was to assemble a picture of his father” from memory. Disciples ought to be able to say what their guru is for them, what part of their personality they owe him. How did my background shape my involvement in and understanding of his Movement?

By risking his life in coming to America, when most men retire, Prabhupāda demonstrated a devotee’s unselfishness. A devotee – happy having Krishna – knows perfect happiness yet wholeheartedly cares about others. Hence he conveys to everyone the bliss of serving Krishna. In fifty years, in eighty languages, those of us he inspired have distributed a half billion of Prabhupāda’s books. Thanks to his good influence, for the first time in history people all over the world now take Krishna consciousness seriously.

Prabhupāda turned sixty-nine going to America by sea. In my town in Minnesota, it was summer. I was nearly fifteen. I delivered a Minneapolis newspaper to houses and sometimes stopped at St. Mary’s Villa to see my maternal

grandmother, who would die there.

My grandmother left an impression on my heart when I was very young. She said something to my mom, pretending not to see me under the kitchen counter. She indirectly said it to me, because I had grown old enough to start discerning what is acceptable.

“Tommy has a bit of the devil in him,” Grandma said.

I thus began to benefit from the informed opinion of another, which is a powerful motive for serious self-criticism. While I attended college, Prabhupāda’s cultured opinions started motivating me.

“We are often confident even when we are wrong,” writes Daniel Kahneman “and an objective observer is more likely to detect our errors than we are.”

Kahneman received the 2002 Nobel Prize in Economics for his work on the psychology of judgment and decision-making. At the University of California, Berkeley, he was the graduate-school advisor of my longtime friend and former classmate Terry Odean, who gave me Kahneman’s best-seller *Thinking Fast and Slow* as a Diwali present. Terry holds a chair at Berkeley’s business school.

Kahneman writes, “[Improving] the ability to identify and understand errors of judgment and choice, in others and in ourselves . . . may suggest an intervention to limit the damage that bad judgments and choices often cause.”

Prabhupāda showed anyone how to recognize a key error: misidentifying the body or mind as one’s permanent or existent self. Souls entangled in the world of matter need to get out of this dreadful temporary environment, and for that we need a process. A guru who really represents God suggests practical interventions to limit the damage caused by the bad choice of thinking only of this life.

Prabhupāda offers the practice of Krishna consciousness according to firm guidelines. This process reminds me of the braces that straightened my teeth. Every three weeks the orthodontist adjusted the wires and clamps – tightly! Similarly, Prabhupāda ordered us to restrict sex to procreation; to not gamble or get intoxicated; to not eat meat, fish, or eggs; and to chant the Hare Krishna mantra. By these practices, we can gradually reach the spiritual level at which we constantly experience ourselves as transcendental to conditional identifications and attachments. And by gradually obtaining love of Krishna, we make our lives successful.

In Los Angeles on Sunday, January 13, 1974, I saw Prabhupāda for the first time. Only two days earlier I had arrived in California – now twenty-three – to try living in San Francisco’s temple for six months. Instead of becoming a graduate student after earning a Bachelor’s degree at the University of Minnesota, I became obligated to Prabhupāda, an extraordinary teacher free of the faults of most intellectuals. He offered an invaluable remedy for the bad choices I was making.

Prabhupāda’s senior disciple in San Francisco especially carried me along for half a year. He was firm on himself and humble with others. His sincerity encouraged me. He regularly organized the inspiring chanting and dancing on the streets. Tall and charismatic, he played a drum and led the singing. Once, on seeing Jayānanda entering the temple, Prabhupāda paused his lecture and said of him, “Jayānanda looks like Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Yes! He was tall and stout and strong, Caitanya Mahāprabhu.”

Jayānanda died of leukemia in mid-1977, renowned as the organizer of the Rathāyātra Festival in San Francisco, and the pioneer of the Rathāyātra parades on Fifth Avenue in New York and Venice Beach in Los Angeles. We talked in the Manhattan temple for the last time. He made the point – again, about bad choices – that unless we keep serving

Krishna, our mental state will be just crammed with decisions offered by *māyā*, Krishna's illusory energy, and we will be perpetually entangled in the temporary world. Humble Jayānanda knew, from Śrīla Prabhupāda, the art of making the better choice.

Prabhupāda's last four years were the years I had his association. I saw him at festivals and heard his classes in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Dallas, Denver, Chicago, Detroit, and Toronto. I traveled across North America twice in the mid-1970s with a group that sold his books to college libraries and professors. We not only visited all the ISKCON temples but followed Prabhupāda's summer tours. At colleges, I accompanied the group leader, Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswāmī, to classrooms where he was invited to speak, and I did research in libraries for his first book, *Readings in Vedic Literature*.

Speaking at a Sunday program in Toronto, Prabhupāda warned Indian guests not to forget Krishna; otherwise, there would be consequences. Now in the West, he said, you have big cars, good salaries, nice apartments – but if you do not offer your food to Krishna (which the *Bhagavad-gītā* recommends), then in your next life you will become cockroaches in your cars. Offering Krishna what we eat nourishes the body spiritually and counteracts karmic reactions. Thus Prabhupāda identified errors of judgment and suggested better decisions.

Once in Dallas, on a scorching summer evening, we had all met Prabhupāda in the temple garden. For me, the most important thing he said was that if you can control your tongue, you can control all your other senses. He meant: chanting Hare Krishna, eating only food offered to Krishna, and telling others about Krishna. Traveling worldwide, Prabhupāda spoke daily to people about how to know Krishna in truth. In Dallas, under the evening sky, he described seeing Krishna:

“Krishna’s energy is not different from Krishna. The sunlight is Krishna’s energy, air is Krishna’s energy, water is Krishna’s energy, land is Krishna’s energy, the sky is Krishna’s energy. This is Krishna’s, or God’s, all-pervasiveness. The universe is an expansion of Krishna’s energy. Every working of nature – Krishna is doing that. So God is present everywhere. If we can learn how to see Krishna always, then our lives are successful. And this is possible by gradually increasing our love for Krishna by the devotional process, little by little, little by little. Just like in practical life, we begin to love somebody gradually, one thing after another, not all of a sudden. Then surrender – that is the ultimate state of loving affairs. We surrender to Krishna out of love, which is the ultimate perfection.”

In 1959 Prabhupāda was sixty-three when he accepted *sannyāsa*, a renounced stage of devoting all his time and energy to the service of the Lord. I now am a year older than he was then, so it is not difficult for me to understand how he felt, physically and mentally, at this age. During his next six years he translated and commented on the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which he published and took to America.

It is more difficult to understand the perfect state of his intelligence at this time: resolute, single-minded, clear of everything that could impede him in all he had to do in his service to his spiritual master, and willing to let Krishna do with him whatever Krishna liked. To preach in the West he humbly repeated Krishna’s message, with strong faith in Krishna’s names, and his glorious activities made Krishna glorious worldwide.

He writes that when people are instructed about following the Supreme Personality of Godhead and they adopt Krishna consciousness, “that is victory for the Lord,” for Krishna then reclaims these souls. Śrīla Prabhupāda is a general, a warrior winning those victories for the Lord.

September's Day

In hellish writhing dark abyss
The soul seems lost to sin
But Paramātmā leaves him not
Remaining there as friend

In human form the Lord appears
As guru, praise the day
September first, Vyāsa's heir
To drive all hell away

I pray that I shall not relent
My thief-like senses shun
And by His Grace all hell be nought
In warmth of guru's sun

O Prabhupāda, September first
Hell shaken to its core
Impersonal swimmer, lifted up
Set on the farther shore

O Prabhupāda, I praise the day
By providence to meet
May I be wise enough to bow
And touch your lotus feet

O Prabhupāda, O Prabhupāda
You said the soul's a spark
Govinda *dhām's* eternal home
Beyond this world so dark

O Prabhupāda, O Prabhupāda
How can I ever express
My gratefulness to you who brought
The secret happiness

Only the utter fool will not
Be glad in what you say indulge
this soul's imperfect praise

That sweet September's day

From,

Mayesa Dāsa

Damaghosa Dāsa

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda

Below we have listed statements by Śrīla Prabhupāda which explain who is a genuine guru and who is not.

Hare Kṛṣṇa

Damaghosa Dāsa

Conversations –

Reporter (2): What will happen to the movement in the United States when you die?

Prabhupāda: I will never die. I shall live for my books, and you will utilize.

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Pressman: Do you know how many followers there are in the United States now?

Prabhupāda: Unlimited. (devotees roar) Some of them admit and some of them do not admit. That's all. (laughter) That is the difficulty **but if anyone comes to me, I shall make him to admit.**

“It is illegal to become a spiritual master if one is unable to deliver the disciple.” [S.B. 28.7]

“Unless one takes shelter of a bona fide, fully Kṛṣṇa conscious spiritual master, there is no chance of understanding Kṛṣṇa...only one who has surrendered to a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, and has taken the dust of his lotus feet can understand Kṛṣṇa...One must take shelter of a self-realized spiritual master, that is the way to return home, back to Godhead.” [SB 7.5.32 purport] **“Unless one is initiated by a bona fide spiritual master, all his devotional activities are useless. A person who is not properly initiated can descend again into the animal species.”**

“Unless one is a resident of Krishna loka, one cannot be a spiritual master.” (Śrīla Prabhupāda letter, June 10th, 1969)

“A śikṣā guru who instructs against the instructions of the spiritual master he is not a śikṣā guru. He is a demon! Sometimes the *dīkṣā* guru is not present always. Therefore one can take learning, instructions from an advanced devotee. That is called śikṣā guru. But śikṣā guru does not mean he is speaking something against the teachings of the *dīkṣā* guru. He is not a śikṣā guru. He is a rascal. Because that is offense. Guru *avajñā*, defying the authority of guru. Then everything is finished, in the beginning!” [Bg. 17:1-3, 07-4-74, Hawaii]

“Guru cannot be self-made. No. There is no such single instance throughout the whole Vedic literature. And nowadays, so many rascals they are becoming guru

without any authority. That is not guru. You must be authorized!" [Bg. 4.2]

1. Accept a guru who is infallible
2. If you don't get a qualified guru, then everything is bogus.
3. If you don't find such a guru, that means Kṛṣṇa is not pleased with you or you are not serious enough.
4. Guru must be accepted from highest order – paramahansa order
5. Who has been cheated by bogus gurus? He says "practically everyone".

761003SB.VRN lectures guru. You should accept a guru who is infallible. Otherwise it is useless. He accepted guru Kṛṣṇa because Kṛṣṇa is infallible. **If we accept guru, a bogus guru, then it is no benefit.** Guru means Kṛṣṇa's representative. **Not that everyone can be guru.**

720911rc.arl Conversations

Prabhupāda: If you do not find a guru, that means Kṛṣṇa is not yet pleased, either you are not serious.

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Ādau gurvāśrayam. If you do not get a qualified guru, then everything is bogus. If you, by good fortune, if you get the association of a guru, qualified *hansa*, *paramahansa*... *Paramahansa* guru means *sannyāsī's* last stage is *paramahansa*. *Kuṭīcaka*, *bahūdaka*, *parivrājakācārya*, and *paramahansa*, these are the different stages... **So one must find out a guru who is *paramahansa*. Neither *kuṭīcaka*, nor *bahūdaka*, nor *parivrājakācārya*. *Paramahansa*....** Then our strong desire to enjoy this material world in different way, that will be slackened.

SSR 2 Choosing a Spiritual Master

Reporter: Don't you feel that people are suspicious because of their experience with fake gurus? If you went to a quack dentist and he broke your tooth, you might be suspicious about going to another dentist.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Naturally, if you are cheated, you become suspicious. But this does not mean that if you are cheated once, you will always be cheated. **You should find someone genuine. But to come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, you must be either very fortunate or well aware of this science.** From the *Bhagavad-gītā* we understand that the genuine seekers are very few: *manuṣyānām sahasreṣu kaścid yatati siddhaye*. Out of many millions of people, there may be only one who is interested in spiritual life. And almost all those who are actually interested are being cheated by so-called spiritualists.

Reporter: I wondered how many people you think might have been taken in by fake gurus?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Practically everyone. [Laughter.] There is no question of counting. Everyone. Reporter: This would mean thousands of people, wouldn't it?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Millions. Millions have been cheated, because they want to be cheated. God is omniscient. He can understand your desires. He is within your heart, and if you want to be cheated, God sends you a cheater.

1. If one receives a mantra from a bogus guru, it has no effect
2. Not only is this mantra useless, but your Deity worship is the same
3. Series of quotes which explain how the illegal guru and his disciples go to hell

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Devotee (3): In regard to worshipping *arcā-vigraha* form, you have explained that if one receives a mantra from a

spiritual master who is not bona fide, that mantra has no effect. So I would like to ask if one is worshipping a Deity and his spiritual master is not bona fide, so that Deity cannot be considered the Supreme Lord?

Prabhupāda: Well, first of all, thing is if the spiritual master is not bona fide, **how his mantra can be bona fide?** Your statement is contradictory. If you say the spiritual master is not bona fide, then how his mantra becomes bona fide? If he is bona fide, then his mantra is bona fide.

Devotee (3): Then why is he giving instruction to worship the Deity? If the spiritual master is not bona fide, then is the Deity also not bona fide?

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: His idea is that if one receives a mantra from a spiritual master, if the spiritual master is not bona fide...

Prabhupāda: **Then there is no question of mantra. There is no question of worshipping Deity. These are all bogus things.** If you are not... Just like here is a young medical man. If he has not received instruction from a bona fide medical college, so what is the value of his medical, being...what is the technical name?

Devotee (4): Quack.

Prabhupāda: Quack! (laughter)...

Now below Śrīla Prabhupāda explains how one who takes on the role of spiritual master but is not authorized, or a pure devotee, both he and his disciples go to hell.

SB 1.19.37 “Unless one is perfectly anxious to inquire about the way of perfection, there is no necessity of approaching a spiritual master. A spiritual master is not a kind of decoration for a householder. Generally a fashionable materialist engages a so-called spiritual master without any profit. **The pseudo spiritual master flatters the**

so-called disciple, and thereby both the master and his ward go to hell without a doubt."

72-12-14. Letter to Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa: "As for your next question, can only a few pure devotees deliver others, anyone, if he is a pure devotee he can deliver others, he can become spiritual master. But unless he is on that platform he should not attempt it. **Then both of them will to go to hell, like blind men leading the blind."**

SB 6.7.14 "Leaders who have fallen into ignorance and who mislead people by directing them to the path of destruction are, in effect, boarding a stone boat, and so too are those who blindly follow them. A stone boat would be unable to float and would sink in the water with its passengers. **Similarly, those who mislead people go to hell, and their followers go with them."**

Īśopaniṣad 12: "The pseudo religionists have neither knowledge nor detachment from material affairs, for most of them want to live in the golden shackles of material bondage under the shadow of philanthropic activities disguised as religious principles. By a false display of religious sentiments, they present a show of devotional service while indulging in all sorts of immoral activities. In this way they pass as spiritual masters and devotees of God. Such violators of religious principles have no respect for the authoritative ācāryas, the holy teachers in the strict disciplic succession. Instead, to mislead the people in general **they themselves become so-called ācāryas, but they do not even follow the principles of the ācāryas.** These rogues are the most dangerous elements in human society. Because there is no religious government, they escape punishment by the law of the state. They cannot, however, escape the law of the Supreme, **who has clearly declared in the Bhagavad-gītā that envious demons in the garb of religious propagandists shall be thrown into the darkest regions of hell (Bg. 16.19-20).** Śrī Īśopaniṣad confirms that these pseudo religionists are heading

toward the most obnoxious place in the universe after the completion of their spiritual master business, which they conduct simply for sense gratification.

Similarly any transcendental message, any Vedic literature, unless it is presented by a self realised devotee, it is poison. You simply misunderstand the whole thing, and you do not get the benefit. Rather, you become a victim of misunderstanding. Lecture, LA, Jan 3, 1969

“Therefore one has to select a spiritual master whose order, carrying, you’ll not commit a mistake. Now, suppose if you accept a wrong person as spiritual master, and if you, if he guides you wrongly, then your whole life is spoiled. So one has to accept a spiritual master whose guidance will make his life perfect.” Bg Lecture March 2 1966

Jagadvira Dāsa

I offer my most humble obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda who first met his spiritual master Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura in 1922. This is when Prabhupāda received his first instruction from his spiritual master and after which a discussion took place. Prabhupāda became convinced that Lord Chaitanya’s message was in good hands and later wrote “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 Krishna. He is that great saintly spiritual master who bestows intense devotion to Krishna at different places throughout the world.”

I offer my most humble obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda who was predicted by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura to bring back the whole world. As Nayana Babu relates, “Guru Mahārāja was looking out at the large crowd of devotees, especially in the front where all the red-clothed *sannyāsīs* and *brahmacārīs* were. But then he turned his head and he looked over to where I was standing,

to his left side. He was looking intently at someone and became silent for a long moment. I happened to look behind me and I clearly saw that the person he was making eye contact with was Abhay Charaṇāravinda Prabhu. They were looking at each other in a special way, I thought. Then Guru Maharaja turned his head back to the front and said, "But I have a prediction. I predict that the next one of my disciples who goes across the ocean, however long in the future that my take, that devotee will bring back the whole world."

I offer my most humble obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda who, in 1960, "...worked hard to raise enough in donations to print *Easy Journey to Other Planets* as a paperback book." This was his first book and it encouraged him to get the Śrīmad-Bhagavatam printed as soon as he could, as it would give him great confidence if and when he were to go the West. Now *Easy Journey to Other Planets* has been printed in many languages and its message is still important today. "...The gross materialist may try to approach the anti-material worlds by endeavoring with spaceships, satellites, rockets, etc., which he throws into outer space, but by such means he cannot even approach the material planets in the higher regions of the material sky, and what to speak of those planets situated in the anti-material sky, which is far beyond the material universe."

I offer my most humble obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda who, in August 1965, left India to sail to the USA on the cargo ship Jaladuta. He wrote in his diary on Friday 13th August, "The cabinet (cabin) is quite comfortable. It is owner's residence and therefore the sitting room, the bedroom and the bath and privy all equipped with first class materials. Everything is nice in the 1st class compartment and thanks to Lord Śrī Krishna for His enlightening Smt. Sumati Morarjee for all these arrangements. I am quite comfortable."

I offer my most humble obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda who celebrated Krishna Janmāṣṭamī on the Jaladuta in August 1965. Prabhupāda wrote, "Today (20/8/65) the captain arranged for a meeting on board the M/V Jaladuta on account of Janmāṣṭamī day and I spoke for an hour on the philosophy and teachings of Lord Śrī Krishna. All the officers attended the meeting and there was distribution of

prasāda. The matter was radiographed to Smt. Sumati Moraji in Bombay." Because of Prabhupāda's pure desire to spread Krishna consciousness, now Krishna Janmāṣṭamī is celebrated in more than 550 ISKCON centres worldwide.

I offer my most humble obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda who is always chanting, hearing and remembering Krishna's pastimes. The day before arriving in Boston Harbour (Wednesday 15th September 1965) he wrote in his diary, "I was engaged in reading *Kāliya Damana līlā* from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, especially the prayers by Śrīmatī *nāgapatnīs* and the last appealing prayer by Kāliya." As George Harrison wrote, "I request that you take advantage of this book *Krishna*, and enter into its understanding." Now Prabhupāda's *Krishna Book* has been translated into many different languages and is being read and appreciated by young and old.

I offer my most humble obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda who took with him on the Jaladuta 40 rupees and 200 sets of his English translation with purports of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* First Canto. In Cochin he wrote, "I saw my books from Bombay arrived in five cases and the agents loaded them on the ship at 4pm. on 22/8/65." He didn't even spend the 40 rupees in the USA, but used it as payment for a taxi. "The driver stopped the taxi on an empty road and turned for his payment. Prabhupāda took from his billfold forty rupees (the same forty rupees he had carried with him on the boat to America in 1965). But the driver took the entire forty rupees and said he would keep it all as the just fare. Prabhupāda protested; the fare should not be even half that!" So even though the 40 rupees was not spent in the USA, the 200 sets of books helped make devotees and spread the Krishna consciousness Movement. Please let us always remember that books are the basis.

I offer my most humble obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda who started his first temple in the West at 26 Second Avenue, New York. He didn't know how he would pay the next month's rent, but took the risk anyway. He wrote in a letter, "I then rented one storefront and an apartment at 26 Second Avenue for \$200 per month, but without any source of income. I started my classes and sometimes, on Sundays, I used to chant Hare Krishna mantra in Tompkins Square Park from three to

five p.m.” So from this humble beginning, Prabhupāda started the Krishna consciousness Movement and now it is spreading rapidly to every town and village.

I offer my most humble obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda who instructed us to chant *japa* at least 16 rounds a day without fail. We do this every day knowing this is one of the most important of his instructions. As Giridhari Swami wrote in the *Śrīla Prabhupāda Tributes* (2013), “I heard a story about you told by Śivarāma Swami. Mahārāja was describing an incident that occurred during your visit to Montreal in 1975. Your visit was brief – only a few hours – but you deeply touched the lives of several devotees that day. One such devotee was an Indian-bodied young man who had been coming to the temple for a couple of years. He was giving donations and also chanting sixteen rounds. As you walked past this devotee, you turned to him and asked, “Are you chanting sixteen rounds?” This young man was awestruck that you had spoken to him, and he was at a complete loss for words. He answered, “I’m trying.” You then lifted up your cane, placed its point into his chest and starting pushing. He slowly backed up until he was pushed up against the wall of the temple building. You then told him, “Don’t try, just do it!”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda – thank you for making the effort to come and save us.

Your servant,

Jagadvira Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīne*

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

Please accept our prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet, which traveled far and wide throughout the world, mercifully spreading Krishna consciousness. By chanting Krishna’s holy names and teaching the fallen, conditioned souls that He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Your Divine Grace not only magnified the glory and fame of Lord Krishna, but you yourself also became universally famous. You then triumphantly returned to Śrī Vṛndāvana *dhāma* for your *tirobhāva*. After a lifetime of unconditional love and service to the Lord, you gloriously departed this material realm. Your effulgent form was spiritualized from your very birth, as you admitted yourself that there was never a time when you did not remember Krishna.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we recall how Your Divine Grace spoke of ‘boiling the milk’—encouraging the existing devotees to deepen their commitment in practicing Krishna consciousness. Several years ago we chose to make it our mission to try to enthuse the younger devotees in ISKCON, especially here in India, to thicken their relationship with the holy name through Śrī Kṛṣṇa *sankīrtana*, to strive sincerely in devotional service and to achieve the highest perfection of human life, going back home, back to Godhead.

Our inspiration to serve your devotees in ISKCON through *sankīrtana-yajña* was strengthened when we read the following words by Your Divine Grace:

“One is understood to be an eternal servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead if he considers himself a servant of the holy name and in this spirit distributes the holy name to the world.” (Ādi-līlā 8.16 Purport)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are almost constantly traveling to different cities, towns, villages, and holy *tīrthas*. Meeting and befriending your many followers in those places, we always try our best to spread and increase the congregational chanting of the *mahā-mantra*. Wherever we have traveled, many of the young devotees have adopted us as a kind of spiritual auntie and uncle. We simply try to enliven and encourage them in their spiritual lives, primarily through *harinām saṅkīrtana*. In this way, we find ourselves becoming enthused in their association as well.

We were blessed to be in Śrī Vṛndāvana *dhāma* singing the Hare Krishna mahā-mantra in your *samādhi* for twelve days during Kartika last year. We sang for your pleasure, gazing upon your beautiful golden form. There, we met many great souls who are also daily engaged in performing Śrī Kṛṣṇa *saṅkīrtana* for the benefit of those seeking your merciful *darshana*.

During December and January we were blessed to spend time in the two holy *dhamas* of Māyāpur and Ekacakra. There, we continued our service of congregational chanting of the Hare Krishna mahā-mantra. We met many more devotees in those holy places who are eager to sing the Lord's holy names and discuss how to spread Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* mission.

We use harmonium, *mṛdaṅga* and *karatāls* in all our kīrtans, and everywhere we go, we chant Hare Krishna with all the devotees we meet. We have been fortunate to engage in *harināma saṅkīrtana* with devotees in the US, Canada, Poland, Czech Republic, Ireland, the Caribbean, the UAE (Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharja), Śrī Laṅkā, and for the past six years, in India.

