



ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA TRIBUTES

26AUG | 2016 Celebrating the
appearance day of our
beloved spiritual master

“

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 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.

”

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami,
on board the ship Jaladuta
dated 18th of September, 1965

ŚRĪLA
PRABHUPĀDA
TRIBUTES



Design and layout by Jagannātha Śaraṇa Dāsa (Janak Rajani)
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26AUG
2016

OM VIṢṆUPĀDA
PARAMAHAṂSA
PARIVRĀJAKĀCĀRYA
AṢṬOTTARA-ŚATA

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD
A. C.
BHAKTIVEDANTA
SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

FOUNDER-ĀCĀRYA
OF THE INTERNATIONAL
SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA
CONSCIOUSNESS

ŚRĪLA
PRABHUPĀDA
TRIBUTES

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beloved spiritual master

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INTRODUCTION

Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā is the blessed day when the disciple is expressing his gratitude to his eternal spiritual master. The disciple attempts to repay his debt...an impossible task since the bona fide guru has imparted to him the highest spiritual knowledge, coming from Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself through the line of disciplic succession – unchanged since time immemorial. And thus so doing, he allows the suffering souls to free themselves from the burning chains of material existence. Whatever the disciple offers, the spiritual master gives it back to his gurudeva, to the disciplic succession, and to Lord Kṛṣṇa with love and humility, allowing that chain of loving gratitude to flow. On that day, each disciple aspires to be a kavi like Vyāsadeva and have thousands of mouths to glorify properly his spiritual master.

This year's Vyāsa-pūjā celebration is unique. It marks the 50th anniversary of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami establishing his mission in the West, the birth of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. All over the globe disciples, grand-disciples and well-wishers will assemble to glorify His Divine Grace in one voice. As predicted by Śrīla Bhaktinode Ṭhākura, it will be joyfully expressed in so many different languages: English, Russian, German, French, Spanish, Chinese, etc., in one melodious and powerful wave of bhakti.

Mukunda Goswami, one of the very first disciples of His Divine Grace, recalls how it all started:

“The storefront prophetically named ‘Matchless Gifts’ located at 26th Second Avenue, soon became a temple, and the Swami lectured there every day. By October he was hosting philosophical

discussions in his small flat. On 13 July 1966 I signed a paper that became the Swami's first corporation. It was called The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, or ISKCON. I didn't really think it very important at the time and really didn't care. I thought that whatever the Swami wanted was okay."

Yes 50 years have passed since that very day. Your disciples' hairs have grown grey, if not white. But in the bottom of their hearts, we are still your "boys and girls", your "white elephants" that in the delicate boutique of Vaiṣṇava relationships and behaviors often broke the refined porcelain china cups and embarrassed you. But you always took the blame for us in front of the great Vaiṣṇavas of Vṛndāvana. Your love for your disciples was immense. On your deathbed, just before your departure from this world, your exalted godbrother, the old Purī Mahārāja came and asked, "What can I do for you?" He had always refused to take prasāda from the hand of a Western devotee thinking it was contaminated. You said, "Yes, there is something you can do for me". And you gave him some prasāda cooked by one of your disciples. For the first time of his life, he accepted it. So in this way, one of your last thoughts was for us. You wanted us so much to be accepted as true devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa by the exalted Vaiṣṇavas of the glorious line of Lord Caitanya. Yes Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are still "your boys and girls". We took birth the day we met you. In the material world people remember where they were when John F. Kennedy was assassinated, or when the Twin Towers were attacked. But each of us remembers dearly when they met you – either physically or through your books for the first time and how his life has changed.

In Bury Place, the first London Temple, you told the assembled devotees during one of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebrations: "This is day when the disciple should tell the spiritual master what he has received from him, how his life has changed". You taught us everything with love and care of every moment, nourishing us with spiritual truth and etiquette by the spoon full. We were starving to understand what the goal of life was. You taught us everything – the highest philosophy coming from the Lord Himself through the line of a powerful paramparā, unchanged. You also told us how to put it into practice in our day to day life...how to be clean, how to eat,

how to breathe, how to sleep. And with such expertise, considering our fallen condition and our flickering mind, how to put Kṛṣṇa in the centre of our life, to chant His holy name in a humble state of mind and thus how to go back home, back to Godhead in this very life time.

When you first came off the *Jaladuta* in Boston, a few minutes were sufficient for you to understand the Western culture, the state of the society and its deep lack of spiritual knowledge. “My Dear Lord, how will they understand your message? They are covered by the modes of passion and ignorance... But if You brought me here, You must have some business to fulfill...O my Lord, let me be a puppet in your hands and please make me dance, make me dance, make me dance”

...And you danced so perfectly. Now 50 years later we see the results. ISKCON is estimated to now have 650 centers, temples, schools and colleges worldwide with approximately 95,000 formally spiritually initiated members. More than 3 billion vegetarian meals worldwide have been distributed and 516 million books and magazines published. Hare Krishna has become a household word all over the planet. You have more than fulfilled the mission of your spiritual father, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura beyond all expectations. The vision of Lord Caitanya, of Śrīla Bhaktinīlode Ṭhākura came true.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you are still present with us when a new guest comes to the Temple, when a newcomer reads your books and awakens his dormant fragile creeper of devotion, eager to reunite with Lord Kṛṣṇa. Despite this tremendous success, you said: “If only I could make one pure devotee, this will be worthwhile”. We are confident that a lot of pure devotees have and will follow in your footsteps like flowers offered at your lotus feet, and all of us – your “boys and girls” – pray to sooner rather than later become one of them.

Mondākinī Devī Dāśī

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The Tributes Team

Every member of the Tributes team (listed below) has offered their time and service on a voluntary basis.

Editorial and Production Advisor Jayādvaita Swami
Production Manager Pradyumna Dāsa
Senior Editor Nimāi Devī Dāsi
Sanskrit Editor Radheya Fournier
Proofreader Jon Chapple
Submission Managers Harṣarāṇī Devī Dāsi & Rosie Patel
Outreach Gaura Dāsa, Sevānanda Dāsa
Website Administrator Puṣkarāja Dāsa
Designer Jagannāth Śaraṇa Dāsa

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TRIBUTES
BY
SANNYASI
DISCIPLES

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

But April is coming. Soon Harvey Cohen will invite you to share his Bowery loft with a young man. Artists and musicians will start attending your *kīrtanas*. Your young roommate will go crazy on LSD, and you will decide it is too dangerous living with him. On an emergency basis you will move in with Carl Yeargens, a casual follower of yours, and his woman, who used to attend your Bowery *kīrtanas*. The woman eventually objected to your presence. Carl took you to the apartment of his friend, Michael Grant, to see if he

could help. Michael found a storefront and apartment at 26 Second Avenue, and your friends chipped in and paid the first month's rent. You started your Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evening meetings—lectures on *Bhagavad-gītā* and “transcendental sound vibration”—and things started happening. Soon the floodgates would open. I joined you, and now I can remember what you were doing fifty years ago.

But about that “silent” period when you were alone with no followers, and about which I had to write “silent meditations,” you later reminisced, “Those were happy days.” You had no one to depend upon but Kṛṣṇa and your spiritual master. As a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, you were always happy. As with Prahlāda Mahārāja, your only unhappiness was to see the nondevotees suffering in *māyā* because of not surrendering to Kṛṣṇa. I think you were happier when you had thousands of disciples and a hundred temples, and the BBT was quickly publishing your books, and your disciples were distributing them in great numbers. You wrote in the “Concluding Words” to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* that you were certain your spiritual master was satisfied to see the work of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* completed in English. And at the 1975 annual meeting in Māyāpur, you were able to tell hundreds of your followers that the prediction of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had come true: hundreds of Bengalis and Westerners were chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa together.

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

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

Your eternal servant,

Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

Jayādvaita Swami

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

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

In glorifying Śrīla Prabhupāda this year, I'd like to review a memorable exchange I took part in on a morning walk in Māyāpur on April 8, 1975, when devotees had assembled from all over the world for the annual Gaura Pūrṇimā festival. On such walks, Śrīla Prabhupāda was usually accompanied by *sannyāsīs* and GBC men, as well as a few others, including the occasional senior *brahmacārī* like, on this occasion, me.

As we walked through the fields of Māyāpur, I raised a question that had sometimes perplexed me about our understanding of the spiritual master – and so of Śrīla Prabhupāda. What does it mean that he is “perfect”?

Here we go:

Jayādvaita: [The *ācāryas*] know everything and they're perfect in everything. But sometimes, from our material viewpoint, we see some discrepancies. Just like we think that...

Prabhupāda: Because material viewpoint. The viewpoint is wrong; therefore you find discrepancies.

Jayādvaita: So we should think that *we* have the defect.

Prabhupāda: Yes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda had gone to the essence: When we see defects in the *ācārya*, what's defective is our own materialistic viewpoint.

But what's the right viewpoint, the spiritual viewpoint? Śrīla Prabhupāda continued:

Ācārya is explained, *bhakti-śaṁsanāt*. One who's preaching the cult of devotional service, he's ācārya. Then why should you find any discrepancy?

Here Śrīla Prabhupāda was quoting from *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā, text 14. Describing Śrī Advaita Prabhu, the verse says, *advaitam bhakti-śaṁsanāt*: "Because He propagates the cult of devotion, He is called Ācārya." Śrīla Prabhupāda here pointed this out as a defining characteristic of the ācārya: He spreads the "cult" of devotional service.

But I wanted to push the matter further:

Jayādvaita: Just, we see...for instance, sometimes the ācārya may seem to forget something or not to know something. So from our point of view, if someone has forgotten, that is...

Prabhupāda: No, no, no. Then...

Jayādvaita: ... an imperfection.

We had all noticed, for instance, that Śrīla Prabhupāda sometimes forgot the Sanskrit for a verse, or quoted it less than exactly. And there seemed to be all sorts of things he was not aware of. Weren't these signs of imperfection? Shouldn't he always "get it right"?

Prabhupāda: That is not the... Then you do not understand. Ācārya is not God, omniscient. He is servant of God. His business is to preach *bhakti* cult. That is ācārya.

Jayādvaita: And that is the perfection.

Prabhupāda: That is the perfection. . . Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Jayādvaita: So we have a misunderstanding about what perfection is?

Prabhupāda: Yes. Perfection is here, how he is preaching *bhakti* cult. That's all.

Śrīla Prabhupāda underlined the point he had already made. What we need to see is how the ācārya is teaching the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, how he is spreading Kṛṣṇa conscious devotional service.

I'd had other thoughts in mind. *Sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstraiḥ*:

We are to consider the spiritual master as good as God and honor him accordingly. *Ācāryam mām vijānīyān*: We should know the spiritual master to be God's very self. *Na martya-buddhyāsūyeta*: We should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man (*guruṣu naramatiḥ*). The spiritual master is perfect!

But in Śrīla Prabhupāda's view, I had misunderstood what perfection is. "Ācārya is not God, omniscient. He is servant of God." And once again: "His business is to preach *bhakti* cult. That is ācārya."

Satsvarūpa Mahārāja then expanded the subject:

Satsvarūpa: Śrīla Prabhupāda, there's also a question of reciprocation. You have so many disciples, thousands, and one devotee was asking me yesterday, "How does... I want to please Śrīla Prabhupāda. How does he know my progress and my service, because I'm..., when I'm so far away from him and if I don't write him?"

Prabhupāda: So his representatives are there, the president, the GBC. They will see.

Madhavananda: The representatives, president.

This was a question I myself had asked Śrīla Prabhupāda early on, at 26 2nd Avenue. The disciple makes progress when the spiritual master is pleased. But how does the spiritual master know what the disciple is doing? In effect I was asking, "How does the disciple get his gold stars" (what in America we sometimes call "Brownie points")? And Śrīla Prabhupāda, at that time, had answered (for me, somewhat enigmatically), "Not only the spiritual master but everyone will know. Face is the index of mind." And on that occasion too he had said that the spiritual master's representatives would know.

Now I edged the question further:

Jayādvaita: The representative may be there, but what is my personal relationship?

I suppose I was looking for an inner dynamic of an esoteric sort, some mystical type of connection. But Śrīla Prabhupāda responded in a different way:

Prabhupāda: Hmm? To obey your spiritual master. Whatever he has said, you follow strictly. Follow the regulative principles. Chant sixteen rounds. That's all.

There's the connection: Just obey! Just follow! "That's all." As we find in *The Nectar of Instruction* (published that same year, 1975): "Devotional service is not a matter of sentimental speculation or imaginative ecstasy. Its substance is practical activity." And this was practical: "Follow the regulative principles. Chant sixteen rounds." This was the "personal relationship": Whatever the spiritual master has said, you follow strictly.

Now another devotee further pursued my first theme, concerning the spiritual master's "perfection":

Devotee: Prabhupāda, when Śrīla Vyāsadeva was lamenting after compiling so many Vedic literatures before compiling *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, he said to his spiritual master, Nārada Muni, that "You please enter within me and find out my deficiency. You are as good as the all-pervading Supersoul."

The spiritual master is as good as the all-pervading Supersoul! What about that? (The verse is *Bhāgavatam* 1.5.7.) But again Śrīla Prabhupāda responded in a different way:

Prabhupāda: That is always the position of disciple [spiritual master]: to find out the deficiency in the character of disciple.

Śrīla Prabhupāda here passed up the opportunity to emphasize that the spiritual master – or he himself – is "as good as the Supersoul." Instead, he spoke on the spiritual master's task of uncovering the disciple's defects.

Providentially, also, Śrīla Prabhupāda "performed the pastime" (as some would put it) of "making a mistake"! He said "disciple" when he meant (as the transcriber has noted) "spiritual master." Thus he illustrated just the sort of error that – from a material viewpoint – we would flag as a tell-tale "imperfection." (But as he had confirmed, it is *we* who have the defect. We don't understand what perfection is.)

The devotee asking, however, stayed on course with his question, focusing on the point he had wanted to bring out from Vyāsadeva's statement:

Devotee: He said that "You are as good as the all-pervading Supersoul."

And Śrīla Prabhupāda once again turned down the invitation to expound upon the spiritual master's equality with God. Instead:

Prabhupāda: Yes. He... He pointed out the deficiency, that “You have not described so elaborately about the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You have touched only the social, religious, political point of views.” That was his deficiency.

So a disciple is always in deficiency before his spiritual master. Just like Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, *guru more murkha dekhi karila śāsana* [Cc. Ādi 7.71]: “My spiritual master saw Me a fool number one. Therefore he has chastised Me.” So disciple should be always ready to be chastised. He should not think that he has become perfect. That is perfection. So long he thinks that he is not perfect – he’s to be chastised – then he’s perfect. And as soon as he thinks that he has become perfect, he’s nonsense immediately, nonsense number one.

Here again is the spiritual master’s perfection: Before his own spiritual master, he always thinks himself a fool, deserving to be chastised. “Then he’s perfect.” Otherwise: “nonsense number one.”

After a break in the tape, we find that Śrīla Prabhupāda then made the same point again, and expanded on it:

Prabhupāda: ...always to be chastised by the spiritual master for perfection. And if he thinks that now he has become perfect, then he’s a foolish. Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, *guru more mūrkhā dekhi*: “My spiritual master saw Me a fool number one.” Was He fool number one? He’s God Himself. But that is the position. He [the disciple] should remain always a fool number one, ready to be chastised. Then he’s perfect.

In the moral instruction, Cāṇakya Paṇḍita gives this instruction, that *lālāne bahavo doṣas, tadāne bahavo guṇāḥ*: “If you chastise your, the son or disciple, he’ll improve, and if you say, ‘Oh, you are all right,’ then he’ll degrade.” *Tasmāt putraṁ ca śiṣyaṁ ca, tāḍayet na tu lālayet*: “Therefore you always chastise your son and disciple. Never flat—” What is called?

Jayādvaita: Flatter.

Prabhupāda: Yes [that’s the word]. No [you shouldn’t do it].

But what about the spiritual master's being "as good as the all-pervading Supersoul"? Satsvarūpa Mahārāja, staying on track, now came back to that point from a different angle:

Satsvarūpa: Prabhupāda, in one purport in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, you write that a disciple of a bona fide spiritual master is supposed to know everything.

And Śrīla Prabhupāda, again, stayed on his own track:

Prabhupāda: Yes, if he follows the spiritual master.

As Śrīla Prabhupāda had said earlier, "Whatever he has said, you follow strictly."

Satsvarūpa: But how could he know...?
What does that mean, "everything"?

Prabhupāda: "Everything" means whatever his guru knows, he should know, that much. Not like God, everything. Within his limit, that's all. If he tries to understand whatever his guru has said, that much is "everything." Otherwise, "everything" does not mean that we know everything like God, like Kṛṣṇa. That is not possible. If he regularly chants and follow the regulative principles, follow the orders of guru, then he knows everything. That's all. Not very much.

Here Śrīla Prabhupāda reasserted a point he had made at the start: "Ācārya is not God, omniscient." And after another break in the tape, we find him reinforcing the point:

[If the ācārya] knows everything, then what is the use of [his] reading books, when he knows everything?
[No one knows] everything —except Kṛṣṇa. Huh?
Aham... Sarvasya cāham ḥṛdi sanniviṣṭo [Bg. 15.15]. He knows past, present, future — everything. You cannot expect anyone to know like Kṛṣṇa, everything.

Accepting Śrīla Prabhupāda's point, I moved in a slightly different direction:

Jayādvaīta: Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* that one who knows Him knows everything.

Prabhupāda: Yes. Because if he knows that Kṛṣṇa

is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then he knows everything. That's all. Not that he should know as Kṛṣṇa. If he... *Yasmin vijsāte sarvam evaṁ vijsātam...* [Munḍaka Upaniṣad 1.3] If he accepts Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, then he knows everything. That is finish.

Jayādvaita: That knowledge itself is...

Prabhupāda: Eh?

Jayādvaita: That knowledge itself is complete.

Prabhupāda: Yes.

Satsvarūpa Mahārāja then restated the point, starting an exchange that further clarifies what it means that the spiritual master “knows everything”:

Satsvarūpa: There may be material things he doesn't know, but they're useless.

Prabhupāda: Eh?

Satsvarūpa: If there's some material information that such a person doesn't know, that's not really knowledge anyway.

Prabhupāda: I did not follow.

Satsvarūpa: If he doesn't know how many people live in...

Jayādvaita: Just like Gaura-kiśora could not write. So it appeared that he did not..., there was something that he did not know, although he knew Kṛṣṇa.

Prabhupāda: Yes. He knows everything. Otherwise, how Bhaktisiddhānta accepted him as guru? He knows Kṛṣṇa. That's all.

And finally a question from another devotee:

Nalinī-kānta Dāsa: Whatever the spiritual master says, that is also perfect?

Prabhupāda: Yes. Because he says nothing concocted.
Whatever he says, he says from śāstra and guru.

The bona fide spiritual master “teaches the cult of devotional service” as received from śāstra and guru, and therefore whatever he says is perfect.

Thus ended this most enlightening exchange. But the story also has a follow-up.

After the walk ended, several of my godbrothers – powerful GBC men and *sannyāsīs* – rebuked me for my insolence: How dare I ask Śrīla Prabhupāda questions raising doubts about his position? Not only had I raised questions about the spiritual master, but I had pushed those questions from the general to the specific: “The ācārya may seem to forget something or not to know something.” There was no hiding who I was asking about—Śrīla Prabhupāda himself! I had crossed the line, from being inquisitive to being offensive.

Maybe they were right.

So a short while later, I went up to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s room in the Lotus Building. Just as he finished his breakfast, I offered my obeisances and sheepishly began:

“Śrīla Prabhupāda, about my question this morning. . .”

Śrīla Prabhupāda asked, “What is that?” That is, what question? So I restated it and then asked, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, was that question offensive?”

His Divine Grace replied, dismissively, “Not offensive.” And then he added: “Just ignorant.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda kī jaya!

Jayādvaita Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated *dandavat pranams* at your lotus feet. Let me eternally massage those feet which are the shelter for all living beings, not just of this universe, for indeed, even the inhabitants of the spiritual world immediately recognize the eminent position of the greatest of souls like you, offering their *dandavat pranams* and throwing flowers in salute. If only I had been qualified to physically massage your lotus feet when you walked this planet. Please grant me that I will be able to do so regardless of your *swarupa* in the spiritual world.

On 10 January, 1972, you wrote what I consider to be my lifetime instructions as to what my duty for you is in this movement. Although I was president of a small temple at the time, having written some initiation recommendations to you, nevertheless I consider your instructions to me to be permanent—not just *desa-kala-patra* for the time being:

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your personal instructions, your orders to me are so heavy. I was an insignificant devotee at an insignificant

temple, and still am insignificant. You were demanding and begging me that **“now you take charge of giving them all good guidance and help on the path back to Home, back to Godhead.”**

“Guide and help all the devotees”.

“All the devotees?” did you mean only the 25 or so in my small temple, or did you literally mean “all the devotees,” even into the future? You were *tri-kala-jna*—who knows past present and future, so you knew that you were going to make me a *sanmyasi* and that I would eventually travel and teach on your behalf all over the world, an ant endeavoring to follow in your giant footsteps; yet “guiding all the devotees” now is very challenging, for many resist, maintaining their own conceptions of what is Krishna consciousness. Please, therefore I am begging, give me the benediction, the strength; empower me to instruct the devotees without offending any of them, so that your order can be fulfilled.

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

You have powerfully ordered me personally, **“...One thing is, that I want that the highest standards of devotional service be maintained...”** Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is very difficult to achieve this goal these days in “modern ISKCON.” Astonishingly, it seems that

hippie philosophy is coming into ISKCON through the back door. What is that? “I’m ok, you’re ok”; in other words, don’t rock the boat. You’re a little off—maybe—but so am I, so I won’t criticize you, and you don’t criticize me, and that swami should not bother us. Obviously I am not suggesting that there should be any rudeness, obnoxiousness, insensitivity, etc, in how attempting to raise standards is achieved; yet silence is also not appropriate. Surely this is not what you want, because your order, which is for all devotees, is crystal clear—no ambiguity whatsoever. Standards must “... **become improved more and more, and** [must not be] **neglected or in any way decreased...**” Again, this heavy instruction is meant for all ISKCON leaders, not just for me. Please give us the strength and fortitude to carry out this essential order.

In a letter to me dated 22 June, 1973, you ordered “...Now you instruct them carefully that they must chant 16 rounds daily without fail and always follow the four regulative principles as well as engage in daily duties of temple attendance, classes and street *sankirtana*. The word initiation means “to begin”—not that when he is initiated a disciple becomes slack; rather upon initiation he begins spiritual life in earnest...” Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda, now there are thousands of initiated devotees who are very “slack.” Please help the movement leaders develop more and more programs and instructions to bring these devotees back to your standards.

To encourage all the devotees who are upset by the reverses and periodic turbulence in our movement such as the destruction of the Moscow temple and Kazakhstan project, I want to present your direct instruction to me on this subject [letter to me, 22 June, 1973]:

“...You have asked what is the mentality of the demons who attacked New Vrndavana and why did this happen? You should know this already, that there are two classes of men, devotees and demons. The whole history is that the peaceful devotees are disturbed by the demons but that the devotees are always victorious by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. In the *Bhagavad-Gīta* Kṛṣṇa ordered Arjuna to declare to the whole world that His devotees would never be vanquished. And in the last verse of the Gīta, Sanjaya says wherever there is Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa’s pure devotee Arjuna there will always be opulence, victory, extraordinary power and morality—*tatra śrīr vijayo bhutir dhruva nitir matir mama*. But because we are

engaged in warfare with the forces of Maya, there will be casualties. Even Arjuna's son, Abhimanyu a 16-year-old boy was killed at the battle of Kuruksetra. We should be prepared to protect the Deities and always expect Kṛṣṇa's Mercy, because we are always dependent on Him and we cannot do anything on our own without Him.

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

Hoping this will meet you in good health.

Your ever well wisher,

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

Śrīla Prabhupāda, here are more vital instructions to me and all the devotees that you intend to be carried out for all time, not just *desa-kala-patra* [Darshan – June 28, 1971, San Francisco]: [Speaking to Makhanlal (me)]:

"...Syamasundara inaugurated this Ratha-yatra here. You know? I advised him to perform Ratha-yatra on a motorcar, and that was the first Ratha-yatra. Then

gradually it came to cart, now it is three. **It is very nice.**
We are improving. More improve, more and more..."

[Note: San Francisco was hardly a wealthy temple in 1971, but we managed to build three Rath cars anyways. Now there are many temples around the world with much greater assets than 1971 San Francisco, yet they do not attempt three cars. However, here we see how pleasing it is (present tense) to Śrīla Prabhupāda. Worldwide, then, we, as a movement, should strive to reach the full pleasure of Śrīla Prabhupāda, rather than considering it impossible. At the 2014 ISKCON Leadership Sanga in Mayapur, a GBC member solemnly and boldly declared from the stage, "The GBC has vowed to carry out *all* the unfulfilled orders of Śrīla Prabhupāda!" This was in front of 450 witnesses. Surely at least some of the readers of this offering recall. Let us all, therefore, work cooperatively, especially during and after this 50th anniversary celebration, to carry out this ambitious goal. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you declared "Impossible is a word in a fools dictionary", so we should not consider this formidable task to be unachievable].

[Darshan – June 28, 1971, San Francisco, you continued instructing me. Note that I was not the temple president and was only a 3½-year devotee, but you were addressing me as if I were in charge. Actually, Jayananda was the president]:

"...Your prasadam this year, I think it is not sufficiently distributed. Why?"

Makhanlal: Not sufficient amount, you mean?

Prabhupāda: Eh?

Makhanlal: Not sufficient menu?

Prabhupāda: Yes. [Note: You were displeased that there was only a little fruit instead of nice *prasada* for distribution. The previous year it had been more opulent. You continued]: **"...Previous year... [there was better *prasada*]... Anyone? Everyone you have got? All right. So this is the difference. I have been in Moscow. So there is... I could not find this. I could not eat fruit. Now your country, Kṛṣṇa has given so nice, so nice flowers, and so nice Vaisnavas...** [Note: You point out that there is no

shortage in America, unlike Russia at that time, so why the skimpy *prasada*? We should take that this was not just a *desa-kala-patra* instruction for San Francisco, but is the standard for our whole movement. "We are improving more and more," you said; yet are we? On the occasion of this 50th anniversary, of Śrīla Prabhupāda, please help us make certain that we are "improving more and more."]

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

[Now you continue, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to define what you mean by "don't slip down"]:

"...Whatever I could do, I have done..." [Oh, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are begging us, with folded hands and tears]: "...Now it is up to you to spread this movement all over the world. Don't go away. There is some tendency, somebody. Therefore, I ask you, no. This is all nonsense. This is Maya's peeping, "Why you are working so hard for a sentiment, chanting and dancing? Come on, take to service and be happy with your wife and children." This is Maya. This is Maya. I did not ask my students to marry to become a lost child. I wanted to give them some facility, because you cannot do without wife. But now I am seeing that some of them are slipping away. This is not to be done, no. Every one of us [is] as good as *sannyasi* because we have sacrificed everything for Kṛṣṇa. *Sannyasi* does not mean simply having no wife and children, he's a *sannyasi*. No. Nothing to possess except Kṛṣṇa. That is *sannyasi*. One should know that "I will have simply Kṛṣṇa, nothing more." Then he is *sannyasi*. This mentality, that "I have nothing

to serve, I have nobody to serve except Kṛṣṇa.” But if you serve Kṛṣṇa, you will serve everyone...”

“...But there is no difficulty. Where is the difficulty? I think we are living better than anyone in the world. (laughter) Where is the difficulty? Simply we have to be very sincere devotee of Kṛṣṇa, that’s all. Everything Kṛṣṇa will supply. Everything. So in that position, go on preaching. [Note: Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are ordering us not to fret over costs, not to dwell in a scarcity mentality, providing, of course, that we preach and engage people vigorously; that we must have full faith that “Kṛṣṇa will supply. Everything.”]

“...Don’t be tottering. You have taken a great responsibility; go on executing it. Don’t fight amongst yourselves for petty things. Go on, advance... Now chalk out your plan how to preach nicely all over the world.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please give us the strength to upgrade this movement according to your orders, to co-operate together especially in the wake of, and honoring, this 50th anniversary, for the need for upgrading is indeed crucial [**“make certain standards are maintained.”**] You have directly ordered me to “become the perfect Krishna conscious angel”, yet how can I possibly attain that goal? It is too high, but on your order, I must try. Perhaps I can become that “perfect angel” when I re-unite with you in the spiritual world.

Respectfully submitted by your eternal servant,

Bhakti Madhurya Govinda Goswami
(formerly Makhanlal Dasa)

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

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

My dear spiritual father,

Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lord Caitanya, and various *ācāryas* predicted your appearance and your spreading of Lord Caitanya's message all over the world, directly and through your assistants. I pray to you that I will always be able to assist you in spreading Lord Caitanya's transcendental *vāṇī*, and that those following me will also be inspired to assist you. The following song I have composed in Bengali highlights Nitāi-Gaura's dissemination of Kṛṣṇa-*prema* and glorifies your role in assisting Lord Caitanya in this effort, especially in the Western countries and, for that matter, all over the world. I hope this song will be useful in the daily spiritual ceremonies of the temples.

Your insignificant servant,

Jayapatākā Swami

সেনাপতি ভক্ত জয় শ্রীল প্রভুপাদ

Senāpati-bhakta, Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda

by Jayapatākā Swami

নিতাই গৌরাঙ্গ নিতাই গৌরাঙ্গ ।

পতিত পাবন নিতাই গৌরাঙ্গ ॥

nitāi gaurāṅga nitāi gaurāṅga

patita pāvana nitāi gaurāṅga

Nitāi Gaurāṅga! Nitāi Gaurāṅga! Savior of the fallen, Nitāi Gaurāṅga!

জয় প্রভুপাদ জয় জয় প্রভুপাদ ।

জয় প্রভুপাদ জয় শ্রীল প্রভুপাদ ॥ ১ ॥

*jaya prabhupāda jaya jaya prabhupāda
jaya prabhupāda jaya śrīla prabhupāda || 1 ||*

All glories to Prabhupāda! All glories, all glories to Prabhupāda! All glories to Prabhupāda! All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

প্রতি যুগে ক্রমে ক্রমে অন্ধকার বাড়ে ।
এই কলিতে নিতাই গৌর পতিত উদ্ধারে ॥ ২ ॥

*prati yuge krame krame andhakāra bāḍe
ei kalite nitāi gaura patita uddhāre || 2 ||*

From age to age, darkness increases progressively. But in this Kali-yuga, Nitāi-Gaura deliver the fallen.

সত্য ত্রেতা দ্বাপরেতে অসুর নিধন ।
এই কলিতে গৌর করে প্রেম বিতরণ ॥ ৩ ॥

*satya tretā dvāparete asura nidhana
ei kalite gaura kare prema vitaraṇa || 3 ||*

In Satya-yuga, Tretā-yuga, and Dvāpara-yuga, the Lord kills the demons. But in this Kali-yuga, Lord Gaura freely distributes Kṛṣṇa-prema.

রূপ মধুরিমা, হরি নাম, সদাচার ।
গৌর মাত্র ভারতদেশে করিল প্রচার ॥ ৪ ॥

*rupa madhurimā, hari nāma, sadācāra
gaura mātra bhāratadeśe karila pracāra || 4 ||*

His weapons were His extremely sweet unparalleled beauty and the congregational chanting of the Holy Names of Kṛṣṇa. His force comprised His practice of the highest level of Vaiṣṇava behavior, etiquette, and purity. But He disseminated love of Kṛṣṇa only in India.

দূর দেশে ভক্তিহীন জীবে উদ্ধারিতে ।
সেনাপতি ভক্ত গৌর পাঠালো পাশ্চাত্যে ॥ ৫ ॥

*dūra deśe bhakti-hīna jīve uddhārite
senāpati-bhakta gaura pāṭhālo pāścātye || 5 ||*

To deliver people devoid of Kṛṣṇa-bhakti in remote countries, Lord Gaurāṅga sent a commander-in-chief devotee to the West.

ভক্তিবেদান্ত স্বামী শ্রীল প্রভুপাদ ।
সেনাপতি ভক্ত জয় শ্রীল প্রভুপাদ ॥ ৬ ॥

bhaktivedānta svāmī śrīla prabhupāda
senāpati-bhakta jaya śrīla prabhupāda || 6 ||

That commander-in-chief devotee (*senāpati-bhakta*) was His Divine Grace Abhayacaranāravinda Bhaktivedānta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda. All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

পৃথিবীতে আছে যত নগরাদি গ্রাম ।
সর্বত্র প্রচারিত হইবে মোর নাম ॥

ভবিষ্যত বাণী সাধু গুরু পুরাণে ।
প্রভুপাদ রূপ দিলা বাস্তব প্রমাণে ॥ ৭ ॥

pr̥thivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma
sarvatra pracārita haibe mora nāma

bhaviṣyat vaṇī sādhu guru purāṇe
prabhupāda rupa dilā vāstava pramāṇe || 7 ||

Lord Caitanya said, “My name will be preached in every town and village throughout the whole world.” Prabhupāda fulfilled this prediction, along with many others made by the *Purāṇas*, saintly persons, and the spiritual masters.

গুরু আজায় প্রভুপাদ গ্রন্থ প্রকাশিলা ।
ভক্ত সবে কোটি কোটি গ্রন্থ বিতরিলা ॥ ৮ ॥

guru ājñāya prabhupāda grantha prakāśilā
bhakta sabe koṭi koṭi grantha vitarilā || 8 ||

Prabhupāda wrote books on the order of his guru, and the devotees have distributed those books in the hundreds of millions. Thus he established that books are the basis of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

খোল নৃত্য গীত সহ শ্রীনাম কীর্তন ।
হরিকথা প্রসাদ সেবা অপূর্ব ঘটন ॥ ৯ ॥

khola nṛtya gīta saha śrīnāma kīrtana
hari-kathā prasāda sevā apūrva ghaṭana || 9 ||

Discussion of the topics of Lord Kṛṣṇa; the honoring of *mahā-prasāda*; the rendering of many kinds of devotional service; and the singing of the Holy Name accompanied by dancing and the playing of *mṛdaṅgas*, *karatālas*, and other musical instruments—all these took place wonderfully.

দেশে দেশে কৃপা শ্রদ্ধা শিক্ষা দীক্ষা দিল ।
দিব্য জ্ঞান প্রচার শক্ত্যে ভক্ত সংখ্যা বাড়ে ॥ ১০ ॥

deśe deśe kṛpā śraddhā śikṣā dīkṣā dila
divya jñāna pracāra śaktye bhakata bādila || 10 ||

From country to country, all over the world, he bestowed mercy, instilled faith, gave instructions, and performed initiations. Thus by his potent dissemination of transcendental knowledge, the numbers of devotees increased. Prabhupāda showed personally how to apply the principle of “preaching is the essence.”

মন্দিরে কীর্তন পূজা-আদি অনুষ্ঠান ।
গৃহে সেবা, নামহট্টাদি কৃষ্ণ-ভক্তি দান ॥ ১১ ॥

mandire kīrtana pūjā utsava dekhi' trāṇa
gṛhe sevā nāma-haṭṭādi kṛṣṇa-bhakti-dāna || 11 ||

By witnessing and participating in temple *kīrtanas*, ceremonies, worship, and festivals, many people were delivered. By practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness in their homes, worshipping the Deities, and by participating in Nāma-haṭṭas, Bhakti-vṛkṣas, and other congregational expansion programs, many people developed ever-increasing Kṛṣṇa-*bhakti* and gave it to others. In this way, Kṛṣṇa consciousness went viral by applying the maxim “utility is the principle.”

বিশ্বের নানা প্রান্ত হতে বৈষ্ণবগণ ।
ভারতে আর্ঘ্যভ্রাতায় করে আলিঙ্গন ॥
'জয় গৌর' বলি নবদ্বীপ পরিক্রমা ।
মস্তকে লেপন করে ধাম ধূলিকণা ॥ ১২ ॥

viśvera nānā prānta hate vaiṣṇavagaṇa
bhārate āryabhṛātāya kare āliṅgana
'jaya gaura' bali navadoīpa parikramā
mastake lepana kare dhāma dhūlikaṇā || 12 ||

Vaiṣṇavas from all over the world come and circumambulate

Navadvīpa-dhāma. They take the dust of the holy *dhāma* on their heads and without any prejudice regarding caste, color, creed, or nationality, they embrace their Indian brothers and chant “Jaya Gaura, Jaya Gaura, Jaya Śacī-nandana!” In this way they achieve transcendental unity in diversity.

বিশ্ব চালক মণ্ডলী করিলা গঠন ।
মিলে মিশে সেবা করার নির্দেশ অর্পণ ॥ ১৩ ॥

viśva cālaka maṇḍalī karilā gaṭhana
mīle miśe sevā karāra nirdeśa arpaṇa || 13 ||

He formed the Governing Body Commission (GBC) as the ultimate managing authority for ISKCON and instructed everyone to serve cooperatively according to the GBC’s direction.

প্রভুপাদ সধগরিলা কৃষ্ণভাবনামৃত ।
স্বর্ণযুগের জয়পতাকা হইল উত্তলিত ॥ ১৪ ॥

prabhupāda sañcārīlā kṛṣṇabhāvanāmṛta
svaṛṇayugera jayapatākā haila uttolita || 14 ||

Prabhupāda infused Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world, and thus the victory flag of the ten-thousand-year golden age was hoisted.

Prahlādānanda Swami

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

namaste sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe

Keeping Śrīla Prabhupāda in One’s Heart

The more we follow Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions, the more Śrīla Prabhupāda will appear and remain within our hearts. By his divine association, we will also have the association of all the previous *ācāryas* in our disciplic succession, including the Six Gosvāmīs, along with the Paśca-tattva and Lord Kṛṣṇa and His associates in Goloka Vṛndāvana.

In the material world, people have different ideas about success and failure, but only an activity performed with pure devotion and resulting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a successful one. Consciously or unconsciously, every living entity is constantly consulting with the Supersoul within their heart. Kṛṣṇa consciousness will come to one who consults with Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and who understands His desires directly, or indirectly through His representatives, before he or she acts. Such a person will then act out of devotion to please Śrī Kṛṣṇa; otherwise, he or she will be lost in the whirlpool of material misconceptions.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mission in this material world is to deliver the conditioned souls. Since in Kali-yuga He came as Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in this age service to Lord Kṛṣṇa means service to Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu requested that we try to assist those we meet in reviving their eternal, spiritual relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa by giving them the holy name, a transcendental book, spiritual knowledge, *prasādam*, a smile, and so on. During such exchanges, Lord Kṛṣṇa will give us the transcendental intelligence and expertise to help ourselves and others advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, pure devotional service. This will truly satisfy our spiritual masters and will keep Śrīla Prabhupāda, along with all other great spiritual personalities, within our hearts. That is the secret of spiritual success.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's servant,

Prahlādānanda Swami

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

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

Begging for a place at your lotus feet,

Your unworthy servant,

Trivikrama Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I beg to offer my most respectful obeisances at your divine lotus feet. This year we are going to celebrate your 120th birth anniversary. First I want to apologies for not having submitted my Vyāsa-pūjā offering in time last year. I also admit that I am most unqualified to describe your unlimited transcendental glories and achievements.

On August 13 2015, we celebrated the Golden Jubilee of your *Jaladuta* Yātrā. Our Kolkata temple organized a major celebration on this auspicious occasion. You struggled in India before starting your journey to America. You agreed to travel in a cargo ship. You experienced sickness, dizziness, headache, vomiting and lack of appetite during your 35 days sea voyage. You even suffered two heart attacks. After your second heart attack you thought that your mission may not be successful. Lord Krishna appeared to you in a dream in which He was steering the boat and he assured you not to fear but to go ahead with your mission.

This year we are celebrating the Golden Jubilee of your incorporation of ISKCON as a legal society and the opening of your first ISKCON temple in New York. At the time of incorporation a friend had suggested that you call it International Society for 'GOD' Consciousness. You insisted that the word God was vague whereas Krishna was exact and scientific. Two months ago we had a big celebration in Mumbai in which several ISKCON leaders, devotees and thousands of congregational devotees participated. In the last week of May we are going to have a big festival in Delhi in which important political dignitaries and over 3000 devotees will participate.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you offered the entire world a way to live peacefully by uniting under the banner of Krishna consciousness. Your transcendental fame and glories is increasing everyday as your movement continues to spread all over the word. More people are taking to Krishna consciousness because of the enthusiasms of your devotees and the potency of your books. Your books are transcendental weapons that cut through all the layers of ignorance and false ego. Recently I had the privilege of presenting to the Indian Prime Minister the Deluxe edition of the Gītā produced by Madhusevita Prabhu. The PM appreciated the Gītā very much and was pleased to hear that your Gītā has been translated in more than

70 languages of the world. On several occasions the PM mentioned that ISKCON was doing good work.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the real inspiration behind all our activities—preaching, book distribution, temple construction, *prasāda* distribution, farm development etc. History will recognize you as the savior of humanity.

On this most auspicious day I want to fall at your lotus feet and beg for forgiveness for my countless offenses. Please continue to engage me in your ISKCON society birth after birth.

Your insignificant servant,

Gopal Krishna Goswami

Girirāj Swami

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

*namaste sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Full Faith: Our Greatest Treasure Śrīla Prabhupāda and ISKCON after Fifty Years

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disciple Dhanañjaya Dāsa told me that at his initiation Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “*Dhanañjaya* means ‘winner of wealth,’” and added, moving his arms all around, “Money is flying in all directions—you simply have to learn the art of catching it.”

The next morning Dhanañjaya raised a question related to a purport he had read in Prabhupāda’s *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* (1.12.33):

Mahārāja Marutta: . . . [He] conducted one sacrifice called Saṅkāra-yajña by which the Lord was so satisfied that He was pleased to hand over to him the charge of a mountain peak of gold. This peak of gold is somewhere in the Himalaya Mountains, and modern adventurers may try to find it there.

“Śrīla Prabhupāda,” Dhanañjaya asked, “Is it true that there is mountain peak in the Himalayas made of solid gold?”

“Yes, there is such a peak.”

“Do you know where it is?”

“Why do you want to know?” Prabhupāda asked.

Dhanañjaya perceived that ISKCON was not doing well financially, and so he said, “Well, if you tell me where it is, I’ll get a rucksack [backpack] and a special hammer and chisel and go to the top of that mountain, hack away at the gold, fill up the rucksack, and come down, and then we can use that gold in Kṛṣṇa’s service. So would you let me know where that mountain peak is?”

“No,” Prabhupāda replied.

“Why not?” Dhanañjaya asked.

“That would become too controversial,” Prabhupāda said. Then he added, “Actually, more valuable than gold are devotees. You should make devotees.”

Dhanañjaya took that instruction to heart and has always tried to make devotees—and along with making devotees, keeping devotees. Naturally, if we gain some wealth, we don’t want to lose it—we want to preserve it and increase it.

As Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote,

It is better to maintain a devotee than to try to convince others to become devotees. It is the duty of the GBC to *maintain* the devotees, keep them in the highest standard of Krishna Consciousness, and give them all good instruction, and let them go out and preach for making more devotees. Your first job should be to make sure that every one of the devotees in your zone of management is reading regularly our literatures and discussing the subject matter seriously from different angles of seeing, and that they are somehow or other absorbing the knowledge of Krishna Consciousness philosophy. If they are fully educated in our philosophy and if they can get all of the knowledge and study it from every viewpoint, then very easily they will perform *tapasya*, or renunciation, and that will be their

advancement in Krishna Consciousness. So first thing is to instruct all of your temple presidents and the other devotees to read daily, just as we have done in our morning class in Los Angeles, . . . reading one *sloka* each morning in Sanskrit and reciting it all together and then discussing it thoroughly by seeing different new things. So you introduce this system and train the devotees first. Don't be too much concerned for the time being with nondevotees. Now we must fix up what devotees we have got in the knowledge of Krishna Consciousness; then we will succeed. What good are many, many devotees if none of them are knowledgeable? [Letter to Satsvarūpa, 16 June 1972]

In a similar vein, Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote,

So I want you leaders especially to become very much absorbed in the philosophy of *Bhagavad-gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, and become yourselves completely convinced and free from all doubt. On this platform you shall be able to carry on the work satisfactorily, but if there is lack of knowledge, or if there is forgetfulness, everything will be spoiled in time. So especially you must encourage the students to read our books throughout the day as much as possible, and give them all good advice how to understand the books, and inspire them to study the things from every point of view. In this way, by constantly engaging our tongues in the service of the Lord, either by discussing His philosophy or by chanting Hare Krishna, the truth is that Krishna Himself will reveal Himself to us and we shall understand how to do everything properly. Now we have got so many students and so many temples, but I am fearful that if we expand too much in this way we shall become weakened and gradually the whole thing will become lost. Just like milk. We may thin it more and more with water for cheating the customer, but in the end it will cease to be any longer milk. Better to boil the milk now very vigorously and make it thick and sweet, that is the best process. So let us concentrate on training our devotees very thoroughly in the knowledge of Krishna consciousness from our books, from tapes, by discussing always, and in so many ways instruct them in the right

propositions. [Letter to Hansaduta, 22 June 1972]

Śrīla Prabhupāda has a disciple named Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, who had been a follower of Sai in Hawaii and had joined ISKCON when Sai, along with other followers, had come to surrender to Śrīla Prabhupāda. Prabhupāda initiated Sai as Siddhasvarūpa Dāsa, and Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa eventually came to serve in Bombay. There he met and engaged with Mr. Nair, who eventually tried to cheat Śrīla Prabhupāda and committed many grievous offenses against him, the Deities Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī, and the devotees. In response to a letter from Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa, Prabhupāda wrote:

Your next question, after leaving this material realm does the devotee remain forever with his spiritual master? The answer is yes. But I think you have got some mistaken idea in this connection. You speak of pure devotee, that he is *saktyavesa avatara*, that we should obey him only—these things are the wrong idea. If anyone thinks like that, that a pure devotee should be obeyed and no one else, that means he is a nonsense. We advise everyone to address one another as Prabhu. Prabhu means master, so how the master should be disobeyed? Others, they are also pure devotees. All of my disciples are pure devotees. Anyone sincerely serving the spiritual master is a pure devotee; it may be Siddhasvarupa or others, a-Siddhasvarupa [the Sanskrit prefix *a* means “not”]. This must be very clearly stated. It is not that only your Siddhasvarupa is a pure devotee and not others. Do not try to make a faction. Siddhasvarupa is a good soul. But others should not be misled. Anyone who is surrendered to the spiritual master is a pure devotee—it doesn’t matter if Siddhasvarupa or non-Siddhasvarupa. Amongst ourselves one should respect others as Prabhu, master—one another. As soon as we distinguish here is a pure devotee, here is a non-pure devotee, that means I am a nonsense. Why you only want to be in the spiritual sky with Siddhasvarupa? Why not all? If Siddhasvarupa can go, why not everyone? Siddhasvarupa will go, you will go, Syamasundara will go, all others will go. We will have another ISKCON there. Of course, Mr. Nair must stay. [Letter to Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa, 14 December 1972]

Another ISKCON in the spiritual sky—what would that be like?

The supreme spiritual planet has different sections. In one, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya's pastimes are talking place, and in another, Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. "This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is for approaching Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa," Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "to be associated with the Supreme Lord in His sublime pleasure dance. That is the aim of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, . . . to enter into the dancing party of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa." (Lecture on the song *Nitāi-pada-kamala*, 21 December 1968, Los Angeles)

In his letter to Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa, after saying that we will have another ISKCON in the spiritual sky, Śrīla Prabhupāda added, "And if somebody does not go, then I shall have to come back to take him there." In other words, every one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's followers is meant to meet him in the spiritual sky and serve him eternally; and when we meet him we'll find that his other followers are also there, and thus our relationships with one another are also eternal, through Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Later, another of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples, Upendra Dāsa', wrote him:

There are times when I take all my relationships within ISKCON and the pleasures and difficulties as something like a dream only. I am reminded of the time you explained to me that there is no reality in this world save and except the Divine Name and service to Him. In the *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* I have also read that all this having to do with past, present, and future is a dream only. I am understanding, "Yes, even these relations as my wife, my children, or my friends or close godbrothers in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, ISKCON, are like sticks meeting in a stream, to be separated in time, but with the same end of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, back to home, or the ocean—that they are still part of these past, present, and future of the measuring temperament, though the devotional service and sentiments therein are eternally developing or lasting." It was raised that "No, our relationships formed here in ISKCON with one another are eternal in themselves in addition to the service, that ISKCON and we members as we are known now shall be known there." All this I was unable to support scripturally, and lest I make an offense and direct error, I place this before you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda replied:

As to your question concerning whether relationships between devotees are eternal, the answer is “yes.” This is confirmed by Sri Narottama dasa Thakura: *cakhu-dan dilo yei, janme janme prabhu sei*—“He is my lord birth after birth.” In this way you have to understand, by studying carefully the philosophy. [Letter to Upendra, 7 January 1976]

Once, at the opening of a bank, Śrīla Prabhupāda quoted the saying that “money attracts money,” that wealth attracts wealth, but where did the original wealth, the devotees in ISKCON, come from initially?

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Antya* 2.6) explains the mood and method of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu: *‘loka nistāriba’—ei īśvara-svabhāva*: “‘I shall deliver the fallen souls.’ This statement characterizes the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” A few verses later (*Antya* 2.13–14), we find a description of His method for delivering people who could not meet Him personally:

*tā-sabā tārīte prabhu sei saba deśe
yogya-bhakta jīva-dehe karena ‘āveśe’
sei jīve nija-bhakti karena prakāśe
tāhāra darśane ‘vaiṣṇava’ haya sarva-deśe*

“To deliver people in regions throughout the universe who could not meet Him, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu personally entered the bodies of pure devotees. Thus He empowered living beings (His pure devotees) by manifesting in them so much of His own devotion that people in all other countries became devotees by seeing them.”

This passage describes how Lord Caitanya empowered Śrīla Prabhupāda, who elaborates on this principle in his purport:

As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 7.11):

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

Unless one is empowered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, one cannot spread the holy names of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* throughout the world. Persons who do so are empowered. Therefore they are sometimes called *āveśa-avatāras*, or empowered incarnations, for they are endowed with the power of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

The first devotees in ISKCON were inspired and engaged by Śrīla Prabhupāda—or by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu through Śrīla Prabhupāda. And following Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Prabhupāda manifested the same mood: *loka nistāriba*—“I shall deliver the fallen souls.”

In our line, in ISKCON, we are meant to receive mercy and to distribute it, to taste Kṛṣṇa consciousness and to share it with others—by the grace of Śrī Śrī Guru and *Gaurāṅga*.

To distribute the mercy and message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Prabhupāda translated many books, with full faith in his spiritual master—Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—and Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote:

It is to be admitted that whatever translation work I have done is through the inspiration of my spiritual master, because personally I am most insignificant and incompetent to do this materially impossible work. I do not think myself a very learned scholar, but I have full faith in the service of my spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. If there is any credit to my activities of translating, it is all due to His Divine Grace. . . . He was very fond of seeing many books published to spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Therefore our society, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, has been formed to execute the order of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Concluding Words]

In 1971, one of our early life members in Calcutta, Shyamsunder Maheshwari, approached Śrīla Prabhupāda when I happened to be in the room. He said, “So many spiritual organizations begin well, in the presence of the founder, but after the founder dies the institutions break apart because the followers fight over the material assets of the institution. What will happen to ISKCON after you leave?”

Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, “That will not happen in ISKCON, because these American and European boys and girls have had enough of material opulence and enjoyment, from before they came to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In fact, they have given up their material wealth and facilities to join ISKCON, so they will not fight over these things.”

In 1973, Śrīla Prabhupāda was invited to be guest of honor at a

series of lectures and discussions to be held at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in Girgaum Chowpatty, South Bombay, on the subject of how the *Bhagavad-gītā* could solve the world's problems. The president of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Lilavati Munshi, was eager to meet Prabhupāda, and she extended a personal invitation for him to join her for tea in the library of her quarters, also in the Bhavan building, just before the conference. And so Śrīla Prabhupāda, accompanied by Śyāmasundara, Śrutakīrti, and me, went to meet Mrs. Munshi.

Several other conference presenters—sādhus, swamis, and political figures—and other important persons were also there to meet Śrīla Prabhupāda, but even within this group of esteemed leaders, everyone accepted Prabhupāda as *the* leader.

As soon as Prabhupāda was seated, everyone started praising him for the wonderful work he had done in spreading Indian culture throughout the world. Mrs. Munshi in particular was astonished by Prabhupāda's success. "How did you do it?" she kept asking. "How did you get them to shave their heads? How did you get them to wear *dhotīs* and *kurtās* and *tilaka*? How did you get the girls to wear saris?" Prabhupāda explained that although there had been many editions of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, it had not been presented "as it is" and there had not been any programs to train students to follow its principles. Although there were so many branches and institutions of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan—both within and outside India—and although they were disseminating books, there was no program for training young men and women to become followers of Vedic culture. Books were required, and training was also required. And he had given both.

Then Mrs. Munshi brought up a point that was on many people's minds. "Quite often when the founder of a mission is present," she said, "the mission is very successful—it flourishes and prospers—but after the founder leaves, things deteriorate. So what will be the future of your movement after you go?"

"The future of my mission is very bright," Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, "as long as my disciples follow my instructions. Just like Gandhi—he had so many programs, but after he left, his followers changed everything. He wanted village organization, he wanted the economy to be based on agriculture, and after he left, Nehru and others changed the whole program. They wanted to industrialize India and imitate the West. So, he had his program, but after he left his so-called followers changed everything and everything became

spoiled. So in the same way, if I leave and my followers change what I've given, what can I do?" By saying this, he challenged us, his followers, with the responsibility of remaining faithful to his instructions.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or *bhakti-yoga*, begins—and progresses—with faith (*ādau śraddhā*). This *śraddhā*, faith and attraction, matures and intensifies into *prema*, pure love of Godhead, and ultimately *mahā-bhāva*, the most exalted stage of ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa.

ISKCON is built on the foundation of Śrīla Prabhupāda's faith in his Guru Mahārāja and Kṛṣṇa:

*yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanaḥ*

"Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed." (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.23)

Śrīla Prabhupāda's faith in his spiritual master and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is manifest in every aspect of ISKCON and is the cause of its success. He wrote:

[We] took up the mission of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to preach the cult of Caitanya Mahāprabhu all over the world, under the protection of all the predecessor *ācāryas*, and we find that our humble attempt has been successful. . . . "To one who has staunch faith in the words of the spiritual master and the words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the secret of success in Vedic knowledge is revealed." The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is being propagated according to this principle, and therefore our preaching work is going on successfully, in spite of the many impediments offered by antagonistic demons, because we are getting positive help from our previous *ācāryas*. . . . [T]he success of the ISKCON party, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, which strictly follows guru and Gaurāṅga, is increasing daily all over the world. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura wanted to print as many books as possible and distribute them all over the world. We have tried our best in this connection, and we are getting results beyond our expectations. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 12.8, purport]

And in his last year with us, Śrīla Prabhupāda explained:

Now, I'll say from my practical life . . . It is not pride. Actually everyone knows that my Guru Mahārāja had thousands of disciples. So out of thousands of disciples, practically I am little successful. That everyone knows. Why? Because I firmly believed in the words of my guru. That's all. There may be many other godbrothers, maybe very learned and very advanced, favored, whatever it may be. . . . So I think sometimes that "Why this wonderful thing has happened to me?" So I search out. I search out only that I cent percent believe in the words of my spiritual master. That's all, nothing else. *Guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete koriyā aikya, āra nā koriho mane āśā*. Don't think of any nonsense. Simply execute what your guru has said. That is success. [Conversation, Bhubaneswar, 28 January 1977]

Faith in Śrīla Prabhupāda and his line is our greatest treasure. If we lose that, then everything is lost. In the same conversation in Bhubaneswar, a disciple gave the translation of *guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete koriyā aikya, āra nā koriho mane āśā*—"My only wish is to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from his lotus mouth"—and Prabhupāda responded, "Then he's safe. And as soon as he manufactures—finished. So don't do it. *Yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau/ tasyaite kathitā*. This is the secret of spiritual success."

I can only pray to develop such faith, and to remain in the association of devotees who have that faith, whether in this realm or that, in ISKCON here or in the spiritual world.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's aspiring servant eternally,

Girirāj Swami

Tribute to Śrīla Prabhupāda

I bow at the feet of my eternal spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Only pure devotion to Krishna could inspire and empower Prabhupāda to tirelessly glorify Krishna. Prabhupāda did this with no material motive, no selfish desire. Out of spontaneous love of Krishna, He devoted his entire being to the Lord's mission.

In doing so, he manifested extraordinary intelligence, both practical and philosophical, along with pure love for all souls, who are part of Krishna.

By following Prabhupāda sincerely and contributing to his mission, we may aspire to become useful in his service.

His servant,

Hridayānanda dāsa Goswami

B.V. Bhāgavat Swami

The Spiritual King of the Golden Boulevard

You came to save us oh fearless one
One divine personality alone but with many
You walked the streets of New York City
Looking for that place to save lost souls

Your favorite boulevard was 5th Avenue
New York is the greatest city in the world, you surmised
And 5th Avenue is the street in that city which is
paved with gold
Certainly if I find a building on this Golden Boulevard
Lord Caitanya's movement would become a success

Many a day you walked up and down the
Golden Boulevard
Trying to find that special place to save lost souls
Would this building work? Is this the place to begin?
Your efforts were tireless, your

determination overflowing the brim

Finally you found a beautiful building that you were sure was the one

You wrote to wealthy Indian businessmen to get the money
When they refused you wrote to your godbrothers
Unfortunately they not only gave no money,
They did not even give some solace or emotional support

But you marched on, undeterred by all these setbacks
You were sure that someday, some way you
would conquer the Golden Boulevard

You went to the Lower East Side and you found
a matchless gift

Later you moved up the street to expand with your
growing following
Then the move to Brooklyn and the two large
brownstones with a chapel
You had mixed feelings about the move
since it was not Manhattan

Finally you obtained your gem, a 13 story building in
Manhattan on 8th Avenue

Just three streets from the Golden Boulevard
However nothing would compare with the amazing event
about to take place

We were now in Manhattan and we held
Rathayātrā on the Golden Boulevard

With all the majesty of the great spiritual king that you are,
you sat on the chariot,

Going down the Golden Boulevard that you had once
walked up and down

In search of the place that would be the beginning of Lord
Caitanya's movement,

Now you returned with a 13 story building, three grand
chariots, and thousands of followers to traverse the path

Surveying the great shops and buildings with their

boundless material wealth along the Golden Boulevard
from atop your seat on the chariot
You were no longer the wandering sage with the pointy
shoes walking the Avenue
You were the Grand Marshal on the chariot of the greatest
spiritual parade in the world
The Golden Boulevard was now laid at your
feet and you floated over it effortlessly

You had returned to the greatest street in the greatest
city in the world
Not as one who had been beaten down by the great
behemoth of New York
But as the conquering hero with your 13 story building and
thousands of followers
You rode the grand chariot down the Golden
Boulevard and on that day you had arrived,
Lord Caitanya's movement had arrived

Your broad smile and sparkling eyes revealed the
deep sense of satisfaction on your lotus face and in
your divine heart.
How happy you must have been that you had come to
fulfill the order of your guru
You established the mission of Mahāprabhu not just any
place, but the greatest place
In the greatest city in the world, New York, near the Golden
Boulevard in that city
Now you rode down that Golden Boulevard triumphantly
the spiritual king of the greatest city in the world New York

On that day Śrīla Prabhupāda you exhibited your
true position as Spiritual King of the world.

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your insignificant servant,

B.V. Bhāgavat Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa preṣṭhāya bhū-
taleśrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmin iti nāmine*

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda! You were totally fixed in following the order of your guru mahārāja His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. His order was to translate the essence of the Vedic scriptures *Bhāgavad-gītā* and Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and spread Krishna consciousness to the English speaking people. By miraculously accomplishing this seemingly impossible task at the age of 69 years you have paved the way for all of us to go back to Godhead, simply by cooperating to spread the *saṅkīrtan* mission of Lord Chaitanya.

This year—2016—is the 50th Anniversary year of your establishing ISKCON for fulfilling Lord Chaitanya’s desire that in every town and village of the world, the holy name of Krishna will be resounding. It is without a doubt that you, in your *vāṇī* form, are directing us as the captain of the ISKCON ship to cross over the ocean of birth and death. “You live forever by your divine instructions, and the follower lives with you.” Therefore on this 50th Anniversary year of the foundation of ISKCON in 1966 we only aspire to be your worthy humble crew members and somehow or other get millions on board your ship to go back to Godhead.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your special mercy, for the last eight months I have been allowed to travel as a member of the adventurous Harināma Ruci street *saṅkīrtan* party (HR) which has been travelling on its 4th world tour spreading the holy names and about 50,000 of your books. They are your grand-disciples lead by HG Vishnujana Dāsa (Slovakia) and their current team is composed of Gaura Karuṇā Dāsa (Czech Republic), Shyāmrāsa Dāsa (Croatia), his wife Maṅgalāvātī Devī Dāsī (Ivory Coast), Harināmānanda Dāsa (Australia) and Bh Sāndīpanimuni (UK). When they visit a city, all the local devotees are inspired and enthusiastically swell the numbers. They also have a popular website on Facebook called “Harināma Ruci”.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, since the recent 50th Anniversary Festival of

your 1965 arrival in Boston, USA, HR has visited many cities in USA, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Fiji, New Zealand, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and now Japan. Everywhere local devotees are offering support and hospitality because they know this group is fulfilling your desire for a world travelling *sañkīrtan* party. By your mercy this 50th Anniversary year of ISKCON HR party will complete doing *harināma sañkīrtan* in 50 countries!

Śrīla Prabhupāda! There is also more very exciting good news! Every place we go we see that despite Kali-yuga's ruthless grip on people's minds and senses, the holy names are so powerful that there is a growing natural interactive response amongst people to tap their feet, clap their hands and respond to the chanting. Their faces light up and many dance with us and take books and *prasāda*. This is proof that Lord Chaitanya's moon is rising steadily and proof of the plain truth of *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* Madhya 22 text 107:-

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

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

Madhya 22.108

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

Thank you.

Your humble servant,

Mahāviṣṇu Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In your presence, I offer my humble obeisances.

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa preṣṭhāya bhū-
taleśrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmin iti nāmine*

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

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

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

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

As I write this offering, I am aware that this day is in the past in relation to when I will actually read it for you on your Vyāsa-pūjā day. And then that time will be in the past and another year will have passed by. One day, another fifty years will have passed, and there will be a celebration of ISKCON's centennial.

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

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

Your attempting servant,

Smita Krishna Swami

*om aṣṭāna-timirāndasya jṣānāṣjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmīlitam yena tasmai śrī-guruve namaḥ.*

You are the *yantrī*, you are doing everything; we are *yantra*, we are only instruments in your hands.

“Thousands of devotees and temples are already there but we are separated only by time. You may not be able to see but I can see.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, you used to say these words because you are on a transcendental platform, beyond the three modes, beyond the worldly nature... only you could see all these. You taught us to simply follow your instructions and get the credits, *nimitta mātra*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it was in the early seventies that you instructed me and few other disciples to go to Bangladesh and preach to the people there. It was the time when a war going on in Bangladesh and still you were prepared to send your own men to preach the *saṅkīrtan* movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Actually you were not sending anybody there but you yourself were going to the field through your representatives, those who were your limbs. You were preparing to preach through them.

There was a time was when Dhaka, the present capital of Bangladesh, was known as second Vrindāvana. Almost every street proclaimed their own Rādhā Krishna temples, and *Hare Krishna mahā-mantra kīrtan* accompanied by the sounds of the *mṛdaṅgas* and *kartāls* would vibrate at each turn of the road, combined with the sounds of bells and gongs saturating the whole atmosphere. Time brought its changes and the second Vrindāvana was lost... in the stringent waves of time itself.

Again time, out of its own accord, started to reveal the lost traces of that same Vrindāvana where Narottama Dās appeared, where Rūpa and Sanātana performed pastimes, where Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi with Vasudeva and Mukunda had sweet dealings with Gadādhara. Where Śrī Advaita brought all the holy rivers so that the aged residents of His village, especially His old mother, could bathe in them and fulfil their heartfelt desire. It was as if time had become imbued with the magnanimous nature of Mahāprabhu Himself and therefore was revealing all these pastime places just as Nityānanda Prabhu would give love of God to anybody and everybody without any consideration of being qualified or not. And time had already

started the preparation for something wonderful as if it were eager to again witness Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtan*, but this time...in that long lost second Vrindāvana.

God's words are sat saṅkalpa, it will happen; and anybody who has faith and follows...his life will be sublime. So too are your words Śrīla Prabhupāda. You used to say "*kasta korle Krishna mile*", if one works hard for the sake of Krishna's pleasure, taking all sorts of trouble, rest assured, he will surely get the mercy of Krishna. And again you would say, "...and if somebody is preaching in very difficult circumstances, even taking the risk of life, he will get special mercy from Krishna."

It was a critical time — both for a country which was badly affected by a war and also for the devotees who had taken your instructions very seriously for they were to take the risk of their lives. Any moment they could have been killed, some were even sent back to India at gunpoint by the army seeing that they were Westerners preaching Vedic philosophy. But still some took this as a challenge, nay, more like an opportunity to please the spiritual master and eventually the Lord Himself...unconditionally. Preaching started incognito; devotees would go about around Dhaka city in civilian clothes searching out favourable persons who were willing to accept the message of Mahāprabhu. In a Muslim dominated country, preaching Krishna consciousness carries its own set of risks: Intimidations, threats from the locals, the police, going to jail, attacks by bandits, no surety of food or accommodation; the list would go on.

Although devotees were going through difficult times, you were there, watching over them, taking care of them because, as you said, they were your limbs and through them you were to sow the seeds of devotional service and only you could analyse that the land was fertile. Your men started preaching in Bangladesh feeling apparent separation from you, but you were not separated from them, rather you were always there with them.

"I am doing everything, you are my limbs'. 'I gave you the skeleton. Now you develop it."

Today, in that same Bangladesh, there are 75 temples, 52 out of 64 districts have Ratha yātrās, 25,000 congregation members, 250 Bhakti Vriksha branches, 500 resident *brahmachārīs* in the different temples, 36,000 students are involved in school, college, and university preaching, and the latest record of distributing 700,000

Śrīla Prabhupāda books in a year. Among these figures, being eager to be a recipient of your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we made a small endeavour with just a handful of devotees to be a part of your preaching movement in Bangladesh. By your mercy, one full-fledged temple with 30 *brahmachārīs* has come up at Netrakona having Rathayātrā, student preaching, festivals, preaching in tribal areas, and book distribution. New preaching centres at Narayanganj, Jamalpur, Dhaka have also been engaging in regular preaching activities. Although our efforts are relatively minute compared to the overall offerings from Bangladesh, we hope you would be pleased and graciously accept this small offering just as Lord Krishna accepts the simple garlands of small forest flowers prepared by His cowherd boyfriends because they have saturated the offering with pure love. Compared to the roses and lotuses, a small forest flower goes unnoticed but when its aroma gets distributed throughout the forest by the wind, Krishna and his friends, being attracted, come and decorate themselves with these seemingly insignificant flowers.

Yes Śrīla Prabhupāda, today we can see the thousands of devotees and numerous temples that you were speaking of and indeed only time was separating us. All the while, time was waiting for you, making preparations for your preaching to take roots in different regions — not only to bring back the second Vrindāvana in Bangladesh but to establish Vrindāvana in all parts of the world.

Simply because of your unconditional grace we have been able to show some accomplishments in the direction of the preaching movement established by our previous *ācāryas* and as given by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. All credit goes to you Prabhupāda, for you are doing everything, you are the *yantrī* and we are simply *yantra*, the instruments in your hands.

Your servant,

Śrīmat Subhāg

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

This year is a very special one for all of us as it is now the 50th anniversary of the incorporation of ISKCON. ISKCON is still alive and growing and while it has its problems, it also has had some successes. I would like to tell you of some successes that I am aware of but I am sure there are many more.

You told us how your spiritual master instructed you that if you ever get money then use it to print books and you asked us to make that a policy. In this regard the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust continues to print all of your writings and has gone on to publish some of the important works of the Goswāmīs such as *Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta*, *Laghu Bhāgavatāmṛta*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Leela Skanda and now the *Sandharbhas* of Jīva Goswāmī. In addition, your leading disciples have taken up their pens and are publishing their own works. Your *Back to Godhead* continues to serve as an important communication journal for all the devotees as well as an introduction magazine for newcomers. There are also several other editions produced in local languages such as Bengali and Hindi, and a special English edition for the Indian market.

Recent figures show that there are now over 750 ISKCON centers around the world. As per the desire of Your Divine Grace, whenever there are sufficient funds, and without stopping the preaching and book distribution, then facilities are arranged for the worship of the Lord. An example of this is the magnificent temple opened last year in Malaysia, a predominantly Muslim country. Your Divine Grace had visited Malaysia in the early 1970's and requested that a temple of Rādhā and Krishna should be constructed there, and the devotees have fulfilled your desire. In February of this year, a newly constructed temple opened in Ekachakra dhām, the birth place of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu. New centers are also well under way and will be opened soon in Trivandrum and Colombo.

I am sure there are many other projects taking place in other parts of the globe but I am only describing the places I am familiar with.

In Bangladesh there are now 75 ISKCON centers and lakhs of devotees. The Dacca Rathayātrā is one of the biggest cart festivals held anywhere in the world. Myanmar is another country where

Krishna consciousness is expanding, and at present there are some 15 centers throughout the country.

Your Divine Grace desired that all of your disciples to take up the work of being spiritual master, provided they strictly follow your instructions. In your absence there are more than one hundred initiating gurus and many others are there who are also well-qualified but are satisfied to serve by giving their valuable guidance and instruction.

In order that all new members of ISKCON have a proper understanding of the qualifications of the guru and their relationship with Your Divine Grace, there is now mandatory participation in the ISKCON Disciple Course (IDC). This also ensures that candidates for initiation are fully conversant with the initiation standards as well as the ISKCON management structure. It is hoped that this will increase the quality of new devotees entering into the society and allow more harmonious dealings between devotees of different gurus and of different generations.

Your Divine Grace desired to fulfill the prediction of Śrīla Bhaktinode Ṭhākura that a great temple, an *adbhuta mandir*, would appear in Māyāpur. The entire worldwide ISKCON society is doing its utmost to contribute towards the cost, and construction is well underway. It is hoped that it can be completed by 2022. We have to thank the outstanding contribution of your devoted disciple Ambarīsh Prabhu for taking up a leading role—both as a donor and collector.

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

While there are great things happening or have already happened, we have to be conscious of maintaining the standards. Lavish buildings and temple worship is not meant for just collecting some income and maintaining. That will be like what Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī described as keeping a *shāligrām* and using it to break nuts. Also increasing the numbers of devotees is not the goal but we want to see them all qualified to go back to Godhead. Our real business is to fight *māyā* and this requires that we educate people in this regard. We pray that we may have the benediction of dying on the battlefield as we take part in this great battle.

Your most unworthy disciple,

Tridaṇḍi Bikshu Bhakti Vigna Vināśa Narasimha

Bhaktivaibhava Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-salākayā
caḡṣur unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

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

Quoting this verse in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.15.16, you give the following comment:

This gives the definition of the guru. Everyone is in the darkness of ignorance. Therefore everyone needs to be enlightened with transcendental knowledge. One who enlightens his disciple and saves him from rotting in the darkness of ignorance in this material world is a true guru.

Modern technology has invented cochlear implants for deaf people. They are electronic medical devices that replicate the function of the damaged inner ear. Although the devices are not free from risks, some deaf patients decide to undergo the surgery. It is touching to see the reactions of deaf people who are able to hear for the first time in their lives. They generally have an emotional breakdown and shed tears. For them the ability to hear is like a gift from God. They cannot believe their good fortune in being able to hear their own voices and those of their loved ones for the first time, what to speak of hearing music and birdsongs, which are such common experiences for those who can hear. It is a very emotional experience to see these people weeping because of feeling blessed.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, not only did you bless us with the ability to hear spiritual sound vibrations for the first time in our lives, but you also gave us the ability to see spiritual objects and think about spiritual topics. In fact, you graced us with the spiritual perception of all our senses. Therefore, how much more than the cured deaf people should we feel emotionally overwhelmed, shedding tears

out of deep gratitude for what you have done for us and the entire world! We had lost our ability to perceive Lord Kṛṣṇa uncountable eons ago. Spiritually blind, deaf, and dumb, we had been rotting in this material world.

The Greek philosopher Epictetus, who was born a slave, said, “He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those which he has.” And William Arthur Ward, one of America’s most quoted writers of inspirational maxims, reminds us: “Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings.”

Kindly bless me to always feel the highest gratitude and joy for what you have done for this insignificant servant of yours as I practice and spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the remaining years of my life.

This year we are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of your founding ISKCON. Already in many places throughout the world wonderful events have taken place in glorification of “ISKCON 50.” For example, on March 20th more than 20,000 students attended a youth festival organized by ISKCON Pune to celebrate the anniversary, and back in August of 2015 more than 14,000 devotees from 120 countries gathered in Netaji Indoor Stadium Kolkata to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of your departure from India on the *Jaladuta*. ISKCON has set two new records in the Guinness Book of World Records, one for yoga and another for world book distribution. The 50/50 book campaign has been launched in many places, in which as many devotees as possible promise to distribute at least fifty books throughout the year. And there are many more remarkable events planned. ISKCON 50 is our big chance to make a global impact to glorify Your Divine Grace and your ISKCON movement. Kindly bless us to successfully stage the many more events to come.

Your eternal servant,

Bhaktivaibhava Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa preṣṭhāya bhū-
taleśrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmin iti nāmine*

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

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

My dearest Guru Maharaja, Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept my most respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.
From sinful acts you saved this boy,
Transformed his life to peace and joy.
Your “one-ness” links home and abroad—
One book, one hymn, one work, one God.
You reveal, beyond space and time,
The Absolute Truth—pure and sublime.
None can match or supersede your
Service to Siddhānta Ṭhākur.
A Vaiṣṇav world—your foundation—
Back to Godhead recreation.
Thanks to you, we’re free from pain,
In Kṛṣṇa’s family once again.
I pray to stay at your lotus feet;
Else I’m just a dog in the street.
Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your eternal servant,

Dānavīr Goswami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa preṣṭhāya bhū-
taleśrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmin iti nāmine*

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, once again on your Vyāsa-pūjā day I would like to pray at your lotus feet: Please save, save, save humanity at large, because Kali-yuga is showing his real face day by day and widening the boundaries of all his irreligious activities. But Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, through His pure devotees like yourself, is so merciful in this age that this movement of yours is the only way to get saved from the effects of Kali-yuga and return back home, back to Godhead.

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

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your causeless mercy you have opened doors for everyone to easily go back home, back to Godhead. Śrīla

Prabhupāda, sometimes I feel so weak and unqualified to carry out this task of preaching, and so your mercy is very much needed. Without your mercy nothing is possible. So on this day of your appearance I pray at the dust of your lotus feet: Please give me the strength to carry on your mission with full devotion and enthusiasm.

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

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

I remain your most insignificant servant,

Nava Yogendra Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa preṣṭhāya bhū-
taleśrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmin iti nāmine*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

A Question of Faith and Determination

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

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

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

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

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

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

On this divine day of your auspicious appearance in this world, I sincerely request you to equip me with the one-pointed faith and determination that are necessary to apply this principle in a way that gives pleasure to your heart.

Your humble servant,

Śacīnandana Swami

Kṛṣṇakṣetra Swami

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

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

This year we celebrate your Society's perdurance, and one aspect of celebration is reflection on successes, but also reflection on

challenges, weaknesses, and failures, individual and collective. We do so, always with the aim of reaffirming and better comprehending your vision of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

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

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

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

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

as this basic truth is recognized, we can be assured that the essential teaching is on course.

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

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

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

In her essay “Approaches to the Study of Christian Spirituality,” Prof. Sandra M. Schneiders defines spirituality as “the experience of conscious involvement in the project of life-integration through self-transcendence toward the horizon of ultimate value one perceives” (Schneiders p. 16 in *Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality*, Arthur Holder, ed., Blackwell, 2005). This is clearly a very broad, inclusive definition, with the advantage that a wide spectrum of people could accept it and see themselves included in it. Understanding spirituality in this way, she notes, allows us to recognize that spirituality is “ontologically prior to its specification by history and theology.” The point for us is that, as you, Śrīla

Prabhupāda, have said about the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, transcendence is an essential feature: as a movement of spirituality, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is meant to be manifest in the world, in history; but as a movement of spirituality, Kṛṣṇa consciousness always resists containment by the world.

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

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

Your aspiring servant,

Kṛṣṇakṣetra Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace. With the torchlight of true knowledge you open the eyes of all of us who are lost in the darkness of ignorance!

*om aṣṭāna-timirāndhasya jṣānāṣjana-salākayā
cakṣur unmlītaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the evening before you left Mumbai for the last time, you consulted several of your disciples on whether you should stay there to await the opening of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī's new marble temple, or go to Vṛndāvana. Your disciples all around the world were daily praying, as you had instructed, "My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, if You so desire, please cure Śrīla Prabhupāda!"

You said you were waiting for Lord Kṛṣṇa to reveal what He desired. When Kulādrī Prabhu suggested that the best place to await that revelation would be Lord Kṛṣṇa's own earthly abode, you liked this idea and immediately decided to leave for Vṛndāvana.

Early the next morning as I stood beside your bed in the quietness after *maṅgala āratī*, I remembered that you had said you liked your disciples to chant the holy names for you. Imagining that I was a qualified devotee able to please you, I started reciting my *japa* loudly enough that you could hear it. Although you could only speak with great difficulty, your unexpected response floored me: "Don't make noise!" I was devastated. How offensive I must be, I realized, that my tongue would reduce even the purest of all pure vibrations to an unwanted disturbance to the pure devotee.

A little later, I sat beside you on your bed, massaging both your hands. Suddenly, you so flooded me with the blissful, surging ocean of your love that I felt fully enveloped by your unconditional mercy and affection for even such as fallen rascal as myself, despite all my many deficiencies. Since then, I have never been able to imagine a higher boon.

O Spiritual Master of the Universe! Nothing but the offenseless congregational glorification of the Divine nomenclature can ever be the reliable as well as relishable antidote for overcoming all sinful human follies, ranging from individual outbursts of lust or false ego that can destroy a marriage or a family; to self-motivated manoeuvres of corrupt ecclesiastics for personal gain or aggrandizement that

can cripple even the most well-established religious institutions; to devious criminal machinations of infernal international banksters that, at the expense of bankrupting the entire rest of the planet, can fill their own bulging vaults (or computerized records) with more artificial money than they can ever properly use or even estimate; to fearful, cold-blooded conspiracies of desperate politicians that can wreak worldwide havoc and trigger planetary nuclear holocausts or even interplanetary star wars.

O Savior of all saints and sinners! Only the sacred methodology of your *harināma* educational program, only that, and again only that, alive and online in your perfect personal example, distributed through your powerful preaching available to all for at least ten millennia in your authoritative literatures, can cancel all the destined mayhem of this darkest age of hypocrisy and enable us to achieve the goal of life.

*harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam
kālau nasty eva nasty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

Indeed this Kali-yuga is blessed, for despite appearing to be just an ocean of faults, it is not that at all. Rather, it provides the greatest imaginable benefit that anyone can be freed from all material attachments and enter the kingdom of God simply by chanting the holy names!

*kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta-saṅgaḥ param vrajet*

Except for a few of your fortunate favored followers, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we Kali-yuga humans are so far from fit to enter into the holy confidential dealings of the Supreme Conjugal Couple in the bowers of Vṛndāvana that most of us, at least for now, should probably not hear of them—neither those innermost affairs, nor those secret arbors, nor perhaps even the stunning celestial beauty of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kuṣjavihārī Themselves. If we did, we would only transgress the limits of propriety. Yet you have given us something categorically non-different from intimately serving those topmost Divine Lovers: transcendental chanting of the fully liberative and eternally pure touchstone of the vibrantly conscious holy names, the very embodiment of purest ecstasy.

*nāma cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇaś caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto 'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ*

This divine vocalization we are qualified to attempt, O rescuer of all fallen souls, only by your undeserved generosity. Please bless us that we may ever persist, despite our confusions and our self-doubts, in our efforts to keep accepting this inconceivable gift of Your Divine Grace. Please encourage us that we may always continue moving forward, despite our repeated failures and our laziness, in our attempts to overcome our offenses to the name. Please flood us with the monsoon of your mercy that we may never waver, despite all obstacles — inner and outer, in our determination to go on sharing with our fellow suffering creatures this oceanic offering of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. And kindly guide our intelligence that we may forever follow in your footsteps, joyously singing, feeding, worshipping, teaching, writing, publishing and distributing books, and developing as many other appropriate technological or paranormal preaching practices and methods as we can according to time, place and circumstance. What else can we do, to benefit either ourselves or others? *Paraṁ vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam!*

Thank you, our eternal preceptor and protector, again and again and again! We will ever remain infinitely indebted to you.

Begging to always remain an insignificant servant of the devoted dust-particles of your lotus feet,

Ānand Kishore dās Bābājī

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

ISKCON is celebrating.

Celebrating 50 Golden Years.

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

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

It was in bad shape 50 years ago, but things have gotten much worse since then. Kali's agents never sleep; they are working around the clock with single-pointed determination and one aim only: to undermine the remaining values of human society and accelerate mankind's downward spiral toward more and more hellish conditions of life. The flames of lust, anger and greed have been stoked into a raging fire of unprecedented deprivation, barbarous violence and ruthless exploitation.

You declared war against Māyā and fought relentlessly against her influence and the schemes of her minion Kali. You were outspoken and uncompromising when it came to pinpoint and expose the degrading tendencies and foolish plans of human society. And you expected us to continue in the same line. Commenting on Gajendra's crisis, you said: "Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has actually declared war against the illusory energy, in which all the living entities are rotting in a false understanding of civilization. The soldiers in this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement must always possess physical strength, enthusiasm and sensual power."

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your merciful glance and the Lord's grace the ISKCON army is still marching. Not that it has been an easy task, especially after your departure. But the army has not been routed by the enemy and dispersed in all directions. No doubt, in the last 50 years we had many casualties, frequent setbacks, countless challenges and a number of battles lost, but the war on Māyā is going on. *Param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*. Let there be all victory for the chanting of the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Despite all difficulties, those who have taken your instructions as their life and soul are in good spirits, because they are confident that nothing can harm us as long as we are following your command.

And the last 50 years have also seen unexpected advances on many fronts. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the peoples in the East have embraced the *bhakti* cult in an unprecedented way. Who could have imagined that the former Soviet Union would become a major offshoot from the ISKCON branch of Lord Caitanya's desire tree of devotional service? Who could have foreseen that even in China twigs are sprouting? Furthermore, secret agents are operating undercover in countries that are off-limit for any form of "preaching", introducing the chanting of the holy name under the most trying circumstances – with surprising success.

You founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness with a clear purpose: "To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world." To accomplish this goal, you created an army of volunteers and deployed them all over the world. You started the mission, showed the direction and supplied the weapon. Forty years ago, while in London, you said: "So, in this age, Kali-yuga, to kill the demons means to stop their demonic activities by the *astra* [weapon] of *kīrtana* – *hari-saṅkīrtana* – which is spread by Lord Caitanya's associates: Nityānanda Prabhu, Advaita Prabhu and Śrīvāsādi gaura-bhakta-vṛnda. They are going door to door, country to country, city to city, and saving the demons from being implicated more and more in material existence."

ISKCON is celebrating 50 years of life-saving missions. Having taken the desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to heart, your main concern was to do good for others (*para-upakāra*), "to take the Lord's message to the residents of this world, to work for the benefit of all other people". Our only ambition is to be counted among the

gaura-bhakta-vṛndas who have full faith in your instructions and have developed the same compassionate vision you embody, a world view so characteristic of the true followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The *saṅkīrtana* mission is based on compassion. Your leaving behind the tranquil life in Vrindāvana, boarding the *Jaladuta*, sailing into Boston Harbor and incorporating ISKCON 50 years ago is all based on that compassion. We are celebrating your compassionate heart, *karuṇā-hṛdaya*.

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

An insignificant foot soldier in your army,

Bhakti Gauravāṇī Goswami

Dhīraśānta dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Krishna's appearance and activities are inconceivably wonderful and therefore the name, form, qualities and activities of Krishna cannot be understood by the material senses, He is called *adhokṣaja*, or "beyond sense perception." Only when the senses are purified by devotional activity, the devotee understands everything about the Lord by the Lord's grace.

In the same way, your own divine appearance and activities are of a similar nature because they are so intimately connected with Krishna. Throughout the many years of practicing devotional service, my spiritual quest to understand Lord Krishna has simultaneously opened my eyes to the unlimited nature of your own unique personality.

Sometimes I am asked by devotees who have never met you, "What was it like to be in the midst of such a great personality as Śrīla Prabhupāda during the time when he was physically present before us?"

Not to disappoint the enquirer too much I will say, “It was a most wonderful experience never to be forgotten.” However, at the same time I will also often express with regret, my dissatisfaction in my lack of understanding the full extent of your greatness at that time or what you would come to accomplish over a significant period in the future.

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

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

This being the 50th anniversary of ISKCON, my glorification to you on your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration will be supported and summed up by these reassuring following statements:

H.H. Vishvesh Tīrtha, the pithadipati of Śrī Krishna Maṭha in Uḍupī:

“Of all people, the devotee of the Supreme Lord is the greatest. And in order to become a devotee, one does not need to be born in any specific type of class or caste or nation.

Devotion to Krishna was limited only to India but Swami Prabhupāda took this devotion out of India and distributed it to anyone and everyone all over the world. That’s why today we can see that people from all over the world are accepting devotional service and becoming devotees of Krishna. In this way, they are becoming the best of humans.”

Likewise, one South Indian guru of the Rāmānuja sampradāya remarked in 1976 after viewing one of your books and witnessing the preaching of some of your young disciples:

“This person is the summon bonum of all *ācāryas*.”

Thus it is the foremost duty of any sincere disciple and follower of Śrīla Prabhupāda to emphasize the unique and distinct position and accomplishment of Śrīla Prabhupāda as the *viśva ācārya*, or

the world *ācārya*, the Jagat Guru, by his accomplishments, and not merely by a self-given title. He is the actual *sampradāya ācārya* to be surrendered to and fully served by all Vaiṣṇavas and all preachers and preceptors in the future.

Predictions Revealed in the Śāstras:

In the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, *Pratisarga* Chapter 20 verses 71–73; it is mentioned: “Lord Jagannāth, the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari Himself, spoke these attractive words for the welfare of all:

“The *mlecchas* who are born from mixed countries ruled by descendants of Kaśyapa (demons) and the *sūdras* will become *brāhmaṇas* by initiation. They will wear *śikhās* and *brāhmaṇa* threads and will become well versed in the uncontaminated fruit of the Vedas (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*). They will worship Me by the *yajña* prescribed by the Lord of Lords, the protector of Śacīdevī, Śrī Chaitanya Mahārabhu.”

Puranic prophecy:

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

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

thousand years.” —*Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* 4.129.49-59

Forty-six years before the beginning of Kali-yuga, Vishnuchitta, one of the twelve great Vaiṣṇava saints of the Śrī Rāmānuja Sampradāya predicted:

“There will come a race which will tread the earth with raised hands and vertical tilaka on their foreheads, who will chant the names of Hari; this will destroy the influence of Kali.” —*Divya-prabandha* 1.10.

Furthermore, Nammalvar (3102 BC), another one of the twelve great Vaiṣṇava saints of the Śrī Ramanuja Sampradāya proclaimed:

“Victory! Victory! Victory! I behold something wonderful: all the inauspiciousness of the living entities is destroyed, no one is going to hell, Yamarāja has no more work to do and the effects of Kali-yuga have ceased to exist. This is because all over the world an increasing number of Lord Vishnu’s devotees are singing His names while dancing and playing musical instruments.” — *Divya-prabandha, Tiruvaymoli* 5.2.1

Śrīpada Rāmānuja predicted:

“The pure devotion to Śrī Hari devoid of *karma* and *jnana* will grow and grow like a banyan tree covering the whole world, teaching everyone who takes shelter.” —*Prapannāmṛta tarpaṇa*.

Śrīpada Madhvāchārya predicted:

“The real knowledge of the difference between *jīva* and Śrī Hari and the service of Śrī Hari will spread all over the world very shortly.” —*Aṅu Madhva Vijaya*.

In *Bhagavat Māhātmya*, Bhakti personified says to Nārada Muni:

“I will leave this country, India, and go abroad.”

Statement by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu:

In Śrī Caitanya Maṅgala, Śrīla Locana dās Thākura; the future appearance of a great *Senāpati bhakta* (General of the devotees), who would preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world is predicted by Lord Caitanya Himself:

“Taking the sharp sword of the congregational chanting of the Hare Krishna mantra, (*nāma-saṅkīrtana*) I will root out and destroy the demoniac mentality in the hearts of all the conditioned souls. If some sinful people escape, and giving up religious principles and go to some far off country, then my *Senāpati Bhakta* will come at that time to give them Krishna consciousness.”

Predicted by Śrīla Bhaktivinode Thākura:

“Śrīman Mahāprabhu did not descend with His associates to deliver a certain number of human beings in the land of India, but rather His purpose was to deliver and uplift all living beings in all countries of the world by preaching the eternal religion of all souls. There are many kinds of religion in the world, and among all of them the highest development of religion is the congregational chanting of the Supreme Lord’s divine names. Of this there is no doubt. Alas! When will that day come when all greatly fortunate souls in countries such as England, France, Russia and America will take up banners, kettle drums, *mṛdaṅgas* and *karatālas* and thus cause the ecstatic waves of *Hari nāma kīrtan* and the singing of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s holy name to rise in the streets of their towns and cities? O when will that day come, when pure and transcendental Krishna *prema* (love of God) will be the only religion of all souls and all tiny sectarian religions will meet in the unlimited and universal religion of devotional service to Krishna, as rivers merge into the great ocean? O when will that day come?”—From the *Sajjana-toṣaṇī* of Śrīla Bhaktivinode Thākura, 1880s.

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is now clear to me that you are a Vaiṣṇava of

the highest order, with the power to create *bhakti* where none existed before. You are an Ācārya who both carried the Age-old message of the *paramparā* and intelligently applied it to the present day world. In this you are unique, even among Vaiṣṇavas.

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

Your unworthy servant,

Dhīraśānta dāsa Goswami

Lokanāth Swami

My most beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at the dust of your divine lotus feet on this most auspicious occasion of your 120th Vyāsa-pūjā celebration! It is just remarkable that it coincides with the 50th Anniversary of ISKCON. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

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

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

Then one hundred and twenty years ago in Kolkata, a phenomenal occurrence took place. The Lord made your appearance possible. In 1922 Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura instructed you to propagate Krishna consciousness in the Western world. After a

lifetime of preparation, you went to New York in 1965, and exactly fifty years ago you became the Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). You tirelessly encircled the globe fourteen times spreading the holy name and propagating Krishna consciousness. It was you Śrīla Prabhupāda, who made Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s prediction come true.

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

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

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

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

I want to extract *śrīr*—opulence; *vijayah*—victory; *bhutih*—exceptional power and *nītih*—morality and delve deeper to illustrate how you are the epitome of these concepts.

Śrīr is translated as opulence. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had written “the Krishna consciousness movement actually started with only forty rupees, but now it has more than forty crores worth of property, and all this opulence has been achieved within eight or ten years” [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.5.47, purport]. ISKCON’s assets have grown immensely since then, and continues to expand. I also recall you saying that if an Indian person has a servant from the West,

that is an indication of the opulence and prestige of that person. You had close to five thousand disciples from the West serving you. Your opulence knew no bounds.

Your *vijayaḥ* is self-evident. Fifty years ago you started with one temple in New York. You informed us that victory meant spreading and conquering. We could ‘conquer’ the West by spreading Krishna consciousness. Caitanya Mahāprabhu had spread the holy names in India and left the task of spreading it all over the world to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda—and ISKCON. Today we have no less than six hundred and fifty ISKCON temples, centres, schools and colleges worldwide. We have distributed five hundred and sixteen million books. One hundred and fifty *Padayātrā* teams with ten thousand participants have walked a staggering two hundred and sixty-thousand kilometres visiting fifty-two thousand towns and villages in one hundred and ten countries. More than six thousand festivals are celebrated annually in ISKCON across the world and over one million meals of *prasāda* are served daily as part of the Food for Life programme. It is estimated that more than nine million people worship at ISKCON temples every year.

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

ISKCON’s *bhūtiḥ* is Kṛṣṇa’s extraordinary power. During the years when the Krishna consciousness movement was trying to make inroads into the former Soviet Union, it was reported that “Semyon Tsvigun, the deputy chief of the KGB under Andropov, had said that the three main threats to the Soviet Union were “pop music, Western culture, and Hare Krishna.” and that the “KGB perceived the distribution of ISKCON literature as a threat since Lenin had also caused a revolution aided by a printing press. (*The Telegraph*, Calcutta, India, editorial). How could anyone be surprised that a superpower such as the Soviet Union felt threatened by the Hare Krishnas? If the power of the holy name makes the Age of Kali tremble, what can it not do to Russia? In 1976 a magician visited our Krishna-Balarāma

Mandir and showed you and the devotees his repertoire of tricks. The magician made many objects appear and disappear. After a while you asked the magician: "What about the miseries of life? Can you make these disappear? Birth, death, disease, and old age?" The magician replied submissively, "No, that I cannot." At these words the magician sat down and you said, "But I can make these things disappear. That is the real magic." Śrīla Prabhupāda, this is proof of how you were extraordinarily empowered.

You gave your followers four regulative principles: no meat-eating, no illicit sex, no gambling and no intoxication. There are no better, nor higher principles of *nītiḥ* than this.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.12. 126, purport states:

"The symptoms of Kali are (1) wine, (2) women, (3) gambling and (4) slaughterhouses. Wise rulers of all states should take lessons from Maharaja Parikṣit in how to maintain peace and morality by subduing... quarrelsome people who indulge in wine, illicit connections...gambling and meat-eating...so how can they expect peace and morality...?" You put your stamp on these substantial principles of morality.

You wrote in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which is the supreme instruction in morality, "*man-manā bhava mad-bhaktah* ...the instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā* constitute the supreme process of religion and of morality... surrender unto Kṛṣṇa [18.78, purport].

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

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

*I remain,
Your humble servant,*
Lokanāth Swami

Bīr Krishna dās Goswami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

This morning in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class, we were reading from the Fifth Canto, Chapter 1, Verse 41. In your translation and purport you explain that Mahārāja Priyavrata considered hellish the opulences he had achieved in this world. He gave up everything and took to complete absorption in Krishna consciousness having experienced a higher taste.

In the class, I gave several examples of devotees who had different types of opulences, such as wealth, strength, renunciation, knowledge, beauty, and fame. Of course these are the same opulences that Krishna possesses in unlimited degree. The devotees I cited gave up all attachment to these opulences simply by experiencing a higher taste in Krishna consciousness. Hence they gave up everything and engaged full time in hearing and chanting.

The question was raised by one of the participants as to when and if it was appropriate for us to follow in the footsteps of these great personalities at a certain stage in life. The connection was made to our different services in guiding the Krishna consciousness movement. In other words: is there a stage in life where we should renounce everything and simply engage in hearing and chanting?

My response was to cite your example — how you were determined to continue with the active preaching mission as long as you were able:

On the morning of Prabhupāda's departure, a few devotees came to his room to make a last attempt, begging him not to travel. He said

nothing, though he was obviously set on leaving. His servants were packing his bags and everything was ready to go. Nevertheless, even as he left his room and got on the elevator, a few men followed, still suggesting he not go.

“Prabhupāda, please reconsider,” said Rāmeśvara Swami. Śrīla Prabhupāda had remained jolly so far, despite his physical weakness, and despite his disciples’ pleading. But now his face changed.

“Don’t travel,” one devotee said. And another added, “Just stay. Sit down and rest.”

Prabhupāda turned, and his eyes were very deep. More than ever he seemed not of this material world. “I want the benediction to go on fighting for Kṛṣṇa,” he said, “just like Arjuna.”

Everyone remained silent, and the important instruction burned into their memories. The elevator opened on the main floor and hundreds of waiting devotees chanted and cheered as Śrīla Prabhupāda walked to his car.

On the way to the airport the devotees again began talking about how degraded Kali-yuga was. “But you have to go on preaching,” Prabhupāda advised them. “You have to go and try to save these people.”

The example you set in this one exchange with the devotees has been my inspiration throughout the years.

There are many such examples such as the profound determination you showed in coming to the West at an age when most Vaiṣṇavas were retiring to the holy places to engage in *bhajan*. You focused on the mission of your spiritual master remembering the injunction Visvanatha Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives us in the *Gurvaṣṭaka* — that by the mercy of the spiritual master one gets the mercy of Krishna and without the guru’s mercy one loses Krishna mercy.

As we age and mature in Krishna consciousness, there is a natural desire to retire from so many activities and retire. That desire arises first of all from the service to your mission. Service to your mission yields the fruit of devotional service which is attraction to hearing and chanting about Krishna and renunciation of the objects of this world:

*vāsudeve bhagavati
bhakti-yogaḥ prayojitaḥ
janayaty āśu vairāgyam
jñānam ca yad ahaitukam*

“By rendering devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one immediately acquires causeless knowledge and detachment from the world.” SB 1.2.7

So, I am praying to you Śrīla Prabhupāda to give me the benediction of being able to go on fighting for you and Krishna till the very end of this body. My body belongs to you to be used in your mission.

In this way, my complete success in spiritual life will be assured. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving this lesson to me.

Your servant,

Bīr Krishna dās Goswami

Gaṇapati Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

It is naturally expected that many obstacles would arise to impede its manifestation. Indeed, in 1977 after the Ananta Śeṣa Deity was established and then stolen from the temple site, you ominously predicted that difficulties would be forthcoming. These

obstacles would reasonably attack the building's foundation, as without a sturdy foundation, surface embellishment would only act to burden the structure.

The TOVP is the symbol of all the selfless service your followers have been inspired to perform over several decades, by your example. It is they who, by your grace and that of the previous *ācāryas*, will be instrumental in disseminating Kṛṣṇa-*prema*. It is to be expected, therefore, that in order for the temple to reach completion we will experience a painstaking purification from the top down to the bottom. Hopefully, these recent events are a demonstration of that process. And hopefully, that process is extending down to my lowly self.

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

Your downtrodden servant,

Gaṇapati Swami

Janānanda dāsa Goswami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Fifty years have passed since that day in July 1966 when you declared, "We shall call our society ISKCON." A few days later, on July 13th, you incorporated the International Society for Krishna

Consciousness. Besides a few well-wishers, who wondered what need there was of a legal society, the rest of the world was oblivious to the significance of this event.

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

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

The rest of the world, however, cared or knew nothing of an Indian Swami founding his "international" society in the backwaters of New York City. What relevance had it for them? I for one was completely oblivious to the event. As I think back, exactly at that time (July 1966) I (made in England) was enwrapped in another world, for England was on its way to winning the World (Soccer) Cup. That was a highlight of my illusory desires. I had not a single iota of consciousness beyond the immediate dream around me.

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

Unbeknownst to me, you had reached out your merciful hand to whoever wished to take it, even in the darkest regions of ignorance.

There is no discrimination in you, Śrīla Prabhupāda—like the sun, you shine for all. Kṛṣṇa reciprocates according to our surrender, but you, even if someone does not reciprocate, still shower your mercy on this dark world.

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

* * *

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

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

* * *

*om aṣṭāna-timirāndhasya jṣānāṣjana-śalākayā
caḥṣur unmlītaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

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

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

forces, so will you despite the likes of myself.

In 1972 you said to Guru Dāsa Prabhu that this movement would go down in history as having “saved the world in its darkest hour.” We are only just beginning to see the fruition of this statement. One born in darkness does not know what is light. It is sometimes blinding to bear the power of your message.

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

* * *

It is 6 March 1966:

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Any questions? . . .

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Your lowly servant

Janānanda dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my sincerest obeisances, and my life as a servant of your servants.

This year, throughout the world, in hundreds of temples, in thousands of homes, and in millions of hearts, the fiftieth anniversary of your life's mission, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, is being celebrated.

As I write this offering I am sitting in a little storefront on the Lower East Side of New York City, in the place where fifty years ago the seed of your lifelong aspiration had become a tiny flowering bud—about to blossom and spread its fragrance across the world.

Here, while gazing out my window, I am listening to recordings of your memories of those beginning days. In your own words, you bring us back to 1922: "When this friend, Mr. Mullik, took me to Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, he immediately asked me that 'You are educated young boys. Why don't you take up Lord Caitanya's message and preach in the Western world?'... In the very first sight, he told me."

After describing your lifetime in preparation to fulfill your Guru Mahārāja's will, and your historic voyage across the world on a cargo ship, you bring us with you to New York City in 1965, "When I came to your country without any friend, without any means. Practically just like a vagabond I came. But I had full faith that 'My Guru Mahārāja is with me.'"

You describe your hopes, struggles, and limitless compassion as you passed through one challenge after another. A Vṛndāvana sādhu wearing the simplest saffron cloth and white plastic shoes, wandering alone, seeking to share the treasures of the spiritual world in New York City, the massive, ever-expanding capital of materialistic life.

In the recording you continue:

I was maintaining myself by selling these books for one year. . . . In this way by selling these books I had only \$200, and I dared to take one apartment and storefront. The storefront was \$125 per month, and the apartment was \$75. I had only \$200. So I advanced him \$200. I did not know how to pay next month's rent. . . .

I started in 1966, lecturing in the storefront and living in that apartment in 26 Second Avenue. Then gradually, these American boys and girls began to come. I started my *kīrtana* in Tompkins Square. More and more, these young Americans, they came to me, and things were organized. Then I registered this Krishna Consciousness Society under the religious act of New York, and gradually people took interest. . . . In this way, five or six students used to come.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa you see everything as Kṛṣṇa's sacred property. Every living being is very dear to you. Still, through your own intimate words we gain a glimpse into how especially dear ISKCON is to you. How especially dear to you are those early devotees who helped when you were practically alone. How especially dear to you, for all time to come, are devotees who endeavor to follow your teachings, encourage your devotees, and offer favorable service to your beloved society. We all have the opportunity to show our love for you by cooperating to serve your life's mission, ISKCON, as it passes through both euphoric celebrations and, at times, inconceivable heartbreaks and challenges.

As I gaze out of my window into the clamor of New York City, I see people rushing about, desperately seeking relief from the onslaughts of conditioned life or searching for anything that might bring them a trace of satisfaction. But, as I remember you, my heart fills with hope and gratitude.

In this lifetime, all that really matters is how we please you. You asked us to sincerely chant the names of God and follow Kṛṣṇa's teachings. With tears of love you appealed to us to assist you in fulfilling the order of your Guru Mahārāja by sharing the Matchless Gift of devotional service with each other, and with everyone.

Rādhānātha Swami

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

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

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

To hear and explain [the revealed scriptures] is more important than reading them. One can assimilate the knowledge of the revealed scriptures only by

hearing and explaining. [*Bhāgavatam* 1.1.6, purport]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

his calling only, everyone takes to the study of the *Vedas* to acquire actual knowledge. [*Kṛṣṇa Book 20: Description of Autumn*]

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

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

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

Your eternal son and servant,

Keśava Bhārati Dāsa Goswami

Pārtha Sārathi dās Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Presently I am dwelling in the shade of Girirāj Govardhan Hill. By divine arrangement I have been allowed to stay here for some months meditating on Raghunath das Goswāmī's prayer,

nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam, dehi govardhana tvam

"Please grant me a residence at Govardhan Hill."

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

prayers, They will grant us Their mercy.

It is a daily practice that I associate with you through playing your lectures hoping to pick up some divine instructions and inspiration in my meager attempt at practicing devotional service. Recently I stumbled upon some gems in the limitless ocean of your *hari-kathā*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda talking to Tamāl Krishna Goswami and Hari Śauri Prabhu on 16 February 1977 at Śrīdhāma Māyāpur:

“All of you (referring to his disciples) were simply born, because the mission (ISKCON) was here started. Just like in Yadu-vaṁśa, Krishna ordered all the devotees — demigods go and take birth there (the Earth) to help me, similarly you were born in America to help me otherwise you were devotees in your past life. I have explained that in my teachings and writing...

First of all “mām eti” goes to Krishna where His pastime is going on and transfer to the original. The devotees are picked up and placed together where Krishna is having His pastimes in either of the innumerable universes.

In some universe He is present, in all universes
He is present, that is called “nitya-līlā.”

So those who are advanced perfect devotee, first of all they are sent there and then further trained up ... mam eti, passing the administration examination, He is made, some associate of magistrate and then gradually he will be promoted up to the high court judge.

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, Krishna wants His assistants, the spiritual master also requires his assistants, everything is going on under Krishna's direct supervision.

mayādhyakṣena prakṛtiḥ (This material nature, which is one of My energies, is working under My direction) BG 9.10.

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

The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart, O Arjuna, and is directing the wanderings of all living entities, who are seated as on a machine, made of the material energy. BG 18.61"

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you also write:

He [Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī] sent me some good souls like you unsolicited. So I accept you all, as assistants or representatives of my guru mahārāja who is still helping me because I am so feeble and unworthy. [70/1/21]

He [Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura] has been helping me in this matter by sending so many young boys and girls, otherwise who would help me in this mission while I came here empty handed and without friends. I can pray to Krishna to take care of you, otherwise I cannot repay your sincere service in my mission. [70/2/47]

No doubt my exalted godbrothers and godsisters are in such a category, especially those sincere disciples who have passed the test and after 40 years or so are still serving your instructions and mission.

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

In my own pathetic and stumbling way, I have been trying to serve you for the last 43 years. I want to continue my service in this glorious preaching mission (ISKCON) but I also want to render service to you in the *aprakāṣa* realm. Gradually this desire is becoming more pronounced. Service both here and in *aprakāṣa* Vṛndāvana nourishes each other and is in relation of cause and effect – two sides of the same coin. I am eagerly looking forward to deepening both aspects of service and humbly pray that you can inspire and guide me accordingly.

Your unworthy and hopeless servant,

Pārtha Sārathi dās Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

On a recent 45-day pilgrimage through the northeast United States, I had much time to contemplate. It was a walk to express my utter appreciation to you, with 1,500 kilometers (932 miles) under my feet.

Formally the trek was dubbed “Walking for Our Teachers.” My route took me from Boston’s Commonwealth Pier, where you first landed in America fifty-one years ago, to Butler, Pennsylvania, where you spent a good month, and then to New York City, where you began your mission, ISKCON, officially incorporating it in July 1966.

The society you initiated was a major milestone. The ISKCON Vaiṣṇava culture took hold, but not without trials and tribulations. Like a trekker walking the Pennsylvania mountain/valley terrain, over the last five decades ISKCON has climbed and descended quite a few steep slopes.

In your endeavor to cement ISKCON within the modern world, you worked to make it a recognizable force grounded in culture and education, rather than merely another religion added to an already pluralistic world of faith. We shall now see how effectively we can continue to market the Prime Entity, Kṛṣṇa, and mold your marvelous Society over the next fifty years. There is much work to be done.

If I may, I would like to present to you and to the society of devotees my humble analysis of some of your contributions to the world and what makes you unique:

The Cutting-Edge Guru

1. You pioneered the practice of *kīrtana* in the West, with emphasis on the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.
2. You introduced to the West the culture of *bhakti yoga*, an ancient devotional lifestyle, with emphasis on serving the Supreme Deity, Kṛṣṇa.
3. You wrote and published books and articles and

established the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT), presenting a scholarly Vedic library of writings on Eastern thought.

4. You established a worldwide spiritual mission registered as the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON).
5. You became a strong and early voice promoting animal rights, especially the protection of the cow and the bull.
6. You strongly promoted a nonviolent vegetarian way of life (and were perhaps the first teacher of Vedic cooking in the West).
7. You introduced to the West the Vedic consecration of food as *prasādam*.
8. You promoted a God-centered agrarian culture, a back-to-the-land initiative centered on the family farm and an eco-friendly existence.
9. You initiated the world's first large-scale program of sanctified vegetarian food distribution to the needy, in Māyāpur.
10. You strongly spoke out against drug and alcohol consumption as harmful.
11. You boldly promoted the science of the soul's transmigration (reincarnation).
12. You strongly challenged atheism and Darwin's theory of evolution and constantly promoted the principle that there is a God and that He is a person.
13. You introduced to the West the ancient techniques of *arcana* or *pūjā*, honoring the Divine in His sacred image.
14. You promoted the anti-racist sentiment by propagating the all-inclusive philosophy that all souls are equal and that "We are not these bodies."
15. You redefined the word *party*: Sing the holy names! Dance! Play music! Eat karma-free food! No intoxication! No lewdness! Serve each other!

Also, Your Divine Grace was a major positive influence on history's most popular rock band, The Beatles, especially on George Harrison, who impacted a generation, if not more.

For all of the above, I offer you the utmost reverence and gratitude.

Begging to remain your humble servant,

Bhaktimārga Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Recently, while writing of Kṛṣṇa's *dāmodara-līlā*, I was spellbound by the similarities between the deliverance of Kuvera's sons and that of your followers. To be more precise, I was captivated by the parallels between Nārada and Your Divine Grace in setting the terms of liberation for your dependents. Upon further research into your teachings, I understood that as the Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON, it is your prerogative to set the terms of liberation for your followers and that Lord Kṛṣṇa is duty-bound to honour those terms.

If Your Divine Grace permits, I shall elaborate on what I have written above:

After Mother Yaśodā captured Kṛṣṇa, the Lord slowly pulled the mortar to the twin *arjuna* trees where He thought, "In a past life those two trees were the demigods Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva, who were cursed by Nārada to become trees in Vraja. Although normally I would have nothing to do with such materialists, I must fulfil Nārada's promise and deliver them."

There is no record of Nalakūvera and Maṇigrīva having performed any significant devotional service. At best they were worshippers of Lord Śiva, and their only act of *bhakti* was recalling Nārada's curse, standing in Vraja as trees and waiting for Kṛṣṇa's mercy. Yet despite their lack of standard qualification, the two attained perfection, *prema-bhakti*. And the reason was that Nārada desired it. Being bound by his devotee's love, Kṛṣṇa was obliged to liberate Kuvera's sons. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you elaborate on this relationship between the pure devotee and Kṛṣṇa in this way:

"And there is Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura's *Prārthanā*, āśraya laiyā bhaje, kṛṣṇa nāhi tare tyāge, 'One who takes āśraya, shelter of a devotee, Kṛṣṇa does not give him up. Kṛṣṇa accepts him.' *Yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādah...* Because if that person who is giving shelter, if he's pleased, Kṛṣṇa is immediately... If he recommends a fool, 'Oh, Kṛṣṇa, here is a devotee!' Kṛṣṇa will accept immediately. It doesn't matter whether he's a fool or rascal. Because he is recommended by representative, he will be accepted." [1]

And this is exactly what happened with Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva. While writing of Kṛṣṇa's obligation to fulfil Nārada's promise to Kuvera's sons, I was reminded of your promise to your followers. How many times had you said, chant sixteen rounds and follow the regulative principles and by Kṛṣṇa's grace we would go back to Godhead.

“Now you must agree to very rigidly follow the rules and regulations, i.e. chanting sixteen rounds of beads daily, rising early and attending *maṅgala-ārati*, observing the four principles, attending the classes, eating only *bhāgavata prasādam* as well as working under the instruction of my representatives, such as your GBC representative and Temple President, and if you follow this procedure very strictly then your life will be glorious and you will go back to home, back to Godhead, this I can guarantee.”[2]

Your guarantee brings the same result as the curse of Nārada: Kṛṣṇa becomes obliged to accept a great devotee's faithful followers.

And the similarity does not end there. Like Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva, we, your followers, did not follow the ideal standard of *sādhana*. When you came to America, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you asked devotees to chant sixty-four rounds. However, when they were unable to do so, you eventually settled on sixteen as a minimum.

This indicates that you adjusted the terms by which Kṛṣṇa would accept us. And for those with implicit faith in Your Divine Grace, it is obvious that you set the conditions upon which the liberation of your followers, for all time to come, would take place.

There are some Vaiṣṇavas who doubt that members of ISKCON can actually go back to Godhead in one lifetime. They argue that the deep conditioning of westerners, the compromised *sādhana* of sixteen rounds, a lack of training in Vaiṣṇava culture, and perhaps a lack of understanding of esoteric teachings are combinedly too great a handicap. Their opinion is that our insufficient qualification can only ensure rebirth as a devotee in which a higher grade of *bhakti* can be practised.

But that is not the example of Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva. Whatever standard Nārada set for the *devas'* liberation, Kṛṣṇa accepted. Similarly, whatever standard you set for our liberation, Kṛṣṇa will accept. That is the conviction of devotees who accept that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are as dear to Kṛṣṇa as is Nārada.

Therefore, although Nalakūvara and Maṅigrīva attained perfection through causeless mercy, and members of ISKCON attain perfection through *sādhana*, some measure of *sādhana* is to be found in Nalakūvara and Maṅigrīva, and similarly a measure of mercy—your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda—is found in us. Our *sādhana* and its perfection are your mercy.

You explain the two paths of perfection in this way:

“Elevation to this stage of ecstasy can be possible in two ways. One way is by constant association with pure devotees. The other way is by the special mercy of Kṛṣṇa or by the mercy of a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Elevation to the ecstatic stage of life is generally attained through association with pure devotees, while elevation to that stage by the special mercy of Kṛṣṇa or His devotee is very rare. The purport is that one should execute devotional service rigidly in the association of devotees so that there will be certainty in raising oneself to that ecstatic position. In special cases, of course, there is special favour from Kṛṣṇa, and although we should always expect that, we should not sit idly and simply wait for Kṛṣṇa’s special mercy; the regular duties must be performed. It is just as when, sometimes, it is found that a person who never attended school or college may be recognised as a great scholar, or an honorary degree from great universities may be offered to him. But this does not mean that one should avoid school and expect to automatically receive an honorary degree from some university. Similarly, one should devoutly execute the regulative principles of devotional service and at the same time hope for Kṛṣṇa’s favour or for His devotee’s favour.”[3]

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda! Thank you. Thank you for your mercy—mercy that has made the path of perfection easy for us. May we always remember that your arrangement with Kṛṣṇa also set requirements for us to which we agreed at the time of initiation. May we always remember that you did not want us to stand like trees but to engage in *sādhana* and preaching. May we always remember that you have settled on the terms of our liberation with Kṛṣṇa and that if we are true to our vows, like Nārada, you will be true to yours. Kṛṣṇa will see to it.

Your servant eternally,

Sivarama Swami

[1] Conversation 12/12/70, Indore

[2] Letter to Ghanaśyāma, 16/2/73

[3] *The Nectar of Devotion*, Chapter 17

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

In *Bhakti Sandarbha*, Anuccheda 244, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī discusses serving the spiritual master. He quotes *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*yat-sevayā bhagavataḥ
kūṭa-sthasya madhu-dviṣaḥ
rati-rāso bhavet tīvraḥ
pādayor vyasanārdanaḥ*

“By serving the feet of the spiritual master, one is enabled to develop transcendental ecstasy in the service of the Personality of Godhead, who is the unchangeable enemy of the Madhu demon and whose service vanquishes one’s material distresses.” [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.7.19]

He then analyzes the verse as follows: “By serving great devotees a festival of *prema* (*rati-rāsaḥ*) for the feet of the eternal Lord (*kūṭa-sthasya*) develops. The word *tīvraḥ* (intense) indicates that the result of serving is superior to just association. The accompanying result is described: *saṁsāra* (*vyasana*) is destroyed.”

What struck me first when reading this is the statement, “the result of serving is superior to just association.” This was your mood, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You were not one to simply sit and associate with your spiritual master, but you dedicated your life completely to serving him by spreading his mission. And as you pointed out in a letter once: “Just like I have written in the first publications of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, ‘The spiritual master lives forever by His divine instruction and the disciple lives with him.’, because I have always served my guru maharaja and followed his teachings I am now even

never separated from him.”

What struck me next is how Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī then develops this point by referring to a line from another *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verse, *mad-bhakta-pūjābhyadhikā* (spoken by Lord Krishna in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.19.21), which he translates as, “worshipping My devotee pleases Me more (*abhyadhikāḥ*) than worshipping Me.” By serving the spiritual master one attains more intense love for the Lord than by worshipping Him directly.

In your teachings to us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you stressed this point persistently—that your disciples’ business in life is to serve you, and in this way we will be able to approach Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Lord Krishna, and not by any other method.

We are trying, Śrīla Prabhupāda. It is not easy to maintain and spread the Krishna consciousness movement in this Kali-yuga, but we are trying. We pray to you on this day for your mercy to help us do this without becoming fatigued by the challenges, and particularly by our own weaknesses. We pray to be able to follow in your footsteps, as you followed those of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, so that we can never be separated from you, and in this way we can become empowered to serve as you were.

It is a lot to ask for, but I don’t see how we can do anything else. Clearly we have no alternative.

Please bless us on this most wonderful day that we can become worthy disciples of you, the most worthy spiritual master. Please bless us with devotion, knowledge and realization so we can properly carry forward your mission. And please bless us with the capacity to co-operate together despite the difficulties and ironies of Kali-yuga.

We place ourselves at your divine lotus feet today, and beg for these mercies.

Your lowly 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-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda

All glories to your mood of compassion on the fallen souls trapped in Kali-yuga by lifting them up with the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the form of the chanting of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa.

“Not considering who asked for it and who did not, nor who was fit and who unfit to receive it, Caitanya Mahāprabhu distributed the fruit of devotional service”.

Ādi Līlā 9.29

As a devoted follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the disciplic session you kept this principle foremost in distributing Kṛṣṇa consciousness worldwide. When coming to the West you could hardly find persons who were qualified to receive, this priceless, pure process of spiritual practice.

Your method was to make us receptive and thereby qualified by presenting it, as given by the previous spiritual masters—yet in a way that was understandable to the Western mind set. In doing so you went everywhere, meeting all types and classes of people and in the compassionate mood of Mahāprabhu, gave it freely to the fit and unfit. You also instructed us, your disciples to adopt the same mood.

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

PURPORT to Ādi. 9.29

There is a category of persons who may be classified as the epitome of being unfit who have in the last 25 years become more and more a focus of ISKCON preachers. These are the criminals of the State, those in prisons around the world.

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

The results over the years has been a steady increase of these “rejects of society” seriously taking to the process of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa — many of them chanting 16 rounds daily, and regularly reading and studying *Bhāgavat* philosophy. This has resulted in many of these persons giving Kṛṣṇa consciousness to their fellow inmates.

A small but steady group of devotees have made it their service to send your books to these persons, along with regular correspondence, occasional visits and in some places a jail is hosting regular Kṛṣṇa consciousness programs.

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

Los Angeles Temple President His Grace Svavās Prabhu has generously offered to send a set of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams* to any jail that requests it. Over the last year and a half, more than 70 sets of *Bhāgavatams* have reached prison libraries in the US.

In Croatia, His Grace Mahāsīmha Prabhu, one of your grand-disciples, managed to successfully place all of your translated books into all the jails of that country.

Bhakti Latā Dāsī, living in New Vṛndāvan has developed prison outreach to hundreds of inmates throughout the US, mostly through your books and through letter-writing and by inspiring other devotees to get involved through her website iskconprisonministry.us

Candra Prabhu in Boise, Idaho, employed as inmate counsellor in a jail in Oregon State has started and maintained a regular Kṛṣṇa consciousness program that has been active for more than 10 years.

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

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

pavanas of society.

With great appreciation and a life dedicated to your mission of giving Kṛṣṇa to others, I offer my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Candramauli Swami

Varṣāṇā Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

shoulder-to-shoulder, we experienced unprecedented affection, appreciation, and respect for one other.

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

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

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

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

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

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

bring us home before darkness engulfs the world at the twilight of the Golden Age.

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

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

Your servant,

Varṣāṇā Swami

Niraṅjana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

Today disciples, granddisciples, and hundreds of thousands of your other followers all over the world are gathering to pay homage to you on the occasion of your divine appearance in this material world. I feel fortunate and privileged to be among them today.

Recently I was reflecting on something you wrote in your purport to the following *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verse (1.15.27):

*deśa-kālārtha-yuktāni hṛt-tāpopaśamāni ca
haranti smarataś cittam govindābhīhitāni me*

“Now I am attracted to those instructions imparted to me by the Personality of Godhead [Govinda] because they are impregnated with instructions for relieving the burning heart in all circumstances of time and space.”

In your commentary, you write:

When Arjuna was face to face with being vanquished in his acquired power and prominence, he wanted again to remember the great teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā* just to teach all concerned that the *Bhagavad-gītā* can be consulted in all critical times, not only for solace from all kinds of mental agonies, but also for the way out of great entanglements which may embarrass one in some critical hour.

Although Arjuna’s words were clear and concise, it was your words that created a stir in my heart. Reflecting on their deep meaning, I momentarily thought of my past, when there was never a thought of Kṛṣṇa in my life, no *Bhagavad-gītā*, and no Śrīla Prabhupāda to guide me. Contrasting those memories with my life as it is now, I became overcome with a mixture of emotions. Foremost among them was gratitude, but then a bewildering question arose in my mind: “How is it possible for anyone to survive in this world without knowing that it’s only by remembering Kṛṣṇa that we can solve the problems of life?” At that moment I simply could not conceive how a living being with a consciousness developed enough to be called human could survive by clinging on to the fallible and futile conception that there is a shelter in this world other than that which comes from remembering Kṛṣṇa.

Of course, there’s always “temporary relief,” and the storehouse of solutions available under this heading is filled with an unlimited supply. “Try heat for relief of the cold. Try cold for relief of the heat. Try food for relief of the hunger. Try intoxication for relief of having to cope. Try speculation for relief of the unknown. Try this and try that . . .” There is no end to the list of placebos. And those who look only for relief will forever get the opportunity to go on looking

for more and more. Why? Because relief cannot fully satisfy the hankering soul. Unfortunately for them, they will never learn that life has so much more to offer than the search for relief. Due to their misfortune, they will never be able to hear you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, somehow, by some stroke of good fortune, something I still cannot fully comprehend even today, you intervened in my life. You taught me that shelter is not the same as relief. Sure, as you wrote in the purport above, remembering Kṛṣṇa brings relief from all kinds of mental agonies, and remembering Kṛṣṇa is also the way out of great entanglements which may embarrass us in some critical hour. But what you showed me and anyone else willing to have their eyes opened with your torchlight of knowledge is that remembering Kṛṣṇa is the natural state of existence and our only shelter in life. And the best way for me to remember Kṛṣṇa is to cling to your instructions and eternally serve under the shelter of your divine lotus feet.

Yes. There is another personality who has captured my mind and who has been indelibly implanted within the core of my heart. For me, remembrance of you is nondifferent from remembrance of Kṛṣṇa. You are the lord, master, and proprietor of my heart. It was you who saved me from the hell where there was no thought of Kṛṣṇa, no *Bhagavad-gītā*, and no . . . I can't even write it. You were there, but I had not as yet heard what you were saying.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. My debt to you is incalculable and can never be repaid. But to simply say "thank you" will never be enough for what you have done for me.

My only prayer to you on this most auspicious day of your divine appearance in this material world is, Please don't ever leave the core of my heart, and please keep me eternally engaged under the shelter of your divine lotus feet.

Your eternal servant,

Nirañjana Swami

*vṛndāvane ramaṇa-reti prasiddha-bhūmau
tatrāpi kṛṣṇa-balarāma-supāda-mūle*

*jṣānam paraṁ parama-kṛṣṇa-sudharmīty uktam
daṅtas 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 tarṁ karuṇā-varuṇālayam
yat-kṛpā-lava-leśena pāmaro 'py amarāyate*

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

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

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

The Generations to Come Should Never Forget

*nīḥśvāse 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, and remember the Lord and His Tulasīrāṇī at the time of death. All else will be stripped away from us!

Bhakti Viśrambha Mādhava Swami

*om ajsāna-timirāndhasya jśānāśjana-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 120th sacred appearance day anniversary.

The year 2016 marks a very special year for all the members of ISKCON as we celebrate our Golden Jubilee; amazingly already 50 years have gone by since you have incorporated your International Society for Krishna Consciousness in New York City. And as ISKCON celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year, gradually all of your disciples still physically present will soon begin to commemorate their Golden Jubilees as your duly initiated disciples. Simultaneously, so many other memorable events will be celebrated in the months and years to come of the 12 year Golden Jubilee Era that will terminate in the year 2027.

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

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

I can share one small incident that reflects your exalted position. When you visited the Montreal temple in the summer of 1975, the few devotees staying at the Ottawa temple where I had joined had come to Montreal to take your *darshan*. While you were discussing topics related to the 5th Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with some of the senior men in your quarters near the temple, a group of us younger devotees were in the next room stretching our ears to catch every word you were uttering. In reply to one question asked relating to what seemed to be the cosmology of the universe, I clearly recall your statement that this one particular explanation you were giving was based not on śāstra but on realization. This immediately struck me as something unique to only such a personality as yourself and further increased my faith and reverence for Your Divine Grace.

I am presently writing this offering from Rajasthan, attending the Gau Kripa Mahotsov at Nandagrām that is run by the Pathmeda Godham Mahatirth where they maintain the largest *goshala* in the world, with close to three lakhs cows. They are very active in helping revive our Vedic culture by providing healthy *deśī* cows to poor farmers and assisting them in returning to the normal and natural farming techniques as advocated by our *rishis* in the Vedas. You often spoke of the importance of Mother Cow and how our Vedic culture is Vrindāvana culture—a culture based on land, cows and loving devotional service to Lord Krishna. Our ISKCON leaders in India have established a separate Ministry for Cow Protection and the State of Rajasthan remains the only one at present having a Minister for Cow Protection. I pray that by your mercy more such developments can take place to reintroduce the basic concepts of cow care that remain fundamental to your order to bring a complete overhaul in modern day society.

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

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

Forever seeking your favorable glance and mercy.

Your humble servant,

RP Bhakti Rāghava Swami

Devāmrita Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

Desiring to be of suitable service to you is our eternal quest.

Whatever little expertise we have amassed derives from your service, and we strive to reinvest it in you.

The yearning to become an effective instrument in your hands is the king sitting on the throne of the *bhakti* life you have given us.

Because of the opportunity to engage in your service, we gradually find that our incongruous motivations, like species besieged by climate change, head for extinction.

Your devotees, begging for increased shelter at your lotus feet, seek divine intelligence to better serve your mission.

You explained:

Krishna's plan becomes very easy for us when we follow Krishna's orders, otherwise, we are following Maya's plan and become frustrated at every step. Following Krishna's orders means chanting daily 16 rounds, following the four rules and regulations, rising early, associating with devotees, like that. Unless these principles are followed, we cannot expect Krishna's protection. [Letter to Jayadeva, 23 July 1972]

Currently the tossing seas of an increasingly pluralistic *bhakti* society pitch and roll the ISKCON boat—waves of global diversity often drenching your dedicated deckhands as they rally to keep

your ISKCON ship on course.

Amidst the spiritual introspection and deliberation necessary for guiding the diversity so it can thrive in unity, there is the grand panacea, though so lofty and sublime. This complete remedy tugs at our hearts and heads, impelling us forward due to your mercy:

Although he is the first living entity, Lord Brahmā is not in the category of *viṣṇu-tattva*. Rather, he is part of the *īva-tattva*. Nonetheless, by the grace of the Lord, who instructed him through the heart (*tene brahma hṛdā*), Lord Brahmā could create a huge universe. Those who are actually pure devotees of the Lord are instructed by the Lord through the heart, where the Lord is always situated. *Īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati* (Bg. 18.61). If he follows the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the living entity, even though an insignificant creature, can perform the most difficult tasks by the Lord's grace. Lord Kṛṣṇa confirms this in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.10):

*teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ bhajatāṁ prīti-pūrvakam
dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ yena mām upayānti te*

“To those who are constantly devoted to serving Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me.”

Everything is possible for a pure devotee because he acts under the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Through His inconceivable energy, a pure devotee can perform tasks that are supposed to be very, very difficult. He can perform tasks not even previously performed by the Lord Himself. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 16.67, purport]

Gazing far overhead at the pragmatic reality and necessity of this consummate, final solution, we prostrate ourselves before you, desiring life-after-life progress toward this pressing practical necessity, though it be so stunningly exalted—life's ultimate goal.

Aspiring for your service,

Devāmrita Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My obeisances at your lotus feet.

May we all be blessed to find unlimited ways to glorify you!

I was being interviewed in The Bhakti Center for a documentary film on “*Hardcore and Krishna*”. I began to explain that the first intersection between Hardcore music and Krishna consciousness were concerts sponsored by Laxmī Nṛsinha Dāsa in the early 1980s in Tompkins Square Park.

I remember that at the time the movement hit a lull and practically no Western people were coming. From this and its offshoot, the straightedge scene, the temples in the West were practically repopulated and the movement regenerated. I described it as like mining a vein. As Śrīla Prabhupāda mined the vein of hippies to populate the Krishna consciousness movement, gradually the movement gained life by the vein of hardcore enthusiasts following bands like the Cro-Mags and Youth of Today (which became Shelter). I was there when this second wave matured and hundreds of people were becoming devotees. To this day, when I travel, devotees from all over the world approach me who came from that scene.

When I was explaining this it dawned on me that the mining of both scenes were born in the Lower East Side and in one sense connected with Tompkins Square Park. Was this a coincidence? Perhaps it was a sociological phenomenon – places where disaffected youth were gathering, but then it struck me: In the beginning of the new century when the hardcore vein had also dried, at least in America, and again the temples and its congregations, except for the Indian diaspora, had also waned, another vein of devotees was being mined. Here at the Bhakti Center, not disaffected youth, but professional people were becoming interested in bhakti, and gradually becoming committed devotees, this time from the yoga scene. Hundreds of such people come to our major programs and many prominent yoga centers accept devotees as their gurus and mentors and some are gradually becoming initiated devotees. And this mine may be the richest of all.

As I was explaining this to the documentary director, it occurred to me that the center of this latest vein that in ways is again revitalizing ISKCON in America – at least in terms of its congregation – is also taking birth very much centered around The Bhakti Center, again in

the Lower East Side. Could this be just a coincidence? I posited the following to the person interviewing me:

“Is this a coincidence, that all three scenes that populated the Krishna consciousness movement were born not only in the same city, but exactly in the same neighborhood? If we look at it objectively, there is only one common thread to these three separate rejuvenations of Kṛṣṇa bhakti, that such a great soul, Śrīla Prabhupāda, lived and served here for a substantial time and thus it is blessed by the dust of the feet of a great soul.”

Was that too much? Well there is śāstra. I thought of the story of Kālidāsa:

“The dust of the feet of a devotee, the water that has washed the feet of a devotee, and the remnants of food left by a devotee are three very powerful substances.” Anyta-līlā, 16.61

And I also thought of the benediction given:

“By rendering service to these three, one attains the supreme goal of ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa. In all revealed scriptures this is loudly declared again and again.” Antya-līlā, 16.62

Were there still particles of dust within the cracks of the pavement invoking revolution? As a disciple I enjoy thinking that way, but there is undeniably something. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your potency is immeasurable and the desire of Śrī Caitanya to glorify you is unlimited. But which every way it is said, you did walk here and that effect is more than just lingering. And most importantly my prayer is still there:

May I eternally serve the dust of your lotus feet!

Humbly in service,

Dhanurdhara Swami

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

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

You state in your purport to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 7.101:

In order to become an empowered preacher, one must be favored by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu or His devotee, the spiritual master. One must also request everyone to chant the *mahā-mantra*. In this way, such a person can convert others to Vaiṣṇavism, showing them how to become pure devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were that empowered preacher favored by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by all adored,
A true follower of the Lord.
He toiled hard with every limb;
Around the world were signs of him.

There was no person so very great,
No power in heaven could master fate.
Caitanya's message, he answered the call:
He gave the mercy to one and all.

His strategy completely planned
Divine ecstasy to flood the land.
Kali forced in far wilds to dwell,
Prabhupāda spread the holy name well.

A beloved son, the heir of bliss.
Who could ever do more than this?
Great love and happy fate thine.
Our guru's service so sublime.

Empowered to preach, a sight to behold,
He always appeared like glistening gold.

An aristocratic wave of his hand—
He seemed to be ruler of the land.

Even those who lived in the sky
Were astonished to see many comply
With the divine movement of Gaura Hari.
From Māyā's grip they were able to flee.

Their senses now willingly restrained,
From sinful activities they refrained,
Feeling happy and deeply content.
He saved them from their predicament.

Ever eager to hear him speak,
They offered him a lofty seat
And listened to sweet words of nectar
Like a honey-bee, a pollen collector.

Spiritual general with a commanding voice,
He was the natural leader of their choice.
Rapt attention they did give;
Happily he told how they could live.

Now, therefore, please hear my rede
And mark my words with duteous heed:
Let us rejoice and let us declare,
“Only he showed compassion and care!”

No debt to saints or *brāhmaṇs*, no,
Nor spirits, gods, or self I owe.
One duty now remains alone:
To follow my father to our spiritual home.

Although no longer in our association,
Something that causes deep agitation,
Prabhupāda is our savior and guide,
In whom we can always confide.

Could he who every joy bestows,
Whose body like the lotus shows,
The friend of all, who charmed the sight,

Whose flashing eyes were darkly bright,

Leave his disciples so far behind,
To whom he was gentle and kind?
This world is wrecked and tempest-tossed,
Like a vessel with her rudder lost.

How are we to continue on
Without our master to save us from
A cruel and doubtful fate,
Something not to contemplate?

This sudden fall from bliss to grief
Appears untrue, beyond belief.
My mind is deeply distraught—
In a dream I seem to be caught.

While it seems he is far away,
In my heart he shall always stay.
Take comfort, because he is within.
My whole life I dedicate to him.