Udupi, Karnataka is our base, Śrīla Prabhupāda. From here we travel widely to spread the congregational chanting of the Lord's holy names. Some of the cities in India where we have led *kīrtans* recently are Delhi, Noida, Jaipur, Hindaun City, Guwahati, Diphu, Morena, Chennai, Maraimalainagar, Bangalore, Mysore, Mangalore, Shimoga, Hebri, Hanja, Kapu, Padubidri, Hiriyaḍka, Manipal, Brahmavara, Udupi, Baroda, Juhu, Kharghar, Thakorly, Belgaum, Hyderabad, Gauraiḍalli, Gour Gram, Salem, Karur, Namakkal, Nellore, Singarayakunda, Vellore, Katpadi, Chirala, Śrī Raṅgam, Rāmeśvaram, Ramanathapuram, Madurai, Brahmaḍura, Kantabanji, Raipur, and in Śrī Laṅkā – Colombo, Kandy, Neuralia, Sitalayam, Trinco and Batticaloa, as well as several small villages

along our travel route. We just returned to our base in Udupi after four weeks of traveling, preaching, and *harināma-saṅkīrtana* – two of those weeks being spent around central Śrī Laṅkā—and we are scheduled to go back there for another month in May for Lord Jagannatha’s Rathayatra, some large public programs, some home programs, and lots of preaching and *saṅkīrtana* with the local devotees in numerous schools and colleges. In all these places, Śrīla Prabhupāda, there are wonderful, sincere, enthusiastic devotees who are very happy to join us in singing the Lord’s holy names.

By your mercy and as our humble offering to Your Divine Grace and your *saṅkīrtana* mission, we have traveled to all these cities, towns and villages looking for opportunities to sing the Hare Krishna mantra and preach the glories of Lord Śrī Krishna. Though your body was elderly, we saw Your Divine Grace push yourself constantly to spread Krishna consciousness through the chanting of the holy names and pure, take-it-or-leave-it, straightforward preaching. By remembering your tireless determination to uplift the fallen souls, we, as an aging couple in our mid-sixties, get strength and inspiration to overcome our travel fatigue and go on running behind you, trying to follow in your divine footsteps.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we find great inspiration in the following statement written by you:

“Just as Bhagīratha brought down the Gaṅgā and liberated his forefathers, similarly we must bring a deluge of love of Godhead that can extricate the conditioned souls from the clutches of gross materialism. At least for some time, we must create Satya-yuga, the Age of reason and piety. We can easily accomplish this Herculean task simply by reintroducing Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* Movement of the congregational chanting of Lord Krishna’s name and thus flooding the world with Krishna-prema.” (RTW 5.1)

Your own beloved guru maharaja, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, deeply enthused us in performing this *seva* to you by powerfully stating the following:

“To induce us to chant Krishna’s name, Śrī Gaurāṅgādeva, the combined form of Śrī Rādhā-Krishna, appeared in this world. If we show no interest in chanting and thereby disregard His teachings, we will never attain auspiciousness. Chanting is the best form of Krishna-seva. If other sādhanas help us develop our chanting, then they deserve to be called sādhana. Otherwise, they are only impediments on the path of chanting. Congregational chanting of Krishna’s holy name is the king of sādhanas. It is the only infallible sādhana capable of bringing us to perfection. Śrī Mahāprabhu did not teach Deity worship in His Śikṣāṣṭaka; He simply taught us to chant.” (*Amṛta-vāṇī*)

Thank you for allowing us to do this service, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please bless us to continue performing Śrī Kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtana and to remain always in the protective association of Lord Krishna’s devotees. Please empower us to always follow your instructions, keep our vows, continuously take full shelter of Krishna’s holy names, and convince others to surrender themselves at the lotus feet of Śrī Nāma Prabhu as well. We hope and pray that Your Divine Grace, your beloved guru mahārāja Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, the entire *guru paramparā* and Śrī Pañca tattva will be pleased by our humble attempts to serve, glorify and spread the holy names of the Lord.

We feel so indebted to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all you have given us, we now want to give something back. Kindly empower us to assist you in boiling the milk within ISKCON.

param vijayate śrī kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtanam

Your grateful disciples,

Haripada Dāsa and Phalini Devī Dāsī
Udupi, Karnataka, South India

P.S. Śrīla Prabhupāda, the following is a poem about your Divine Grace that we wish to offer to you on this auspicious occasion of your holy appearance:

Changed Our Hearts Forevermore

Going West, alone, all abhorred
But naysayers, Prabhupāda ignored

Left the village he adored
Never crossed the sea before

In Calcutta, with *Jaladuta* moored
Brave and bold, he climbed aboard

Vaiṣṇava sadhu dress he wore
Trunk of *Bhāgavatams* he bore

Courageous servant of the Lord
From his face God's light shone forth

As he sailed across the sea
Had full faith in the Almighty

Heart attacks, sickness, Death at his door
Kṛṣṇa saved him, grabbed the oars

Jaladuta reached New York's shores
Valiant warrior still on board

Came out West to serve the Lord
Just to give and nothing more

Kīrtan, preaching, struck a chord
Among the burnt-out hippie hordes

Told the Truth in his purports
Explained the ancient Vedic lore

Taught us how to serve the Lord
Made devotees by the scores
Brought the news of Nitāi-Gaura
Opened up Vaikuṅṭha's doors

Rains of mercy he did pour
Changed our hearts forevermore

Tripti Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I do not have adequate words to honor you or fittingly extol your glorious nature. Perhaps the best word I can use, to sum up all that you are to me, is 'Father'. When I was a little girl, I thought my father knew everything and that he could protect me always, no matter what happened. As I grew up, I slowly saw the fallibility of my earthly father.

But you are my Spiritual Father. You know Krishna, and thus you know everything. You are always with Krishna and thus, when I take shelter of you, I know you can protect me – always – no matter what happens.

You are the epitome of all the good qualities that we seek in a father. You are pure, fearless, honorable, giving, compassionate, strong, wise and devoted. In you, these qualities are unlimited and without end. And so too, your fatherly love is boundless, causeless, and limitless. Somehow, by the grace of Krishna, I have received your causeless mercy. You have accepted me as your disciple, your spiritual daughter. Śrīla Prabhupāda, my most prized possession is a letter from you that begins, "My Dear Daughter" and ends with your blessings. All that I am is summed up in these words.

I have no qualities worthy of your mercy, but I have you as my Father, my North Pole, and my guiding light. And, therefore, I have hope. Hope to aspire to one day be worthy of your love and blessings.

With every ounce of my being, I am grateful to you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your aspiring servant,

Tripti Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your divine lotus feet. I hope and pray that someday I may grab hold of your mercy and never let go. Of late whenever I say my *Gāyatrī* prayer, I can see the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium, with you as the Founder *Ācārya* of ISKCON, seated on the most opulent Vyāsāsana with 20 thousand devotees gathering around you in the temple room. As I meditate on you being in the bliss of Krishna consciousness, I suddenly grasp for a moment how dear you are to Lord Krishna and how much you are in love with Krishna! Your unalloyed love of God, your unlimited kindness, your never ending compassion are still readily available to all who become fortunate to come in contact with all the gifts you created – your transcendental books and your beautiful surrendered devotees. I pray to serve you with sincerity and honesty.

Your eternally grateful disciple,

Lalita Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble *daṇḍavats* at your lotus feet.

All glories to Your Divine Grace.

Year after year is passing by while I am residing in this body and I am still breathing. When will the final moment come?

Year after year I see myself and others struggling for spiritual guidance and encouragement in order to stay engaged in the mission you entrusted us with. As you requested, we may not embarrass you in our little attempt to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

When I am standing on the street Śrīla Prabhupāda, trying to give out a few of your books, to feel connected to you is not so difficult. Your strong hold can be felt by anybody who is engaged

in book distribution. Any step aside from the path you established, any sign of pride will be corrected via the Supersoul, your merciful glance and the response we may get from the conditioned souls. Book distribution is so nice, it is self-correcting. There is very little room to grow insanely proud and very little space to move regarding our own selfish schemes.

How can one live always this way? How can one be always connected, any moment of one's life?

On this day, as we celebrate your appearance in this world, I would like Śrīla Prabhupāda, to pray for your ultimate guidance. Correct me, chastise me, show me via other devotees where I still have a space to go, in which way I can be engaged in your service. How I can still use the remaining energy given to me. You are my eternal master, but how can I be a better eternal servant?

What would I give for one letter coming from you! One word, one glance to make me dance. When I was small child every night before going to sleep, I dreamt my little dream of being somebody's absolute servant, sleeping at his door like a dog, eagerly waiting for his command. Being overrun by lust, that dream was gradually covered and forgotten before you finally appeared on the scene. The moment I saw your radiant face, when I saw your lotus feet moving quickly to the exit while you passed me by, that moment I realized that here is the master I was always looking for.

How much I would like to simply wait minute after minute for your command! But you want me to be a grown up boy. You want me to remember the essence of your mission and serve along the daily needs. Things can get complicated, Śrīla Prabhupāda. To find a room for common understanding of absolute authority is not always an easy task. So many define their service along their own concepts, their own needs, so many run around confused and desperate without any direct spiritual guidance. Is it because they don't want to have one? Is it because it's simply not physically available? I don't dare to analyse.

And so I can speak for myself only. Please hold me strong, use me, and push me. I don't see any other way for advancing further as to feel your walking stick in my back. The days I would enter your room and you would shout at me, calling me a rascal, I would certainly break down with tears of ecstasy in my eyes. I don't feel comfortable with praise, too strong is my pride. But I saw what

those godbrothers you pushed firmly could achieve. I see the greatest blessing in your push.

What else is there to do, Śrīla Prabhupāda? What else can a sixty-one year old man do? I have still strength left to fall in māyā. Block it Śrīla Prabhupāda, confiscate it and channel whatever is left into your mission. What else is there to do? I am materially speaking at the end, as much I was at the end when I joined this Movement in 1972. My life was taken over by you, but there is so much more to take. Please Śrīla Prabhupāda, break my inner resistance to be engaged more firmly, take over more, make me an unconditional tool in your hands.

I know Śrīla Prabhupāda that your *saṅkīrtana* Movement is going on wherever you are. I hope that I can understand the privilege of being part of your mission despite all the institutional obstacles to be found on the way.

I don't see Śrīla Prabhupāda, how I can ever enter the close association of the Lord, but I can see the possibility of being engaged in your service life after life. Your mercy seems not to have any boundaries. I want to continue to be your soldier Śrīla Prabhupāda, regardless of rank, place and time. I want to be a more effective part of your war attempt against illusion. Seeing Maya assuming the most subtle forms, applying even *tilak* and pretending to be a devotee, the need of your absolute presence and shelter seems to be imminent.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for keeping me still engaged in your service,

Please show me how I can serve better,

Your unworthy servant,

Manidhara Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your worshipable lotus feet. You are very dear to Lord Caitanya and Lord Krishna because you are preaching the message of the *yuga dharma* in this unsteady world, and because you are the faithful servant of your divine spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura whose mission was to relieve the world of

apa-sampradāyas, Māyāvāda and impersonalism.

You were so adventurous in the ways you preached. You crossed the ocean with no assistance or of the association of your godbrothers. You came to a place of unalloyed materialism with varieties you'd never dreamed of. You found a small, but growing group of the dregs of society who showed a slight interest in the eternal process of *sanātana dharma*, and never lost sight of the goal of your vision, which was to water the seed of devotion with your enthusiasm and dedication to your spiritual master's orders.

Nothing added to the message; nothing subtracted.

But, oh, how resourceful you were. You took *harināma* out to the streets, the parks, major convention halls, the concerts of Kali-yuga music lovers – "...no place for a gentleman," you said. You took the holy name to every continent on the globe, including places preaching had to be done in secret, like Iran, China and Russia. You took the grandeur of Rathāyātra,

Janmāṣṭamī, Rāma Navamī Festivals, Sunday Love Feasts, transcendental dramas and dioramas to every town and village. You took the simple program of chanting, dancing and feasting to the furthest degree and made Krishna *bhaktas* out of unsuspecting seekers and non-seekers alike. Hare Krishna is a household word!

You left behind the boat with which we could cross the ocean of birth and death, your transcendental literature and fabulous commentaries, your exceptional confidence, enthusiasm and example. You left us unlimited, ever-expanding devotional service. You left us your mercy, and all we have to do is take that mercy, share it with others – take a piece of the universe and continue spreading the mission of Lord Caitanya. As it is said that

Lord Caitanya is the most munificent incarnation of the Lord;

you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are the most munificent saintly preacher who ever walked the earth. You set into motion a spiritual self-sufficient, self-propagating, self-satisfying systematic process for the benefit of ages to come.

Yes, let me take a piece of the universe and do my best to spread your mission, because wherever that goes on is where you are. And wherever you are, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I want to be there. I will never come to an end of expressing my gratitude for being allowed to take the shelter of your lotus feet and the saffron-like particles emanating from your lotus lips.

With love, I make this offering and pray I remain fixed as your eternal servant,

Parvati Devī Dāsī

Rangavati Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabupada, my only hope in this world of death and darkness.

As I sit in my MVT room in beautiful Vrindāvana, I see your presence everywhere. You have given so many conditioned souls the choice and privilege to follow your teachings and instructions. Both containing a guarantee if carefully practiced with love and devotion.

Old age and its challenges are what you have warned us about from the beginning of your preaching in America, and now that it is becoming a stone cold reality, your words sink in deeper and deeper. The message of Lord Krishna in the *Gītā* seems to walk off the pages and stare me down causing a quite a humbling submissiveness to His words. We are the eternal soul residing in this temporary body – separate and not equal. Let this Absolute Truth be set in stone in my mind and heart and let your kindness and compassion seep into my spiritual progress.

O divine guru, you are what I'm made of and although I'm fallen and forgotten, I pray at your lotus feet to keep anywhere near you eternally.

Your aspiring disciple,

Rangavati Devī Dāsī

Rasa Liladevi Devī Dāsī

My dear Gurudeva, Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda ,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīne*

*namas te sārāsvatī-deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādī-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Gurudeva, you are the life of my life!

I am remembering your selfless sacrifice to leave the holy

dhāma of Vrindāvana to come to America at an advanced age to fulfill the desire of your spiritual master and in order to collect so many fallen souls. We were simply waiting for your mercy and your loving kindness. You taught us how to live for Kṛṣṇa, to chant and be happy, to work for Kṛṣṇa by offering the fruits of our endeavors to Him. You gave us the peace formula, the *Rāja-vidyā*, as found in the sacred *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Now, in the later part of my own life, I pray to you for enthusiasm, patience and dedication. Please empower me to help push on your mission to the best of my ability, as long as I live and breathe. You taught us that older age is not for retirement, as much as realized service and renewed commitment to God and Guru.

Your teachings will always be my guiding star on the path back home, back to Godhead. I offer my *daṇḍavat pranāms* before you ...

Humbly aspiring to the service of your lotus feet,

Rasa liladevi Devī Dāsī

Maha Punya Devī Dāsī

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīne*

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

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, because he has taken shelter at His lotus feet.

We offer our respectful obeisances, O spiritual master, servant of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta! Who kindly is preaching the message of Lord Caitanya and delivering the Western countries, which are full of impersonalism and nihilism.”

In the scriptures (Vedas), we find plenty of information about the right way we should perform devotional service with sincerity, humility and absolute surrender to the lotus feet of the spiritual

master, because only in this way we can be delivered and meet the Supreme Lord Śrī Krishna, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Only the absolute surrender and devotion to the spiritual master will allow us to enter the kingdom of God, but Śrī Kṛṣṇa can only be pleased if we are able to humbly please the guru completely without false prestige. In this present condition of life, when we get a human body, is when we should dedicate and consecrate our lives to seek the Absolute Truth, which is only known through approaching a genuine guru, a pure devotee of the Lord, but it really is very difficult to meet someone with those qualities, because the guru must be someone completely devoid of the slightest attachment to worldly life and immensely dedicated to serving God all days of his life, eating and sleeping only enough to keep body and soul together.

In the course of our existence in this material world, we can meet many false gurus and mistakenly believe that any of them is the chosen of God, but if we look carefully his activities, his preaching, his example, we can realize who is genuine and authentic.

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is the bona fide envoy sent by God for this age, and he himself stated that his books would be read during the next 10,000 years, and we are seeing this every day. More and more people around the world and throughout the planet, hundreds, thousands and millions of people are trying to surrender to his divine lotus feet just by reading some of his holy books and learning from his sinless person.

He is not an ordinary being, because in our world there is no one person who can follow the lifestyle of His Divine Grace, sleeping only three hours a day, translating and writing many books, opening temples and farming communities around the world, traveling and preaching tirelessly despite his advanced age. Undoubtedly, this alone can be achieved only by a pure devotee, an intimate one sent directly by the Supreme Lord, and that person is without doubt His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Certainly today, several of his disciples are equipped with the necessary skills to understand his immense, divine and sacred mission in this world. To them I offer my most humble obeisances to their feet, for being worthy representatives of our

immaculate gurudeva. They are kindly illuminating many souls that try to get out of this material mess under his guidance and precise instructions.

If we meditate carefully and deeply into the purest qualities of Śrīla Prabhupāda, many of us would find ourselves immensely joyful that a genuine and illuminated saint sent by the Supreme Lord appeared amongst us.

In my case, I declare that even if I were to thank Śrīla Prabhupāda without non-stop for thousands of lives, could I can reciprocate even a thousandth fraction for having received his blessings, I could also not understand everything that encloses the high purity and greatness of his soul. This is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* by Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa:

*bahūnāṁ janmanām ante
jñānavān māṁ prapadyate
vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti
sa mahātmā su-durlabhaḥ*

“After many births and deaths, he who is actually in knowledge surrenders unto Me, knowing Me as the cause of all causes and all that exists. Such a great soul is very rare.” (Bg. 7.19).

Śrīla Prabhupāda is that great soul who came to this world to give us all his vast knowledge and save us from the cycle of repeated birth and death, to take us by his hand back home, back to Godhead.

Another very significant verse is where Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s words fill us with hope to think about our inevitable and joyful homecoming, but always by the hand of a genuine spiritual master.

*ye yathā māṁ prapadyante
tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham
mama vartmānuvartante
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*

“As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly. Everyone follows My path in all respects, O son of Pṛthā” (Bg. 4.11).

I’m struggling to someday be deserving of the kindness of His Divine Grace, and if I start to think I had the good fortune to have

him so close that I could almost hear his breathing, I feel at the same time, the most fortunate creature but also the most insignificant, because I can't quite understand the immense commitment that I have with his blessed person.

When we had the wonderful blessing to have Śrīla Prabhupāda in this country – Mexico – first in 1972 and then in 1975 (where I had the good fortune to be living in the temple), then we all were too young and could not understand the huge significance or the magnitude of his divine presence, and maybe we committed many offenses, but from that time on, undoubtedly everyone's lives changed in a radical way, because not all are fortunate enough to watch and relish a person of such importance and purity.

All obeisances to the auspicious appearance in this material world of the most magnanimous, divine, loving and perfectly pure person for the next 10,000 years, HIS DIVINE GRACE A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA KĪ JAY!

I am one of the scattered million sheep in this world, trying to live eternally grateful and surrendered to his divine, sacred and wonderful lotus feet.

The most humble and insignificant aspiring servant of the servant of his servant,

Maha Punya Devī Dāsī
Celaya, Guanajuato, Mexico

Nartaka Gopala Devī Dāsī

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Krishna on this earth, haven taken shelter of His lotus feet. My respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Sarasvatī Goswāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

Very dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

By the depth of your compassion and your purity you inspired this conditioned soul to begin the path of surrender to Lord

Krishna. I feel totally indebted and grateful to you.

Here in Florida, we are diligently trying to push on the mission of Lord Caitanya, as was your desire. You wrote: "For some time now I have been thinking to have a nice place in Florida and now it looks like you are trying for it...So just work hard for Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His mercy will fall upon you like torrents of rain in the monsoon season." Letter, Mar 6, 1973.

And we feel that you would be very pleased that we now hold eight major Rathāyātras every year throughout the state of Florida. Thousands of conditioned souls are receiving the blessings of Lord Jagannath. As you so perfectly taught us: "compassion for the eternal soul is self-realization." *Bhagavad-gītā*. 2.1, purport.

Once here in Gainesville, Florida, one of your disciples wanted to know how you expand in so many pictures to receive the offerings of your disciples. There are thousands of devotees; how can you be present in all these places to receive the offerings? You replied to him by letter, Śrīla Prabhupāda, "The spiritual master is present wherever his sincere disciple is trying to serve his instructions. This is possible by the mercy of Krishna. In your attempts to serve me and in all your sincere devotional sentiments I am with you as my Guru Mahārāja is with me. Remember this always." Letter, Dec. 1, 1973 to Bhakta Don (Dhaneśvara Dāsa)

You once told one of the devotees: "I pray to Krishna every night to please protect me from Māyā." *Memories* Vol. 1, p. 367. Later you complained: "My disciples flirt with māyā." (remembrance, Viśāla Dāsa) Sadly, we not only flirt with maya but we embrace māyā. We encounter obstacles, but somehow or other you are always there when we turn back to you and try to rectify ourselves. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Another reason we are grateful to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is that with brilliant simplicity you exposed the bluffs of the scientists: "Why is the sand crab running? Scientists would say it is due to instinct, but there is no such thing as instinct...instinct is a word coined by scientists to cover up the fact that there is Supersoul, there is God, and there is past experience...you have been in the body many lifetimes so you know to look for the mother's breast. The baby animal is nudging for the mother's breast. It's past experience, the past lifetime, and it's the Supersoul within the heart that guides the living entity, it's not instinct. There is no

such thing as instinct...If you analyze it you will see that it means absolutely nothing. Yet the scientists have convinced everyone that the whole of nature is moving by instinct; it is moving by Supersoul." *Memories* Vol. 1, p. 35

Within the last year our godsister Yamunā Devī's book came out, and I recall an inspiring story related there. A young sannyāsī disciple of a different guru visited Yamunā and said that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, had only given the ABCs of Krishna *bhakti*. He added that unless she joined his guru's mission, no advancement would be made. Yamunā replied: "When I feel as though I have understood one ten-thousandth of a drop in the ocean of what Śrīla Prabhupāda gave us, in however many lifetimes that takes me, then by his grace he may give me more."

We have sometimes seen that disciples may stray away and go elsewhere but you very clearly told us: "For an intelligent disciple, what his spiritual master provides is sufficient...if you simply follow my instructions, everything will be revealed to you from within." *Memories* Vol.1, pages 192 & 196. And you also told us: "You may know it that I am eternally your guide, but if you don't accept me as your guide what can I do? ...So eternally I want to remain your guide provided you want to accept me." Letter, Sept. 9, 1972. Yes, please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are begging you to please keep us at your lotus feet. There may be other gurus but you are the only one who is our guru, and we pray to remain eternally devoted to you.

Your humble servant,

Nartaka Gopala Devī Dāsī

I was born in the darkness of ignorance...but by your unlimited mercy, I always found guidance and enlightenment on the path of my life. Thank you dear Gurudeva.

It's been forty years since I met you — three times in person but mostly through your teachings. The path of self-realization isn't easy for that person who is too entangled in ignorance, with no good qualities; by Your Grace and your teachings, you so kindly delivered this foolish person who is beginning at last to remove the deep layers of impurity and to surrender to your real love and to Krishna.

On the journey, we meet numerous difficult situations but the secret is more love for ourselves (because we are part and parcel of Krishna) and more love for others (for the same reason). Suddenly everything becomes clear and respect for everyone is possible. It's not that because you are a devotee you must think of yourself as superior or become proud. Rather, you ask us to be very compassionate.

The world today needs a huge amount of unconditional love, like that which you give us Śrīla Prabhupāda. We must learn again what is sharing and respect. This begins at home, where we are. With ourselves, with our family and all people. Without any expectation or imposition even with your teaching which is so great and beneficial for all!

Every year, I see the way covered on the path of realization by coming closer to Your Divine Grace. So, on this auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I humbly pray to always remain eternally close to you, even if sometimes I stumble. All glories to your divine lotus feet!

Your eternal servant,

Hiranmayi Devī Devī Dāsī

All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances

I hope someday I can render pure service at your lotus-like feet, this is the goal of our life and nothing else we desire.

You wrote in your Bhāgavatam:

‘Every devotee, therefore, should be determined that in this life he will be able to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead and by that process go back home, back to Godhead. That is the perfection of the highest mission of life.’ (SB 4.8.69, purport)

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

I do not find the strength to carry on alone the saṅkīrtana of the holy name of Hari. Please bless me by giving me just one drop of faith with which to obtain the great treasure of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

My humble prayer is to let me follow in this lifetime your divine instructions.

Your aspiring servant.

Jaiya Jagannatha Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to Your Divine Grace.

By your mercy I am able to write this offering after a month in Vṛndāvana in Krishna-Balarāma Mandir where many of your disciples gathered for the 40th anniversary of the grand opening of the Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir, Vṛndāvana April 20, 1975.

“I accept you all as assistants or representatives of my Guru Maharaja”. (letter to Hayagrīva, L.A. 1/14/70)

“You are all my children and I love my American boys and girls who are sent to me by my spiritual master and I have accepted them as my disciples.” (Letter to Satsvarūpa and Uddhava, L.A. 7/27/70)

Sent by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura to assist you is beyond words for me. I’ll always remember that day I found your Back to Godhead magazine on my doorstep, which lead me to the nearest temple to become your disciple. Called to assist you to distribute these books of pure transcendental knowledge is my duty and still is after 40 years. Trained up in Chicago O’Hare airport by your incarnation of book distribution H.H. Tripurāri Swami was special for me as this experience helped me continue on as a book distributor.

Hundreds of your books were distributed daily by us, you were wrote many letters to us saying how pleased you were of us. Your spiritual master then sent me to assist you when Detroit Fisher mansion was purchased, so I could be the saṅkīrtan leader and Temple commander of this beautiful Temple given to you by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

There, you gave me personal attention and second initiation. I only could bow down at your desk, unable to say anything, as you gave me my thread and mantra giving me instructions to follow the four regulations and to continue chanting 16 rounds. Seeing you behind your desk with a golden aura filling the room will

remain with me forever.

The next day when you were in the garden, we were alone together again. Your chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa was clear and bold, then suddenly you went into a trance, at that moment while fanning you, waves of bliss were flowing through my body until you came out of your trance, opened your eyes, chanting the mahā-mantra.

You were kindly giving me a small taste of what you were experiencing, pure love of God ever increasing within you.

While here in this material world, now old and disabled, I'll try to follow those instructions you gave me until that day we meet again. I shall continue to distribute your books in South India, knowing that is my service that will please you.

I wish to thank you for guiding me all these years and allowing me to come to Vṛndāvana to be with your sincere and loyal followers to commemorate the temple opening 40 years ago.

You are engaged in the divine service of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. I pray that one day, I can be so fortunate, to serve you in Goloka Vṛndāvana while engaged in the service of the eternal consort of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Your servant

Rathayatra Dāsa

All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga. All glories to
Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances, and my humble prayers
on this holy day.

(1)

*gurudevō!
kṛpā-bindu diyā, koro' ei dāse,
tṛṇāpekḥā ati hīna
sakala sahane, bala diyā koro',
nija-māne sprhā-hīna*

(2)

*sakale sammāna korite śakati,
deho' nātha! jathājatha
tabe to' gāibo, hari-nāma-sukhe,
aparādha ha 'be hata*

(3)

*kabe heno kṛpā, labhiyā e jana,
kṛtārtha hoibe, nātha!
śakti-buddhi-hīna, āmi ati dīna,
koro' more ātma-sātha*

(4)

*jogyatā-vicāre, kichu nāhi pāi,
tomāra karuṇā-sāra
karuṇā nā hoile, kāndiyā kāndiyā,
prāṇa nā rākhibo āra*

TRANSLATION

1. Gurudeva, give to this servant just one drop of mercy. I am lower than a blade of grass. Give me all help. Give me strength. Let me be as you are, without desires

or aspirations.

2. I offer you all respects, for thus I may have the energy to know you correctly. Then, by chanting the holy name in great ecstasy, all my offenses will cease.
3. When will such mercy fall to this one who is weak and devoid of intelligence? Allow me to be with you.
4. If you examine me, you will find no qualities. Your mercy is all that I am made of. If you are not merciful unto me, I can only weep, and I will not be able to maintain my life.

Your lowly servant

Sanat Kumara Dāsa

Yayaniya Devī Dāsī

All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga
All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn itī nāmīne*

*namas te sārāsvatī-deve gaura-vāñī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

I want to thank you very much because I was able to be in the 40th anniversary celebrations of your second visit to Mexico City temple in 1975. Also thank you very much for blessing my son by telling his father “You are very fortunate you have a nice son.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please let me serve along with my family, son, daughters, grandchildren, and everybody else.

Your servant,

Yayaniya Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It's Gaura Pūrṇimā 2015 in West Bengal, and while appreciating the transcendental energy of Śrī Māyāpura Dhām, I also meditate on your New Māyāpur in France.

Clearly your Māyāpur Candrodaya Mandir is spreading the glories of Śrī Guru (yourself) and Gaurāṅga at an amazing pace: hundreds of thousands of pilgrims come for *parikramā*, the astounding ToVP is quickly rising, announcing an unparalleled flood of mercy by Śrī Śrī Pañca Tattva. Māyāpur is first in book distribution, Māyāpur Institute is educating dozens of devotees yearly, the GBCs and senior men just gathered to discuss 'unity in diversity' as you asked them for the continuous wellbeing of your ISKCON, and as Vaiṣṇavas from different countries are joining by thousands to build the first spiritual town, more and more young preachers and *sannyāsīs* piously born in India are finally getting ready to preach all over the world. All these wonderful achievements and developments in Śrīdhām Māyāpur bear witness of your unique service to the *paramparā*, that you performed 50 years ago after boarding the *Jaladuta!*

But what about your New Māyāpur, as you named it? After all, is it not meant to be a special embassy of the original Māyāpur, meant to show how the mercy of Gaura-Nitāi is spreading from Māyāpur to Europe, thus making Their glory and mission true? By naming it 'New Māyāpur', you definitively established a transcendental link between this once remote village of France (now the only *tīrtha* of Your Divine Grace in continental Europe) and the holy *dhāma* (ISKCON international headquarters). Lord Caitanya created and gave us Māyāpur *dhāma*, and then you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, created and gave us New Māyāpur in the West!

So now, how is your New Māyāpur, following in the glorious footsteps of its original mother-house? Like Śrīdhām Māyāpur's slow beginnings, there have been long difficult times here, with few determined, selfless devotees doing their best to at least maintain this important project. Moreover, if atheistic France

didn't seem not to be the best place for a symbolic twinning with Śrīdhām Māyāpur, it was so only "as long as a devotee who is like a bumblebee drinking the nectar of Lord Caitanya's lotus feet does not appear before the eyes," (Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī's *Śrī Caitanya-Candrāmṛta*). Actually we clearly see that it is only because of your personal *shakti*, once and forever invested in this special *tīrtha*, that New Māyāpur has survived after your physical departure. The desires of a pure devotee will always come true because they are non different from the will of the Lord. The Lord is all-powerful, and He makes sure that the words of his intimate devotee come true. So, these are your words:

"This is a first class place...very good prospect... thousands of people will come and take shelter...Here there is no difficulty to learn how to love Krishna, and He will provide you all necessities of life... Now that in Europe we have got our Krishna-Balarāma temple, real strength will remain from Them. If you are not supported by Balarāma, then it is not possible...I like New Māyāpur very much, especially I like to live in my wonderful rooms." So this year, some auspicious, important and challenging improvements are finally ready to start. We know that it is only by your intense and sincere feeling for the suffering of the conditioned souls that New Māyāpur can and will develop as both a symbolic and real embassy of Śrīdhām Māyāpur in the West. Thus, with full faith in you and with our growing love for you, we don't and will never forget that here, in New Māyāpur, we are simply your humble servants. Please maintain hope in us; then Krishna will not withdraw His mercy on us and He will use New Māyāpur to make you happy. That is my hope.

Gratefully yours forever.

Gopaswami Dāsa

A Message to my Beloved Guru Mahārāja

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Your thoughts, words, and deeds are all-glorious. Your home is Goloka Vrindāvana, the highest planet in existence, Krishna's eternally supreme planet. You are a *nitya-siddha* devotee, an eternally pure soul, and you have never left the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Krishna. You are also a *śaktyāvesha avatar*, an especially empowered soul, the rarest of persons in this entire material world, sent here by the Lord to save the most fallen souls in this Age of Kali. You are totally and completely surrendered to Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Everything you did when you were here was perfect and pure, and a loving devotion to your guru maharaja Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and to Lord Śrī Krishna. Your books, which you translated just as perfectly as they were originally written, are wonderful, amazing, and astonishing. Because you are a pure devotee, your commentaries on all your books are absolutely pure. Your books, and your words, are works of devotion, and they spread knowledge about the Absolute Truth all over this universe.

You sacrificed your own comforts to save the souls of this material world of suffering. You gave us back our real life. We know who we are now, and we know that Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Yes, we know that God is Śrī Krishna. We never would have known this, and that we are His eternal parts and parcels, if you had not come to save us.

You were, are still are, a perfect example of how we should engage ourselves in devotional service, in pure *bhakti* yoga. You are absolutely wonderful, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

All glories to you from the core of my heart.

I offer you my most humble obeisances, again and again, forever and ever.

Your fallen servant who hopes to become a real devotee,

Lelihana Devī Dāsī

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

*namas te sārasvatī-deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You worked tirelessly to establish the Krishna consciousness Movement all over the world. On your first meeting with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta he requested you to preach the message of Lord Caitanya in the English language to the people of the Western world. But you surpassed his instruction and advanced the preaching also in India. Through your great determination and intelligence, you established your centres in Māyāpur, Vṛndāvana and Mumbai.

By your grace this year, I had the opportunity after many years to revisit your Śrī Māyāpur Chandrodaya Mandir. Attending the morning programme and experiencing the wonderful worship and care offered to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava, Their Aṣṭa sakhīs, Śrī Pañca Tattva, Śrī-Nṛsimhadeva and your divine self by your devoted servants was deeply satisfying. My past remembrances in the 70's were of vast paddy fields and the few buildings of your Māyāpur centre and other assorted *mathas* of your godbrothers. Now there are buildings everywhere. Then, on one occasion you questioned why no one was coming, but now there are thousands and thousands of visitors every day and hundreds of thousands during festivals. When back in the 1970s you mentioned that Māyāpur would be a spiritual city, hardly anyone could conceive what your vision was. Māyāpur now is fast becoming a place where many thousands of devotees will reside; what to speak of the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium towering over the landscape. The external structure is practically complete but the internal finishing has only just begun. By your mercy it will become what Śrīla Bhaktivinoda predicted generations ago. I began to appreciate your directive that devotees should visit Māyāpur for the festival as I met devotees that I had served with 30–40 years ago at various stations in the world.

I also had the good fortune to visit Śrī Vṛndāvana *dhāma* on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the opening of the Śrī-Śrī Krishna-Balarāma Mandir when you mercifully accepted me as your disciple. I remember Ramaṇ Reti was far distant from Vṛndāvana town, surrounded by fields and sparsely wooded forest. Not any more, buildings and apartments have sprouted up in every available space. Your temple is being nicely maintained by your sincere followers and the standards of worship practiced have encouraged all other temples and *mandirs* to advance.

All of the increases in facility have as their basis the instructions in your transcendental books and those instructions establish the purity in the practical activity of your disciples and followers. Therefore a most important aspect of your ISKCON Movement is the training, care and maintenance of devotees. Over the last almost 50 years, so many persons have encountered your Movement, possibly joined the activities of ISKCON, even moved into your temples and accepted initiation but through their own shortcomings or the tricks of *māyā*, or so many other reasons have left the association. The service they have rendered will never be lost but how to care for devotees throughout their whole lives whatever their position, condition, location, age or gender?

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have hopefully rendered some pleasing service to you within the last 42 years, possibly slightly more than some other of your disciples, and certainly much, much less than many, many others. You have given me much, much more than I can even appreciate or ever possibly repay. I am praying to you on this special day that you utilize me again as your serious and sincere servant to help spread and strengthen your most valuable ISKCON Movement. May your glories be spread all over the three worlds.

Your still aspiring servant,

Medhavi Dāsa

Cape Town, South Africa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your beautiful lotus like feet. All glories to you my divine Spiritual Master.

As I write this I am still feeling the incredible 'buzz' I received from attending the 40th anniversary of the opening of the Krishna Balarāma Temple in Vṛndāvana. It was the best festival EVER! It was like a whole week of Vyasa-puja days interrupted only by scrumptious *prasāda* and a little sleep here and there. Oh, and a *bhajan* session in the Temple with all the godsisters, just like old times. Hearing all the wonderful stories about you from so many of your disciples was a completely delightful treat.

I had been looking forward to the festival all year but it far surpassed even my eager expectations. So many devotees who had been instrumental in the building of Krishna Balarāma Mandir, or who had served there in the early days, attended and shared their experiences. It was a grand reunion indeed. The family feeling that devotees once shared came surging to the front once again; well at least it did for me. I was so happy just hearing stories about you all day, and about the monumental achievement of building Krishna Balarāma Temple with the little facilities that were available and the distinct lack of cement. I just wanted to stay like that forever, hearing your pastimes.

It reminded me of a story my mother told me as a kid (I think it's by Jean-Paul Sartre or someone like that). A man sells his soul to the devil and in return the devil tells him he can stop his life at any time and it will run perpetually as it is at that time. The man goes through the usual trappings of a material life – wife, kids, etcetera, etcetera, but his life of course, is never quite perfect enough to stop. So finally he reaches death and he has never used his boon. And thus the devil, knowing that there is no perfect time in people's lives and that they will always hanker for something or another, has tricked him and now owns his soul.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given us so many happy, contented times in our life that we would be spoilt for choice if we had to stop our lives at a perfect time. We have had such glorious lives serving you.

I had a funny realisation once. I realised that there was little difference in what I did before I met you and what I do now. Worked with kids then; work with kids now. Had connections with a shop then; still have a shop. Organised the town's carnival then; still involved with carnivals. But there is a huge difference; because of you, all my work now is centred around Krishna. And that makes all the difference. You gave real purpose to my life and for that there are not enough thank-yous in the world. It is an unrepayable debt.

This debt to you and to a degree to your other devotees really showed itself at the festival. I felt truly humbled by the service executed by my peers. As it ended I felt a sense of loss. Being with my old godsisters again, the years that separated us seemed to melt away and it was almost as if we had never parted company. By some fluke I was the last one of the visiting godsisters to leave and it became a very poignant experience. It made me think of the writings of Narottama dās Ṭhākur when he laments the loss of his associates. He states, 'Unable to obtain their association, I must simply weep.' Believe me I was close to tears when I realised they had, one by one, left Vṛndāvana and there I was without their association. Śrīla Prabhupāda you gave me these wonderful friendships. Without you I would not know the excitement of serving you and Krishna with these exalted souls.

Maybe one day we will all be serving you again in Vṛndāvana or maybe somewhere else. We talked in a semi joking way that it was good we were celebrating forty years since the opening of Krishna Balarāma Temple and not fifty years for we knew there would be no certainty that we would all be there for the fiftieth reunion.

Luckily we met you so we can understand the nature of this challenging material world. You also gave us each other, and for my godsisters, I thank you. As I stated earlier we have had such glorious lives serving you. And soooooo much fun.

My prayer stays the same as always. Please allow me to remain in your service.

Proud to be your dancing white elephant.

Your servant

Mokshalaksmi Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I feel so very fortunate to have been guided to your lotus feet. Nothing can possibly compare to that wonderful gift. Unfortunately I am still riddled with faults; envious, lazy, puffed up, obstinate, arrogant, foolish, dull, to name a few. Still, there remains a faint hope that one day, by your mercy, I will become a disciple worthy of your blessings.

You have many wonderful followers who have taken your instructions as their life and soul, and sacrificed everything for your pleasure. I fervently desire that I can one day be as they.

Despite my many shortcomings, I have had a very meaningful and nice life, simply because you showed me your mercy and accepted me as your disciple.

I feel very privileged to be a member of your wonderful ISKCON society, and despite a few ups and downs, we now seem to be on an even keel, with you firmly at the helm. I sincerely hope that I can contribute something meaningful, so that we can make a major change in this rotten Kali-yuga society.

Although I am now 70 years old, I am hoping that whatever little time I have left, I can please you and pass the “final exam.” To think that you were my age when you embarked on your heroic journey to America is inconceivable.

There is a very nice verse in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 4:9:12 that explains my good fortune further.

“O Lord who have a lotus navel, if a person happens to associate with a devotee whose heart always hankers after Your lotus feet, seeking always their fragrance, he is never attached to the material body or, in a bodily relationship, to offspring, friends, home, wealth and wife which are very dear to materialistic persons. Indeed he does not care for them.”

Just by dint of your presence in my life, I am hoping that I

will also develop detachment from all that keeps me in the material world and perhaps one day be fortunate to gain your company once again.

I know this is only possible by coming to the stage described in another very instructive verse.

“The self-effulgent *Vaikuṅṭha* planets, by whose illumination alone all the illuminating planets within this material world give off reflected light, cannot be reached by those who are not merciful to other living entities. Only persons who constantly engage in welfare activities for other living entities can reach the *Vaikuṅṭha* planets.” – *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 4:12: 36

So, this is my challenge; to simply dedicate myself wholeheartedly to spreading Krishna’s glories. Of course that is where the real nectar is, and that is where the reward is for achieving Krishna *prema*. So I beg you to bless me with the patience and determination to sacrifice everything for that. Without doing that my life is simply a waste of time, and I will never be happy.

Your eternal servant,

Adikarta Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My heartfelt obeisances to your lotus feet.
Surrendering my life is an ongoing feat.

I meditate on services that you would treasure.
Praying for guidance to give you pleasure.

You told us we'd show love by cooperating;
The culture of *bhakti* is the way we're relating.

And not just to others, but to Kṛṣṇa too.
Our *sādhana* is foremost, according to you.

In a letter you sent June, nineteen-seventy-two (1972),
You encouraged your devotees, who were only a few:

“Now that we have so many temples and students
I fear us continuing without being prudent.

When we expand too much, will we become weak,
Missing the whole point of what we truly seek?

By increasing results, will our devotion be lost?
By focusing on quantity, will quality be the cost?

By thinning the milk will we only be a cheater
Losing the chance to make it thicker and sweeter.

You gave us the example of condensation
I consider your words with contemplation.

As the world moves faster, there seems more to do
We need more time, money, and manpower too.

I am seeing more upset, more sickness, more stress,

Would it be intelligent to simply do less?

Your Movement is precious, how will it sustain
If we can't keep this pace or the balance maintain?

You exhibited true qualities of austerity,
You showed us tranquility and simplicity.

Please help me to slow down and connect with you,
To respect and value others in all that I do.

Reveal the spiritual, essential core.
Allow me to discern how 'Less can be More.'

With love and gratitude,

Your servant,

Sukhavaha Devī Dāsī

Ambarisa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda please accept my fallen *danḍavats* at
your lotus feet.

In the autumn of this year, it will be 50 years since you landed
in the United States. In those 50 years, you have spearheaded a
worldwide movement intent on revolutionizing the consciousness
of the planet, and returning countless spirit souls to the loving
arms of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Part of your transcendental strategy to conquer the world with
Krishna Consciousness is the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium in
Śrīdhama Māyāpur. Your idea is to create an awesome exhibition
in the birthplace of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, which the whole
world will come to see, receiving transcendental knowledge in the
process. I am happy to report to you that as of this moment and
by your mercy, the project is going very well. After many years of
false starts, this year, the super structure of the TOVP is nearing

completion. The massive 350 feet high central dome is almost finished, and soon it will be capped by a massive *kailash* to create the largest kīrtan hall in the world. Soon more than 10,000 devotees will broadcast the holy name to all corners of the planet.

There is still so much more work to be done, but devotees from around the world have embraced the project as your dearest desire. Last year we visited South Africa and the Middle East, and this year we are touring North America with Lord Nityānanda's *pādukā* and Lord Nṛsimhadeva's *satari* escorted by Jananivās Prabhū from Māyāpur. We are collecting millions of dollars in donations and pledges from your devotees and well-wishers around the world. Many of them are very humble and give whatever they can to see this temple finished. It is a temple which is truly being built by the hands of all devotees.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please continue to bless this endeavor to make your plans for Śrīdhām Māyāpur become a reality. Through this instruction, the name of Chaitanya Mahāprabhū and Śrīdhām Māyāpur will become famous in this world, and your desire to do something wonderful for your spiritual master and the previous acharyas will be fulfilled.

"I, the Soul of all beings, am not as satisfied by ritual worship, brahminical initiation, penances or self-discipline as I am by faithful service rendered to one's spiritual master." – *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 10.80.34

Thank you for giving us this rare opportunity to assist you in this effort. It is our unfathomable good fortune.

"O best of the brāhmaṇas, many men have laid down their lives on the battlefield, being unafraid of fighting, but rarely has one gotten the chance to give his accumulated wealth faithfully to a saintly person who creates holy places." – *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 8.20.9

Your menial servant,

Ambarisa Dāsa

Prabhupāda is our link to Kṛṣṇa.

The days that Prabhupāda stayed in Los Angeles in 1976, were all illuminated by a very bright sun. I sought all the opportunities allowed to serve him. However, the time of his departure arrived, and we all went to the airport to bid farewell to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The presence of many devotees at the airport turned that space into a beautiful and attractive setting for anyone who was there. It resembled a painting with a variety of colors – saris, *dhotis* and flags that formed an endless catwalk at the entrance and hallway. The people were curious and did not know what was going on and asked, “Who is that so important personality they are waiting for?”

Finally, Prabhupāda arrived at the airport followed by other disciples. He entered holding his cane, walking majestically. An aura of peace and safety emanated from him. The devotees followed him while chanting and competing graciously, to stay beside Prabhupāda. The atmosphere was a mixture of simultaneous confusion and happiness.

Someone gave me a flag to hold, but my friend Nitya-līlā Devī Dāsī (from Caracas) asked me to deliver the flag to another person and follow her, because we would be blessed by the guru’s mercy. As I ran, I noticed that the devotees and *sannyāsīs* lagged behind. Nitya-līlā had a goal in mind that she would get to be right next to where Prabhupāda would sit. Śrīla Prabhupāda came exactly to the place she expected and sat down. And for this reason, we were able to stand exactly behind his lotus head. In this way, Kṛṣṇa allowed us to taste the nectar of *sadhu-saṅga* which we were so anxious to have.

Meanwhile, Śrīla Prabhupāda was talking with his disciples and *sannyāsīs* when H.G. Yamunā Devī Dāsī arrived. He immediately turned to her and said very kindly, “Jaya! Yamunā! How are you?” Prabhupāda always cared about the devotees’ welfare – seeing if they were happy in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. H.G. Yamunā Devī Dāsī bowed down humbly and they continued to talk. Meanwhile, a devotee brought a tray with a variety of fresh fruits and offered it to Prabhupāda. Prabhupāda took one fruit and ate half of it. The other half was returned to the tray when

he realized that devotees and *sannyāsīs* were pushing each other to have his remnants. When finally he dropped the piece of fruit, one *sannyāsī* immediately caught it and popped it into his mouth, leaving all others very surprised. Prabhupāda did not hold back and laughed with great satisfaction.

An airport employee came to communicate about Prabhupāda's departure time. Everyone became silent, pleading with their eyes: No! Śrīla Prabhupāda, don't go. Stay with us forever!

Śrīla Prabhupāda immediately stood up and walked firmly toward the door, despite all the efforts to keep him with us a little more. When the door closed, I tried to look through the glass, but the glass was opaque, and nothing could be seen through it. I stayed there for some time as life had no meaning. It was very difficult to accept his departure. I felt a great feeling of emptiness in my heart. When I turned back to reality, the devotees were already going back to the bus that brought all of them. We had the consciousness to continue our devotional service because that's our link with Prabhupāda.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda! Jagat Guru of the universe! You came to fulfill the emptiness of my heart. You brought Kṛṣṇa for all of us and the wisdom of how to execute devotional service. How much nectar I heard from your lotus mouth! I want to thank you continually, everyday, through devotional service and offerings. Your instructions will always satisfy our greatest desire to serve you more and more, until the last moment of our lives.

Your most fallen servant,

Raga Bhumi Devī Dāsī
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil Yātra

Recently I heard a wonderful talk given by Ravindra Svarūpa Prabhu on the importance of remaining faithful to the mission of Śrīla Prabhupāda. He pointed out that Śrīla Prabhupāda once said ISKCON is his body and therefore the duty of a disciple is to function as a tiny part of the body in unison with the whole, not against the health of the body like a cancerous cell. That really hit home with me. I want to be a little insignificant cell in the body of ISKCON, doing my tiny part for the whole and taking care not to become diseased; giving trouble to the body. And what is that disease that causes illness and does not allow one to regain optimum health? It is holding on to material desires not conducive to the development of Krishna consciousness, nor to the mission of the spiritual master. It is said that the disciple should not approach the guru with a return ticket in hand. When we approach the guru it should be with real sincerity. One must execute the order of the spiritual master without reservation, with hesitation – a one-way ticket without consideration of ever returning to that place from which we came prior to arriving at his (the guru's) lotus feet.

I pray to Śrīla Prabhupāda to kindly help me by forcibly taking this return ticket from my hand and to rip it up in front of my eyes. Because my faith is very weak I have held on to this return ticket for years, foolishly thinking I should keep it just in case I might need it someday. Please do this favor for me Śrīla Prabhupāda. Ask your Lord, Śrī Krishna to take this burden away from me, for I have hidden it for years, there in the depths of my heart. Please tear it into a thousand pieces. Let 'you' be my only shelter, because by taking full, unreserved shelter of you, my divine master, I take shelter of the supreme destination, the Lord of the heart.

Śrīla Prabhupāda kī jaya!

Ramananda Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Millions of obeisances at your lotus feet!

It's amazing what you have done to save us and what you continue to do all the time. You are the most important person to grace us and the world in our lifetimes!

You gave us your 'Matchless Gifts' – your books, talks, example, and mercy. You are making the unfortunate fortunate. You open doors that have been closed for way too long. You open the doors to the spiritual world for us. We owe you everything but we cannot pay you back. All you want from us is that we love Kṛṣṇa. You told us that in Atlanta. You said if we develop our love for Kṛṣṇa that will please you the most. All the devotees loved that statement because it includes all of us. We all have the same opportunity to perfect our lives by following you and going back to Godhead. There is no greater treasure to be had in all the worlds and you are giving your mercy liberally to all who are intelligent enough to take it.