Your insignificant servant,

Rāmāi Swami

Giridhārī Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Since this year we celebrate ISKCON's fiftieth anniversary, I have been privileged to make several presentations on "The Seven Purposes of ISKCON" to devotees throughout our zone. In the course of making these presentations, I have personally gained deeper understanding of your vision for ISKCON, and perhaps more importantly, how to better realize it. This too was the case with those who attended the presentations.

Most astounding for many devotees to hear was that you crafted

these seven purposes back in 1953, when starting the League of Devotees in Jhansi. As early as then you were clearly envisioning a worldwide movement to propagate the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Only a short thirteen years were separating you from officially registering your ISKCON society in 1966.

Your seven purposes read like *sūtras* in that they are complete but at the same time thickly condensed. Throughout your books and recorded lectures, you provide insights and instructions that help your followers unpack these *sūtra*-like purposes. You left nothing ambiguous; your intentions were crystal clear. As we mined your teachings, we found many valuable gems that seemed to speak directly about the seven purposes.

* * *

Your first purpose is “To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.”

You once said that your books would be the “law books” for the next ten thousand years, the golden era when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s *saṅkīrtana* movement would spread widely. Your books would be the foundation upon which ISKCON rests, the basis of everything. You directly spoke about this in two letters:

My first concern is that my books shall be published and distributed profusely all over the world. Practically, books are the basis of our movement. Without them our preaching has no effect. [Letter to Maṇḍalībhadrā, 20 January 1972]

Books are the basis of our movement. Whatever appreciation we are getting on account of our books, it is because we are following the path chalked out by exalted devotees. [Letter to Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa, 9 January 1976]

Translating, publishing, and distributing transcendental literature were clearly at the forefront of your mission. But at the same time you were equally concerned that your disciples carefully study your books.

So we should have good association, by study of good books like *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, we should realize ourself. Otherwise, our mind will remain

always an enemy, an enemy. And enemy, as the enemy is always prepared to do harm, so my mind will drag me to things which will make me entangled more and more in this material miserable life. [Lecture on *Bhagavad-gītā* 6.4–12, New York, 4 September 1966]

Don't think that simply our books are meant for selling. No. It is meant for reading also. If we read regularly, at least two hours, three hours, that is *tapasya*. *Tapo divyam*. [Lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.5.1, Vṛndāvana, 23 October 1976]

In 1976, perceiving that many devotees were not familiar with your books, you had a letter sent to all GBC members and informed them of your plan to institute formulized study, with examinations.

Here in India many persons often criticize our sannyasis and brahmanas as being unqualified due to insufficient knowledge of the scriptures. Factually, there are numerous instances when our sannyasis and brahmanas have fallen down, often due to insufficient understanding of the philosophy. This should not be a point of criticism nor a reason for fall down, since Śrīla Prabhupāda has mercifully made the most essential scriptures available to us in his books. The problem is that not all the devotees are carefully studying the books, the result being a fall down or at least unsteadiness. . . . [Letter approved by Śrīla Prabhupāda and sent to all GBC members by Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami, 7 January 1976]

You wanted all prospective candidates for *brāhmaṇa* initiation to pass a written examination to attain a Bhakti-śāstrī degree, and for *sannyāsa* candidates to attain a Bhakti-vaibhava degree.

After hearing how much importance you placed on the study of your books, many devotees attending the presentation vowed to study them more deeply, enroll in *śāstra* courses, form study groups, and regularly listen to your recorded lectures.

* * *

Your second purpose is “To propagate a consciousness of Krishna as it is revealed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.”

When you founded your Society in 1966, you carefully chose the term “Krishna consciousness” instead of “God consciousness”

to emphasize the specific, attractive personality of Kṛṣṇa, who is the Supreme Being mentioned in so much of Vedic literature as the source of all that exists.

“Kṛṣṇa consciousness” was of course your translation of the first line of a verse by Rāmānanda Rāya that Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī included in his verse anthology, *Padyāvalī*, and that is quoted in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 8.70):

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ
krīyatām yadi kuto 'pi labhyate
tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalam
janma-koṭi-sukṛtair na labhyate*

“Pure devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness cannot be had even by pious activity in hundreds and thousands of lives. It can be attained only by paying one price—that is, intense greed to obtain it. If it is available somewhere, one must purchase it without delay.”

You desired that this “consciousness of Kṛṣṇa” be propagated “as it is revealed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.”

Perhaps, throughout the whole world, it is the first time—we are preaching *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is. We are the only institution in the world that we are preaching *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is, and people are liking it. Before that, for the last two hundred years, so many swamis, yogīs and, . . . they tried to preach Hindu philosophy, Vaiṣṇavism. Not a single person was a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, not a single person. Now you see so many young men. Why? Why this difference? Because we did not present *Bhagavad-gītā* adulterated. [Conversation, Hyderabad, 12 April 1975]

Studying quotes such as these, attendees at our presentation resolved to give up the speculative tendency to say “I think” or “maybe” when they presented the philosophy to others. Rather, they would repeat what you said, either verbatim or in their own words when needed.

* * *

Your third purpose is “To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Krishna, the prime entity, and thus to develop the idea, within the members, and humanity, at large, that each soul is part and parcel of the quality of Godhead (Krishna).”

You taught us right from the beginning that Kṛṣṇa could be approached only through His pure devotees.

In the Ādi Purāṇa there is the following statement by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, addressed to Arjuna: “My dear Pārtha, one who claims to be My devotee is not so. Only a person who claims to be the devotee of My devotee is actually My devotee.” No one can approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead directly. One must approach Him through His pure devotees. [*Nectar of Devotion*, Chapter Twelve]

Naturally, the purpose of Vaiṣṇava *saṅga* is to have the great fortune of serving the Vaiṣṇavas. In Chapter Twelve of *The Nectar of Devotion* you sweetly paraphrase several verses extolling the extraordinary benefits of Vaiṣṇava-sevā.

In the *Padma Purāṇa*, there is a nice statement praising the service of the Vaiṣṇavas, or devotees. In that scripture Lord Śiva tells Pārvatī, “My dear Pārvatī, there are different methods of worship, and out of all such methods the worship of the Supreme Person is considered to be the highest. But even higher than the worship of the Lord is the worship of the Lord’s devotees.”

A similar statement is in the Third Canto, Seventh Chapter, verse 19, of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: “Let me become a sincere servant of the devotees, because by serving them one can achieve unalloyed devotional service unto the lotus feet of the Lord. The service of devotees diminishes all miserable material conditions and develops within one a deep devotional love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. . . .”

A similar statement is found in the First Canto, Nineteenth Chapter, verse 33, of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: “There is no doubt about one’s becoming freed from all reactions to sinful activities after visiting a devotee or touching his lotus feet or giving him a sitting place. Even by remembering the activities of such a Vaiṣṇava, one becomes purified, along with one’s whole family. And what, then, can be said of rendering direct service to him?”

You taught us that service to Vaiṣṇavas paves the road to Goloka, and that offending them paves the road to hell. *Apa* means against, and *rādha* means devotion. An *aparādha*, therefore, is an act that stops devotion. The *Skanda Purāṇa* lists six types of *vaiṣṇava-aparādhas*:

(1) to kill a Vaiṣṇava, (2) to blaspheme a Vaiṣṇava, (3) to not offer obeisances upon seeing a Vaiṣṇava, (4) to get angry at a Vaiṣṇava, (5) to not feel delighted upon seeing a Vaiṣṇava, and (6) to think ill of a Vaiṣṇava. All of these constitute offenses, of varying grades of seriousness. But one thing is sure:

If the devotee commits an offense at the feet of a Vaiṣṇava while cultivating the creeper of devotional service in the material world, his offense is compared to a mad elephant that uproots the creeper and breaks it. In this way the leaves of the creeper are dried up. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 19.156]

In his *Upadeśāmṛta* Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states that service to Vaiṣṇavas is based on six loving exchanges: offering gifts in charity, accepting charitable gifts, revealing one's mind in confidence, inquiring confidentially, accepting *prasādam* and offering *prasādam*. Indeed, to facilitate these six exchanges was reason you established ISKCON:

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness has been established to facilitate these six kinds of loving exchanges between devotees. This Society was started single-handedly, but because people are coming forward and dealing with the give-and-take policy, the Society is now expanding all over the world. [*Nectar of Instruction*, verse 4, purport]

Anyone who is trying to be aloof from this Krishna Consciousness Society and yet engage in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is living in a great hallucination, for this is not possible. From this statement by Dhruva Mahārāja it is clear that unless one is associated with devotees, his devotional service does not mature; it does not become distinct from material activities. The Lord says, *satām prasāṅgān mama vīrya-sainvido bhavanti hṛt-karṇa-rasāyanāḥ* (SB 3.25.25). Only in the association of pure devotees can the words of Lord Kṛṣṇa be fully potent and relishable to the heart and ear. Dhruva Mahārāja explicitly wanted the association of devotees. That association in devotional activities is just like the waves of an incessantly flowing river. In our Krishna Consciousness Society we

have full engagement twenty-four hours a day. Every moment of our time is always busily engaged in the service of the Lord. This is called the incessant flow of devotional service. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.9.11, purport]

A pure devotee desires only to engage in loving service to the Lord in the constant association of the Lord and His eternal associates, as stated in the previous verse (*dāsānudāso bhavitāsmi*). As confirmed by Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura:

*tāndera caraṇa sevi bhakta-sane vāsa
janame janame haya, ei abhilāṣa*

To serve the Lord and the servants of His servants, in the association of devotees, is the only objective of a pure, unalloyed devotee. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.11.25, purport)

Gaining deeper insights as to why you established ISKCON, devotees attending our presentation promised to take Vaiṣṇava-saṅga and Vaiṣṇava-sevā more seriously, and not take them so much for granted. To do this, they vowed to base devotee association on the six loving exchanges established by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and of course to avoid Vaiṣṇava *aparādha* like the plague.

* * *

Your fourth purpose is “To teach and encourage the Saṅkīrtan movement of congregational chanting of the holy name of God as revealed in the teachings of Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.”

You taught us that the descent of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was an extremely rare event—so rare, in fact, that it takes place only once in a day of Brahmā, or once every 8,640,000,000 years. That’s how often the Lord Himself comes in the guise of His own devotee to practice and teach the most sublime process of attaining *kṛṣṇa-prema*: *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*.

As the emissary of Śrī Paśca-tattva, with full faith in the order of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, you fearlessly chanted the holy name in Tompkins Square Park in 1966 and attracted your first followers. Traveling the globe over the next eleven years, you attracted thousands more through your chanting and inspired others to go out and do the same.

Your instructions are clear: public chanting is the main way of propagating Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

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. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.24.10, purport]

One of your dear godbrothers once said that you were successful in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness around the world because of two things. You had full faith in the order of your spiritual master, and you also had full faith in the holy name.

Hearing what you taught, both in word and through example, the attendees promised to organize and participate in more public *harināma* programs. This, they said, would benefit them and others.

* * *

Your fifth purpose is “To erect for the members, and for society at large, a holy place of transcendental pastimes, dedicated to the personality of Krishna.”

It is well known that you established Śrīdhām Māyāpur as ISKCON’s world headquarters. You envisioned a transcendental city of many thousands, all playing their roles to serve the Lord. The center of that city would be the *adbhūta-mandira*, the magnificent temple predicted by Nityānanda Prabhu, from which *nāma-saṅkīrtana* would be broadcast all over the world.

Kṛṣṇa also wonderfully fulfilled your desire to establish large temples in Vṛndāvana and Mumbai. By the time of your departure, you had established 108 temples, and now there are nearly 600. In this way you have established not only one but many “places of transcendental pastimes, dedicated to the personality of Krishna.”

You clearly wanted your followers to establish temples, but at

the same time you cautioned that the main purpose of a temple was to maintain proper standards of Deity worship, hold classes, distribute *prasādam*, and serve as a base from which devotees would go out to preach.

I have seen the pictures of the Deity installation you have sent. It appears to be very nicely done. Stick to the principles. All the brahmana devotees appear to be very nice. Do this and be happy. In your country hundreds of temples like this must be opened. Town to town, village to village. I am very pleased. Another temple opened, another book published, that is the success of this movement. Without book distribution the temple worship standard will also diminish. Therefore both of them should go side by side. I can see in the pictures so many outsiders offering respect with awe and veneration. This Deity worship is very important. As soon as you get sufficient initiated brahmanas, try to open another center. [Letter to Kuruśreṣṭha, 28 December 1976]

Hearing these insights on the purpose of establishing temples, the attendees made firm commitments to personally assist with Deity worship, regularly attend temple programs, and participate in public preaching programs.

* * *

Your sixth purpose is “To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler and more natural way of life.”

To establish practical working models of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, you desired to establish sustainable Kṛṣṇa conscious communities that would provide devotees and visitors with a better alternative to the chaos of the present godless civilization. Basing these communities on the principles of “simple living and high thinking,” devotees would grow their own food, protect the cows, weave their own cloth, and use the balance of their time for practicing and teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Our farm projects are an extremely important part of our movement. We must become self-sufficient by growing our own grains and producing our own milk, then there will be no question of poverty. So develop these farm communities as far as possible. They should be developed

as an ideal society depending on natural products not industry. Industry has simply created godlessness, because they think they can manufacture everything that they need. Our Bhagavad-gita philosophy explains that men and animals must have food in order to maintain their bodies. And the production of food is dependent on the rain and the rain of course is dependent on chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Therefore let everyone chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, eat nicely and keep their bodies fit and healthy. This is ideal life style. We do not condemn modern civilization but we don't like to get it at the cost of God Consciousness, that is suicide. [Letter to Rūpānuga, 18 December 1974]

Most of the attendees had never visited an ISKCON farm community, nor were they living in rural areas. Thus they had no direct experience of the model you envisioned. But they did have some thoughts on how they could apply some of the principles of simple living and high thinking, even in the city. One devotee said she could start by being satisfied with less, by using older clothes instead of buying new ones, by using the same mobile phone instead of buying the brand-new model, and by restricting internet usage to things only important for her profession and Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Others said they would try to reduce time-wasting activities that drew time away from their spiritual practices. Others wanted to start supporting an ISKCON farm project somewhere around the world.

* * *

Finally, your seventh purpose is “With a view towards achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, magazines, books, and other writings.”

Publishing and distributing books were, as you often said, your most important activities. You labored long and hard to translate your books, and you worked equally hard to get them published and distributed. In the early years you did all that yourself; later you inspired your disciples to help you. The Bhaktivedanta purports were your devotional ecstasies, fully saturated with Kṛṣṇa's mercy. Producing and distributing books fulfilled the order Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura gave you to “teach Kṛṣṇa consciousness among the English-speaking public, especially in the Western countries,” but also expressed your personal compassion as

you strived to save mankind from its path to destruction.

There is no doubt about it: to distribute books is one most important activity. The temple is not a place for eating & sleeping, but a base from which we send out our soldiers to fight with maya. Fight with maya means to drop thousands and millions of books into the lap of conditioned souls. Just like during war time the bombs are raining from the sky like anything. [Letter to Rāmeśvara, 3 August 1973]

Our first business is this book distribution. There is no need of any other business. If the book distribution is managed properly, pushed on with great enthusiasm and determination and at the same time if our men keep spiritually strong, then the whole world will become Krishna conscious. [Letter to Satsvarūpa, 5 January 1976]

I will never die. I shall live forever in my books, and you will utilize. [Press Conference, San Francisco, 16 July 1975]

The attendees responded more to this seventh purpose than to all the others. Most had come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness by receiving one of your books. All felt greatly benefited by reading them. Many had distributed them and personally witnessed how your words transformed people's lives for the better. They vowed to study your books more carefully, to teach from them, and to distribute them to others. They understood that this was our "family business," and that it was everyone's responsibility to participate in some way, be it small or large.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for so kindly giving us the seven purposes of ISKCON and for providing clear directions on how to practically apply them. Please bless us so that we can play our parts in making your glorious ISKCON into the preaching mission you envisioned. We offer our bodies, minds, and words in your service.

Begging to remain your humble servant,

Giridhārī Swami

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

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

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

Your servant,

Amala-bhakta Swami

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

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

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

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

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

There are many things that should be done, many things that could be done, many things that are not getting done, and many things that are getting done on the 10% level. I could look at the glass as 90% empty or as 10% full. It seems better to light a candle than curse the darkness.

Although these mundane musings are miscellaneous and

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

*mahat-sevām dvāram āhur vimuktes
tamo-dvāram yoṣitām saṅgi-saṅgam
mahāntas te sama-cittāḥ praśāntā
vimanyavaḥ suhṛdah sādhaso ye*

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

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

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

Your servant,

Candraśekhara Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most prostrated and heartfelt obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace and your limitless mercy.

I continue my yearly glorification of your embodiment of the twenty-six qualities of a Vaiṣṇava. The next quality is *māna-da*, respectful. Of the four cardinal principles laid down by Lord Caitanya in his *ṭṛṇād api su-nīcena* verse, none of which are easy to achieve, perhaps respecting others is the most difficult. Certainly though freedom from desire for any respect is almost equally demanding, to honor others in one's mind is not a simple task. But you mastered the art of honoring everyone, a quality born of tolerance, which was boundless in your person.

After you arrived in the US you lived in the midst of degradation and sinful activity. Still, you addressed everyone as Mr. Robert, Mr. David, etc, though all your original followers were young enough to be your grandchildren. Although you were superior to everyone, you addressed them with all due respect, seeing them as servants of Kṛṣṇa. Such respect for all can manifest only in a realized pure devotee who sees all living entities equally (*paṇḍitaḥ sama-darśinaḥ*). One example of your humble and respectful demeanor occurred while you were in an airport lounge, waiting to depart. Many devotees were crowded around you, blocking some of the other passengers. When an airport official complained to the local temple leader, he stood up and commanded that all ISKCON devotees should leave the lounge, and you immediately humbly stood up and prepared to do so. Such humility, which governed your every dealing with both devotees and nondevotees, endeared everyone to you when they saw such a rare quality so prevalent in your divine person.

The next quality, which is the natural consequence of respecting others, is *amānī*, the absence of false prestige. Your constant sacrifice for all fallen conditioned souls is the main evidence of this quality. Not only was your every effort a proof of your selflessness, but practically everything you did was superhuman and totally bereft of any personal consideration. You left the transcendental peace of Vṛndāvana for the misery-ridden streets of New York. You relinquished a peaceful sādhu life to accept many difficulties in order to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, following the mood of Prahāda Mahārāja: *naitān vihāya kṛpaṇān vimumuḡṣa eko*. This year we celebrate

worldwide the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the glorious movement you left in the form of ISKCON, a legacy that inspires us to mold our lives in pure *bhakti* and to carry out your mission.

I sincerely pray that some day I can achieve one drop of these Vaiṣṇava qualities of respectfulness and absence of false prestige on the recommendation of Caitanya Mahāprabhu in His *Śikṣāṣṭakam*, and most importantly by receiving your merciful empowerment. Thank you for this opportunity to make your service my life's work.

Your insignificant servant,

Guru Prasād Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

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

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

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

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

Your insignificant servant,

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisance on this most glorious day of your appearance. Let your divine glory spread all over the world for the benefit of all the living entities.

Many times you emphatically reminded us of the critical condition of Kali-yuga. In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, you said, people would become degraded and violence would prevail everywhere. And sure enough, we are seeing that prediction come true. Sinful activities have become so rampant that breaking the four regulative principles is now the normal standard of life. There is violence wherever we look. In the name of religion, *adharma* is gaining popularity, and violence in the form of terrorism is engulfing the world.

Recently, during Easter time, when the Christians in Lahore were celebrating that auspicious occasion, a suicide bomber detonated a bomb, killing more than hundred people and injuring over three hundred others. Less than a week earlier, two young suicide bombers sacrificed themselves to kill more than thirty people in a Brussels airport. An hour later, in the same city, another suicide bomber caused an explosion in a train station, killing more than twenty and injuring more than three hundred. Last November, gunmen and suicide bombers almost simultaneously hit a concert hall, a major stadium, and restaurants and bars in Paris, leaving 130 people dead and hundreds wounded. Since your departure from this planet, life has changed drastically, and violence, in a new shape, is terrorizing the world.

Since the destruction of the Twin Towers in New York fifteen years ago, the United States, which had been so open and liberal, has become much less so because of concerns about people's security. But even though the governments of many nations have taken measures to curb the violence, they haven't been successful, and terrorists are increasing enormously. A Muslim terrorist group named the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has taken over parts of those two countries. Its members brutal murder those opposed to them and even sell young women in the marketplace—all in the name of religion. And as the domain of these groups expands, so too do their atrocities.

Neither local governments nor the joint military efforts of

Europe and America have been able to curb these terrorist groups. As a result, millions of people in the Middle East, mostly Muslims, are fleeing their homeland and taking asylum in neighboring countries and Europe.

It has become clear that the third world war will not be fought between countries with specific boundaries and by soldiers wearing uniforms. It will be a war of terror, and there will be no way to identify the terrorists until they've launched their deadly attacks. No political power or military or police force will be able to curb them, what to speak of defeat them.

Wondering what our role should be at a time like this, how we should deal with the situation, I think of how you acted in 1944 when Japan was about to bomb the British military base in Calcutta. When everyone was fleeing the city, you not only stayed on but went out on *harināma* with your servants and some trusting neighbors. You told one of your senior godbrothers, "If I chant the holy name, Kṛṣṇa will protect me, and even if He doesn't and I leave my body chanting the holy name, my life will be successful."

Although Calcutta faced imminent danger, for some reason Japan suddenly changed its plan and did not bomb the city. The reason may be mysterious to some, but it is clear to us that because of your chanting the holy name on *saṅkīrtana*, Kṛṣṇa saved that city.

This example provides us with a wonderful lesson: when the entire world is in the grip of terrorism, and pandemonium reigns—in that critical situation we, your loyal followers, must go out with *mṛdaṅgas* and *karatālas* and perform the *yuga-dharma* of *nāma-saṅkīrtana* without concern for our safety. If we take shelter of the holy name, Kṛṣṇa will protect us, and even if we die, we will achieve the ultimate perfection of our lives. Our faith in the holy name will be tested, and onlookers will see how the devotees have conquered the fear of death.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please give us the strength and courage to be able to act with this conviction. Please bless us that we can properly follow your footsteps, mold our lives according to the examples you so mercifully set for us, and become your true followers.

Your humble servant eternally,

Bhakti Chāru Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

*naivāvidan kṣīyamāṇam jalam gādha-jale-carāḥ
yathāyur anv-aham kṣayyam narā mūdhāḥ kuṭumbinaḥ*

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

A half-century ago you began the Hare Kṛṣṇa explosion at the Matchless Gifts storefront at 26 Second Avenue, New York City. So please allow me to conclude by praising one of the “matchless gifts” you have bestowed upon us: (Yes, in this case, various gifts

can simultaneously be dubbed “matchless,” or matched only by one another. Yet the whole transcendental package is indeed unmatched by any other philanthropy ever given in the history of the worlds.) This is the matchless gift of real philosophy, which takes into account the imminence of death while cultivating the sense of eternal life. By focusing our consciousness on Kṛṣṇa, the very root of existence, you magnificently bless us by delivering the ultimate understanding of life and death, of everything and everyone. (Out of your unfathomable humility, you described such work as that of the postal peon, who must simply deliver the mail with its information unchanged.) And you have made it practical, by urging us to worship Nāma Prabhu, who is nondifferent from Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, your personal, intimate friend, and indeed the friend to *all* His parts and parcels.

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

*Aspiring to remain,
Your eternal servant,*

Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami

PS: Along with devotees worldwide, I also humbly pray that Your Divine Grace, on behalf of Lord Kṛṣṇa, bestow special relief and special mercy on your beloved daughter Govinda Dāsī, who, as you undoubtedly know, recently suffered very serious injuries due to a car crash. Thank you.

TRIBUTES
BY
INITIATED
DISCIPLES

Dear Lord and Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I bow before you, offering my repeated humble obeisances again and again.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please show me your face

And make me a miracle of Your Divine Grace.

You are my master, I am your slave—

Please let me serve you day after day after day.

Śrīla Prabhupāda! Śrīla Prabhupāda!

You declared it was true,

That you were a “cowboy” always serving
that supreme boy of blue hue.

Devotees may speculate (it’s quite natural to do),

But in that San Francisco apartment we
all clearly heard it from you.

ISKCON 50 is dedicated to you, who brought hope of spiritual bliss into our lives. In terms of eternity, fifty years is but a blip in time, but those precious first fifty are indelibly embedded in our hearts, our minds, our thoughts, our words, our bodies, and our daily lives. Fifty years of transformation. Fifty years of wonder. You’ve never left us; you’re with us every day. Please allow me to never again stray. Fifty years with you in my life, and my heart still cries, “I want to surrender, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Please help me surrender, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Please let us serve you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Please let me serve you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!”

Thus far 2016 has been an interesting and unusual year . . .

ISKCON 50 puts us to the test.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, don’t let us rest.

Please let us act in service to you.

Please let me always remain with you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, our Lord and Master, this is my prayer. It is nothing new: it is how I am always remembering you. Dear Lord and Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please keep my head at your lotus feet, without which, where would I go?

Your Dāsī,

Mālatī Devī Dāsī
(as named by you)

Madhusūdan Dāsa

It is said that “Kids say the darndest things,” meaning because they are less inhibited and innocent they come out with, sometimes, very witty, sanguine, funny or cute and attractive statements. Not really knowing the extent of their statements it seemed like some unknown intelligence was speaking through them.

Because Śrīla Prabhupāda was intimately in touch with that so-called “unknown intelligence,” Krishna, he was the emblem of innocence, witty beyond belief, always sanguine in making a serious point, many times funny, and always attractive in whatever he was saying. And his disciples were like little hatchlings, stretching for nourishment from his lotus lips.

When Prabhupāda was speaking about the *Bhagavad-gītā* commentary of Dr. S. Rādhākṛishnan where he said, “That it is not to the person Krishna that we must surrender to but to the unborn, un-manifest within Krishna,” Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “Yes, he is S.R. (the Dr’s. Initials)—Simply Rascal!

After a class, when Prabhupāda asked for questions, I said I heard from devotees that there was an ocean of milk. So I asked him, “Is there really an ocean of milk?” He replied, “Come, I will drown you in it!”

Again after a class, a young woman asked Prabhupāda, “Don’t all paths lead to God, to the same place?” Prabhupāda pointed to different parts of his body each time asking “Do you put food here, do you put food here?” When he pointed to his backside he also said “Do you put food here?” Then, he said, “No you just put food here,” pointing to his mouth. He explained that in the same way the

only path that leads to God is devotional service. When he finished, the young woman got up, embarrassed and in tears, and hurriedly left the temple. Shortly thereafter, she joined the temple and was eventually initiated.

Around two years after my initiation, when my mind was bothering me with doubts, I wrote to Śrīla Prabhupāda asking “was praying to Madhusūdan to slay the demon of my doubt?” He wrote back, “...unless you act according to the direction of Madhusūdan how can Madhusūdan or Madhusūdan’s father help you?”

In all the years that Śrīla Prabhupāda was with us and all the lectures that I personally witnessed, he was able to answer every philosophical question, plus I never saw him defeated in any argument.

I remember the many times that he asked various other disciples, or groups of disciples, “Are you convinced (about Krishna consciousness)?” Now, I’d like to answer that question Śrīla Prabhupāda: “Yes, I’m convinced!”

I pray to always hear any and all the words from your lotus lips. Please, I beg you to continue giving me your blessings, without which I am lost.

Your eternal humble servant,

Madhusūdan Dāsa

Dāmodara Dāsa

Prabhupāda

Holy Father

When I Falter

Tell Me “Harder!”

This little verse refers to the time when Śrīla Prabhupada was in Beth Israel hospital. We took turns going there to serve him. Mostly that meant squeezing his temples. My hands aren't big. So his instruction to me was, “Harder, harder!” Now may I apply that to all aspects of my service to him.

Dāmodara Dāsa

New York

Kāṣṇanbālā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your transcendental lotus feet, along with this attempt to honor you. It is only by your unlimited kindness that I'm allowed to take shelter in your loving service.

In this world, there are countless persons, from leaders to so-called authorities, professing to have answers to save everyone from the deepest of despairs through incomplete explanations. Yet all along, between ulterior motives and/or their partial realization in the end is not an encompassing, fulfilling solution.

What resonates as ‘clear as a bell’ for me is that Śrīla Prabhupāda is a cent percent pure devotee of Lord Śrī Krishna. Many movements and causes focus on the leaders’ names but he never coveted recognition for himself. Instead he had created a worldwide society not addressing him as ‘the one in charge’ but propagating ‘the Hare Krishna Movement’ glorifying Krishna.

Just by hearing Śrīla Prabhupāda's lectures, reading his books,

seeing his activities, displayed such evidence of how he used everything in Krishna's service. There was never an iota of cheating or self-motivated mentality.

One of the first teachings, I remember hearing was the true authenticity of Krishna consciousness that Śrīla Prabhupāda so meticulously bestowed on one and all; that these teachings are handed down in the disciplic succession ever so carefully, repeating exactly what was heard from the previous *ācāryas*.

How that gives such peace of mind, which otherwise is so lacking in this material world. Śrīla Prabhupāda always gave all credit to his beloved spiritual master for his own ability to push on this movement and encourage his fledgling children. In that way, we are so safely situated; taking shelter of Śrīla Prabhupāda connects us to his spiritual master and through the entire *paramparā*.

This is one of the many countless examples of Śrīla Prabhupāda's special mercy and potency that I heard recently: Many times he would say that the grandfather is more kind to the child than the father is. Śrīla Prabhupāda was in Hawaii and at that time Kārtikeya Prabhu was his servant. One day, Govinda Dāsī brought wheat germ from the market. In those days, devotees used to make wheat germ *halavah* and offer it in the temple. It was very sweet and rich. Kārtikeya thought that next time Śrīla Prabhupāda asks for *halavah*, he'll make it from wheat germ and Śrīla Prabhupāda will be so pleased.

One day, it was rainy and cold. Sometimes when it would be rainy or cold, Śrīla Prabhupāda asked for *halavah* as ghee and grains heat up the body. So, this day he called Kārtikeya to make *halavah*. Kārtikeya was very excited, went into the kitchen, got the wheat germ and proceeded to make the *halavah*. The whole time he was cooking, he was thinking how happy Śrīla Prabhupāda will be with the wheat germ *halavah*. That was his whole meditation; how Śrīla Prabhupāda would be so pleased.

Then he offered it and brought the *halavah* to Śrīla Prabhupāda in his room. As he was waiting to see how he would like it, Śrīla Prabhupāda instead looked up with a very sour expression on his face and said, "*halavah* means *sūjī* (farina)." Then Śrīla Prabhupāda motioned with his left hand to 'take it away.' So, brokenheartedly, Kārtikeya took the bowl of *halavah* out of the room.

Kārtikeya was very upset and didn't know what to do. So, he went into the Temple and sat in front of the altar before the pictures of Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī, crying. He

prayed to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta saying, “I was just trying to please your spiritual son but somehow he was upset with me. I don’t know what to do. I really only wanted to please him.”

Suddenly, Kārtikeya heard Śrīla Prabhupāda’s voice calling from his room, “Kārtikeya, Kārtikeya.” He came running to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s room. Śrīla Prabhupāda told him to bring the *halavah*. He immediately brought the bowl of *halavah*, and Śrīla Prabhupāda began to eat it with gusto and relish. Then he said, “bring more.” He brought more, and again, when Śrīla Prabhupāda finished, he requested more. In this way, Śrīla Prabhupāda finished off the whole pot of *halavah*.

From this pastime, Kārtikeya related that he could then understand “that the whole disciplic succession is there behind Śrīla Prabhupāda, to pull us out of this deep dark well of material existence.”

In *Bhagavad-gītā* chapter 18, verse 75, Saṅjaya says to Arjuna, “By the mercy of Vyāsa I have heard these most confidential talks directly from the master of mysticism, Krishna, who was speaking personally to Arjuna.”

In the purport, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “Vyāsa was the spiritual master of Saṅjaya, and Saṅjaya admits that it was by Vyāsa’s mercy that he could understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This means that one has to understand Krishna—not directly but through the medium of the spiritual master. The spiritual master is the transparent medium, although it is true that the experience is still direct. This is the mystery of the disciplic succession. When the spiritual master is bona fide then one can hear *Bhagavad-gītā* directly as Arjuna heard it.”

How fortunate we are! It is beyond my comprehension the depth of fortune we have been bestowed; children and grandchildren of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s around the world. All I can say is I am forever grateful to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, my beloved spiritual master, and I beg to remain always in your loving service.

Kāṣhanbālā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupada,

I offer my not-so-humble obeisances at your lotus feet. When I think back on my life, as old people in *māyā* tend to do, I think of all the things I am grateful to you for.

First and foremost, you gave me a taste for the holy name. Despite my present abominable condition, I still have some small taste for hearing and chanting. When I wrote to you from New Vrindāvan to tell you I was still taking methadone, you told me to “Keep taking your medicine, and keep chanting, and one day you will not need it anymore.” As always, you were right.

Secondly, I am grateful to you for your having engaged me in your service. You encouraged me in all my endeavors to help your ISKCON movement, despite my polluted motivations. You overlooked all my faults and praised my service to New Vrindāvan, Spiritual Sky, the LA temple, and the BBT. My life blossomed in your service. You are the father I never had.

But I guess my offenses caught up with me, and over the years I became gradually more and more estranged from your service. The greatest blessing, though, is that somehow or other I still have a very small taste for hearing and chanting, and a very small taste to be of service to you.

After two recent strokes, I am no longer working, so I thought I would make some extra money by making and selling De’s Ointment, for which you gave me the recipe and name, ‘Herboint.’ So one more time I have dovetailed my base desires (in this case greed) with service to Krishna via you, his very dear representative. I hope you will be pleased with my vain attempts to satisfy you.

Last but not least, I am grateful that I still have the association of devotees in my life, through my saintly wife Kadamba, and through the devotees here in Visalia and Three Rivers, who congregate twice a week and on festival days to read *Gītā* and have *kīrtan*. I cannot adequately express my gratitude for these wonderful disciples of yours, who have accepted my foul presence in their midst, welcoming me with love and compassion.

Bottom line, at this point in my life I can only hope for some incredible miracle to change my rotten heart. Only by your mercy will this happen, so I must somehow surrender myself to you. I doubt that this will be my last birth in the material world, but I

pray that you and your disciples will continue to bless me with their association, life after life, so that I might one day go back home, back to Godhead.

Raṇadhīr Dāsa

Visalia, California

Vāmanadev Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Without your presence in my life I would be lost, without hope and without true love. You are the beacon of light and truth that shines through the fog of my consciousness and gently leads me on the often difficult path of true spiritual life. It is the memory of your kindness and selfless service that keeps me inspired to continue trying to further your divine mission.

You have enormous compassion for the suffering living entities, and have shown this by your endless efforts to preach Krishna consciousness by your every word and deed.

I pledge to renew my efforts to read and to study your transcendental books. They are the life and soul of your movement and the most perfect way to feel your love and connection.

I fall at your feet and beg forgiveness for my many shortcomings. By your mercy alone will I be able to avoid the many pitfalls on the path back home, back to Godhead.

With all the humility at my command, I beg to be allowed to remain your servant,

Vāmanadev Dāsa

St Augustine, Florida

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*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*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were born in a different age and of a different culture, yet your message timelessly rings true and relevant. Many times you said you were not propounding yet another one-eyed, faith-filled religion. Rather, you were teaching the essential religious/spiritual principle beyond birth, country, culture, body, intelligence, and mind. You taught us that all souls are intrinsically servants of Kṛṣṇa.

Anyone who neglects Kṛṣṇa's service, you would say (often citing Kṛṣṇa at *Gītā* 7.15), is a rascal. And with each passing year it seems truer and truer that, as you said, they indeed are "all rascals":

Politicians are rascals:

They are simply changing forms of government: electing one rascal, rejecting him, electing another rascal, and rejecting him. Because the candidates are all rascals, the people have no alternative but to elect a rascal. They are thinking, "By electing this rascal, we shall be happy."

False gurus are rascals:

You: I can declare that they are all nonsense.

Journalist: I wonder if you could elaborate on that a little bit.

You: I can say, furthermore, they're all rascals.

The members of the public are rascals:

What is the public? All rascals. They are killing cows and drinking and topless dance, bottomless dance. What is the value of this public? All rascals.

False scholars are rascals:

There are 640-45 editions of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Simply cheating. Amongst them, there are big, big scholars. Not scholars. All rascals, but they cheat.

From your vantage point of pure *bhakti*, anyone lacking devotion to Kṛṣṇa is a rascal:

Now you have got the machine; you go there. No. You cannot go. You are so limited. Even you cannot go to the moon planet, which is so nearest. You cannot go. But still, we are proud of our airplanes, sputniks. We are thinking, "Now we have become God." These rascals, they do not know what is God. They are all rascals.

Good rascals and bad rascals, with some rascals more sincere and others less, but yet "all rascals," determined to avoid Kṛṣṇa and His service.

Once a pious *paṇḍita*, a scholarly leader of the Indian independence movement, inquired from Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura: "Do the *paṇḍitas* of the Kāśī School accept the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [as the rightful commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtra*]?"

Your Guru Mahārāja replied, "They look upon the *Bhāgavatam* as only one particular book among others, a particular *Purāṇa* among other *Purāṇas*. They do not adopt it solely." Then he explained his own viewpoint, which is that of all the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*: "We think there is no need for any other book than the *Bhāgavatam*. Only those other books are acceptable that say something in its favor; the deliberations that go against it are not worth being called spiritual."

The *paṇḍita* then asked whether or not this was a universally accepted conclusion, or were there deliberations against the *Bhāgavatam*.

Your Guru Mahārāja then replied in a wonderful way that so much reminds us of you: "There is no deliberation in the world which is not against the *Bhāgavatam*. All the different currents of thoughts of *jīvas* averse to God from time immemorial are against it."

And translating, publishing, and distributing that book, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, was your life's mission. You are humble but direct as you describe your books as unique and revolutionary.

We are not very big scholar. We have no such qualification

that we can compose very nice literature. There may be so many mistakes or . . . Whatever it may be, but it is revolutionary. That is a fact. It is revolutionary. Otherwise, why big, big scholars, professors, university authorities, librarians, they are taking? They are thinking they know that this literature will revolutionize the whole world. Because there is . . . in the Western world there is no such thought. They agree. So why it is revolutionary? Because there is an attempt to glorify Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Nothing more. There is no literary career." [Class on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.8.20, Māyāpur, 30 September 1974]

Many things within your movement will undoubtedly shift and be adjusted as necessity and time apply their irresistible pressures. But your books, which are meant solely to glorify Kṛṣṇa, should never shift from being ISKCON'S center. Devotees should study your books, for they contain your instructions, your essential teachings, and are central in keeping as meaningful your position as ISKCON'S founder-ācārya.

Being on the wrong side of the line that divides devotees from conditioned souls, I too am a rascal. Yet you are my glorious master, and as the years pass I pray to become increasingly dedicated to you and your service. I remain forever indebted to you for your continued tolerance and for allowing me to make my offerings to you.

Your servant,

Bhūrijana Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

*nāma-śreṣṭham manum api śacī-putram atra svarūpaṁ
rūpaṁ tasyāgrajam uru-purīm māthurīm goṣṭhavātīm*

*rādhā-kuṇḍaṁ giri-varam aho rādhikā-mādhavaśām
prāpto yasya prathita-kṛpayā śrī gururīm taṁ nato smi*

I bow down to the beautiful lotus feet of my spiritual master, by whose causeless mercy I have obtained the supreme holy name, the divine mantra, the service of the son of Śacīmātā, the company of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and his elder brother Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, the supreme abode of Mathurā, the blissful abode of Vṛndāvana, the divine Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Govardhana Hill, and the desire within my heart for the loving service of Śrī Rādhikā and Mādhava in Vṛndāvana.

– Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī

Part I: Fifty years ago...

You began your new Society in a tiny storefront at 26 2nd Avenue, on the Lower East Side of New York City. Your use of the word “international” to describe this one room to your handful of new, ragtag followers prompted sarcastic comments among them. They thought they knew you and that you were theirs alone – these New York bohemians conjuring up the latest outrageous statement against the establishment.

But you were the emissary of Kṛṣṇa. You belonged to His place always and never to New York or any other place in this mortal world. Still, you so patiently gave yourself to those New Yorkers, lived with them, cooked for them, washed the pots after they had feasted on what you had offered to your Kṛṣṇa, and in turn to them. You even stood in line to use the shower after them.

Once, a drug-addicted young man who shared a loft space with

you chased you out with a knife. Some days later, when he came to the storefront temple and sat in the *kīrtana*, you commented to the others, “He’s making some advancement, don’t you think?”

Your reality and vision were always of Kṛṣṇa’s world. Your intimate, familial identity was always of that ultimate world, the summum bonum world – yet you showed unprecedented compassion, bending down to the depths to lift us up. Embracing lower than tenth-class people as your very own, you raised us up without discrimination by the power of your grace. You gave us access, although we had no right. You offered us as flower petals to the feet of your Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga, on whose orders you had risked everything to come to us.

Today, fifty years later, that tiny storefront is still there, now dwarfed by the tall, shiny buildings in the expensive, gentrified new neighborhood that surrounds it. We can scarcely imagine the rat-infested, drunken, bum-infested skid row that this place was when you came there from your beloved Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma.

This tiny storefront is the holy *janmāsthāna*, the yogapīṭha of your Kṛṣṇa consciousness Society. Sometimes I walk this holy *parikramā* along with you, remembering you, from 26 2nd Avenue, to 61 2nd Avenue, your second temple. This is where you told us that you did not pray to Kṛṣṇa to send you so many stars. You asked Him to send you one moon. You said that Kṛṣṇa had sent you so many moon-like boys and girls. This is where I sat next to you, unbathed, after hitchhiking to New York from Montreal, and received the Gāyatrī mantra from you. You gave us access, although we had no right.

Then we walk together to Tompkins Square Park to circumambulate the Hare Krishna Tree, under which you held the first public outdoor *kīrtana* outside India. This tree is the yogapīṭha and janmāsthāna of the *hari-nāma saṅkīrtana* movement. Sometimes you fondly remembered those days, recalling who were the first to dance.

Then we circle around to 25 1st Avenue to The Bhakti Center, where some of the children of your children are ingeniously sharing, in many innovative ways. It is “the oldest of all in a new dress ...” as you wrote in your poem to your guru mahārāja in 1935. I am grateful to sometimes be able to assist those young people, sharing your Kṛṣṇa consciousness in your old neighborhood.

Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Muralīdhara preside there, with you gazing at Them and transforming the Lower East Side of New York into Śrī

Ṛndāvana-dhāma. We are grateful to honor all others who serve you in New York in different ways, grateful to honor all those who serve you throughout the world, according to their own realizations of your instructions.

*This parikramā of past, present, and future is a garland strung on what you have given us and what we are now trying to offer back to you.

Part II: And forty years ago...

In 1976, the year of the American Bicentennial, you came to Washington, D.C. to bless our nation's capital. You sat and watched the greatest ever display of fireworks on the famous National Mall. As it finished, you said, "Is that all?" You were seeing Kṛṣṇa at every moment. Certainly, it was only but a spark of His splendor.

In this international city of foreign embassies, one can see, taste, hear, and smell the cultural offerings of every country in the world. You are an emissary from a much higher realm. You came to plant in our hearts the desire for Śrī Ṛndāvana-dhāma and for the loving service of Śrī Rādhikā and Mādhava. *As each embassy celebrates its country's freedoms, you came to free us from the cycle of repeated birth and death and give us the freedom to revive our true identity as Kṛṣṇa's part-and-parcel jīva souls.* You gave us access, although we had no right: to dance for the pleasure of the King and Queen of your country, Braja Raj Kṛṣṇa and His Braja Rāṇī, Śrī Rādhā. These gifts are all your mercy, the mercy of Their chosen emissary.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, today I am remembering how you gave us access, although we had no right. After forty years, after fifty years, I can only pray that one day you will be pleased to call me your own servant.

I pray to offer you this garland of past, present, and future in your service, strung on the line of your instructions.

Your aspiring servant,

Rukmiṇī Devī Dāsī

ISKCON of Washington, D.C.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your holy lotus feet which are compassionate, powerful and very merciful and which are the source of peace, love and shelter for the fallen souls of this Age.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as I sit here on the shore of the ocean of time I am thinking of when I moved into the Boston temple in early 1969. When I arrived, there was a household couple, four *brahmacārīṅīs* and another *brahmacārī*. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had previously blessed the temple president Satsvarūpa when you gave him your precious daughter Jadurāṅī in sacred marriage. The four *brahmacārīṅīs*: Śārādīyā Devī, Rukminī, Arundhatī and Jāhnvā—along with Jadurāṅī—were fully surrendered souls who were always absorbed in Krishna *kathā*. You described their beautiful and exquisite paintings as “windows to the spiritual world”. When we read the letters they received from you, we can perceive their deep understanding of Krishna consciousness as well as your deep love for them. Śrīla Prabhupāda, to this day these pure souls have clung tightly to your lotus feet and it appears that they are your eternal servitors.

The other *brahmacārī* in the ashram, Devānanda and I, would alternate doing the morning *pūjārī* service using the one wool dhoti that we had. When either of us finished the service we would wash the dhoti in the bathtub and hang it on a line to dry for the other to use the following morning. Śrīla Prabhupāda, Devānanda pleased you with his classes at Boston University. Later, he accepted the renounced order of life and served you in India. In the year 1980—while staying in Benares—Devānanda departed from his mortal frame.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as I sit here on the shore of the ocean of death—shaken to the core by the sharp pains piercing my body—I am beginning to realize that:

IT IS NOT ABOUT ME.

IT IS ABOUT YOU.

IT IS NOT ABOUT SERVING MY SENSES.

IT IS ABOUT SERVING YOUR LOTUS FEET.

IT IS NOT ABOUT BEING HAPPY IN THE MATERIAL WORLD.

IT IS ABOUT BEING HAPPY IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a true *mahā-bhāgavata*, an exalted

uttama adhikārī and the topmost *paramahansa*. Those who take shelter of you are most fortunate.

All glories to your divine lotus feet.

Your aspiring servant,

Patita Pāvana Dāsa

Labāṅgalatikā Devī Dāsī

Yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo

The ācārya is never an ordinary person. He is on the level of Kṛṣṇa, either as assistant to the gopīs or an assistant to the cowherd boys. Śrīla Prabhupāda is so exalted and so merciful, he never refused anyone but saw how he could engage everyone in the service of Kṛṣṇa. He said that a devotee thinks, “Whether I have success or not, whether I go back to Godhead, never mind, it may or may not come. My only wish is to serve my spiritual master.” By the mercy of the spiritual master one can get the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Labāṅgalatikā Devī Dāsī

Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu Dāsa Adhikārī

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

*om ajñāna timirāndasya jñānāñjana śalākayā
cakṣur unmlitaṁ 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 10 minutes to 2am 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 offering 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. It delineates 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.
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 Rathayātrā of 1972, sitting on your Vyāsāsana under Lord Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadra at Marble Arch.
9. July 1973, Orly Airport, Paris. You asked me from your car window, ‘Where is your father?’
10. Later, on Ekadasi, whilst eating your *prasāda* 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 āraṭi to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Parisīśvara in the temple room, I was assisting Śrīla Bhagavān Dāsa carrying the Lord’s *cāmara*.
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 Bhaktivedanta 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, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the cornfields of Letchmore Heath, with Bhaja Hari Prabhu, Vaikuṅṭhanātha Prabhu, Śrutakīrti Prabhu and Mother Kaiśorī.
15. I recall your *darśana* in your room upstairs at Bhaktivedanta 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 capattis’, 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 Rathayātrā, 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. You came to our new home at 108, Ellesmere Road, Dollis Hill, London, on 25th July 1976 and stayed with us for over five hours. Caturbhuja Prabhu later described this event as akin to Lord Ramacandra’s great home-coming to Ayodhya,

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,

Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu Dāsa Adhikārī

Cathurbhuj Dāsa

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

“I was born in the darkness of ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes by the torchlight of knowledge. I offer him my most humble obeisances.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

This year, on your 120th Appearance Day, also coinciding with the 50th Appearance year of your movement in America, I think it is especially poignant to recall some of the precious gifts that you have given to us all, through which to conduct in devotional service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa.

I recall in my last year’s Vyāsa-pūjā offering (see Śrīla Prabhupāda Tributes 2015, pages 162 –163) I spoke of many of us taking up the Sanskrit language as a vehicle and as an educational tool for communicating to the future leaders of society.

To further Kṛṣṇa’s desire and just to save the fallen souls you took great trouble and went through great toll to sail on the *Jaladuta*, departing from the land of India to come to the West in 1965.

Since then, through your inspiration, devotees all over the world have been doing their bit to sail with you and serve in your epic journey to capture Lord Caitanya’s mercy.

This year, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I can report to you about meetings with the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, in London, with Lord Dholakia and Lord Hague, the latter two being members of the House of Lords, a parliamentary institution in the United Kingdom. The meetings went very well, with each of these leaders

accepting your *Bhagavad-gītā* and promising to read it. There were wondrous Gaura-pūrṇimā festivals in Karachi, and Pune, with over 20,000 people.

With more than 100,000 devotees in Russia now, will this be a real incentive for America and other countries to reinvigorate and catch up. The race is now on! Which will be your first country to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious? Certainly, Mauritius looks promising with the Prime Minister's visit, and others are rapidly following.

It is estimated that there are now between six to seven million people practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the Western world in one form or another. It seems to us that we should all strive to inculcate principles which are actually directed at making ourselves purer and purer and thus, forwarding the movement in a way that is compatible with your personal instructions to us.

Within centres of excellence and in buildings and temples where science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is practiced there should be a prospective where visitors are always reminded of your valuable contribution and message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I feel there should be a grand hall called "Śrīla Prabhupāda's Hall", which shall become a magnet for attracting devotees rather than narrow sectarian interests.

So I finally return to my point which is love of Godhead. By your example and by your books, you have provided us a method and a tremendous insight into developing our role and attitude in devotional service. By highly practical advice and guidance you have steered devotees along the path, loving Kṛṣṇa, and imbibing the science of Kṛṣṇa with adulation.

Today, of all days we seek your causeless mercy.

Your humble servant

Cathurbhuj Dāsa
London

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you, our beloved spiritual master.

We pray that our report to you this year pleases you in some small way. We are the sparrows among your great followers. Please forgive us for our inadequacies. You have given us a priceless gift, your knowledge of spiritual life. How is it that we are among the recipients who have received it? Only because of your compassion and mercy we are among the fortunate.

We would first like to tell you the story of Asha.

The arms of the old, live oak trees shelter her. Their canopy is 100 feet high and she sits beneath. She is shaded, so maybe she would have sat there willingly. But Asha cannot walk, she is paralyzed. She was born with a deformed hip and no one wanted her. She could walk then and her owners brought her to us. Her name is Asha and she is a Black Angus cow.

She is no ordinary cow. Then again, who is an ordinary cow? No cow is ordinary. All cows are important according to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

“The bull is the emblem of the moral principle, and the cow is the representative of the earth. When the bull and the cow are in a joyful mood, it is to be understood that the people of the world are also in a joyful mood. The reason is that the bull helps the production of grains in the agricultural field, and the cow delivers milk, the miracle of aggregate food values. The human society maintains these two important animals very carefully so that they can wander everywhere in cheerfulness.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.16.18 purport)

Asha’s deformed hip made it difficult for her to walk in a straight path. She was our “hula” girl as her hips would sway from side

to side to get down or up a hill. Often, she could be seen walking sideways down a hill.

Asha was born on a farm that bred Black Angus cows for breeding stock. Because Asha had a hip deformity she could not be sold for breeding. She could be sold for meat, but her owners could not do that and had never done that with any of their cows. They asked us several times to take her and we finally agreed. She came to us as a baby. That was 13 years ago.

When she first came the vet examined her and said she probably would not live more than a few years. The possibility of the nerves in her hip and other legs becoming pinched and her becoming paralyzed were strong and likely to happen sooner than later. But Asha bravely kept walking.

Just by being a cow, Asha is important. She is also important because she represents the personality of the Earth.

The personality of religious principles, Dharma, was wandering about in the form of a bull. And he met the personality of earth in the form of a cow who appeared to grieve like a mother who had lost her child. She had tears in her eyes, and the beauty of her body was lost. Thus Dharma questioned the earth as follows. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.16.18)

She is also important because, as you have told us, anyone who cares for her can draw religious principles.

For a *Sanātanist* (a follower of Vedic principles) it is the duty of every householder to have cows and bulls as household paraphernalia, not only for drinking milk, but also for deriving religious principles. The *Sanātanist* worships cows on religious principles and respects *brāhmaṇas*. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.17.3 Purport)

And she is important because we love her and we care about her.

Every few hours we take her water and hay. She continues to eat and drink. We clean up her cow dung and make sure she is clean. We spray her to prevent flies. We make sure the CD is playing with you chanting *japa* or *bhajan*. We give her a little *prasāda*. And we pray for Lord Krishna's mercy upon her. It is beginning the fourth week that Asha has been sitting under the old, live oak trees. Some of the trees are over 250 years old and their patient tolerance can be felt by anyone who sits beneath.

She went down in the north pasture. There was no shade there and it was hot. All the cows gathered around her, licking her and pushing her in an effort to get her up. She tried to but her front legs would not support her which never happened before. We waited to see if she would gain strength and get up but she didn't. We then decided to get her up with a cow sling with the hope her legs would revive once they were free. Her legs were lifeless. We then moved her, by use of the cow sling, to a shady place.

She wishes to live. Please give us the strength to care for her until she decides to visit the Surabhi cows in Vaikuṅṭha loka. Please guide her on her journey.

There are other stories of other cows but this one has made the most impression upon us this year of your fiftieth anniversary celebrated by devotees worldwide. To give respect to cows like Asha and in honor of your anniversary we are offering you our new ISCOWP center in historic Rochelle, Florida which will open this year. The building is two stories, 8000 square feet and has facility for staff housing, guest hosting and accommodation, Deity worship and the ISCOWP office. Our cow protection activities will be nearly completely powered by solar energy with 105 solar panels on the new ISCOWP center's roof. We have a very good well for our water needs but since the roof is quite large we are now in the process of building a rainwater harvesting unit primarily for the cows and gardens. Every day we are learning about the soil, the climate, and how these factors affect the practice of cow protection and plant production. After 26 years of protecting cows (mostly in West Virginia, USA) we are still learning.

In addition to the main building, we have built two new outbuildings, one for equipment storage and one for a farm workshop and canning and preserving of garden produce. An additional barn for hay and ill cows is in the process of being built. These outbuildings are projected to be powered by the solar panels on the ISCOWP center's roof.

We are offering this new center to you but it is you who has given us the strength, resources and desire to create a cow protection center that we hope will present cow protection as an activity worthy of a lovely and substantial representation that is solely dedicated to Lord Kṛṣṇa's most glorious and important animal, the cow.

There are non-devotee workers building the ISCOWP center who see Asha every day. Some are having deep realizations and want to

decease their meat eating. One lady, Elsie, visits Asha several times a day, brings her water and talks to her. It is the first thing she does when she comes to work in the morning. When Elsie talks to Asha, she says Asha moos in response. Elsie's heart is changing due to Asha. We have no understanding of the power of cow protection! Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, help us to understand and everyday increase our understanding, loving relationship and knowledge of the auspicious cows.

Our eternal thanks to you will never be sufficient for what you have given us. We are trying every day with our efforts to thank you every day. We pray to you that we will make you happy with our efforts to present cow protection as a substantial and worthy activity not only for devotees but for non-devotees also.

People do not know what they are doing in the name of economic development. The influence of Kali will keep them in the darkness of ignorance. Despite all endeavors for peace and prosperity, they must try to see the cows and the bulls happy in all respects. Foolish people do not know how one earns happiness by making the cows and bulls happy, but it is a fact by the law of nature. Let us take it from the authority of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and adopt the principles for the total happiness of humanity. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.17.3 Purport)

Your sparrow like disciples,

ISCOWP Staff
Florida, USA

Dīnadayādri Dāsī

Śrī Vyāsa Pūjā, The Most Blessed Event ~ August 26, 2016

We worship the day you appeared on the Earth
To save the poor fallen from birth after birth
All glories, all glories to this divine day!
O beautiful son of Śrī Gour Mohan De
Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta sent you to the West
To slay śūnyavādi he dispatched his best
Surrendered to Krishna, your life in His hand,
Aboard *Jaladuta* you heard His command
A torch in the darkness, our savior had come

Beholding your light, we sang “Here comes the sun!”
Without you we’d still be immersed in the well
And gasping for breath in impersonal hell
All glories, all glories to Your Divine Grace!
Beloved of Krishna, compassionate face
While gone from our vision, our tears fall like rain
Enthroned in our hearts may you always remain ~

With love and gratitude from your insignificant servant,

Dīnadayādri Dāsī

Manmohinī Devī Dāsī

Just on my way to India. My ninth trip there. Why was I going again?

Why I came to India hit me as soon as we entered the Delhi Airport. I was traveling with my husband and a group of strong, dedicated old devotee friends who I loved and was very comfortable and familiar with. We all had each other and were assured of creature comforts once we got there—decent rooms, good *prasāda* and a very large selection of good devotee association. Still, after more than 30 straight hours of traveling, all of us (in our mid to upper sixties), were both physically and mentally exhausted.

It hit me hard—the thought of our beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda who was about our age when he made the trip in reverse. He traveled alone without friends or family. He was on a very uncomfortable steamship traveling for almost a month while enduring life threatening health challenges. He had almost no money, no secure goals or plans, and would have to endure many more hardships during a very cold East Coast winter. He was a stranger in a strange land. Not only strange, but often hostile and very impious.

Why did he take such a trip? We know he felt duty-bound to carry out the orders of his Guru Mahārāja. Also that he felt much compassion for us fallen conditioned souls who’d still be wallowing in a dense ocean of nescience had he not come to give us all spiritual knowledge. But also, he must have wanted to make his guru proud. When you love and honor someone deeply, you want to please them and have them become extremely proud of you.

We owe more than this one lifetime to Śrīla Prabhupāda. It might very well be impossible for us to ever repay what he has done for us. Since I've joined the Movement, the highlights of my existence have been when I've been doing activities that I know in my heart would please Śrīla Prabhupāda—whether it was assisting to open temples, chanting at the big pop festivals, distributing his books, or trying my best to follow his basic program and chant inoffensive rounds.

It is also coming to India. It made him beam with pride when we would travel here to show his brethren how we took to Kṛṣṇa consciousness instead of sinful life...how he transformed us all into devotees of Lord Chaitanya.

As we ecstatically chanted at many different holy places and boldly distributed his books, we were displaying the fruits of his labor. To attempt to please him and make him proud of me is why I took this trip to India again. What more is there to life?

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda, All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda, All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!!!

Bhakta Dāsa

All glory to Sri Guru and Gauranga!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*om aṅśāna-timirāndhasya jṣānāṣjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

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

*namas te sāravate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

By the mercy of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna, one who is fortunate comes in contact with a pure Vaiṣṇava and receives the *bhakti-latā-bīja*, the seed of pure devotional service. By the mercy of the pure Vaiṣṇava spiritual guide, one is able to progress from the darkest regions of ignorance, to the place of perfect light and truth.

Somehow, I do not know why, at the young age of 19, I was crying within for God's help, as I did not know where to go, what to do, who to believe, or anything at all. I met one of your disciples

by the name of Durlabh Dāsa, and when I looked into his eyes I had a glimpse of eternity. My hairs were standing on end fully and I was shivering and began to weep. At first I thought he must be the spiritual master that I had been seeking.

Durlabh Dāsa showed me your photo and at that moment I understood that I am here only for you. I asked Durlabh: “What should I do?” He told me to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra and to meet him the next day and he said he will take me to the nearest temple which was in Los Angeles.

Since that fateful evening in Laguna Beach, on August 30, 1969, the mahā-mantra has remained ever-dancing on my tongue, within my heart and mind; truly since then, my only doubts are my own “weakness of heart” as you explained in your purports in the Second Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, concerning the heart being “steel framed”.

All too often I feel that indeed my heart is steel-framed. Or as you told others, our hearts are like coal, and although we continue to clean them, all we find is more blackness.

Nevertheless, by Your Divine Grace’s causeless mercy, my faith in you, in the Vaiṣṇavas, and in Lord Hari remains fully intact and I am sure that in the crores of births that I must continue to experience, I will always continue to progress towards the goal of *ahaitukī bhakti*.

*yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiṣṇānā
sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ
harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇā
mano-rathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ*

“One who has unflinching devotion for the Personality of Godhead has all the good qualities of the demigods. But one who is not a devotee of the Lord has only material qualifications that are of little value. This is because he is hovering on the mental plane and is certain to be attracted by the glaring material energy.” [SB 5.18.12]

This verse explains that when we are pure or akiṣṇā devotees, THEN all the good qualities of the *devatas* automatically appear in our character. We so easily take this verse to mean that just because we once took initiation all good qualities are there already!

It is not so cheap, is it?

Your Divine Grace has shown us the real potential of this human life. Today, because of your humble efforts, the holy name of Lord Krishna is being sung in every country on this earth. There

are hundreds and thousands of aspiring Vaiṣṇavas trying to share what you have brought. Will the people of this world ever really appreciate what you have done? I don't know. I wish your name and your teachings would be broadcast on every television network, on every radio station, in every magazine and newspaper. I wish the big stadiums were full of massive *saṅkīrtana yajñas* instead of football games and performances by demonic performing artists... Will that time come? It is possible if there is a saintly Vaisnava king somewhere...

Meanwhile, my body is aging. I see every week one or two of your disciples is leaving. My mother is gone, my father is 94 and could go anytime. I am not so foolish to not know my imminent departure is also at hand. I pray at your lotus feet to bless me to be able to remember you and the Lord's holy name when that time to leave comes to me. I continue to offer myself to you as your unconditional servitor, life after life after life.

Thank you Your Divine Grace.

Your eternal servant,

Bhakta Dāsa

Kusha Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, our *sāragrāhī* Vaiṣṇava, our hero, our light, our life!

You have shown us the way in life and in death. You have clarified and simplified and taken the fear out of dying, out of living and out of loving. For you have shown us the safe haven of Krishna *bhakti!* You have lit that torchlight of knowledge and love in our hearts. You have saved us from the most dangerous types of fear. By your fearless example you have shown us how to live and how to die. We are so grateful.

I have always prayed that after this life I would continue to take shelter of your mission, but recently I heard when asked where you would go next you replied, "The hellish planets!" I took pause and recoiled reconsidering my fervent prayers. This life has been a real test of strength and tolerance and the idea of going deeper into *māyā* scared me. But I understood you more, perhaps some of us have gone down and you are going to reclaim those who are yours. You

are that merciful. Still I took pause for my mercy is not that great! I am afraid of falling deeper so I stay in a safe zone. What shall we do, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda?

The medicines that we have needed to take here on Earth for all the maladies that we find ourselves plagued by are already rough enough. This Kali-yuga is hard to manage. We see geniuses in conditions that we would not want to experience.

This year we have lost many godbrothers and sisters to the call of the great beyond. Attending the passing, we witness — it is not easy to die...there is a resistance which makes the way in which you left us even more precious. You shared Krishna consciousness until your last breath. This is amazing! I am learning about your greatness more and more year after year as continued realizations pour in.

Living in Vrindāvana is a double-edge sword for us. Our breathing apparatus amongst other considerations are heavily challenged. But living here is also easy. While I am practically not a devotee, still I aspire to be, but I am weakened by this aging process. But living and serving here is like Krishna conscious life support.

When I compare your vigor, strength and bravery at this age to satisfy the order of your guru maharaja, I am continually amazed. There is so much about you, your life and your instructions that continues to bear fruit and enliven my soul.

Āschārya karmaṇi, your *sāragrāhī* life is astounding! Thank you!

I am forever yours, your aspiring disciple,

Kusha Devī Dāsī

Puṣṭa Krishna Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

You know of all of my activities so there is no need to recount them here. But, I want to express that I have developed a greater respect for the many sincere seekers who are amongst your disciples and well-wishers. Although the path of *bhakti* is sometimes filled with curves and precipices that threaten one at any moment, you have protected my *bhakti* creeper, and I am feeling ever more enlivened in Krishna consciousness.

Your revelations from within are a regular occurrence as you care for me to mold me into a fit servant of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna. I thank you so much for surrounding me evermore with your entourage of servitors. I pray that your influence will be felt more and more by everyone who counts you as their master. Please reserve a place for us who are crying within for your mercy. Your patience and your mercy are all that we truly have.

Hare Krishna.

Yours in eternal service,

Puṣṭa Krishna Dāsa

Śatadhanya Dāsa

Sometimes we senior devotees think, act and talk as if we are very advanced in Krishna consciousness. The acid test—Śrīla Prabhupāda describes in his books—is how much we are still attached to this material body and sense gratification. You may feel that these words: attachment to the material body and sense gratification are meant for someone else and are hackneyed or devoid of freshness or originality. Yet you and I are but a grain of rice in the pot, which when pressed indicates the condition of the whole pot. We're not so special! 'Beyond the bodily concept of life' constitutes *mukti*—yeah, yeah, I know, we are devotees engaged in devotional service, at least we should be, and we have surpassed *mukti*, indeed leaving it far, far behind—right? No, wrong!

Even in *bhakti*, as elaborated in Viśvanāth Cakravartī Ṭhākura's *Mādhurya Kaḍambinī*, there are practical stages of genuine spiritual advancement and one cannot artificially jump like a monkey over them. So, yes, *mukti* is also a requisite and fundamental for *bhakti* and devotees, and a most crucial benchmark because, as Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī says in his *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu*: "Unless and until one is beyond the bodily concept of life he can fall down at any moment."

Similarly, we—each one of us—must first be gradually purified of all our material desires and contamination, "*anartha nivṛtṭiḥ syāt*", to become a suitable and fit receptacle to receive the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda and Krishna. Yes, I agree, it would just be awesome if we could entirely skip all this basic stuff and get right down to *bhāv* and *prema*—but that, my friend, is not *bhakti*, but rather *bhukti* or

prākṛta sahajiyā.

The key, of course, is to go on sincerely chanting the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*, progressively shedding all the offenses to the holy names, and reap the exponential and perceptible self realizations thereof. This is doing it the genuine way, as revealed by *guru, sādhu* and *śāstra*, and the way to pleasing Śrīla Prabhupāda. Such is the wonderful world of Hare Krishna!

Verily, then, we must aspire for, and attain, *mukti*—in *bhakti*—for it shall certainly enable us to sustain beyond the bodily platform of life and become *niṣṭhā* or fixed in our determination to serve and love Śrīla Prabhupāda and Krishna eternally.

‘We are not this body’ is a unique and revolutionary truth gifted by the Vaiṣṇava *paramparā*, not something theoretical or which we assume we know, but a palpable and miraculous realization. Without this trans mundane consciousness taking hold of our being, it’s neigh impossible to bid a legitimate farewell to lust and sense gratification—and enter the realm of eternity to make further advancement—no matter who you may be or who you may feign to be.

Albeit no separate endeavor is necessary, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur said: ‘it may be sweet to hear that no endeavor is necessary to know one’s self and God. While that may be true for lower religious teachings, it is not true regarding *bhakti*, the highest truth and culmination of love of God.’

Ergo, let us make the endeavor to follow the regulative principles and become pure, chant the holy names inoffensively, engage in dynamic devotional service, commit no Vaisnava *aparādhas*, and please Śrīla Prabhupāda at all times: and, as well, endeavor to understand, appreciate, and apply the full import of being “beyond the bodily concept of life”, as otherwise MĀYĀ shall not be far behind!

Your humble servant,

Śatadhanya Dāsa

Jaya Jagadīśa Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhuapda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet! Jaya Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu! Jaya Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa!

I’m sorry to say, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that I got it all wrong

from the start.

Although, beginning in 1971, I offered almost 20 years' service to our beloved ISKCON, in fact I was executing my devotional service (including careful *sādhana*) in such a *tamasic* mind-set that, because of my accumulated offenses, I gradually became convinced that the process was not working and did not work.

Please allow me to explain.

After leaving ISKCON I learned that there are two kinds of shame. Healthy shame instills in us humility, modesty and other qualities conducive to spiritual advancement — the understanding that we're not God.

Toxic shame, on the other hand, increases our *tamasic* tendencies such as envy, self-hatred and toxic doubt.

Unfortunately, it took me many years to finally understand that you did not wish toxic shame upon us; rather, you wanted us to imbibe the humility and modesty inherent in healthy shame. Unhappily, I had confused the two.

And thus, despite strict external *brahmacarya* for 12 years, knowing that internally I didn't measure up, my self-loathing and *tamasic* qualities intensified and I left Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Thankfully I never lost touch with the devotees . . . and those friendships have saved me. In early 2014 my Godbrother Śrīman Narahari Prabhu preached Kṛṣṇa consciousness to me so that gradually my dormant *bhakti* seed re-awakened.

He suggested that I read the autobiographical book of His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami Mahārāja, *The Journey Home*. Once I began reading, I could not put it down. Days later, while showing someone the book, I suddenly broke down, overwhelmed with emotion.

What was happening?

It took me several days to realize—I desperately missed my real family!

So although 25 years had passed since I had followed the process, and although I strayed very far indeed, your kindness – which was always available – re-manifested and I began following once again.

What a difference a few years “on the outside” can make! My appreciation of you, my eternal spiritual master (what a singularly exalted soul you are!), has increased many times over. My appreciation of the process of *bhakti* yoga, of the association of devotees, and of the purifying power of the holy name is much greater than ever before.

And my understanding of what a tremendous grip the mode of darkness still has on my consciousness has led me to exercise a little more patience and humility in my *sādhana* practice.

Since I began following the process two-and-a-half years ago, many blessings have come forth – some externally pleasing and some externally disastrous. But the greatest blessing is my renewed faith in you and in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and my desire to never again give up the chanting of Kṛṣṇa’s holy names, no matter where my accumulated sinful reactions may take me.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for forgiving my offensive nature and welcoming me back into your association and the association of the devotees—who, I might add—have all welcomed me back with great love, respect and kindness.

I remain (this time, I hope) your ever-faithful servant,

Jaya Jagadīśa Dāsa

Vishnu Dāsa

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

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

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

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the deliverer of the fallen souls. His mercy turns the dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains.”

*he guro jṣāna-da dina-bandho svānanda-dātā karuṇaika-sindho
vr̥ndāvanāsīna hitāvatāra prasīda rādhā-praṇāya-pracāra*

“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 only ocean of mercy. Although dwelling in Vrindāvana, you have descended for the welfare of fallen souls like myself and you are preaching the divine love of Rādhā for Krishna. Please be kind upon me.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my prostrated obeisances at your divine lotus feet, again and again, every day and every night begging for your mercy and guidance to understand the ultimate goal of life, love of Rādhā and Krishna.

As the evening of my life approaches and I am realizing ever more seriously what your purports reveal regarding the nature of the body, mind and soul, I have no doubt that all along you knew us all better than we ever knew ourselves, and what we would go through in the future.

I have always been a rebel since birth: rebel against parents, teachers, religions, governments, society, etc. But somehow you appeared and captured this rebel heart and embraced it with selfless compassion, patience, and unflinching dedication to saving rascals like me regardless of my ignorance, my arrogance and foolishness in thinking that I knew my 'self'.

You knew our rebellious natures very well and knew that after you left, our natures would not change much. You understood our spiritually neophyte condition and that there would be divisions and dissensions that we didn't see coming. Your warnings went unheeded by some. The change of heart that is needed now more than ever within your movement will take place only when we understand the purport of Bhaktivedanta and follow your divine example and instructions.

As your disciples grow older, and ideally more wise, experienced and learned via the mercy of your books, lectures and instructions etc. we draw nearer to Your Divine Grace and to leaving behind forever this mundane bodily jail sentence in this ocean of nescience.

In a lecture in LA in 1969 you said:

"So therefore it is upon me, what we want. So we have to simply pray to Kṛṣṇa, as Lord Caitanya has taught us, aya nanda-tanuja kiṅkaraṁ patitaṁ mām viṣame bhaoāmbudhau:

"This material atmosphere is a big ocean of nescience. Somehow or other I am put into this, fallen. Please pick me up. Please pick me up and make me one of the atoms at Your lotus feet.' That should be the only prayer, 'Please pick me up.' Then He will pick up. And tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mām eti kaunteya (Bg 4.9). Immediately after leaving your body, you will go to Kṛṣṇa."

Throughout the past 40 years since you left this world I have always carried wonderful memories of you, and dreams about your smile and your mercy shining down on me—very personal experiences I’m sure many devotees have had in a similar way. That is your empowered ability, to enter our lives as the external manifestation of Paramātmā. But today you continue to guide us from within. We should always be asking ourselves, “are we really listening to you?”

You opened our eyes to the reality of pseudo-*vaiṣṇavas* and the dangers of becoming or following ‘rascal guru’ and taught us what ‘real Guru’ means.

Prabhupāda: So-called gurus, they are so-called gurus. They are not gurus. That is already explained. If one does not speak what Kṛṣṇa speaks, he is not guru. If you accept so-called guru, that is your misfortune. What can be done?

Puṣṭa Kṛṣṇa: Some of them will say some things that Kṛṣṇa says, but they’ll take from other places also. What is the position of such persons?

Prabhupāda: He’s most dangerous. He’s most dangerous. He is opportunist. He’s finding out customer, something here...according to the customer he is giving something, as the customers will be pleased. So he is not guru. He’s a servant. He wants to serve the so-called disciples so that they may be satisfied and pay him something. He’s servant. He’s not guru. Guru is the master. You cannot disobey guru. But if you become a servant, you want to please the disciple by flattering him to get his money, then you are not guru, you are servant. Just like a servant pleases the master. He’s not guru. He’s servant. So our position should be servant, yes, but servant of the Supreme. So guru means heavy. You cannot utilize him for satisfying your whims. That is not guru.

As our last years in this human form of life become crucial, when time is of the essence, there will be your voice, your inspiration, the *paramparā* and Vedic knowledge you handed down to us, the *mahā-mantra* on our lips, and the path of devotion, *bhakti*, which will take us to life’s ultimate destiny. I owe you my life and my devotion, Śrīla Prabhupāda. It’s not like a one-time debt to be paid off, but it’s my

lifetime contract with you, signed with commitment and love.

You continue living among all of us as the perpetual flame that will continue glowing with *sat-cit-ānanda* and compassion. More and more we are actually seeing your glowing magnanimous influence spreading over the Earth. There is no force that will be able to stop the *saṅkīrtana* movement which you have started in these modern times.

The priceless gems we inherited from you which keep multiplying and spreading for the emancipation of future generations are your precious books, letters, conversations, and lectures. We sometimes take for granted or forget to be grateful that we also have the good *saṅga* of the very extensions of your self—your disciples and followers. They are all very dear to you. Your hope was that they would care for one another and work together as a worldwide congregation.

“You are cooperating; therefore I am getting the credit. Otherwise, alone what could I do? *Ekākī āmāra nāhi pāya bolo*. Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself wanted our cooperation. He is God, Kṛṣṇa. And therefore, cooperation is very important thing. Nobody should think that “I have got so great ability. I can do.” No. It is simply by cooperation we can do very big thing. “United we stand; divided we fall.” (Room conversation in Māyāpur, 16/3/76)

*om aṅśāna-timirāndhasya
jṣānāṣjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmmīlitaṁ yena
tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we will continue to pass on the torchlight of your books, our memory of you and talks with us, passing it down as long as the *jīva-tattva* are still suffering in this Kali-yuga.

With the rebel in me defeated,

I remain flattened on the ground in the sacred dust at your lotus feet,

Your dedicated servant,

Vishnu Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I am writing this offering today on Nityānanda's appearance day. Nitāi is Ādi-guru and you are His representative. We see that, like Nitāi, you sacrificed everything for the pleasure of your guru and for Gaura-Nitāi, Kṛṣṇa-Balārama and Rādhā-Govinda. Like Nitāi, you did not discriminate between who should get your mercy and who should not. You simply distributed freely devotional service to anyone and everyone, regardless of qualification. Therefore it is our hope, that despite our disqualifications, we can access your mercy and also distribute it to others. As Lord Caitanya ordered Nitāi to go to each and every home to give to everyone, without discrimination, the mercy of the holy name, so you have given us the greatest gift—you have given us Lord Kṛṣṇa in the form of His holy name, the Deities and the *Bhāgavatam*.

On this most auspicious day I remember how you empowered us to live a life of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and to share it with others. You never took credit for your amazing success, but you gave all credit to your spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī and you even sometimes gave all the credit to us, your disciples.

Your disciple Bhajahari recalls one conversation with you: "After working the night shift in a steel factory I almost had a nervous breakdown from the strain.

Śrīla Prabhupāda then said: Actually that's because in your last life you were all brāhmaṇas. Otherwise how could you come to the platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness so quickly? Actually my guru maharaja has ordered all of you to take birth to help me spread this mission. Now we are all together again."

How could you touch us and inspire us so deeply? Because your life was a true example of sublime faith and surrender to Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission. You even had more faith in us than we did in ourselves and you inspired us to go way beyond our personal limits to do the impossible for Kṛṣṇa. You inspired us to live in India under austere conditions just so your Vrindāvan, Māyāpur and Bombay temples could be built. You are inspiring us even now to go out from our comfort zone to try to become a genuine devotee and try to share the compassion we have gotten from you. Please always bless us with courage, strength and determination to continue serving with your ISKCON devotees, despite all obstacles,

and with great enthusiasm and dependence on your mercy.

Why would Śrīla Prabhupāda wish to save so many of us who he didn't really know?

I would like to share with you something I recently heard from a video of Brahmānanda where he explained to us why Śrīla Prabhupāda loves us all so much.

“We have no qualification to be loved, but Śrīla Prabhupāda’s love is causeless, his mercy is causeless, his empowerment is causeless and his equal vision is causeless. Śrīla Prabhupāda did not see our disqualification as *mlecchas*, women, foreigners, black or white. He saw our soul underneath it all and our eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa and he was always trying to link us with Kṛṣṇa in *bhakti-yoga*. As SB 1.1.2 says that the pure souls hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* because it distinguishes truth from illusion. It is for the *paramo nirmatsarāṇām*, for the *paramahansas* who are like swans that take out the nectar from this world of illusion. Śrīla Prabhupāda was always looking within us for the spark of Kṛṣṇa consciousness that he could fan into a flame of loving service to Kṛṣṇa. He saw beyond our designations. That’s why he loved us—he saw our connection to Kṛṣṇa and accepted us as servants of Kṛṣṇa. So today we can feel some solace from our separation from Śrīla Prabhupāda by hearing all the wonderful ways that Śrīla Prabhupāda connected us with Kṛṣṇa. And let us go on for the rest of our lives remembering how Śrīla Prabhupāda connected us with Kṛṣṇa and in his mood let us try to connect the whole world in Kṛṣṇa’s service as servants of Kṛṣṇa.”

From Govardhana Dāsī: “I’m no one special, but you don’t have to be anyone special, you don’t have to have seen Prabhupāda or to have been initiated by him: if you love Prabhupāda, he loves you.”

Your servant,

Nārāyaṇī Devī Dāsī

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

The occasion of your appearance in this world is more auspicious and beneficial to the world at large than most can ever fathom. It will go unmarked by hundreds of thousands of souls who are unconsciously benefiting from your having come to assist Lord Chaitanya in spreading the holy name to every town and village in the world.

The chanting of the holy name, spread by your disciples all over the globe, purifies the atmosphere and counteracts the deleterious effect of the abominable acts taken as the ‘norm’ in this Age of Kali.

Your unmitigated faith in the power of the holy name moved you to come amongst us here in the West — most of us engaged in activities that were certainly repugnant to you — sit down, start chanting, inviting us to chant with you. You knew that if we chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa we would begin to regain consciousness of our true self and be able to serve your mission and, in rendering service, would further regain some spiritual consciousness.

We are so very, very novice, but you have shown us the path to tread and assured us that if we do that simplest of activity, **Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa**, we will make progress.

Many of us, your disciples, were raised in the Judeo-Christian faith but could not find true explanations of this world and its seeming injustices and inconsistencies within the teachings from our childhoods.

In the Gospel of Matthew, it says: “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it”.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for leading us to the narrow road, and instructing us on how to remain walking toward that narrow gate.

Your daughter and helpless servant,

Mahāśinī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your legendary journey to the Western world came about due to your inconceivable mercy and your tenacity to please your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Swāmī Ṭhākura. There are so many conditioned souls who are recipients of that mercy. I am one and am so very thankful, yet so enormously undeserving.

You have mercifully pulled me out of this ocean of misery in which I was drowning. And then even then more mercifully—tolerated me by not throwing me back—like a fisherman who catches a fish that is too small, too weak, too diseased and too unqualified and is thrown back into the water. By your non-discriminatory mercy, you waded into the blackened waters of the Western world that none other would, and started catching as many fish as you could. Just to save us. Just to teach us. Just to allow us the infinite fortune to help you in Your mission.

Many rose to the occasion and gloriously succeeded, making you proud and showing the whole wide world your glories. Many tried and failed, and yet many tried, failed and then came back to try again. All the while your comforting, enveloping mercy was there... is there.....just waiting for us...for me. Yes, even for me.

And so it is that I place this wretched head and heart on the ground, at your lotus feet and pray. I pray to my grandfather guru, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura that I may not commit any offense at your lotus feet. I pray to Lord Nityānanda, the Ādi-Guru, that He bless me with a humble heart and the steadfastness necessary to be able to please you. I pray to Lord Nṛsimhadeva to make me fearless in my service while following your instructions. I pray to Hanumānjī, the best servant of Rāma, that I may develop a devout attitude of servitude in carrying out your instructions. And I pray to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī that I can succeed in your instruction of always remembering Krishna and never forgetting Him.

Your most fallen servant,

Vārāṇasī Devī dāsī

Vāṇī/Vapuḥ Voices

Before I went on my first morning walk with Śrīla Prabhupāda and several devotees, I had only seen him in large gatherings. My temple president knew I was having a hard time trying to distribute his books, so when he asked if I'd like to go on a walk, I was grateful for the opportunity.

It was February 1975, a chilly, grey morning on Miami Beach. Like Śrīla Prabhupāda, I clutched a charcoal *chadar* round my shaved head as we walked the sand next to the Atlantic's waves. Since there was little room between the steep bank and the ocean, we followed Prabhupāda single-file, like ducklings behind their mother.

As the tide ebbed and flowed, devotees called out questions from behind, and Prabhupāda would stop and turn to answer. At one point in the jockeying, I stopped right in back of Prabhupāda's head. Unfortunately, I didn't hear the question that prompted him to stop, nor the answer that followed, for I was fixed only on his physical form — his golden brown head; his thinning, silvery śikhā—and the overwhelming fact that I was only inches away from the spiritual master of the universe!

Suddenly a voice came, not from the sky but from deep within, a "heart transmission" as clear as a bell. "Yes, you're right in back of Śrīla Prabhupāda's head, but you're light years away from Śrīla Prabhupāda." Starry-eyed and stuck in a bodily concept of Prabhupāda, I was mortified for being so foolish.

Yet the next instant brought a blissful realization: "Wow, it's true. Prabhupāda's personal presence is less important than his everlasting instructions. *Vāṇī* is more important than *vapuḥ*. If I become devoted to Prabhupāda's *vāṇī*, someday I'll really be able to meet him, in the spiritual dimension.

As Prabhupāda kept walking and talking, I still wanted to be near his body, but only to hear him. This was my inoculation against his leaving this world nearly three years later. Devastating as that event would be, it was *vāṇī* Prabhupāda who would live on with us, if we keep our ears to the ground of his instructions.

"He lives forever by his divine instructions,
and the follower lives with him."

Your servant,

Sureśvara Dāsa

Mahendra Dāsa and Sukhadā Devī Dāsī

*tulayāma lavenāpi
na svargaṁ nāpunar-bhavam
bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya
martyānām kim utāśiṣaḥ*

(SB 4:30:34)

“Even a moment’s association with a pure devotee cannot be compared to being transferred to heavenly planets or even merging into the Brahman effulgence in complete liberation. For living entities who are destined to give up the body and die, association with pure devotees in the highest benediction.”

Our Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept our humble obeisances.

How amazed and thankful we are to have you as our spiritual master. Thank you for coming to save us from the agonies of material life.

We have struggled over the years to be good and faithful disciples. Please forgive us for our downfalls.

Nowadays we are grasping at your simple instructions to us, that is, chant 16 rounds on our beads, take *prasāda* and associate with devotees.

In this area where we reside, devotees come together weekly to read *Bhagavad-gītā* and two nights a week we have *kīrtan*. We are daily reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and your other books as you have instructed us to do. Hopefully our small endeavors please you.

We pray that we can continue to progress in our devotional lives by following your example and instructions.

Your insignificant disciples,

Mahendra Dāsa and Sukhadā Devī Dāsī

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

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

What magic there was
Amidst the hope and fear
Springing up on the shores
Of America that year

New worlds opening
As old ones wept
A wave of change
Into which you stepped

Bold and fearless
With unshakable faith
Your intense compassion
Made battle with fate

To rescue the world
From its hell bound ride
In a small storefront
Of New York's Lower East Side

You founded ISKCON
Now fifty years past
Giving form to the vision
Lord Gaurāṅga forecast

Where in every corner of the globe
Every village, every town
Every hamlet, every house
Krishna's name would resound

Today as we gather
To honor you and celebrate
The grace of your qualities
Which have made ISKCON great

I lay down at your feet
Bidding all hesitation be gone
May I remain always your servant
In your glorious ISKCON

Your insignificant servant,

Pañcharatna Dāsa

Sukhadā Devī Dāsī

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

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

Once a magician traveled to Vrindāvana and took the opportunity to entertain. Objects appeared, disappeared, and reappeared. He even cleverly removed a penny from your ear!! Everyone laughed and enjoyed the fun. At one point, however, you became grave. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, questioned the magic maker, “Can you make birth, death, old age, and death disappear?” The magician sadly replied that he could not. You reminded everyone present that this was the real magic. It was, is, and always will be—the real magic.

From time to time, a theologian met the devotees distributing your books. After conversing with some of the devotees he became puzzled. He so admired their determination and enthusiasm, but upon questioning the devotees discovered they knew very little of the philosophy. This seemed incongruous; that is, until he met you. He could understand how it was possible when he was in your magnanimous presence.

When you arrived in America you resided with the Agarwals. Sally Agarwal reminisced about her time with you when she was

interviewed. She spoke of your expertise at cooking, how you were able to cook a feast in the three tiered tiffin and how much the family relished it. She remembered your delight upon seeing her son take his first few steps. As she continued to speak about your visit she stopped and exclaimed, "I don't think I've enjoyed anything as much in my entire life." I was amazed when I heard this from a seemingly regular middle-class American housewife.

Umāpati Prabhu related a story about a *Bhagavad-gītā* you had received from an Indian businessman. You asked one of the devotees to read from it. It contained the usual babble of Kṛṣṇa representing the unborn within. You asked your disciples what they thought, and to your dismay one of them expressed his appreciation. Your face grew from pink to red, and redder, and redder still as the narration continued to deny Śrī Kṛṣṇa's eternal form of beauty, knowledge and bliss. You asked the devotee if he was finished. He said no and continued. Finally he stopped. You slammed your fist on the table, and stood up with force screaming vehemently, "It's Krishna, Krishna, Krishna!! Krishna is a person. Krishna is not the unborn within!!" Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for slamming our *nirviśeṣa śūnyavādi* contamination. Śrī Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead!

Once the devotees picked some hibiscus flowers to decorate the altar. When you saw the flowers you explained that they were meant to be offered to Lord Shiva, not Krishna. The devotees asked what to do with the blossoms, whereupon you tucked an alluring blossom behind each ear giving your incredible, magical oceanic smile.

In the *Nectar of Devotion* it states that a moment's association is all that is required for liberation. You were and are so free with your moments. You made us fortunate and your magic continues to spread in the form of *harināma*, *prasāda* distribution, your books and your pastimes. Please make us instruments in your service so that your desire can be fulfilled and the magic of dancing, chanting, and feasting can continue to spread to every town village and farm.

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You have us left with an unimaginable mission. You have instructed us to deliver the entire world. This seems quite impossible because we have a hard enough time delivering ourselves and even a harder time working together co-operatively as a unified worldwide ISKCON. So how is it possible that we can successfully carry out the order you have given to us to deliver the whole world? It almost seems like a dream.

But it can happen, and indeed it will happen because it is predicted in the *Caitanya Caritāmṛita* that the entire world will someday be inundated with pure Krishna *bhakti*. How will it happen? It will only happen by our sticking tightly to all of your instructions, accepting them as our very life and soul. Then and only then will your full world-delivering potency be manifest through us. Therefore, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are begging this boon from you that in all times, places, and circumstances with all of our thoughts, words, and deeds we can now be fully absorbed in following your instructions to the absolute very best of our abilities. This will save us and anyone who follows us. And indeed, simply by our being fully obedient to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that brilliant, effulgent day will dawn in the future when all the world's leaders will accept your teachings as the ultimate guiding principle for the entire human society. May that day come soon. May that day come soon.

Your lowly servant always begging for your mercy,

Saṅkarshaṇ Dās Adhikārī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You, our eternal spiritual master, let us never forget all the sacrifices you have under taken for us. You have given us a priceless gem. Not a day goes past that a person doesn't inquire from me about my clothes, my *tilak* and asks why I dress like this. They say "you look so lovely, and you look so peaceful," and then I tell them about Krishna. Most know something, and many know our restaurants.

I would like to always be an instrument for us to keep the standard you have shown us, and to pass it to all newcomers and teach them with love and purity the priceless gem that you have graciously bestowed upon us.

Your eternal servant always,

Surabhi Devī Dāsī

Advaita Āchārya Dāsa and Archya Devī Dāsī

Choose your masters well!

Choose your masters well.
It's sometimes hard to tell
They may take you on the royal road to hell.

To serve is within our nature
To worship our creator
But don't be fooled by cheats and rascals
Break loose from Maya's illusionary shackles.

Good masters are few and far between
Very rarely to be seen
But he will be known by how he acts
He will fill one's mind with spiritual facts.

His every breath and word will be
To worship and please our Lord Hari
Through love our Lord has sent His servant
Śrīla Prabhupāda, who shines so radiant.

At last someone who wants our best
At his lotus feet we can finally rest
So kindly approach His Divine Grace
He can help us leave this sinful place
To serve our Lord, the origin of all that be
Within His embrace we can finally be free.

Jai Jai Prabhupāda!

Advaita Āchārya Dāsa and Archya Devī Dāsī

Ātmānanda Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble and respectful obeisances.

You always stressed the importance of your followers enthusiastically cooperating together. I have compiled a draft plan for achieving this, and below I present a very condensed version for your consideration.

You always took apparent challenges as opportunities. The apparently overwhelming obstacles to our cooperating for you may well be opportunities to achieve the type of world-changing results you inspired.

I am convinced that unless we acknowledge how distant we are from what you are calling us to achieve, we risk remaining so. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, always urged us to be the best examples ourselves, instead of minimising the efforts of others.

I pray to you, my master, guiding light and only hope, that I never give in to blaming or complaining, arising from my own weakness of heart. Please continue to bless and empower us.

Aspiring to be your sold-out servant, eternally,

Ātmānanda Dāsa

HOW TO CREATE COOPERATION

Śrīla Prabhupāda instructed us to cooperate together to maintain and expand his mission. This seems to be the most difficult goal to

achieve, societally. Agreeing about and discussing cooperation must be linked by action, to manifesting that cooperation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us a multitude of instructions that are *conducive* to working together. If, cooperation is such a fundamental necessity for success, then it is incumbent upon us to become qualified to do so.

Of course, our success in any of our endeavors depends on the quality of practical surrender in our *sādhana*. Through it, the intrinsic qualities of our real spiritual selves, necessary to overcome all difficulties are revealed by the Lord as we chant His holy names.

So, after all the discussion and agreement on the principle, how do we get the tangible, on-the-ground results Śrīla Prabhupāda wants and promises? What could we do differently?

“... Sometimes there may be disagreement and quarrel but we should not go away. These inebrities can be adjusted by the *cooperative spirit, tolerance and maturity* so I request you to kindly remain in the association of our devotees and work together. The test of our actual dedication and sincerity to serve the spiritual master will be in this mutual cooperative spirit to push on this movement and not make factions and deviate.” Letter, 12/9/73 [emphasis added]

Śrīla Prabhupāda says that “mutual cooperative spirit to push on this movement and not make factions and deviate” will be possible by “cooperative spirit, tolerance and maturity.”

Here, below, are some suggested steps towards achieving these goals.

I. ACKNOWLEDGE

First, acknowledgement that, as a society, we are far from the globally transforming spiritual and cultural power that Prabhupāda wanted. Unless we are able and willing to critically examine ourselves, no one will take us seriously.

Letter to Jānakī, 1/18/69:

“... We are pushing our movement on the background of a peaceful atmosphere in the world, and if we show a little disturbance in our own camp that will not be a very good example. Therefore, everyone should be forbearing, tolerant and cooperative. That is my special request to you all...”

Prabhupāda was once asked, “How far is Lord Caitanya’s prediction that His name will be heard in every town and village

true?" He replied, "That depends on those who are preaching."

II. COMMIT

The next step is to formally commit to achieving cooperation. This will be the manifest acceptance of Prabhupāda's request that we create and maintain unity in diversity.

"...Please try to maintain the philosophy of unity in diversity. That will make our movement successful. One section of men have already gone out, therefore we must be very careful to maintain unity in diversity, and remember the story in *Aesop's Fables* of the father of many children with the bundle of sticks..." Letter, 10/18/73

In 1970, Prabhupāda wrote: "So these two things are always side by side—Māyā and Krishna—Krishna is service and Māyā is sense gratification, so every moment we are prone to be subjugated by either of them. Our duty is therefore to be very, very careful. The poison is personal ambition."

If serious challenges arise at this point, we would benefit by applying the following step, III, to resolve them.

III. APPLIED ŚRAVAṆAM

Learn how to listen to each other, without prejudice or attachment

As Krishna tells Uddhava, it is many times better to worship, serve and please the devotee of Krishna than it is to serve Him. "One may worship Me within the Vaiṣṇavas by offering loving friendship to them and honoring them in all respects."

If we desire to serve and please a devotee, we need to understand what he or she wants and needs. And how can I know what is pleasing to them? By humbly inquiring, and by listening to what they say. Real listening arises from a desire to another. I must be willing to honour their thoughts and feelings, even if I strongly disagree with them. Only by *suspending* (not giving up or denying) my own opinions, judgments, perceptions or feelings, is that possible.

"The first and most difficult task of dialogue involves parking the ego and listening with an open spirit..."

This applied śravaṇam, is the first process in devotional service, and thus is the first step in serving each other, and progressing to the point of serving together, cooperating.

And it arises from: 1.) The desire to work together, no matter what; and 2.) spiritual respect for each other as potential allies, and 3.) a willingness to master (surrender) my own mind and senses. This does not mean giving up healthy discrimination or judgment.

In building this foundation of understanding by hearing each other, trust and respect are naturally engendered. When that is established, then and only then will it be possible to work side by side.

“To be understood is a basic human desire. To know how to effectively listen and convey understanding is a key element in expressing love and care. Illuminating this principle, philosopher Paul Tillich once remarked that the first duty of love is to listen. Listening becomes especially important when we realize that as people we come together in community. A characteristic of genuine community is that conflicts and tensions are addressed, or communicated, in ways that enhance closeness and mutual understanding. According to psychologist Rollo May, “Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy and mutual valuing.” (Relationships That Work, David B. Wolf 2008, p.23)

To be able to be empathic (compassionate) and understand others, is the quality of an advanced devotee (*Bg.* 6. 32 & purport). Our unexpressed, untamed emotions, are effective stumbling blocks – traps – which overwhelm and ensnare us. As Krishna says (*Bg.* 6.6) “For him who has conquered the mind, the mind is the best of friends; but for one who has failed to do so, his very mind will be the greatest enemy.” Prabhupāda explains, “...One who cannot control his mind lives always with the greatest enemy, and thus his life and its mission are spoiled...”

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.21.33, purport, Prabhupāda explains: “...A person who is situated in the mode of goodness is certainly more intelligent than others. Therefore, he can practice the brahminical activities—namely *speaking the truth, controlling the senses, controlling the mind ... , practicing tolerance ...* In this way, if he engages himself in the loving service of the Lord as an actual *brāhmaṇa*, his aim to achieve the final interest of life is attained...” [*emphasis added*]

A common understanding must be established *before* we can possibly move into workable, collaborative activity. To think that we can sustain teamwork without such a foundation is like thinking that without a good foundation, a building will remain strong. It is the mentality in a fools' paradise: an illusory, sentimental world in which differences, possible conflict and strong emotions are avoided, swept under the carpet.

Laird Schaub has been working with communities in the United States for many years. He has been a practicing professional group process consultant for 25 years, providing training in consensus facilitation, conflict resolution, and communication skills. In a 2012 interview, he said "... It is very common for groups that live together to not even have had a conversation about how they want to work emotionally. And it's tragic, in a way...when you don't have any agreement about what you're doing, or how you're going to do it—lacking in agreement about what to do—it's jungle ball [chaos]!"

Part of Step III is to establish educational and training structures for learning applied śravaṇam. The most challenging work of establishing cooperation will certainly not happen by chance. As Prabhupāda told Girirāja (Mahārāja), we must use intelligence and organization.

This paper focuses only on the three preliminary steps, leaving the rest for later.

The teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda suggest that it is not only possible, but simple, although maybe not easy, to achieve functional cooperation. It is our birthright and duty: our burden of love and greatest fortune.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my worthless obsequies at your divine lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda! I want to thank you for giving me the great opportunity to come to your ISKCON movement, which you started single-handedly 50 years ago. This year, devotees are celebrating the founding of your ISKCON. We can never repay your kindness and causeless mercy upon us for giving us the chance without discrimination, regardless of race, religion, gender or color, to take to Krishna consciousness and become devotees. You were always thinking of many ways to expand your movement and engage the conditioned souls in devotional service. You opened so many temples all over the world for this purpose, giving people the opportunity to visit and associate with devotees, hear about Krishna, chant His holy name, take *prasāda*, read your books, and join your movement. You painstakingly translated so many transcendental literatures that have come down to us unchanged, from the line of disciplic succession for our eternal spiritual benefit. Śrīla Prabhupāda you said, before You came to the West there were 600 editions of *Bhagavad-gītā* that had been here for the last two or three hundred years, but not one single person became a devotee. In their commentaries, the non-devotee impersonalists don't mention 'Kṛṣṇa' as being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or that we should 'worship Him' or 'surrender unto Him'. One has to become a *bhakta*, and hear *Bhagavad-gītā* from a self-realized soul only in order to get Kṛṣṇa's mercy to understand *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is. Certainly not from some big impersonalist politician or swami non-devotee who says, "it is not to Kṛṣṇa", that we have to surrender to. So they made no devotees during that time until you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, came here and published *Bhagavad-gītā 'As It Is'*. Since then, you have made millions of devotees and every day it increases by your mercy. You would be very, very pleased to see how your sincere disciples, empowered by you, have spread your movement to so many countries. There are now many millions of devotees all over the world—in India, Russia, the ex-eastern bloc countries... a preaching centre has even opened in China, all due to your mercy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda is a *śaktyāveśa avatāra*, invested with the transcendental power of the Lord to preach and spread Lord Caitanya's movement all over the globe. Simply by reading your

books that you went to so much trouble to translate, and sincerely follow your instructions, we can become liberated and return home to Krishna by your mercy. I remember when you visited Australia you would translate at night for hours in a tiny, austere, storefront room. During the day you would give classes, attend preaching engagements, teach the temple president to cook, receive visitors, answer letters, instruct devotees and local temple management, manage the running and expansion of ISKCON etc, then do more translating during the day. Amazing! Especially since you were in an old body, to do what is impossible for an ordinary human being with youth and good health to accomplish. Śrīla Prabhupāda you were always very happy and your face would light up with your big transcendental smile when you would hear how successful book distribution was. You described your transcendental books as ‘time bombs’...people buy them, and in due course of time they explode. Someone may buy your books, put them up on the bookcase for years, forget about them. Suddenly one day they see them, take them down, start reading them and get inspired to become devotees. Śrīla Prabhupāda said that if anyone reads His books there is no doubt he or she will become a devotee. As you are worshipable, so your books are also worshipable, they are the literary incarnation of Krishna. Śrīla Prabhupāda once asked Hansdutta, “so why did I write all those books”? he said, “so we can know the philosophy, learn the philosophy”. He said, “No! The purpose of all these books is to convince you to chant the holy name of Krishna”.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you have told us repeatedly that this human life is very rare and short, but perfect for God realization. Only in the human form does one have intelligence to inquire who am I? Who is God? What’s the purpose of this world? We have been suffering in this material world since time immemorial, transmigrating through innumerable species in our vain quest to become masters of the material world, and big enjoyers of the senses. As a result we have only suffered, become degraded and forgetful of our loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa, as His eternal servants. We have been through so many material creations and annihilations, afterwards remaining unconscious within the body of Mahā Viṣṇu for millions of years, waiting until another material manifestation. As Krishna and Lord Caitanya appear only rarely, once in a day of Brahma, so it is also rare to meet a pure, unalloyed devotee of the Supreme Lord like Śrīla Prabhupāda. We are indeed most fortunate, as it’s only

by serving His lotus feet, taking initiation from Him and pleasing him can the seed of devotional service be sown within our hearts. Without the mercy of the spiritual master there is no hope of making any advancement in spiritual life, it doesn't matter how learned, beautiful, wealthy or aristocratic we may be, if we don't have the mercy of the pure unalloyed devotee, we can't attain Krishna. *Yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādah*, "By the mercy of the spiritual master one receives the benediction of Krishna. Without the grace of the spiritual master one cannot make any advancement. Therefore I should remember and praise the spiritual master. At least three times a day I should offer my respects unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master." You dedicated your whole life and worked hard to fulfill the desire of your beloved spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who wanted you to preach Krishna consciousness in the English speaking countries. Now by His mercy you have spread this movement everywhere. All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your worthless disciple

Govinda Mohinī Devī Dāsi

Guṇagrāhi Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to Your Divine Grace on this most auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

I had the great fortune of coming in contact with the devotees in 1968. Inspired by their enthusiasm and cordiality, I visited your temple in Buffalo, New York, one Sunday a few hours before the feast. In spite of my far-from-brahminical appearance, I was invited into the kitchen to help, and after a two-minute briefing on the protocol of cooking for Kṛṣṇa, I found myself on the assembly line folding *samosās*. I love to cook, but what I remember most about that day was how warm and kindhearted everyone was. I chose to be sheltered by ISKCON from then on, and I am very happy to say that for forty-seven years your movement has fully satisfied my heart. There are many reasons for that, but the main one is the love shared amongst the devotees.

While writing this offering, I was reading in His Holiness Śivarāma Swami's book *Kṛṣṇa-saṅgati* the following description of

the deer's despair due to intense separation from Kṛṣṇa after the Lord had departed Vṛndāvana and gone to Mathurā:

Once-playful deer, unmindful of the soft grasses that had lost their flavor, longingly gazed toward Mathurā. In sadness they simply listened to the echo of Kṛṣṇa's flute-song. And if that echo were ever to leave the valley of their ears, then how would these timid creatures have continued to live? They would live only by hearing of Kṛṣṇa, as did the *gopīs*, who had sustained Vṛndāvana with their love, as did the bees, birds, and sparse foliage, who had all abandoned their duties in the trauma of Kṛṣṇa's absence. And live they must, for if one tiny insect, one insignificant blade of grass, or any of Kṛṣṇa's associates were to die, Kṛṣṇa would immediately perish of a broken heart.

How relishable it is to read about Kṛṣṇa's divine love for his devotees and how much He cares for them. And how equally relishable it is for us to meditate on how Kṛṣṇa imbued you with that same love and how you showered it upon us through your personal dealings, compassion, intimacy, concern for our well-being, and huge personal sacrifice. You clearly showed, just as did your Lord throughout His pastimes, that your devotees were more dear to you than your own life.

ISKCON is now fifty year old, and although you left this planet after being with us for only twelve years, the legacy of love, so sweet and impelling, that you powerfully instilled in us has been transferred from generation to generation for forty more years.

We see that your ISKCON has not only stood the test of time but is replete with wonderful accomplishments that will surely continue to propel us far into the future with great transcendental force. I am so happy to have visited *yātrās* where ISKCON is expanding at a rate reminiscent of the days you were personally with us. Although it is impressive to see all the big beautiful buildings that are going up and the projects that have been started, what I have been truly overwhelmed by more than anything else is how many pure-hearted souls your stalwart disciples and their followers are attracting. Everywhere I have gone I have met saints, young and old, decorated with one Vaiṣṇava quality after another. Their nature is such that it makes me feel as if I have known and loved them forever. They are warm, humble, openhearted, joyful, and enthusiastic, and they

reflect your mood in such a way that one cannot help but want to associate with these devotees again and again.

You say in your *Upadeśāmṛta* commentary that this movement was started to facilitate the love shared amongst the devotees. That love is what everyone truly wants, and when sincere seekers find themselves in an atmosphere permeated by it, they become greedy for it and come back again and again for more. That is the ISKCON you gave everything for and sheltered us with. It is the gift of lifetimes, the spiritual world on earth, and the only hope for the lonely, alienated, hapless souls of this dark age. You bestowed it on all and continue to do so as your transcendental potency flows like a river of nectar that, as predicted, will continue to rise and flood every town and village of this world.

In spite of all the inspiration you have bestowed upon me through your pure-hearted devotees, still I have for so long been shamefully aware of my unwillingness to wholeheartedly follow in their footsteps. Therefore I am begging you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to please continue to cast your merciful glance upon me so that in some future lifetime this aspiring *bhakta* can take proper advantage of your treasure house of good fortune. Until then, I will continue to pray for the day when I am free from the envy, lust, and lethargy that have blocked my path. On that glorious day, I will truly know what it means to have joined your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

Your grateful servant,

Guṇagrāhi Dāsa

Jagattāriṇī Devī Dāsī

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you and all glories to your mission of delivering all the foolish souls like myself within the universe. Thank you for taking so much effort for those who are “rotting” in this material world, totally unconscious of their intimate relationship with Krishna.

Recently I read:

“So these bodies means we have manufactured according to our different mentality. Kṛṣṇa says “You stop all this

business. Simply you are migrating or transmigrating from one body to another or one planet to another. That will not make you happy. Sarva-dharmān. You just surrender unto Me. Because you are meant, your original creation is meant, for serving Me.”

Just like this body. When this body was made in the womb of my mother, it was just like a small pea, and from that pea, different holes came out, then hands came out, legs came out, the fingers came out. Why this finger was created? **Because I require the service of the fingers.**

Because we are part of Kṛṣṇa, our pleasure is in serving Him. Everyone is thinking “I cannot be happy serving you, I can only be happy serving myself.” But no one knows who the self is. That self is Kṛṣṇa.

We are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. Just like this hand or this finger are part and parcel of my body, similarly we are also senses, part and parcel of the spiritual body of Kṛṣṇa. So when we purify ourselves, then we act in our original, constitutional position.

Just like the finger is meant for serving my body, similarly, when, as soon as we are in the position of our original constitution, then we serve Kṛṣṇa.”

This morning when I woke from sleep, I discovered that while sleeping, my hand had been in an unnatural position that had temporarily cut off the blood flow resulting in a few moments of paralysis.

As I sat there trying to use my hand and finding it had become a heavy lifeless mass, I was given a gifted moment of valuable reflection. Naturally as owners of the hands of this body, I expect the parts to work. It is essential for my wellbeing and also it is normal. So when suddenly the fingers are incapable of movement it is very noticeable, very disturbing, and I will do whatever I can to try and fix the problem. I suddenly thought how anxious Krishna must be to rectify the dysfunctional condition of the souls who are paralyzed by ignorance of their relationship with Him.

“So the hand, unless it’s serving its source, then it’s

useless. The servant must serve its master or the part must serve the whole. And our relationship with God is the same. Just like the hand is made out of bile, blood and air, flesh and bone, as all the body is, so similarly we're made out of spirit. Qualitatively the same as Kṛṣṇa, but quantitatively many millions of times less. Qualitatively the same, quantitatively different. Fragmental portion."

You have explained to us so clearly, using examples we can see and understand. We are parts of that Supreme, like the hands or legs of our body, and we are meant to intimately, naturally spontaneously and lovingly serve as the bodily limbs constantly offer service to us. How expertly you present the highest truth using simple, understandable experiences. I felt so grateful for this blessed moment of discomfort.

So this morning, as I sat waiting for my hand to "return to normal", I entered into a reflection on how lifeless and useless a "paralyzed limb" I feel. I prayed not to remain "out of relationship" with Krishna any longer. And of course I naturally thought of you and wanted to cry out my appreciation for the gift of spiritual rejuvenation that you have given.

O' dear Prabhupāda, I cannot begin to repay my debt to you yet sadly I remain a slow learner, a fool, but I will seriously continue to rejuvenate my dull brain with your words of spiritual wisdom. Please continue to guide my understanding. Please continue to look kindly upon me. As your disciple I pray for the confidence to return to my natural healthy position as the "hand or finger" of Krishna!

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

I remain your aspiring servant,

Jagattārīṇī Devī Dāsī

Padmanābha Dāsa and Līlāmañjarī Devī Dāsī

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.

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance, with the torchlight of knowledge.

Your humble servants,

Padmanābha Dāsa and Līlāmañjarī Devī Dāsī

Sarvamaṅgalā Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I beg to offer my obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

On the sacred day of Vyāsa-pūjā, the disciple is called upon to voice appreciation of the spiritual master, that magnanimous personality who offers the most rare opportunity to go back home, back to Godhead. Your glories are innumerable and immense, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You are so exalted and your service to the Lord is unfathomable. We can only catch a glimpse of the magnitude of your compassionate activities. Therefore with such limited vision and comprehension, how is it possible to effectively offer praise?

Your own worship of your spiritual master is exemplary and illuminating to witness. In your concluding words to the *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* on November 10th, 1974, you offer all the glory of your transcendental devotional service to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta whom you address as “my beloved eternal spiritual master, guide and friend.”

You go on to say “Although according to material vision His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda passed away from this material world on the last day of December, 1936, I still consider His Divine Grace to be always present with me by his *vāñī*, his words.

This fact we can now understand, now that you have physically left this world, yet are always present in your books. How impossible it would be to survive without your words of instruction

as the transparent via medium of the Lord. As soon as we read your translations and purports, our consciousness is immediately transformed. We feel your potency and mercy in this way.

Then, in those “Concluding Words,” you continue by quoting from the first Śloka of the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, “*tene brahma hṛdā ya ādi-kavaye.*” You write, “Spiritual inspiration comes from within the heart, wherein the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in His Paramātmā feature, is always sitting with all His devotees and associates.”

This is one of the stunning statements which verifies how you are always with us, for you are one such elevated devotee who is always in association with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Krishna, seated within the core of our hearts. How much more personal could a relationship be?!

By your grace, we are allowed to personally experience your presence in the ways you mercifully appear as our “beloved eternal spiritual master, guide and friend.”

Though we may anguish at not being a fit receptacle for such mercy, nor having the capacity to pleasingly manifest what you have instructed us to do, we can take courage from your humble expressions and description of your tireless endeavours to spread Krishna consciousness. You are heroic, Śrīla Prabhupāda, yet you write, “I could not, however, immediately take up his instructions to preach, but I took his words very seriously and was always thinking of how to execute his order, although I was quite unfit to do so.”

What austerities you tolerated in the mission to deliver Lord Chaitanya’s mission! How could anyone read of the early days of your days in America without tears rising?

“...With no companion, I loitered here and there...”

For a neophyte such as myself, there is so much ambivalence between feeling your presence, yet feeling your separation; desiring service, yet being weak and irresolute in its execution. The only medicine for such maladies is hearing your words, chanting the mahā mantra, serving your lotus feet and praying to always stay under their shelter.

Again in your poetic “Adore, adore ye all the happy day” you say:

“Misled we are, all going astray
Save us Lord, our fervent pray”

The Lord personally sent you to save us from going disastrously further astray in the jungle of this material world where there is danger at every step.

You describe these dangers and the pain of separation in your commentaries upon the meeting of Rāmānanda Rāya and Lord Chaitanya:

“When Lord Caitanya asked Rāmānanda Rāya what is the most painful experience in human society, Rāmānanda Rāya replied that separation from a pure devotee is the most painful experience. In other words, when there is no devotee of the Lord present, there is great suffering in society, and association with other people becomes painful. In Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (3.30, 6-7) it is stated that if one who is bereft of the association of a pure devotee tries to become happy through society, friendship and love devoid of Krishna consciousness, he is to be considered in the most distressed condition. In the *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* it is stated that the association of a pure devotee is more desirable than life itself and that in separation from him one cannot pass even a second happily.”

So Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have not adequately glorified you but I pray again and again that I never try to find consolation in society, friendship and love devoid of Krishna consciousness; that I may never leave your service, although my efforts to serve are paltry. I am conditioned by my long and inauspicious sojourn in this material world, being constantly subject to the three fold miseries. How you have had the kindness to take on such unqualified persons is another unfathomable mystery and a testimony to your being the benevolent representative of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Indeed, your mercy is all that can sustain me. If only I can keep trying to become more grateful, this lifetime will have been progressive.

May I humbly offer this prayer to you:

“Please give me the privilege of devotional service and make me your own maidservant.”

Your menial servant,

Sarvamaṅgalā Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances.

All glories to your divine lotus feet.

Thank you for seeing us through yet another year of aspiring to become your loving and faithful disciples.

This past year brought us more in focus with our real desires of always serving your divine mission as well as trying to hear the Lord's holy name more purely. Thank you for bringing this glorious sound vibration of the holy name to our ears and into our hearts. We pray that this great treasure will remain in our hearts eternally. In this way, a proper seat for you will self-manifest, and we can keep you near always.

You have poured such riches and great wealth upon us in the form of all your books, all your disciples and all your creative and unlimited ideas for service; that we may imbibe the sweetness of this great mercy forever. We pray to be able to give these wonderful gifts to others more as well. We pray for the intelligence to be able to offer this wealth in ways entirely appropriate to the Western mentality, so that others will see the benefit, as essential to their very lives. We are praying for your guidance in carrying out this most blissful of tasks; these tasks that require much honesty, sincerity and humility on our part.

These are the tools that we are most in need of and are feebly attempting to acquire. But we have faith, gleaned from you that the Lord will provide what we lack when we are completely honest and sincere. So, we cannot thank you enough for all your blessings, while all our attempts at trying to glorify you, dearest Prabhupāda fall short. Thank you unlimitedly for always encouraging us and pushing us forward, despite all our faults.

Your servants,

Goṣṭabihārī Dāsa and Mahāviṣṇupriyā Devī Dāsī

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*

In honor of the 50th celebrations of ISKCON, I initiated an effort to honor the Vaiṣṇavas who are enthusiastically broadcasting Lord Chaitanya’s movement through the media, specifically film/video. The first Vaisnava Film Festival was launched in Mayapur ten years ago as a competition. Now, a decade later, I saw that there were many devotees who had dedicated much of their lives serving you as filmmakers, and, yet, they had not been officially recognized for their tireless endeavors. You said, in a letter to Karandhara — Bombay 22 March, 1972:

“This television program is very much encouraging to me, and I wish to take part in it immediately. I wanted to cancel all other engagements and go direct to Los Angeles, but if I go in that way my promised visit to Sydney and to Japan especially will be frustrated.

So take little patience at least for one month, I’m sure that by end April I shall reach Los Angeles.

One thing more, if we are successful in this program then my dreamt mission of life to spread Krishna consciousness all over the world will be fulfilled. I wish to speak on the great philosophy of *Bhāgavata Dharma* at least once in a week on Television, so if arrangement is made by you for this, then you will be doing the highest service for Krishna.”

Fifty years ago, film played an important role in establishing the Hare Krishna movement in America. A CBS news crew made a documentary on a “New Swami”

“Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Hare Hare... An hypnotic rhythmic chant of 16 words has

replaced LSD and other drugs for some in New York's East Village. On Second Avenue and First Street is a storefront in which a Hindu Swami has set up shop. There his American disciples are learning about Krishna Consciousness."

From the first days of your fledgling ISKCON, you gave your blessings to budding filmmakers who found you a fascinating subject as you mesmerized your motley small band of followers on the lower East Side of New York City. Richard Witty and his wife were the first professionals to roll camera shortly after you had established a storefront temple there. The film, "*Matchless Gifts*" is a classic which will endure and enlighten for the next ten thousand years. Your disciple, Dāmodhar, made some early films such as the evocative, "*Gurudeva*" in 1969. In a 1970 letter to *Bhagavān*, you said:

"So go on with your organization for distribution of my books through press and other modern media and Krishna will certainly be pleased upon you. We can use everything—television, radio, movies, or whatever there may be—to tell about Krishna and outside of devotional service all these modern paraphernalia are just so much rubbish."

In reply to a letter from me describing my educational background from the London Film School, you wrote to me in 1971, "You please make films about Krishna." Of course, you prefaced that request by asking me to "...chant 16 rounds and follow the four regulative principles." You never lost sight of the priorities. I came to LA in 1972 to assist a project to film you giving classes on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Dvija Hari told him that he wanted to make films, and you responded very encouragingly in 1973:

"So I have no objection if you want stay in India or anyplace, but for your work I think it is better anyway to go to Los Angeles. That is the best place in the world for making film. Harikeśa Prabhu has been working in that connection also. He has shown me some film script which appears nice, so if conjointly you are able to do something for Kṛṣṇa in this way, that will please me very much. I always wanted that there should be a cinema made of *Bhagavad-gītā*, now you are fulfilling my desire

in that connection. At any rate we shall discuss further when we meet again in Calcutta in a few days' time."

Yadubara Dāsa and Viśākhā Devī Dāsī, who had already been photographing and filming you, were commissioned by Karadhar to produce "*Hare Krishna People*" in 1974, and you paid for it from your BBT. You relished playing it repeatedly in various preaching engagements, especially in India.

To Tamāl Krishna in 1976, you encouraged him:

"One movie expert has opined there are so many ideas in our movement. Try to get our ideas into movies."

Your consistent blessings for making Kṛṣṇa conscious films has been enthusiastically embraced by your grand disciples as well as your direct disciples. In 2006, Yadubara Dāsa and Viśākhā Devī Dāsī received a Lifetime Achievement Award for their numerous productions and filming of *Your Divine Grace*. Now we have recognized the endeavors of many more of your followers:

Lifetime Achievement Awards:

1. Siddhānta Dāsa, for his *Memory* video Series and companion books what to speak of his hard-working ITV service since 1979.
2. Krishna-līlā Devī Dāsī, for her numerous enlivening ISKCON documentaries – Karuna Productions.
3. Haridās Dāsa, for his ITV (ISKCON Television) India broadcasting of *darshan*, *pravachans*, and self-produced documentaries via cable and satellite.
4. Rāmānuja Dāsa and Shyāmāsakhī Devī Dāsī, for their Hare Krishna Culture broadcasting in UK and Europe including original programming of both interview and documentary nature.
5. Vāsudeva Dāsa (BhakTV), for his numerous award-winning documentaries illuminating and expanding the understanding of the Vaisnava tradition in-house and through other cultures.
6. Prānanātha Dāsa, for his technically superior documentaries on ISKCON projects and activities.
Īśvara Dāsa, Touchstone Media, for aggressive distribution of video media for over 20 years in India, Southeast Asia, Middle East

7. Viṣṇu Mūrti Dāsa, Bhaktivedanta Library Services, for indefatigable distribution of video media for over 30 years in Europe.
8. Bal Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, ITV Russia. Same as above, but in C.I.S. as well as production of festival documentaries along with his late son, Krishna Dāsa.
9. Antardwīp Dāsa for establishing Mayapur.TV, a portal for 24 hour *darshans*, *pravachans*, and live camera feeds from temples all over the world.
10. Vaisnava Seva Dāsa, webmaster of ISKCON Desire Tree, a portal for all types of multi-media including videos.
11. Nrsimhānanda Dāsa, Producer-Director, ISKCON Television (ITV), Vaisnava Film Festivals, Uplifting Cinema Pvt Ltd.

Special Achievement Awards to:

1. Ananta Vrindāvan Dāsa, Mongolia, Iskconvideos.com
2. Paṣcaratna Dāsa for all the black and white videos of Śrīla Prabhupāda.
3. Vijaya Rādhikā Devī Dāsī and Shyām Gopal Dāsa – Vṛndāban Experience Productions - Reconnection trailer
4. Jagannāth Kīrtan Dāsa, Dhīra, Dan Karpinsky and team from Kriyate Productions (based in Mayapur) – films about gurukula, kīrtan, TOVP (latest).
5. Lauris Bolnis, venturing into narrative filmmaking with the ambitious featurette, “Reconnection,” amongst other productions.
6. Shaktyāvesha avatāra Dāsa, Kīrtan and Art Foundation, writer producer director, Long Lost and Forget to Remember, director, Reconnection.
7. Tamāl Krishna Dāsa – Das Productions – Fortunate-People social media campaign.
8. Madhudviṣa – krishnastore.com; editing, subtitling over 50 hrs for compiling The Śrīla Prabhupāda Complete DVD Library subtitled in 20 languages.
9. Of course, the list is not complete. Many more people are engaged in filmmaking—whether it be for the “big screen” or social media. As the landscape of distribution of visual media has evolved, devotees are adapting and innovating in every sphere. You taught us the principle of *yukta-vairāgya*,

and, thus, you have parted the waters and made possible so much engagement in Krishna's service. Such is the genius and mercy of a pure devotee; he teaches how to see and use everything in Krishna's service. You state it plainly:

"The actual fact is one may be a perfect transcendentalist or spiritual man by possessing the whole world, and one may be a gross materialist without possessing a farthing. So this distinction can be made on the basis of consciousness. When one is Krishna conscious while possessing everything in the world, he is a perfect spiritualist, and one may have renounced everything in the world, but lacking in Krishna consciousness, he is a gross materialist." (Letter, April 23, 1970)

You particularly encouraged the use of films:

"Regarding the motion picture, it is a great opportunity, and if they actually want to do something wonderful I can come there personally and see to its direction. If it is an important film I think my personal direction is necessary. If not, then I think you can send me a synopsis of the script so that there may be nothing objectionable from the start. If this film is properly done it will be very profitable, even from the commercial point of view; and if they are interested, we can give them hundreds of stories from *Bhāgavat* which will make wonderful films, and simultaneously the people will be educated to the proper religious and moral standard. So please try very seriously for this and I think Krishna will give you all intelligence and facility."

(Śrīla Prabhupāda's Letter to Shyāmsundar, Sept 22, 1970)

Vishākhā: "We plan to make a motion picture of the *Bhagavad-gītā* dance that they do. My husband and I...

Prabhupāda: Do it. Apply your American brain how to serve Krishna. That is success."

*idaṁ hi puṁsas tapasaḥ śrutasya vā
sviṣṭasya sūktasya ca buddhi-dattayoḥ
avicyuto 'rthaḥ kavibhir nirūpito
yad-uttamaśloka-guṇānuvarṇanam (SB 1.5.22)*

“Whatever talent one has got... these talents are also acquired after austerity. It is not ordinary thing. So everything should be employed to describe Uttamaśloka, Krishna. Krishna is Uttamaśloka. So we have got so many Krishna’s pastimes, Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s pastimes. We can overflow. Just like you can overflow with this literature, we can overflow... This is art. Art, music, everything we can utilize. In any way one is addicted—let him eat only, let him sing only, let him paint only, let him dance only — we have got everything. That is Krishna consciousness. Let him do business also. Yes. Engineering — construct temple. It is so all-perfect movement, Krishna...that is Krishna, all-attractive. Everyone can be attracted and give up everything. He will be attracted by Krishna in such a way that he’ll give up all nonsense. That is Krishna consciousness. No more other *enga...* *anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam* [Brs. 1.1.11]. All other attraction finished. Simply Krishna.”
(*Morning Walk* conversation, Feb 10, 1975, Los Angeles)

Please continue to bless all of your aspiring servants to make films in all media and all languages so that the whole world has the opportunity to become Krishna conscious. Thank you for allowing me to participate in whatever way possible in this noble endeavor to spread Krishna consciousness via films only made possible by your inconceivable mercy.

I beg to remain engaged somehow or another at your lotus feet.

Your unqualified and reluctant disciple,

Nṛsimhānanda Dāsa

Director, ISKCON Television

Āli Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

All glories to my divine master, who fifty years ago, in his old age, came alone from very far to save us poor fallen souls who

were roaming about in a world of materialism and impersonalism, without any aim in life.

I am certainly one of those fortunate souls who have been rescued by Your Divine Grace and to whom has been given the opportunity to engage in the most useful activity of helping the pure devotee of the Lord in his mission.

In August 1973, you were in Paris and after the installation of our wonderful Rādhā-Paris-Īśvara, you called into your room—one after another—the devotees who were going to take second initiation. I was one of them.

Yogeśvara Dāsa was introducing each devotee to you, one by one, explaining which service they were performing. When my turn came, he informed you that I was translating your books in the Italian language, and you looked surprised:

“So... she knows Italian?” “No, Śrīla Prabhupāda”, Yogeśvara replied, “she *is* Italian”. Looking even more surprised, you smiled and said: “Oh, this is a very good use of womanly intelligence!”

Since then, I tried—according to my capabilities—to do my best to present your books to the population of my native country. I am still trying to please you with this humble service, hoping to surprise you again and make you smile.

The memory of your smile is the steady driving force that makes me overcome weakness and discouragement, and is also the stimulus to surpass all *maya*'s traps that slow down my devotional path.

I hope to have been a worthy daughter of Your Divine Grace, and I strongly desire to continue to be it for the rest of my life.

Your aspiring servant,

Āli Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī

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 Ādvaita,
Gadādhara, Śrīvaas 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 outside of India exactly 51 years ago, and giving Krishna and Lord Caitanya to the whole world.

Lord Caitanya's movement in the West is just 50 years old this year, yet still in the very early pioneering stages.

The Catholic Church was not properly established until 350 years after the coming of Christ. But to Prabhupāda's credit ISKCON has spread to more places on the planet in 50 years, a feat that took Christianity 1500 years to achieve!

Big things soon will happen in Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement, such as in the old Soviet bloc—Russia, Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania and Moldova.

There are now more devotees living in temple there than in England, Western Europe, America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand all put together.

The TOVP will attract so much attention when it's completed—especially in India where ISKCON is also booming and Temples are opening all the time now.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said: "If you can propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness constantly, then, by spreading this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, you can make the whole world Kṛṣṇa conscious, and then it will be Vaikuṅṭha". *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.8 Māyāpur, April 1, 1975.*

Prabhupāda, you had full faith in Lord Caitanya's movement and the coming of a Golden Age of spiritual awareness and

Krishna consciousness.

You said we can make the entire world Krishna conscious—you had full faith that Lord Caitanya’s movement can transform this world. I heard you say many times, “It will eventually happen”.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you have said, “In this present day, man is very eager to have one scripture, one God, one religion, and one occupation. So let there be one common scripture for the whole world—*Bhagavad-gītā*. And let there be one God only for the whole world—Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

And one mantra only—*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*.

And let there be one work only—the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead”. (From *Introduction to Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*)

If you are sincere, God will find you and send His pure devotee. Haribol! All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your fallen servant,

Gauragopāla Dāsa

Janmanālaya Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

The first time I came in contact with you was through a picture, a photograph in the *Īśopaniṣad*. Somehow or other I was so moved, that up to this day, 45 years later, I still carry this moment with me. Today I can name that moment: “*ashraya vigraha darshan*” — unconsciously at that time I had your *darshan*, and I felt and knew deeply, that by being and staying with you, all my misconceptions of the meaning of life will be removed, and that I will be completely sheltered in all situations of my life.

I thought what happened to me can possibly happen to my friends and others too, and at times I became disappointed when they would not share my enthusiasm. At times I become disappointed with myself, too. In connection with you I become conscious of the condition of my heart, and what I observe is quite humiliating: At one moment, I raise myself, appreciate the highest and most divine, just to sink down at the next moment to the most horrible and worst kind of ignorance. Being in that hopeless and desperate

condition, I aspire to come under your shelter, trying to respond to the words I hear from you, willing to always renew my sincerity in Krishna consciousness. Maybe one day, with my eyes shut, I will take that “leap of faith”... and I know you will catch me. Thank You for Your kindness,

Your aspiring servant,

Janmanālaya Dāsa

MadanMohanMohinī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances. I place my head at your lotus feet for eternity for everything you have done for everyone everywhere at all times. No one else can do what you have done. And this is an absolute fact.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am so sorry and am embarrassed that I cannot write more than this simple and meager offering, but what more can I say than the above? Actually, my plan was to sit and meditate on writing my offering but it has turned out that we at the Temple of the Holy Name – now an ISKCON temple in Prabhupāda Village – are on a huge marathon because we are going to install 4 ft marble Gaura-Nitāi Deities in a couple of weeks – all in honor of the 50th anniversary of your most wonderful ISKCON movement! Please accept this offering in gratitude for the life you have given us. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

From the bottom of my stone-like heart I remain your eternal and humble servant,

MadanMohanMohinī Devī Dāsī

THE CINTĀMAṆI LADEN PINNACLE PATH TO PERFECTION

“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 Saraswatī Goswāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Chaitanya Deva and are delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.” - *Śrīla Prabhupāda Praṇāmas*

My Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You once explained the commentary by Śrīla Viśvanāth Chakravartī Ṭhākur on Śrīmad *Bhagavad-gītā*, 2.41, and the profound effect it had on you. You stated: “The secret of success in spiritual life is to make the order of the spiritual master the very life and soul of the disciple.”

I am trying to meditate deeply on this verse and purport, and am deeply affected but also conflicted. Conflicted because, as your disciple, your orders to us were to work together cooperatively, all become guru, both for you and for Lord Chaitanya, to try and expand your Mission, or at least preserve what you had built. What a challenge!

In many ways, your life mission, ISKCON, is flourishing. The grand house that you built, in which the whole world can live, still stands broad and tall on the hill like a beacon of light for all in the terrible darkness of this Kali-yuga. Your global mission seems to be thriving. There are some parts of the world, where your movement is apparently “booming” such as Russia, India, Bangladesh, Africa, and China. The numbers of new ISKCON temples and Centers is surely impressive—numbering at 650, with 10 in New Delhi, and 75 in Bangladesh respectively! The number of initiated disciples stands now at 75,000! Also, there are so many restaurants, schools and farming communities globally.

You gave us and guided us on the peerless *cintāmaṇi* laden, pinnacle path to perfection.

yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo, yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi

“By the mercy of the spiritual master one receives the mercy of

Krishna. Without the grace of the spiritual master, one cannot make any advancement.” Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam, Verse 8.

I shudder to think of what calamities would await us had you not come.

We were taught to have faith and submit to authorities. Whoever represented you and Krishna were our authorities, especially the GBC, as the ultimate managing authority overseeing the spiritual standards of your movement. For most part we have done that, in spite of our roller coaster history these past 45 years.

Time for a reality check—I am surely to blame for my own shortcomings—impurity, arrogance, laziness, ineptitude, and misfortune. I am simply not good enough, and have not been good enough as your disciple.

Please empower us to maintain your global house and keep up the routine work while we still have time. Your divine instructions still shine brightly and clearly, as they were repeatedly given to us, your direct disciples. They were burned in to our hearts and minds forever.

We were there, we are still alive, and we still remember! Heaven help those foolish enough to neglect your divine instructions.

Without your *cintāmaṇi* laden, pinnacle path to perfection, with its pure and peerless instructions, we would be lost. Your instructions, orders, and dire warnings concerning the dangers and horrors of World War, cataclysms, general dangers and hardships of lack of food, water, and security, are more pertinent today than ever before.

On a visit to Atlanta, you pointed to the skyline and announced, “This will all be finished”, and then asked us, “why?” After various devotees gave possible reasons, Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Goswāmī correctly answered, “Because nobody knows how to grow food anymore”. You strongly answered, “Yes!”

Your instructions were to set-up ‘Vrindāvan Villages’, self-sustainable farming communities, with cow protection and land cultivation to accompany the ‘sister temple’ in the city. They would provide devotees with shelter, sustenance, and promote preaching.

The shelter and sustenance are for the devotees during War, for our *gṛhasthas*, our children and their *gurukulas*, and the *Varṇāśrama* colleges. For our own cows, as well as for *prasāda* distribution programs, and restaurants, setting a perfect example of depending on Krishna, His land and His cows, and then organizing preaching / teaching tours and training programs.

This would ensure that the devotees and your movement survive to save the wretched sufferers of the world. It was your divine order and desire!

You also warned that in the future, due to economic collapse, unemployment, and starvation, people would flock to our farms by the millions, and it would be our duty to be prepared to feed them *prasāda*, engage them in Krishna's service, and to train them to gradually become Krishna's devotees. I shudder to imagine what nightmares would await us if we neglected your pure and peerless instructions.

Without your *cintāmaṇi* laden, pinnacle, path to perfection, with its pure and peerless instructions, we would be lost.

We must not have extreme reduction of daily, congregational, *harināma saṅkīrtana*, which is the very heart and soul and *yuga dharma* of your movement of Śrī Krishna Caitanya Mahāprabhu. We must have extreme increase!

Imagine the glorious, purifying *yajña* with 650 Temples and centers *harināma saṅkīrtana* parties performing nearly daily! That is the standard you set in your Hare Krishna movement. There are huge swathes of the Earth where pro-active, transcendental book distribution which you ordered, and pleaded for—as the direct order of your guru maharaja—as the *Bṛhat-mṛdaṅga* simply must increase!

You set the perfect example with your pro-active transcendental book distribution.