This is the 40th anniversary of the opening of your Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Mandir which manifested because of your desire and strong determination. You were fully involved every step of the way – from securing the land and overseeing every detail of the design and construction and the grand opening. You did the first *ārati* for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma on that opening day, the appearance day of Lord Ramachandra. You always showed the righteousness of Lord Rāma, the purity and patience of Mother Sītā, and the strength and service of Śrī Hanumān.

I went to Vrindāvana that first year the temple was opened and you so mercifully gave me *brahmin* initiation. I engaged in the Deity worship and was serving happily, living a peaceful simple spiritual life as you always asked us to; simple living, high thinking, you always said. In the end, in 1977 you fulfilled my desire and allowed me to personally serve you. Those were the best days of my life! I remember you every day. I remember what a kind and gracious host you were to your constant flow of guests, devotees, aspiring devotees and world leaders. I remember how you made sure all your guests received *prasāda* and you told us to continue

giving the holy names, *prasāda* and your books out to everyone we could. I remember how happy you were when a newly printed book arrived. Even though you were bedridden those last days on earth; when a book came you asked us to prop you up and turn up the lights and give you your reading glasses so you could see the new book. Even though you were sick you smiled broadly looking at every detail of the books, the pictures and all cover-to-cover. It was such a joy seeing you so happy.

One day you saw me reading your *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* in my spare time and you smiled broadly and said it was very good that I was reading. Such a simple thing pleased you so much! You did not ask very much of us for yourself but you asked us to love and serve Kṛṣṇa. George Harrison liked that about you too. You were most noble yet so humble at the same time. We cannot imagine how fortunate we really are having come in contact with you.

I got to meet you the first day I joined in San Francisco after Rathāyātra. You told us Rādhā Dāmodar devotees, “You are very bright-faced and fortunate to come to Lord Chaitanya’s Movement. Now that you are fortunate; make others fortunate. Preach this message of Lord Chaitanya’s all over the world.”

So I’m doing that Śrīla Prabhupāda, but I need more of your mercy to do more sharing of the love of God and love of yourself by following you all will become most fortunate. There is no limit to who can follow. You are our Jagat Guru!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I hope you are awarded the Nobel Peace Prize because you did more to spread peace and love around the world than anybody! You said your mission is the real ‘United Nations’ because it unites people of every country as devotees in service to our sweet Lord. We have a long way to go but we are on the road. The road back to Godhead. The road to you, shown by you. It only gets better as we go.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for all you have done and all you will do. Your mercy is our ‘Matchless Gift.’

Your eternal servant,

Gauridasa Pandita Dāsa

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

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

This temporary world of quotas, karma and capabilities, is always inhibiting the conditioned soul, who is bound by every desire like hundreds and thousands of tightly secured tumblers. As a bull is obliged to move according to the direction of his driver, pulling on ropes knotted to his nose, one is lead to the destination of whom he follows.

Whatever voice you choose to hear
Will be the one your course to steer.
This guiding light you hold most dear
No pain nor trial will cause you fear.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept my most reverent and humble obeisances.
All glories to you beloved spiritual master,
for you are the deliverer of the fallen.

Weary, from this battle with Māyā's lure
At your feet we are secure.
No longer in the victim's race
For happiness in a wretched place.

You speak the truth with perfect words
Which scatter in the wind like flying birds
Illusions making us believe
We are the cause of all we conceive.

As your wards we all agree
That our true identity
Has been revealed for all to see
Are symbols of your great mercy.

Bathing myself in the sweet waters of hearing and chanting, I follow the course you have mapped out, for crossing over the treacherous and turbulent sea of the modes of material nature.

Exemplifying what it means to follow one's guru, making his desires your desires, you engaged your *saṅkīrtana* army, moving it in waves of devotion. These waves are as infinite as waves in the ocean, and it would take Śrī Ananta Deva Himself to describe their glories.

With complete faith in the holy name, and the instructions of your spiritual master, you took the first wave to the streets of New York City. With a small group of devotees you chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, for all the world to hear.

You sent another wave of surrendered disciples to open temples across land and sea, creating a place where fortunate souls, worn out by the cruel abyss of material miseries, could seek shelter and associate with devotees.

The next great wave was the most sublime. It crashed like a tsunami on the shores of the earth, changing the hearts of millions. You sent your soldiers armed with your transcendental books like spiritual bombs, to purify the world and distribute knowledge of the Absolute Truth. These waves have multiplied and compounded and are now flooding the earth.

How did such great good fortune come upon us? There is nothing we could have done or ever be able to do which merits this kind of mercy. Every day of our lives we have the rare opportunity to hear from a *nitya siddha*. Śrīla Prabhupāda left behind the boat for crossing over this ocean of death which plagues us all. That boat is the intimate association and ecstasies of his Bhaktivedānta purports. If associating with a pure devotee for just one moment can award the greatest benediction, who, desirous of crossing over the miserable ocean of repeated birth and death, would not mold his life around associating with Śrīla Prabhupāda by hearing from him and reading his books as a daily practice? The pure devotee can give Kṛṣṇa, so if Kṛṣṇa is Who we want we must go to that person who has Him.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, from my infinitesimal place in the forest of this material world, with a deep breath and as loud as I can, I sing your glories. Alas, it is just a squeak like the sound of one raindrop falling upon a bolder. But there has now come a rumbling

– deep and resonate – filling all space and circumambulating the earth. If one has not heard this sacred sound and seen it erupt within his heart, he must, with great alacrity and urgency seek to find it and thus give his life meaning. O Śrīla Prabhupāda, O Master, O Senāpati in Lord Caitanya’s great *saiṅkīrtana* army, because of your endeavors the holy name of Kṛṣṇa has spread to every town and village throughout the world. It was predicted and it has been done.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you on behalf of all conditioned souls rotting in this wretched world and held captive by the tight ropes of material nature. Chanting the name of the Lord is the *yuga dharma* and it is the life and soul of the devotees. But in the same way as worship of a devotee is considered even more exalted than worship of the Lord, your sacred name is even more dear and cherished to those who are your faithful followers.

Please let us all chant together, with hearts overwhelmed with sincerity, gratitude and love: All glories to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda! All Glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda! All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Begging to remain your eternal daughter and disciple,

Samapriya Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It gives me great pleasure to submit my Vyasa-puja offering for the 2015 *Tributes* book.

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

*namas te sārāsvatī-deva gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviṣeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

In your letter to Rayarāma May 16, 1969, you said, “Outdoor *kīrtan* must be done, even at the cost of suspending all editorial work. That is your first and foremost business. Temple worship is not so important. If need be, the whole temple can be locked, but the outdoor *kīrtan* cannot be stopped.”

Now after nearly fifty years I’m just beginning to see that through my neglect of this most important instruction I have unnecessarily wreaked havoc on myself and others. When I somehow remember to follow this instruction things gradually open up and develop nicely. To the degree I somehow avoid engaging in this activity, to that same degree complications and difficulties rise up as so many obstacles and problems blocking the way.

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, help me understand how I might follow this highest priority, top number one instruction.

Your confused and struggling servant,

Sarvopama Dāsa

Vyasa-puja offering to Śrīla Prabhupāda

*om ajñāna-tinirāndhasya 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.

Your teachings are the guiding light in the right direction for all Vaiṣṇavas, and your example of life is the driving energy that moves all wills dedicated to cultivate and expand Krishna consciousness.

Listening your classes encourages everyone to participate in your mission. Being an instrument of your will is a privilege, and one's opportunity to exercise consistency and become better in every aspect. With you, no one feels alone and defeated.

As time goes on, your spiritual stature increases in the heart of your followers, and the inspiration that we receive from you to spread Krishna consciousness in your name, grows day after day.

On the day of your glorious appearance in this world, our souls jump, very proud to belong to you and glad to serve you with renewed joy and enthusiasm.

Thank you for taking me into account.

Your unconditional servant,

Śrī Padambuja Dāsa

Subhangi Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I pay my obeisances to you a thousand times. May you be glorified worldwide. Every morning when I look at the rising sun, I meditate that you are sitting on the Vyāsāsana in front of its brilliant effulgence. From all directions of the world, one devotee after another is coming forward to place a most fragrant garland around your neck with love and affection. Why does the world not see that you are the real Mr. Universe? You are everyone's friend and ever well-wisher.

When I read your *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, I am nourished by the nectar of your divine instructions cradled in every word which help us to make a loving home where the suffering souls of the whole world can live.

May I ever become qualified to always be situated under the protection of the shade of your brilliant lotus feet.

Your struggling aspiring servant,

Subhangi Devī Dāsī

Tirthakara Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My daṇḍavat pranāms to your divine lotus feet.

I adore the lotus feet of my gurudev, ocean of grace, Hari in human form, whose words are like a flood of sunlight on the deep darkness of powerful ignorance!

I adore the pollen-like dust of the lotus feet of my guru, bright, fragrant, sweet to the taste and full of the flavour of love; pure powder of the root of ambrosia that heals all the attendant ills of life.

This dust is like the holy ashes on the divine body of Shambu, beautiful, auspicious and bringing forth joy. It rubs the dirt off the fair mirror of the votary's mind, and, when applied to the forehead as a *tilak*-mark, it attracts a host of virtues.

The lustre of the nails of the holy guru's feet is as the brightness

of jewels; when one recalls it, a divine splendour illumines the soul, dispersing the darkness of ignorance with its sun-like glory. How blessed he is in whose soul it dawns!

The dust of the guru's feet is a soft and agreeable ointment, like ambrosia to the eyes, removing every defect of vision. (Tulsidas, *Rāmācharitamānasa*)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

As I'm no long actively involved in your ISKCON movement, all I have left is my memories, the memory of your first visit to New Māyāpur in France in August 1975. The memory of your last visit to Bhaktivedānta Manor in 1977 when I was allowed, together with Sulocana prabhu, to carry Your Divine Grace on a palanquin back and forth from your room to the temple room. The memory of the enthusiasm of the assembled Vaiṣṇavas when news came that you would be visiting. Besides those memories I still feel connected through your Bhaktivedānta Purports of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Tulsidas writes: "Rāma Himself redeemed one ascetic's wife (Ahalyā), but the holy name has converted the sinful hearts of millions of sinners." You have made that holy name available to us Śrīla Prabhupāda! Who can estimate your glory?

Your insignificant disciple,

Tirthakara Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to this most special day of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

You coming to this material world is definitely the plan of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He conferred upon you the responsibility to spread the holy names, *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare* around the world.

Prior to your establishing ISKCON in 1966 in New York, these holy names were more or less confined to India. But as the chanting of the Lord's names is the *yuga dharma* of this Kali-yuga, the names couldn't just be available for a select section of devotees in India. Someone had to actually do the spreading around. The great *ācāryas* knew that a personality would appear to accomplish this task. And, true to their vision – that great personality appeared on Nandotsava 1896 in Calcutta. His name was Abhay Charan De, the special emissary of Lord Caitanya to start a spiritual revolution on the planet earth.

In 1966 you incorporated the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, only 49 short years ago. Point 4 of the constitution reads as follows:

“To teach and encourage the *saṅkīrtana* movement, congregational chanting of the holy name of God as revealed in the teachings of Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.”

In order to do this you went to Tompkins Square Park and started the chanting of the holy names under a tree accompanied by some dedicated followers. In other words you planted the seeds of the *saṅkīrtan* movement there and then. A movement that will one day spread to every town and village of the globe. Although this appears an almost impossible task, it is not. Why? Because you are the bona fide representative of Lord Caitanya who predicted that it would happen

Actually the holy names are non-different from Krishna:

*nāma-cintāmaṇi-kṛṣṇaś caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto 'bhinnatvān
nāma-nāminoḥ – Padma Purāṇa*

Furthermore they are invested with all the potencies as confirmed in *Śikṣāṣṭakam 2 nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktiḥ...* As we cannot put any restrictions on the Lord in terms of what he can and cannot do, similarly we cannot put any restrictions on the holy name as they are as all powerful as the Lord Himself. And you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, has brought the names out of India. You are the dear associate that Lord Chaitanya uses to fulfil his prediction. And you have the full benediction of your *paraḥaṁsa gurudeva*, as evidenced in the letter he wrote to you in December of 1936:

“I am fully confident that you can explain in English our thoughts and arguments to the people who are not conversant with languages of the other members...I have every hope that you can turn yourself into a very good English preacher if you serve the mission to inculcate the novel impression of Lord Chaitanya’s teachings in the people in general...”

How glorious you are! How wonderful! How fortunate we are to have been accepted as your disciples.

Just as we cannot really fully comprehend the power of the holy name, so we can also not understand your potency. You are *sākṣād-dharitvena* the confidential servant of the Lord chosen to benedict the world with His holy names.

For this purpose you have accepted disciples to assist you and who have taken your instructions seriously. They are going around the world to spread the holy names through *harināma saṅkīrtana* and especially, Kīrtan Melas.

Thus, as your disciple, I simply aspire to please you by cooperating with these chosen representatives of you. I hope in this way I can please you and at least repay a tiny fraction of what I owe you.

Begging at your lotus feet that you will always keep me in the service of your servants.

Your lowly servant

Śrīniketan Dāsa

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

*namas te sārasvatī-deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnya-vādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

My beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda

I bow down in the dust of your lotus feet.

Please accept my most humble and respectful obeisances.

All glories to Your Divine Grace.

You are the embodiment of the mercy of the Supreme Lords
Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi!

Hare Krishna!

Keenly, deep down from the core of my heart, I feel the desire to overtly proclaim that to me you are the highest authority, over and above anyone else, concerning any sphere of existence.

The authoritativeness of the whole spiritual chain of the transcendental seers of the Absolute Truth, originating from the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Krishna, reaches down to this fallen soul through Your Divine Grace's embodiment of mercy, at whose divine lotus feet I wholeheartedly surrender.

You have shaken me from my slumber, broken this material nightmare, made me conscious again, and brought forward the understanding that I am solely a fallen soul, amongst the myriad of fallen souls lost into an endless noisy darkness.

With all sincerity, I openly admit that any so-called knowledge, professed by any so-called authority from this material plane, be it considered by majority as an erudite philosopher, learned scholar, highly advanced scientist, cultured literate, expert politician, perspicacious sociologist, elevated spiritualist, worldly veteran, great religious leader or even outstanding genius, now sounds to my hearing like the croaking of frogs.

What to speak of the one derived from unsound material senses, that simply contributes in nourishing my reason with distorted perceptions, so to fool me into "getting a hold of the wrong end of the stick".

But Your Divine Grace, with the torchlight of divine knowledge dispels the darkness of ignorance, so that my blinded eyes can regain the power to see.

And now, although for the time being my vision is still blurry, by dint of aural reception from your lotus lips, whatever I become aware of, if does not comply with the pattern that you have kindly revealed, it's immediately filtered out and discharged as mortally deceitful.

No more am I defenseless against the massive bombing of nonsensical disinformation, touted as truth by so many agents of the delusive material energy.

With the sword of transcendental knowledge, sharpened by worshiping and serving Your Divine Grace, I should now be able to clearly disjoint the illusion from reality.

Implicit faith in Your Divine Grace and in Lord Śrī Krishna, and not implicit faith in the so-called "proved by evidence or observable facts" of the many "croaking doctor frog", is the secure path to follow. As confirmed by the śāstra and the ācāryas.

I am sure that, in everything you say, Your Divine Grace, is correct and the "doctors frogs" are imperfect, even if from my limited capacity of perception it may appear otherwise.

Your Divine Grace does not belong to the relativity of this material platform.

You are Śrīla Prabhupāda, messenger from the absolute world. A man from Vaikuṅṭha, where everyone is *acyuta*. Infallible under every circumstance.

"The guru is not an erring mortal whose activities can be understood by the fallible reason of unreclaimed humanity. There is an eternally impassable line of demarcation between the saviour and the saved. Those who are really saved can alone know this"— Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur, December, 1931 edition of *The Harmonist* (*Shree Sajjanatoshani*), Vol. XXIX No. 6.

I do not need to find hyperbolic justifications if this picture does not fit into my minuscule understanding of the Absolute Truth. I simply accept Śrī Krishna's word and the words of the pure devotees at face value.

Your Divine Grace is an unalloyed pure devotee of Śrī Krishna that, in the same words of the Supreme Lord as for His promise, “will never be defeated.”

Empowered by Śrī Krishna, every single word emanating from your lotus mouth is absolute and all-comprehensive. In front of Your Divine Grace the lesser relative knowledge becomes very pale.

You are manifestly a spiritual giant, even amongst other spiritual giants, and all the materialistic or pseudo-spiritualistic Lilliputians of this material world, cannot compare with Your Divine Grace.

In my present lower condition I may not be able to completely grasp this true fact, nonetheless it is confirmed by all the great *ācāryas*.

From my inescapably relativistic point of view surely I don't dare to even think that I can find any kind of inadequacy in such a *mahā-bhāgavata* personality like Your Divine Grace or that Your Divine Grace may be subjected to some kind of material influence.

“The relationship of the Spiritual Master and the disciple is not the same as the relationship with Krishna in Vrindāvan. The relationship with the Spiritual Master must always be continued with the greatest respect and veneration, without forgetting His exalted position; like father and son.” – Śrīla Prabhupāda, letter to Hansadutta, Los Angeles, 16 Jan 1969

*sākṣād-darītvena samasta-sāstrair uktas tathā bhāvayata eva sadbhiḥ
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

“The spiritual master is to be honored as much as the Supreme Lord, because he is the most confidential servitor of the Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and followed by all authorities”

At least, I should have such a firm conviction if I desire to serve Your Divine Grace, acting as one of your faithful representatives. Yes, I have not come to follow Your Divine Grace blindly; you have resuscitated my dead brain and you have instilled in me such a strong “scientific faith” that can easily make the “fideistic science” of the materialists and their so-called “observable truth”, an

object of scorn.

And you have warned us:

“Don’t follow rascals and fools. Then it will be useless waste of time. Follow the great *ācāryas*. *Ācāryavān puruṣo veda*. One who is *ācāryavān*, who has accepted *ācārya*, he knows.” – Śrīla Prabhupāda lecture on SB 1.2.19, Calcutta, September 27, 1974

At times, in the preaching field, you use forthright words and examples, underlining particular passages of the scriptures which are colliding with the widespread mentality prevailing in the so-called advanced societies. Here and there this fact has elicited some reaction from various parties, where we have been rebuked as fanatics, fundamentalists, sexists, racists and so on and, in order to try to appease their minds, on several occasions we have assumed, with our best intention, the aptitude of apologists.

I have solid confidence in your demeanor and aptitude toward the false certainties of this worldly material society and I have the same confidence in Your Divine Grace’s unparalleled wisdom and power of judgment.

With the same mood as your divine spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswāmī, you have strongly attacked the wrong convictions of the conditioned souls, aiming particularly at those that, as the present leaders of human society, are engaged in the heinous crime to propagate the false idea that we are part of this material world, and that God, if ever exists, it is just a blind force with no personality, so dooming the poor fallen souls to an everlasting suffering in the endless cycle of births and deaths.

Under the circumstances are those false leaders, the inveterate fanatics, materialistic fundamentalists, sexists, racists and so on. And their propaganda is very strong so much so to sometimes effectively contaminate even the mind of innocent devotees who fall into their trap.

Therefore Your Divine Grace has showed that to counteract such dangerous propaganda, our preaching must be forceful and uncompromising.

Are certainly in the wrong camp those who, out of their own

ignorance born from their materialistic upbringing, arrogantly misunderstand our position as aggressive sectarianism. Such an aggressive assertion of the Absolute Truth is the needed requirement to stop the rampant propaganda where illusion is peddled as reality that is being carried on all over the world by the so-called scientists and empiric philosophers.

“There is no literature throughout the universe like *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. There is no comparison. There is no competition. Every word is for the good of the human society. Every word, each and every word. Therefore we stress so much in the book distribution. Somehow or other, if the book goes in one hand, he will be benefited. At least he will see, “Oh, they have taken so much price. Let me see what is there.” If he reads one *śloka*, his life will be successful. If one *śloka*, one word. This is such nice things. Therefore we are stressing so much, “Please distribute book, distribute book, distribute book.” – Śrīla Prabhupāda’s lecture on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 1.16.8, January 5, 1974, Los Angeles.

Beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, I miss your physical presence on this planet. I miss the expectation and excitement of “Śrīla Prabhupāda is coming!” I miss the opportunity to jump on a vehicle and come where you are, to directly observe your stunning physical form, the one of an inhabitant of Vaikuṅṭha, the way you speak, the way you move, the way you look at your disciples, and the divine forms of the Deities in the temple with your lotus eyes full of transcendental love, the way you respect *prasāda*, the way you chant beautiful Vaiṣṇava songs, and play devotional musical instruments. I miss all of this Śrīla Prabhupāda, and deeply felt emotions are aroused while these remembrances are manifested in my mind.

But at the same time I clearly perceive your divine presence amongst us.

Your books are here, Your instructions are here for all of us to follow.

Devotional service to Your Divine Grace is always available. It only depends on my will to accept it. If I constantly put into practice what you have taught us, I can then be in Your Divine

Grace’s life-giving association forever, life after life, no matter where I will be.

“Simply our prayer should be, My dear Krishna, please remind me to always chant Your holy name, please do not put me into forgetfulness. You are sitting within me as Supersoul, so you can put me into forgetfulness or into remembering You. So please do not put me into forgetfulness. Please always remind me to chant, even You send me into the hell, it doesn’t matter, just so long as I can always chant Hare Krishna...” – Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letter to Devānanda – Nov 23,1968

My dear Krishna, please always remind me of my beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, of his wonderful pastimes and instructions.

Please do not put me into forgetfulness of His Divine Grace so that even if time will seem to keep us apart forever, he will live in the core of my heart.

Your humble and respectful servant,

Narakantaka Dāsa (Tridandi Dāsa)
Terni - Italy

Anandamaya Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

When the *Tributes* staff contacted me regarding the 2015 *Tributes Book*, I at first replied that I wouldn’t know where to begin with a tribute, and did not intend to submit one this year. Although it is certainly true that I don’t know how to even begin glorifying you in a sufficient manner, to not attempt to do so would constitute dereliction of duty on the part of a genuine disciple as well as a breach of Vaiṣṇava etiquette. I can only glorify you from the meager platform of realization which I have achieved over these 40 years. Purification is a tall order, and I see myself hanging on to obvious as well as subtle attachments. Yet row I must else the boat

of liberation becomes forever mired in the endless whirlpools, eddies and backwaters that constitute *māyā*.

In 3:37, the *Gītā* speaks about lust as being the “all-devouring, sinful enemy of this world” which binds us. Here, the *Gītā* is speaking of lust in a general sense. Yet lust “can be transformed into love for the Supreme,” and it is this transcendental alchemy which you have dispensed, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and in following in your footsteps and unlocking it, we gain entrance into a Kingdom of transcendental riches beyond our wildest dreams. We are in a great, protracted war with this enemy in the form of lust, but fight on we must, taking aid, of course, from the merciful *ācāryas* and *sādhus* on the path. Nothing truly as worthy as this could possibly come cheaply.

I can only speak from the degree of realization I have attained and what lessons I have learned: persistence in practice is essential to realization. Dogged persistence – no – for we are not dogs, but rather a practical, determined, rational and steady attempt to progress daily in *bhakti*. The *Gītā* lists determination as a transcendental quality and further states in 18:33 that:

“that determination which is unbreakable, which is sustained with steadfastness by yoga practice, and thus controls the mind, life, and the acts of the senses, is in the mode of goodness.”

Although not an easy task due to our conditioning as well as our encumbrance within the three modes, there is no greater sacrifice nor greater glory than becoming determined to traverse the *bhakti mārg* as enunciated by your good self. By and by, through following your instructions, admittedly less than perfectly, I have hope that in some birth I may attain maturity in *bhakti*. I am therefore eternally indebted to Your Divine Grace. I pray that I will someday be able to chant “*Shyāma*” with complete sincerity and conviction and that the holy names will carry me home.

Your disciple and servant,

Anandamaya Dāsa

2015 Vyāsa Pūjā Homage to His Divine Grace, Jagat Guru,

Śrīla Abhay Caraṇa Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda

I first offer my humble obeisance in full *danḍavat* prostration at the lotus feet of Om̐ Viṣṇu-Pāda Paramahaṁsa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-Śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda!

Praying:

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

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

*namas te sārāsvatī-deva gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

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

Secondly, I offer my deepest heartfelt apologies for my exacerbating our separation by failing to offer a homage to you last year on your Vyasa-puja anniversary.

My failure was due to my fixation on apparent shortcomings of our () ISKCON organization (individuals and collectively) to administer and manage the final wishes that you described as “the other 50% of your mission”! Due to my fault-finding mentality, I could not find the words to truthfully address your Holiness... Thus; in my contaminated consciousness, I chose to not voice my mind’s poisoned analysis.

Over the course of this last year, distraught in deep remorseful scrutiny and assimilation, I have actively focused my attention on coordinating a solution on your behalf, by doing what I could to rectify this long-delayed portion of your mission to the best of my personal ability; and, to encourage others to do so to the best of their ability, as well. I feel that my energy is being used much more appropriately in yours and the Lord’s service now!

This is a very special year for all of us; your disciples, granddisciples and great grand-disciples, because it marks the 50th anniversary of your arrival here on our shores to rescue our minds from the agonizing forgetfulness of our Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa! You have mitigated our suffering condition by causelessly foregoing the refined Vṛndāvana atmosphere and association, in favor of the good advice of your spiritual master that you come to the West to offer us the exit from our material entanglement.

During the course of the past 50 years, so much has been accomplished with the first 50% of your mission that we can all see now that: “It can never be stopped”, as you have seen and told us before!

The TOVP is the last item to “crown” this endeavor, and we remain a few short years from the “Grand Opening Ceremony” and celebration; and, its completion is absolutely essential to the entire *paramparā*’s purposes!!!

You have kindly revealed to my heart that the “other 50%”, the rural farming community development, will become much more the focus thereafter; as, the support of permanent communities was encouraged by Śrī Caitanya Himself throughout His pastimes in India. He repeatedly instructed His followers to go to their home-village and institute the *saṅkīrtana yajña* in their own (rural) community! It remains incumbent upon us (your legacy) to do the same; as **YOU** have repeated in His stead...

Coming to this conclusion shortly after your last Vyasa-puja, as I considered my plight, an opportunity to take a Permaculture Design course was revealed – Realizing that you had always stated that the responsibility of the social structure is to protect: “the Land and the Cows”; and, you ALWAYS mentioned it in THAT order! After researching what is “Permaculture” design, I immediately enrolled on the course...of course, without knowing how to design permanent ‘culture’ of the land, the cows would not have a very substantial environment to “protect” them within – thank you for engaging me in this service!

Although the current devotee momentum is to complete the TOVP (as rightfully it should be), when the attention turns to securing a (global) support network of Vṛndāvana-like village communities to carry on, and expand our movement through the next 10,000 years of *saṅkīrtana* outreach efforts, we will have a

“Permanent-culture design” foundation laid, to protect the cows and the brāhmaṇas (*go-brahmaṇya*); and to build upon generation after generation!!!

Our (your direct disciples) numbers continue to decrease in increasing rapidity. As they do, the remainder, whose older age defies the logic of rural farming community development continue to defer that responsibility to “the next generation”; an unfortunate ongoing dilemma.

I ceaselessly pray that they, in their old age, realize your final statements to us – in your last days:

“Book distribution and farms: these are our solid programs. They can change the whole world. The whole foundation of animal civilization can be destroyed. If I have hope, for still living, I want to organize the farms, make it perfect. Simple living and high thinking.” – Tamal Krishna Goswami’s Diary, August 9, 1977

“I have only done fifty percent of what I want to do. The farms have to be done. If they are established, *varṇāśrama* will be established.” – Tamal Kṛṣṇa Goswami’s Diary – August 10, 1977

“This is the next aspect of Krishna consciousness which I wish to push forward. If I am able to travel again, then I shall visit the farms and make them perfect. On these farms we can demonstrate the full *varṇāśrama* system. If these farms become successful then the whole world will be enveloped by Krishna consciousness.” – Letter to Hariśauri from Tamal Krishna Goswami, August 10, 1977

Your servant in separation,
(but not as much so, as last year)
Langaganesa Dāsa

My dear spiritual master, please accept my respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

Every year that I write this letter of Vyāsa-pūjā in honor of your holy appearance in this world is for me like having a dialogue with Your Divine Grace. Sometimes I imagine that I am in your room, as has happened to many of my godbrothers, and when you question me about my service, I respond with a list of what I'm doing and what I would do in the future.

Unfortunately, having not done almost anything for you I would not know what to say, and maybe that is the reason why I have never been in that room with you and will never be in the future.

This year is a different year, for the first time I am free from the duty of taking care of my parents. My mother left her body, and at least from this point of view I did my duty. Both, my father and my mother left their bodies with tulasī beads, *tilak*, Ganges water and the transcendental sound of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra.

Now the desire to serve you is increasing, I hope that this desire will be transformed in to reality.

For your pleasure, I will try to preach in South Italy. I was meditating on the ISKCON situation in Italy, and the situation is that although many devotees come from South Italy, we do not have any temple or preaching center in South Italy.

I have nice situation, I have nice family, a lot of facilities, but you teach us with your example that the disciple must not be content to do his simple and mere task, but needs to engage all his strength to help his spiritual master in the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

This is the desire that I have, Śrīla Prabhupada, to serve you in the best way – all sincere disciples must help the spiritual master in the mission of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

But sometimes the desire is not always applied in reality, the desire must be transformed in real action, and this is not an easy task.

Śrīla Prabhupada, I know that you have given me so much, I also know the cost to you in sacrifices and austerities, that little spiritual education which so far I have assimilated, but even though I have a strong desire to serve you, material nature put so

many obstacles between the desire and the actual realization.

The illusory energy of this material world keeps me tied to this material existence. I cannot make that step alone. That effort guarantees the strength to push this movement of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness forward. I cannot climb over obstacles that material nature has put before me, although the desire is in me and is still alive.

I have fallen so low, sometimes I am ashamed to look at you. When I hear the wonderful stories of my godbrothers who are constantly engaged in your service I feel like a worm. We are engaged in a transcendental war – those who do not fight are considered deserters and I am a deserter, nothing is more degraded than being a deserter.

In this Vyāsa-pūjā letter, I ask you to bless me so that this preaching desire will become a reality.

I sincerely hope that next year I will again write this letter with a turnaround. I hope that I can give you a small list of things done and things I want to do in the future, finally, I can get into your room, no longer ashamed to look at your lotus-like face, proud to be a good example for other devotees and happy to represent you with dignity.

Please Śrīla Prabhupada pose a small glance over me, and put a little bit of trust in me, so that I can be of help in the propagation of the movement of *saṅkīrtana* of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

Trying to become a qualified disciple, please accept my respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

Mrtyuhara Dāsa

Padmacarana Dāsa

All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga
All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda
Please accept my humble obeisances

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīnī*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Somehow after many years I again started to be around the devotees, and last year I attended the Rathāyātra festival after a long time, and I had the chance to associate with my godbrothers.

Please bless me to be able to be with the devotees and my godbrothers again.

Your servant

Padmacarana Dāsa

Satyarāja Dāsa

Vyāsa Pūjā 2015: Hari-Dāsa-Varya

By Satyarāja Dāsa

Please accept my most humble obeisances placed gently and reverentially in the dust of your lotus feet. I pray that you will also accept this perhaps unduly creative attempt to glorify your lotus-like position in relation to other superlative devotees. I realize that in subordinating such perfect souls to Your Divine Grace, I border on offense. But I think context will bear me out – in terms of compassion and spreading Krishna consciousness to others, you have no equal.

There are so many “greatest” devotees described in the śāstras, but you are, Śrīla Prabhupāda, at least in a particular sense, the best among them. Although this is true in many ways, it can especially be seen by the very fact that you make these great souls accessible to so many others. In other words, you are the Hari-dāsa-varya, the greatest devotee, in terms of *sañkīrtana*, sharing the greatness of all paradigmatic devotees with the world at large!

Traditionally, Girirāja, or Mount Govardhana (who is both God and devotee), is described as Hari-dāsa-varya (See *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 10.21.18), but there are others who are also described as “the greatest,” too, and we must therefore conclude that devotees are considered supreme according to particular categories in which they excel.

For example, Sanātana Goswāmī’s *Bṛihad Bhāgavatāmṛita* tells us of Nārada Muni’s search for the greatest Krishna *bhaktas*. Nārada first discovers those whose *bhakti* is mixed with *karma* and *jñāna* (Brahmā and Shiva, respectively). Indeed, let us not underestimate Shiva, who, according to the *Bhāgavatam* (12.13.16), is the “best of all devotees” (*vaiṣṇavānām yathā sambhuḥ*). He is considered as such particularly among the *yogīs* and among those who favor penance and austerity. The *Bṛihad Bhāgavatāmṛita*, too, directly refers to him as “the greatest Vaishnava.”

But to return to Nārada’s search, after locating Brahmā and Shiva, he then goes up to Shānta-rasa (Prāhlada), Dāsyā-rasa (Hanumān), and Sakhya-rasa (Arjuna and the Pāṇḍavas). At this point in the *Bṛihad Bhāgavatāmṛita* (1.6.14), Yudhiṣṭhira, in particular, is called “the greatest of all Vaishnavas” (*mahat-tamo bhāgavateṣu*).

Nārada is then sent to the Yādavas, Krishna’s direct family and descendants. The elder members of the Yadu dynasty, like Yaśodā and Nanda Mahārāja, are in Vātsalya-rasa, and they are undoubtedly the greatest in that particular category. Here I can’t help but think of praise often directed to Mother Yaśodā. For instance, the *Bhāgavatam* (10.9.20) tells us, “Neither Lord Brahmā, nor Lord Shiva, nor even the goddess of fortune, who is always the better half of the Supreme Lord, can obtain from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the deliverer from this material world, such mercy as that received by mother Yaśodā.” The *Bṛihad Bhāgavatāmṛita*, however, particularly tells us that Nārada approached Ugrasena, who was the senior-most Yadu of the time.

So Nārada’s search takes us through what is, in effect, a journey through the *rasas*, in which he finds exemplary devotees from Shānta to Vātsalya. But he goes further.

Ugrasena then sends Nārada to Uddhava, who is more dear to Krishna than life itself – their closeness is beyond words. True, Uddhava is in Dāsyā-rasa in Dvaraka, but because of his deep love for Krishna, manifesting in its most intense form after his journey to Vraja, he is considered like a bridge to the Vraja-vāsīs.

Here, because of Uddhava’s hybrid position, we take a slight detour, where we are privy to a conversation with the most intimate Dvāraka-vāsīs, Krishna’s Queens, along with Rohiṇī, who lived both in Vraja and Dvāraka. We are also brought into the presence of Śrī Balarāmaji – and who can be more devoted to Krishna than He? Finally, we are directed to the Vraja-vāsīs – i.e., the *gopīs*, etc., and ultimately Rādhārāṇī – who are declared by Krishna to be dearest among all His devotees.

Beyond this listing, there are many other “greatest” Vaiṣṇavas, too. The *Caitanya Bhāgavata* (Ādi-khaṇḍa 2.78), for example, tells us that Advaita Āchārya is *vaiṣṇava-graṅganyā*, the “greatest devotee,” and so on.

But lest we lose the focus of our central point: How would we know about these greatest Vaiṣṇavas if not for you? Consider Rādhikā, who is the topmost devotee of Mādhurya-rasa, which is the highest consideration – the ultimate and supreme Vaiṣṇavī – would we have ever heard of Her if not through Your Divine Grace? No. Never. So, as far as I am concerned, you share in Her Supreme glory. You are clearly an offshoot of Her greatness, Her *shakti* and divine mercy – you are *our* Rādhārāṇī, Śrīla Prabhupāda. In fact, no other incarnation or *ācārya* has accomplished what you have. Lofty predictions were made in various sacred texts – from the Śrī Vaiṣṇava work, Tiruvāymoli to Chaitanya Bhāgavata, from the Bhāgavata Māhātmya to the writings of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura – telling us that a great soul would soon appear who would take the chanting of the holy name around the world, establishing the non-sectarian truth of Krishna consciousness for one and all, transforming sincere souls into great devotees of the Lord. Who has fulfilled that prediction? Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, only you. This unquestionably establishes Your Divine Grace as “Hari-dāsa-varya Supreme.” To surpass your manifold accomplishments, one

would have to take Krishna consciousness to other planets. And I suspect, if I am not mistaken, that you are already working on this in your own mysterious way! All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Ashalata Devī Dāsī

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet again and again.

I thank Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna for blessing me by giving me a guru like you.

I want to glorify you not only once a year on Vyāsa-pūjā, but every day of my life. Truly, I cannot express myself with words.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the genuine guru. There is no doubt about this. You opened my eyes and gave me real knowledge. I used to be bewildered with so many questions and you are the one who gave the answers to all of my questions. You acknowledged that Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

You came as a boat for me to cross this material ocean. What would have happened to my life without you? You showed me the path to my real home, back to Godhead and you told me the procedure to get there.

I am forever in gratitude to you.

That is the kind of guru I have, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the real disciple. To follow the instructions of your guru, you took charge to spread Krishna consciousness in the Western world, with nothing in hand except your saffron clothes, shoes and cane to walk over the earth.

In the early days, you would sit under the tree to chant and preach. You would spread your own *chādar* on the ground to

sit on. You kept going on with your efforts to spread Krishna consciousness all over the world.

That is the kind of guru I have, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

You are the pure devotee of Krishna. To spread Krishna consciousness you did not care of anything. You faced any and every obstacle that came in your way, regardless of your personal comfort or personal interests.

And you did it!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you went to an English school in those days and after studying hard, you were entitled to your degree. But you did not really care about the degree, you gave up your degree in order to preach Krishna consciousness all over the world. Who in the world will do that?

That is kind of guru I have, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Seeing your austerity, purity, and sincerity, Krishna came to support you with His full forces. Your desires came true and Krishna consciousness has spread all over the globe.

You have changed the lives of many, many people. Your movement is growing more and more. The ISKCON movement, Hare Krishna devotees, and your books are known all over the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless us and keep giving us your mercy so that we can serve you and Krishna more and more.

Please keep me at your lotus feet always. Thank you so much for all the mercy you have given us.

Your worthless servant,

Ashalata Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

As time goes on my sense of awe and incomprehension only increase when I contemplate my good fortune to have met you and to have been accepted by you as your disciple. Such an opportunity is so rare. What are the chances for a fool like me, bound up by the three modes of material nature, to have been given access to the topmost perfection of human existence? Your mercy is as deep and broad as an unlimited ocean. My little brain cannot conceive of how I became part of the most pure and sublime *sankīrtana* mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Your mercy is all that I am made of, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

When I received initiation from you, I was a young girl of 22 years old. I had not much idea of what I was getting into. I was told that all I had to do to be your disciple was to follow the four regulative principles and chant 16 rounds a day. It seemed easy. All I had to do was follow instructions. Now I am beginning to understand the weight of responsibility that I have accepted by becoming a disciple and representative of such an important personality as yourself, the *jaḡat* guru, spiritual master of the universe. Your activities and achievements in producing so many books and establishing a worldwide spiritual movement in such a short time are marvellous and inconceivable, and cannot be imitated. At the same time, a faithful disciple is meant to follow to the best of his or her ability in the footsteps of the spiritual master to carry forward his mission.

My husband is distributing your books every day for your pleasure. My first Vaiṣṇava *seva* is to take care of my family, and I also do some writing, teaching, counselling, and matrimonial services for devotees. My wish is to simply continue to improve the quality of my service for your pleasure. I hope and pray for further opportunities to please you and to attract your merciful glance. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have left this huge responsibility to your disciples and granddisciples, to take care of a rapidly growing worldwide spiritual movement. We are all responsible to train and take care of young devotees, to teach them what you have taught

us, so that your legacy will remain intact and your teachings will live on. Please engage me in whatever way you see fit, so that I can somehow or other assist you in this great mission to save humanity and disseminate knowledge of Krishna consciousness throughout the world.

Your unworthy daughter,

Jagannathesvari Devī Dāsī

Subhivilasa Dāsa

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāminī*

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

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

The mercy of Lord Caitanya is only available by getting the mercy of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You are very kind for bestowing us with love of Godhead. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the saviour of us through your love and compassion.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your glories are unlimited. Recently, I began watching ISKCON activities worldwide on the Māyāpur TV channel. When I turned on the 2015 Gaura Pūrṇimā Festival in Māyāpur, I could see your unlimited glories in the presence of your disciples, granddisciples and other devotees. Due to the sheer number of devotees, the *abhishek* for Gaura-Nitāi needed to be moved outside the temple building. It is only because of your mercy that ISKCON is growing leaps and bounds.

How is it possible to host, feed and accommodate so many people? It is just because of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Seeing kīrtan, festivals, deity worship, classes, book distribution and so many other programs on live broadcast can

allow a person to watch and be absorbed in Krishna consciousness 24 hours a day in association with temples worldwide. This is due to your causeless mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, 2015 brings the 40th Anniversary of the Krishna Balarama temple in Vrindāvana that was personally opened by you. The celebration is a great success.

Your dream of the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium in Māyāpur is becoming a wonderful reality.

This is also the 50th anniversary of your leaving India for America in 1965 to inaugurate the ISKCON movement in the West and we can witness the Hare Krishna explosion across the world.

All these events and celebrations and successes are because of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I just keep trying to serve you in a very, very, insignificant way by remembering your kindness to me even though it was undeserved, your personal association and instructions in Chicago, Detroit, Vrindāvana and Toronto.

Please, please always keep me in your service.

Begging to serve you eternally, I always remain your servant at your lotus feet,

Subhivilasa Dāsa

Sauri Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your feet. This year for me has been a year of lessons. The lessons that I have suffered from the most are the lessons that have helped me accept my position as being just an ordinary person who – by your mercy – was exposed to the practice of Kṛṣṇa *bhakti*. As a soul in a material body born in America, I've been programmed since birth to strive for the number one position. This mindset I have carried into spiritual life. I strove to be the number one *saṅkīrtana* devotee and I was (at least in my temple), I strove to become learned enough to give a *Bhāgavatam* class, I strove to learn ślokas so my class was backed up

by śāstric evidence, and I strove to be recognized as an advanced devotee. This is where I failed. An advanced devotee like you Śrīla Prabhupāda doesn't hanker for name, fame, position, recognition, but simply endeavors to please Kṛṣṇa by pleasing ones' spiritual master. This means Śrīla Prabhupāda, my purpose in life will ultimately be achieved when I fully endeavor to satisfy you.

This year the body I'm inside of will have been in existence for sixty years. I joined your ISKCON society when I was nineteen in May of 1975, which means it has been forty years since I started associating with devotees and cultivating my small glimpse of what devotional service is all about. Now your ISKCON society has grown incredibly due to the selfless service of encouraging conditioned souls in numerous ways with the purpose of attracting them to take up the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Many of your disciples and granddisciples have achieved tremendous mercy by preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others, coupled with following a very high standard of spiritual life in their own lives. Because of this, your society has grown incredibly. My illusory milestones of forty years in ISKCON, and sixty years of bodily age carry insignificant importance, because these years have been utilized endeavoring for primarily sense enjoyment, but the fifty year milestone of ISKCON is full of meaning and is glorious, for your ISKCON is vibrantly full of life due to so many ever increasing numbers of living entities enthusiastically taking up and steadily pursuing and making tangible progress in spiritual life under your guidance.

*dharmah svanuṣṭhitah pumsām
viṣvaksena-kathāsu yah
notpādayed yadi ratim
śrama eva -hi kevalam*

“The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labor if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead.”

I've been wasting my time Śrīla Prabhupāda. I've been endeavoring to create name, fame, fortune, and position for this body. Now that this body is almost finished, please grab hold of my soul and give it some shelter under your lotus feet which will

influence me to become a selfless servitor of you Śrīla Prabhupāda. You can grant me this gift because you possess it. You selflessly endeavored to please your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura throughout your life, but it wasn't until towards the end of your life, from the material perspective, that you achieved any tangible success in the eyes of others. I will never be like you in this life Śrīla Prabhupāda, and I will never be like anyone else in this creation. I am endeavoring to be satisfied with my small abilities to serve you at present by doing some simple service in ISKCON, and pray that you someday, in some lifetime of mine, will empower me to please you by somehow encouraging others to take up the process of *bhakti* with a selfless humble attitude, free from all material desires – gross and subtle. I'm so thankful for going through the school of hard knocks, for this prayer of mine is the result of doing so. This means that maybe my endeavors so far haven't been "so much useless labor", after all.

Your steadily struggling servitor,

Sauri Dāsa

Haridasa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

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

The unparalleled glory of your character, qualities, deeds, and accomplishments is self-evident. The results of your compassionate devotional service are audible and visible all over the world, and especially known in the hearts of those who have established a connection with you. These results are precious and bestow the greatest fortune. They give hope for realizing the

true value of human life and the promise of knowing and loving Lord Śrī Krishna.

For these and many other reasons, we owe you a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid. Your spirit of sincere loving devotional service to the Lord, including the way you gave honor to all, and which characterizes all you are and do, is your nature, a teaching, and a goal. You touched us with that spirit and encouraged us to discover it for ourselves. It pleases you when you see it appear in us, and it is an open gift you have given to the world by your example and teachings.

May I always remember your wonderful spirit of devotion and come to know it better by your grace.

Your servant,

Haridasa Dāsa

Arjuna Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

This year we held the first Kīrtan Mela in Mauritius. During this blissful experience I strongly felt that this was the reward from your lotus self and from your loving Lordships Śrī Śrī Krishna Balarāma and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Golokānanda to all the devotees here for their years of devotional service. Thank you very much indeed. It was as if Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī opened Her jewel case and gave us an ecstatic glimpse within. Even when we weren't able to be there all the time, we followed it on Māyāpur TV's live broadcast and *gṛhete goloka bhāya*. We are grateful and most indebted to the kindness of your most excellent disciple Śacīnanadana Mahārāja, who has developed such a deep taste for chanting the holy names, for sharing this nectar with us all. We are all so enlivened, uplifted and purified by this event that we plan to now hold Kīrtan Mela annually, with your kind and continuous blessings.

You nicely explain in your books that how in this Age of Kali, the prime religious practice is the chanting of the holy name. You

explain how, in this age, simply by chanting the holy name one can attain the goal of life. Krishna has incarnated as the holy name in order to deliver those who are sinful and are thus suffering greatly. One can satisfy and worship the Lord simply by chanting His holy name. Chanting yields the results of other religious practices performed in previous ages. Nowadays, it is the only fruitful sacrifice. Sacrifice to the demigods is satisfied by this *sañkīrtana yajña* and one can attain the same results attained in previous ages by severe austerities just by chanting the Hare Krishna mantra.

Your *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* advocates *nāma sañkīrtana* as the essence of religion in this Age of Kali. Rather than inventing one's own religious process, one should accept this approved method of religion for this age. This is the sum and substance of *sanātana dharma*. In this age of logic, argument and disagreement, the chanting of Hare Krishna is the only means of self-realization and is especially suited to deliver us from all dangers. Whatever is spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead is a mantra and is suitable for delivering the conditioned souls from mental speculation. Therefore, your lotus self as well as all the learned scholars of this age worship Lord Krishna by this method of *nāma sañkīrtana*.

You have revealed to the world that Krishna personally inaugurates this religion of the age as Lord Chaitanya, who incarnated 500 years ago and who taught, "In this Age of Kali, the process of worshipping Krishna is to perform sacrifice by chanting the holy name of the Lord. One who does so is certainly very intelligent, and he attains shelter at the lotus feet of Krishna." You so nicely explain how Lord Chaitanya thus introduced the *sañkīrtana yajña* for the deliverance of all men. It is more important than other Vedic ritualistic sacrifices. Thus tapasya, or spiritual austerity, has been made easy by Lord Chaitanya in the form of chanting Hare Krishna. The processes of *jñāna*, *yoga*, meditation and pious activities are not as effective in cleansing the heart as chanting the holy name. The holy name counteracts the evil effects of the Kali-yuga. In all the Vedas it is seen that to cross the ocean of nescience there is no alternative to the chanting of the holy name, as it destroys the demoniac mentality of the people in general.

Thank you for this most precious of gifts, dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Here in Mauritius, those of Hindu origin are fond of performing *havans* or *yajñas*, fire sacrifices to obtain divine blessings. However, in your *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, 9.1.17, you state, “In this age, the performance of *yajña*, fire sacrifice, has been forbidden because no one can properly chant the Vedic mantras.” You have taught us that six priests should be present to conduct a bona fide fire sacrifice: a priest and his assistant to make the offerings and to take care of the sacred fire, two for chanting the mantras, and two for ensuring that each syllable of the sacred mantras has been properly pronounced. This is because if one syllable of the mantras is improperly chanted, a totally contrary and inauspicious result may happen. As we read in your books, sometimes this may lead to highly unfortunate consequences. Furthermore, fire sacrifice is the *yuga dharma* of Treta-yuga, the second or silver age, not of this age.

The *yajñas* mentioned in the holy histories lasted for months and years, and in the case of the sages at Naimiṣāraṇya, for 1000 years. Today, when a pundit does a fire sacrifice that lasts say one hour, this actually is only a few seconds for the Lord in Śvetadvīpa. Furthermore, the Lord and all His demigods sleep for four of our months [*chaturmās*], as one of their hours equals a fortnight for us. That is why traditionally in Mauritius no *yajñas* or marriage ceremonies etc. are conducted during the *chaturmās* – He who will bless us is asleep!