You translated The 1st Canto of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, printed it in Delhi in a Three-Volume set, and shipped 200 sets in big steel trunks to New York City for your book distribution. You then regularly trudged the streets of Manhattan, up and down for hours, regularly visiting book stores, and preaching opportunities.

Heaven help the foolish that neglect your divine instructions! Krishna help us all! Please kindly empower us to fulfill this sacred duty.

Again a reality check—my inadequacy, incompetence, and uselessness screams blame and guilt. I have been weighed, I have been measured, and I have been found wanting, as your disciple.

Your brilliance and genius also manifests in your transcendental, organizational design for your temples' management, which makes up the house you built in which the whole world can live.

With a temple president, treasurer, temple commander,

saṅkīrtana leader, head pūjārī, head cook, the temple management was wired like a finely-tuned Swiss watch, and was a powerful, dynamic, spiritual vehicle to behold in action! With live-in *ashramas* filled with serious and sincere, aspiring devotees undergoing training, we had a full morning and evening temple program—daily.

The devotees—being eager to serve and learn were available for *harināma saṅkīrtana*, and proactive, transcendental, book distribution, thus bringing in Lakshmi, while spreading the cooling, merciful rays of Lord Caitanya’s Benediction Moon. I doubt that a more intelligent, and Krishna conscious system for intensive purification, education, and preaching has ever been devised. You did that, Śrīla Prabhupāda—you and Śrī Kṛṣṇa!

It ensured that your followers lived like pure devotees. It guaranteed your desired and intended purification, education, and preaching. It also protected and saved the devotees from suffering great misfortune, sorrows, and indignity of having to live and practice without devotee association, and having to live and work surrounded by ‘*karmīs*’, and worse.

Truthfully, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as your disciples for 45 plus years now, as those who were there to see, hear and be trained by Your Divine Grace, (what to speak of as your eternal servitors !), we are surely, bona fide representatives of what you set-up, what you wanted, and what you said to us.

In 1975, in Śrī Dhāma Māyāpur, during a GBC meeting, you proposed and passed a resolution stating: “I want all of my disciples to gather here in Māyāpur every year to discuss achieving, Unity in Diversity in my ISKCON movement.”

Two years ago, at the SGGGS Meeting, HG Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Prabhu had every one stand and chant this Śrīla Prabhupāda Quote three times at the start, and three times at the close of the meeting.

So, these are our ‘marching orders’, and it is long past the due time to take it seriously, offer our assistance, and begin to participate in the stewardship of your/our Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mission, and its direction.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, my eternal lord and master, please kindly empower us in this endeavor to serve you!

Begging to remain in the shade of your lotus feet as your eternal servitor,

Sevānanda Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, for accepting me as your disciple. Where would I be without your mercy? I pray that you will not abandon this fool and that somehow you will be pleased to accept these verses in your honour on this sacred day of your Vyasa-puja...

From Karmageddon: A Quartet for 2016

Part III – The Blessing

THE GOLDEN AGE of endless summer
Turned to grey so long ago.
The growing clouds of ignorance
Have covered most of what men know.
As Autumn season turns to Winter
It should come as no surprise
That season always follows season,
Here, beneath these Earthly skies.

Summer, Autumn, Winter, Spring—
So too the Cosmos slowly turns.
The mighty wheel of time rotates;
Austerity and Truth adjourn
To usher in the Kali-yug'
Five thousand years already run—
Four hundred thousand more to go
Till Kali's Age is dead and done.

Till then, the bounds of darkness rise
And draw the hearts of men to hell,
The qualities of love and light
Submerged beneath a rising swell
Of mischief and hypocrisy,
Of rampant quarrel and deceit—
The ways of Man applauded
By how well he learns to lie and cheat.

Farewell to Truth, to Self Control,
To Cleanliness and Mercy sweet—
Companions in a former age
Now banished in a winding sheet—
Beyond whose tight embrace
All talk of love of God is cast away
While pages of eternal wisdom
Never see the light of day.

We glimpse the night of dark intention
Taking root across the earth—
A harvest for the hearts of those
Who've long ignored their inner worth,
Whose lives, in step with Kali's drumbeat,
Celebrate the madman's call
To Armageddon's karmic circus—
Ringside seats for one and all.

As Kali finds his foothold
In the sins men daily sow and reap:
Illicit sex, Intoxication, Gambling,
The trade in meat—
So Lust and Anger, Greed and Madness
Flourish as the Age unfolds
And Kali makes his residence
Wherever men have hoarded gold.

Fetid stench of Kali's presence,
Rivalled only by his sight—
Haughty, twisted, dog-faced feature,
Golden crowned and black as night,
Struts beneath his battle banner—
Owl emblazoned on its folds—
The rogue who plays in kingly dress
His game of chess for human souls.

The company we choose to keep,
Our aspirations, thoughts and dreams;
Those things on which we meditate,
Our hopes and habits, plots and schemes,
Each moment, day and night we nurture,

Patronise and make our own
Will—in another time—be tasted,
Fruits of what today we've sown.

In truth it's we who make the choice
Whereby we flounder, sink or swim:
The food we savour, words we speak,
The thoughts that linger—bright or grim—
We choose, we daily choose to follow
First the player, then the game.
How fortunate are they who choose
To chant the Lord God's holy name.

This simple truth, embedded
In the words of each and every scripture,
Urges faithful men to chant His name
And seek the bigger picture.
Sacred sound invokes the Lord
As ancient memories revive
The soul's eternal disposition—
Loving service come alive.

The embers of that higher truth
Still linger in the heart of Man—
A lantern waiting to be lit
By one who'd challenge Kali's plan.
The mystic seed of Divine Grace
Which, daily scattered far and wide,
Awaits the open heart and mind
To cultivate the flame inside.

Occasional—though rarely seen—
An Indian Summer, bright and clear,
Defies the winter's chill decree
To lift all hearts with hope and cheer—
Contrary to all expectation
Briefly turns the season back
As Fortune shines its golden rays
Alleviating Winter's lack.

Likewise Gaurāṅga's Golden Age
Reigns but a brief ten thousand years—
Foretold by wise men, saint and sage
And long since worshipped by the seers
Who see beyond temporal bonds,
Across the corridors of time
To glimpse the shape of things to come
Within this earthly paradigm...

They see the highest principles of life
Embraced throughout Mankind
And nurtured by a race of saints
Who walk the earth with peaceful mind;
To propagate the chanting of
The names of God around the globe—
To every town and village
As Chaitanyadeva Himself foretold...

*Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

The devas queue to take their birth
To carry out the Lord's decree
And Love of God will flood the Earth
As countless souls at last break free
To turn the Age of Kali back
With torchlight of the *yuga dharm'*—
The universal mahā mantra,
Lord Gaurāṅga's Hari Nama.

From town to town, from coast to coast,
In North and Southern hemisphere,
All humankind will loudly chant
The sound vibration saints hold dear.
From East to West, from dawn to dusk,
Within the house and on the street,
The earth and sky will resonate
To upraised hands and dancing feet...

*Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

The name! The holy name of God
Reverberates around the globe
As men and women realign their lives
And give their children hope.
Within the folds of Mother Earth
The simple life will set them free
To chant the holy names of God
And dance in sacred harmony.

With Honesty and Sense Control
They'll conquer Kali's wicked ways.
With Cleanliness and Mercy
They will sanctify their nights and days.
And honest folk will congregate
From near and far to hear them speak
And join them as they celebrate
The holy name at Krishna's feet...

*Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

The Hare Krishna mantra spreads
And sets the troubled planet free.
Great benefit to all who hear it—
Angel, human, fish or tree,
All creeping things of fur and feather—
Creatures all beneath God's sky
Emerge from Kali-yuga's nightmare,
Back to Godhead—bye and bye.

Compassion's gateway opens wide
For those with eyes and ears to see
A cosmic crossroads manifest,
Foretold by ancient prophecy;

Uplifting countless hearts and lives
For those who seek the Lord's embrace—
The Hare Krishna mahā mantra—
Mercy of His Divine Grace...

*Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

Part IV – The Master

WHO DARES TO CHALLENGE Kali's rule
Where fear and darkness fill the night?
What saintly soul has stemmed the tide
With messages of love and light?
What noble heart has stayed the hand
Of Mankind's execution day?
That history awaits the telling—
Seize it—ere it slips away...

A full five thousand years ago
Lord Krishna hinted at his deeds...
And Lord Chaitanya prophesied
His Chief Commander Devotee
Would make His name a household word
To save a fallen human race.
His *senāpati-bhakta*—
Śrīla Prabhupāda! His Divine Grace!

He is the Master of the Ship
Not limited by earthly bounds,
Whose sails are filled with sacred mantra,
Hymns of transcendental sound,
Illuminating shore and stream—
A lightship on the churning seas.
His lifeboats are a flood of books
To grant the world its last reprieve...

*Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare*

Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare

His words of mercy resonate
Beyond the raging ocean squall.
They energise the stricken soul
To call upon the Lord of All,
To bless the reader and the world
With mercy's flood of causeless kindness,
Touching hearts and healing eyes
Of Kali-yuga's Winter blindness.

Our Master sails his mercy ship
Forever onwards, day and night,
Inviting all to climb aboard
And resurrect their inner sight.
Casting lifebelts far and wide
The crew are in the greatest haste

To give *prasāda*, holy name,
And priceless books of Divine Grace.

This IS the news that Kali fears—
And does his best to block it—
Still, Gaurāṅga's wave of mercy flows
No one has power to stop it.
The dam is burst and now

The *yuga-dharma* tide is coming in—
A transcendental surge of love
To break the stranglehold of sin...

Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare

All glory to those saintly souls
Who heed Gaurāṅga's urgent call.
With holy name and eager heart
They humbly serve the Lord of All

Whose *senāpati's* legacy
Of wisdom and devotion
Has changed the course of history
In Kali-yuga's ocean.

Each year we meet to honour you,
Your bless-ed birth to celebrate.
Your words have turned our lives around,
Your mercy glance regenerates
The eager hearts of all who'll seek
The shelter of your lotus feet.
O Prabhupāda! Your Divine Grace!
Chaitanya's mercy—now complete.

Present in your picture, *mūrti*,
Sacred books and spoken word,
You offer us the highest confidential truth
Although we don't deserve
The mercy you so freely give
In transcendental sound, embraced
By all whose eager heart receives
The kindness of Your Divine Grace.

We glorify your timeless pastimes,
Praying that we too may learn
The journey of the humble heart
To Krishna's realm of no return—
When all of us will meet again
Imbided with transcendental taste

Of loving service at your feet,
The shelter of your lotus feet,
Eternal service at your feet.
All glories to Your Divine Grace!

*Praying for your mercy,
Your servant,*

Sākshi Gopal Dāsa,
London UK

Taruṅ Kṛṣṇa Dāsa

*namah om visnupadaya krsna presthaya bhutale
swami sri bhakivedanta prabhupadaya te namah
gurovajnam sirasi dharyam sakyavesa sva rupine
hare krsneti mantrena pascatyā pracya tarine
visvacarya prabaryaya divya karunya murtaye
sri bhagavata madhurya gita jnana pradayine
gaura sri-rupa siddhanta sarasvati nisevine
radha krsna padambhoja bhrngaya gurave namah*

I offer my humble 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. Taking the order of his guru on his head, he became empowered by Nityānanda Prabhu to act as a *śaktyāveśa avatāra*. He distributed the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the eastern and Western world, delivering and uplifting all fallen souls. He is the best of millions of jagat gurus because he is the personification of divine mercy. He has distributed the sweet nectar of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatām* and the transcendental knowledge of *Bhāgavad-gītā* all over the world. He is constantly engaged in exclusive devotional service to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī, and Śrīla Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. I offer my humble obeisances unto Śrīla Prabhupāda who is like a bumblebee always tasting the nectar of the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Govinda. [Śrīla Bhaktisundara Mahārāja and Kṛṣṇa Mayī Devī Dāsī 1 – SCSM]

Some say that Prabhupāda gave us everything, we don't need anyone else, but by 1985, TS and others were saying, Prabhupāda gave us everything...he gave us everyone else.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: "Don't try to put a circumference there."

1963: Film "9 Hours to Rama", "Hey Rama!" not "Oh God! Attenborough heal thyself!"

1963: American consumes as many resources as 23 Asian Indians. P.S. 154. Flushing, NY Weekly Reader Teacher Molly Reff

1965: Your Divine Grace steps off the Jaladuta, let the transcendental gains begin.

1967: Joseph Buccheri purchases and plays for us Magical Mystery Tour including, I am The Walrus wherein we hear Elementary Penguin singing Hare Krishna man you should have seen them kicking...Edgar Allen Poe ... your *sisyā* Nandakisora Dāsa later extracts transcendence from Poe's prose.

Your *śiṣya* Bahulaśva Dāsa discusses science with you during your massage. You retort “*Why do you think I accept this daily massage? Just so I can keep this body fit...for challenging material scientists and kicking them in the face with boot!*” Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura comes to mind?

Your Netherlands translating *śiṣya* Hayeśvara Dāsa quotes you: “*How dare you be morose in my presence?!*”

1970: January 4, and *śiṣyas* cornered at 61 Second Avenue and 4th Street. Karatālas echoing, Steve and I approach, enter, ascend. Toṣaṇ Kṛṣṇa Dāsa greets us. After prasād, Kanchanbala Devī Dāsī chastises me. Rightly so.

1970: January 11, this time four of us, all from Jamaica High School, attend.

1971: February. Your *śiṣyas* move to Brooklyn 439 Henry Street and Kane Street, cornered again. Walk right in, sit right down, on the ashram basement floor... I am handed a paper to sign. “What is it?” I say. “A petition.” Srutvasrava’s wife, Ananda’s mother, states. “What for?” I ask. “We are requesting our spiritual master to visit us in New York, asap, by March 15, 1971 or else,” she says.

“Or else?” I say. “Or else we won’t be able to maintain body and soul together!” she says. “Hmmm... you mean?...” “Yes” “Hmmm Hm Hm...”

“OK, I’ll sign”. We wanted chanting, dancing, feasting, preaching.

By June you still had not made your way to JFK but Dayānanda arrived from LA, describing you to us. Śrīla Prabhupāda Detroit - Jefferson, Boston – Beacon, and finally, finally, in July 1971, you arrived! How glorious! My parents drove Nitāi Dāsa and I to greet you at Kennedy Airport. We drove back to 439 Henry Street. In your first of many lectures you substantiate Prahlād’s 7th Canto words:

“For one convenience, we must accept so many inconveniences. To fly Boston to New York takes one hour but traffic from the airport takes 3 hours. Therefore, *māyā sukhāya*. Humbug civilization for temporary happiness.”

In conclusion “Miśra, we could use a man/gurus like Prabhupāda again. Didn’t need no welfare/mayik/kali-yuga state. Each got a prasādam plate. Daily Harināma was great! Those were the days! By your mercy I have everyone and everything.

Your servant,

Taruṇ Kṛṣṇa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My obeisances to you again and again.

I was thinking. What is your glory? How can I glorify you?

I go through this every year as I search for new ways to express my appreciation, love, and indebtedness to you. Every day I pray to you in so many ways, but they are prayers for service, for your mercy to inspire me, to help me chant more purely free from offenses, and to reveal to me how to please you.

Again, what is your glory? It is that you came to this temporary material world at all. “[*The material world is*] No place for a gentleman.” That is what you used to say. You came, not as an ordinary *jīva* soul who is desirous to enjoy their senses separate from Kṛṣṇa, but you came as an eternally liberated associate and servant of the servant of the Supreme Lord. You were sent here to help fallen conditioned souls of Kali-yuga like myself awaken to their true identity as eternal servants of the servants of Kṛṣṇa. You came setting the example of how to live, fully dependent on the mercy of the Lord, and how to please one’s guru by making the guru’s order the focal point of life.

The modes of material nature do not act on you as they do on us. You are transcendental to the modes—not an ordinary man and it is an offense to think so. A moment’s association with you has changed so many hearts (*including mine*), starting them on the road back home, “Back to Godhead”. That’s the potency of the pure devotee of the Supreme Lord. You inspire our love and we want to serve you.

You may have left our material vision, but your words and your instructions live on in your books, and in so many other ways we can see and hear you. You are still transforming us to the extent that we take advantage of all that you have left us.

When I first heard you, I recognized you. You are the external manifestation of the Supersoul and by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, He sent you. You “drafted” us into service to help you fulfill the instructions of your spiritual master. Some of us stayed close to you and others came for a short time and left again. We all got to play some role in helping you serve your guru Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur. As you once said in a room conversation, when asked why you came (*I am paraphrasing*), “Kṛṣṇa sent me. I didn’t want to go. The material world is such a terrible place. But, He ordered me to go. Why? To write the books [*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, the

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, *The Nectar of Devotion*, *Kṛṣṇa Book*, *Śrī Īsopaniṣad* and others].” For Kali-yuga especially, these books were required, and you engaged us in helping you produce and distribute them. What a glorious mission and opportunity! We have been part of a transcendental army blitzing through the world like a medical ambulance screaming through the night on a battlefield to save conditioned souls from repeated birth and death. When you were physically present with us that mood of urgency and compassion was there.

(*I’m paraphrasing*)...“Just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, dance and be happy. And when you are tired, take *prasāda*. Just do it,” you would say. Practice “plain living and high thinking”, and “Always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him.” All other duties are meant to serve these.

How we can find that mood of love and surrender in your physical absence? Just a look or a word from you corrected so many misunderstandings. Now there are so many different views of how to please you and opinions of what displeases you. So many of your disciples are scattered by the winds of time. Yet, we can’t forget you and most still desire to serve you.

It seems that the personal presence of a pure devotee is required for us to have the kind of surrender that I remember so many of us having in the beginning of your mission in the West. Otherwise, how we could we serve all day with no thought for our own wellbeing – only how can we please you? The *gopīs* were like that. They’d go to hell if their foot dust would cure Kṛṣṇa’s headache. I’m not saying we were that pure. No, not by a long way. But, you gave us a taste for that kind of surrender. You brought us to that platform in spite of our shortcomings, material attachments, etc. You carried us and then left us. You flew our plane and then we had to fly it by ourselves. Many of us didn’t do very well, but we can’t help but yearn to be at that corner of love and surrender again having tasted it, and pray for the day to serve unconditionally. You gave us a taste for pure devotional service and I pray that if the material world is my destiny, in next life that I be born in the home of a pure devotee so I can always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him, from the beginning of that life.

Your glories are unlimited.

Your daughter and servant,

Karlāpati Devī Dāsī

Mahāmān Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

Although it is not possible to understand and realize your glories, qualities and activities etc, by your mercy I am beginning to appreciate how inconceivably great and kind you are to one and all.

The creation of the ISKCON movement by Your Divine Grace is the greatest miracle that has ever happened in creation and is the greatest auspicious happening on this planet. All other religious movements/cultures fade away in comparison.

Māyā is manifested in so many forms, and the Personality of Kali-yuga frustrated by the vigorous preaching of your followers.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you explained that the best quality any disciple can have is submissiveness to the order of one's spiritual master. On the occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I pray for your mercy so that I may imbibe even a tiny fraction of this precious quality – submissiveness to the order of Your Divine Grace.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, myself, your humble servant, and all your followers and the world in general will always remain indebted to you for the precious gifts you have given.

My prayer is that I receive your protection to remain in this most precious treasure chest.

Fabulous, unprecedented projects are springing up throughout the world, making even the non-devotees marvel at the inconceivable potency of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. It is very conceivable that this movement will overtake the material civilization.

I pray to be forgiven for any negligence in worship of Your Divine Grace and any offenses that I may have committed knowingly or unknowingly.

*aparādha-sahasrāṇi
kriyante 'har-niśam mayā
dāso 'ham iti māṇi matvā
kṣamasva Śrīla Prabhupāda*

Thousands of offenses are being committed by me day and night but thinking me to be your own, please forgive them.

My obeisances again and again to you, the eternal master of my life,

Your servant,

Mahāmān Dāsa

Vāṇinātha dāsa Brahmachārī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Hare Krishna!

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for kindly blessing me to be able, someday, to find eternal knowledge and bliss.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for teaching me how to become a first class human being.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving me freedom from birth, old age, disease, and death.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for teaching me how to become a speck of dust at your lotus feet.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for translating and allowing us to publish and distribute *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* in so many languages for the enlightenment and upliftment of all living beings.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for allowing us to be connected to Krishna's lotus feet through the unbroken chain of disciplic succession known as the Brahma Madhva Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for kindly making such a severe sacrifice in leaving your beloved Vrindāvana to come to the West to deliver such a fallen wretch as myself.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for kindly giving me so many gracious devotee associates without whom I am nothing.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for kindly opening my darkened eyes with the torchlight of transcendental knowledge while I was

wandering in ignorance.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for so definitively defeating impersonalism and voidism.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for showing—by your personal example—the true meaning of pure Krishna *bhakti*.

Now, if you would, please allow me to spend the rest of my life (whether it be two minutes or twenty years) in your divine service. Having experienced such a higher taste, I find nothing else at all attractive. Haribol. Hare Krishna!

Your humble servant,

Vāñīnātha dāsa Brahmachārī

Madan Mohan Dāsa

Hare Krishna

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Please accept my humble obeisances. There is all glory in your divine service!

As the years go by, with all the required purification built into the *sādhana* you gave, the depth of my conditioning and attachments has become more clear to me. I am an ordinary Kali-yuga conditioned soul who has come in contact with the most exalted understanding brought by your teachings of Lord Krishna in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī as Lord Caitanya. This is what it means to take the elevator and not the steps. The steps use my strength and energy to move up the seemingly unlimited stairs, but the elevator is moved by another energy source, and beside moving much quicker, is also moved by a someone else's power which is much more powerful. This elevator appears to have glass walls so you can see the floors as you go by, all the while resisting pressing the stop button to get off before getting to the top floor. What can I say? It is the "ride of my life" (pun).

On one hand, the realizations have become very intimate and personal, but I also see how Māyā has kept up with her empowered service of testing me — from the need to apply pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness at every moment — to showing me the very nature and cause of my inattention. Or even how when pride enters, I can see how the taste goes away, leaving a bitter aftertaste, or I want to be sure some notices my humility...there seems to be no end to the

trickery of the cheating propensity, until achieving the lotus feet of pure service to you.

Now, I can honestly say, that I believe whatever Krishna consciousness I may have, is all your mercy and that takes many forms. It is written that when a pure devotee desires anything, Krishna being controlled by their love, always fulfills it. And I remember Śrīla Prabhupāda saying that he was always desiring our advancement.

Just to follow the very special form of *sādhana* is your mercy; just to have the urge to read your books is your mercy; to serve you is your mercy and my greatest good fortune. When I stop to think about it everything in my life is your mercy and therefore I owe my life to you. May I someday please you in some small way.

An insignificant soul that happened to be caught by “collateral benediction”,

Madan Mohan Dāsa

Kāla Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You live eternally in your transcendental ecstasies, for you are always glorifying the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Śrī Krishna, Who acts wonderfully. This is just the nectar we need to quench our parched stay in this desert of material existence.

Your voice and words are an oasis in this otherwise barren combination of the Lord’s external energy which I have tried and failed to manipulate as my own, for my satisfaction. That oasis you provide is my only shelter from the illusions imagined by me, outside the cooling transcendental island of your nectarean association.

I thought to confess my transgressions in writing to let you know all my fall downs and deviations from your instructions since we first met in 1972. Then I realized I would run out of time even if I wrote for a night and day of Lord Brahmā. Besides, it would simply

illustrate my immature attempt to draw attention away from Lord Krishna. What pride! What nonsensical ignorance! Boring and total waste of time and energy!

As you wrote in a letter to Govinda Dāsī years ago...“...we are not concerned about these past misunderstandings. We are only concerned about the progressive service in Krishna consciousness.”

I plead at this time that you request Lord Krishna, on my behalf, to remove my ignorance quickly, so in these last few years, in this old body, that I may be engaged for your pleasure, to help, in whatever way you prefer, to serve your mission which is non-different than that of Lord Chaitanya and Lord Nityānanda. Let me please you by helping everyone I meet to become devotees of the Divine Couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Rāsabihārī.

It is only through the service you assign me that I will come to realize my eternal relationship with you, Lord Krishna and all the devotees of the Lord.

All glories to you each and every day and especially on this, your divine appearance day.

I take shelter of your lotus feet.

Thank you for your patience towards this insignificant beggar for your mercy.

Your grateful servant,

Kāla Dāsa

Rāma Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Another year has gone by and I am, as always, struggling to control my mind.

Perhaps one day I will be able to fully follow in your footsteps but, as things stand, that day is still a long way off.

All I can say in my defence is that at least I am trying.

Your servant,

Rāma Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

This year being ISKCON's 50th anniversary, once again you become the focus of our contemplation. In fact, whenever anything of importance happens in ISKCON, we are drawn to your divine instructions and personality and sit by your lotus feet like little unexperienced children.

This year I had the opportunity to visit Kolkata, along with the places of your early pastimes: the small apartments where you made your divine appearance and where you lived as a child, the Rādhā Madan Mohan and Rādhā Govinda temples that were the focus of your early life, the school and college you went to, the place where you first met your spiritual master in 1922 and the Khidderpore Dock where you set sail for America in 1965. You amaze me whenever I think of you, and this was another transcendental experience. By visiting the places of your early pastimes, I felt invited to join your family. What especially struck me was the simply middle class background which you originated from and the fact that you performed such extraordinary service for your guru maharaja starting the most influential Vaiṣṇava movement in the world.

During the 1996 centennial celebrations we intensely remembered your instructions to get back on the tracks of the *sampradāya* since we were on the verge of going astray, losing sight of your wonderful personality. You rewarded us for our endeavors. Now, during ISKCON's golden 50th anniversary, we are thinking about how to perpetuate your preeminent position for all times to come, at least for the next 10,000 years. We have learned that ISKCON rests on you as the *Founder-Ācārya* like a tree rests on its roots and that if you are forgotten, there will be no more ISKCON. Just like by irrigating the root of the tree, the trunk, branches and leaves are nourished, so by worshipping you as the *Founder-Ācārya* all of ISKCON will thrive and flourish. Only through your divine personality will we remain connected to the *guru paramparā*.

As for myself, I more and more appreciate the very few moments I spent in your direct association, because "the value of a moment's association with the devotee of the Lord cannot even be compared to the attainment of heavenly planets or liberation from matter, and what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material

prosperity, which are for those who are meant for death” – Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, 1.18.13. I am in the age now that you took *sannyāsa* and am certainly reminded of death more often than before as more and more of my godbrothers and sisters leave the planet. I hope that we all will remember your divine lotus feet for the rest of our lives.

Your servant,

Vaidyanāth Dāsa

Govardhana Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

It’s so incredible to contemplate what you have achieved, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your solid faith in the words, desires and instructions of your spiritual master led you to leave India at a very advanced age to fulfil the order of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. You came without money or backing but you succeeded in working a miracle. What further proof could be needed of your incomparable greatness?

Your disciple Krishna-Premī Devī Dāsī expressed your mood perfectly in a song. She sang:

‘Your pity overflowed. That’s why
you left your Lord’s abode.’

Wonderful Prabhupāda, because of you I understand that every voice in the world should be raised in lovely harmonies for the pleasure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Those sounds would surely touch the hearts—even of stones. Every soul can only find satisfaction in pleasing Krishna. When will that day come when I will be part of that pleasing symphony?

The hallmarks of my personality are lust, anger and pride. Alas how infrequently I have been able to approach you properly, but when I do so, those bad qualities crack and fall to the ground. That’s because in your presence, sins go far away. Wonderful Prabhupāda, you introduced the songs of the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* to us, and demonstrate practically the highest level of what it means to be a devotee.

In my heart there’s a memory playing. Outside the temple room at the Manor you had left your shoes while you were giving

class. I was thinking, ‘So many important devotees are serving you. Fortunate souls to have pleased you, they are allowed into your close association. What can I, a sinful mouse, do to please Prabhupāda?’ I got a lot of flower petals and arranged them under your shoes, like a cushion. I thought, ‘Prabhupāda will see that someone has done that out of respect for his shoes, and he will be pleased.’

When it was time for you to proceed to the temple room door, on your way upstairs to your rooms after class, it was like a great king was moving. Devotees surrounded you and escorted you to the door, some of them walking backwards, offering the *cāmara*, taking pictures, and so on. How wonderful that memory is. I’m sure the demigods were also there, guarding you, the world’s topmost devotee, as you executed the most intimate service of guiding the Lord’s fallen parts and parcels back home, back to Godhead.

Someone upset the flower petal arrangement I’d made but it was still wonderful to have observed Your Divine Grace in action. Please always allow me to meditate on you and on ISKCON, your glorious achievement. I have no other shelter.

Always hoping to please you one day,

Your fallen servant,

Govardhana Devī Dāsī

Rājaśekhara Dāsa Brahmachārī

All Glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda
— the ‘Glory of India’

Simply due to the dedication and sincere efforts of just one man, a humble and learned saint from India, who possessed extraordinary faith in the order of his guru – a spiritual revolution was born that changed religious history forever, and the lives of millions the world over.

That an elderly man in his seventieth year, could leave the shores of his homeland and the holy town of Vrindāvana, and with just forty rupees in his pocket and a metal trunk full of *Bhāgavatams*, on the order of his beloved guru, set sail for an alien and inhospitable land to spread the transcendental message of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s *saṅkīrtana* movement.

That in just eleven short years, this humble saint could have such

a powerful influence on mankind, that he brought about a remarkable renaissance in religious belief and established Krishna consciousness as the fastest growing religion in the history of the world.

That in such a short span of time, he could circle the globe fourteen times and spread the holy names of the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* to every town and village on the face of the earth, thus making the holy name of Lord Krishna known to almost every human being on the planet.

Even more remarkable is the fact that he could convert thousands of young men and women, who were addicted to the sensual pleasures of modern-day life, and could inspire them to abandon their sinful acts and surrender their lives at the lotus feet of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Krishna.

That just one man could translate from Sanskrit so many important Vedic scriptures, like the *Gītā* and *Bhāgavatam* and then inspire his disciples to distribute them by the many millions, establishing him as the most prolific religious author in the history of the world.

That one man, a potent preacher of the ancient Vedic culture, a true representative of Vyāsadeva and the Brahma-Madhva *sampradāya*, a pure devotee of Lord Krishna, who dedicated his life for the benefit of humanity—who is now glorified and worshiped by millions around the world—surely, this one man alone is without any doubt—the true ‘Glory of India’.

All glories, all glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda, India’s most glorious son.

Rājaśekhara Dāsa Brahmachārī

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I was fortunate to spend some time with your disciple and old friend Śyāmasundara recently. I asked him if he could distil the essence of his time with you—over seven years of intimate service from 1967—into a few highlighted pearls of wisdom.

The first thing he said was that you encouraged the early devotees to always take risks for the sake of guru and Kṛṣṇa. Although Śyāmasundara lived in the Amazon jungles for six years, remote stations in Africa, and other exotic and dangerous places, each with its Indiana Jones' style of real life adventures—he said they all paled in comparison to the early days with Your Divine Grace. He has been asked by many to write of his uncanny adventures discovering famous ruby, silver, emerald, diamond and gold mines all over the planet, but he simply replies to them, "if you want to know the real adventure—the most exciting, exhilarating adventure, well that was my time with Śrīla Prabhupāda".

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were not working with a play book, a "Spreading KC for Dummies" starter kit. Each day was a new and bold mind-blowing excursion into the unknown where Lord Kṛṣṇa's mercy was the only safety net. Of course you were propelled by the foundational instructions given to you by your divine master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī. Beyond that it was uncharted territory.

Almost daily Śrīla Prabhupāda would ask Śyāmasundara about numerous new ideas he had for spreading the mission of Lord Caitanya. "What do think about this Śyāmasundara? What about if we do that, or go there?" And then off they went. He said they always felt fearless and bold because they knew you had their back. They were doing it out of love for you Śrīla Prabhupāda, feeling propelled by the profound visceral compassion you had for the wayward conditioned souls of this dark Age. They were Prabhupāda fanatics—fueled by intense love for you and belief in your mission, and bold vision of an International Society. Sometimes these days the 'Prabhupāda fanatic' term has a less than favorable connotation to those with a more scholarly disposition. And yes of course, sentiments must be balanced with intelligence and *siddhānta*. Yet, it's interesting to note that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement

blanketed the planet as a result of this unfettered enthusiasm. Such is the intensity of devotion and surrender you harnessed. It is similarly recounted by Brahmānanda Prabhu in Satyarāj's beautiful biography *Swāmījī*.

Same mode—fearless, selfless surrender to you and your mission. Mountains were moved in those few years, Kṛṣṇa consciousness spread like wildfire across the plains of every continent. It was fueled by this mood of taking unbelievable risks on your behalf. The devotees had no doubt about your purity, your selfless devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and your fathomless compassion for all suffering souls.

Śyāmasundara, Brahmānanda, Jamunā, and so many other dedicated early disciples felt that love personalized towards each and every one of them by dint of your *vapu* association. They knew in the core of their being that you loved them like no-one else could ever love them—that you cared for them beyond what anyone of this world could fathom.

This was the ticket to the VIP mercy party.

V = Vigorous. I = Intensive. P = Preaching. If you add the F word—Fearless, it becomes Fearless, Vigorous, Intensive Preaching. That was the mode of the day. What an explosive and magical time!

The second essential truth that Śyāmasundara revealed was something you said which has always stuck with him—that there are six types of people in the world:

“Those who see only the bad in someone else; those who see both good and bad in others and choose the bad; those who see a little bad in someone and choose to make it very big. These are three. Then there are those who see both good and bad and choose the good; then those who see only good in others; and then there are the devotees, who see a little bit of good in someone and choose to make it very big.”

You displayed this last paradigm unequivocally across the board. See the little bit of good and choose to make it very big. That's why everyone loved you. So much so they sacrificed it all for your mission. I earnestly pray that I too can embody this quality to always see the good in others especially the devotees, and make it big, and that our entire Kṛṣṇa consciousness mission becomes impregnated with this holy Vaikuṅṭha vision. It was your vision. It was how you lived—for you are the quintessential Vaikuṅṭha man. May we all

follow your lead in this regard.

The last thing Śyāmasundara said was that you inspired in him a profound faith that Kṛṣṇa would always save him regardless of whatever perilous or challenging situation might arise. He has carried this throughout his life and put it to the test regularly. It never failed him. It never will. I too fervently pray for this depth of faith which is so lacking in me.

What a miracle you have bestowed upon us all! As I recently watched a documentary called *Particle Fever* about the anticipated discovery of the Higgs boson particle that is at the epicenter of all matter, I was in awe. Of the massive speculative endeavors by so-called intelligent physicists and—on the other side—the profound spiritual answers you opened our eyes to via the light of the *Bhagavat*. One scientist stated “I can see now that my whole life has been in vain searching for these things”. You saved us from this maze of endless mind bending speculative endeavors. You enlightened us to the descending process of receiving knowledge. You presented the most profound truths in the simplest, most succinct manner so that all could comprehend how masterful that is! “*Life comes from life*”. Brilliant!

But most importantly you showed what it is ultimately important so that we could always keep our eye on the goal and target—the lotus feet of guru and Kṛṣṇa—far beyond this catastrophic temporal realm.

I quote you from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

“Similarly, everyone has his destined happiness also. No one can get more or less of these things simply by personal endeavors. Even if they are obtained, they can be lost again. One should not, therefore, waste time with these flimsy things; one should only endeavor to go back to Godhead. That should be the mission of everyone’s life”.

Thank you O greatest of the great masters, for this is the essence of life, and we are eternally in your debt.

I heard you say in a lecture the other day: “I had a friend who was cloth merchant. Sometimes in his sleep he would quote the price of cloth. In the same way we should be so absorbed that in our sleep we quote the price of Kṛṣṇa—*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa*. That is wanted”.

There is no way to repay this debt for showing us the way out. For showing us the meaning of life. For showing us God, His Name,

His Form, His abode. For being a living perfect example of a pure devotee, AND for loving us in the utmost profound, tolerant and compassionate way.

I thank the early devotees like Śyāmasundara and Brahmānanda, and so many bold and brave others who paved the way for future generations. I thank all those who are presently engaged in your service, dedicating heart and soul to this movement. May we all enter that 'Fearless VIP party'—that fearless, vigorous, intensive preaching party—for as you said so succinctly in LA, "Actually, you can never repay the debt to the spiritual master, but if you want to try, then you should preach vigorously as I have done".

The *Caitanya-maṅgala* says that Lord Caitanya foretold the appearance of an empowered devotee to spread chanting worldwide: "I want to flood the whole world with the chanting of the holy names. I will personally preach and flood India with *harināma-saṅkīrtana*. My *senāpati bhakta* (commander-in-chief) will come, preach in distant countries and flood the world with the chanting of Hare Krishna."

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are none other than that self-same "*senāpati guru*".

I am simply praying to always remain a speck at your feet in this mood which you so perfectly lived by—moment to moment, day after day, year after year, in service and surrender to your gloriously compassionate *saṅkīrtan* mission.

I remain your flawed and fallen, yet always aspiring servant, crying out for your mercy,

Bādarāyaṇa Dāsa

Prabhupāda, where are you?

Wandering in this world
Wondering in this world
Bound, bewildered, battered
Prabhupāda, where are you?

In illusion
Intransigent
Helpless, hopeless, hapless
Prabhupāda, where are you?

Tiny spark of life
Suffering
Afraid, arrogant, angry
Prabhupāda, where are you?

Have we understood
Devotion
Kindness, kicking, killing
Prabhupāda, where are you?

Under the modes
Outwitted
Timid, tortured, terrified
Prabhupāda, where are you?

Service the answer
My Master
Inspiring, intimate, illuminating
Prabhupāda, where are you?

You are WITH US
your WISDOM
Instilling BHAKTI

OH NO! DEMON!
I'm so sorry for you now
I know it's Kali-yuga
time for you and your power

But it seems the
Golden Lord appeared
to save us in this Age
So even lowly you
can be delivered from your cage

The lions and the tigers
the wolves and wolverines
all raise their little children
in the art of gnashing teeth

They teach them with their claws
They teach them with their speed
They teach their cute and tumbling brood
to do the killing deed

But in the Jharikhaṇḍa Forest
Lord Caitanya walked along
and for the woodland creatures
He sang His loving song

And even as the deer and rabbits
birds and bears were graced
The scary predators arrived
and joined in the embrace

They let go of conditioning
their lots just disappeared
and hearing the Lord's holy names
they gave up all their fear

They sang along in their own way
they listened and they prayed
Their sense of who they were revived
Eternal! Blissfully Alive!

So now poor demon fellow
I see your anger and your rage
your fighting spirit is so strong
so many wars you wage

But if you would only stop awhile
and kindly take a look
you might discover relief
From Śrīla Prabhupāda's books

He tells us of the forest
and the covering on our hearts
he passes on Gaurāṅga's song
and our harmony part

The peace that we are after
lies within us all
The uncovering of the jewel
is each one's deciding call

The tools are here to use
the matter can be solved
when we learn matter moves by spirit
The Supreme Spirit holds us all

I offer my obeisances
to A.C. Bhaktivedanta
who came to us as Swāmījī
with his loving caring call

He lifted us poor demons
who knew not what to do
and engaged us in the service
of Mahāprabhu

How grateful we must be
How honored we must feel
to be his arms and legs and voices
continuing the appeal

For 50 years we have applied
his teachings in our lives
still wading in our impurities
we continue to rise

Let go now those attachments
lust, anger, greed and power
and share with all you meet
this gracious loving shower

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.*

Rukmiṇī Priyā Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Thank you ever so much for coming to this dark planet so many years ago, on the order of your spiritual master, to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness to us fallen souls.

Thank you for accepting me as your disciple in 1973. Each time I am fortunate enough to hear or read your words which dissipate all ignorance, and whenever I am fortunate enough to associate with your legacy, I am imbued with gratitude. I am forever grateful to you because your faith and perseverance have made this sacred and sublime process of *bhakti yoga* available to one and all. You turned away no one—there were no exclusions. No one was banned, excommunicated, ostracized or humiliated, as your message comes straight from Vaikuṅṭha; straight from the spiritual world—straight from Kṛṣṇa Himself.

Thank you, Śrīla Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda for your endless compassion.

Your servant eternally,

Rukmiṇī Priyā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Today I saw on Facebook how your dearly beloved devotees and ‘grandchildren’ have successfully opened a ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa’ center in Beijing China. I got ‘chicken skin’ as they say here in Hawaii simply contemplating the incredible potency of your pure desire to please your spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda. This led me to clearly see how my only prayer to you is to please let me serve your mission with even a tiny fraction of your determination. With your blessings anything is possible, even this insignificant aspiring *bhakta* may someday please Your Divine Grace.

I also offer my deepest gratitude for you to continue to allow me the association of the pure hearted devotees who are spreading your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, both near and far. By that association, mercifully given to me by Your Divine Grace, I have continued to hear the glories of Kṛṣṇa *kathā* and *harināma*. Please allow me this purification, so I can assist in some small way to spread Śrī Kṛṣṇa *saṅkīrtana*.

Your aspiring disciple,

Jagaddhātrī Devī Dāsī

My dearest Spiritual Master and Father

I feel so unqualified to address you and fall at your feet begging forgiveness. I am your wayward daughter entangled, enmeshed in this massive material energy. I am only hanging on to your mercy by the merest thread.

Now this body has turned 71 and old age is taking over. My mother left this world a few months ago at 90 but suffered dementia. I don't want to go like that! I don't ever want to forget you or Krishna.

Over the last 20-30 years I have fallen further away from devotee association and chanting my rounds. I have not kept to my promise to you. It has and continues to be most difficult for me.

You once said there are no hard and fast rules, then immediately added "well actually there are two! 1) Never forget Krishna and 2) Always remember Krishna.

If I were an artist, I'd be going through my Blue Period! I have and am suffering depression. A heavy weight holds me paralyzed, like in thick mud pulling me under.

I pray for mercy and forgiveness

Your fallen servant

Anavadyāṅgī Devī Dāsī
Stagecoach, Nevada

The humble offering

At the beginning of Kali-yuga, there were obvious signs that the people were losing all of their good qualities, especially their memory. Then Śrī Vyāsadeva came to write down the knowledge of the Vedas in order to ensure that it would remain available to all.

In the same fashion, when obvious signs of atheism, impersonalism and voidism became rampant, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, appeared to render that very Vedic knowledge appealing again. Some individuals, who saw you chanting in the parks with your *karatālas*, became enchanted by you. You created ISKCON for them and that grand *gurukula* has now spread all over the world. You are the inspiration for all the followers who come to take advantage of the hearing and chanting that is going on perpetually within all of the centers.

We never tire from reading your books because every time we open them, they give us new realizations. Your pure heart, blazing with love of Krishna, can be felt within all of your books, lectures and conversations. When we tend the ear to listen to you, we are automatically sent into the Vaikuṅṭha atmosphere.

I fervently pray, with a straw between my teeth, that I may remain in the environment of the pure sound that emanates from your lotus lips. Prostrated on the ground, I offer you my most genuine obedience.

Your most insignificant,

Praghosa Dāsa
Montreal

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Each year, when I begin to write a tribute, I wonder “what should I write about?”. Almost invariably one of the things my mind lands on, is to thank you for creating a lifetime of devotee friends and association for us all. How empty our lives would be without the society of Kṛṣṇa devotees you set up for us. So, thank you always for that.

You have given us the knowledge by which we can exit this material world. I actually don’t even know what that means. I say it, but I don’t know what it means and can’t understand the depth and value of what it means. And if I did, I would be in shock.

Through the spiritual master’s mercy, a dumb man can become a good speaker, a blind man can see, and a lame man can cross mountains. I am dumb, blind, and lame, but you have allowed me to come and take shelter at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa – to take shelter at your lotus feet.

I feel my life is blessed because of you – and maybe even previous lives leading up to this one were also blessed because of you. And, now any future life will also be blessed because of you.

I find it embarrassing when I remember how defiant I was when I first saw you. In my misguided mentality and resistance, I didn’t think it was right that people bow down to any man. And, of course, your disciples immediately bowed down when they saw you. Part of my good fortune is that I have a sister who is your disciple, so I stuck around and eventually did some service. Lucky for me that even the taking of *prasāda* and seeing Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rukmiṇī-Dwārkadish qualifies as service. And hearing—I listened to you even when I couldn’t understand what you were saying.

Thank you for allowing me, this dull, dumb, blind, lame person to offer service to yourself and to your beautiful Śrī Śrī Rukmiṇī-Dvārakādhīśa. Thank you for giving me protection at your lotus feet. Only as devotees, do we really have the capacity to care about others. Thank you for caring about us.

Forever thankful,

Kadamba Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble obeisances and commitment unto your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

On this holy day of your appearance I would like to join the chorus of my godbrothers and godsisters who are glorifying you in such a sincere and heartfelt way.

When I met you, I immediately became aware I was standing before an extraordinary personality. And as time went by, this perception not only solidified but became more and more verified and enhanced.

I became attracted especially by these your qualities:

Your concise way of speaking. You always described the Absolute Truth with a few and properly chosen words.

Your sense of detachment. You acted with urgency and involvement but at the end you withdrew yourself and let the results develop in their own way.

The integrity of your character. You were not influenced by your surroundings. You were always yourself.

The true humility of your personality. You never took credit for all of your successes, but attributing everything to your spiritual master and the good will of the Lord.

Your vast knowledge of śāstras and your ability to cite them in each and every circumstance.

Your steadiness. You performed your duty at all times, places and circumstances.

You were able to set your priorities correctly. So you executed the most important and the necessary. No wasting time in secondary engagements.

You were expert judge of place, time and circumstances. I saw you how you reacted and behaved in different kinds of situations and it was always perfect, appropriate and pleasing. I never have seen any other Vaikuṅṭha man acting like this while being on the same "mundane" plane where we were!

Once, in Los Angeles, you were residing in your apartment which had a window towards the street, and if you were standing up, then you could be seen from the outside. I was passing that very street and looking up when I saw you. And what you were doing? You were standing in front of a picture of your guru maharaja, and offering him obeisances or prayers with your hands folded in the

namaskār position. I was so moved by this manifestation of your love you were exhibiting in a solitary place!

The energy and creativity you generated was unbelievable, even though you were in a body so fragile and of advanced age.

You were always engaged with intensity, concentration and seriousness in whatever you were doing. You had complete control of your mind and your other senses and you submitted your body in austere and demanding conditions, such as traveling from one continent to the next and adjusting immediately to the local timetable, climate, food, etc.

Your faith in the Lord, the previous *ācāryas* and the *sāstras* was so complete that you were able to move your disciple's consciousness drastically and swiftly to the transcendental dimension.

You were balanced in your relations with others, even when confronting extreme elements, offensive behavior or craziness, still you didn't overreact or depart from your being a perfect gentleman.

Although you were like a general with the most important mission to save humanity, still you also had the heart of a mother and never sacrificed an individual soul for the sake of your mission.

These elevated and attractive qualities could be experienced constantly by anyone fortunate to be in your presence. You had a taste for Krishna *kathā* and you were 100% committed in the *saṅkīrtana yajña* of Lord Chaitanya, which you carried with no signs that you were doing some austerity or sacrifice. You were always satisfied within—blissful and free from anxiety.

The benefit that all these qualities created for me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is that they brought me to the point of surrendering and offering all my energy to you, and through you to the Lord.

We all have the tendency and need to love, but in the material world, being continuously disappointed with our relations with others due to impurities, we can't find any person we consider worth of our love, service and surrender. And as our nature is to be happy only when we experience love and express it through service, not finding a person deserving our trust and love, we often end up with serving and loving nobody. But for fortunate souls like us, who met Your Divine Grace, these loving energies were finally liberated and manifested in the proper way, to the proper person and for the proper cause.

So, Śrīla Prabhupāda, thanks to your personality, the personification of *Bhāgavatam*, I found my way towards back home,

back to Godhead.

Every year my faith increases and the appreciation, gratitude and love I feel for you becomes deeper and bigger. Your biggest gift, the chanting of the holy name, still reigns supreme in the center of my existence, and your teachings are still the favorable winds pushing my vessel towards the supreme destination.

I am your creation Śrīla Prabhupāda, one of your miracles. From ignorant, lost and sleeping soul to aspiring servant of the pure devotee! What a fortune in the Kali-yuga times humanity is going through. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for bringing me back to life—I was unconsciously dreaming some nonsense and you brought me to the beautiful reality again!

You spent hours and hours translating the best of the Vedic literature so that you could convince us about the potency of the holy names of the Lord. So if you engaged the most valuable time of your days for this goal then—following your example—I am considering that the highest benefit I should also strive to contribute to others is this development, maintenance and increase of their faith to the holy name. Because once one comes in regular contact and with faith for the holy name then the name Himself will do the rest for the upliftment and perfection of that soul.

People in general may not understand why the devotees chant repeatedly these same words and they tend to think that the value and potency attributed to this chanting is exaggerated. So you have taught us to distribute your books to help them come to the proper conviction.

After all, in each and every religion, either through the prayer, public worship, Eucharistic rites, or study of the holy scriptures—according to its particular beliefs, customs and traditions—all is based in the medium of the sound, pronounced silently, loudly or read, individually or collectively, as a means of connection. The same sound I am even using right now to express respectfully my deep esteem, love and gratitude for Your Divine Grace.

You have described this transcendental sound to be like the favorable wind which is pushing our human life towards the supreme destination. You have also indicated that for the chanting to bring about its beneficial result, there must be submissive and concentrated hearing.

So, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, through the chanting of the holy name every day, with all humility in my command and power of

recollection, I am praying to continue being allowed to perform some small part in the saṅkīrtana movement and try—like this—to please you, reciprocating the mercy received.

Thank you for having me accepted as your disciple! Please intercede with the Lord for this lowly soul to be able to attain His shelter! I know I am not up to the standard but if you talk to Him He will surely show some more mercy...and please help us cooperate among ourselves for your service! You are the unifying factor, if not you who else?

Mercy Śrīla Prabhupāda! Mercy!!

Your aspiring servant,

Citraka Dāsa

Sarva-drik Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

One of the many things you discuss in your classes, morning walks, and books, is the need for self-sufficiency. You often quoted SB 1.10.4, “*sarva-kāma-dughā mahī*”, all man’s necessities of life are produced from the earth and the mad pursuit of material happiness, technological advancement, materialistic science, and factories are a useless waste of human energy and potential. Real *artha* comes from the land. And although useful in the Lord’s service, cell phones, cars, and computers are not edible if there is no food! Walmart civilization is no civilization and is ultimately unsustainable. You wanted devotees to produce food and said that a flower, fruit or vegetable produced on one’s own land, “... is hundred times valuable than it is purchased from the market.”

With that thought in mind, my wife and I have invested many, many hours of labor, and lots of green paper also, to create gardens, orchards and flower beds that supply nearly all our yearly necessities for *pūjā*, cooking, preserving, and sharing. And there are many other benefits as well. Digging in the dirt, sweating in the heat of the sun, and struggling to turn an unused, vacant piece of land into a productive asset for the pleasure of the Lord brings many profound realizations.

You see, I was also a vacant, unproductive, lost, and sinful soul,

until you turned the soil of my heart with the powerful spade of your wonderful Bhaktivedanta purports, your *prema* laden *kīrtan*, and your saintly disciples. By reading and applying your message in my life the many weeds and stones that prevented the flourishing growth of the *bhakti-latā-bīja* that you mercifully planted there is gradually beginning to sprout. It has taken many years, and although there is a long, long way to go, I can say that there has been progress. And although my progress has been slow, mostly due to an inauspicious, *tamasic* birth, some fruits have come from my labor also. The one thing I cherish more than any other, that is not the exclusive product of devotional labor, but is actually a product of your mercy, is the small bud of loving feeling in my heart for you and Lord Krishna that gives me hope that someday I will be the disciple you expect me to be. Thus I feel inspiration that one day I will successfully uproot every tangled weed, jagged stone, and any other thing that threatens your service. In this way perhaps my heart may become the rich, fertile field, suitable for such a merciful master to cultivate.

In the meantime, I will continue digging in the dirt, growing beautiful things for the Lord's pleasure, and regularly going out preaching, to have a try at watering the *bhakti-latā* creepers of younger devotees that have come in profusion, taking shelter of your wonderful ISKCON society. Please bless me to never stop endeavoring in this way, pulling out as a detestable weed any obstacle that comes between me and your eternal service. Please always count me as one of your followers and keep me somewhere near your lotus feet.

Your eternal servant,

Sarva-drik Dāsa

My very beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

You arrived at the perfect time to bring order to our lives with the torchlight of transcendental knowledge that you inherited from your predecessors; knowledge which you personified throughout your life in an exemplary way.

It was in 1965, at 69 years of age that you arrived in a cargo ship which brought you from India to New York City. You had no more than a few dollars, but your hopes were hinged on the trunk containing a few books which you were able to author and print in India before your arrival in America. Following the order of your spiritual master, you brought the first texts of wisdom contained within the ancient Vedic literature. Motivated by deep feelings of love and gratitude toward your master, but also by compassion for the precarious human condition, sleeping barely two or three hours a night, you dedicated the last 13 years of your life in the Western countries, following your mission translating, printing and distributing profound literature which, like bombs, were destined to destroy the crass ignorance of so-called modern civilization. Thirteen years you were with us and in those thirteen years, you marked the beginning of a worldwide revolution; a revolution beginning with the awakening of consciousness to the transcendental plane. A loving revolution that eventually would rise to the greatest scale.

It is a stark contrast between the logic and intelligence of your proposal compared to the mediocre notions conditioned by ignorance. Convinced that we are these bodies, that there is only one life, that everything is relative and that no one has knowledge... we drew from these conclusions our philosophy and from there we generated our values system. Under that uninformed premise, we have dedicated our human energy to struggle arduously toward happiness in the realms of the individual (health, money, accumulation, consumption, prestige, sex, etc.), familial (security, love, economic wealth, education, status), in the political and social (religion, order, health, equality, freedom, social justice, etc.), not realizing that this world doesn't possess the conditions necessary to achieve these goals. This world has never provided us with these results and it never will; simply because, at the end of the day, behind all the efforts to accomplish these goals, this world exists under the

influence of time, which deteriorates and dissipates all.

We have dreams and sportively say that one who does not believe in their dreams has no reason to live. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, spoke to us of day and night dreams and at the same time gave us a clear reference of what it means to be awakened. Being awakened means being conscious of our intrinsic spiritual reality and that state of consciousness—Kṛṣṇa consciousness—which determines the difference between a dream and reality.

At night, we can dream of wonders or nightmares, but we only establish the true difference between illusion and reality upon awakening. Likewise, if there is no understanding, no awakening and development of spiritual consciousness, the identity and values acquired through that identity are no more than day or night dreams.

In this sense, my face, my family, my community, my country, my flag, my car, my work, my pleasures and pain, my old age, my disease and my death only exist in a daydream. Then the night dream comes again and in that state of consciousness, I dream of glory, of a landscape or of a beast, only to awaken to the great dream of acquired human identity. The promoters of “pragmatic reality” insist that we should conform to the inconvenient idea that since we only have one life, our goals should be focused on exploitation, production, accumulation and consumption of goods and services until the end of our days, as the most rational way of living. That is the way life has been, and will continue to be if God doesn’t exist and if there is no absolute criteria which includes all living beings. It’s playing the game of life in the name of freedom as each person sees fit. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, understood that this primary concept is no more than the vision of a prisoner, who is subjected to the laws the state and can only elaborate ideas, imagine, but cannot understand free life, much less explain it. Worse is when, in his imprisoned dementia, he denies the existence of a free life and demands respect for his opinions.

As a worthy ambassador of the progressive conceptions of ancient India – wise and mystical, you have oriented us toward the spiritual plane, a plane which, rather than being vaporous and insubstantial, is perceived in a tangible way by those scholars who have given serious importance to the topic of existence. Through Vedic literature you taught us that God not only exists in his impersonal, all-pervading aspect, but also as a person. God in His original aspect has a form, qualities, attributes, tastes, etc. You explained that

we, living beings have a form, we maintain relationships, we have qualities and particular tastes precisely because the original source has all those attributes in an unlimited way. This understanding is perfectly reasonable when the source of everything that exists Himself possesses what He generated. As a musician, I understand that the music that I make is the expression of my internal states. My music is contained within me. If it wasn't, how could I generate it? My music, therefore, is the energy generated by my person.

You explained the similarities and differences that exist between the generator and the generated. We, the living entities, the souls which now occupy these material bodies are a fragment of that Absolute Truth; the truth which is composed of the elements of transcendence: eternity, knowledge and bliss. You also taught us that by His energy, God, Kṛṣṇa, is present throughout all time and space, because consciousness, not time and space, is what determines our unity or separation from God. We are not disconnected at any time from God because He not only generates everything, He also penetrates everything, existing even within every atom. The difference is that in a conditioned state, consciousness, through the senses and mind, perceives God and understands life as ever-changing; from there arises the experience of the relative plane. Nonetheless, when consciousness is purified and the intelligence experiences illumination, the illusion of material life disappears and one can experience and understand the absolute perspective, in the same way that one can experience material life in the presence of the sun.

This philosophical proposal is only the ABC's of the immense treasure contained in the coffer you brought to the Western world. The most glorious part of your legacy to modern society is having exposed the eternal loving reciprocity that exists between liberated souls and Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person. What an abysmal distance between your humble and wise offer, Śrīla Prabhupāda, an offer full of sweetness and beauty, compared to the offer of the proud people who boast themselves as "not believing in fairy tales" and "having their feet on the ground".

Thanks to your pure devotional service, I have been able to study and glimpse the reality beyond dreams. That experience, although fluctuating throughout more than 40 years, has been my light, my inspiration and the goal of my life. With all my heart, I want to express my gratitude for the effort you put forth for the illumination

of the human race, for the immense literary legacy that you left, both for us and for future generations. I want to forever experience your presence through reading your books and hearing the sound of your voice. I want to be close to your sincere disciples and with them, delight in the privilege of the loving and immaculate refuge of your lotus feet. I want to be a part of that precious love that you represent Śrīla Prabhupāda. You can grant it. Out of compassion, make me yours Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Eternally grateful, your humble servant,

Havi Dāsa

Arjuna Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to your divine lotus feet!

My heartfelt ecstatic congratulations on your 50th year of arriving on the Western shore at Boston Harbor.

This year especially, your multi-glorious activities and accomplishments are being heralded all over the world by your loving disciples, granddisciples and many well-wishers in grand celebration.

It is simply remarkable and incomprehensible what Your Divine Grace has achieved in such a short span of 12 years during your physical presence.

This was pure magic to behold.

Your mercy and grace is ever expanding even up to the present moment.

This is predicted to continue for almost 10,000 more years!

According to one devotee you have stated:

“Now, the seeds have just been planted. In time they will grow to become big trees. And then, in time, they will begin to bear fruit, and then ahh!”

Wondrous and amazing grace was beheld within your heart Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Once in Vrindavana you mercifully glanced at me and immediately all bereavement was obliterated from my mind.

Your love truly showed when I called out to you.

I am still embracing that moment after all these years.

Such is your towering potency, *prema* and purity!

Your love, care and affection excels even that of one's father and mother.

You are saturated with pure devotional *shakti*.

You are saving all of humanity from a dark and hellish future, slowly but surely, brick by brick.

Your causeless mercy is here for anyone and everyone to just take it for the asking.

Simply causeless, simply wonderful.

My dearest Gurudeva, grace is not earned or merited, it's not something we deserve. It is not an experience that just happens.

It is inconceivable grace bestowed by a pure Vaiṣṇava!

You are an ocean of grace.

We all get what we deserve but every so often we get what we don't deserve, and that is the amazing grace of a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

The sounds of the holy names are vibrating all over the universe and the name of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is widely being known in almost every town and village across the globe.

It is as if you are Hari *kathā* and Hari *kīrtan* incarnate.

Your mercy expands wherever and whenever you cast your merciful loving glance.

Once again Śrīla Prabhupāda, I declare, you bestow your grace upon all souls without consideration.

Your Divine Grace is over flooded with the treasure of internal and external flavor of pure ambrosial nectar filled devotional *seva*.

It is now 48 years since I first had darshan of devotees chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in NYC's West Village.

Being engaged in so much useless youthful folly and endeavoring with a constant flow of diminishing returns, I often called out a prayer, and then you mercifully appeared in my life!

I was blind and felt oh so defeated, then you came along with *Bhagavad-gītā*, chapter 4, text 34.

This was the first verse I read. It touched me so deeply and I still find myself struggling with these instructions:

"Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth."

It seems so surreal that someone like myself , so lowly, shy and unlearned was blessed by your benevolent grace, yes, a manifestation of amazing grace!

A reservoir of superlative munificence saturated with grace of another kind and another place.

One so deep and wide that multitudes of souls can dive and tap into it and become purified and intoxicated in Kṛṣṇa *prema* at once.

A path of transcendent madness may I say!

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a spiritual monarch showering mercy on everyone.

You are an illustrious kind and gentle soul, a pure lover of your spiritual master and Lord Gaurāṅga.

You are deeply absorbed in the *bhava* of chanting and distributing the holy names of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Therefore I make my humble obeisances eternally from all directions—up, down, within, without, and all around your brilliant sparkling lotus feet.

What grace I have found in you.

I've been touched by a true angel of God.

May I never abuse and take for granted Your Divine Grace.

Your lotus feet are served by high virtuous spiritual celebrities all over the universe.

I pray to forever try and follow or even stumble behind those dazzling lotus feet on this merciful path of grace, infused with *bhakti*.

Lately, more than in the past I am thinking quite deeply and profoundly about what you personally told me years ago on the meaning of a true disciple.

On a morning walk in Mayapur you repeated once again:

“Disciple means discipline. The word discipline comes from disciple. Unless there is discipline, there is no question of disciple. The word *śiṣya* comes from the verbal root “*śās*”, which means “ruling”. From this root comes “*śāsana*”, which means “government”, “*śāstra*”, which means weapon, “*śāstra*”, scripture, and “*śiṣya*”, disciple. They have all come from the same root, *śās-dhātu*. There is a saying, “Obedience is the first law of discipline.” Unless there is obedience, there cannot be any discipline. And unless there is discipline there is no question of disciple. Disciple means one who follows discipline.”

Kindly bless me Śrīla Prabhupāda with some menial *seva*.

Let me finally become a true disciple somehow, some day or some life in some way.

I pray to be more ideal in behavior and character, to represent you purely.

Let me please become a humble instrument in your holy mission.

Please allow me to “see you more clearly, love you more dearly, follow you more nearly day by day.”

So on this special 50th year celebratory occasion, my fervent prayer Śrīla Prabhupāda is that though I be bereft of any qualifications, where you are is where I want to be, where I have to be, where I must be, or existence has no meaning to me.

In the words of our dearest Śrīla Bhaktivinode Thākura from Śaraṅāgati:

“But when, O master, out of your great mercy, will you bestow upon this servant of yours the spiritual competence to fulfil that order? When will my mind become tranquil and fixed? When will I endure all hardships and serve Lord Hari without distractions?”

May the object of my love forever be Hari, Guru, Vaiṣṇava.
Your aspiring disciple,

Arjuna Dāsa

Prthuśravā Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Your appearance day is cause for great celebration among your followers. To meditate on your appearance and life’s mission in this world always brings about deep feelings of great fortune and gratitude in me. The simple *sādhana* and very high *sādhya* that you have brought to all of us in this dark and degraded time is certainly Lord Caitanya’s divine grace upon us, who are otherwise most unfortunate souls.

In our experience of you, we saw the mystical phenomenon in which you would attract numerous followers—both simple and

sophisticated—who took up practicing full-time devotional service, giving up all other engagements. Someone may propose “Oh! Is this some kind of mind control or charisma?” No. As Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has stated *prema-bhakti jāhā hoite, avidyā vināśa jāte*. Because you possess *Kṛṣṇa prema* you can elevate anyone to having a glimpse of that *Kṛṣṇa prema*, and simultaneously you can destroy lifetimes of material desires and ignorance which cover the soul. Then the strong desire to love and serve Kṛṣṇa becomes manifest in them. This is the power of the pure Gaura *bhakta*, for he is endowed with knowledge and devotion (*bhakti-vedānta*) as well as complete realization of the power of the holy name. This is how the Lord conducts His divine intervention – that is, by dint of His compassionate devotee’s desire He agrees to change the heart of both the pious and the impious so that they may embrace loving devotional service to Kṛṣṇa.

You have stated in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.22.5, “Thus it is actually a fact that if one meets a saintly person completely engaged in transcendental duties and achieves his favor, then one’s life mission becomes complete. What is not possible to achieve in thousands of lives can be achieved in one moment if there is an opportunity to meet a saintly person...A saintly person has the power, because of his spiritual advancement, to give immediate liberation to the conditioned soul.” This miracle is affected by the specific process of hearing from the pure devotee, as you have explained: “A pure devotee always engages in the service of the Lord, taking shelter of His lotus feet, and therefore he has a direct connection with the saffron mercy-particles that are strewn over the lotus feet of the Lord. Although when a pure devotee speaks the articulation of his voice may resemble the sound of this material sky, the voice is spiritually very powerful because it touches the particles of saffron dust on the lotus feet of the Lord. As soon as a sleeping living entity hears the powerful voice emanating from the mouth of a pure devotee, he immediately remembers his eternal relationship with the Lord, although up until that moment he had forgotten everything.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.20.25, purport)

After your disappearance, due to our conditioning, we sometimes tend toward forgetfulness and lose our sense of connection with you and your mission. But none of us should become despondent – whether one was blessed with your personal association or if one came to this movement after your manifest presence – because you’ve given everyone an opportunity to have a perfect connection

with you and your mission by leaving behind your *vāṇī*, the cure for all forgetfulness. Indeed, in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.15.27, you assure, “The merciful Lord left behind Him the great teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā* so that one can take the instructions of the Lord even when He is not visible to material eyesight. Material senses cannot have any estimation of the Supreme Lord, but by His inconceivable power the Lord can incarnate Himself to the sense perception of the conditioned souls in a suitable manner through the agency of matter, which is also another form of the Lord’s manifested energy. Thus the *Bhagavad-gītā*, or any authentic scriptural sound representation of the Lord, is also the incarnation of the Lord. There is no difference between the sound representation of the Lord and the Lord Himself. One can derive the same benefit from the *Bhagavad-gītā* as Arjuna did in the personal presence of the Lord.”

On this most auspicious day I wish to sincerely thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for the opportunity to continue to hear your powerful voice which bestows *bhakti* and destroys ignorance. I am also grateful to be able to share this priceless opportunity with others. With whatever humility I possess, I bow down at your lotus feet and pray that you forgive my offenses and always bless me with some service which is pleasing to you.

Your grateful servant,

Pr̥thuśravā Dāsa

Ramaṇya Dāsa

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

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

Dear and divine Guru Mahārāja Śrīla Prabhupāda, the greatest Ācārya

Thanks to you, billions of time for this opportunity to offer one more time this insignificant offering, to your lotus feet on this most auspicious day of your glorious and most blessed Śrī Vyāsa pūjā celebration festival.