You so powerfully explain, “Animals were put into the sacrificial fire. By Vedic mantra, it was given a new, rejuvenated life. That was the test. When a sacrifice is done, an old animal is put into the sacrificial fire, and he comes out with a new body. That means the Vedic mantras are being pronounced very properly. But at the present moment such expert priests and *brāhmaṇas* are not available. Therefore it is stopped, because it is Kali yuga. Nobody is properly reading or cultivating Vedic mantras. Nobody can properly chant Vedic mantras and take the benefit. But this mantra: *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*, any way you chant, neglectfully or properly, the result is there. So in this age, the mantra to chant is called the Hare Krishna mahā mantra. So chant Hare Krishna, that’s all. Therefore Chaitanya Mahāprabhu taught, *nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatiṁ anyathā*, there is no other way, no other way no

other way, *kalau*, in this age. At present, the brāhmaṇas cannot do sacrifices properly. That is also gone. Simply as a formality, they ignite some fire and hither and thither, some mantra—finished.

However, although sacrifice may be offered to please Krishna, He is more pleased when grains and ghee, instead of being offered in the fire, are prepared as *prasāda* and distributed, first to the devotees and then to others. This system pleases Krishna more than anything else. Furthermore, at the present time there is very little chance to offer sacrifices by pouring oblations of ghee and food grains into the fire. So take *prasāda*, chant Hare Krishna mantra and dance in ecstasy. This is the only *yajña* for this age.

Therefore, the best performance of *yajna* given is the *sankīrtana yajña* as mentioned in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, in the 11th Canto, chapter 5, text 32: Those who are intelligent take advantage of the greatest *yajña* in this age by chanting the Hare Krishna mahamantra in congregation. When the Hare Krishna mantra is chanted by many men together, the chanting is called *sankīrtana*, and as a result of such a *yajña* there will be more blessings from God. In these days of scarcity, people can gain relief from scarcity of food by the simple method of the Hare Krishna *yajña*. Indeed, this can relieve all of human society."

In your *Happening* album, you explain: "The word Harā is a form of addressing the energy of the Lord. Hare is directly enacted from the spiritual platform, surpassing all lower states of consciousness - namely sensual, mental and intellectual."

In your ISKCON, which is Her Hare Krishna movement, She combines with Her Supreme Lord and Husband Mādhava to become Lord Śrī Krishna Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, who is thus celebrated as the most munificent incarnation of Godhead, *mahā vadānyāya avatāra*. Every morning we pray to Her in Her expansion as Tulasī Devī, and sing to Her, "Please give me the privilege of devotional service," *sevā-adhikāra diye*, so that we can bask in the rays of Her love for Radha and Krishna, Śrī-rādhā-govinda-preme sadā yena bhāsi. The sun is known as *bhāskara*, as his enlightening rays precede his rising and lingers on after his setting, so *bhāsi* actually means to simply enter into the proximity of Her love, for if we are honest with ourselves, we must admit that we don't seem to have very much love for Śrī Rādhā Govinda in our own hearts. Thank you for giving us the secret of awakening our own dormant

spiritual love.

Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's divine love is then distributed by Her foremost representative, your lotus self, *prema-bhakti jāhā hoite*. You give us the combination or key that unlocks the doorway of the heart, which is how sincerely we chant on our meditation beads, chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*, 16 rounds a day. This is your maha-mantra, the great chanting for deliverance in this Kali-yuga, this Iron Age of quarrel. You further explain, "The three words, namely Harā, Krishna and Rāma, are transcendental seeds of the mahā-mantra, and the chanting is a spiritual call for the Lord and His internal energy, Harā, for giving protection to the conditioned soul. The chanting is exactly like a genuine cry by the child for the mother. Mother Harā helps in achieving the grace of the supreme father, Hari, or Krishna, and the Lord reveals Himself to such a sincere devotee."

We especially appreciate your taped instruction, "*Prīti pūrvakam*, with love. Not as hackneyed: "Oh here is the duty, chanting of Hare Krishna. All right, *Harekrishnaharekrishnaharekrishna...*" (you chant very quickly and indistinctly) "Not like that. With *prīti*, with love. Chant every name, Hare Krishna, and hear."

Perfect instructions from a perfect master!

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

I beg to remain,

Your eternal servant and the humble servant of your servants,

Arjuna Dāsa

Mauritius

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you, our wonderful and amazing spiritual master. I pray that I might always take shelter of your golden lotus feet.

What an honour it is to be your disciple. I feel such gratitude to you for pushing me on the path of *bhakti*. You opened up your heart to the world; we just need to make the connection.

The English language just doesn't have the precise and heartfelt maturity to convey such emotional spiritual subject matter. We adore you. You became our mentor, our experienced and trusted adviser on all matters spiritual and material. In fact, as the supreme teacher, you are leading us, with infinite love, to the lotus feet of Rādhā and Krishna. You are leading us away from the double-barrelled *anarthas* of wealth and prestige – the trappings of the material path. You showed us how not to be a puppet of the three *guṇas*, but to dedicate all our actions and thoughts to the Divine Couple.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mercy is infinite. We cannot fathom the good fortune you have bestowed on us by Your Divine Grace. You have steered us away from the mercenary mentality of working for personal rewards. Thank you for helping us wriggle out of the materialistic dimension which is only concerned with the external world. The ropes of illusion are so bound up with modern media luring us into the belief that nothing exists but matter and its manifestations, with the exclusive attention to prosperity, making us greedy for sense gratification.

Thank you for saving us all. It has been said that when one sees the beautiful form of Gopāl standing in his three-fold bending form on the banks of the Yamuna, your life will never be the same. When I saw you on that providential day in Melbourne, Australia,

in April 1976, forty years ago, life as it had been, was over for me. Your effulgence, your humility, your pure mindedness and your dedication to the order of your spiritual master, won me over for life. I am praying to stay focused on your instructions. Your single-mindedness in delivering your divine message to us is overwhelming...and yet, you are so modest and unpretentious.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, what I really want to convey to you, is that I am so grateful to you. You have saved so many of us and the process is still continuing by dedicated devotees. Your kindness needs to be returned by kindness – we should try and help other souls get out of their illusion. My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, how can I repay you? Your temples are an oasis in this dry world of speculation and sense gratification. We need to pray at every moment to never forget Krishna. Every moment that we don't think of Krishna is *māyā*.

Out of your humility, you claim no qualification, you only want to serve your guru mahārāja. You have helped us with our feelings of pride which sets too high a value on our own importance, position and achievements. You are smashing our arrogance and haughtiness. I am such an offender. I am begging you for your help and for your forgiveness. Your determination is a never-ending inspiration for us in overcoming challenges that seem to appear around every corner.

You have translated over seventy books, established the *Back to Godhead* magazine, and encouraged us to distribute these literatures. You recorded 30 albums, established hundreds of temples and farming communities, and you mercifully initiated 5,000 disciples.

A few years ago, I met a Christian minister. He said that although he believed in God, he was not sure if there was a supreme Absolute Truth. I requested him to go on the internet and Google 'Supreme Absolute Truth' and the answer comes up as Krishna! In this age of technology, even machines can be preachers. By your grace, the devotees become inspired with spiritual intelligence and are so motivated that they can use anything in Krishna's service. Every day, so many souls can tune into the classes and *darshans* in so many temples around the world and their lives can be forever changed by that association.

One wonderful aspect of this earthly planet is that your golden

lotus feet have walked it and you have sanctified so many so many countries with your dignified and holy presence.

You have the highest intent for humanity. Thank you so much Śrīla Prabhupāda for everything you have given us. You are truly benedicting us.

Your fallen servant,

Atitaguna Devī Dāsī

Damayanti Devī Dāsī

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

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

Praying, Śrīla Prabhupāda on your Appearance Day 2015 Celebration, with a heart full of clear loving gratitude and renewed determination. Please forgive me for any mistakes in services this past year. Also, please forgive me for the many weaknesses of heart, and any offences knowingly or unknowingly.

Thank you for sending the challenging blessing the past few months. I will continue to assimilate, study, and try to clear away lamentation and hankering.

As each year passes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I can only pray, chant and sing your glories by positioning myself to always be close to the dust of your lotus feet, following your devoted disciples who also walk with you each day, in their hearts.

Reaching a stronger understanding of your love this month, I will continue to study and meditate on your words, *bhajans* and pastimes, in the association of those you love and trust.

Eternally your Daughter,

Damayanti Devī Dāsī
Canada

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvayata eva sadbhilḥ
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

“The spiritual master is to be honoured as much as the Supreme Lord because he is the most confidential servitor of the Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and followed by all authorities. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is a bona fide representative of Śrī Hari (Kṛṣṇa).”

Lord Krishna bestows mercy upon us and gives all living entities shelter in the form of the spiritual master. Caitanya-caritāmṛta states:

*kṛṣṇa yadi kṛpā kare kona bhāgyavāne,
guru-antaryāmi-rūpe śikhāya āpane*

“Kṛṣṇa is situated in everyone’s heart as the *caitya-guru*, the spiritual master within. When He is kind to some fortunate conditioned soul, He personally gives him lessons so he can progress in devotional service, instructing the person as the Supersoul within and the spiritual master without.” – *Cc Madhya 22.47*

Thus there is no difference between the shelter-giving Supreme Lord and the initiating and instructing spiritual masters. If we fail to subordinate ourselves to the spiritual master we will not be able to cultivate Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The fallen souls are languishing in a very dark place and good fortune can come to them only by the mercy of the bona fide spiritual master. Those who are immersed in household affairs are factually in a very miserable condition because their lives are devoid of devotional service. Never hearing the sounds of Kṛṣṇa kīrtan nor discourses on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, never associating with

devotees engaged in grand festivals glorifying guru and Kṛṣṇa, such life is tantamount to hell. When will the *jīva* be released from bondage and become fully engaged in such festivals of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *saṅkīrtan*? I fall at your feet, and at the feet of all my godbrothers and godsisters begging their mercy, and pray that very soon I too may have the great fortune to be fully engaged in serving you in your mission to propagate the *saṅkīrtan* movement of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda.

Your fallen servant,

Aniha Dāsa

Pita Dāsa

Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā, The Most Blessed Event

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

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

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Krishna, having taken shelter of His lotus feet. Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Sarasvati Gosvāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.”

On this day of Your Divine Grace’s appearance I offer my most humble obeisances unto you, my savior Śrīla Prabhupāda, who has taken me out of the wilds of the Western world and gave me the blessings of spiritual life. For this Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am truly grateful.

*tvaṁ naḥ sandarśito dhātrā
dustaraṁ nistitīṣatām
kaliṁ sattva-haraṁ puṁsām
karṇa-dhāra ivārṇavam*

“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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I first came to your temple in Philadelphia in August of 1970 and was introduced to your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* by your servant Naiyana Baram Prabhu who gave me mahā-mantra and Krishna *prasāda*. After four years I finally gave up on material life and took shelter of your temple where your disciples introduced me to Your Divine Grace. At first Śrīla Prabhupāda, being so contaminated I could not understand even a word Your Divine Grace spoke. Again by the assistance of your devoted followers I gradually could hear your words.

Day by day Śrīla Prabhupāda, I feel your sweet guidance in my newly awakening spiritual life. Over 40 years of daily chanting the Lord’s holy name, and it is like I have just started. I know Śrīla Prabhupāda that you are very pleased as I chant Hare Krishna, but I always require your help to perfect my devotional service. Eternal life has little meaning for me if I cannot see you there. I prefer void. I am alien to the transcendental world without you. Your Divine Grace is my only assurance.

You are my only guide in the dark midnight, black ocean of birth and death. Please allow me always to remain at your lotus feet by Your Divine Grace’s side, serving your mission hearing your instructions. My greatest boon is to be always with you and to feel your presence and protection. My greatest fear would be to lose it. At death the body is unmanifested, the destination for the soul will certainly be lost without your divine connection. My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda please do not forget this lowly servant.

May I become more and more attached to you day by day Śrīla Prabhupāda. With you all the saints reside, by your words you

reveal to us their *darshan*. As you are purely loving, devoted to Lord Krishna and always have Him close, being with you Śrīla Prabhupāda, one has Krishna. Therefore it is said, you are truly the sum total of all the demigods, because by you one is rewarded Krishna *bhakti*, and can enter into the eternal association of Rādhā and Krishna.

*se-saba saṅgīra saṅge ye koilo vilāsa
se-saṅga nā pāiyā kānde narottama dāsa*

“I will certainly enter into fire or smash my head on rock if that will give me now your eternal presence”.

Please on this day of your blessed appearance may Pitā Dāsa always be as an atom at your lotus feet.

Your fallen servant,

Pita Dāsa

Cakri Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

We are completely indebted to you because you have given us the greatest gift of all, Lord Krishna and His holy names. It is stated in prayers to the holy names:

*madhuraṁ madhurebhyo 'pi
maṅgalebhyo 'pi maṅgalam
pāvanam pāvanebhyo 'pi
harer nāmaiva kevalam*

“The holy name of Śrī Hari, Krishna, is alone the sweetest of all sweet things. It is the most auspicious of all auspicious things, and is the greatest purifier of all purifying things.”

Therefore you have given us the best thing that anyone can give. You have made it possible for us to free ourselves from material bondage and elevate ourselves to the spiritual platform

of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. And, to experience the ecstasy of pure love of God. How can I possibly appreciate this great gift that you have given us?

*sa guruḥ sa pitā cāpi
sā mātā bandhavo 'pi saḥ
śikṣayec cet sadā smartuṁ
harer nāmaiva kevalam*

“If someone teaches us to remember the holy name of Hari alone then that person is our preceptor, father, mother, and friend.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my greatest well-wisher and friend, and my eternal father. You are our master and savior. No one can be a greater well-wisher than you.

*aho duḥkham mahā-duḥkam
duḥkāḍ duḥkhataraṁ yataḥ
kācārthaṁ viśmṛtaṁ ratna-
harer nāmaiva kevalam*

“Alas what a sadness what a great sorrow. It is more painful than any misery, that this jewel of the *harināma* (the holy name of Lord Hari) has been mistaken for a piece of glass and has been forgotten by the general mass of people.”

Out of your great compassion you are giving us what we have all forgotten, the jewel of the holy names. You are dispelling the great misery of ignorance of the holy names. You have come to end the suffering of all living beings by giving us the nectar of the holy names and Krishna consciousness. Therefore, you are the greatest servant of the holy names.

One time in your room, an Indian gentleman bowed down to you and asked for your blessings. You looked at him and then said that you had so many temples around the world and so many disciples and daily so many troubles were coming to you on your head. So, if he wanted to get your blessings then he should try to relieve you from some of those troubles. Śrīla Prabhupāda, please allow me to help you and serve you in your mission to distribute the holy names and knowledge of Krishna everywhere. Then I may be able to sincerely ask for your blessings. Otherwise my life is useless. When I am serving you and helping your mission by

distributing your books, and preaching about Krishna, I feel alive again. I pray that I can continue to serve you and the nectarean holy names of Lord Krishna for the remainder of my life.

Begging to be your servant,

Cakri Dāsa
Dallas, Tx

Drumila Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Recently your disciple and my glorious godbrother Rasada Prabhu passed from this world in Śrī Vrindaāna *dhāma*. Thank you for blessing me with his association in this life. He was a sweet and gentle soul who loved you dearly. His passing has given me cause to reflect on my own life.

As you know, I struggle greatly in my personal life. I have been far less than a perfect disciple, if I can call myself one at all. Remarkably, as far as my imperfect senses can tell, you still remain in my life correcting me and guiding me, and giving me inspiration to carry on. I doubt I could go on living if I didn't believe that was true.

I try to remind myself how fortunate I am to have one of the greatest spiritual masters in the last two centuries, or ever. You have given us everything we need to attain spiritual perfection. Your books, your temples, and the association of sincere Vaiṣṇavas.

The responsibility to represent you properly is overwhelming, and I feel I have failed miserably so far. But I remind myself that to utterly surrender to you would be the greatest achievement and perfection of my life. I haven't the strength of conviction, sincerity, or intelligence to carry out this great task.

Please do not give up on me. Please give me a desire to reciprocate with the unlimited mercy you've shown me. Please teach me to love you, Kṛṣṇa, and Lord Caitanya. I am in awe of the innumerable pure devotees you have created. I dream to be

fortunate enough one day, or one lifetime to be counted among them. Please help me to live out this dream, somehow or other. All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda, for saving the world in its darkest hour.

Your aspiring servant,

Drumila Dāsa

Gaura Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

When I arrived in Śrī Vrindāvana *dhāma* for the 40th Anniversary of your Krishna Balarama Mandir, I first went with H.H. Janānanda Goswāmī to visit your disciple Rasada Prabhu, who was just a couple of weeks away from leaving his body. His cancer ridden body was a reminder of what you spent your life writing about in your Bhaktivedānta purports to prepare us for a successful death, by being absorbed in love for Lord Krishna

Rasada Prabhu reminded me that you had stated at the Māyāpur Festival in 1976 that we should work hard for eight months a year, and spend four months in the holy *dhāmas* of Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana to recharge our spiritual batteries, so I am praying for the mercy, health and blessings to be able to do this each year.

I was amazed to see the progress of your long awaited Temple of Vedic Planetarium at your Śrīdhāma Māyāpur Candrodoya Mandir. This is your ultimate challenge to all the atheistic scientists and politicians of the world to accept the authority of Lord Krishna. While I was there, I took the third level of Teacher's Training offered at the Māyāpur Institute so that I can become more involved in assisting you in educating your present and future students in the priceless gift of your books.

I am very grateful to your various followers who sponsored me to visit Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana this year. It was very inspiring

to hear about the struggles to establish your Krishna Balarāma Mandir which was only possible by cooperating out of love for you. Splitting into various factions can be justified by the term ‘unity in diversity’ but when someone asked you about one such faction you said that they were not in our *sampradāya*.

At present I am speaking in many classes of high school students, one after the other at your Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi Temple of ISKCON Copenhagen, and now leaving to do more *harināma*, home programs and book distribution at your Oslo, Norway and London *yātras*. Thank you very much for creating a huge worldwide network of Krishna conscious centers from which the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu can flow into the hearts and lives of everyone.

I was inspired hearing from my godbrother HH Dhīrasānta Mahārāja, that as much as he loves doing school programs, he sees that there is a greater priority to help your many smaller temples by visiting them and encouraging them. As you said, it is more important to boil the milk and care for the devotees that we currently have than to just keep on expanding while losing those that have already become devotees.

I spoke to one devotee this morning and he was telling me how difficult it has been to establish anything steady in Greece for example, and Serbia. Devotees come and go, and sometimes demoniac governments and so-called religionists make it difficult to share Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but this is your desire, so please engage me in assisting you in this way.

Thank you very much for allowing me to assist your humble servants in some capacity. Please help me to overcome any obstacles so that I can remain the servant of your servants, birth after birth.

Your eternal servant,

Gaura Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my most humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of our eternal spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda who has mercifully provided us Vedic knowledge through the torchlight of His books and shown us the spiritual pathway as the guiding light to reach our original home.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the ocean of mercy, just as the ocean is limitless, your compassion and mercy is limit less. You awaken faith in our hearts and your compassion planted the seed of *sādhana bhakti* in us.

Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Vrindāvana all alone and started writing his books in Rādhā Dāmodara temple and contemplated how to go to America and fulfill his guru's mission. Then one day Rūpa Goswāmī appeared in his dream and said "You can do it" because your spiritual master chose you, just follow his instructions.

Then positive things started to happen when he got a free ticket on the Jaladuta to go to America. Śrīla Prabhupāda was carrying with him a small trunk with *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, and two sets of clothes, and 40 rupees in his pocket.

Śrīla Prabhupāda is a transcendental "gardener" who planted the seeds of devotional service to fulfill his spiritual master's mission. This transcendental tree planted by Śrīla Prabhupāda started having branches all over the world like a banyan tree. Śrīla Prabhupāda also gave us principles to follow. He said if a person receives the seed of devotional service he should take care of it by becoming a gardener and watering the seed gradually by the process of *śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam*.

Once Girirāja Mahārāja asked Prabhupāda what we should do when you are not here and ISKCON falls from its standard. Prabhupāda replied, "...you are all part of ISKCON, you work on it to correct the problem, but don't leave and I am always with you."

Śrīla Prabhupāda's patience, creativity and professional work will surely be seen by future generations as one of our generation's greatest contributions to humanity. He gave us a new life and taught us how to live a simple life with high thinking. He was always pleased by our simple efforts.

I pray to remain eternally engaged in your service.

Your humble servant,

Subuddhi Devī Dāsī

Bhaja Govinda Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Another year has so quickly passed. Many of your spiritual children have left this mortal world. Still this movement continues to grow by your causeless mercy. Living here in New Raman Reti, Alachua, Florida, I see how vibrant our second and third generation of devotees are and how enthusiastic the children are for devotional service. When I joined in Gainesville on SW Depot Avenue, I had no idea of how that small temple would lead to such a large, vibrant community.

Each day Śrīla Prabhupāda, I wake up so grateful for the opportunity to engage in devotional service. I feel most fortunate to be able to share this great message with others. You teach us that books are the basis and with each passing year I become more and more convinced and grateful. As we witness how Kali-yuga is advancing before our eyes each day, we remain unalarmed, feeling the steadiness of the wisdom of your teachings. You have given us the weapons of fearlessness through the chanting of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa and the reading of your books. Our debt can never be repaid. I just want and pray for eternal service at your lotus feet and the feet of the dear devotees of the Lord.

I thank you forever for the gift you have so mercifully bestowed upon this fallen soul. I am praying to be eternally your humble, grateful servant.

Your servant,

Bhaja Govinda Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In 1975, a close friend from high school Laxminātha Dāsa introduced me to your movement. He was standing at a traffic light in my neighbourhood. I stopped because I knew him, even though I had always avoided your disciples previously. My life was about to change. The seed was planted.

I enjoyed distributing your books for a number of years until my desires for sense gratification caused me to leave your movement. In 2013 my materialistic life was altered drastically after I started chanting Hare Krishna again. I know in my heart you came to retrieve me. I pray every day for the strength to serve you forever. I will do whatever it takes to stay in the association of you and all my wonderful godbrothers and godsisters.

I pray to remain your eternal servant.

Jivanatha Dāsa

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most blessed event, I humbly submit my offering to you.

As I sit here and attempt to praise someone who possesses qualities as you do, there are no words that can even touch or compliment anywhere close. How does one offer love to such a soul who holds so much love that embraces the entire world? This kind of love cannot be repaid, understood or ever measured, although I attempt to make a small offering to you.

There are numerous souls who lose their way and attempt to discover the good in themselves and others as they try to redirect and re-dedicate themselves in meager ways. You found me amongst the lowest of living entities and offered me a chance to know who I am and why I am here. You offered me a magical journey that has been extraordinary to say the least. And even though I attempt to find any good in my life it all comes back as a

circle from you and to you. Deep down I can never repay you but each year I try to say some words straight from heart.

I replay in my mind all the times I saw you and all the times I have heard you speak. These moments define my life. I have seen how the world has changed because of your presence and your unlimited mercy.

On this day and all the days to come I offer my dedication and love to you in hope that I will be able to witness the world continue to change because of you. Your words and teachings pave the road of this material world. It is only through you we are able to get a small glimpse of the *sañkīrtan* movement of Lord Caitanya dancing through the streets of every city and town.

You are truly the Lord's miracle in so many ways. You are the light in my world of darkness and I hope your blessings continue to do all the things you have set forth in your disciples. I strive each day to serve all of them because I see them serving you in magnificent ways and it is through their dedication I continue to be encouraged.

On this blessed day, I continue my journey in hope to see you again.

Your most fallen servant,

Lilasmṛti Devī Dāsī

Palaka Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my fallen obeisances at the lotus feet of Your Divine Grace.

Today in practically every part of the globe, your disciples and followers will gather to celebrate this most blessed event, your appearance on this planet. Although unqualified and full of *anarthas*, as your disciples, we must try and speak something in glorification of Your Divine Grace. So we must begin with 'thank you' Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Thank you for the genuine love you have for the Supreme Personality

of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and all of His children. Thank you for showing that real love has nothing to do with the mundane selfish lust mistaken for true love in this temporary world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the love you hold is pure, unadulterated, and straight from the spiritual sky. Because your love and devotion is coming directly from the root cause of everything, it is exhibited eternally and in every facet of your existence. It is your pure love that makes you so attractive for all of us who have come to know you. And it's that moment's association with such a pure *bhakta* as you Śrīla Prabhupāda that changes steel-like hearts and plants the seed of devotional service even for those who have come into your association by your transcendental sound vibration alone. The love you carry can easily be seen right there on the glow of your face and transcendental body. In every spoken word and in every song you sing, we find in you only pure *bhakti*.

This pure love you have is shared in every one of the volumes of books you kindly left for us to read. It is there in every word and on every page. It is there in every one of the thousands of hours of your recorded talks. Because you wanted all of us to personally have your association, yet knowing that was not possible even for the majority of your direct disciples, you arranged to appear in recorded sound. And because your pure sound is eternal, by the will of the Lord both recorded and written words will be there for future generations to be utilized for ten thousand years yet to come. The love you hold and share with all of us conditioned souls is pure love of God and because you do so much sharing on such a tremendous scale, we think no-one can be more dear to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa than you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, from your compassion we here in the Western world owe you more than a simple thank you. We owe you our deepest gratitude. Had you not left India and come to America to bring pure devotional service, surely we would find ourselves bereft of any and all hope for happiness or ultimate salvation from the miseries of material life. We shudder to think what life without you and Kṛṣṇa consciousness would be like. Your compassion for the unfortunate plight of all has brought light, hope, happiness and the Absolute Truth to this world of suffering "cheaters and cheated."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the embodiment of compassion

because you translated and wrote books filled only with pure transcendental knowledge aimed solely to revive our true identities as spirit soul servants of the Lord . Your enthusiasm and determination to share this knowledge has in turn enthused an army of dedicated souls who surrendered everything and risked all simply to assist you in your mission. We pray that missionary spirit you entrusted with us will remain and only grow stronger.