This year is 2016 and we are trying to celebrate 50 years of the inauguration of your ISKCON movement. Even through so many different changes, situations, problems, and crisis', we are still trying to work together to serve your lotus feet on this most glorious mission that you very kindly organized. Thank you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is too artificial, to try to say everything is okay after your departure from our physical, material vision. There are so many different things to mention today for

your glorification, but today I would like to mention a few things:

The first book of your books I read was *Easy Journey to Other Planets* in 1970. I noticed it was your first book you printed in India before you came to the West.

The first time I was able to take your *darshan* in Mexico City ISKCON Temple was the first time you visited in 1972 and gave us your unlimited mercy. The second time was after 1975 when you also visited and give us more of your unlimited mercy in different ways. Then in 1976 was the last time you visited New Dwarka Dhām, L.A. California, ISKCON headquarters of the Western world as you yourself mention.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, your unlimited mercy and your miracles are inconceivable.

There are so many different things you accomplished by yourself in a very short time you were here on earth with us, but there is very little time to mention all of them.

But today I will try to mention a few that you yourself mention in some of your lectures in a very humble way. I offer a meditation on all these things you have accomplished.

You transformed or converted the Westerners—boys and girls—in to *brāhmaṇas* and *sannyāsīs*. Nobody has done this before, it is the greatest miracle ever performed.

The Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra is being chanted all over the world by your ISKCON movement. But the most impressive thing is when you yourself were chanting every day in New York City, in Tompkins Square Park. There were no devotees, no Laxmi or money, and no temples. But you were determined to follow your *guru-mahārāja's* instructions.

These instructions were predicted by great *ācāryas*, such as your divine *Gurudeva* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and confirmed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya; Mahāprabhu Himself, "Every town and village", only because of

you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The holy name will be chanted because you traveled around the world and preached the holy name, the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra.

You freely gave the holy name to all the living entities—doctors, lawyers, professors, scientists, men, women, children... to everyone freely, just like Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the Jharikhaṇḍa Forest.

By your unlimited mercy and by your divine instructions, all the ISKCON temples are performing the *saṅkīrtana yajña* for this Age of Kali. Kīrtan is going on 24 hours a day for many months, and this is your mystical power. This is your unlimited mercy, and your miracle on earth.

The earth planet is getting purified with the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, and this was never done before.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for coming in to our lives. I miss everything about you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please forgive me, I'm not very spiritually advanced, but I miss your presence, your nice smile, your lectures from the Vyāsāsana, your morning walks, I miss everything about you.

Because of you, whatever I know about Śrī Kṛṣṇa is your unlimited mercy.

On this most auspicious day of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā, I'm praying to you to please help us to keep serving your lotus feet all the time, every day, until we leave this material world.

But most importantly, please Śrīla Prabhupāda, give special blessings and spiritual protection to Śrīmān Ambarīṣa prabhu and his good wife Śrīmatī Svāhā Devī Dāsī to finish the accomplishment in Māyāpur Dhāma—the TOVP for the pleasure of Śrī Paśca Tattva, Guru Gaurāṅga, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava and Aṣṭa Sakhī, Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, and all of the Vaiṣṇavas.

Your insignificant servant,

Ramaṅya Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda!

With your permission I would like to express my gratitude to you for revealing to me a deeper and more complete understanding of your *guru tattva*.

You are the ninth representative of our disciplic succession after Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī. Everything I know about devotional service and our disciplic succession is only because of your teachings and mercy, *evam parampara-prāptam*.

“There is only one guru who appears in an infinity of forms to teach you, me and all others... Therefore if the Absolute Truth is one, about which we think there is no difference of opinion, the guru also cannot be two.”

In the *Nectar of Devotion* you tell us of the first four most important rules and regulations Rūpa Goswāmī said that we must follow:

1. To accept the shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master.
2. To become initiated by the spiritual master and learn how to discharge devotional service from him.
3. Obey the orders of the spiritual master with faith and devotion.
4. Follow in the footsteps of the great *ācāryas* (teachers) under the direction of the spiritual master.

In the *Nectar of Instruction* you define *sato vṛtteḥ*:

“In this Krishna consciousness movement we require everyone to rise early in morning by four am and attend *maṅgala-ārati*, or morning worship, then read Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, perform *kīrtan* and so forth. Thus we hold continuous activities in devotional service 24 hours daily. This is called *sato vṛtti* or following in the footsteps of the previous *ācāryas* who expertly filled every moment of time with Krishna conscious activities.”

In your purports to Cc. 2.19.156 you wrote:

*tāṅdera caraṇa sevi bhakta-sane vāsa
janame janame haya, ei abhilāṣa*

By his personal example, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura stresses that a devotee must always remember to please his predecessor ācārya. The goswāmīs are represented by one's spiritual master. One who is actually serious about advancing in devotional service should desire only to satisfy the previous ācāryas. *Ei chaya gosāṣi yāra, mui tāra dāsa*. One should always think of oneself as a servant of the servant of the ācāryas and thinking this, one should live in the society of Vaiṣṇavas. (Cc. Madhya 13.80)¹

Here in Māyāpur Dhāma, when we go on *parikramā*, we visit the Samādhi and places of worship of four of our previous ācāryas: Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Gaura Kishora dāsa Bābājī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī. We get to hear and glorify their lives and teachings. Every year I read a good part of *Caitanya-bhāgavata* with your spiritual master's purports and Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma Māhātmya by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. My realisation of having a personal relationship with each of these previous ācāryas through and because of you Śrīla Prabhupāda, is ever increasing.

Praying to them and receiving their blessings and becoming more inspired and dedicated to sharing Krishna consciousness with others as you have instructed is so faith enhancing.

Caitya-guru, Kṛṣṇa in the heart has mercifully manifested externally as all our gurus and each of them are repeating the same transcendental message of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī and Lord Caitanya.

"I belong to Kṛṣṇa and this life should be fully utilized to serving Him through you, my spiritual master and all the devotees, my *prabhus*." Sharing the transcendental message with as many others as we can through the variegated services of ISKCON is most pleasing to you, our previous ācāryas and Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Feeling your expanding protection, guidance and shelter through your instructions and those of the previous ācāryas makes Krishna consciousness more and more real. With the desire to please you, I pray to remain fixed in these realisations and become an instrument in your hands,

Your insignificant disciple,

Rajendranandana Dasa

*¹ nāhaṁ vipro na ca nara-patir nāpi vaiśyo na śūdro
nāhaṁ varṇī na ca gṛha-patir na vana-stho yatir vā
kintu proḍyan nikhile-paramānanda-pūrṇāmṛtābdher
gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ*

“I am not a *brāhmaṇa*, I am not a *kṣatriya* I am not a *vaiśya* or a *śūdra*. Nor am I a *brahmacārī*, a householder, a *vānaprastha* or a *sannyāsī*. I identify myself only as the servant of the servant of the servant of the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the maintainer of the *gopīs*. He is like an ocean of nectar and he is the cause of universal transcendental bliss. He is always existing with brilliance.” (Cc. Madhya 13.80)

Mahādyuti Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances and please forgive all my offenses against you and your followers and the *saṅkīrtana* movement with which you have graced the world. All glories to you!

Now my body is almost the age yours was when you travelled to America on the *Jaladuta*. I’m simply amazed at how, especially at that age, you were able to accomplish what you did. You struggled tremendously, as a poverty-stricken mendicant, to print your books. Then you selflessly and thanklessly ventured to cold and unwelcoming America, a cesspool of sinfulness. On the month-long journey, you endured severe nausea and two heart attacks. Having finally arrived, you continued to push, push, push to establish Krishna consciousness where it wasn’t wanted, like a person trying to sell mirrors to people who are blind. By material standards, one might say you were crazy, like the dwarf who wants to catch the moon, but by spiritual standards, your craziness was the highest peak of love for the Supreme Person, which transcended the mundane limits of possibility. You had your books, and, as you said, firm faith in the order of your spiritual master and the holy name of Krishna. And that was all you needed. And *you* were all that *we* needed — indeed what the whole world needed (and still needs) — a miracle incarnate, the greatest blessing, and a gift that keeps on giving.

How did you do it?

- Sleeping little and eating little — consistently for *years*; indeed, often apparently to the neglect of your

- physical well-being.
- Travelling frequently and widely, often on long-haul flights (which for many travelers are torture).
- Responding promptly to dozens of letters daily, some from seemingly unimportant people with unimportant questions.
- Speaking daily (or almost) with all kinds of guests.
- Lecturing daily (or almost), both in-house and publicly.
- Installing Deities and initiating disciples.
- Establishing the Rathayātrā festival in major cities (almost unknown outside India).
- Nurturing your numerous disciples, often with individualized guidance.
- Directing your rapidly growing worldwide movement.
- Starting various projects, such as farms, restaurants, diorama exhibits, and the Bhaktivedanta Institute of devotee-scientists.
- And of course, writing, publishing, and distributing copious quantities of transcendental literature.

(Forty years ago, a professor who was studying our movement said to me, “Now tell me the truth, Bhaktivedanta Swami didn’t write all those books himself, did he? He has a team of ghost writers, doesn’t he?” I assured him you wrote them all yourself.)

I myself can’t do *any* of that, what to speak all of it! The only hope for me, therefore, to give real benefit to the people of this dark, desolate world is simply to try to assist you according to my capacity and to encourage others to do the same.

As your movement continues to expand to a heretofore unimaginable degree, so do your glories, Śrīla Prabhupāda! All glories to you!

Your wretched servant,

Mahādyuti Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My most worshipful obeisances at your feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you are the *jagat-guru*, the savior of the entire universe, and the fact becomes more clear with each passing day. Anybody who knows anything about spiritual life has received this knowledge from you. When asked once how many disciples you had, you replied that you had unlimited disciples. *Jaya!* It is a fact. It was you alone who singlehandedly gave the understanding of the Absolute Truth to everyone on this planet through your translations and Bhaktivedanta purports. Soon all of these people who have been sitting on your books for decades, and being purified simply by having them in their homes, will begin to read them.

The conditions of the world are becoming the same as they were when you arrived in America. There was confusion and mayhem in 1965. Under the influence of *tamo-guṇa* there was great strife and political unrest. Those were perfect conditions for you to begin to cast the seeds of Krishna consciousness. The world will soon be coming to that stage again, but this time it will be different. Being purified by having your books in their houses, they will finally be able to understand them. And they will learn how to take shelter there because all of their fallible soldiers are going to be removed simultaneously – their money, the government, their jobs, titles, good looks, and whatever material resources they may have are all going to prove useless in solving the problems they will soon be faced with. Where will they go for shelter? To you, to your books and to the *mahā-mantra*. Coming soon is the time of the second wave of the Krishna consciousness movement, and the Spiritual (R)Evolution! We are organizing the Spiritual (R)Evolution! to get people to chant the *mahā-mantra* as an appeal to the Lord for shelter and protection.

We pray that you will bestow your mercy on us and bless our efforts to serve you in this way, and allow the mercy of Krishna and the *paramparā* to flow through us to the world.

Please keep us always under your shelter and protection.

Forever and always your servant,

Dhaneśvara Dāsa

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

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

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

Nearly forty-three years have passed since I joined your transcendental movement, and throughout these years never for a moment have I thought that my life, present or future, could be separated from the life of ISKCON. I have not been an exemplary devotee, but my attachment to your Society, the Society of devotees, kept my consciousness on track. Rhetoric not being my strength, I won't be able to write noble, high-sounding words to celebrate the 50th anniversary of ISKCON, but one thing I can say with no hesitation: without this movement we are all lost.

Many things have happened during these fifty years, some positive, some not.

At this point in time, when your faithful disciples have either left this world or are quickly aging, it has become clear that we are at a junction: we will either pass on to future generations a strong ISKCON Society, or leave behind a confused and precarious scene.

You gave the formula for maintaining your movement united, alive, and vibrant:

[I]f we keep Kṛṣṇa in the center, then there will be agreement in varieties. This is called unity in diversity. . . . Please try to maintain the philosophy of unity in diversity. That will make our movement successful. [Letter to Kirtanānanda, 18 October 1973]

The following is an excerpt from a presentation on “Unity in Diversity” I made this year in Māyāpur:

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is facing, and will face even more in the future, the challenge of maintaining its unity, all the while allowing for diverse expressions of devotion to manifest. Unity means oneness in purpose: the satisfaction of the founder-ācārya's desire. All diversities must be characterized by this one

purpose in order to be accepted as bona fide. The preservation and expansion of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is the desire of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

So our purpose should be to satisfy your desire to maintain and expand the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement; only then shall we remain united at your lotus feet.

In another excerpt from the presentation I emphasized that to successfully implement the unity-in-diversity principle, we need absolute clarity both within ISKCON and around it:

Unity in Diversity within ISKCON

An inescapable and urgent need of our Society is defining a clear set of criteria for determining whether a group or institution and their projects should be recognized as a bona fide expression of variety within ISKCON. Such a set of criteria will be a most important legacy for posterity.

Unity in Diversity around ISKCON

There may also be groups or institutions that are favorable to ISKCON but only partially fit the required criteria. Their support is not to be discouraged. Though it may not be possible to recognize them directly as being components of ISKCON's internal variety, we should, to varying degrees, either affiliate ourselves with them or develop relations with them.

I will end my humble offering with a prayer: Please let your honest and faithful devotees, particularly those who had the great fortune of your *vapu* association, be illuminated from within the heart and empowered to make ISKCON the shining and everlasting manifestation of your mercy on this world by realizing unity in diversity.

I don't see how we can return to your eternal association without having realized this fundamental desire of yours.

Please keep me in your movement forever.

Your humble servant,

Madhusevita Dāsa

A conclusion of deliberation is that a disciple should express gratitude to his/her spiritual master for the knowledge, guidance and mercy. The Vyāsa-pūjā homage is glorification and gratitude. Unqualified as I feel I am, it is through the spiritual master that I come into contact with the disciplic succession, and thereby in contact with Krishna. Without the mercy of the spiritual master, it would not be possible for me to do my service on the altar or to the *śālagrāma-śilā*, live in the temple, take *prasāda* and associate with godbrothers and other devotees. A Vyāsa-pūjā homage is even an expression for what one has realized, which has matured within, but my realization is that every day is a new day to start over. I have begun reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's small books again. For example, *Easy Journey to Other Planets* at the moment. One hears so many classes, but the difficulty is to absorb knowledge and apply it with realization in contrast to reading without service. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* 4.34:

*tad viddhi praṇipātena
paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānani
jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*

SYNONYMS

tat—that knowledge of different sacrifices; viddhi—try to understand; praṇipātena—by approaching a spiritual master; paripraśnena—by submissive inquiries; sevayā—by the rendering of service; upadekṣyanti—they will initiate; te—you; jñānam—into knowledge; jñāninaḥ—the self-realized; tattva—of the truth; darśinaḥ—seers.

TRANSLATION

Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth.

If you want to know the truth, you have to approach a bone fide spiritual master, bow before him and pose relevant questions in order to serve him.

Ariṣṭahe Dāsa

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance, with the torchlight of knowledge.

*śrī-caitanya-mano-'bhīṣṭaṁ sthāpitaṁ yena bhū-tale
svayaṁ rūpaḥ kadā mahyaṁ dadāti sva-padāntikam*

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?

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmin iti namine*

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

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

Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O 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,

Please accept my worthless obeisances at your eternally glorious lotus feet. Another year of service to you and your ISKCON society and another Vyāsa-pūjā opportunity to reflect on and offer prayers for your mercy. This year I come to you as a beggar, asking for that which you are so eager to bestow to those of us who can hear your voice and instructions.

With great gratitude and humility I want to share a profound experience I had in the association of devotees here in the temple room of Śrī Śrī Gāndharvikā Giridhārī. It was in early May during a public seminar for devotees that I was asked to go into a meditative moment and think about my highest aspiration in Kṛṣṇa

consciousness. “Finally”, I thought to myself, “A serious question that can help me focus.” After a timeless minute of contemplation where many thoughts and visions filled my head, the assembled devotees were requested to then share their insights with the devotee sitting next to them. Those 60 seconds of contemplation on my highest aspiration had an immediate impact on my awareness. I enthusiastically turned to Praṇava Prabhu, my scholarly god nephew and friend, and in a short time I told him what had happened. When the leader of the seminar asked for members of the audience to share their thoughts about the meditation with the others in the devotee audience I watched the microphone being passed around and then it came to Praṇava Prabhu who dutifully offered it to me so that I could say something. But I turned my head and silently indicated that I did not want to say anything. The experience was deep...most profound, and I knew that it was far too intimate and personal to share in a public gathering.

Even now I hesitate to tell my experience to the assembled devotees in this Vyāsa-pūjā offering because many may misunderstand me. However, the memory of that experience has persisted and become relevant in my daily thoughts and life. So by the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda Tributes I wish to share with the readers and Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrī Śrī Gāndharvikā Giridhārī what came to me when asked: “What is your highest aspiration in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?” I hope to inspire anyone who reads or hears this humble offering to also reflect on this question and use it as a catalyst for further advancement in developing pure love for the Lord.

So what is my highest aspiration you ask? It is very simple actually. My highest aspiration in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is what Śrīla Prabhupāda taught all of us; to develop pure love for the Lord. During that short but interminably long meditation my mind went wild. I knew I should be specific. And I knew from my daily *sādhana* practices what the answer was. From praying to Tulasī Devī, the goddess who teaches as well as bestows bhakti, I daily pray, *rādhā kṛṣṇa sevā pābo ei abhilāṣī*; “My desire is to obtain the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.” But even more specifically I daily chant, as do the many hundreds of thousands of followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda around the world; *ei nivedana dharo, sakhīr anugata koro*, “I beg you to make me a follower of the cowherd damsels of Vraja.” **So here I am....a beggar, begging not only for the great privilege of devotional service, but begging for the highest objective, the**

highest aspiration any devotee can achieve, *mañjarī bhava*. To become a follower of the gopīs is to become a *mañjarī* in Goloka Vṛndāvana. And who taught us to pray like this? Our dear beloved spiritual master A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Some of you may want to start shouting out loud “*Sahajiyā!*...I knew it all along! That Rāmanātha is contaminated, he is a māyāvādī heretic and should be banned from ISKCON!” You may remember the “Gopī Bhava Club” in Los Angeles where Prabhupāda said the now famous words, “First deserve, then desire” and showed his great displeasure for those offending devotees. And you may think, “Rāmanātha wants to take this *sahajiyā* offense to an even higher octave, Gopī bhāva is not good enough for him, he wants *Mañjarī bhāva!*” But please, before you condemn me or chase me away from the shelter of Prabhupāda’s lotus feet, I beg your mercy. The question asked of me was, “What is your highest aspiration in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?” I was not asked if I am qualified to achieve that aspiration. I recognized when asked the question that I am a struggling neophyte swimming the great ocean of *anartha niṛtī*. I am painfully aware of my many shortcomings and ego absorbment. But awareness of my lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness simply serves as an impetus to steadily move forward to the goal. Śrīla Prabhupāda has often stated, “If you are going hunting, you might as well shoot for the rhinoceros.” Throughout Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books we have all been taught that the highest achievement in Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism is to become the follower of the Vraja gopīs. The six Goswāmīs where all mañjarīs in their eternal *swarūpa*, and I for one believe this to also be the eternal position of Śrīla Prabhupāda. For over 43 years of *sādhana* bhakti practice and reading Prabhupāda’s books, I have understood my many disqualifications. But I have also understood what is the highest goal. Whether or not my aspiration will become a reality is up to the mercy of the devotees and Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīmatī Tulasī Devī. I find it a great enigma that as a new *bhakta* who knew nothing of the intricacies of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I was instructed to daily chant to Tulasī Devī. And now some four decades later I am still chanting to Tulasī Mahārāṇī and on rare occasions getting a glimpse of the power and beauty of pure love for God as exemplified by the Vraja gopīs. That *Gopī bhāva* or *Mañjarī bhāva* is like a great ocean of transcendental ecstasy. By the mercy of Tulasī Mahārāṇī, I feel like I am on occasion able to at least every now and then put my big toe into that ocean and feel some happiness. Great

exalted Vaiṣṇava ācāryas are swimming deep in that ocean of divine love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, surfing the wave of bliss, and inviting all who can hear their voice to come join them.

However, the answer to the question “what is my highest aspiration in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?” is only half answered. In order to achieve my spiritual aspiration I must also have a plan of service to Prabhupāda in the remaining years of my life in the material world. And that aspiration of service is linked to the TOVP for Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava. It is my aspiration to fulfill the desire of two of my revered *śikṣā* gurus, H.H. Jayapatākā Swami and H.G. Jananivās Prabhu. By the arrangement of the Lord I have been allowed to assist in the conceptualization and building and running of a new temple project in Śrī Māyāpura dhām. This new project is located on ISKCON property that is sacred to Lord Shiva, the Shiva dhoba area where Bhaktivinode Ṭhākur uncovered the two Shiva lingams that are enshrined at Yoga Pīṭha. On that sacred spot called Shiva dhoba, a proposed temple is being conceived. The *Mahāprahu Mahādeva Mandir*. I told Praṇava prabhu that it is my highest aspiration to render service to this project. This mandir will serve as the Dik Pala temple, protector temple, for the TOVP and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava. It is my great privilege to be one of the observers of the love Dance between Lord Shiva and Rādhā Mādhava slowly unfolding before ISKCON devotees. And I forever thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for this service in the holy dhām and promise to work and act in a way that will be in totally agreement with guru, sadhu, and *śāstra*. My vision is that a new era of auspiciousness for Māyāpura dhām will follow the achievement of this sacred aspiration.

On this holy day of celebration of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā, I repeatedly pledge my allegiance to you Śrīla Prabhupāda. It is only you who can help me swim the great ocean of *anartha nivṛtti*. Please help me genuinely beg Tulasī Mahārāṇī for pure devotion to the Divine Couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava in the groves of Vṛndāvana. Please help your growing devotional communities understand their highest aspirations in Krishna consciousness and empower those individual devotees to achieve them.

Your insignificant fool and beggar in training,

Rāmanātha Sukha Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your holy lotus feet. All glories to your unequalled stature in the world of devotional service!

You are called 'Spiritual Master' because you are able to present appropriately the spiritual subject matter of God or Krishna consciousness to anyone and everyone, including the big leaders of society. The opening of your letter to the then Governor General of Canada, Roland Michener is a good case in point:

“ISKCON (the International Society of Krishna Consciousness) is a non-lucrative organization, whose purpose is to promote the well-being of human society by drawing its attention to God. We are a non-sectarian society, and our members include people from Christian, Jewish and Moslem as well as Hindu faiths. The aim of ISKCON is not to found a new religious sect, but to invoke the living entity's dormant love of God, and thus provide the human society of all faiths with a common platform of clear theistic knowledge and practice. Members of ISKCON may retain their own respective religious faiths, as ISKCON is meant to establish a clear, practical common formulation of the common ideal of all theists, and to defeat the unnecessary dogmatic wranglings that now divide and invalidate the theistic camp. This common ideal of theism is to develop love of God.”
[Letter to Governor General Canada, 24 Aug 1968]

Actually, you are the center of our lives. Just like today we all come together for the anniversary of your appearance day as opposed to the *Guru Pūrṇimā* ceremony which is generally performed by the Māyāvādī sects [Letter from Gaurasundara, 2 Aug 1969]. Or when we chant *japa*, circumambulating Śrīmatī Tulasī Devī, we perform an extra bodily revolution just to acknowledge your presence on the *Vyāsāsana*. You control us as much as we agree to follow your beneficial instructions. It is a matter of love and strength on both sides. It is not a matter of force, even though force entails strength.

Even though you have relinquished your physical form 38 years ago in November of the year 1977, while I was serving in the French army, you are in fact very much with us.

This is confirmed in various ways - for example:

1. When the reporter asked you who will be the next ācārya after your passing, delighting all your disciples and followers, you sidestepped the question, and your grand and bold reply was: "I SHALL NEVER DIE." I write this sentence in capital letters.
In the mood of the exuberant, enthusiastic and sometimes wild early days, collective exclamations of "Jai" along with "Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda" followed.
2. When you noticed how your pictures were somehow neglected, you clearly explained that the bona fide spiritual master, being situated on the absolute platform, is not different from his pictures and they should therefore be treated accordingly. The same reasoning will apply to your *mūrti* on the *Vyāsāsana* and therefore I am saying that you are very much here, right now, in front of us.
Let us treat you accordingly with all due respect, consideration and propriety. At times you do indeed reciprocate with us directly from the *Vyāsāsana*.
3. Besides that and most importantly, anyone can always and under most circumstances directly associate with you through sound vibration by listening to your lectures, which have been so nicely produced by the Bhaktivedanta Archives, read your books or chant *japa* in your company. You have so kindly, expertly, and liberally given us all your knowledge and realizations. Where is the question of separation?

"In the absolute world there is no distinction as me, or he, and I. Krishna and His representative is the same. Just like Krishna can be present simultaneously in millions of places. Similarly, the spiritual master also can be present wherever the disciple wants. A spiritual master is the principle, not the body. Just like a television can be seen in thousands of places by the principle of relay monitoring." 680528let.Malati

The spiritual master sets us straight on the path back home, back to Godhead. I want to thank you very much for the reply to the only letter I ever wrote to you in April / May 1977, when, under the direction of H.H. Akshayānanda Swami, I was doubting my

position as the temple commander at the Krishna Balarāma temple in Vrndāvana, India. One of Your favorite disciples H.H. Tamāl Krishna Goswāmī relayed your words to me:

“There is no difference between management and study in Krishna consciousness. I am studying books and writing also and at the same time attending to your letter. And there is so much management to look to. So I am doing both because there is no difference.”

These represent indeed most important, enlightening, meaningful and direction-giving instructions. Due to our artificial education systems, we tend to see borders and demarcations. These are therefore also artificial borders and artificial demarcation shattering instructions. I try to execute my service in that mentality and make these instructions the cornerstone of my remaining life in this fragile tabernacle. This non-difference is both enlivening and productive as well. It is also timesaving because practical. These instructions are very much in line with your insistence on authenticity, as opposed to bluff and blind following.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I sometimes feel very, very good in devotional service and sometimes not so good, to put it positively. Frankly sometimes I feel miserable, so much so that addressing you, as I do now, becomes a burdensome task. I am then unable to pray to you with sincere feelings. It simply becomes an artificial formality at best. I take the liberty to speak like this while remembering the example of Śrīla Narottama Dās Ṭhākura, who says in his prayer to the lotus feet of Śrī Nityānanda from *Prārthanā*:

*hā hā prabhu nityānanda premānanda-sukhī
kṛpābalokaṇa koro āmi boro duḥkhī*

Or as per your own translation: “My dear Lord Nityānanda you are always joyful in spiritual bliss. Since you always appear very happy, I have come to you because I am most unhappy. If you kindly put Your glance over me, I may also become happy”

Please hear my wish Śrīla Prabhupāda:

I would like to continually feel very, very happy in devotional service and always be able to remain very active in cultivating and spreading Krishna consciousness to the best of my ability without interruption. Enough time has already been lost.

Śrī Krishna in *Bhagavad-gītā* 3.30 clearly implies that on the

transcendental plane one becomes free from lethargy.

“Therefore, O Arjuna, surrendering all your works unto Me, with full knowledge of Me, without desires for profit, with no claims to proprietorship, and free from lethargy, fight.”

I wish to become like you, who exhibited the greatest steadiness of mind amidst even the greatest disappointments—for example when your GBC deputies unexpectedly abandoned their posts. According to Śrī Krishna *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* 2.48, this equanimity is yoga:

“Perform your duty equipoised, O Arjuna, abandoning all attachment to success or failure. Such equanimity is called yoga.”

In that respect, I find *saṅkīrtan* book distribution the most edifying and pleasing school of yoga.

In glorification of Śrīla Prabhupāda, I would also like to bring to the attention of the devotees to a website which lists individuals who have become tremendously successful after the age of 50 and Śrīla Prabhupāda’s name is also mentioned.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2010/LIVING/worklife/05/16/mf.famous.career.after.50/>

My friend Madhukānta Prabhu found and supplied this information.

In conclusion, I may state that, just like the Vedas, you are an inexhaustible source of both spiritual and material inspiration and will remain the perfect example in all respects. By material inspiration I mean to say that you teach us how to handle the material world for Krishna, which in fact is also spiritual.

Let us therefore follow you closely in all earnestness.

Thanking you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your insignificant servant,

Yādavendra Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

About America's presidential race this year, 2016, you would say what the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* say about politics and economics:

People suffer because of their association with the lower modes of ignorance and passion (symptomized by lust and greed), and some engage in politics to improve their condition; economically, societies unnecessarily produce paraphernalia just for their sensual enjoyment; people will be less disturbed and be happy if they are better situated in the mode of goodness—but they need to adopt transcendental loving devotional service to reach life's perfection.

Very few contemporary thinkers write about transcendence in personal terms, as you did, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The philosopher Eric Voegelin writes: "... the divine is recognized as the moving factor in human consciousness. The strength of the divine pull and the human response to it may vary in particular cases, but in each instance individuals participate in the same process of discovering reality. Consequently, experiences with transcendental reality are not unconnected. They are connected by the common factor of the divine presence."

Unfortunately, the experiences with transcendental reality that people have in common are never perfectly reflected in politics and economics, says Voegelin. He describes how cultures tend to defend their conventional representations of truth. Their philosophical insights become culturally preserved in some form of civil theology or civic religion akin to nationalism, which is taken as the truth itself by most individuals, though it is only a derivative of philosophical truth.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you endeavored to inspire all the members of human society, and especially the members of ISKCON, to have the highest transcendental experiences. How we preserve philosophical truth and our philosophical insights—in conventional or unconventional cultural representations—time will tell.

You declared dependence on God in 1976, on the two-hundredth anniversary of America's Declaration of Independence, and said: "The government should be very expert to know the aim of life—the common cause—and should train people to work for the common

cause. The government's actual duty is to understand what God wants and see that society works toward that aim. Then people will be happy."

Fifty years ago you set ISKCON going with an extraordinary and sometimes aggressive spirit, in the hope that devotional service will become important in countries worldwide. You gave us the greatest means for discovering transcendental reality: the chanting of Hare Krishna, *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.*

Your servant,

Tattvavit Dāsa

Pūrṇamāsī Devī Dāsī & Kṛṣṇadāsa Kaviraja Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupada,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you, the deliverer of pure devotional service!

By your appearance, Śrīla Prabhupada, even the degrading Kali-yuga has become auspicious. Prior to your appearance, everyone on this planet was quickly descending through the modes of nature to a very hellish life. But by your association — whether in person or through your books, so many people are being lifted to the highest realm of spiritual understanding — pure devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Lord Caitanya arranged that when you needed, transportation around the world became easier than it had ever been. In only 12 years you opened 108 temples all over the world. You published so many books. You gave the world so much facility to become attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa.

Somehow or other we got caught up in this wave of love of God and are feeling fortunate that we are still pushing forward to the goal. We are trying to also share this love of God, Kṛṣṇa with as many people as possible, thus helping you to fulfill your vow to your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. You have often stated that by the endeavor alone Kṛṣṇa will be pleased. On this day of your appearance we pray that you may always keep us engaged in this mission. Then perhaps our lives will be perfect. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupada, for the huge amount of mercy you have already

given us and the unlimited mercy of which we have yet to take full advantage.

Your servants,

Pūrṇamāsī Devī Dāsī and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kaviraja Dāsa

Phalinī Devī Dāsī

My dearest spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my unworthy self, prostrated at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, to your beloved spiritual master His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and to our entire *guru paramparā* headed by Lord Brahmā himself.

All glories to Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Paṣca-tattva, whom Your Divine Grace kindly re-introduced me to forty-three years ago when I received a book—*The Teachings of Lord Caitanya*—from your disciple Dattātreya Dāsa at Stapleton Airfield in Denver, Colorado. I had heard that the Hare Krishnas distribute their books at the airport, and so I had gone there to find your devotees and get one of your books. That book answered so many questions for me and turned my life into something meaningful. I am forever grateful to those disciples of yours who made the effort to go out there to the airport that day, and every day, to distribute your books. Had they not been there, I would not have received your beautiful, golden-colored book with the colorful, heart-charming painting of Śrī Śrī Paṣca-tattva on the front cover. I am so grateful to the artists who painted pictures for your books according to your directions and to the devotees who took the time and put forth the effort to help you publish your books.

Most of all, I am grateful to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for writing those books. I remember chanting *japa* one morning, walking down the alley next to the Los Angeles Temple toward Watseka Avenue. I glanced up at your window, and saw the back of your head. I wondered if perhaps you were using your dictaphone, translating and commenting on ancient holy books, as I knew you spent long hours and exerted much effort doing so in the service of your spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. It seems like every time I sit down to write a Vyāsa-pūjā offering to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, this is what my mind goes to. That memorable image of you sitting at your desk with your dictaphone, laboring on little sleep, just so that

your disciples and followers could have your personal instructions available at every moment of every day for the rest of our lives.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, there is one song you kindly taught us, the English translation of which I like to recite every morning. I offer this recitation again to Your Divine Grace:

“O Venerable Vaiṣṇava, O ocean of mercy, be merciful to your servant. Give me the shade of your lotus feet and purify me. I hold onto your lotus feet. Teach me to control my six passions: words, mind, anger, tongue, belly and genital. Rectify my six faults: overeating, attachment to material things, useless, idle talk, inability to follow regulative principles, sense gratification, and impure habits. Bestow upon me the six qualities: enthusiasm in practicing devotional service, firm faith in devotional processes, a strong desire to attain *prema-bhakti*, a favorable service attitude, avoidance of non-devotees and appreciation of the company of devotees. And offer unto me the six kinds of holy association: to go to an assembly of devotees, to invite devotees into one’s home, to discuss and hear devotional topics, to take the *mahā-prasāda* of devotees and to offer *mahā-prasāda* to devotees. 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. Kṛṣṇa is yours. You have the power to give Him to me. I am simply running behind you, shouting “Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!”

Thank you for this wonderful prayer, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You have also given us the greatest gift of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s holy name, and the process of chanting—both as *japa* and as *kīrtan*—that sweet holy name of the Lord. Of course, to try to repay you, to try to reciprocate with you for having bestowed the greatest gift upon the suffering souls of this world (of whom I am one) is an impossible challenge. So, I beg you to please accept my continued efforts to follow your instructions carefully, every day of my life—and especially your instruction to “try to love Kṛṣṇa”—as my humble attempt to reciprocate with you. Please somehow or other use your mystic powers to find a way to extract the love that’s buried deep in my coal-black, hard, cold heart and offer it to my Lord for His pleasure. That love, dormant as it is and buried deep inside me, is

really all I have to give. If I may, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I would like to offer to you again the lyrics to an old song I wrote to Your Divine Grace many years ago:

The Love in My Heart

There is no gift in this whole, wide world and universe
That can begin to repay the gift you've given to me
There is no wealth great enough that it could ever compare
To the rare gem that you have kindly given me
What can I give to a person who has everything?
Nothing I own could ever really impress you
Nothing at all in this wide world could ever show you how I feel
What can I do to show you how grateful I am?
I know you've said that the way to please you best of all
Is if someday once again I could feel love in my heart
For your friend Kṛṣṇa Who's the Supreme Friend of everyone
If I love Him then that will really please you most
So to this end I plan to dedicate the rest of my life
To reawakening the love for God that's there in my heart
And so I pray that you'll accept this as my humble gift to you
As I have nothing else to give except the love in my heart
Please accept the love in my heart

Your unworthy yet nonetheless aspiring servant,

Phalinī Devī Dāsī

My obeisances at your lotus feet
You only came to give and not to cheat
Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta—he asked you
To preach the message of Mahāprabhu

On *Jaladuta* you got a free trip
Thirty-six days on a cargo-ship
You came across the Atlantic Ocean
To teach us about love and devotion

Your vision only to serve the Divine
You left for New York at age sixty-nine
The order of guru—that's why you came
Every town and village—the holy name

On Second Avenue with just a few
A worldwide movement was started by you
You went many places speaking the truth
Many came to hear—especially the youth

Senses bewildered and out of control
Covered by *māyā* the eternal soul
'You are not the body' you came to teach
The message of Krishna you came to preach

Darwin's theory being taught everywhere
You chanted Krishna's names in Tompkin's Square
Distribute your books—that's the solution
A great transcendental revolution

Life comes from matter—you didn't agree
You opened our eyes and now we can see
Helping us with transcendental vision
Guiding us to make the best decision

To stand next to you was a special treat
And then to bow down at your lotus feet
We hope that we'll see you again one day
Your servant Jagadvīra Dāsa does pray

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

All glories unto you!

Today, along with my godbrothers and sisters all over the world, we join together to attempt to properly glorify you on your most auspicious Vyāsa-pūjā, and in so doing, deepen our appreciation, our gratitude, and our love for you.

Not an easy task, as the impact you have made on our lives individually spans across many spheres, and your contributions to the world are deeply profound, transcendental and far-reaching.

You came to us in America in September, 1965. With the order of your Guru Mahārāja firmly established in your heart, and unflinching faith in that order, you came to the West to begin to introduce the science of Krishna consciousness to anyone willing to hear your message. You chanted alone in a park, in the most important city in the world, New York – with little support, finances and facilities.

“Forgotten Krishna we fallen souls

Pay most heavy the illusion’s toll...”

Meditating on your guru’s mission and how to execute it, praying fervently to Lord Kṛṣṇa to send some sincere souls, you persevered in those early days, determined and fixed in your conviction that the holy name will pierce through the darkest of illusions. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda for coming to us! Many spiritual seekers of that time travelled eastward to India, searching out a guru, desperate for any kind of so-called enlightenment that might befall them....a very dangerous venture. Deeply feeling the plight of the conditioned souls, and feeling great compassion for all, you came, armed with transcendental knowledge and the holy names, determined to fulfill the order of your beloved guru, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī.

“Darkness around, all untrace

The only hope, Your Divine Grace”

Yearning for meaning to life, yearning for happiness, and knowledge, real knowledge – we became attracted to your divine message, your prasāda, your chanting, and your

followers. But most of all, we were attracted to your pristine example. We had never before seen a pure devotee of the Lord; someone whose every word and deed – even their very life was an offering to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

As you have taught us Śrīla Prabhupāda, there is the book Bhāgavata, and the person Bhāgavata; and the person Bhāgavata lives his life in terms of the book Bhāgavata. As an expert spiritual master, painstakingly guiding your disciples, you helped us through the many challenges we faced in those early days by your faith in us and your pure, transcendental example. You gave us Bhagavad-gītā As It Is, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Krishna Book, and Caitanya Caritāmṛta, all elaborately explained with your wonderful purports....delivered in such a way that our conditioned minds and hearts might accept them. With beautiful analogies and references from previous āchāryas you showed us how to present philosophy in such a way that it would be not only understood, but respected. Some of the most renowned scholars of our time, after reading your books and commentaries, claim they have never before heard such erudite explanations of Vedic knowledge and such deep, pure realizations. We learned the importance of not just reading your books, but reflecting upon what we have read, discussing it with others, and assimilating by practically applying it to our lives. By your mercy, although immature, we have learned to be “śāstra cakṣus”: seeing through the eyes of scripture, an asset of immeasurable value, one that continues to help us through the difficult times after your departure from this world.

How fortunate we are, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to be the recipient of your divine compassion, your mercy, your love – that you gave so freely, to whomever would hear your message. I pray that I will always be grateful for all you have given.

You encouraged us.

You inspired us.

You empowered us.

In this way, you taught us what it means to glorify Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you often stated that the symptom of a good manager, a great leader, an inspirational personality was his or her ability to be a “touchstone” to inspire others to follow and continue the legacy established. We can never imitate your greatness, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but beyond a doubt you have empowered us, through the agency of your intense desire, to continue to spread Lord Caitanya’s movement, in spite of so many obstacles. Today, I beg to become your touchstone; I beg to become qualified so I can be of some meaningful service to you. Your mercy is always there...it is there for all of us who sincerely follow your instructions with faith

and love. Looking around, there is so much to be done to carry forth your mission to the next level; to expand it in such a way that it becomes attractive and very relevant. Determination is required, and I am easily discouraged. I pray to you for strength, increased conviction in your instructions, and the ability to never forget all you have sacrificed, and all you have given. Please allow me to eternally remain in your service to assist you in this way; that I may be able – in some small way, to use what I have been given to further your mission, to truly understand your mood, and to inspire others as you have inspired me.

Your fallen servant,

Paṭṭarājñī Devī Dāsī

Aja Dāsa

O Śrīla Prabhupāda! O Master! I don't even know how to address you. How does an ant address the Universe? How does an insignificant, crippled beggar approach the most divine emperor?

You are not just a spiritual master, though that would be enough—for the true spiritual master is a most confidential associate of the Lord. You are the saviour of the world—the *Senāpati Bhakta*, the one who was chosen to deliver—in full—the *yuga dharma* of Lord Caitanya, and fulfill His desire to have the self-effulgent holy names spread to every town and village on this otherwise miserable planet, now blessed by your appearance here and touched by your two golden lotus feet. You are the world Āchārya!

You know my heart, my mind, my darkest and most intimate thoughts, and yet, you still allowed me to approach you and adopted me as your child. When there was doubt in my mind and I asked you within a dream, you told me you knew ALL your students in your heart. You console me at every moment, for nothing else can do that here. When you first set eyes on me at the San Francisco Airport, that electric penetrating gaze that went down to my toes and through every cell of this body changed me eternally!

I think I am a rascal fool #1, but even that is too much to claim. Mostly, I am just insignificant, unimportant, of no consequence and useless—something that doesn't even catch one's attention... background noise drowned out by the other noises. Yet, somehow

or other, your holy shadow was cast upon me and I received the greatest mercy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you SAVED me. I have NO shelter anywhere but you! I can't even beg for your mercy for fear of annoying you. If I can even just gaze at you from a distance, and try to stay out of your way, knowing that you accepted me, and continue to accept me, that is enough. I hold you in my heart like a dying man holding on to his last breath. You ARE my breath, my life, my soul. My life is yours, in every conceivable way. Without you, I do not exist.

Truly, I am sorry that this is not better. I do not even know how to honor you or to glorify you. I should do this every day, but again, I'm afraid it would simply annoy you—some sycophantic blubbering fool seeking your divine mercy. Who am I to say anything about your qualities? Only one who has truly followed you and fulfilled your desire can actually understand you enough to glorify you, as you glorified your divine spiritual master.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, falling at your feet, I can only thank you... again and again I thank you. I cannot even beg for a drop of your mercy for I have already received FAR more than I deserve. You have given me the holy name and tried to make me your servant. All I can ask now is that you don't kick me away!

Begging to remain your servant eternally,

Aja Dāsa

Dīna Sharaṇa Devī Dāsī

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

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

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda
Founder-ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

On this auspicious day of your appearance,

The whole world of ISKCON and friends and
Your disciples are rejoicing and celebrating

50 Years ISKCON 2016
Joy of Devotion

.....

This is our "centenary"
Because none of us will witness

100 years ISKCON 2066

.....

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda
Founder-ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

All of your personal achievements and
All of your sincere and loyal disciples' achievements
Are now coming to maturity and to
A crossroads on the way to Godhead.

Your legacy and the future of your mission
Belong to the new generation.

The new generation's future starts now,
Nourished by fifty years of
efforts, sacrifices, faith, and loyalty.

Despite difficulties and mistakes,
Your disciples are still
Holding up high the light of Kṛṣṇa consciousness
In your name,

Because you have shown us

"The Lord of your heart."

.....

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda
Founder-ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

For this wonderful, rare, and priceless gift
To the human race of all creeds and colors,
From the core of my heart on this auspicious day of your appearance
I, a fallen soul, thank you.

Had you not, out of deep compassion, Taken upon yourself the danger-
ous journey

To countries outside India,
None of us would have ever had
The great fortune of coming in touch with

"The lord of our heart."

.....

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda
Founder-ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

As with most of your disciples,

The first few years of my life
Were spent roaming around this material world,

Searching.

After much failure,

The second few years of my life
Were spent practicing spiritual life under your guidance,
Trying to understand and serve

“The Lord of my spiritual master’s heart!”

The third few years of my life
Left me stripped of all hope for material and spiritual success:
Cheated, deprived, and stranded . . .

“Will there be a life after this? Where are you,
“O Lord of my spiritual master’s heart!?”

For the last few years of my life,
I beg you to allow me
to always remember you,
to never forsake your association,
to always be filled with your unconditional love forever,

“O lord of my heart!”

May your holy name alone remain on my lips,
Never again to leave the core of my heart!

On this auspicious day of your appearance,

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda
Founder-ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

I am begging to become your servant,

Dīna Sharaṇa Devī Dāsī

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

I beg for your mercy. I want so much to be engaged in transcendental service so I can become free from the modes of passion and ignorance. At this point, hearing and chanting have to be my constant service and focus. Yet in all honesty I am still pushed by strong tendencies to become absorbed in external affairs. Why am I so foolish so late in my life to continue to be carried away and distracted from hearing the sound of the holy names?

As a young child I looked up to the sky and wondered who is up there? Who is my real guide, my Lord and master? Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Lord Krishna allowed Montreal to be the third place you came to bless us with your unlimited mercy, and my heart was pulled into a *sankīrtana* party. To have lived with such wonderful Vaiṣṇava devotees was indeed a great boon! They were eager to serve constantly and were not desirous of adoration; rather their only motive was to please you. I am praying to the Six Goswāmīs and Lord Caitanya every single day to free me from my *anarthas* which I hold on to. Let me deeply connect to these words—that I am your eternal servitor and not just repeat them like a parrot. Please let me somehow please you and perfect this life.

Wishing to be your sincere disciple,

Lalitā Devī Dāsī

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

There are so many ways in which you have saved my life and attempting to list them all would take more space than this offering allows. Nevertheless, I find no better day to express my most sincere gratitude for some of them than today.

I had a loving father who took very good care of me. Unfortunately, he encouraged me to enjoy sense gratification, believing this would make me happy. It didn't. It only caused me frustration. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for becoming my real father and instructing me that austerity, not sense gratification, brings real satisfaction and happiness. You are the father I always wished for, the father who not only wanted the best for me, but who could both show me what is best and empower me to achieve it.

I had one sister but no brothers. I always wanted a brother, feeling incomplete without one. When I moved into the temple in Berkeley in 1970, I was immediately gifted ten brothers. And now I have thousands more, many of whom are dearer to me than any material brother could ever have been. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for not only satisfying my need for more siblings, but for giving me the most special brothers (and sisters) anyone could ask for.

As a teenager, I spent endless hours writing songs, playing music and singing. Singing the same meaningless songs over and over left me feeling empty and dry. I had a deep need to express myself through music but such songs turned my taste for music sour. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving me profound songs to sing, *kīrtan* to chant, the harmonium to play them on, wonderful devotees to sing them with and a mission to give transcendental sound to the world.

I always wanted to play drums. But my parents wouldn't allow it. Still, the desire to create rhythms by banging on something never left me. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving me the *mṛdaṅga*. You fulfilled my desire to be a drummer—and with the sweetest of drums.

I had a very creative mind. But growing up I found no

meaningful way of putting my creative energies to use. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving me unlimited opportunities to utilize my energy in the fun and exciting service of making the world more Kṛṣṇa conscious. I can only imagine how miserable, bored and unfulfilled I would have been had I not been given the opportunity to use my thoughts, skills and enthusiasm in creatively working to make the world more Kṛṣṇa conscious.

As a student, my lifestyle was unregulated, unclean and passionate. I could speak philosophically but lived more like a dog than a human. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for introducing me to the human form of life.

I tried to satisfy my need for love through shallow relationships, relationships that ended up being much more about satisfying my lust than loving another person. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving me celibacy, the *gṛhastha āśrama*, and respect for women. You saved me from having to experience countless anxieties and perils by giving me the power to overcome unhealthy sexual attitudes and instincts I previously thought impossible to control.

I was a confused student. I wanted to know why I was in this material world, and what my purpose in life was. But the education I received left me frustrated because my professors were as confused as I was (or maybe more so). Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for appearing on my campus as an accredited *Bhagavad-gītā* class taught by devotees. Your sun-like words dissipated my confusion and gave my life purpose by answering every question I had (and every question I would ever have). You are a transcendental professor, and the only professor who could have stopped me from following the mantra of the day: "If it feels good, do it." You saved me from wasting my youth in the endless pursuit of pleasure.

I never found reading interesting. I grew up absorbed in physical activities and neglected intellectual pursuits. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for sacrificing your sleep to give me your books. From the time I found them, I began to devour them. Within two months of receiving your *Gītā*, I had already read it twice. Your books have always been my lifeline to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and are the only books I have ever read that bypassed my head and operated directly on my heart. And distributing your books has always opened up the flood gate of your mercy on me.

I wanted to help others, but all I could teach them were my own speculations, the same useless thoughts that were messing up my

life. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving me something of value to offer the world, something that makes people happy, clears the confusion in their lives and gives them a reason to live. Giving Kṛṣṇa to others has been the calling and highlight of my life.

The day I met you, I considered my life a success. If I were to die the next day, there would have been absolutely nothing to lament for since meeting you was the highlight of my life and my ultimate perfection. Every day I am thankful for the great fortune of being able to serve you. My deepest desire and prayer is that every waking hour of the rest of my life be fully engaged in your service. There is nothing in the universe I want more than this.

Your service is my life. Unless I am serving you every moment of every waking hour I suffer. I therefore pray to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that I will only be engaged in serving your lotus feet, and nothing else, throughout the remainder of my life and for eternity.

Your aspiring servant,

Mahātmā Dāsa

Mayeśa Dāsa

*om aṅśāna-timirāndhasya jṣānāṣjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

Your Divine Grace

1

Planet suffocated
Kali's increase
Paramparā's mercy
conditioned soul's release

2

Worldwide movement
revolution begun
Chaitanya's desire
the Kṛṣṇa sun

3

Defeat of academics
foolish pride
Smashing so-called sadhus
Voidist suicide

4

Scientist's speculation
never opposed
By Vedic information
now fully exposed

5

Disciples of disciples
through every village and town
Spread the Lord's mercy
with the holy sound

6

Momentous transformations
taking place
Results of obeying
Your Divine Grace

Mayeśa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

I cherish the day I first laid eyes on Your Divine Grace ‘in the flesh,’ as it were, in 1974. In a moment I felt completely connected, and I had never realized I was unconnected. By this time you had already established an international movement that was changing the world, giving all living entities the facility to once again resume their connection, their constitutional spiritual reality and relationship. You offer the greatest welfare to all mankind.

I also offer my respects to all my predecessors in my most valued service to you for the last 16 years, and my respects to my local authorities for cheerfully supporting me as the Head of Dept. of your beautiful Samādhi/Samādhi Museum Monument, for life, as Gopal Krishna Mahārāja expressed recently. I especially offer my gratitude to Mahārāja and his never-ending friendship, guidance and encouragement as the devotee I have served the longest within this Dhām and others. He’s the best lawyer I ever had for keeping me well engaged in such a variety of services to you in most of 42 years!

The wonder of your Samadhi *seva* is that you allow me to be so close to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as you sit regally as the compassionate overlord of your servants eternally in your sacred resting place as an exemplary standard of the *paramparā*. You often speak to me of endless unique ways of how to bring Krishna consciousness to the multitudes. And it affords me the most menial as well as the most creative services. Further, it brings me closer to the association of the devotees who all, as do I, pray fervently for your mercy and shelter, without which we wouldn’t have a spark of a chance to get handed over to Krishna in His eternal service.

And I offer my respects to all the devotees who have in the past, at the present, and in the future offer even the slightest service for this wonderful mission, now in its 50th year out of the predicted 10,000 years duration — or maybe even 50,000! I pray that all of us,

big and small, unique unto ourselves, will continue to do something wonderful, or even something simple, to help you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in this divine mission you have taken on your head for Lord Caitanya and your divine spiritual master, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

I pray that I become worthy of being your beneficiary. And, oh, Śrīla Prabhupāda, if it pleases you, truth told, I wish always to be wherever you are to engage in your service.

Your servant,

Pārvatī Devī Dāsī

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

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

After Fifty Years

You left alone that day in Calcutta;
There was no fanfare; there were no cheers.
None could predict your mission's success,
Now in full bloom after fifty years.
You came to a dark place in the world,
Filled with conflict, anxiety, and fears.
Your message of truth brought peace and hope,
Enlightening the world for fifty years.
Knowing Caitanya's grand divine plan,
Through your faith the Holy Name appears,
Re-awakening our covered hearts
As Kṛṣṇa's Name spreads for fifty years
You gave us *bhakti*, simple but sublime,
Devotional love that brings joy and tears.
You taught with patience, firmness, and love,
Guiding your disciples for fifty years.
Your teaching was clear, simple, and bold;
It only required that we opened our ears.
Hearing your words, it all became clear,
Increasing our faith for fifty years.
Every town and village was the goal.
Not content till the whole planet hears,
You traveled the world, planting the seeds
That still bear fruit after fifty years.
Your ISKCON movement is saving the world,
Even while Kali's nescience nears.
You captained the ship on a spiritual course
As your mercy flows for ten thousand years.

Your Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda kī jaya! Jaya Gurudeva Patita Pāvana!

Loved, respected, unforgettable and incomparable Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Let me write now that I have some thoughts about your exalted person, because really, any of us will ever know when we can no longer do so. So now that I can, I'll try.

Whatever your wonderful and simple personality taught us by example was a cluster of virtues that so far, I have not been able to develop, because of my little or minimal faith or understanding of your divine teachings.

Each year, as we approach another anniversary of your sacred Vyāsa-pūjā, I try to seek and find the right words to honor you, and words to thank you, but I know I'm clumsy and I cannot do it correctly. I ask in the most humble way excuse my insignificant attempt to express myself up to you.

Today, after reaching my 61-year anniversary, I find spiritual sustenance in the work of your wonderful book presented in three volumes, entitled: Śrīla Prabhupāda Śikṣāmṛta. We are translating it into Spanish, with a small group of devotees who are dedicated to this great project, and the idea is to present a monthly book consisting of a topic (or maybe 2, if they are small), as this wonderful work consists of 50 titles.

As I'm reading the content of the letters that you wrote to your first disciples, I realize the wonderful person that you are and how you answered those letters of hope and anxiety, giving the perfect answer to their questions, or perhaps because the little understanding of what the greatness of devotional service was, and how it can be performed according to what you want us to develop without offenses, immaculately and with great affection, respect, devotion and sincere love for the Supreme Personality God, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

There is no doubt that every answer from you, was the exact key we all needed and still need to try to serve adequately to the lotus feet of Your Divine Person and in doing so our devotional service can get without blemish to the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person.

I can only tell you, that you have been and will remain an example and inspiration for many generations of devotees to come,

and not just devotees, but by every honest soul who has the desire to surrender to your divine lotus feet and get divine knowledge. Once again I prostrate myself before the dust of your lotus feet, begging your blessings for perhaps one day to be in front of you and try to serve you for all eternity, because I have the certainty that in the spiritual world, Kṛṣṇaloka, you're living in absolute and complete happiness, belonging to that wonderful and sacred paradise, where the center of everything is Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

You wrote the most beautiful prayer in Bengali for Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa when you were on board the *Jaladuta*, September 18, 1965, pleading to Him for the release of all fallen souls, and I want to remember it here, because it is another sign of your divine magnificence.

- 1) *baro-kṛpā kaile kṛṣṇa adhamer prati
ki lāgiyānile hethā koro ebe gati*
- 2) *āche kichu kārja tava ei anumāne
nahe keno āniben ei ugra-sthāne*
- 3) *rajas tamo guṇe erā sabāi ācchanna
vāsudev-kathā ruci nahe se prasanna*
- 4) *tave jadi tava kṛpa hoy ahaitukī
sakal-i sambhava hoy tumi se kautukī*
- 5) *ki bhāve bujhāle tārā bujhe sei rasa
eta kṛpā koro prabhu kori nija-vāsa*
- 6) *tomāra icchāya saba hoy māyā-vaśa
tomāra icchāya nāśa māyār paraśa*
- 7) *tava icchā hoy jadi tādera uddhār
bujhibe niścai tave kathā se tomār*
- 8) *bhāgavater kathā se tava avatār
dhīra haiyā śune jadi kāne bār bār*
- 9) *śṛvatām̐ sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ punya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ
hṛdy antaḥ-stho hy abhadraṇi vidhunoti suhṛt satām̐
naṣṭa-prāyeṣu abhadreṣu nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā*

*bhagavaty uttama-śloke bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī
 tadā rajas-tamo-bhāvāḥ kāma-lobhādayaś ca ye
 ceta etair anāviddham sthitāni sattve prasādati
 evaṁ prasanna-manaso bhagavad-bhakti-yogataḥ
 bhagavat-tattva-vijñānaṁ mukta-saṅgasya jāyate
 bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś chidyante sarva-samsāyāḥ
 kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi dṛṣṭa evātmanīśvare*

10) *rajas tamo hate tave pāibe nistār
 hṛdayer avadar sab ghucibe tāhār*

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

12) *athaca enecho prabhu kathā bolibāre
 je tomāra icchā prabhu koro ei bāre*

13) *akhila jagat-guru! vacana se āmār
 alankṛta koribār khamatā tomār*

14) *tava kṛpā ha'le mor kathā śuddha habe
 śuniyā sabāra śoka duḥkha je ghucibe*

15) *āniyācho jadi prabhu āmāre nācāte
 nācāo nācāo prabhu nācāo se-mate,
 kāsthera puttali jathā nācāo se-mate*

16) *bhakti nāi, veda nāi, nāme khub daro,
 'bhaktivedānta' nām ebe sārthak koro*

- 1) 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.
- 2) But I guess You have some business here, otherwise why would You bring me to this terrible place?
- 3) Most of the population here is covered by the material

modes of ignorance and passion. Absorbed in material life, they think themselves very happy and satisfied, and therefore they have no taste for the transcendental message of Vasudeva. I do not know how they will be able to understand it.

- 4) But I know Your causeless mercy can make everything possible because You are the most expert mystic.
- 5) How will they understand the mellows of devotional service? Oh Lord, I am simply praying for Your mercy so that I will be able to convince them about Your message.
- 6) 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.
- 7) I wish that You may deliver them. Therefore if You so desire their deliverance, then only will they be able to understand Your message.
- 8) The words of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are Your incarnation, and if a sober person repeatedly receives it with submissive aural reception, then he will be able to understand Your message.
- 9) It is said in the *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.”

- 10) 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.
- 11) 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.
- 12) Somehow or other, Oh 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.
- 13) 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.
- 14) Only by Your causeless mercy will my words become pure. I am sure that when this transcendental message penetrates their hearts they will certainly feel englanded and thus become liberated from all unhappy conditions of life.
- 15) 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.
- 16) 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, I You like, You can fulfill the real purport of Bhaktivedānta.

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami.

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

And thanks to your persistence and perseverance, we were able to encounter this great science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that you, with your infinite mercy decided to entrust and put in our hands, and which has been expanded over the years in all countries, and even in the most remote places on this planet Earth.

Thank you very, very much! Loved, respected, admired and unforgettable Śrīla Prabhupāda, spiritual teacher, guide and example of all human beings!

The least of your candidates' servant of the servant of Your servant,

Mahā Puṇyā Devī Dāsī
Celaya, Guanajuato, México

Haripāda Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Thank you Prabhupāda
For crossing the sea
Saving an insignificant
Soul like me

You came to enlighten
Awaken and liberate
All fallen souls
From an unfortunate fate

I shudder to think
The foolish things I'd do
If I had not somehow
Been blessed meeting you

Thank you Prabhupāda
For your faith in the Lord
Kīrtans in the park
Brought many souls aboard

Who could have guessed
So many would come
Bow at your feet
An incredible sum

Thousands surrendered
Giving all we had
Serving constantly
Mostly blissful, seldom sad

Thank you Prabhupāda
For distributing *prasāda*
Helping us understand
Lord Krishna is God

One of your blessings
Transcendental books
Opened our eyes
To see how the Lord looks

You taught everything
Belongs to the Lord
It's all His property
Have no need to hoard

Thank you Prabhupāda
For the Lord's holy name
We no longer want
Profit, adoration, or fame

From Goloka, the *yuga dharma*
Congregational chanting the Lord's name
Has mercifully descended
Filling our hearts with *prema*

By introducing Mahāprabhu
The golden *avatār*
You blessed us all with
Freedom from *samsāra*

Thank you Prabhupāda
For inspiring us all
Giving Krishna to others
Your clarion call

Somehow we met you
Śaktyāveśa *avatār*
Now slowly understanding
How fortunate we are

One thing left to mention
On this Vyāsa-pūjā day
We vow to serve you
In every conceivable way

param vijayate śrī kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtanam

Your grateful disciple,

Haripāda Dāsa
Udupi, Karnataka, South India

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my fallen head at your lotus feet.
I pray that one day, my only wish will be
to have my consciousness purified and freed
by the words emanating from your lotus mouth,
which is like an endless stream of ambrosial mercy.
Śrīla Prabhupāda, attachment to your lotus feet
is the perfection which fulfills ALL desires, ALL desires
I beg you to let me serve you effectively,
devotionally, selflessly, honestly, humbly, eternally...
I pray to serve your devotees attentively, respectfully,
And with common sense; seeing you in everything
and in everyone.
My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, every day I pray to repay
the eternal debt that has come my way
The debt of you giving me
the nine devotional practices of *bhakti*
the eternal blessings of Kṛṣṇa's holy names and pastimes,
a sense of humor, especially when life gets tuff 'n' ruff
and your personal, compassionate presence
in my limited vision, darkened heart and unruly mind.
Your Divine Grace, so fatherly, so freely, so lovingly
Always giving me another chance to serve you nicely
You stay with me every day, never leaving me
Singing, speaking, encouraging, advising, guiding
Giving me your divine presence so kindly...
Everyday, all day long, like an eternal love song
When oh when my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
My lord and master...when will I serve you with
unmotivated and uninterrupted loving devotion?
Ahaituky apratihātā...crossing the material ocean
of lust, distrust, whimsical notions and emotional commotions...
Tears falling from my eyes today, Śrīla Prabhupāda
as I yearn to serve your sincere devotees
and your ISKCON Vrindāvana mission heartfully.
Through the 45 years of distributing your books and mercy
Your lotus lips said two sentences to me, that I hear frequently...
You said to lowly me, "I am always with you, do not be fearful."
You know my heart and you have diligently carried me

when I think I'm alone; you always come to me so personally
Please help me to serve you, Śrīla Prabhupāda,
And my Lords, Tulasīdevī, Vrndāvana and your devotees...
Genuinely, pridelessly, wisely, lovingly
Your fallen Mahādevī Dāsī prays every day...

Mīnākṣi Dāsa

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

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

O Śrīla Prabhupāda! On this special tribute to you Jagad Guru who opened my eyes, I want to tell you that by your example and practices, you changed my life completely. You made me a better person and gave me the opportunity to know the real purpose of life and the Supreme Person, Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa. You instructed us that the only way to obtain Him is following your teachings and not any another path. That is why I say thank you again for coming into my life.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda! After you left your vapu form, my life went through a lot of changes. I was always looking for that leadership that you showed us, and always expecting a special feeling of all your pastimes here on this planet earth. You definitely changed us Śrīla Prabhupāda!

O Śrīla Prabhupāda! Looking back at those moments is very difficult but full of feeling and sacrifices, expecting some of my godbrothers to give me some strength. But after a while, slowly praying and doing sādhana and bhajan to Lord Kṛṣṇa, everything is coming and taking form and shape. I then realize that it is up to you and how much you want us to know about Guru and Kṛṣṇa.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda! You are in the line of Śrīla Bhaktisidhānta Saraswatī Mahārāja, and giving your mercy, you said in the beginning to please chant 64 rounds. But our mentality said that this is impossible to do. Then by your kindness you made it easy and lowered it to 16 rounds, and we can now do it. According to

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Mahārāja, he said that Kṛṣṇa will never accept prasāda from somebody who does not chant 64 rounds. So again, Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for your mercy upon us.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda! Because you made it easy in the beginning for us, now is the time to go deeply into the chanting and to start doing something to satisfy you, to develop more time to understand Kṛṣṇa and His pastimes with His associates. Only by following your instructions and plans to continue in our sādhana and bhajan lies the foundation that is part of your design for us. Only because of your mercy what we can do will be effective.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda! After having suffered so much from māyā's attacks and weak faith, sometimes we need to grow and associate with the good Vaiṣṇavas who have good bhajan to the Lord. Our determination and conviction becomes more mature and then we have a taste for the holy names, and that is the only way to know the Supreme Personality Kṛṣṇa Bhagavān and His activities. We need to make sound resolutions, and act in accordance with the śāstras.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda! The reason why I need to make the vow to represent you according to your standards is to be more in the line with your teachings and regulations. In this Age of Kali, there is no other way but to follow your wonderful teachings.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda! Thank you again.

Your eternal servant,

Mīnākṣi Dāsa

Nartaka Gopāla Devī Dāsī

Very dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. I recently read in

Conversations with Śrīla Prabhupāda Volume 11, you were speaking with several disciples regarding the Victoria Memorial in Calcutta (now Kolkata). You told them, "When it was being constructed, I went to the top by the scaffolding."

The Victoria Memorial was built in a 15-year period from 1906 to 1921, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and you were between the ages of 10 and 25 during those years. It was built to honor Victoria, the Queen of the British Empire, also called the Empress of India, who had

passed away in 1901. When it was built, it was one of the tallest buildings in all of India at 184 feet, or 56 meters. Also, in the West, scaffolding means steel or aluminum with wooden boards. In India it is different, it means bamboo poles with rope or even vines tying it together. So when the devotees heard you say this, they remarked: “Śrīla Prabhupāda, you must have been very brave.” To which you replied, “Yes, I am still brave, otherwise how could I come alone to preach Krishna consciousness? Some astrologer told that: ‘This boy, for executing his purpose, he will enter into the fire.’”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bestow upon me just a fraction of one drop of your resolute determination and courage to stay fixed at the lotus feet of Lord Sri Krishna.

One time Yamunā Devī asked you, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, how many times were you with your guru mahārāja?” You answered her, “Since I met him, I have never been away from him, not for one second.” You also told us one time, “My spiritual master has never left me.”

You taught us that the best way to be with you is by service in separation: “Let us meet by *sañkīrtana*. I do not feel separation from my Guru Mahārāja when I am engaged in his service. His pictures give me sufficient strength. To serve the spiritual master’s word is more important than to serve him physically.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please help me take your instructions to heart so I can serve you better than I am now. Please give me more realizations so I can feel your presence in my life at all times.

Trying to remain,

Your servant,

Nartaka Gopāla Devī Dāsī
Florida Yātrā

Rathayātrā Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you.

With this divine appearance day, I’ve the opportunity to think deeply about my 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.

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 just to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I pray that I may somehow please you with my service in my old age and that I may serve you eternally.

Living in Bangalore and going to Vrindāvana during festivals has inspired me for higher association and service. I have just returned from San Francisco with a new US passport and a 10-year India tourist visa, ready to spend my last years here in India (until you call me for service elsewhere).

The planet is getting ready for war as you predicted. As devotees, we will be protected and the preaching will be fabulous. Change will happen soon, even within our ISKCON, you can feel it in the air.

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.