In your last months you further encouraged us with these words:

“In the future there will be history of how the Vedic culture was introduced in America. We are actually introducing a new style of life and civilization. Everything should be ideal. Others have never dreamt of such civilization — free life, happy life, no anxiety, and hope, great hope that we are going back now, back to Godhead. By increasing the selling of books, America, and then the whole world will become Kṛṣṇa conscious, and historians will mark this period, how America became Kṛṣṇa conscious. All the world is in darkness. The scientists, Darwin, Freud, all in darkness. This is the only institution that is giving some light. You must be convinced of this in order to preach effectively.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are confident this day will soon come when the entire world becomes infected with pure *bhakti* as a Hare Kṛṣṇa pandemic is injected into all cultures and societies by Your Divine Grace’s teachings. Thus, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa will be heard, accepted and then spread to every town and village in every corner of this world because you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, agreed to appear on this day out of pure love and compassion for all of us fallen conditioned souls trapped in this vicious cycle of repeated birth and death with no end in sight.

May we remember Your Divine Grace, not just on this most auspicious day, but every day as we try to the best of our capacity to assist you in your glorious mission to reclaim all souls back to home, back to Godhead!

We beg for mercy so we may never be kicked away from your service due to our limitless faults and pray to always remain attached to the shelter of your lotus feet life after life. We feel it

impossible to repay your causeless kindness upon us except to share you, our Śrīla Prabhupāda, with the entire world.

All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!*

Aspiring to be your servant eternally,

Palaka Dāsa

Vaibhava dāsa Adhikārī.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Because you taught us to live on the level of *sat*, eternity, it is our duty to transmit Krishna consciousness. Since your message is eternal, it is without any end. Because you come from Śrī Krishna, it is my duty to present Krishna consciousness so that one who hears can have the right perspective. Because of this you represent to us our *paramparā*, as an obeisance to you, we must follow as the best ethic that Krishna is Ādi Purusha. As you came to the West from Vrindāvana, giving us *Krishna Book, Teaching of Lord Caitanya* and *Nectar of Devotion*, so that we could be able to distribute in the places we were preaching. We must present at first that Śrī Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as you wanted to us to do so. Your movement is descending from the spiritual sky; as the soul which gives life to a body, your vision of Śrī Krishna and your relationship with Him are the foundations of any other statement concerning our world of relativity. Every morning we are honored to associate with you teaching us through a tape, from which you chant *japa*. This sound comes from the highest kingdom. We know that you are there, now, and that you are looking at us. With you, are desire trees, *cintāmaṇi* stones, nectar in every holy *kuṇḍa*, the science of Śrī Krishna's *rasas*. We hope to remember such truths always – daily, constantly.

By preaching, I want remember you in each transcendental sentence of the books you gave to us.

Vaibhava dāsa Adhikārī

My dear beloved Gurudev Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

My journey on the path of *bhakti* started in 1976 when you gave me *harināma* and *brāhmaṇa* initiations, thank you for your mercy. Since then I have served you in many different capacities: as a wife caring for your disciple, a mother giving my children instructions on love and service to guru and Krishna, a translator and editor for the Portuguese BBT, as well as a *pūjārī*, cook, and book distributor.

The taste all devotees acquire by performing devotional service under your guidance is the fuel of our lives. Under your tutelage we feel protected, loved and cared for.

Now that I've raised my five children and am free to serve in a fuller capacity I have noticed that the opportunities for the Vaiṣṇavīs around the world are limited. While here in Alachua, I've been able to give *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* classes and dress our beautiful Deities; it's unfortunate that in other temples women are not given these same opportunities.

I am very grateful for these services. To prepare for *Bhāgavatam* class I immerse myself in meditation in your words and as a result I am able to express your message with more understanding and this has in turn also enhanced the quality of my chanting. Serving Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, Śrī Śrī Krishna-Balarāma and Śrī Śrī Rādhe-Śyāma has increased the depth of my personal relationship with the Lord. Every day I am immersed in thinking about how to dress and care for them. I buy Them flowers, make Their turbans and the time spent with Them on the altar is priceless!

I would like to do more and I believe that I can. I teach haṭha-yoga and meet many accomplished women who could use their talents to spread the Krishna consciousness movement. How can we inspire these women to serve if they encounter a negative attitude and the possibilities of service they could offer are restricted? Isn't it against the purpose of our mission to curtail the ability of any soul to serve Krishna? Oh my dear Gurudev, how can we please you in our service? If you want us to do more, to inspire and engage successful, accomplished women, we pray to you to please show us the way.

The contribution, talents, and enthusiasm of women has done so much – and could do so much more – to spread Lord Chaitanya’s mission. The movement can move forward with spiritual purity. You created the *bramachārīṇī āshram*. You addressed all your women disciples as Prabhu. We learn from you that, “... a different creation of transcendental vocabulary all meant for bringing about a revolution in the impious life of a misdirected civilization ... even though irregularly composed, is heard, sung and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest.”

A world where Vaiṣṇavas and Vaiṣṇavīs serve guru and Gaurāṅga to distribute the mercy of this path of *bhakti* is needed. If we work together as godbrothers and godsisters of a majestic father, we can make you proud.

A change of heart will put our society back in the cooperative course so emphasized by you. No one is perfect, we all commit mistakes, but how we rectify it and show our dedication to you and this mission is what is important. Please inspire us to dig deep and find love and kindness and joy to transform and “bring about a revolution in the impious life of a misdirected civilization.”

We are women of integrity; faithful followers who have spent our lives dedicated to you and Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda’s mission to take the holy names to every town and village. Please guide us so we all work to our full potential to serve the *sankīrtana* army.

With love and surrender.

Your fallen daughter,

Jaya Gauri Devī Dāsī

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīne*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my divine Master

Thank you for allowing me to always
be in your divine company
Thank you for allowing me to serve
you and Gaura Nitāi daily

Thank you for allowing me to hear your
voice, my master`s voice, daily

Thank you for not rejecting me
Thank you for feeding me
Thank you for protecting me

*Tumi ta' ṭhākur
Tomāra kukkur*

You are my master
I am your dog

Jaygurudev Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your eternal pastimes are eternally glorious. The accomplishments you have made and continue to make here on Planet Bhumi are astonishing.

I am for always indebted to you for picking me up out of the material ocean and allowing me the shelter of your lotus feet.

My association with you was very limited, and yet I always feel connected to you. I was fortunate to be present in 1976 and 1977 when you came to Bhaktivedānta Manor; your transcendental home in the UK to which you referred as Green Hell.

Access to you was from a distance due to devotees wanting to protect you from the many.

It was in 1977 you gave *darshan* and a lecture in the Temple Room at the Manor, your health was poorly, you were carried on a palanquin up the stairs to your rooms accompanied by a throng of eager devotees. Too many, and knowing you were not well I waited standing at the door to the Temple as you proceeded upstairs. It was very kind that at that time after you had arrived at your rooms, you manifested your mercy within my heart, letting me know that it was, ‘a little difficult’.

Your pastimes for that time came to an end and yet you are still here.

You have continued to be present – time and space are not an obstacle for you. I have your deity on the altar and I see your smile or frown. Some may think this is imagination, but when more than one sees the same then it is far more than that.

There was one occurrence where after talking of your glories at a *nāma-haṭṭa* program, I went to pick-up your deity form and energy was just emanating from you. Unknown to me, one devotee Mātājī who heard the talk was having doubts about you, I turned

and handed her your deity, and she became overwhelmed with your mercy, also feeling your energy.

Another time I was at Rathāyātra in Leicester, I had an ornate umbrella that had caught the eye of a local *pūjārī* of Lord Nāthji. Later in the day we visited Nāthji and met this *pūjārī*. He requested that please could he have the umbrella for Lord Nāthji. I was happy to give this to him and later when returning home I was greeted by a big smile from you. My wife also witnessed this.

While travelling to a BBT seminar in Germany, we were driving past Hamburg University. At this time I decided to put on a lecture by you. I had many cassettes and chose randomly from these. You started to speak giving a lecture that you had given many years earlier at Hamburg University and here you were speaking from Hamburg University many years back as we drove past the University. This, and many more examples are there of your manifested mercy to us.

But the greatest gift you have given is your books, filled with such expert purports.

So you are very much here with us all, your compassion on the fallen souls of this age continues to manifest in so many lives.

Remembering you Śrīla Prabhupāda is to be with you.

You are not a conditioned soul subjected to the whims of *māyā*, but fully eternal intimate servant of the Lord. Your appearance and activities are remembered with great transcendental pleasure.

Please bless me to serve you to your satisfaction.

Your son and servant.

Atmatma Dāsa

I wrote last year about Śrīla Prabhupāda in Bombay in March, 1977. This year I will continue by describing my perspective of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s last visit to the West – to London’s Bhaktivedānta Manor in late August/early September of that same year, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s last. Despite his failing health, Śrīla Prabhupāda traveled with great difficulty from Vrindāvan to London, arriving on August 26th.

At that time, we in Sweden had just received the first Swedish hard-bound edition of *Bhagavad-gītā* “som den är”. It was a challenge to distribute such a big book since the BBT price was three times the paper-back “Yoga-bibliotek”, which we had successfully learned to distribute face-to-face to the Swedish people in villages, towns and cities. British Śivanātha, Spanish Garuḍa, and American Yogīndra constituted an international BBT sales team. Understanding that our relationship with Śrīla Prabhupāda and Krishna hinged upon our service to the mission of introducing *Bhagavad-gītā*, we already felt close to our spiritual master. Thus, we did not feel it necessary to go to London in late August ‘77, to be in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s physical *vapu* presence – immersed as we were in studying and distributing *gaura vāṇī*. Although we were unaware that the urgency we intuitively felt was being generated by Śrīla Prabhupāda’s imminent departure from the world – separation was already manifesting in ISKCON.

Vegavān Prabhu had gone to meet Śrīla Prabhupāda in London and he phoned Ajit Prabhu, who presided over the Stockholm temple in Vegavān’s absence. They suggested that we, the book-distributors, should travel to London for Janmāṣṭamī/Vyāsa-pūjā with Śrīla Prabhupāda. Whether we were right or wrong, we book distributors hesitated to take advantage of this invitation. Instead, we chose to focus on our fledgling attempts to get the *Bhagavad-gītā* distribution going. Finally, however, we complied with Vegavān’s earnest entreaty and drove through Denmark, and took the ferry from Esbjerg to Harwich. Then, (driving on the left side of the road!) we proceeded on to Bhaktivedānta Manor, arriving there on the morning of Janmāṣṭamī, September the 6th. As soon as we arrived, it was announced that Śrīla Prabhupāda would travel to Bury Place temple in downtown London to take *darshan* of Śrī Śrī

Rādhā Londonīśvara. Exhausted as I was from the arduous drive from Sweden (and on the left, in England) I stayed back at the Manor to rest while the other Swedish devotees followed Śrīla Prabhupāda. It seemed a sensible decision at that time to me that I didn't go with the others, but in retrospect it was a unique opportunity lost (to visit the Bury Place temple), for the sake of a little comfort.

At any rate, I clearly recall the extraordinary kīrtans we had at the Manor. Harikeśa Swami warned us to be careful not to damage the Manor's interior with our reckless abandon while dancing and jumping during the kīrtan performances. Another memorable occasion was the meeting of the European *sankīrtana* leaders. Rohiṇī Suta and Jayagurudeva coached us in a bold technique of giving the book unreservedly to anyone we happened to meet, trusting in Providence that the recipient would subsequently reciprocate by giving us a donation. At the Manor meeting, Mahārāma and Manidhara debated the respective pros and cons of taking the time and trouble to cook a hot meal while traveling in the vans – at least potatoes in the winter season, Maharama argued, but Manidhara insisted that cooking was māyā. And, Prithu spoke so dynamically about the book distribution mission that I asked Vegavān if he might invite Prithu to come back with us to Sweden in order to inspire us in our mission of distributing the large *Bhagavad-gītā*. Vegavān did so, and Prithu kindly agreed to come for a few weeks. This provided a breakthrough for *Bhagavad-gītā* distribution.

Pradyumna gave a *Bhagavad-gītā* class one evening at the Manor on chapter 4, verse 6; and Prithu gave a class on 14.26 while we were riding on the ferry. The fact that I remember Krishna kathā 'details', almost 40 years later, purifies my memory and indicates the potency of spiritual sound vibration. There was a midnight *ekādaśī* feast served on Janmāṣṭamī, and I still remember the tapioca *prasāda*, (an eternal spiritual impression?)

The next day was Śrīla Prabhupāda's Vyāsa-pūjā. Tamal Krishna Mahārāja glorified Śrīla Prabhupāda by reminiscing about the early days in Los Angeles when there was no temple and that Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke wherever devotees could gather here and there, as circumstance permitted. Then, while Tamal Krishna spoke, Śrīla Prabhupāda himself spoke up, interjecting that he even resorted to "speaking in a garage". As far as I

remember, those few words were the only ones I ever personally heard Śrīla Prabhupāda speak in person. I also remember that – as recorded in the *Lilāmṛta* – Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted his age to be calculated according to the notably Indian system, i.e. the first birthday is the very day of birth, in contrast to the Western method of calculating (and celebrating) the first birthday at the end of the person’s first year. Śrīla Prabhupāda pointed this out by inducing the devotees to bring one candle more for his cake – bringing the total to 82 candles.

Finally, I recall the enthusiasm the British devotees had to please Śrīla Prabhupāda by distributing his books. After the feast on Vyasa-puja afternoon, Amita and Kripāmoya recruited me to go to London for distribution. May I always remember Śrīla Prabhupāda and be able to describe his instructions without difficulty.

Yogindra Dāsa

Bada Haridās

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you.

On your divine appearance day, we have the increased opportunity to think deeply about our connection with you, which is the only cause of good fortune, to meditate on your innumerable and unfathomable good qualities, your inconceivable accomplishments, your profound and ever deepening teachings, your perfect example and the most amazing reality of all, the fact that you have never left us.

I didn’t have the good fortune or qualification to have much of your physical association. I knew this was Kṛṣṇa’s arrangement. I have always been given what was appropriate and needed; still, I often felt insecure and wanted to know for certain that you personally accepted me and that you approved of my insignificant service. Like a small child, I wanted to feel that you knew who I was and that you loved me. Often I felt quite alone in this world.

Looking back at the ups and downs of my devotional life, I can see that you were always there for me, guiding and protecting. In

spite of my inability to properly follow all of your instructions, you never left me. Any lack of feeling your association was only due to my unfortunate tendency to stray from your service. You are always present in the sincere application of your teachings.

By your grace, as a new *bhakta*, I had the clear vision that all problems could be overcome only by love and unflinching faith in your lotus feet.

*yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanaḥ*

You always felt your spiritual master watching over you because of your love for him. You were one hundred percent dedicated to his mission. My greatest ambition is to become your true follower in all respects and to always feel your loving glance.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I especially want to thank you for the association of your devotees, young and old, past, present and future. Thank you for manifesting yourself, your love, compassion, concerned correction, encouragement, strength, determination and all your other qualities through your devotees. Devotees of the Lord are oceans of good qualities. I pray that I may always live in their company, sincerely serve them and develop deep appreciation and unflinching love for them.

On this most auspicious day I pray to become more devoted to, absorbed and realized in your divine teachings. I pray to become a pure conduit for those pure teachings and for your love. I pray that all my actions are prompted by pure love and compassion just as yours were. I pray to become qualified to always be with you.

Thank you again and again.

Your aspiring servant,

Bada Haridās

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept my respectful obeisances.
All glories to Your Divine Grace!

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīne*

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

With a touch of bitterness mixed with so much joy I write to celebrate the holy day of your Vyasa-puja, your holy and salvific appearance in this world. This world's otherwise horrible host of incarnations marked by joy and pain that obsessively would end each time with the tragedy of death, harbinger of the next rebirth in the infinite cycle of *samsāra*. You came and you have given us the opportunity and the means to redeem ourselves, save ourselves and fall in love with God. Glory and infinite gratitude to you for bringing the divine light of hope and faith in the darkness of our existence!

My mother, Ānandavṛndāvana Devī Dāsī, a fervent devotee of yours, your admirer and servant, recently left her old and exhausted body, and her physical presence has disappeared from the sight of our eyes, thus exiting at the same time from our relationships, and this has left a large void, yet filled by an infinite and poignant feeling of love at a distance. I'm telling you this, not to sadden you, but to offer my experience of how this event made me realize, once again, the infinite luck we received to have known you, welcomed you into our hearts, and later served you, by shaping my life, both of my parents lives and the life of my whole biological and spiritual family in accordance with your divine teachings.

The writing of this letter implies every year – at least once a year – an honest and deep look into the mirror of our consciousness, and every time, it is for me both arduous and highly beneficial because, by seeing the good and the bad in me allows me to adhere strongly to the first one and even more decisively take distance

from the second one. So I offer you the conclusions I have drawn from this immersion by seeking what unites me to you:

When I think of whom, in the course of this incarnation has had the greatest influence on the human and spiritual forming of my character, no doubt it is you.

When I think of whom, over the last forty years I have turned to, every time I found myself faced with crucial choices, no doubt it is you.

When I think of whom my heart bestows the utmost gratitude to, no doubt it is you.

You are the source of my inspiration.

You are my model of active and contemplative *bhakti*.

You are the one whom I dedicate my every initiative to because I know that the success of my offer to God depends on obtaining Your Divine Grace under the form of intercession.

You, with your behavior, teaching and works, are the most divine thing that I could see in this life. You are to me more than a father and a mother, whom I love dearly, because I was born from you into knowledge and love.

I honor you and give you all my gratitude for what I have accomplished.

I ask for your forgiveness for any lack in my behavior and the blessing of being able to serve you with ever increasing commitment, purity and spiritual strength.

With infinite gratitude and devoted affection I offer the remaining years of my life, waiting, when it will be, to come to you, by Krishna, among the blessed people!

Your servant,

Matsyavatara Dāsa

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master who has opened my eyes blinded by the darkness of ignorance with the torchlight of knowledge

The lotus feet of my spiritual master His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda, the guru who is there whenever one you thinks of him. The guru who lives in his books; the guru who is manifest in the form of his global movement is the only way by which we can attain pure devotional service. I bow down to his global form – as a fly at his feet with great awe and reverence.

By his grace one can cross the ocean of material suffering and obtain the mercy of Rādhā and Krishna, Tulasī Devī, Mother Yasodā, and all residents of Śrī Vrndāvana, Sītā Rāma Laxman Hanumān, Lord Jagannātha, Subhadrā Devī, Lord Baladeva and the residents of Jagannāth Purī; Lord Caitanya, Lord Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita, Gadādhara, Śrīvās and all the residents of Māyāpur, Ekachakra and Śāntipur; the twenty-two incarnation Śūkara Naradha Nara-nārāyaṇ four kumāras Buddha, Kalki, Krishna, Balarāma, Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Nṛsimha, Dattātreya, Dhanvantari, Mohinī *yajña* Kapila, Ṛṣabha, Pṛthu, Vāmana, Nṛigupatati and Vyāsadeva, Rādhā Dāmodar, the six Goswāmīs, Mother Gaṅgā *ca* Yamunā *caiva* Godāvarī, Sarasvatī, Narmadā, Sindhu, Kāverī *jale 'smin sannidhiṁ kuru* and all the residents of your *Bhagavad-gītā* and all the residents of your seventeen volumes of *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* and twenty-seven volumes of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, three volumes of *Krishna Book. Nectar of Devotion, Nectar of Instruction, Śrī Īsopaniṣad, Teachings of Lord Caitanya, Teachings of Queen Kuntī, Teachings of Lord Kapila. Easy Journey to Other Planets, Perfection of Yoga, On the way to Krishna, Science of Self Realization, Coming Back*, and all the residents of all of your books, our eternal family.

My only wish is to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from your lotus mouth; attachment to your feet is the perfection that fulfils all desires; you open my darkened

eyes and fill my heart with transcendental knowledge; you are my Lord birth after birth; from you ecstatic *prema* emanates; by you ignorance is destroyed; the Vedic scriptures sing of your character. Our spiritual master is the ocean of mercy, friend of the poor and lord and master of the devotees. O master be merciful to me. Give me the shade of your lotus feet. Your fame is spread all over the three worlds. I take shelter at your lotus feet.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda, and thank you for being in this moment.

Your fallen servant, but still a servant,

Punyatama Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Recently I read in the *Kṛṣṇa Book* the chapter entitled ‘Sudāmā brāhmaṇa is blessed by Lord Krishna’ and I reflected how although Lord Kṛṣṇa eternally performs His pastimes, it was not until now that the world has had the opportunity to know them. This is only because you made it possible through your ISKCON and the vigorous distribution of your books. You have come with the mission to save humanity, bringing it back home, back to Godhead, and it is only by knowing and developing love for the Supreme Lord, that this will be possible, so it is essential that the content of your books would be known worldwide.

In the chapter that I mention you wrote:

“Lord Kṛṣṇa was engaged for a long time in talking with Sudāmā Vipra about their past association. Then, just to enjoy the company of an old friend, Lord Kṛṣṇa began to smile, and asked, “My dear friend, what have you brought for Me? Has your wife given you some nice eatable for Me?” While He was addressing His friend, Lord Kṛṣṇa was looking upon him and smiling with great love. He continued, “My dear friend, you must have brought some presentation for Me from your home.” Lord Kṛṣṇa knew that Sudāmā was hesitating to present Him the paltry chipped rice which was actually unfit for His eating, and understanding the mind of Sudāmā Vipra the Lord said, “My dear friend, certainly I am not in need of anything, but if My devotee gives Me something as an offering of love, even though it may be very insignificant, I accept it with great pleasure. On the other hand, if a person is not a devotee, even though he may offer Me very valuable things, I do not like to accept them. I actually accept only things which are offered to Me in devotion and love; otherwise, however valuable the thing may be, I do not accept it. If My pure devotee offers Me even the most insignificant things – a little flower, a little piece of leaf, a little water –but saturates the offering in devotional love, then I not only gladly accept such an offering, but I eat it with great pleasure.” Lord Kṛṣṇa assured Sudāmā Vipra that He would be very glad to accept the chipped rice which he had brought

from home, yet out of great shyness, Sudāmā Vipra hesitated to present it to the Lord. He was thinking, ‘How can I offer such insignificant things to Kṛṣṇa?’ and he simply bowed his head. Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supersoul, knows everything in everyone’s heart. He knows everyone’s determination and everyone’s want. He knew, therefore, the reason for Sudāmā Vipra’s coming to Him. He knew that Sudāmā’s love for Him as a friend was never tainted by any desire for material benefit. He then snatched the bundle of chipped rice which was hanging on the shoulder of the poor *brāhmaṇa*, packed in one corner of his wrapper, and said, “What is this? My dear friend, you have brought Me nice, palatable chipped rice!” He encouraged Sudāmā Vipra, saying, I consider that this quantity of chipped rice will not only satisfy Me, but will satisfy the whole creation.”

By reading these sublime pastimes of the Lord and knowing His character and also that of His devotees, my heart is filled with hope, because I now know not only about the love that His devotees profess to Lord Krishna, but the affection in return He dispenses to them. I understand that to have real access to this wonderful and transcendental world, a pure heart is needed, which I do not have at all, but at least I cherish to have a hope to hold on to it.

Humbly I bow again and again to your divine lotus feet, with my heart full of gratitude for this invaluable gift that you have spilled all over the world.

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī iti nāmīne*

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

Your servant,

Vraja Vasi Dāsa
Celaya, Guanajuato, México

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*namas te sārasvati-deve gaura-vāṅt-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

My prostrated *daṇḍavats* at your lotus feet. On this auspicious event of the Vyāsa-pūjā of Your Divine Grace, so many around the world will pay homage to you. I am also trying to offer my humble homage, while recognizing my lowly position. I can't even begin to glorify you, the true representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Krishna. You are the Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. You founded ISKCON to bring the mercy and message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu to the entire world. Your ISKCON is expanding and bringing your mercy to people in many towns and villages in different countries through your books, and the methods you have given, namely various festivals and *harinama saṅkīrtana*.

Being a true representative of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, you are naturally very compassionate and a well-wisher of all living beings. Please have mercy on me, keep me in the shelter of your lotus feet and inspire me to render some meaningful service in your ISKCON.

*Gurudev! kṛpā-bindu diyā, koro' ei dāse,
tṛṇāpekhā ati hīna
sakala sahane, bala diyā koro',
nija-māne sprhā-hīna*

“Gurudeva, give to this servant just one drop of mercy. I am lower than a blade of grass. Give me all help. Give me strength. Let me be as you are, without desires or aspirations.”