Your fallen servant,

Rathayātrā Dāsa

Lelihānā Devī Dāsi

To My One and Only Guru Mahārāja

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

You are the most glorious *nitya-siddha* devotee. You are a rare and special person, a *shaktyāvesha avatar*, empowered to save millions and billions of souls who are lost in this world of birth, disease, old age and death.

Anyone who comes into your association—even for a moment—is the most incredibly fortunate person. You yourself have said this in many of your classes. You said that if anyone reads one of your books—books that are full of transcendental knowledge—they are on their way back to Krishna. Not only this, but if anyone reads even one sentence in your books, even one word, or even if one only holds

one of your books, that person is among the most fortunate souls in this entire material creation.

Such grace you have bestowed upon us, we who have been made the most fortunate persons in this world by your causeless mercy and kindness.

By the transcendental knowledge that you have given us in your books, in your words that you have spoken in classes, *darshans*, morning walks with your disciples, special meetings with dignitaries and scientists, and letters to your disciples and others, that we are privileged to read, and to hear and see in the recordings and videos made by your servants, we are all going back to our real home where we once lived.

We found out from you who we really are, that we are tiny spiritual sparks of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Krishna. We are eternal beings, always knowledgeable of our true life as a *dāsadāsa anudāsa*, a servant of the servants of that beautiful Blue Boy Krishna. And in this position we are eternally blissful as participants in Krishna's amazing pastimes.

Thank you very much for everything you have given me. Thank you for saving me from this world that is a prison house for fallen souls, of which I am the most fallen.

But now I am on my way back home to you and Krishna. Please allow me, my dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, to be your *dāsadāsa anudāsa* for all eternity, in the beautiful blissful spiritual Kingdom of our one and only, lovely Śrī Krishna.

All glories to you my special Guru Maharaja.

Your fallen servant,

Lelihānā Devī Dāsi

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

*namas te sārāsvatī-devē gaurā-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādī-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. I pray to you for your mercy to be able to glorify you on this most auspicious day.

Previously, I realized that only when I became a parent myself, did I begin to have any deep appreciation for the difficulties that my parents had encountered while raising eight boys. (Being from a good Italian Catholic family, my mother had four children in nappies at the same time, [I was one of the twins] and that was before the development of disposables). In pursuit of work, my father had also moved away from Little Italy, the south-side of Chicago where practically everyone was a relative, to Memphis, Tennessee, way down south, where there were only a handful of relations.

So, it made me appreciate, what my mother and father went through just to raise a medium sized family. What to say of yourself, who had accepted many thousands of children, not just in one location, but spread all over the world. And how you provided not just for our physical necessities, but most importantly for our spiritual requirements and direction.

Now, it has come to me to act as one of your more senior sons and accept more responsibility for accepting and caring for new additions to your growing family. This I cannot do without your increased mercy. Therefore, on this day made auspicious by your holy appearance in this world, I am fervently praying that you exterminate all desires from my heart that have nothing to do with serving your mission, that you destroy my “comfort zone,” and forever place me in “stretch mode” to extend myself to everyone in need of your mercy.

Hoping then, that I will see myself as your fully devoted son,

Your lowly servant,

Medhāvī Dāsa

My Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my worthless obeisances at your wonderful lotus feet. All glories to you my divine spiritual master.

I was thinking about your kindness. Not just the hugely kind act of leaving that most magnificent of realms Śrī Vrindāvana Dhām to come and save all of us conditioned souls, but all your daily acts of kindness. I once heard about a conversation you had with one of your devotees where the disciple told you that he sometimes feels sorry for all of the conditioned souls and you replied, “Only sometimes?”.

I think this perfectly illustrates the compassion you felt for the trapped spirit souls you saw in this prison house that is the material world. Whilst you walked with us I saw first-hand some of your unlimited acts of kindness. The one that always strikes me is the story of how those Bombay beggar children got to go into your room for *darshan* with you.

The Bombay temple in those pre-construction days was a far cry from what we see today. There was a concrete floor with tiles and metal, scaffold looking, towers that held up the corrugated tin roof. The Deity room side had a wall but the rest of the building was open to the elements. In the rainy season we could lower turquoise bamboo blinds to help shelter us. It was simple but it was heaven.

Surrounding Hare Krishna Land, and indeed on the back of the land itself, were many hut style dwellings, the homes of Bombay’s poor. Somehow we started a school for these children giving them *prasāda* and clothes, for their clothes were more holes than cloth. These children would have the most incredible *kīrtans* and by luck one day, you heard them and asked who was chanting. Upon hearing it was the school children you must have asked to see them for we were duly invited to visit you in your rooms.

The next evening I nervously climbed the two storeys to your Bombay home, ushering the children before me. We had prepared ourselves. We were scrubbed clean, neatly dressed and carrying original drawings of Kṛṣṇa which were painstakingly created as gifts for you. Awestruck, we entered your room. You were sitting there in all your splendour. The children, almost bewitched remained silent. I handed over the pictures explaining that the children had drawn them for you. You looked at them and asked me what they were. I, being more naïve, had not put the best pictures on the top and the

children's artistic skills were not developed. I explained they were drawings of Kṛṣṇa. You said, "Oh!"

And that basically is how our monumental meeting went. You had shown your kindness to these materially deprived children. You, a man with important people to meet, books to write, temples to build, a movement to run, in fact the whole world to conquer, found time to spend with these insignificant children. We all know that Chāṇakya Paṇḍit tells us that you cannot buy back a moment's time for a million gold coins but you shared your precious time generously with seemingly unimportant, poor children. That surely shows your kindness and compassion for all people great or small.

Years later I returned to Bombay and tried to track down the children. I found one, still living in his beautifully swept hut, and guess what we reminisced? That wonderful trip to your room of course.

Today we are working towards the ISKCON 50 celebration. Still finding myself serving with kids, I find myself questioning what I can teach them about you. I want them to understand the hardship you endured to establish this movement and the determination you showed to achieve your goals. I also want them to understand the faith you have in Kṛṣṇa. And of course I want them to know your kindness and compassion.

The class did two pieces of art to help understand aspects of this. One was a silhouette of New York with you wandering alone. The other was you chanting alone, under a tree in Tompkins Square Park. The results are history; our history. Fifty years of our history.

It still amazes me what you—a lone man—not counting Krishna of course who is ever by your side—did. You single-handedly held back the tides of Kali-yuga. It still leaves me humbled when I think about it. And now that I am past sixty and feeling the bodily pangs I see it as an even greater achievement than I even did previously.

I was remembering another big celebration we had for you and that was your centenary year or centennial as we called it. One of the declarations of that time was that you had built a house in which the whole world can live. The house is there and now we must fill it with the kindness you showered us with. Then it will be filled to bursting point.

Praying to remain one of your servants,

Mokshalakṣmī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Once again, I thank you, with all the sincerity I can muster, for appearing in this dreadful place, to deliver Lord Kṛṣṇa's beautiful, and timeless message to the hapless souls of Kali-yuga. I know I am extremely fortunate to have somehow or other been guided to your shelter. We were all in the blazing forest fire of material existence, and by the rain cloud of your mercy, you extinguished the fire. Now our duty is to spread your mercy to as many souls as possible. I truly lament that my potency is so limited. I am in complete awe of some of your disciples' ability to transmit your message to others. All I can hope is that at some future stage I will be blessed with the ability to achieve more.

My feelings towards you are similar to the feelings of Uddhava towards Lord Kṛṣṇa expressed in the following beautiful verse *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.29.5.

*taṁ tvāṅkhilātma-dayiteśvaram āśritānāṁ sarvārtha-
dam sva-kṛta-vid visrjeta ko nu*

*ko vā bhajet kim api viśmṛtaye \langle nu bhūtyai kim
va bhaven na tava pāda-rajo-juṣāṁ naḥ*

“Who, then, could dare reject you, the very Soul, the most dear object of worship, and the Supreme Lord of all – you who give all possible perfections to the devotees who take shelter of you? Who could be so ungrateful knowing the benefits you bestow? Who would reject you and accept something for the sake of material enjoyment, which simply leads to forgetfulness of you. And what lack is there for us who are engaged in the service of the dust of your lotus feet.”

Anyone who accepts you as the direct representative of Kṛṣṇa is indeed very fortunate, and to forsake your service seems to be directly courting disaster. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* that you so kindly presented for your “friends”, there is the statement that, just as Lord Śiva instructed Pārvatī how worship of the devotee is greater than

worship of the Lord Himself, that worship of the devotee situated in *vātsalya-rasa* is higher than worship of the devotee in *sakhya-rasa*, and worship of the devotee in *mādhurya* is higher than that in *vātsalya*. Therefore, without speculating on your particular relationship with the Lord, it seems appropriate, that whatever your position you deserve the greatest worship.

Another verse I find very encouraging as it explains my good fortune in associating with a pure devotee like you is spoken by Dhruva Mahārāja and shows the amazing benefit of those that are blessed with your presence in their lives. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.9.12.

*te na smaranty atitarāṁ priyam īśa martyaṁ
ye cānv adaḥ suta-suhrd-grha-vitta-darah*

*ye tv abja-nābha bhavadīya-padāravinda
saugandhya-lubdha-hṛdayeṣu kṛta-prasaṅgāḥ*

“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.”

So that is the amazing potency of your association. I am sure that you are depicting your good self as one who is hankering after the Lord’s lotus feet. Just because of your attachment to Kṛṣṇa, we are becoming detached from this material existence. As I stand in the autumnal years of my life, I pray that I may spend whatever time I have left in this mortal frame doing something to please you. Please enter my heart, and give me the intelligence to find a way to help spread this wonderful message. I am begging for you to enter my heart and guide me to your lotus feet, wherever they are. May my consciousness be entwined in the words emanating from your lotus mouth, and my body sacrificed in the fire of enthusiastic service to Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtan* movement.

Your insignificant disciple,

Ādikartā Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories to your glorious mission. Thank you for the knowledge of the futile and ignorant nature of this material world. Whether one is born in the royal family or the slum, the result is the same. Without the torchlight of your compassion, there is no release from frustration and misery. Those who appear to be soaring above always crash to the ground unless they can grasp the rope of your causeless mercy.

This is the 50th anniversary of your International Society for Krishna Consciousness. There has been a myriad of convolutions, detours, and deviations, but fundamentally, your society has survived, and in many areas flourished. People from nations around the world have taken to Krishna consciousness. As the world headquarters, you wanted *Śrīdhām Māyāpur* to be the place where these nations would unite in service to Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. I pray every day that those who are in charge of this project will remain true to your vision.

The construction of your Temple of the Vedic Planetarium goes forward unabated. The domes are almost completed and the detailing work has begun. There are devotees from around the world who have given their sincere commitment to this project. Even in the construction, we are your United Nations. All around the world devotees and supporters are giving money to push things forward. It is only out of love for you that they have faith in the project and your vision. You are the recipient of all glories and we are simply your menial servants.

Thank you for accepting me as your disciple. As the jaws of Kali-yuga begin to bite harder, your instructions and love are the only shelter. As your disciples, it is our mission to spread your glories everywhere. You are the savior of the most fallen and the reservoir of mercy for the fallen souls. Your unique contribution is bringing Krishna to the Western world. This alone makes you *Jaḡad Guru*. No one else can make this claim. I fall at your feet again and again. Please only allow me to serve you birth after birth.

Your fallen servant,

Ambarīṣa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances.

All glories unto you!

Fifty years ago you set out on the most important amazing mission to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world at a ripe old age when most people are retired. Fully depending on the mercy of your guru maharaja and Lord Kṛṣṇa, you did what no one has done before! You spread the love of God and conquered the world. You accomplished your mission; the mission of Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga!

This year we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of your ISKCON and the 50th anniversary of the first Rathayātrā in the Western world in San Francisco. This must be very pleasing to you and Lord Kṛṣṇa as it is to us. Uncountable spirit souls are still being benefitted by what you did years ago. Countless souls will continue to benefit now and throughout the rest of this Golden Age of Lord Chaitanya! Not just the devotees and people, but countless moving and non-moving living entities, animals, insects, plants and trees etc. who hear the kīrtan of the Rathayātrā, the harināma, or a devotee chanting japa, will get liberated and elevated to Kṛṣṇa consciousness! This is all your mercy; your 'Matchless Gifts' to us all.

You sacrificed everything for us. You sacrificed your sleep to stay up most of the night working on your books for all of us—the most important books in the world that show us how to get out of this world and attain life's perfection, Kṛṣṇa prema.

You are the most important person of our times; the most important person to come our way, and the most important person in our lives. The guru of gurus who all sit at your lotus-like feet. All we need to do is listen to what you say and follow you all the way back to Godhead.

You are still alive. Those who know will thrive; those who forget will die. You are still the guru. Those who follow you will arrive; those who forget you will go aside. Those who represent you will be blessed. Those who try to replace you will miss. You said you would always live on in your books and sounds and pictures around and all we need is love of God and you are taking us above. Above the mundane so-called love to the real everlasting love that never dies. There is no way we can repay you, but it's our duty to try. You told

us that if we develop our love for Kṛṣṇa; that would please you the most. We do that by hearing from and following you. We don't need to go anywhere else. Everything we need is with you. You are our saving grace! Your Amazing Divine Grace!

Happy 50th ISKCON Anniversary Śrīla Prabhupāda, and may the 100th and 1,000th and 10,000th be even better so countless souls can be delivered back home all due to you, our Jagat Guru!

Glories, glories, to you Śrīla Prabhupāda...glories, glories to you!

Your eternal servant,

Gaurīdāsa Pandita Dasa

Chaitanya Chandra Dāsa

1

*sri-kṛṣṇa-sankīrtana-varṣi-vaktra
mahaprabha-dhvaṣṭa-tamo-bharaya
siddhantadevanucaraya tasmai
namo namah srīla prabhupadaya*

I offer my obeisances to Śrīla Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda again and again. He is certainly a true follower of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. From his divine mouth the nectar of *sankīrtana* is constantly flowing and the effulgence destroys all ignorance and darkness.

2

*brhad-mrdanga-rati-sanga-hasya
maha-dyuti-dyotita-dig-mukhaya
sva-granthadhara śnapitaya tasmai
namo namah srīla prabhupadaya*

He gently smiles with joy when anyone distributes his books with love, or is engaging in great *kīrtan*, his great lustre illuminates all directions, and he bathes everyone in the nectar of his own books. Again and again I offer my obeisances unto Śrīla Prabhupāda.

3

*kīrtana-nada-sruti-matra-cancat-
pada yuja-manda-manoharaya*

*sada-paramparanuraga tasmai
namo namah srila prabhupadaya*

As soon as he hears the sound of this *kīrtan*, his transcendental lotus feet attract everyone's heart, for he always follows the footsteps of the *paramparā* line. Again and again I offer my obeisances unto Śrīla Prabhupāda.

4

*advaita-garva-ksapana-svavakya-
vismapita bhakti-vedantajaya
sva-tippanibhagavata tasmai
namo namah srila prabhupadaya*

His teachings are so beautiful that they subdue the pride of the Advaita Vedāntists and amaze all true Bhaktivedāntas in the glory of *bhakti* and *vedānta*. Śrīla Prabhupāda himself started his explanations and purports of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and I again offer my obeisances unto Śrīla Prabhupāda.

5

*ananda-pracara-svapaca-desam-
khadi-bharalankrita-vigrahaya
yad darsanam bhagya-bharena tasmai
namo namah srila prabhupadaya*

When he is immersed in preaching, his transcendental body is wrapped in a (*sannyāsī*) *khādi* cloth. Only by divine fortune one is able to meet him. Again and again I offer my obeisances unto Śrīla Prabhupāda.

6

*sthale sthale yasya krpa-prapabhih
gauranya trsna samhatinam jana
nirmulita bhavanti eva tasmai
namo namah srila prabhupadaya*

Again and again I offer my obeisances to Śrīla Prabhupāda. Wherever his mercy flows it completely uproots the thirst for anything outside of devotion to Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu (or Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī) in all who has gathered there. Again and again I offer my obeisances unto Śrīla Prabhupāda.

7

*yad guru-bhakti upalarekhikiva
sparsah punah sparsa-maniva yasya
pramanyam evam srutivad yadiyam
namo namah srila prabhupadaya*

Again and again I offer my obeisances to Śrīla Prabhupāda. His faith in and devotion to his guru is as strong as a rock. With only a touch he transforms others, alike to a philosopher's stone that fulfils all the desires. His words are as authoritative as the Vedas themselves and I offer my humble obeisances to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

8

*murtaiva vani kimayam kim esa
karuna-sarastanuman nrloke
sambhavyate yam krtibhih sadaiva
namo namah srila prabhupadaya*

Examining his activities and achievements in this world, the wise constantly wonder: "Is he the embodiment of transcendental instruction (*vāñī*) or the incarnation of divine compassion?" Again and again I offer my obeisance unto Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Vaiyāsaki Dāsa Adhikārī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I was born in the deepest darkness of ignorance with my eyes closed. But by your mercy you have opened my eyes with the torchlight of knowledge of *Bhāgavat-gītā* and *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

Here is the report of my activities this year on the auspicious day of your appearance.

In January/2016, the Indian Science Monitor gave me the 2015 award for outstanding achievement in the field of science and technology for my book *Cosmology on Trial*.

This reminded me of the verse: within the instruction of the spiritual master is the empowerment to fulfill that instruction.

Previously I had faith in this verse, but now I have direct realization of the reality of that verse. Please hear my story how I learned this truth:

Back in April 2011, I saw a letter you had written to Rāmeśvara, dated 2 April 1977.

“Now we are forming scientist’s party and we shall try with their help to establish Krishna consciousness as the genuine scientific movement of the world exposing the so-called scientists as nothing but speculators. Svarūpa Dāmodara has received very good response here in India from the scientific community and there is good hope that many others will join him. He is returning to America for preparing some publications and when these are completed I have asked him to tour vigorously throughout the world lecturing with his other colleagues at all major institutions and universities.

“He has drawn up a budget of immediate needs, a copy of which is enclosed and I immediately sanction this amount. Whatever expenditure he requires supply him immediately from the BBT. I am prepared to give \$10,000 or more monthly if required to finance this most important preaching program.”

I was struck by how important you considered this science preaching. “*I am prepared to give \$10,000 or more monthly.*” That was a huge amount back in 1977. My feeling was that somebody should take up this service and expose most scientists as simply speculators.

Two weeks later, I flew into London for some preaching programs that were booked. I was given the *sannyāsī* room where I found a large number of your books. Glancing over the titles one caught my attention — *The Goldilocks Enigma*. That’s not one of Prabhupāda’s books, I thought. What in the world is it doing here?

As I browsed through the pages, the author, British cosmologist Dr. Paul Davies, revealed to readers an issue that has baffled cosmologists since the 1960s. Scientists have discovered that the universe is so finely-tuned in every detail that even the slightest adjustments in the laws of nature would mean that life, as we know it, could never have arisen.

In other words, the laws of nature tell us that the universe was designed to support life. In spite of this evidence, scientists refuse to accept God’s creation and teach a mechanistic Big Bang origin of the universe. They completely ignore the *Bhāgavatam*’s

description of how Mahāviṣṇu glances at Durgā Devī to initiate the material manifestation.

I was thinking, *this is a synchronicity*, that within a few short weeks I had seen your letter about “exposing the so-called scientists as nothing but speculators,” and now this science book had come into my hands. I decided to get that book and read it carefully.

For days on end one thought kept coming to me: *Does Prabhupāda want me to write a book to expose the scientist’s bluff?*

Clearly, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you wanted to establish Krishna consciousness as the genuine scientific movement of the world and expose the scientists’ bluff. I had zero qualification for this service, but I had a little faith that following the instruction of the spiritual master pleases Krishna.

Finally, I did write that book with the title *Cosmology on Trial*. It went on to become a #1 bestseller in the US, Canada, UK, Australia, and even Germany where it was #1 for three months although not even in the German language!

Nowadays, devotees say to me, “I didn’t know you had a science background.”

Truth be told, I have no science background. Yet, because I took up your instruction, Śrīla Prabhupāda, Krishna empowered me for this one small service.

I remember how you used to reply when people praised you for the outstanding service of spreading the chanting of the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* worldwide. You would always say: *kṛṣṇa-sakti vinā nahi tāra pravartana* — without being empowered by Krishna no one can spread the holy names all over the world.

Of course, Krishna empowered you in all respects as a śaktyāveśa-avatār. You set the example by always strictly following the instructions of your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. This was the example you gave to us.

I have gained only one drop of realization and I’m still trying to follow in your footsteps. Yet now I know that by accepting the order of the spiritual master the empowerment to fulfill that order is given by Śrī Krishna.

I remain dedicated to carrying on your mission,

Vaiyāsaki Dāsa Adhikārī

Śrī Padāmbuja Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. On this occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the ISKCON foundation, I wish to thank you for the many gifts you have showered on me and all your followers.

You came to tell us that we are not the body, and because of that, our life completely changed its course and destiny. You mercifully gave us the Hare Krishna mantra, and through this simple method we raised awareness, gradually discovered the true nature of things and the real purpose of human life. Now, fifty years later, we have the same age you had when you came to America searching for us, and although we are completely transformed by your grace, we still remain your little defenseless children, which, in order to keep our faith and enthusiasm alive, still need to hear your voice over and over again nourishing ourselves with the powerful, nectarean food of your divine teachings. By reading your books and listening to your recorded classes, we feel and share with you the sublime reality of the spiritual world so naturally, clearly and obvious that without any doubt we dwell in it, even when “apparently” we are walking side by side with other sleeping beings on planet earth.

Personally, since I am at your service, I have felt and always feel protected and completely satisfied in every situation. Like you rescue other disciples and followers, you have also rescued me from the clutches of māyā. By giving me the name of Śrī Padāmbuja Dāsa, you have made me the servant of the lotus feet of Krishna. This rescue and inconceivable blessing of yours are so real that not in a million lives could I have found enough words to appropriately thank you. Nor I would be able to describe the feeling of peace and bliss I feel. I know I do not deserve you, however, you continue protecting and encouraging me. I glorify you eternally for that.

I am very clumsy and ignorant. Perhaps I am boring you with too much talk and few facts, however, either way, inconceivably and

miraculously I am your son, which, without deserving your attention, I feel receiving I am receiving from you every day. Otherwise, by myself, I would not be able to chant Hare Krishna every day; neither remember Him, or worship the Lord on my altar as I do. At all times, I am moved and inspired by you. My debt to you is immense.

Distinguishing the real from the false, perceiving the true nature of things and directing my steps in the right direction, I owe it all to you. Is there anything bigger than transcending the influence of the illusory material energy and serving Krishna? There are no words capable of expressing the meaning of being in the presence of the Lord, after having being introduced into His Kingdom by someone like you, His most confidential servant. Certainly, talking of inconceivable magic, miracle or marvel is little to refer to this beautiful reality, of which—thanks to your indescribable mercy—I can enjoy next to your unconditional devotees.

After forty-four years of having met you and lived in the shade of your lotus feet, I can clearly understand that you are the one who makes it possible for me, as well as for other beings, to comprehend that you are always interceding for us before Krishna. This fact proves that your rescue mission did not end with your physical presence. On the contrary, it impeccably continues, because it's your eternal mission; your unmotivated special service to Krishna. Otherwise, how can we explain that your movement vigorously keeps growing in quantity and quality, although you are not physically present on the planet?

It is very clear to me that the only real thing is the spiritual plane of existence. Associating with your persona, by Your Divine Grace, we can all be transported there. Every day that passes by, I experience and appreciate the fortune of being aboard the incommensurable transcendental ship that you have built, which is constantly expanding and you modestly called it "A house were everybody can live".

Conditioned souls have their two feet in the material world. The ones that begin to awaken their consciousness have one foot in each platform. And, those who fully awaken their consciousness have their two feet in the spiritual world. This is what, by your grace, I have comprehended in all these years.

At this last stage of my life (now I am 73), I realized that meditating on you means having both feet in the spiritual world. From this position, one can see the material existence (comprised

of millions of lives) as a distant, diffused nightmare, incapable of negatively influencing one's humor, impossible to shadow our bliss. We prevail in a continuing endless ecstasy that personally makes me feel like a tree firmly rooted in the land of Krishna, although, in the context of rational logic is difficult to accept.

The wonders of the spiritual world that we can experience, due to your selfless dedication, boundless love and extreme sacrifice, has become our permanent sublime habitat which leads us with ample determination to communicate what we have learn from you, to those suffering homeless souls of the material world.

I have no more words, not because lack of interest in continuing to glorify and appreciate the inconceivable gifts I have received and continue receiving from you each day. I stop now, because I know there are no words to continue glorifying you as I desire to do so.

From the deepest of my heart, and in constant renewal to serve you better every day,

Your unqualified servant,

Śrī Padāmbuja Dāsa

Śubhāngī Devī Dāsī

Dear most Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My life is only for you

I am only because of you,

What could I sacrifice for you?

Please take me home with you!

I wanna serve you!

How can I serve you?

With what can I serve you?

There is nothing much left, with what I could serve you!

Please, I pray, may you give me an efficient service

To serve your mission even in old age,

Now, that I have understood,

Why I should serve you with every breath

Your aspiring servant forever

Śubhāngī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to your divine appearance day. All glories to your ISKCON's 50th anniversary.

You have come to the West in 1965 on board the *Jaladuta* with a single purpose – to fulfil the order given to you by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, your divine master. You received that order in December 1936, just a fortnight before your gurudeva's disappearance.

You started working to execute his command almost immediately. In the fifties you founded the League of Devotees in Jhansi. In order to spread Krishna consciousness you felt the need to have some legal society with whatever goes along with it, including a charter. You registered it in 1953. Unfortunately the League of Devotees was short-lived, but as there is no loss in any spiritual activities, the basic framework of the league was revived in 1966 when you founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in New York.

With ISKCON you could finally execute the order of your Guru Mahārāja to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the English speaking world. When we read and hear about this historical event in New York in 1966, we remain speechless. Your dear son, Brahmānanda Prabhu described the event in one of his early memories. Until this day I am awestruck... such a vision of clarity of purpose. Only divine inspiration can produce it. Let's look at the last point in the charter:

“With a view towards achieving all the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, magazines, books and other writings.”

When there was nobody to help, when there were no resources, when there were no facilities, when there was not one initiated disciple, you had this vision. Obviously, you were 100% confident that by the grace of your Guru Mahārāja you could make it happen. Otherwise why would you have put it in the Charter of ISKCON? Amazing!

You are definitely the empowered devotee sent by Lord Caitanya and predicted later on by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. They had already sent some *jīvas* to appear in the material world to help you accomplish your task. Otherwise how can it be explained? The original stalwart devotees were just waiting around the corner to join

you in the *sāṅkīrtana* movement. By your mercy they accomplished superhuman tasks and the movement took off like a rocket. Hare Kṛṣṇa became a household world within a short time. In 1968 three householder couples came to London to establish Lord Caitanya's mission in a place where experienced sannyāsīs failed 30 years before. Not only that. They got the most famous people in the world to spread the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra! Wow! Prabhupada what *śakti* you invested in them! Once the US and UK were conquered, it was only a question of time until the holy names of the Lord were spread all over the world.

In November 1969, for the first time in this life, I was so fortunate to hear the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra in Piccadilly Circus, London. Little did I know what impact this strange chant would have on me, a dedicated sense enjoyer. But looking back, I realize that this brief encounter with the devotees and the holy names was the start to make me embark – a couple of years later – on the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I feeling very much indebted to you. At the same time I regret that I could not become a better devotee, though I still like to serve you in any capacity that I can be of some use to you. I humbly beg you to accept this tiny service. Specifically in this year 2016 it is a great pleasure for me to go and explain the glories of your pastimes in establishing ISKCON. Although I don't know Kṛṣṇa, I know you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Reading the memories of your disciples describing your activities is my only hope and solace in this material world. You are such a great devotee that simply by doing this I can keep my enthusiasm and inspiration alive.

Kindly grant us the favor that we can remain conscious of you and Kṛṣṇa for the remaining years of our journey in this world. That will hopefully give us an opportunity to serve you again in a future life.

Deeply indebted, your servant,

Śrīniketana Dāsa

Narakāntaka Dāsa

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

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

Most beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You are always engaged in unalloyed devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead by spreading His glories far and wide. Your Divine Grace is a direct manifestation of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, a genuine representative of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and as such the greatest personality of all times.

I'm still here, for an undeserved fortune, in this most sacred yearly appointment to add again my voice to the one of the transcendental choir of your many disciples, to jointly sing the unlimited glories of Your Divine Grace.

You are the perfect spiritual master, my sublime eternal teacher. I belong to you and it is with deep love and gratitude that I earnestly desire to reaffirm the complete surrender of my tiny independence which I joyfully submit at your command.

My only desire is to utilize my whole existence in fulfilling your desire: ignite the spark to awaken the dormant pure love for Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna lying in every conditioned soul's heart.

In order to become a receptacle of your mercy, so to succeed in such a wonderful task, first I have to become purely Krishna conscious myself.

That means always remember and never forget Your Divine Grace.

And I want to remember you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but not only as a reassuring thought parked in the back of my mind while I do what I like in executing devotional service (even if what I like to do may be the right thing to do).

What I actually desire the most is to be able to bring up, right to the top of my mind's thoughts, the powerful sound of your ācārya voice, always chastising me for my faults when my intentions or actions do not strictly comply with your instructions and spiritual standards.

Yes Śrīla Prabhupāda, at least for me, this is the best way to always

remember and never forget Your Divine Grace— the most secure and protective way against the dangerous illusory complacency, unintelligent enthusiasm, false kindness, imaginative ecstasy and sentimental speculation induced by Māyā's mystic power—and also the most rewarding!

Tokyo 24/04/1972:

“So, so far we are concerned, when our spiritual master used to chastise, we took it as blessing. That was very nice. And he would chastise like anything. ‘Damn rascal’, ‘foolish’, ‘stupid’ anything, all good words. (laughter)”

One day it so happened... Prabhupāda was speaking. So I was very much fond of hearing. That gentleman, he was a retired doctor. So he wanted to speak something. He should not have done so, but... Just like... So naturally I also... And Prabhupāda saw it, and he became so angry. So he knew that my attention was drawn by him. He chastised him like anything.

He was old man, actually almost like his age. So he was paying sixty rupees in those days per month.

So he became so angry, that “Do you think that because you pay sixty rupees, you have purchased us? You can do anything and anything?” He said like that. Very strong word he used. “Do you think that I am speaking for others? You have learned everything? You are diverting your attention.”

So many ways, he was very, very angry. You see?

So this is nice, to chastise... (Bg 2.11): “Arjuna, you are talking like a learned man, but you are a fool number one.” *Gatāsūn aḡatāsūmś ca nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ*. That means “If you had been actually *paṇḍita*, learned man, then you would not have lamented for this body; *Gatāsun*...but the modern civilization, they are giving all value to this body, all their philanthropic work, hospitalization and this, so many things...In the *Bhagavad-gītā* we don't find anywhere a single line that “You raise fund for” I mean to say, “giving relief to the poor” or “to the suffering”. Is there any instruction in *Bhagavad-gītā*? You have read. Can you find out? But these people, they have become more learned than Kṛṣṇa.

“Our Guru Mahārāja, so strict...a little discrepancy, he would chastise like anything. But we liked it very much.”

I don't want to fall into the trap of thinking: “Now everything is fine. I've reached a safe position. I'm competent.”

Ādi-Līlā 7.72: “Every disciple must consider himself completely unaware of the science of Kṛṣṇa and must always be ready to carry out the orders of the spiritual master to become competent in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A disciple should always remain a fool before his spiritual master.”

Māyāpur 08/04/1975:

“So disciple should be always ready to be chastised. He should not think that he has become perfect. That is perfection. So long he thinks that he is not perfect – he’s to be chastised – then he’s perfect. And as soon as he thinks that he has become perfect, he’s nonsense immediately, nonsense number one.”

Letter to Gajendra Prabhu 27/01/1970:

“A sincere disciple feels it pleasurable when his spiritual master chastises him with calling him such names as fool and rascal. My spiritual master sometimes called me in that way and I remember that day always and feel transcendental pleasure.”

Please Śrīla Prabhupāda, give me the spiritual intelligence to act in pursuit of your desired goal. Protect me from the snake-like over-intelligence, that with its venomous effect obfuscates my consciousness and blurs my spiritual vision.

Letter to Śivānanda Prabhu 13/02/1969:

“Regarding utilizing intelligence in devotional service, intelligence should be confirmed by the spiritual master. Therefore we accept the spiritual master for guidance. You should not depend on your own intelligence.” Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I’m totally aware that your chastisement is an action of love.

Bhuvaneśvara 02/02/1977:

“All these students, all these disciples...I do not accept anyone as my disciple that ‘You can do whatever you like. No. My first condition is that ‘You must be sinless’. At least you must try to become sinless, because in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.28) we understand: *yeṣāṁ tv anta-gataṁ pāpaṁ janānāṁ puṇya-karmanām te dvandva-moha-nirmuktā bhajante mām...*”

Without being sinless, one cannot make any advance.”

Philosophy discussion on Arthur Schopenhauer:

“I can also become bold enough to chastise you, but you also, what, in whatever condition, you carry my order due to the basic principle is love. And our whole philosophy is love. We are just trying to learn how to love Kṛṣṇa, that’s all.”

Letter to Niraṣjana Prabhu 05/05/1972:

“This is the duty of the father or spiritual master, to simply chastise. By this chastisement, the disciple can realize his mistakes, and become strong and fixed up in devotional service.”

Please Śrīla Prabhupāda, continue to chastise me all the time if I become distracted while chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare* or if I miss to chant the prescribed number of rounds on the *japa-mālā*.

Please, continue to chastise me if I do not pay proper attention during the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class.

Please, continue to chastise me if I do not study attentively and regularly your transcendental Bhaktivedanta purports from your *Bhāgavata* books and therefore ask nonsensical questions. Or worse, if I divert my attention to reading some conditioned soul’s useless nonsensical writings.

Please, continue to chastise me if I do not adopt the proper behavior in front of the Deities or within a holy Vaiṣṇavas’ assembly and if I indulge in futile ‘world-wide *prajalpa*’—idle talk (as you had foreseen in a letter to Gurudāsa Prabhu in Calcutta 5th February 1977: “The installing of telex communications for our main temples is not required. Then they will gossip more through the telex.”).

Please, continue to chastise me as soon as I begin to drift toward a false sense of independence.

Please, continue to chastise me when I waste my precious allotted span of time and distract my mind with some non-Krishna conscious programs or become lenient toward my own determination-killing weaknesses.

Please, continue to chastise me if I think that your chastisement it is unfair, because I do not deserve it since I’m not doing anything wrong.

Please Śrīla Prabhupāda, always chastise me with your breathtaking “Sit Properly”. I miss it so much!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I beg you to bless me with the desire for your chastisement, life after life.

So that, by your chastisement, someday I’ll become completely sinless, and gaining Your Divine Grace’s association as your humble eternal servant I’ll be able to happily utter: “Our Guru Mahārāja, so strict...a little discrepancy, he would chastise like anything. But we liked it very much!”

Hare Krishna.

Let me humbly pray their Lordships Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi, the source of all remembrance, to grant me the power to always remember and never forget His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!*

Your unworthy servant,

Narakāntaka Dāsa

(former Tridaṇḍi dāsa) from Radio Krishna Centrale, Italy

Ānandamaya Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to you, Guru Maharaja, who has taken shelter at the lotus feet of Lord Krishna and has come to deliver us from voidism, impersonalism, and misconception in general.

Another year has passed and following is my report to Your Divine Grace. What I never considered when I was young has happened; I have passed into an old man’s body with its concomitant and increasingly acute distresses. I hope that it pleases you that I hold fast to some chanting daily, although I do not like to chant unless I am attentive. I read from your books and listen to your recordings, also.

I regret to say that the longer I practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the less I feel that I grasp it. Yet I have hope that in some birth I may fulfill your wish that we become purified and that my will synchronizes with that of the Lord and I again become a particle of spirit useful to the Lord, no longer separated by misconception, as well as becoming increasingly useful to your good self.

I observe a rapid acceleration of the deleterious effects of Kali-yuga, which greatly disturbs me. There are now ghastly political, societal and climatic disturbances. I used to ignore politics, but the world is now inundated on all sides by political and social factions of every persuasion. Sometimes I wonder if you want me to become involved in these highly contentious issues, but then I realize that you simply wanted us to finish up our business here and get out. Should we become involved here, we run the risk of taking on fresh karma in this reactionary world. On the other hand, some of these events affect the Vaiṣṇavas, so I feel that these events cannot be ignored altogether, and I speak out on them, cautiously. I almost feel as though an unscheduled incarnation of the Lord will be needed here to clean up this mess before the next scheduled incarnation, that of Kalki *avatār*. Is that possible?

One of your instructions to us was to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and I am pleased to report to Your Divine Grace that I am still distributing your books and have also one preaching website running by your mercy. I have recently read an estimate that now 1% of the population of most countries have accepted Kṛṣṇa consciousness and taken it to heart. You wanted at least 10% of the population to become Kṛṣṇa conscious, so there is still a vast gap that needs to be bridged. I know that I must increasingly play a part, so I am considering re-starting the little beach kīrtan programs that I used to sponsor. Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please somehow give me guidance so that I may fulfill your desires.

Your disciple and servant,

Ānandamaya Dāsa

Mr̥tyuhara dās Adhikārī

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

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

On this auspicious day of your divine appearance, all your disciples offer a Vyāsa-pūjā meditation to you. This year is the

50th anniversary of ISKCON's foundation, and is supposed to be a special year. The next big anniversary will be in the year 2066, and I am sure all my godbrothers and myself will all be gone from this material world.

Then, for us, there will be no special anniversary for this specific commemoration. When no more disciples of yours will be present in this world, my wish is to see only one person glorified, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. If this happens, it means that we did the right service to you.

Your wish is to spread our movement worldwide, and all the devotees are trying to perform this big service for your satisfaction.

We can see how people in general are acting against the spiritual principles of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. They are all engaged in indefinitely increasing their gratification in this material world.

Our duties are to preserve your desire, to preach "*As It Is*".

You are like a commander and we are like soldiers. Fighting can sometimes be dangerous, but if we follow the commander's instruction, we will be safe.

To always be successful in preaching means to put you in front of us.

Śrī Krishna is the sun, you are Śrī Krishna's sunlight, and I like to live under your light.

I can't be in front of you, you are always in front of me

I can't preach, you are a preacher

I don't have desire, you have desire

I don't save people, you save people

I don't speak *Bhagavad-gītā*, You speak *Bhagavad-gītā*

I don't write books, you write books

I want to act as just one finger of your body, and you can use me as your instrument.

My desire is to remain under your shadow and to never see the false sunlight of *māyā*.

I am satisfied being in your shadow, and this is the place I am feeling protection.

Your eternal servant,

Mṛtyuhara dās Adhikārī

PRABHUPĀDA IN MY LIFE

Today, I am very conscious that without Prabhupāda I am nothing. I am just a little dust on the ground. Prabhupāda is part of my life, eternally. And in my conditioned stage of consciousness I don't see any hope of salvation and I am not even thinking about it. I just want to serve him, eternally, no matter where. When Prabhupāda came to the Western countries he transformed my life into a new life, an eternal life, full of knowledge and bliss.

We, Prabhupāda's disciples in Brazil, have been serving him all this time and now that we are getting old we are depending more and more on Vaisnavas' mercy and care, as well as the maintenance of our spiritual consciousness through our devotion. We are carefully observing rules and regulations, studying his books daily, and taking shelter at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet with great determination.

I have been keeping important remembrances about Prabhupāda all these years. I was working on his books at the Portuguese BBT. When he came to the Los Angeles Temple (1976), that meeting remained in my heart forever as a lotus treasure of his unlimited qualities. We can't ever forget his beautiful and unforgettable smile, his transcendental pastimes and genuine instructions and strong determination to fulfill the mission of his spiritual master, His Divine Grace, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswāmī. All these remembrances are the vital air in my body which keep me alive, faithfully, trusting fully our Founder-Ācārya, His Divine Grace, Śrīla Prabhupāda, our father, friend and eternal spiritual master.

“When a pure devotee or spiritual master speaks, what he says should be accepted as having been directly spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the *paramparā* system” – A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda. (Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛita, Antya Līlā, 05.71)

In the beginning, even without knowing him personally, we, Prabhupāda's disciples in South America were serving him in the mood of separation by editing and distributing his books daily, in the sun or rain. But later on, by the grace of the Vaiṣṇavas, I had the opportunity to see him personally, hear from him and serve him. This short period of time was impregnated with spiritual realizations

and the feeling of Kṛṣṇa’s presence in each moment (when he was there and even after his departure to another country). I really don’t know how my life would be without Prabhupāda, without Kṛṣṇa, without the association of Vaiṣṇavas, without the opportunity of worshipping him, glorifying him, understanding and realizing his transcendental nature more and more, each day, each second. By his pure guidance I learned about Kṛṣṇa and how to serve Him. Through his books, I learned how to look in the right direction and perform *saṅkīrtana* and to enlighten others about the importance of their spiritual nature and how to stop the circle of birth and death (*saṁsāra*), how they should use their free will correctly by choosing the best way of life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In this way, waking their dormant love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, at least in this lifetime.

“Simply we have to desire to please Him, and not desire anything for ourselves. Then we become simply instruments for His will. This is the important essence of Kṛṣṇa consciousness” – Letter to Ātreya Ṛṣi, October 20, 1973

Your servants,

Rāga Bhūmi Devī Dāsī and Mahā Kāla Dāsa (brother-in-law)

Āshālatā Devī Dāsī

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances on to your lotus feet again and again.

With the mercy of Krishna one gets guru. With the mercy of guru one gets Krishna.

I thank Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna for blessing me by giving me a guru like you. I want to glorify you, but your glories are beyond my words. What can I say to the biggest author on the earth?

On the *Jaladuta* came a Krishnaduta, the messenger of God to spread Krishna consciousness to the Western world to deliver the fallen souls all over the world.

You came as a boat for us to cross this material ocean; what would have happened to our lives without you? You showed us the path to our real home, back to Godhead and you told us the procedure to get there. We are forever in gratitude to you.

You are a real disciple. To follow the instruction of your guru, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, you proceeded to the West. 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. To spread Krishna consciousness, you faced any and every obstacle that came your way, regardless of your personal comfort or personal interests. And you did it.

Seeing your austerity, purity and sincerity, Krishna came to support you with his full forces. Your desires came true and you spread Krishna consciousness all over the globe.

You are a genuine guru—Jagat Guru—a great, great *mahātmā* who did a wonder in the world and a miracle on the earth.

It has been 50 years since you established ISKCON. With determination and boldness you incorporated this society, putting Krishna front and centre. From the humble beginnings of Tompkins Square Park and Matchless Gifts, you successfully established hundreds of centres around the world—including temples, restaurants and farm communities. Now Krishna consciousness has even penetrated China and Pakistan.

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. Until the moon, sun and stars remain in the sky, your glories will remain Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your worthless servant,

Āshālātā Devī Dāsī

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

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

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of ISKCON, it must be recognized that you gave the greatest gift to the world.

Last year in 2015 in Boston, we all celebrated your arrival 50 years ago to the West. How fortunate for all of us in the Western world that by the order of your guru maharaja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja, you were so compassionate and kind to take the trouble to make the journey across the ocean.

First and foremost I would like to thank you again and again for accepting me at your lotus feet. In spite that I took birth in a Vaishnava family and met many saintly persons who used to come to my childhood home, I did not get any closer to Krishna consciousness until I met you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I do not know anyone who is more closer to Gaura-Nitāi, Lord Krishna and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī than you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You are the most merciful guru in this universe. You have more qualities than I have pen and paper or my brain and mouth to describe. It would take lifetimes to describe them.

However, with my limited knowledge and mind I will try.

In *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita*, Madhya Lila 22.78–80 it is stated:

*kṛpālu, akṛta-droha, satya-sāra sama
nidoṣa, vadānya, mṛdu, śuci, akiṣcana
sarvopakāraka, śānta, kṛṣṇaika-śaraṇa
akāma, anīha, sthira, vijita-ṣaḍ-guṇa
mita-bhuk, apramatta, mānada, amānī
gambhīra, karuṇa, maitra, kavi, dakṣa, maunī*

“Devotees are always merciful, humble, truthful, equal to all, faultless, magnanimous, mild and clean. They are without material possessions, and they perform welfare work for everyone. They are

peaceful, surrendered to Kṛṣṇa and desireless. They are indifferent to material acquisitions and are fixed in devotional service. They completely control the six bad qualities—lust, anger, greed and so forth. They eat only as much as required, and they are not inebriated. They are respectful, grave, compassionate and without false prestige. They are friendly, poetic, expert and silent.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a pure devotee and perfectly possess these twenty-six qualities of a pure devotee of Krishna, as given in Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛita:

1. Merciful – *Kṛpālu*:

As far as I know, there is no one more merciful than you Śrīla Prabhupāda. You gave so much through your writing, lectures, temples and festivals in order to have mercy on the conditioned souls. A Vaishnava is merciful because he is the well-wisher of all living entities. There is no better well-wisher of all of us than you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Even when you wrote letters, you would sign, “Your ever well-wisher”. This shows that you were always thinking of us.

2. Non-defiant – *Akṛta-droha*:

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛita*, *akṛta-droha* is translated as humble. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have shown us the real meaning of being humble. You never took credit for the thriving and successful ISKCON all over the world. You said that you have done nothing except follow the order of your spiritual master, surrendering to his instructions and following them with full humility.

3. Truthful – *Satya-sāra*:

You are the most truthful person. You told us the absolute truth, the supreme truth of chanting Hare Krishna which alone can save mankind in this Age of Kali. You never changed the message of the Lord, giving everyone Vedic literature as-it-is.

4. Equal to Everyone – *Sama*:

You instructed and followed this by treating everyone equally. Your mercy and compassion was given equally to all without regard of

age, colour, race, or qualification. You saw everyone as spirit souls and not their various material forms.

5. Faultless – *Nidoṣa*:

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are free from any faults. You were never in illusion, never tried to cheat others, never possessed imperfect senses, and never had the tendency to commit mistakes. You were always engaged in pure devotional service to the Lord.

6. Magnanimous – *Vadānya*:

You are the most magnanimous, giving us the most matchless gifts — spiritual knowledge, devotion, festivals, *prasāda*, books, Deities, the mahā-mantra, and more.

7. Mild – *Mṛdu*:

You are the most gentle and mild despite having attained success and respect across the world, you tolerated our faults and remained mild despite any tribulations.

8. Clean – *Śuci*:

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you exemplified cleanliness by displaying and teaching both spiritual and bodily cleanliness.

9. Without Possessions – *Akiṣcana*:

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you showed as ācārya by example that in spite of all the ISKCON possessions, you put everything in ISKCON's name, nothing personally.

10. Welfare Work for Everyone – *Sarvopakāraka*:

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were that exceptional personality that performed the highest welfare work for mankind to give us the formula to go back home, back to Godhead.

11. Peaceful – *Śānta*:

In spite of all the difficulties and troubles in dealing with all the neophytes and raising ISKCON, you remained peaceful and kept absorbed in the mission assigned by your spiritual master.

12. Surrendered to Krishna – *Krishna śaraṇa:*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were constantly absorbed in Krishna’s will and dependent on Him. You showed complete material detachment as well as detachment from the bodily concept of life.

13. Desireless – *Akāma:*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you possessed absolutely no material desires. You simply wanted to serve your spiritual master and Lord Chaitanya. You were fully determined to spread Krishna consciousness all over the world.

14. Indifferent to Material Acquisitions – *Anīha:*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you utilized everything in the service of Krishna, using everything from printing presses and voice recorders, airplanes and vehicles to buildings and marble in order to preach Krishna consciousness.

15. Fixed – *Sthira:*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were absolutely determined and fixed in your mission to preach around the world. You took your guru maharaja’s order, and with fixed determination made it your life’s work.

16. Completely Controls the Six Bad Qualities – *Vijita-Ṣaḍ-Guṇa:*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you only possess transcendental qualities and never manifested the six bad qualities of lust, greed, anger, greed, illusion, madness and envy. You taught us that we can mitigate these qualities from our nature through the process of devotional service and by following the four regulative principles.

17. Eats only as Much as Required – *Mita-bhuk:*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I remember once a devotee asked you, “How much should we eat?” You replied, “eat well” and a few moments later, “but not too much.” You would be presented with great amounts of *prasāda* but you would only eat a small portion and then distribute the remainder to the devotees.

18. Sane – *Apramatta*:

You were never under the influence of *māyā* or intoxicated with so-called material pleasures. You were never under material illusion. You taught us simple living and high-thinking and led by example, always being absorbed in thoughts of Krishna.

19. Respectful – *Mānada*:

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you showed everyone respect, treating everyone as equal living beings despite many showing ignorance. Through your display of respect to everyone, you brought many to Krishna consciousness.

20. Without False Prestige – *Amānī*:

Although you were the head of ISKCON, a worldwide movement, with dozens of temples, thousands of devotees and followers, false prestige never touched you. You would never take credit and would always thank the devotees for helping you in your mission and would give full acknowledgement to your spiritual master.

21. Grave – *Gambhīra*:

You told us to be grave was to be serious about Krishna consciousness. You displayed this graveness by never forgetting Krishna—even for a second. Once, you had arrived in Australia and a reporter at the airport asked why you were looking very grave. You replied that you were thinking of Lord Krishna and since Krishna is so great naturally we become grave. She asked you if you ever smiled and in response, you smiled even though you were still thinking of Krishna.

22. Compassionate – *Karuṇa*:

Who can be more compassionate than you who could not bear to see conditioned souls in distress? You have brought mercy to the lowest of the lowest and made them into devotees and *sannyāsīs*. You were always thinking of your disciples and their spiritual journey.

23. Friendly – *Maitra*:

You are our real friend because you directed us to Krishna. You gave us real friendship — not the temporary selfish friendship found in this Age of Kali. You displayed your sincere friendship by always signing your letters, “Your ever well-wisher.”

24. Poetic – *Kavi*

One of Krishna’s many names is Uttamasloka which states He is very pleased with the choicest poetic words. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, not only wrote poems on the *Jaladuta* but several other times including your 1936 Vyasa-puja offering to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Maharaja. Since that day, your godbrothers would call you “Kavi”.

25. Expert – *Dakṣa*:

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you once said, “A devotee is expert. This means he is willing to do anything. He does not say that because he is a brāhmaṇa he cannot do a menial task.” You displayed compete expertise every aspect and you expertly presented Krishna consciousness to the world, engaging even neophytes in this movement.

26. Silent – *Mauni*:

You told us that we should always be eager to speak about Krishna but we should be silent in terms of nonsense talk. You always spoke about Krishna through lectures and preaching and never engaged in the nonsense of gossip and material talk.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have all of these qualities and more. Please be merciful to this menial servant so that I can receive even a little shadow of these qualities and follow in a minute way.

Please keep me close to your lotus feet and in the service of your ISKCON.

Your worthless servant,

Śubhavlāsa 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*

Fifty years ago this summer, in a tiny storefront on New York City's Lower East Side, you officially established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON).

Outside of yourself, no one could understand your intention, or your vision. Even the name you chose was puzzling. At that time your little group was far from "International." You had arrived from India less than a year before, but the others were all American. Nor was it much of a "Society." It was just a handful of youth, mostly dropouts from the mainstream, who occasionally spent time with you and were slowly—not so steadily—committing to following your teachings.

"Krishna" was definitely there, you made sure of that. You did not teach about a faceless, nameless Supreme. Yours would not be the International Society for "God" Consciousness. No. You impressed upon your followers, your "Society," that God is a person. His name is Krishna, and chanting His name is the best path forward in this troubled Age.

Your community was destined to become "Conscious" because of your presence. Many in your youthful clan were seeking consciousness altering or consciousness awakening before meeting you. But, you started them on the path of being conscious of the basics of human life—you are not this body, life is meant to overcome suffering, and you are not the master of all you survey.

Beyond those simple concepts of spiritual knowledge, your young followers couldn't begin to comprehend your expansive vision: That ISKCON will be a vibrant international society, one that will reach far beyond the boundaries of New York, and—like the *Bhāgavatam* itself—become a "transcendental creation meant to bring about a revolution in the misguided lives of an impious civilization."

But you saw the future. You laid out your vision in your Seven

Purposes of ISKCON, which not only legally established the functions of your society; they gave a glimpse of things yet to come.

Today, fifty years later, we need to pause, ponder and remember the boldness, the courage, the compassion and the urgency of your Seven Purposes. During this year, the 50th Anniversary of the founding of ISKCON, we aspire to go beyond our limited vision to look anew at your purposes, to celebrate fifty years of progress—and lessons learned—and to renew our conviction and commitment to the amazing journey you have set us upon.

Let us contemplate briefly just one purpose, your first:

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

Such a beautiful vision! It is an expression of hope, founded on a radical proposition:

That spiritual education and spiritual practice can address our most fundamental problems and provide in a practical and systematic way, solutions to all of today’s ills.

Today those ills are so vast, so all pervasive, and so disturbing. We live in a time of ever-increasing stress. Individuals are stressed; families are stressed; the global economy is stressed; relief efforts are stressed; political systems are stressed; and the entire eco system is stressed. It is painful to see, and painful to contemplate. And yet the mass of people remain, as you wrote in the Boston Harbor, “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 Vasudeva.”

We, your followers and modern day members of ISKCON, are trying to heed your call. We want to awaken our own taste for the message of Vasudeva. We pray to help you bring about “real unity and peace in the world.” Yet, too often our own shortcomings hold us back. Our sectarianism. Our arrogance. Our lack of faith. Our unwillingness to put the welfare of others before our own. Please forgive us for these shortcomings, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please take us, despite all our flaws and weaknesses, and make us your instruments.

Much has been accomplished in the first fifty years of your movement, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Yet, we have only begun to chip away at the ignorance, deceit and corruption that rot the modern society, and if we are honest, our own hearts. As members of ISKCON, as

your followers, we pray to realize that we will only make a genuine difference, a genuine change in the world, if we humbly and sincerely beg to comprehend your vision, your purpose, and yes, your greatness.

If we begin to see as you see, Śrīla Prabhupāda—to see the Lord all around us, to see that the souls suffering in this world are our lost friends and fellow lovers of God, and that “systematically” propagating spiritual knowledge is the only way to “check the imbalance of values in life,” then only will the troubles that shake us, the obstacles that face us, and the material desires that plague us quickly fade. At that time, by absorbing our minds in your vision, we will also find that your determination, your compassion, and your inspiration will flood our hearts. Then only we will become empowered and capable tools in your hands—and as members of your International Society for Krishna Consciousness, help to bring about the peace and unity that you envision for the world.

Your servant,

Anuttama Dāsa

Haridāsa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

The 50th anniversary of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness has arrived and is being celebrated around the world. How fortunate for us all.

Here in the United States of America there is a longstanding constitutional mandate that religion and the state must be separated. The state is not against religion, but the state must not endorse a particular religion. Thus we have separation of church and state. Over time this has led to many court cases about religious icons or scriptural teachings being presented in public places by civil

authorities, or by trustees of public institutions and property. This doctrine has led to the building of a boundary that bars religious representations from being sponsored and displayed publicly by civil authorities . . .

Except, perhaps, in my little corner of the country close to Washington, DC, where situated openly in a public building on a college campus is a beautiful First American Theistic Exhibition (FATE) diorama illustrating the *Bhagavad-gītā* verse 2:13, which shows a human life proceeding in all its stages from birth to death and then shows transmigration of the soul to another body.

The plaque beneath it reads:

“As the embodied soul continually passes, in this body, from boyhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death. The self realized soul is not bewildered by such a change.” *Bhagavad Gītā As It Is*, 2:13

This diorama has been in the same spot for more than 25 years. I know because more than 25 years ago—as a student—I saw it displayed in the same hallway in which it sits today and have seen it there many times over the years. Nowadays I serve as a professor at the same college and the FATE diorama sits there still. Its fixed presence on the campus is unusual considering that religious iconography, or scriptural quotations, are not displayed anywhere else on campus because of the public nature of the institution.

I think the *Bhagavad-gītā*'s clear and sober truth presented by the diorama has been accepted by the institutional authorities in your way, Śrīla Prabhupāda—as a *science*, one worthy of being presented to all for thoughtful consideration. For if it were perceived as a religious teaching of a sectarian group, it would have been removed for fear of violating the separation of church and state mandate, and thus open the institution to potential legal actions. Therefore it would have been removed despite its aesthetic and educational value.

I am proud and grateful that it continues to sit serenely at the college, my place of service, and that it daily enlightens passersby with transcendental knowledge. It does this for me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, by reminding me of you, your teachings, and your devoted followers.

Out of your kindness, 50 years ago, you and your new-found followers formed the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. The enduring presence of the FATE diorama is one of many testaments to how Krishna consciousness is becoming successfully rooted in Western society.

Thank you so much for blessing the people of our land, and all lands, by weaving us into Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's wreath of "the holy name and prema" that you have woven around the world.

Your servant,

Haridāsa Dāsa

Arjuna Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

By Your Divine Grace we have understood that life is a learning curve, and that the trials and tribulations we experience, which are the fruits of our own bad karma, actually impel us to evolve spiritually. When we are ready for it, Lord Kṛṣṇa arranges for us to meet a genuine saintly guru like your lotus self who teaches us how to become saintly ourselves. Your Divine Grace chose debauched New Yorkers as your first ISKCON disciples and you quickly uplifted them to prove to the world that Lord Caitanya's process of delivering the most fallen actually works when sincerely practised. Your disciples quickly attained great spiritual heights by pleasing you and thus pleasing the Lord, which is the open secret of prompt spiritual advancement. Over the last 40 years we have seen so many of your disciples become truly saintly and so visibly spiritually advanced. They are the living proof that the process of following the instructions of Your Divine Grace actually works. You wanted that the whole world becomes happy in Krishna consciousness. You created a house in which everyone may live, you named it the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), and thus you kindly offered the world a spiritual shelter or oasis, an international embassy wherein everyone and anyone can become part of a grand transcendental family of devotees that harmonizes all inter-ethnic cultures. You are kindly welcoming everyone to join your ISKCON family and are thus giving us so many brothers and sisters from every country in the world. Therein, your fundamental task of making saints out of us sinners is going on. This is the greatest achievement of real spiritual education.

The modern world is suffering in the turmoil of spiritual ignorance, and this torment is based on the popular and prevalent impersonal conception of the Supreme Being.

In 1935, you wrote in a prayer to your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, “The Absolute is sentient thou hast proved, impersonal calamity thou hast moved.”

In a letter to a leading disciple, you wrote, “To save a man from impersonal calamity is the greatest service to humanity.” — Letter to Gargamuni – 19 October, 1967

Your Divine Grace came to teach us that a higher reality does exist—a spiritual dimension free from all anxiety, a transcendental abode where every step is a dance and every word is a song. As the foremost ambassador of that spiritual world, you are inviting us to join you there for eternity. Furthermore, you revealed, the cynosure of all loving lives there, and He is never alone — His name is Krishna and He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Together with His divine feminine counterpart, Śrī Rādhā, and surrounded by hundreds of thousands of Goddesses of fortune, you and your Lord Krishna are welcoming us to come and join you there in His personal company and thus really enjoy.

On the order of your spiritual master you sailed from India to America on the ship *Jaladuta*, and on September 13th, 1965, while on board, you wrote, “A Prayer unto the Lotus Feet of Krishna.” In the first verse and refrain you pray, “*Krishna taba puṅya habe bhāi, e-puṅya koribe jabe rādhāraṇī khusī habe, dhruva ati boli tomā tāi* — I emphatically say to you, O brothers, you will obtain your good fortune from the Supreme Lord Krishna only when Śrīmatī Rādhāraṇī becomes pleased with you.”

Śrī Rādhā, addressed affectionately by Her devotees as Śrīmatī Rādhāraṇī (Śrī—divine and *matī*—mother), is the divine better half of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, and is described in the following Sanskrit prayers: *krishna-prāṇādhidevī ca, mahā-vishṇoḥ prasūr api, sarvādyā vishṇu-māyā ca, satyā nityā sanātānī* — Śrī Rādhā, who is the life of Krishna’s heart, is the first of all persons, and as the primordial Goddess, She expands as Lord Vishnu’s external energy, Māyā. She is the embodiment of truthfulness, is eternal and ever-youthful; *brahma-svarūpā paramā, nīrliptā nirguṇā parā, vṛindā vṛindāvane tvamī ca, virajā-taṭa-vāsīnī* — Śrī Rādhā’s transcendently immaculate appearance is the topmost spiritual form, is beyond mundane qualities and is Supreme. In Vṛindāvana, She is the Goddess *Vṛindā* (*Tulasī*), the leader of the gopīs and She resides on the banks of the Virajā River (where Goloka Dhāma is situated); *goloka-vāsīnī gopī, gopīsā gopa-mātrikā, sānandā paramānandā,*

nanda-nandana-kāminī — Śrī Rādhā lives in Goloka Vṛndāvana Dhāma, the topmost spiritual planet. She is a cowherd damsel (*gopī*) and is the Supreme controller of all the other *gopīs*. She is the divine mother of all the cowherd folk. She is always joyful. She personifies and radiates the highest transcendental ecstasy, pure love of Godhead, which She is always feeling and thus constantly experiencing the highest bliss. She expertly fulfils all the desires of the darling son of King Nanda, Kṛṣṇa.

Those who are spiritually cognizant understand that your ISKCON is actually Her movement. ISKCON serves as a conduit for Her infinite compassion. You wanted even your female disciples to thus become spiritual masters and help to widely spread Her compassion. This instruction of yours may not be so popular with the rank and file devotees nowadays, but in my understanding we are evidently a feminist movement, as every morning, all of ISKCON's sincere members pray to Tulasi Devi to become *dāsīs*, maidservants, (*sevā-adhikāra diyē koro nīja dāsī*.) As you explained to Śyāmasundara in your Philosophy Discussion on Carl Gustav Jung:

“Actually, the real position is that every living entity is female, originally. But falsely he is imitating to become a male, to enjoy. This is called *māyā*. Actually he is female, but he is trying to imitate the supreme male, Krishna. That is *māyā*. This is not fact. So our proposition is that you come to the original state, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You are not predominator, you are predominated. Predominated means female. That is our philosophy, because every living entity is by nature a female, *prakṛti*. The living entity is *prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* means female and *puruṣa* means male. So here in this material world, although we are *prakṛti*, we are identifying ourselves as *puruṣa*. This male-female dress, that is immaterial. Our consciousness is now male consciousness. A female, the so-called female, here, she also wants to enjoy a male, and the male also, he also wants to enjoy the female. Both of them have the same propensity of enjoying. So this enjoying propensity is for male. Therefore *jīvātmā* is sometimes described as *puruṣa*. But actually the *jīvātmā*, the living entities, they are *prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* means predominated, and *puruṣa* means predominator. So we are all predominated. And the predominator is Krishna. Therefore originally, by constitution, we are all females.”

Everything we offer, we offer through Your Divine Grace. Without you kindly offering our services on our behalf, nothing is accepted by Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna. You offer to your guru maharaja and like

that our offering goes up the through the chain of spiritual masters to the maṣjarīs then to the gopīs and only then to the Divine Couple.

Your Śrīmatī Rādhāraṇī re-combined with Her Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, to incarnate as Lord Chaitanya, in Bengal, India, in 1486, to start a spiritual movement for the enlightenment of all materialistic men all over the world. As the divine universal mother of all, Śrī Rādhā feels immense compassion for Her children in the material realms, who are all suffering in the darkness of ignorance. Those who help Her to alleviate that suffering of Her sons and daughters by the means of spreading Her Lord’s message of enlightenment and liberation are very, very dear to Her. To this end, Your Divine Grace is Her foremost ambassador from the spiritual world, and empowered by Her, you wrote and translated a profuse number of books full of this spiritual knowledge and divine ambrosial love. Helped by your sincere disciples, you established the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT), to systematically distribute and teach this transcendental literature all over the world.

You came to introduce Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna to the whole world. You personally established over 100 temples of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna around the world and instructed your followers how to properly worship Them, in a mood of awe and veneration. You guarded your followers against the folly of excessive familiarity which is the sure and quick path to spiritually regressing. Thus you have proved yourself to be a very special and personal envoy from Śrīmatī Radharani. You came to engage everyone in Their divine service and today there are over 600 ISKCON temples worldwide where Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna are served with love and devotion.

All this has happened in just 50 years! Just imagine what will happen in the upcoming 50 years. One thing is certain, dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, you will go down in history as having saved the whole world.

All glories to Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Begging to remain,

Your servant,

Arjuna Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are so much in love with Krishna that your heart is filled with an unlimited ocean of love, which is constantly overflowing. You have showered us, and are still showering us, with unending love and compassion, but I am so poor-hearted that my reciprocation is minute in comparison.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have achieved what no-one else has ever achieved before you, due to your unbounded love, faith, commitment, courage, determination, and compassion. Inspired by your example and filled with unending gratitude, we carry in our hearts our own dreams and desires that we would like to fulfil to reciprocate with you, to please you, and to assist you in your transcendental mission. I would like to do so much more for you than what I am doing, but I am limited by my *anarthas* and my karma.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you know our hearts, you know our dreams and desires, and you know how much we want to serve you, to please you, and to receive your merciful glance. Please accept our desires to serve you and, if you want them to come true, please ask your Lord Krishna to empower us that we may fulfil our dreams and desires for your pleasure, and for the benefit of wandering souls, either in this life or the next or the next, as you see fit. And, because life is very short, please bless us with the ability to utilise wisely whatever time we have left in this life for your service and your pleasure.

Your fallen daughter,

Jagannātheśvarī Devī Dāsī

*om aṣṣāna-timirāndhasya
jṣānāṣjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmlitam yena
tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your boundless mercy melts all hearts, however hard.

On this day of your Vyasa-puja, at your lotus feet, I offer my homage; Lacking humility, immersed in illusory activity, kindly forgive my audacity:

Like a red-faced ape I simply imitate, my foolishness please tolerate.

Gracious ambassador of Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma,
Fearless destroyer of Māyā's binding charm,
Glorious emissary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī,
Matchless bestower of Śrī Krishna *prema-bhakti*.

Your gentle heart, soft as a rose, overflows with compassion like Lord Nityānanda,

Your divine form, resplendent in *sannyāsa* robe, shines golden like Lord Caitanya,

Your sweet words, heavy with Absolute Truth, are soothing balm for every *jīva*,

Your lotus feet, immeasurable as the Ocean, are causeless shelter for Kali-yuga.

On your head the blessings of the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya Sampradāya,

Of Vaisnava saints such as Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana and Śrī Jīva;

Your preaching elicits shivering of ecstasy in Nārada and Lord Shiva,

While the *devas* shower you with flowers, shouting, "Jaya! Jaya!"

You brought the medicine, loud chanting of Śrī harināma *saṅkīrtana*,

Combined with study of the spotless *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*,

Saving us from ghastly hell in samsara's deathly vice,

Engaging us in Śrī Krishna's devotional service, the elixir of life.

“Chant sixteen rounds of Hare Krishna mantra every day, with full concentration,

Follow the four regulative principles strictly, without deviation,
Observe Vaisnava festivals such as Ekādaśī and Janmāshṭamī,
Serve your godbrothers and godsisters with utmost humility.

“Read *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Nectar of Devotion* and my other books daily,

Distribute my books profusely and simply repeat what you’ve heard from me,

Worship the Deity most opulently by offering Them all things nice,
Like *samosas* and *kachoris* fried in ghee, *rasagula*, *sandesh* and saffron sweet rice.

“Protect the cow and the bull, symbols of religiosity,
Cow’s milk is essential for good brain and healthy vitality.
Krishna is a cowherd boy, with His flute He calls each cow,
Balarama tills the Earth, on His shoulder rests a plough.”

With the *Teachings of Lord Caitanya* you destroy the Māyāvādī aberration,

With *Kṛṣṇa Book*, *prasāda* and the holy name you create a joyous celebration.

Throughout the universe your fame has spread,
Kali’s agents now run in fearful dread.

Prabhodānanda Saraswatī says, a heart awash with nectar,
Streaming from the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā,
Is achieved by attaining the lotus feet of Gaura,
But Gaura says, at Nitāi’s feet we must surrender.

Nitāi has now appeared as Śrīla Prabhupāda, our loving master!

At the lotus feet of our gurudeva we eagerly take shelter.

Śrī Guru’s lotus feet are the sole abode of pure devotion,

We fall at your lotus feet, begging for mercy without reservation.

By Your Divine Grace we can cross the ocean of misery!

By Your Divine Grace we obtain Śrī Krishna’s unlimited mercy!

May your teachings become one with our heart,

And from this holy path, may we never depart.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, at your lotus feet I pray, having fallen far away,
Please permit me to walk behind you, each and every day.

Your fallen servant,

Anīha Dāsa

All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I offer my most prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet and ask forgiveness for my offences for not always adhering to the instructions I heard from your very lips. In my youth I was much more obedient. When you were physically present I found serving The Lord and Vaiṣṇavas so much easier. With age I have matured in body and intellect but my devotional spirit has withered.

Please excuse this weakness of mine and help me to once again situate myself properly by rendering some form of service to you, the Vaiṣṇavas and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa.

Repeatedly begging forgiveness, your fallen son,

Abhilāṣa Dāsa
(aka Cooper Ali-Shabazz)

Atītaguṇā Devī Dāsī

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances,
All glories to you, my spiritual master.

You have saved so many of us from Kali-yuga's ever-tightening grip. Krishna's servant, *māyā*, is becoming stronger and stronger as the years pass.

I feel so fortunate to be living in Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's abode, Śrī Māyāpur, where the forces of Kali-yuga are not so apparent. You introduced us to this holy land where every word is a song and every step is a dance. I remember you being here in 1977, so weak and frail physically, but so enlivening to us spiritually. I had the good fortune to have your darshan in your room. You were so kind and loving towards me who had given you an insignificant gift, but you treated it as if I had given you something very valuable. You gave me the most valuable gift, in fact, and in my attempt to reciprocate with an insignificant gift in return, you continued to

shower me with your kindness. Service to Krishna is the topmost gift that one person can give to another.

What a happy day that was, a hundred and twenty years ago when you appeared on this earthly planet! One day this world will understand your true greatness in giving Krishna-prema to all of us conditioned souls. So many transcendental books have been distributed and so much spiritual knowledge has flooded the world because of you. Without your perseverance and enthusiastic determination to give this knowledge, Kali-yuga would have a strangle-hold on everyone. What would have happened to those interested in god-consciousness and self-realisation if it was not for you?

With failing health, but with your spiritual master's goal deeply embedded in your heart, you went to foreign shores where the populous was only interested in more and more sense gratification. Without you, I'd be flailing in an ocean of despair and bewilderment. Thank you so much for taking the mammoth decision to go to New York and thank you for breaking through to the spiritually clueless individuals to make them understand that ultimate goal of Krishna was to love Krishna and not to gratify the senses.

You brought real joy and genuine warmth to us fallen souls. We can never thank you enough. You are Krishna's sublime gift to us.

Your insignificant servant,

Atitagunā Devī Dāsī

Baḍa Haridās Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you!

Thank you for engaging me in your service of giving Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. I pray that one day I can be fully absorbed in your mood of compassion and fully dedicate my life to sharing the good fortune you have given me.

As Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura prays,

*kabe jībe doyā, hoibe udoya
nija-sukha bhulī' sudīna-hṛdoya
bhaktivinoda, koriyā binoya*

“When will I feel compassion for all living beings? When will I forget my own pleasure in genuine humility? And when will I, Bhaktivinoda, meekly go from door to door, preaching your message of love?”

On the order of Lord Caitanya and your guru mahārāja, you picked up this extremely unqualified person and engaged me as an emissary of your compassion. Personally, I have no such compassion. I am just trying to act on your behalf, even though blindly. But, by your grace, I have understood something. While some may look for higher truths elsewhere, you gave us the secret: We can hardly expect Kṛṣṇa’s mercy in the form of Kṛṣṇa *prema*, if our hearts are not burning with compassion for the suffering of the conditioned souls. You showed this by your example. Lord Caitanya taught it in the form of these truths: Nāma Ruci, Vaiṣṇava Seva and Jīva Doya. Many times you explained that the most confidential devotees are those that are engaged in helping the Lord in His mission of reclaiming the fallen souls. And Kṛṣṇa personally says, *na ca tasmān manuṣyeṣu kaścin me priya-kṛttamaḥ*—“There is no servant in this world more dear to Me than he, nor will there ever be one more dear.”

Thank you for patiently teaching me this truth and pushing me, reluctant as I am, to take up this work. You never cheated us with something cheap. You actually showed us how fallen persons can get the full mercy of Lord Caitanya.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an ocean of mercy. On your divine appearance day I pray that I can somehow reciprocate your love by becoming your instrument of compassion and deeply imbibe this sentiment in my heart of hearts.

Praying to become your servant,

Baḍa Haridās

Damayantī Devī Dāsī

Śrīla Prabhupāda,

O Gurudeva, I offer my repeated obeisances before you and bring you the gift of my heart.

As a fully devoted servant of your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, you are boldly preaching Lord Gaurasundara's blissful message of personal divine love, thus delivering the Western lands from the throes of voidism and impersonalism. I pray each day to deeply follow your instructions and to further carry on your mission, as it is presented.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for hearing my prayers and removing so many burdens this past year and also, for gently guiding me from within.

Each day is another day closer to our reunion. In the meantime, I will serve with mindful, loving kindness, knowing you are very near.

Your daughter/disciple, with love always,

Damayantī Devī Dāsī

Victoria, B.C. Canada

Jagatam Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you. All glories to Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, having stayed in Śrī Vrndāvan Dhāma for the last seven months, I noticed that many devotees who were new or new to ISKCON were coming up to me and expressing their feelings that I was full of love, indeed, even saying I was like the personification of love. I couldn't understand this at all, because I wasn't feeling love in my heart. Unfortunately, my heart had become hardened because of various experiences in my life while trying to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness, so I definitely didn't feel the love they were talking about.

This puzzled me for several months: Why were devotees saying this to me? Recently, after talking with one of my godsisters, I realized the answer to this enigma. It was because of YOU, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

YOUR MERCY IS ALL THAT I AM MADE OF! I understood that because you had given me so much when I was a baby and growing devotee, probably even before joining your glorious movement, THAT MERCY HAS STAYED WITH ME ALL THESE YEARS! That mercy was pure, spiritual love: It can never become depleted or erased. It is eternal, it has become a part of my psyche, and IT WILL NEVER LEAVE ME!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given me birth, so much spiritual nourishment and enlightenment and YOU WILL NEVER LEAVE ME! Prabhupāda, you love me, you REALLY LOVE ME! And that love will never leave me! This realization gives me strength, because it is based on truth and reality. And for the same reason, it gives me freedom to be eternally who I am – in bliss and knowledge.

Prabhupāda, you have given me EVERYTHING. I am eternally indebted to you, and the only way I can hope to repay you is by continuing to follow this sublime process which you so mercifully imbibed in me.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, if I can attain even one iota of the person that you are, then not only myself, but others will also be benefited. PLEASE, PLEASE let me realize this beauty and love you have given me, let me connect with the source of that love, and act in it daily and eternally.

Your fallen servant,

Jagatam Devī Dāsī

Gaura Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I am feeling very grateful to you for all the wonderful disciples

and through them the enthusiastic granddisciples that you have initiated. Their valuable words cause me to reflect on my spiritual growth—or lack of it—in my development of Krishna consciousness. They help me to remember you, as you have requested

“Please always try to remember me by my teachings and we shall always be together. Just like I have written in the first publications of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, ‘The Spiritual Master lives forever by his divine instruction, and the disciple lives with him.’ Because I have always served my guru maharaja and followed his teachings, I am now even never separated from him. Sometimes Māyā may come and try to interfere but we must not falter, we must always follow the chalked out path laid down by the great *ācāryas*, and in the end you will see.”

(Śrīla Prabhupāda letter, November 25, 1973)

I am praying for much more enthusiasm and intelligence to follow and assimilate your teachings so that I will never feel separated from you for a moment so that in the end I “will see” my eternal relationship with Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Krishna.

Just this evening I distributed your *Bhagavad-gītā* to two Malaysian brothers in the parking lot of a grocery store. Their mother is a Buddhist who is always talking to them about the importance of chanting and how it is important to never stop chanting in order to be protected from negative influences.

I taught them how to chant the Hare Krishna mantra and they invited me to come and meet their mother. Thank you very much for giving me this privilege to serve Lord Krishna’s family members by giving me the enthusiasm to remind them about Him.

I pray that I can become a steady qualified servant because there is so much service to do for your huge, ever increasing worldwide spiritual family. It is very nice to meet new people, but as you said numerous times, now is the time to “boil the milk” and facilitate the devotees that we currently have.

I beg to remain your eternal servant,

Gaura Dāsa

*om aṣṅānatimirāndhasya jṣānāṣjanaśalākayā
cakṣur unmmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrīgurave namaḥ*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

All glories to your divine service to the *paramparā* and to Mahāprabhu's mission.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in spite of great difficulties and disappointments you persisted in your mission of spiritual awakening, cultivating the taste for Krishna *bhakti* and encouraging everyone to chant Hare Krishna!

This year I was in Māyāpur, and I saw that how your Krishna consciousness movement is spreading literally to every town and village. During the classes in your temples there are devotees from different countries, different cultures, eager to hear, and in each group the class being translated live into their different languages! How pleased you must be! More and more persons from different cultures are now engaging in devotional service. How 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!

As you said, "purity is the force". Your purity is the force that will continue to always guide us.

This is a special year, the 50th anniversary year of your arrival in America. And then shortly thereafter you began your worldwide movement and I see how your preaching is increasing! Distribution of your books—the backbone of your movement—is increasing and it is incredible how everyone is trying harder to work together in a co-operative spirit.

I wonder what I did in my previous lifetimes that Krishna brought me here in Toronto in September 1972. This was a turning point in the second juncture of my life. Deep in me there was an inner longing for spiritual guidance and one day it happened! I saw a Western-bodied devotee holding a Krishna book in his hand. I grabbed the book and said "Krishna in Canada?" "Yes" he said, and gave me the address of the first little Gerrard Street temple.

The next day I went to 187 Gerrard St, and Mother Sucharya

opened the door for me with a smile. I realized that for every event that happens in one's life, Krishna is preparing us for something, and that was Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy...ever-lasting.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I met you twice in Toronto. The first time at Toronto Airport, I still remember I could see a fearless ambassador who came from Goloka Vrindāvana *dhām*. With your cane in your hand and your brisk, purposeful gait, anyone could see that you came with a purpose, and surely you changed our lives eternally.

Due to your mercy, the only desire left in me is to serve you, I have no other desires left now. You are the source of my spiritual nourishment and my ever loving well-wisher. In these advanced years of this body, I feel worthy only living under your shelter. Every day when I visit the temple, I feel your presence.

Your devotees are fulfilling your desire for the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium, and no-one can understand how all these things are being done in your absence. But actually you are not absent. We know you are always with us. Otherwise, how are these amazing achievements coming one after another?

Please bless me so that I can remain the servant of your servant birth after birth. I pray that I continue to serve you in any capacity.

Your humble servant,

Subuddhi Devī Dāsī

Cakrī Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Recently I was able to hear a recording of my initiation. It was June of 1976, and I was on the Rādhā Dāmodar travelling party. We pulled into the Detroit temple, the former Fisher mansion. My bus leader Gopī Jana Vallabha Mahārāja told me, "Śrīla Prabhupāda is here now and you should take initiation from him." I was unsure of myself, but I am glad that I decided to take his advice. The next day I was initiated. This was the first time, after many, many years, that I heard a recording of my initiation. Hearing this was a very profound experience for me. I realized that you have taken the burden of delivering me from this ocean of repeated birth and death, and so

much suffering. I feel great gratitude for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda for having accepted me. It is a great burden to deliver someone from this material ocean, and you accepted that burden for me. You didn't know me or anything about me, but still you agreed to give me your shelter. Therefore you are an ocean of mercy. By some good fortune I was able to get your association. You are willing to accept anyone who comes before you in surrender. I also noticed that before you gave me my name you made a deep gurgling sound in your throat. It's just my speculation, but I feel that you were thinking it wouldn't be easy to deliver this soul, but you decided to accept me anyway. I am eternally indebted to you for accepting me as your disciple. Please continue to give me your shelter and allow me to serve you

*yāhāra prasāde bhāi e bhava toriyā yāi
kṛṣṇa-prāpti hoy yāhā ha'te*

By your mercy we can cross this great ocean of material suffering and arrive at the lotus feet of Krishna in the spiritual world. You have given us everything we need to cross over this very difficult ocean; the Hare Krishna mahā-mantra, your books, and your instructions. The path is very clear, and undoubtedly we will reach the goal.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mercy is unfathomable. Please give me the strength to follow your instructions for the rest of my life. Please let me show my gratitude to you by allowing me to assist you in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Aspiring to be your servant,

Cakrī Dāsa

Dallas, Tx. USA

Vrajavāsī Dāsa

*om aṣṣāna-timirāndhasya jṣānāṣjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmmilitarī yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

My beloved Lord and Master

Thanks for showing me that I'm not this material body, and that I am a servant of Lord Krishna.

Thanks for revealing to us the enchanting form of Lord Govinda, Who captivates millions of Cupids, and Who expertly plays His flute and wears a peacock feather on His head.

Thanks for revealing to us that the Supreme God who sustains the material and spiritual worlds, appears in Bhauma-Vṛndāvan as a mischievous cowherd and is the breath of life and the pleasure of Mother Yaśodā, Nanda Mahārāja, the *gopīs* and all the other inhabitants of Vṛndāvana.

Thank you for revealing to us Lord Kṛṣṇa in His most munificent form as Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Who has graciously descended to spread His *saṅkīrtana* movement for all mankind, even for the most fallen, which fills my heart with hope.

Thank you for the 50th anniversary of your ISKCON that has delivered the holy name of Kṛṣṇa to every corner of this planet.

Thanks for being so tolerant with me although I am unworthy and dishonest.

Thanks for letting me try to give you even an insignificant service.

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

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

Your servant,

Vrajavāsī Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga. I must remember, always with a grateful thought, your teachings, because without them I would not be able to use my intelligence in order to distinguish between what is good or what I have not to do. As the years have gone on, we see how it became more and more dark and uncertain. We elder devotees have a duty to maintain our necessary vision of your purposes, by your executing Śrī Krishna's mission. We have the duty to continue to apply the mood, and perspective you presented, which is unique as a way to communicate between human society and Śrī Krishna. It is the only way to go back to Krishna. The path we have to follow by fulfilling our spiritual duties is now smaller and smaller, because on every side we must avoid deviations. Ecology, gender, Hinduism, impersonalism, *sahajiyā*, mundane veganism are misunderstandings which continuously coming forward in a more and more dangerous way. How can I help to protect your society for Krishna consciousness? How can I contribute so that this International Society for Krishna Consciousness remains as you gave it to us? In every *Brahma-muhūrta* I ask Śrī Krishna, always hoping that He will make me understand what you really wanted. At the same time, your example is there, before me, as eternal, in relationship with Śrī Krishna, just as Śrī Krishna's holy name is eternal. As Śrī Krishna *smaraṇam* is a symptom of life in the living beings, so to remember your deeds and explanations is for me essential. Without such nourishment, even for a short time, we die without what we need. But a philosophical defence of Śrī Krishna's message through you is now an aspect of basic importance. Otherwise, we risk spoiling our purposes in our preaching activities. During the time of *Brahma-muhūrta* we remember your instructions about devotional service to Lord Śrī Krishna, together with remembering the supreme Lord, because you are with Krishna. So, by associating ourselves with Śrī Krishna in His holy name, we will associate with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. And it is because of this, that I could be present, with your extended Vaishnava association.

Please, accept my humble obeisances.

Vaibhava Dāsa

My dear Gurudev Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your soft and golden lotus feet.

This lifetime is taking its course and heading to its final stage. It's only by your instructions that I continue existing and can go on performing my many services to family and society at large. You kindly distributed this valuable knowledge to one and all. Who can ascertain the treasure of your legacy?

But being unfortunate and lacking piety I tread behind your stalwart disciples trying to stay engaged in Śrī Gaurasundara's mission of mercy. I have no qualification by far and wide, and in a very small way I keep the spirit of *sankīrtana* alive in my hatha-yoga classes. Lord Gaurāṅga's mission of mercy is very personable and keeping this personal interaction shining with the rays of the benediction moon is my goal. All these souls I encounter I see as sent by you. My most ardent desire is to please you with my actions. Our good fortune is that Bhakti Devī is independent of the material energy, and no matter how thick it is, we can keep going forward.

I pray to you today for the position of servant of the servant of your servants. Please let the association of your servants be a constant occurrence, for without those who love and serve you, this world is a very sad place. The happiness derived from devotional service is so satisfying that a drop here and there is able to keep me afloat, holding on to the rope of your lotus feet. More and more, the realizations of this transcendental knowledge appear in my heart and I'm so very grateful to understand who I am, who Śrī Krishna is, what this world is, and through this understanding I am able to relay to others my heart and its few realizations, and also sharing delicious *prasāda*.

To glorify you — my dear master — is my most cherished desire. Please keep me as your dog and kick me so I keep running towards the goal of life, *prema bhakti*.

Your insignificant disciple,

Jaya Gaurī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my insignificant obeisances, all glories to your lotus feet.

Again the opportunity to glorify you has come, every day I offer my obeisances to you at least three times a day. Everything I do, if it is significant starts with my obeisances to you.

You are the guiding light that has allowed me to gain an understanding of this world and my position in it. My understanding would be even more if I diligently studied your books, which are the greatest treasure on the planet. They are rāja-vidyā, and they reveal the most secret of all secrets to those who sincerely approach them.

When searching for an understanding of everything, the Lord situated in my heart guided me to your lotus feet. He revealed Himself in the form of you, my eternal spiritual master. You are nondifferent from the Lord in my heart being His external manifestation.

I think sometimes what I would have done had I not met you. Life would have had no purpose, no reason. But now I can simply call out the holy names and move beyond this material realm governed by illusion.

Every question I had and so many I had not even thought of have been answered by you.

What a gift you are to this world. Anyone who is sincerely seeking the answers to this material engagement can strike gold by coming into contact with you. You are still ever-present in your ISKCON movement. Many more souls now are finding their way, thanks to your books; they surpass all others giving the highest knowledge. They have been expertly written, having no fault.

You are still here with me guiding and encouraging. Your approving smile and your serious frown are both welcome. Pleasing you is the perfection of life.

I pray that I can always remain at the shelter of your lotus-like feet and that I might be able to satisfy you by continuing to serve your mission in some way.

As my eternal father, please forgive me for any offences I may have committed.

Your insignificant servants,

Ātmātma Dāsa and Śacīmātā Devī Dāsī

*bhayam dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyayo 'smṛtiḥ
tat-māyayāto budha ābhajet tam
bhaktyaikayeśam guru-devatātmā*

SYNONYMS

bhayam—fear; dvitīya—in something seeming to be other than the Lord; abhiniveśataḥ—because of absorption; syāt—it will arise; īśāt—from the Supreme Lord; apetasya—for one who has turned away; viparyayaḥ—misidentification; asmṛtiḥ—forgetfulness; tat—of the Lord; māyayā—by the illusory energy; ataḥ—therefore; budhaḥ—an intelligent person; ābhajet—should worship fully; tam—Him; bhaktyā—with devotion; ekayā—unalloyed; īśam—the Lord; guru-devatā-ātmā—one who sees his own spiritual master as his lord and very soul.

TRANSLATION

Fear arises when a living entity misidentifies himself as the material body because of absorption in the external, illusory energy of the Lord. When the living entity thus turns away from the Supreme Lord, he also forgets his own constitutional position as a servant of the Lord. This bewildering, fearful condition is effected by the potency for illusion, called māyā. Therefore, an intelligent person should engage unflinchingly in the unalloyed devotional service of the Lord, under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, whom he should accept as his worshipable deity and as his very life and soul.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.2.37

In last year's *Tribute*, I described the final time (of the four fortunate times) I had *darshan* of Śrīla Prabhupāda at Bhaktivedanta Manor on Janmāshtamī/Vyāsa-pūjā, 1977. This year, I will continue chronologically by explaining how I received a *mūrti* of Śrīla

Prabhupāda in 1978. At the Māyāpur-Vrindāvana festival 1978, the Stockholm temple president, Vegavān Dāsa, acquired a brass *mūrti* of Śrīla Prabhupāda, 10 cm in height. This *mūrti* must be one of the first casted in Vrindāvana. The *mūrti* positions Śrīla Prabhupāda's palms together in *namaste* supplication. The casting of this formation was experimental (according to the erstwhile Vrindāvana-based sculptor, Bhaktisiddhānta Dāsa ACBSP) and soon discontinued after Śrīla Prabhupāda's departure for some reason (perhaps theological) and is rarely seen today, to my knowledge. When Vegavān Prabhu returned to Sweden after the festival, he gave the *mūrti* to the TSKP brahmacārī group (Smita Krishna Dāsa, Aristahe Dāsa et al.) for worship as we traveled and distributed Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. I was fortunate to get the privilege of taking care of the *mūrti* by daily bathing, clothing, and offering *prasāda*. The *mūrti* thus became my prize-possession. On the weekends, I would sometimes string a flower garland. A wood-carver I met in Norway made a simple, but crafty, *Vyāsāsana*. I made a cushioned box for transporting the *mūrti*. Later as a *gr̥hastha*, Śrīla Prabhupāda's *mūrti* got a variety of cushions sewed by my wife and our daughter helped sometimes in the daily *pūjā*. I felt protected by my *sevā* to the *mūrti* when I sometimes traveled to foreign countries. I had the *mūrti* in my possession, for example, when in 1980 I was involuntarily detained by deprogrammers. After entering Bangladesh, another time, despite a hostile border official's baseless allegation that my carrying the *mūrti* was "illegal smuggling of gold", I did guru-*pūjā* at *Rūpa Sanātana smṛti tīrtha*, *Puṇḍarik dhām* and many other places of importance for our *Chaitanya Vaishnava* tradition. Later, back in Sweden, the Śrīla Prabhupāda *mūrti sevā* was an important feature of my Krishna conscious *sādhana* when I manned a cafi-cum-preaching center in a university town in the remote north near the Polar Circle for three eventful years in the '90s.

In recent years, Śrīla Prabhupāda *mūrti* was placed on the altar in the Stockholm temple where he received regular worship by the temple *pūjārīs*, but last Fall, I again took personal charge of Śrīla Prabhupāda *mūrti sevā*. During *Kartik*, Smita Krishna Swami and Ariṣṭahe Prabhu and I reunited to again travel together 40 years later with our Śrīla Prabhupāda *mūrti* on *Vraja maṇḍala parikrama* and on His Divine Grace's *tirobhāv* observance at *Nanda grām*, Śrīla Prabhupāda *mūrti* received elaborate worship by Lokanātha Swami and senior devotees. After *Kartika* I went with Śrīla Prabhupāda *mūrti* to Māyāpur for the winter and there I acquired paraphernalia

for his worship such as a stone for grinding sandalwood paste, saffron and camphor as well as a dais made of local Māyāpur wood from the Acacia tree (*akashmoni* in Bengali) etc.

Since this year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s founding of ISKCON (and I personally the 40th of my initiation as his disciple in August ’76) I take the auspicious opportunity to publically express my intention in this tribute to maintain daily worship of Śrīla Prabhupāda *mūrti* in my “sunset years”, if Lord Krishna so desires. May I always remember Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions and describe them without difficulty.

Jaya Mādhava Dāsa

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda, the pure devotee of Krishna who changed the world.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

On this auspicious day of your appearance, 2016, I am at a total loss of what to say this year. Mere words can praise you, but actions speak louder than words...let’s dedicate to Kṛṣṇa conscious action for you.

As this is the 50th Anniversary of ISKCON, I’d like to say all is okay, but it’s not. Your work is unfinished in your ISKCON. Please inspire your followers to take up this last order.

The temples are the transcendental manifestation of your mercy...Krishna’s mercy. I have always been grateful and in awe of what you have tried to achieve by founding ISKCON.

One thing, however, is evident. You stated to us that 50 % of your work is unfinished in ISKCON. My hope is that someday the future generation of ISKCON devotees will take up this task of fulfilling your goal of establishing real *varṇāśrama* society within ISKCON.

Your Divine Grace is the only one who has changed the world. No one but you came to Boston Harbor in the mid-1960s, to a land of gross materialism, impersonalism, Godlessness to preach pure Krishna consciousness. It was you and only you.

No one took the trouble to go on a boat across the ocean, suffer multiple heart attacks at the advanced age of 70, to bring the

Westerners pure love of God. No one, but you, and for that we all have to rejoice.

No one but you was empowered by Lord Krishna to translate *Bhagavad-gītā* As It Is.

The book that was printed in millions and distributed all over the world. The book that made countless dedicated disciples for you.

No one but you taught us how to dress, how to behave, and how to understand Vedic culture. You preached by example and established 108 temples, taking on nearly 5,000 disciples in a mere 12 years. This was a superhuman feat by your sincere purity and humility. But most important, you obeyed the order of your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī to print books in the English language...to go and preach in the West to the Most Fallen souls (like me).

No one but you did this great task to save the fallen souls of Kali-yuga. In many, many thousands of years from now, the world as we see it will be changed. Hopefully your desire to establish *varṇāśrama* will have taken root in society. Hopefully, we will be coming closer to the break in Kali-yuga where we will see many people come to your movement and be able to give them shelter in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and help them as you had desired. We can only try to lay that foundation down now.

No one but you Śrīla Prabhupāda, was a pure devotee who came from the spiritual sky by the request of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa to help the fallen souls of Kali-yuga and spread the chanting of the holy names *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare* on the behalf of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

No one but you taught us how to worship the Deities of Kṛṣṇa, offer vegetarian foodstuffs to Lord Kṛṣṇa, how to serve Kṛṣṇa.

No one but you—you and you alone—are taking all souls back home, back to Godhead, and for that I thank you and ask for your continuing mercy to this fallen soul you named Jaya Mādhava Dāsa. Many, many thanks to you.

Thank you once again Śrīla Prabhupāda for the gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. ISKCON and the entire movement is just an incarnation of and creation of your mercy.

Thanks for your family of devotees in ISKCON, for the many temples we can take shelter of, for accepting an unqualified, low-class person such as myself as your disciple.

I ask for your mercy so I may do some more service for your sincere Russian

Devotees before I leave this mortal coil.

Thank you for everything in Kṛṣṇa consciousness my dear spiritual father and well-wisher.

You changed the *karma* of the entire world, and thank you for changing me.

Śrīla Prabhupāda kī jai!

Your fallen servant,

Jaya Mādhava Dāsa

Moscow, Russia

Matsyāvatāra Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

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

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

*om aṣṭāna-timirāndhasya jṣānāṣjana-salākayā
cakṣur unmlītaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

This year, we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the foundation of ISKCON, and I wish to live it dedicated to your memory, your teachings, your endeavours, and in spirit of friendship for your dearest disciples.

ISKCON was your organizational masterpiece, the vehicle by which in 12 intense years, you brought five continents to know the value of the Bhakti Gauḍīya Vaishnava religious tradition, with particular reference to its literary masterpieces – like the Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛita, the books by the Vrindāvana Goswāmīs and the best known *ācāryas* that succeeded them.

In the footsteps of Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī and your guru mahārāja Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Goswāmī, you accurately weaved an organic continuity through these books and the greatest *bhakti*

Vaiṣṇava classics from antiquity — such as Īsopaṇishad, *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Nārada-bhakti-sūtras* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which you wisely enhanced and modernised with your enlightening commentaries.

You prepared and completed this social, religious and spiritual project your entire life but you made it manifest during the last 12 years of your glorious existence, at an age when most individuals retire from active life out of weariness and dejection. Just in those last years of your earthly presence, you manifested your masterpiece: ISKCON.

Your masterpiece contributed to saving hundreds of thousands of young people from the desperation induced by a hedonistic lifestyle — an attitude that is irresponsible in so far as it is unaware of the extraordinary opportunity of having obtaining the rare gift of birth in the human form.

As one of the many beneficiaries, I wish to express my immense gratitude and I do so by spreading your teachings, remembering you on all occasions, public or private — and solemnly today, by celebrating your sacred Vyāsa-pūjā.

This year, the day of your Vyasa-puja falls on the fortieth anniversary of our first meeting.

My first *darśana* of your holy person in India — a memorable dialogue that changed the substance and form of my life's direction, as well as that of many people who, from yours and Śrī Krishna's mercy, and out of their goodwill, decided to follow me while I followed you as I still do.

At the time of that existential turning point, I was 31; I was an idealist full of desires and hopes but without certitudes. Looking back on my life now, I identify my meeting with you as the most significant happening in my existence, its effects incessantly forging the centre of gravity of my consciousness. Recognising you right away as my guru, following and serving you without any interruption, shaping my life on your teachings, all activated a gradual process that transformed me on the inside and on the outside. My transformation was spiritual and anthropological at the same time. A veritable revolution — entirely peaceful, beneficial and redeeming. Despite my human weaknesses, you inspired, governed and maintained constant the entire transformation process, day and night, during joy and sorrow.

I feel for you with immense gratitude and the intense desire to serve you every day with more sincerity and devout love.

You didn't simply give me the holy name, you gave me the taste for a life in *bhakti* through the example of your life.

You were, are, and will be my constant model of reference, in every time, place and circumstance.

You are my model in Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's teachings.

You are my model as scholar of the śāstras.

You are my model as a charismatic preacher in public.

You are my model as a deeply compassionate friend in private.

You are my model as a disciple and guru.

You are for me infinitely more than sublime and wonderful...

You are the orthopraxy of Vaishnava *bhakti*!

Despite my many imperfections, I ask for your blessings so that I may become your loving servant and make your work adequately known to the highest number of people and, through your teachings, make them happily attain love for God, Bhagavān Shri Krishna.

Your servant disciple,

Matsyāvātāra Dāsa

Prasūti Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

What you have given this world is so wonderful that it is impossible to completely describe this gift.

You came to the West at a time when it was considered to be a sure way of becoming degraded, but instead of falling down you have picked up many thousands of souls who were in a hopeless state and put them safely on their path back to Krishna.

Even all these many years after your leaving your physical, you are lifting us out of the mire of this material world and giving us the necessary sustenance to stay on the track back to Godhead.

I have been in a strangely fortunate position for the past six months where I am living 'alone'. This has enabled me to listen to your lectures all day, day after day. This has been the greatest pleasure I could have ever hoped for.

I think I have eventually got the most basic premise of this Krishna consciousness philosophy. As you repeat this information so many times, it has slowly sunk in through the thick coverings of illusion which were keeping me so blinded. Now I am aware that I

am not this body.

Wow, that is wonderful.

Plus I have also realized that I am an eternal part and parcel of Śrī Krishna. That is such a comfort that I relish it over and over. Now wherever I go and whatever I see, this fact never leaves me—that everything is going on inside of Krishna, we are never out of His association and He never stops loving and protecting us. Whatever is happening is His arrangement for our satisfaction.

What is our satisfaction? To be loved and to be loving!

So how do we learn about love in a world where Krishna’s love is denied even though He is supplying everything, and the word love is bandied around as if it was a cheap thrill, like “I love ice cream”!

How do we remember the love that we used to have for Śrī Krishna?

This process of cleaning our dirty heart has been meticulously given by you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, with the greatest patience and love we have ever experienced. Hearing you speak to so many different people has been very revealing. You were able to say the same truth many times without ever speaking in a way that made anyone feel that you were bored with the repetition, even though you were having to say the same thing hundreds of times.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, your loving dealings with the people you met have opened the doors for us to begin to experience real love.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda your huge sacrifice of hardly sleeping for many years so that you could provide us with the extensive library of spiritual guidance is an inspiration for many thousands of souls. It is the priceless gift that will endure for thousands of years to come so that Krishna’s will is sure to be done, and many thousands will be saved from the hellish life of this material world of death and will return to the eternal blissful relationship with Śrī Krishna, with the knowledge of how to serve Him for His satisfaction.

Krishna is in every atom, so when we do anything to please Krishna, we experience billions of forms of Krishna being pleased in our bodies. This is why devotional service is so pleasing.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mercy is great, that is why even a fallen soul like myself has been blessed by you.

Thank you, thank you, thank you, for ever and ever.

Your aspiring servant,

Prasūti Devī Dāśī

Punyātma Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the lotus feet of your global form of ISKCON that never sleeps.

I offer my obeisances to all the residents of your books, my eternal family. I offer my obeisances to all those who serve you daily, my obeisances to everyone who is engaged in distributing your books. I offer my obeisances to those who sing the *mahā-mantra* on the streets in cities all over the planet. I offer my obeisances to those who distribute seven million plates of *prasāda* daily. I offer my obeisances to all those who put Jamunā *jal* in every body of water on the planet, freeing untold amounts of living entities from their past *karma*.

On the 50th anniversary of your divine mission, your mercy is flowing all over the planet. I'm a fly at your lotus feet, praying to serve your mission until its completion and your movement has bestowed benedictions upon all. With the assistance of others, I offer you this website celebrating your devotees chanting all over the planet. I have posted 500 devotees to date on prabhupādagl obalkirtanrevolution.com and another website being developed is dharmarevolution.com. We hope to showcase your desire for a *prasāda* diet for this planet. I'm so grateful to you. Without you I am nothing, so I humbly beg you to allow me to serve your lotus feet, birth after birth.

Your servant,

Punyātma Dāsa

Nidrā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda.

All glories to Your Divine Grace and your mission.

By your mercy, many leaders in our movement are determined to increase book distribution every year. Now, during your 50th anniversary, special plans for increased festivals, etc., are unfolding for your pleasure.

Every soul on this planet will benefit from this celebration, whether via books, *prasada*, the holy names, festivals, and other programs. May this not just be for the 50th anniversary, but also for future years. This will please you. This ever-increasing mood is your heart and we will please you when we genuinely imbibe it.

Only with your blessings upon us as a cooperative ISKCON can we execute such plans for the benefit of all devotees and people in general. Certainly the devotees are enthusiastic and happy this year as they serve your 50th anniversary, and for years onwards.

Thank you for being always present with us, to guide and help us to develop our love for you.

Your aspiring servant of your servants,

Nidrā Devī Dāsī

Guruprasād Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On the auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, with all the sincerity I could muster, I offer my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. I acknowledge my shortcomings, offences and faults which you are already aware of. Nonetheless due to a wee bit of feeling of gratitude left in me, I attempt to offer some words of glorification using the letters of *prema dhvani* “JAYA ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA”. I humbly request that you kindly accept them for the sake of my purification. Let me also join other devotees in loudly chanting “JAYA ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA” on this joyous occasion.

“**Jagad guru**”, this title very aptly applies to Your Divine Grace because based on your books, writings, and media recording of your teachings, thousands of sincere souls have already acquired real spiritual knowledge, while thousands more are in the process, in every habitable continent of this world.

“**Āchārya**”, one who teaches by own example through daily activities. Your Divine Grace is an Āchārya par excellence.

“**Your ever well-wisher**” is the concluding phrase in all the letters you sent to your disciples and even to some others who evinced some interest in the Krishna consciousness process. This phrase reveals your compassionate heart.

“**Senāpati**” servant of Śrīmān Mahāprabhu. This can be no one

else but Your Divine Grace; that is how devotees in ISKCON would think. Why? The mission of Śrīmān Mahāprabhu has reached and is now flourishing in all corners of the world under your expert guidance and direction to ISKCON and all the devotees.

Your Divine Grace is a “**revolutionary**”, since you threw away the conventional barriers and started giving the Brahminical initiation to disciples irrespective of one’s race, nationality, gender, color etc.

“**Incredible**”, for me no other term comes to mind whenever I think of your accomplishment, within twelve years, Śrīla Prabhupāda. “**Incredible**”, also your unrelenting efforts, even at an advanced age, in your service to your Guru Maharaja.

A “**loving and lovable**” personality you are, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Not only the devotees, but even casual visitors could feel so in the presence of Your Divine Grace.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you told us “**books**” are the basis, “**preaching**” is the essence, “**purity**” is the force and “**utility**” is the principle. These statements are constant sources of inspiration for all devotees as they aspire to serve Your Divine Grace in your mission. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you always insisted on the publication and distribution of your books. You are an expert in making / implementing “**Bṛihad-Mṛidaṅga**” as desired by your Guru Mahārāja. As a result, now BBT is the world’s leading publisher of books on the topic of Religion / Spirituality.

“**Humility**”, this word as an attribute itself could be defined by the exemplary demeanour of Your Divine Grace; never taking credit for so much accomplishments but attributing such credits to your Guru Mahārāja.

A “**distinguished**” personality, who you are, Śrīla Prabhupāda. In so many public programs, interviews or other gatherings, you always appeared as a special and “**distinguished**” person to others.

Now, once again I beg for your mercy, Gurudeva ... śakti-bhuddhi-hīn, āmi ati dīn koro’ more ātma-sātha. “Please keep me in the association of your dear devotees and let me learn to serve like them.

Your insignificant aspiring servant,

Guruprasād Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

To all the devotees of Kṛṣṇa, to all the demigods, to all residences of all the planetary systems, to my family, friends, and strangers everywhere, this is my message and prayer to you, my spiritual master, to whom I am forever indebted.

My message is that there isn't a moment during my waking hours that doesn't include Your Divine Grace. I rise at 2:30 a.m., chant my rounds and more, read your books, listen to your lectures and follow the four regulative principles. My life is simple and fulfilled, while at the same time, my mind is absorbed in memories of you and my heart aches for your personal presence once more.

When I thought of you today it was of happy days long ago, when life was full of promise, when I was much younger and you very mercifully accepted me as your disciple.

Then, without consent my thoughts jumped to when you left this world, acting in such an exemplary way to enter again into your eternal pastimes with Kṛṣṇa in Goloka Vṛndāvana. I felt extremely lost that day being more fearful than I could ever admit. I felt alone — simply looking for a private place to hide, to wipe away an incessant flow of tears from my eyes.

I fought my fear by taking shelter of your instructions. Ever since those dark hours I have yearned for your presence continually. I recovered my sanity by telling myself that, "We will meet again one day".

However, it's been over forty-one years since I first heard you chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra on *Benediction Moon*, and still, after so long, I am daily begging for your kind mercy... when will that day be mine?

I am constantly badgered by material desires, if I stop my meditation. Lust, anger and greed stand ready to drag me down if I waver in my determination. The three modes of material nature are eager to control my every thought, word and deed if I hesitate for an instant, and the three fold miseries of life are ready and waiting to sting me if I flounder for an instant.

My consciousness tingles with excitement each and every moment. It feels like electricity is flowing through my body, becoming more energetic each time a choice is thrust in front of me and I chose to fight Maya and side with you. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

made my life exhilarating and alive, you destroyed drudgery and boredom. If you hadn't found me, what kind of life would it have been shadowed by believing it all ended with death?

On my journey along the path less travelled, the one you inspired me to tread, you have taught me a wonderful truth. I have always had that one person in all of creation that everyone is looking for, but few ever find. That person I was created to love forever and who loves me unconditionally, within me constantly. Of all the places that person could be, it turns out He has always been travelling within my heart.

This person is qualitatively like myself — spiritual in nature, but quantitatively rich in all qualities, the causes of all causes, the Supreme Absolute Truth.

No strong force, or rejection, or forgetfulness, or even death itself, can destroy this eternal bond of love between Kṛṣṇa and I.

My prayer is that everyone can know this glorious love and rejoice in its wonder. It heals the pain and suffering of the material condition, bringing knowledge, bliss and eternity. This love removes all lust, puts an end to all anger, gets rid of all greed, eliminates all guilt and eradicates all regret. Extinguishing forever all fearfulness and illusion.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, alone I can never succeed. Therefore, I beg to be able to remember Your Divine Grace eternally and always be allowed to be engaged in your pure loving devotional service, for without which, my life is wasted. It is only your causeless mercy that can make my determination to succeed resolute and permit me to enter into eternal loving pastimes with Kṛṣṇa. It is only your kind loving glance that can destroy all inauspiciousness that causes me to stumble along the path back home inhibiting service to exalted Vaiṣṇavas.

Your mercy is all that I am made of. Therefore, I beg that you please don't forget about your lowly insignificant servant Pauruṣa Dāsa and allow him to help you wherever you may be, always.

Your ever aspiring disciple,

Pauruṣa Dāsa

New Govardhana Farm, Australia

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

All glories to you our divine master and savior of the world.

This is the 50th Anniversary of ISKCON.

What unimaginable mercy you have brought to the suffering souls of Kali-yuga.

I beg to remain in the service of you and your ISKCON.

By your mercy I have raised four daughters who have also taken to the path of bhakti. Three of them are initiated disciples. This is my offering to you Śrīla Prabhupāda, the next generation of devotees. I know they will surpass me in service to you. Here is an offering written by my youngest daughter, Tārāvalī Dāsī Sherreitt.

Offering to Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my humble obeisances to His Divine Grace, A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda and to his disciples and followers.

O' Śrīla Prabhupāda, my ever well-wisher.

You have awakened my soul like a newborn opening his eyes for the very first time.

You have chanted the mantras that I have once known but now have forgotten.

You have made it so that I may approach Krishna by His holy names, but I am so easily distracted.

You have built a home where the whole world can live and take shelter.

You have given me the chance to take Krishna's mercy as a gift.

You have provided the philosophy for me to make an attempt to spiritual advancement.

You have sung the prayers that I endlessly desire to hear.

You have spread the knowledge of a true Vaiṣṇava.

You have made use of this material existence for me.

You have the power in your words to make me fall in love with Krishna over and over again.

For I am just a lost and confused soul trapped in this body for many, many years to come, and my only reason from this moment, is to serve you, the servant of the Lord.

I offer my humble obeisances unto you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You have given us everything, may I remain and your feet for all eternity.

Your mercy beggar,

Strītamā Devī Dāsī

Aṅkotha Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Yesterday, just as I was coming to the end of offering the āraṭi and singing Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam to you, it struck me that your worship is now going on constantly around the globe. As I am putting down the *cāmara* and blowing the conch, another devotee in a temple or home to the West of me is getting ready to start your worship. In this way a beautiful wreath of your worship is surrounding the planet and purifying all the inhabitants.

By the concerted efforts of your dedicated disciples and grand disciples, day by day the number of *jīvas* getting Lord Chaitanya's mercy in the form of your books, *prasāda* and the holy names is increasing. You personally started these activities in the West over fifty years ago and the momentum you initiated is showing no signs of slacking. Lord Chaitanya's predicted golden age, the 10,000 year merciful respite from the ravages of the Age of Kali is becoming more and more of a reality by your unceasing efforts to serve the desire of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta and the predecessor āchāryas.

I pray today Śrīla Prabhupāda that you please forgive all my weaknesses and shortcomings and allow me to rededicate myself to your glorious mission.

With gratitude, your humble servant,

Aṅkotha Dāsa

I was born in the darkness of ignorance but my eyes were forcibly opened by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda. I offer my obeisances thousands of times at his lotus feet.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Although the following verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is spoken in relationship to Krishna it is equally applicable to you.

*tava kathāmr̥taṁ tapta-jīvanam
kavibhir ṛḍitam kalmaṣāpaham
śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ śrīmad ātataṁ
bhuvī gṛṇanti ye bhūri-dā janāḥ*

“Nectarean discussions about you are the life and soul of those who are tormented by separation of you, and greatly learned personalities sing of them. Those narrations vanquish the distress of past sins. Immediately upon being heard, they bestow the highest auspiciousness, and especially the wealth of *prema*. The nectar of your narrations is expanded by those who glorify your pastimes and therefore such narrators are truly the most generous benefactors in the world.”

Therefore we eagerly gather together today to listen to those who have had the good fortune of getting your association either by direct physical contact, through prayer, reading your books, or realization by following your instructions and performing devotional service.

You are the external manifestation of the Supersoul, the manifestation of the mercy of Lord Nityānanda, the most intimate associate of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna and you have fulfilled the desire of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī to establish the mission of Lord Caitanya in this world. By your complete surrender to Śrīla Bhaktisidhānta Swarwatī Ṭhākura and our illustrious *paramparā*, you have given us the practical example of how to be a real disciple of a real spiritual master and hence you are known as Āchārya.

That you took the time to show me your personal mercy is inconceivable to me and I will never be able to pay my debt to you, although I pray I never stop trying.

I remember when you came to New York in the 70s. By this time the devotees had moved into the “skyscraper” building in Manhattan from the temple on Henry Street in Brooklyn. At one point The

Vaikuntha Players were to do a play entitled, *The Age of Kali*. I had managed to get into the theater early and somehow ended up sitting just behind you to your right. There I was, “Bhakta Jeff” flanked on all sides by *sannyāsīs* and sitting next to the temple president H.H. Ādi Keshava Mahārāja who gave me the ‘thumbs up’ as if to say “good move Jeff”. I remember you, Śrīla Prabhupāda wearing sandalwood garlands and garlands of roses and aromatic gardenias from Hawaii. You carried a pink lotus flower with the stem in a little glass water-filled tube gently between your thumb and middle finger. You smelled like a celestial garden and I sat transfixed on every detail of your transcendental form, the perfect *Acharya*, ambassador of the spiritual world. When you spoke, you sent shivers up my spine and goose bumps all over my arms. You filled my heart and mind with realizations and the desire to surrender. Please let me never forget.

Your eternal servant,

Jīva Pāvana Dāsa

Pañcagaṇḍa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your merciful lotus feet, and divine instructions which are freeing all the suffering living entities of the universe.

We are very much appreciating your beautiful Śrī Śrī Krishna Balarām Mandir. So many visitors, pilgrims are coming daily and they are totally amazed at the splendor and artistic design and exquisite beauty of Their Lordships. The 24 hour kīrtan is going strong—so many enthusiastic young devotees eager to chant the holy names. Daily, hundreds are chanting the mahā-mantra for the first time upstairs in your *samādhi*, and hundreds and thousands of books are distributed for your pleasure.

Now we have constructed a new Deity kitchen and bakery so that your devotees can serve the Deities nicer. More and more new members, *nāma-haṭṭa* preaching is going to many surrounding towns and villages, and several Rathayātrās each year. There are several college preaching programs at big universities. The youth are very attracted to your *saṅkīrtana* movement.

Our new Bhaktivedanta Eco-Farm and Go-Mata Bliss are teaching

self-sufficient living, organic farming and cow protection. Festivals are getting bigger and better, more *sañkīrtana*, more books, translated in more languages, attracting devotees from around the world.

Sitting in the *kīrtan*, or hearing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* lectures in front of Their most beautiful Lordships, makes one completely satisfied, knowing that you have given us the greatest treasure, pleasure for allowing us to serve you in this most sacred place Śrī Vrindāvana-dhām.

Please bless us so we can remain always at your feet and continue serving you in the mission of spreading Lord Caitanya's mission at Śrī Śrī Krishna Balarāma's lotus feet.

Your servant,

Pañcagaṇḍa Dāsa

Vaikuṅṭha Mūrti Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you for giving us our REAL family. Thank you for allowing us to continue to grow in love of those devotees who are our real connections. You are so kind and life has been so wonderful to allow us to have our devotee godbrothers and godsisters even closer now.

I love you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thank you for a life better directed than what it would have been without you.

Your servant,

Vaikuṅṭha Mūrti Devī Dāsī

I offer my heartfelt obeisances to you, my beloved Guru Maharaja, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You came into my life because of your causeless mercy. You gave me the gift of devotional service to purify me and bring me to Krishna, but, because I am a rascal, I am not making any progress.

In my life, whatever happened to me, in Krishna consciousness, began with reading one of your books. Looking back at what I read, I can confidentially say that your books are not ordinary or not simply pieces of paper with ink. They are mercy incarnations of Krishna in literary form.

You expressed extreme mercy towards your disciples, when you were physically present, but you have not stopped there. Today, everyone has all benefitted from your generosity because of the countless literature you left us with.

At an advanced age of sixty-nine, you chose to leave Vrindāvana, and against all odds, came to the Western world. You did this not only because it was your guru's desire, but also because you saw the suffering of every soul.

Today I would like to catch hold of your lotus feet and implant them on my stone-like heart. My goal is to remember your instructions at every moment, and by doing so, I may one day become Krishna conscious and obtain the true goal of this life.

I am eternally grateful and will thank praise you again and again for accepting me as your disciple.

Your most fallen servant,

Tattva Darshinī Devī Dāsī

Nanda Kumār Dāsa

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

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirveśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Sent by Kṛṣṇa	<i>nitya siddha</i>
You never left Vrindāvana	You carried it wherever you went
Preach in the West	A lifetime in preparation
You did not renounce the world	You embraced it
Fearless	You journeyed into the unknown
Struggling alone	You were accompanied by the <i>paramparā</i>
An internal vision	ISKCON manifestation
Entered like a needle	Left like a plough
Pure devotee	Exemplar of devotion
Traditional	Not stereotyped
Fixed	But always travelling
Heavy like a thunder bolt	Soft as a rose
Old wine	New bottle
Vāṇī	<i>Vapuḥ</i>
Leader of men	Servant of God
Respected and worshipped	Conduit of mercy
A trunk full	Publishing house
Impossible	A fool's dictionary
Final pastimes	Hearts overflowing with love
In separation	Always meeting

Your insignificant servant,

Nanda Kumār Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances and gratitude for all your many kindnesses.

After some 30 years, I have had the opportunity to visit Śrī Vrindāvana Dhām. I saw the enthusiasm of hundreds of visiting devotees—young and old, who gather there from all over the world. It was overwhelming to see how—while I have been somewhere doing my little attempt at maintaining some service—every one of your devotees has been continuing to expand and connect ready souls all over the world. Those gathered at the *dhām* are just a small sampling.

During Maṅgala Ārati at Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Mandir, a bright-faced army of little *gurukula* boys joined hands and hearts to loudly chant Kṛṣṇa’s names. At the Sāndīpani Muni School, after chanting your *pranāmas*, a sea of laughing Brijbasi girls took my friends and I by the hands and pulled us into circles to dance and sing Kṛṣṇa’s sweet names in a beautiful transcendental game.

I observed how, to a greater or lesser degree, your disciples have been able to keep you in the center as the Founder-Ācārya of everything useful they know.

Please let me remain as a simple, transparent follower of Your Divine Grace, without complicating what you have given us. Let me follow you and shine a light on your teachings so that I can receive your promised benediction of freedom from my false ego—so that the mystical influx of *bhakti* happens more and more. Otherwise, I have no hope of assisting anyone else in fulfilling their soul’s longing.

May we all find the *sattvic* rhythm of devotional service that keeps life sweet, protecting us from political and sectarian consciousness (the destroyer of faith). May we fearlessly rise from stagnation to see each other as Kṛṣṇa does, with unconditional love.

Your ever aspiring servant,

Gopīmātā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to service at your lotus feet. All glories to your unlimited, expansive compassion, mercy and love for all of us rotting here in this Kali-yuga, chewing the chewed in a land with danger at every step, seemingly since time immemorial. How fortunate we are to have met Your Divine Grace. How fortunate for us, you had Lord Caitanya’s mercy to shower on us this Kali-yuga. How much easier can it get to go from the land of pain and death to the place of eternal *rasa* with Rādhā and Krishna?

I am one of your rank and file book distributors, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thank you for allowing such fallen souls like me to take up this topmost, nectarean service. Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is always looking to engage others in Krishna’s service—thinking Herself not as qualified. We follow in Śrī Rādhikā’s footsteps looking to engage others in the service of Her Prānanātha.

Coming from the Brahma-Gauḍīya-Mādhva sampradāya, book distributors tap fortunate *jīvas* on the shoulder and ask them if they want to take part in the *Rāsa Līlā*. Just like you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are following you, and everybody, everywhere, becomes fortunate. Now so many have the opportunity to answer the call of Krishna’s flute. If we want, if we love Krishna unabashedly, we can go join the party in the middle of the night with all the dancing, singing, sharing and loving.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I saw a movie where a couple had been made to forget they had a son. When the father realized he had forgotten he had a son, he sobbed so intensely, «How could I forget my son?» This is how I feel about my real, eternal *seva*. I seem to get a slight glimpse into a world, but quickly get distracted by some seeds of desire fructifying through my mind, reminding and encouraging me to do activities away from your service, and I sob intensely. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you opened my eyes with the torchlight of Vedic truths. Now, in my latter part of life, I am attempting to dive into the ocean of Vaiṣṇava literature, studying under proper guidance, to try to please you with service and surrender in a mood of unalloyed love.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, until we meet you, we all feel so lost and alone. Nobody is listening and nobody cares.

Here’s my song to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You gave me REAL love from the very start:

Thank you for hearing me. Thank you for hearing me.
Thank you for loving me. Thank you for loving me.
Thank you for seeing me. Thank you for seeing me.
Thank you for holding me. Thank you for helping me.
Thank you for coming and saving us, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your fallen, grateful disciple,

Mallikā Devī Dāsī

Daiva Dāsa

*jaya-nitya-līlā-pravishta om vishnu-pada
paramahansa parivrājakāchārya ashtottara-shata
Shri Śrīmad His Divine Grace Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Mahārāja Prabhupāda kī jaya*

Please accept my most revered and humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet on this holiest and most auspicious anniversary of your divine appearance on this otherwise God-forsaken planet.

My offering to you this year is something I have written, and pray with all sincerity, that it become manifest someday, somehow or other, so that your legacy be firmly established as the most empowered transcendental author whose writings will inevitably become the 'law books for mankind for the next 10,000 years'.

A business model canvas for the establishment of ISKCON Hawaii New Navadwīp dhāma, as a world-class:

Vedic Cultural Academy of the Pacific & Ethnobotanical Meditation Gardens

A center of learning dedicated to scholastic achievement in the study and practical application of Vedic literature immortalized in the highly acclaimed and supremely authorized translations and purports of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Set in the lush Nu'uanu valley of Honolulu amidst meditation gardens full of tropical indigenous ethnobotanical plants, fruit trees and heavenly scented flowers and an enormous sacred banyan tree. Śrīla Prabhupāda came to Hawaii 9 different times and stayed a total of 130 days and spent hundreds of hours in deep meditation translating and writing priceless relevant commentaries on the cream of Vedic literatures for the benefit of all humanity.

CUSTOMER SEGMENTS (Who do we serve)

- General public
- All level of students; primary, secondary, graduate etc.
- All levels of academia; religious scholars, social/natural/formal sciences, the humanities
- Devotee community; both local and international
- Donors
- Garden and Botany community
- Visitors and guests

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS (How do you get, keep, and grow participants and supporters)

- Donor survey and database management
- Regular seminars and conference events throughout the year
- Student recruitment outreach
- Donor support celebrations and retreats

UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

- Spiritual education and enlightenment for today's and tomorrow's leaders
- Diversified curriculum degree program
- Competitive scholarship opportunities
- World class educators
- Spiritually infused environment
- Pure vegetarian dining

CHANNELS (How do they want to be reached?)

- Fund Development Coordinator
- Board of Directors
- Board of Advisors consisting of devotee scholars and *brāhmaṇas* and academic professionals
- ISKCON International promotion and advertising
- Rotary clubs
- Donor software
- Website and electronic communication

KEY PARTNERS (Who can best leverage this biz model?)

- Board of Directors
- Board of Advisors
- Key donors

KEY ACTIVITIES (Actions crucial to success)

- Plan and initiate fundraising campaign.
- Master plan for temple campus gardens and other crucial spaces
- Formulate budget and sound financial plan and sustainable integrated fundraising development plan
- Recruit and hire key staff

KEY RESOURCES (What do we need to have to put this plan into place within a year or sooner)

- Assemble qualified teaching staff and administration
- Set and reach funding goals
- Outline accredited curriculum
- Successfully manoeuvre through any red tape and anticipated or unforeseen obstacles

COST STRUCTURE

- Human Resources
- Renovations and infrastructure
- Program operational costs
- Academy phases:
 1. Campus and Garden design
 2. Fundraising Campaign

3. Campus and Garden construction
4. Recruitment of faculty and students and enrolment
5. Grand opening dedication ceremony to
His Divine Grace

REVENUE STREAMS

- International Membership Donor campaign
- Tuition and scholarship program
- Academic conferences and workshops
- Gardening workshops
- Restaurant and Gift shop
- Cooking classes
- Bhakti yoga and meditation classes
- Scheduled tours

Jīvacaraṇa Dāsa

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-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, having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

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

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your grace I came into the association of your disciples. What they have done for me I can never repay. If in my life I am able to offer any service that will support those devotees or others I would consider my life a success.

Your eternal servant,

Jīvacaraṇa Dāsa, who wishes to someday become serious.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

The theme of my current preaching concerns the good fortune I had, as a young man, to join ISKCON all those years ago. As an old man, I now tell youngsters that it was the best and most important decision I have ever made. Because when old-age sets in, there aren't too many material pleasures to aspire for. The looming prospect of death taints everything.

Thanks to you Śrīla Prabhupāda, I do not have to be a passive victim of eternal time: a goat grazing in the slaughterhouse yard. I can grab my bead bag and do the needful. You have given me hope, something to strive for. Maybe one day I can come to wherever you are.

Thank you

Your grateful servant,

Prahlāda Bhakta Dāsa

Dhīra Dasa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda:

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

We are eternally grateful that you have come to our Western countries, bringing the most precious and rare gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness for all of us most fallen souls. You are deeply faithful in adhering to the order of your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahaṁsa Parivrājakācārya Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. You are fulfilling the ecstatic vision of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura by spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world, establishing the holy birthplace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and bringing Vaiṣṇavas of every nationality, from every corner of this planet together at Māyāpur, chanting "*Jaya Śacīnandana, Jaya Śacīnandana!*"

Your preaching is just in line with the desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who inspired the Six Goswāmīs of Vṛndāvana to write transcendental literatures condensing the essential elements of our

Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy for the benefit of all human society. The way you have taken that literature, and translated, explained, published and distributed it everywhere is nothing short of an incredible, unprecedented miracle!

You are the direct representative of Lord Nityānanda, who took all risks to go out and preach the glories of Kṛṣṇa's holy name. He is even more merciful than Lord Caitanya Himself, as evidenced by the pastime of Jagāi and Mādhāi. On this most holy and auspicious day of your transcendental appearance in this world, we pray for that same mercy to shine on your disciples, granddisciples and all devotees, that we may not disturb your mission by quarrel and hypocrisy, but work together in love and trust, cooperating per your request to make ISKCON the ecstatic catalyst for giving Kṛṣṇa consciousness to all.

As Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *nimitta-mātram bhava savya-sācin*, I fall at your feet with a straw in my teeth and ask today for your kind benediction that I may also become a useful instrument in your mission on this earth. We are eternally indebted that you have created a way we may have your ecstatic association and that of the entire *paramparā* through your books, recorded lectures, devotees, and the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. By showing us how to share that blissful association, you have revealed the path to the greatest happiness and benefit possible in this human form of life. *Jaya Jaya Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!* Life after life, I beg to remain,

Your servant,

Dhīra Dāsa

Śārṅga Ṭhākura Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories unto you and your spotless undeviating service to the Lord. I offer my humble obeisances at your lotus feet that have traveled so far and inspired so many. You are transforming the whole world Śrīla Prabhupāda, bringing its diverse peoples to take shelter of Krishna, giving true knowledge and pure life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I beg to remain engaged in service to your spiritual family, this international society that you have created, and

which continues in your name, under your «steam» and watchful eye.

You have provided a clear path for us through the challenges and disturbances of this world, teaching us how to live and teach others the life of Krishna consciousness.

You have given us sure footing in a world of endless mirage, where forms appear and disappear, baffling our attempt to be happy.

I pray to dedicate my life to you Śrīla Prabhupāda, and your mission more and more.

So that I can honestly say that I accept only those things favorable for devotional service and reject all those things unfavorable, and therefore without hesitation follow wherever you lead me.

Only through your blessings have I found shelter and engagement in chanting, preaching, study, and serving the devotees. Thank you very much for this inspiring treasure of my life.

One of your countless humble servants,

Śārṅga Ṭhākura Dāsa

Krishna-kīrtana Devī Dāsi

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Humble *praṇāma* at your lotus feet
The devotees eagerly we meet
To celebrate your blissful mercy

You taught us to chant 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 teaching

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 and all lovingly,
Eternally, serving your mission
So gratefully, in separation...

Your servant,

Krishna-kīrtana Devī Dāsī

Jīvānanda dāsa Vanacārī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances,

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

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

Each year as I prepare my Vyasa-puja offering to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I realize a little bit more of the auspiciousness and importance of your appearance in this world.

In the conditioned state of illusion the living entity is so very limited in his consciousness that there is very little that he can perceive outside of his sensory perception. With eating, sleeping, mating and defending at the top of the list of material activities it is very difficult for the conditioned soul to consider anything beyond bodily desires. Thus it takes some advancement in spiritual consciousness to have even some small realization of the true position of the devotee of Krishna.

So little by little, as the years and decades go by, I am slowly

realizing the importance of your auspicious and merciful appearance in this world which is not fit even for a dog, what to speak of an exalted, angelic representative of the Lord such as yourself.

Mostly I have always tried to understand the importance of your appearance as it relates to myself for my own personal benefit. I am now starting to see and experience more and more the sufferings of others who are fellow prisoners here in this world of illusion. More and more I want to help them somehow see past the smoke and mirrors, see through the hype, and taste the sweetness of the way of life that you have so selflessly given us. I feel a growing responsibility to help, serve and aid in the salvation of those whom are caught in and held by the hard-tied knots of the web of Maya. They have lost all knowledge of their true identity as loving servants of our sweet Lord Krishna and are so much in need of your mercy. Your mission, the mission of Lord Caitanya, is their only hope.

Therefore I am praying daily to Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Krishna, Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi and Śrī Śrī Śrī Paṣca Tattva to please make me into the devotee of their devotee; Your Divine Grace. I am asking them to make me into a useful instrument for you to use as you so desire. It is your energy alone that has carried us for these 50 years. Please energize me in such a way that I might help change the lives and futures of the living entities struggling in Kali-yuga. Only from your mercy can their fate be changed from the most unfortunate into the most fortunate.

This you have proven to us as you have unlocked the prison door of illusion and offered us an opportunity to escape and return back to home. Acting as a conduit for Lord Caitanya's compassion upon the fallen souls, you have established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness which has been turning those whom are the most fallen and sinful into devotees of Lord Krishna for 50 years. ISKCON is, therefore, your instrument to deliver your mercy to the world.

Please keep me as a part of this society of yours. Please empower me to free as many of Māyā's inmates as possible. Please help me to remove the covering of the darkness of ignorance from those whom have lost their way here and to somehow influence them to accept your mercy. Your mission, your ISKCON is their only hope. You are still delivering the fallen souls and your mission is becoming more and more successful as it spreads to all parts of the world. I am asking to please be allowed to assist you in some way. My

life is of no importance what so ever unless engaged in helping you in your mission.

Aspiring to be your eternal servant,

Jīvānanda Dāsa Vanacārī
Tucson, Arizona

Kośarūpa Devī Dāsī

Please accept my humble obeisances prostrated at your lotus feet.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I am feeling your presence and spiritual protection,
and at the same time missing you so very much.

I am still a child spiritually, and I'm waiting for you,
my spiritual father, to return, and call me to your side.

It's been so long since your physical departure . . .

Thrown into grief and despair, we struggled,
endeavoring to please you, expecting to be with you once again,
through your *vāñī*, and through those who love you.

Still we hanker for your *vapu*, and we catch ourselves praying to see you smile, to hear your words of encouragement, to be in your presence. And when you kindly appear to us in a dream, you assure us you are still with us, accepting our service, accepting our love.

I am feeling your presence and spiritual protection,
and at the same time missing you so very much.

I am still a child spiritually, and I'm waiting for you,
my spiritual father, to return, and call me to your side.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, so often I feel alone in this world of birth and death,

separate from so-called family and society,
unable to identify with their passions and goals.

By your kindness, you've given us much greater aspirations
than toiling for money and power,
much better engagement than Māyā's service.

Yet the layers of material conditioning covering my heart and intelligence

are still firmly caked on.

"One can become Krishna conscious in a single moment," you told us, "or it may not happen after millions of lifetimes."

I'm stuck in the middle, attached to you and attached to the material desires and aspirations I identify with, fooled into thinking they are somehow part of me, forgetting they are Māyā's snare.

When I made my promises to you so many years ago, I understood my vows to be eternal, so it is to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that I have given myself for eternity. And now it is up to you to do with me as you like.

I am feeling your presence and spiritual protection, and at the same time missing you so very much.

I am still a child spiritually, and I'm waiting for you, my spiritual father, to return, and take me with you.

Your daughter and aspiring servant,

Kośarūpa Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are universally glorious, and the perfect compass that never fails to point north. You have given us all of the necessary tools, and all of the teachings. You are our constant beacon and mentor on the path back home, back to Godhead. You have unflinchingly shown by your own example, and you have expertly delivered Lord Caitayana's message of compassion. You are a Vaiṣṇava of the highest order, and worthy of praise and respect from every quarter. I offer my humble obeisance in the dust at your holy lotus feet!

You have taught us precepts of simple living, high thinking, and the absolute necessity of purity. To these ends, and to the glory of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and His eternal servant, Your Divine Grace, I offer my Vyasa-puja offering hoping to surrender everything to you. You are the kindest, wisest, and most caring person that I have ever met. You stand heads above any crowd. Your scholarship, erudition, and ability to separate the truth from illusion has established you as the *paramahansa* swan-like leader, and highest of the global community.

Your ability to illuminate every instruction, every teaching, and every poem of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava theology is virtually unparalleled. You are both the rose and the whip whom has blessed every receptive ear with the message of unconditional, eternal love. You have worked tirelessly with the single focus of saving the fallen and therein pleasing your *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswāmī, and the predecessor *acaryas*. What astounds me is the strength of your conviction, the humility of your heart, and the incredibly powerful posture of your words.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray that you may thoroughly enjoy your holy appearance day, and the many offerings of my godbrothers and godsisters, and your many granddisciples as we individually and congregationally strive to take the shelter of your holy lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my only hope.

Prabhu-Kṛpā Dāsa

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