Your worthless aspiring servant,

Guruprasad Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace and to your beloved Vyāsa-pūjā day.

Your devotional care for all of your followers and all *jīvas* is amazing. No ordinary person could possibly share such a pure heart with so many.

You are the inspiration of compassion for all souls in this universe and beyond. Your magnanimity as savior of *jīvas* is unprecedented and therefore you are worthy of the highest spiritual glories.

Surely Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda were pleased when we made an extra effort to glorify you during the Centennial year. After that year we realized that this increased glorification needs to go on always and should increase year after year. Certainly we have not done enough in this regard. In fact it will never be enough, but as followers we must make an attempt both now and forever.

Here in Denver we have increased book distribution over the previous year as an offering to you. With your mercy we humbly beg to be eventually qualified to be fully sincere and pure so that we are worthy to be empowered to serve your mission and spread the glories of Guru-Gaurāṅga more and more.

Your aspiring servant of the servants,

Nidra Devī Dāsī

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

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

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

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my ever well-wisher,

Another year has passed, and it seems that I am none the wiser. Yet just as sentimental. Again as I write to you it seems to be more of an annual letter than a true tribute to you.

I find myself in the white sands of New Raman Reti, with your ever-beloved Rādhe Shyam and Those lovely Boys Kṛṣṇa Balarama and Their mercy incarnation, Gaura Nitāi.

I am realizing more and more the indescribable mercy you have given your disciples, and the world. The relationship that satisfies, that we crave, that we need, with the Supreme Person Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This mercy, this relationship is beyond any words that I could feebly mumble. But this is your glory, your love, your heart that you gave to us.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mercy surpasses that of Mahāprabhu Himself to have created this ISKCON movement. The association of the holy name and those great souls who have dedicated their lives to the holy name. Giving freely to every living entity the opportunity to go back home, Back to Godhead.

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.*

I only beg that you keep me at your lotus feet lifetime after lifetime, let me continue to relish this life of love you have given.

All unlimited glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda,
My ever well-wisher

Living to serve you,

Stritama Devī Dāsī

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your vast and unfathomable compassion for the fallen souls is directly reflecting the mood and desire of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. Just as Nityānanda Prabhu went freely around all areas of Bengal to cast the net of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's *prema mahā jala*, without taking the slightest consideration of who was qualified and who was not, you traveled all over the world taking with you that same *prema mahā jala* and freely cast it on one and all. And wherever you saw a spark of reciprocation you fanned it with great care, patience and love. You are rightly called Your Divine Grace because you took the reservoir of compassion and grace from the heart of Śrī Nityānanda and mercifully showered it in all areas of the globe that had not been previously inundated by Śrī Nityānanda.

I am so fortunate that you also invited me into your association, unqualified as I am, and have given me all help and encouragement to advance my consciousness to that most rarefied of all states, that of Krishna consciousness. Although my progress has been in fits and starts I take strength from the fact that you will not give up on me as long as I keep on trying to become a devotee.

Today on this most auspicious day of your appearance, I fall at your lotus feet and ask that you please continue to bless me with your loving glance and give me the chance to become just an atom of service in the ocean of service that manifests from your divine heart.

Your insignificant servant,

Ankotha Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my *daṇḍavat pranāms* millions of times in the dust of your lotus feet.

As your movement expands exponentially all over the world, I reflect upon the internal revolution you have initiated within my heart as well. Just as Mahāprabhu had both an external and internal reason for His divine descent, I also see that Your Divine Grace is not only manifest in the opening of grand temples and projects all over the world, but also in the hearts of your devotees and even the miscreants who have somehow made contact with your instructions and mission.

I pray that you continue to work on me from within and bless me to become a real follower of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī and empower me to help spread Krishna consciousness all over the world. I also pray that all devotees learn to live and work together in harmony as you envisioned.

Sincerely with all my love

Jivapavana Dāsa

All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga
All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances

On this auspicious day of Vyāsa-pūjā celebrations, I would like
offer you this humble prayer:

(1)

*gurudev!
kabe tava karunā-prakāśe
śrī-gaurāṅga-līlā, hoyā nitya-tattva,
ei dṛḍha viśvāse
`hari hari' boli', godruma-kānane,
bhromibo darśana-ās*

(2)

*nitāi, gaurāṅga, adwaita, śrīvāsa,
gadādhara,—pañca-jana
kṛṣṇa-nāma-rase, bhāsā'be jagat,
kori' mahā-saṅkīrtana*

(3)

*nartana-vilāsa, mṛdaṅga-vādana,
śunibo āpana-kāne
dekhiyā dekhiyā, se līlā-mādhurī,
bhāsibo premera bāne*

(4)

*nā dekhi' ābāra, se līlā-ratana,
kāṅdi hā gaurāṅga! boli'
āmāre viṣayī, pāgala boliyā,
aṅgete dibeka dhūli*

TRANSLATION

1) Gurudeva! Lord Gaurāṅga's transcendental pastimes are eternal realities. I await the day when, with this firm faith manifested by your mercy, I will wander through the groves of Godruma, chanting "Hari! Hari!" and hoping to behold those pastimes.

2) The Pañca-tattva — Nitāi, Gaurāṅga, Advaita, Śrīvāsa and Gadādhara — will flood the entire universe with the intoxicating nectar of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by performing a mahā-saṅkīrtana.

3) In my ears I will hear the sounds of dancing and the playing of the mṛdaṅgas. By constantly beholding the sweetness and beauty of that pastime of Lord Gaurāṅga's, I will swim in the flood tide of divine love.

4) Materialists will throw dirt at my body and proclaim me thoroughly mad. For being again bereft of seeing the jewel of that pastime, I shall weep and cry out, "O my Lord Gaurāṅga!"

Your servant,

Jñāna sakti Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Every morning we sing to you:

*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair uktas tathā bhāvayata eva sadbhiḥ
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

The spiritual master is to be honored as much as the Supreme Lord, because he is the most confidential servitor of the Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and followed by all authorities. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is a bona fide representative of Śrī Hari [Krishna].

You are *sākṣād-dharitvena*, a direct ambassador of Lord Hari, carrying His potency. Kṛṣṇa says “The *ācārya* is My very Self.”

He also says that He is in the heart of the pure devotee. He is more accessible to us through His pure devotee than He is through His Deity form, because He can speak to us through the pure devotee. Your words are directly Kṛṣṇa’s words. We can directly hear Kṛṣṇa by hearing from you. Kṛṣṇa likes to work through His pure devotee. It is His way. It gives Him the most pleasure when we approach Him through you.

Sākṣād-dharitvena can also mean that the spiritual master is the sum total of all the demigods. The principal demigods create, maintain, and destroy. You have created all of our spiritual good fortune. You are maintaining our spiritual progress in so many wonderful ways. You are destroying our material impressions and attachments.

In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, there is a long list of all the demigods that one can pray to for various material benefits. *Svayam Bhagavān*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa does not directly deal with the material world. When someone prays to Him for material benefits, his appointed agents, the demigods fulfil those desires. Since all the demigods reside in the body of the pure devotee, there is no need for us to have any fear for our maintenance and protection if we surrender and take shelter of you.

You can carry such power because there is no tinge of false pride in you. No tinge of desire to use the power for any reason other than Kṛṣṇa's pleasure.

On this auspicious day, please bless us to understand your glories more and more; to love you more and to surrender more fully to you. Help us to realize that surrender means surrendering the darkness, the attachments to things that cause pain and distress, and accepting the light, and the things that cause great, permanent happiness and love. The word guru means one who draws us from the darkness to the light. Please bless us that our faith in your light and love-filled words may increase, and our resistance to your pulling us towards the delightful spiritual world may decrease. Please bless us to let go of all our attachments to material existence and turn fully to you.

Thank you for your mercy.

Your servant,

Mahendrani Devī Dāsī

Pancagauda Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Your love and devotion for your spiritual master has caused a tidal wave of Krishna consciousness which is rapidly spreading all over the world. I am very thankful to you for allowing us to serve you in your home Śrī Vṛndāvana *dhām*. We just celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the opening of your Śrī Śrī Krishna Balarāma Mandir. Many of your servants came to celebrate – your Gurudāsa, Brahmānanda, Dhanañjaya, Surabhi, Gurukripā, Guṇārṇava, Śrutakīrti, Hari Śauri...so many of your sons and daughters who served you and this project had the most amazing reunion. As they told their stories of your glories, we all were transported to your lotus feet, awaking loving emotions that brought great joy and made us cry.

As we all honored Krishna *prasāda* together, chanted, danced and discussed Krishna *kathā*. We felt Lord Krishna personally present before us. The common binding ingredient was you Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are our life and soul, you have come from the spiritual world to save the fallen conditioned souls and you are empowering your faithful servants to follow in your footsteps.

Please allow us to continue serving you in the holy Vrndāvana *dhām*.

Your servant,

Pancagauda Dāsa

Prahladanatha Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda:

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti itī nāmīne*

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

mattaḥ smṛtir jñānam apohanam ca...

I just pray that you always remain in our hearts and minds... “From Me comes remembrance and forgetfulness,” says Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. So we pray every day that He keeps you in our minds, thoughts, and heart of hearts. All glories to you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your lowest of servants,

Prahladanatha Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Thank you for the most amazing experience I've had with a wonderful four year old; she and I were having a lovely conversation about dolls when she took a long drink of water. As she finished I told her that Kṛṣṇa was the taste of pure water. She looked at me thoughtfully, her eyes dancing as she peered around, looked over at her mother, the altar, and the small books we'd been reading earlier and after about ten seconds replied, "And Balarāma tastes like ice cream!" I have rarely been that thrilled by anyone and the fact it was a four year-old who made the statement turned it into one of the gems of my life. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda for making this moment possible, for crossing the ocean and giving us Kṛṣṇa (Who knew I would have this delightful experience!)

Thank you for the life I have and my friends and family who constantly warm my heart. Thank you for continuing to be the pivotal point in our lives and for keeping us close to you. I have no facility to offer you any service and yet somehow Kṛṣṇa has allowed me to witness people declare 'Haribol' when they come to visit me, simply in response to me saying it first. Thank you for the miracle of *prasāda* and the ability to share it with people who are not yet devotees. Thank you for giving us the memory of you.

Aspiring to be your servant,

Vaikuntha Murti Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

It has been 38 years since I saw your beautiful smiling face and heard you speak, but you have kindly diminished the pain of separation by making nice arrangements for your teachings to remain. At first I thought that hearing once might do the trick, but turns out, I need you around all the time. You speak through your books and recorded audio and video messages, through your followers, and through our hearts.

Without this gift, there is only perpetual false hope for satisfaction in this world. Our hearts are crying for the love we need, but generally we are so bewildered by false ego and ignorance that we cannot even recognize or remember the solution when it is right in front of us. Therefore, we are perfect recipients of the holy names of the Lord, “*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.*”

What kind of friend stays with you and waits for you to see the truth even when you repeatedly refuse? Only the most kind and compassionate.

Please never leave me. Accept me as your helper and by your grace, help me to actually become kind to all living entities.

When will that day be mine, when I am constantly meditating on your burning, sweet-hot desire to unite Lord Kṛṣṇa with his fortunate friends?

With gratitude from my heart of hearts,

Gopimata Devi Dasi

Please accept my fallen obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet on this special occasion of this Golden Jubilee celebration of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

All glories unto you and to your guru maharaja, who ordered you to come to the West the very first time you bowed down before him. It was obvious to him who you were and he had full confidence that you were the empowered ambassador of the spiritual world, Kṛṣṇa's Vaikuṅṭha man who could fulfill Mahāprabhu's desire to bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness to every town and village.

Please allow me to begin my humble offering unto you with this letter you dictated August 10, 1977, which is titled your 'Last Instruction'.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Last Instruction

The Final Letter (To GBC Australia from Śrīla Prabhupāda's secretary, 10th, August, 1977)

Śrīla Prabhupāda was most enlivened to hear the report of New Govardhana farm. His Divine Grace, in the last month or so, has been stressing the importance of these farm projects and said: "This is the NEXT aspect of Kṛṣṇa consciousness which I wish to push forward. If I am able to travel again then I shall visit the farms and make them perfect. On these farms we can demonstrate the full *varṇāśrama* system. If these farms become successful, then the whole world will be enveloped by Kṛṣṇa consciousness (Emphasis added.) From your letter I can understand how nice this farm is. I am very happy to see fresh vegetables, fresh fruits, grains, the devotees taking sumptuous prasādam and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. This is the actual meaning of human life. It is a very good farm, from your letter I understand Prabhupāda said: "Kṛṣṇa is the farm *ācārya*. Baladeva is holding a plough, and Kṛṣṇa is holding the calf. Kṛṣṇa advised Nanda Maharaja not to perform Indra *pūjā*, but to worship the land, Govardhana because it was supplying all foodstuffs for the residents of Vṛndāvana, and the cows as well." So Śrīla Prabhupāda wants you to develop this farm very nicely, as it will be the FUTURE PROGRAM TO PRESENT THE WORLD as the IDEAL of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In the cities we

are interested for preaching, but we cannot present the ideal of Varṇāśrama system. This is ONLY possible at the farms, so they're VERY IMPORTANT.

“Whatever you build you get the building materials locally. If you can manufacture tiles locally, then your house problem is solved. Build up a bamboo frame and on it place tiles. In any event, get everything locally. I wish to make a farm tour and then I shall surely visit your farm.”

Many years before even coming to America fifty years ago, you wrote about how Lord Caitanya's movement would spread to every town and village. This is summarized in what we now know as the four waves of the *saṅkīrtana* movement. The biggest wave you revealed would be the 4th wave, creating self-sufficient Gītā Nāgarī /Vṛndāvana style village communities, based on the teachings in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. It has always been exciting and amazing to be a part of this unfolding lotus flower *saṅkīrtana* mission. Whether it is the process of hearing and chanting, Deity worship and festivals, book and *prasāda* distribution, building temples, making devotees or developing the farm projects, you have given us so much activity to keep us busy birth after birth.

Praying with all humility at your lotus feet to always have the enthusiasm and determination to assist you in your wonderful plans to serve your guru and Gaurāṅga.

Daiva Dāsa

Digpala Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

Without you I am but a fallen devotee. I am only a small insect following the footprints you left behind.

I humbly ask you to guide me through this treacherous path so that I may be only with you.

I wish to remain at your lotus feet as your humble servant,

Digpala Dāsa

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. This dust is the most sacred possession of a disciple because it is a desire tree. My desire is that I keep sacred my vows and always remain under the shelter of your lotus feet.

O Lord and Master, I write this poem hoping that it will be pleasing to Your Divine Grace whose mercy is freely given to those who reciprocate those deep feelings of love. Kindly have mercy upon me.

Part 1

Fulfilling the desires of the previous *ācāryas*
Your Divine Grace showered mercy upon this world
diving deep into that ocean of nectar
you enjoy the mellows of *bhakti rasa*

Following in the footsteps of the damsels of Vraja
Your Divine Grace renders eternal
service to the Divine Couple
eternally bound by Their all-consuming love
you bathe in its splendor

Delivering the world from the dense
darkness of ignorance
Your Divine Grace enveloped the world
with the cloud bank of mercy
like a *cakora* bird that drinks pure nectar
you sported in that ocean of love

Those bereft of devotion live a hellish existence
whilst followers of Your Divine Grace live eternally in *rasa*
living only to please the Divine Couple
you lovingly reciprocate with those who approach you

That *nitya siddha* who embodies love and compassion
appeared as Your Divine Grace
to entreaty the conditioned souls
you brought the holy names

Part 2

Service to Rādhā Kṛṣṇa...the desired goal
my heart is black, black like coal
caught in the wheel....the wheel of time
this beggar cries... the sun does not shine

This beggar cries a deep anguished plea
without your mercy can I be free?
service to Your Divine Grace the only cure
material existence for how long must I endure?

O ocean of mercy please flood this heart
made of steel please break it apart
entrapped in a cocoon the proverbial worm
what is my fate an indra gopa germ

Break the shackles that keep me away
oh where is that day
I want to serve, I want to love
cover me with the *bhakti* salve

Your lowly servant,

Nanda Kumar Dāsa

Wake up little *jīva* turn your face to the sun
give up the illusion that it is all one
monistic, atheist, *sahajyā* and more
take your subatomic self and walk through the door
of a life you've forgotten, abandoned back then
now you can't remember the where or the when
you've been allowed freedom to fall and to wane
from the safety and shelter of the Supreme who sustains
you're helpless, so small, but the biggest of fools
please now accept the necessary tools
handed to you by the one who's been sent
by the very person you defied back when you went
to a place you call home. You struggle, you cry
and now you must survive, now you must try
to remember...PLEASE remember
dear *jīva* so it becomes clear
the words of your master, who's so loving and dear
he knows who you are, he has cried through the night
he has left his *Vṛndāvana* knowing your plight
there was no permanent bed, no personal gain
but a heart full of compassion to help you refrain
from your sinful forgetfulness and hideous demise
but he's not to be fooled, he has *prema*, he's wise
he walks hand in hand with his best friend who's blue
now he offers that little cowherd boy's hand over to you
thank you dear master, no words will express
how my heart bleeds and yearns for just one caress
your arms wrapped around me, as a father will do
and I fall into your lap, like a child will do
I cry. I'm so happy. No more am I sad. I'm
home. Śrīla Prabhupada and I am so glad.

Our Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Humble *pranāms* at your lotus feet
The devotees eagerly we meet
To celebrate your blissful mercy
You taught us “chant, dance and be happy”
All together we are enlivened
Glorifying you, so enlightened
By your lectures, that we still relish.
Deity worship, you did in Paris
Stressing chanting, in the seventies
You came to us, such a blessing!
Your Divine Grace, we share your teachings
Your videos, we enjoy spreading
Your life story, all remembering
Your sacrifice, touring and preaching
For our sake, for the Society
Giving your books, begging gracefully
Our service, our submission,
And above all, cooperation.
We were trying, no limitation
Spontaneously, Guru adoring
We responded, sincerely praying
Attentively, we are worshipping
Your every word so diligently,
Eternally, serving your mission
So gratefully, in separation...

Your servant,

Krishna-kirtan Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

As I offer my most humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet, I can hear your voice revealing sacred truths, I can hear you warning us that suffering lies in the search for fortune and fame and that joy lies in embracing Krishna's holy names. Your wishes for us are simple:

You wish for us to walk in the wisdom of the saints and sages,
you wish for us to walk in the truth that's true for all ages,
you wish for us to feel God's voice like wind swirling 'round,
you wish for us to hear God's voice embedded in sound.

You wish for us to dance to the sound of Krishna's blessed names,
you wish for us to dance in the truth in which reality is framed,
you wish for us to feel God's breath like wind swirling 'round,
you wish for us to embrace God's form embedded in sound.

As I half-heartedly undertake my devotional practices, I pray that you miraculously change my unwillingness to willingness to fully embrace your divine lotus feet and Śrī Krishna's divine holy names, so that your wishes for us become reality!

Your servant,

Mahapurana Dāsa

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

This last year has seen some changes in my life which are all down to your merciful glance. Some of these changes are not to my liking but deep down I see your hand is involved. You do not like to see a devotee suffer but what can you do if that devotee remains stubborn and un-surrendered?

Anyway, you are incomparable and no-one can ever take your place because what needed to be done you, were the only person to do it. The bottom line is that others had that choice but you were the best man for the job and anyone who disputes this is simply a foolish person. Of course to know your glories is not for everyone to know, and certainly no amount of mental speculation will aid anyone in understanding you in full.

For all my failings I love you just as much as that first day in 1975 when I read the beginning of the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam Canto 1, Part 1, and surrendered my life unto you. I am weak, please forgive me and please don't stop your rectification lessons that I understand but still don't accept. Just recently, I went to see Rasada in the Vṛndāvana Hospice and it was the first time I'd ever been to see a devotee friend in the process of dying. I even refused in 2005 the opportunity to see my mother who was in a coma since I didn't see the point. I regret that now but what is done is done and cannot be undone. So I went to see Rasada about five times and I noted that on my last visit, the evening before his departure he was fading fast, could hardly speak and he was lonely and afraid. This brought home to me the importance of rising above these modes of material nature, and to do this we need to understand and follow your clear and unequivocal instructions. I am still a little shell-shocked from my experience in Vṛndāvana but I am glad that you gave me an opportunity to see just how selfish I really am. No finger pointing, the buck stops with me!

Anyway, with that out of the way I am proud to be your disciple, I am proud to have met you and I always want to be with you if you'll have me. I would be very good at cleaning your room and putting on your shoes.

Oh, I almost forgot, I hear so many negative things about this or that and I know that you are aware of all these things, but for me my ears are bunged, my eyes are closed and my lips are sealed. Please just allow me to live in simple ignorance with only a positive road ahead of me. All glories to you on your appearance day. Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your often foolish disciple,

Haridasa Thakura Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust at your holy lotus feet! You are a swan-like *paramahamsa*, and a pure *rasika bhakta* who serves at the heart of Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement.

I know this, as I am witness to the transcendental effects of the divine words of your *vapi* incarnation. Though I am for all intents and purposes materially blinded, I can readily see how the Absolute Truth, Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Krishna Caitayana stands ever present within the saffron effulgence of your divine teachings. He blesses the Kali-yuga and the piteous condition of the most fallen through you.

You have left us sets of impeccable law books, and you have illuminated the eternal path. You have given us shelter; you have captured our hearts as you straighten our backs. You have taught us the difference between impersonalism, the *sahajiyā* impersonators, and the path of pure *bhakti*. Whatever light, illumination, or knowledge we find in this Western world has passed through your loving hands. In the process of all of this you have given us the experience of being with you as you served their Lordships Krishna and Balarāma, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the *gopīs* and the residents of Vraja. You have shown us how to love the Lord, to serve the Lord, and how to love and serve the Lord's servants.

I pray for your blessings as I endeavor to glorify a person whose glories are without limit. As I sit at your lotus feet chanting, I pray that I may serve you in Lord Caitanya's mission having put aside all considerations for everything except your pleasure.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your instructions are my only shelter. With straw wedged between my teeth, I aspire to realize the purport of your perfect instruction, and ultimately, I beg for admittance into Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's school of excellence where your discourse is heard without interruption. Wherein, I am praying to pick up some small portion of the mantel of your mission, as I beg to remain at your lotus feet.

Your fallen servant,

Prabhu-Kṛpa Dāsa

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

*namas te sārāsvatī-deve gaura-vāṅī-precāriṇe
nīrviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, my beloved Spiritual Master:

Please accept my *danḍavat pranāms* at your lotus feet on this most auspicious day of your appearance.

Today I reflect on the most glorious prediction made by Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu:

prthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma

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

You single-handedly fulfilled the prediction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, by taking the instructions of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura on your head and compassionately sowed the seeds of Krishna consciousness in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of innocent conditioned souls, all over the world. Likewise, through your many books, and the tireless efforts of your disciples and granddisciples, the pure message of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu continues to spread to every inconceivable nook and corner of this earth.

Recently I had the good fortune to travel to the remote country of Papua New Guinea with His Holiness Vedavyāsapriya Mahārāja, and saw firsthand how the fortunate people of that land were eagerly chanting Hare Krishna mahā-mantra, and accepting Krishna *prasāda*. Having witnessed such a glorious sight, I remain indebted to you, for kindly giving me the opportunity to participate in your mission, even though I am insignificant and unqualified in so many ways.

Dear Gurudeva, you gave us clear knowledge of the true purpose of human life – to attain love of God, Krishna *prema*. This is confirmed in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, wherein the great Mahājana, Śrī Prahlād Mahārāja gives this important instruction

to his classmates:

etāvān eva loke 'smin puṁsaḥ svārthaḥ paraḥ smṛtaḥ
ekānta-bhaktir govinde yat sarvatra tad-ikṣaṇam

“In this material world, to render service to the lotus feet of Govinda, the cause of all causes, and to see Him everywhere, is the only goal of life. This much alone is the ultimate goal of human life, as explained by all the revealed scriptures.” (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 7.7.55)

You perfectly exemplified this instruction in your life, teachings and actions, and thus, you remain my constant inspiration.

Please give me your mercy so that I can serve you eternally life after life.

I beg to remain at your lotus feet.

Your eternal servant,

Sivaradhya Dāsa

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

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

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

My dear Gurudeva, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

On this most auspicious Vyāsa-pūjā day, I beg to glorify you although I am most unqualified to do so.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, O spiritual master, O giver of divine wisdom, O friend of the fallen, you are the giver of your own bliss and you are the ocean of mercy. You have descended for the welfare of fallen souls like myself. Please be kind upon me. I simply pray on this auspicious Vyāsa-pūjā day, please bless me to serve you and the Deities wherever I am, and always be in Krishna consciousness throughout my entire life.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your servant,

Sudhir Krishna Dāsa
Dallas, Tx

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“

By the grace of the spiritual master the cloud of the mercy of the Personality of Godhead is brought in, and then only, when the rains of Krishna consciousness fall, can the fire of material existence be extinguished.”

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.21.17
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda