

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA TRIBUTES

08 SEP 2023 Celebrating the
appearance day of our
beloved spiritual master

“

One who is serious about understanding spiritual life requires a guru. A guru is a question of necessity, for one must be very serious to understand spiritual life, God, proper action and one's relationship with God. When we are very serious about understanding these subjects, we need a guru.

”

Śrīla Prabhupāda lecture, Vyasa-puja
22nd August, 1973—Bhaktivedanta Manor, UK

ŚRĪLA
PRABHUPĀDA
TRIBUTES



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08 SEP
2023

OM̐ VIṢṆUPĀDA
PARAMAHAMSA
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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Celebrating the
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this year's *Śrīla Prabhupāda Tributes*, a collection of Vyāsa-pūjā offerings from Śrīla Prabhupāda's direct disciples.

All of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples are welcome to write an offering for this yearly book, regardless of their personal history, present circumstances, personal views, or institutional affiliation.

The book provides an opportunity for all of Śrīla Prabhupāda's direct disciples to express their realizations, reflections, and gratitude – and for other devotees to read and reflect upon what these disciples have expressed.

Following traditional Vaiṣṇava etiquette, we have placed the offerings from sannyāsīs first, and then those from Śrīla Prabhupāda's other disciples, all in order of seniority by initiation. We make no judgments about the āśrama status of our contributors. When a devotee signs his offering with a sannyāsī name, we publish it with the name submitted. In the back of the book you'll find an index to all the contributors in alphabetical order.

When the book comes out each year, we welcome you to start reading from it as soon as you receive it – *ahead* of the day of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā. That way the book can help fill your mind with thoughts of Śrīla Prabhupāda and his devotees as the sacred day of Vyāsa-pūjā draws near. And later the book can serve as a source of memories, insights, inspiration, and history, preserving the words of those who wrote.

If you're Śrīla Prabhupāda's direct disciple, but haven't been included in this year's book, we warmly invite you to send an offering for next year's. And everyone please spread the word. The place to find out more about the book and submit an offering is www.sptributes.com.

If you have any suggestions for improving the book, please write to us at sptributes@gmail.com.

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda and to all of his disciples and followers.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your servant,

Pradyumna Dāsa
Production Manager

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- Our main, anonymous donor, UK, who offers this service in loving memory of H.H. Bhakti Caru Maharaja
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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.

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

TRIBUTES
BY
SANNYĀSĪ
DISCIPLES

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

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

THE GIFT OF PAIN

The other evening, a Christian song taught me something about Śrīla Prabhupāda.

As I sported in my favorite playground, the internet, I stumbled upon a site featuring Christian music. “Well,” I thought, “why not give it a listen?”

I felt almost hypnotized by the soft, lovely music—good old American country-style—and the poetry of faith in Jesus Christ.

Then my thoughts flip-flopped. My mind showed me the Christians sitting around the dinner table feasting on slaughtered chickens and cows.

I cupped my chin in my hand. “What good is the beautiful music,” I thought, “when you live off the pain of others?”

“Oh yeah?” says Mr. Christian and slams his bloodied fork down on the table. He stands up, picks up his napkin, and wipes the gravy from his chin.

“You some kind of nut?” he shouts. “Who’s gonna cry for a chicken or a cow? Huh? They’re lower creatures. They don’t feel pain the way we do.”

Oops! Sounds like the same excuse Hitler used for killing Jews, doesn’t it? He called them sub-human (*‘untermenschen’*).

But did I do any better than Hitler or the Christians or the other vampires?

I too feasted on the pain of others. Then Prabhupāda showed me Lord Krishna’s words: “He is a perfect yogi who, by comparison to his own self, sees the true equality of all beings, in both their happiness and their distress, O Arjuna.”

So Prabhupāda gets the credit, not me. And let’s look at something else from Prabhupāda:

Vaiṣṇava is always feeling for others’ distress. That is Vaiṣṇava. Vaiṣṇava: *para-duḥkha-duḥkhī*, they are very

much afflicted with others' miserable life. (lecture)

We like to speak of compassion, but what does "compassion" mean if not the ability to feel the pain of others?

Most Jews eat meat, but the most famous Jew of all, Jesus Christ, sacrificed his own life to save his followers.

And Prabhupāda told me about the great compassionate devotees in our own Vaiṣṇava line, like King Śibi, who offered his own body to a hungry eagle to save the life of a pigeon. Would someone who eats chicken do that? He would take the pigeon away from the eagle and eat it himself.

A leper named Vāsudeva could not bear to let even the tiniest of entities suffer, not even a worm who might fall from one of his sores. He would pick up the little creature and put it back on. Yes. Even a little worm feels the pain of hunger. (And at their first meeting, Lord Chaitanya healed his devotee Vāsudeva.)

Can you think of anyone else who would care about the tiny beings that most people step on?

No? Well I can. Why did Prabhupāda tell his servants not to cut the grass at his house in Los Angeles? "You have given the animals a home," said Prabhupāda. "Do not take it away."

For me, though, I am swallowing hard today and wiping the sweat off my forehead because my landlord told me he cannot renew my lease. But what if I had built the apartment myself, and someone came with a giant lawn mower and smashed it to pieces? I would be yelling and crying and flailing my arms. The mere thought cuts through my stomach like a sword. And it's just a thought.

Could I have ever imagined that a little bug would feel something even worse if it really happened? Of course I couldn't. Prabhupāda's servants had to tell me.

Vāsudeva Datta, another devotee of Lord Chaitanya, wanted to take upon himself the pain of not just worms and pigeons and followers but of all living entities: "My dear Lord," he said, "let me suffer perpetually in a hellish condition, accepting all the sinful reactions of all living entities. Please finish their diseased material life." (Cc. *Madhya* 15.163)

Thousands of years earlier, the devotee Rantideva offered the same prayer:

I do not pray to the Supreme Personality of Godhead for the eight perfections of mystic yoga, nor for salvation from

repeated birth and death. I want only to stay among all the living entities and suffer all distresses on their behalf, so that they may be freed from suffering. (SB 9.21.12)

What a marvelous thing Prabhupāda has shown me! Just by reading about the compassion of these Vaiṣṇavas, I have seen a brilliant new facet of the jewel we call human life.

Who am I, though, to talk big words of compassion? Would I offer my own life to save a pigeon? But Prabhupāda has shown me which way to turn as I continue on my path toward human life.

But turn in the direction of pain?

Let me ask Śrīla Prabhupāda:

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Fifty-seven years ago, I came to you looking for eternal pleasure. Today I want to ask for pain. But not the pain of feeling sorry for myself. Oh no. That makes me curl my lips in a snarl.

Rather let me feel the pain of those who suffer – whatever their race, whatever their species. Let me feel their bodily pain, their grief, their hopelessness, and give me the strength to endure it.

Give me the strength to follow in the footsteps of Rantideva. After sharing his family's food with a *brāhmaṇa*, he shared his last plate of food with a *śūdra* and with a keeper of dogs and the dogs. Then he gave his last glass of water to a dog-eater.

Please point me in that direction.

Please grant me eternal remembrance of the hardships and troubles you yourself endured to save me. And let me follow you on this path.

And yes, please give me strength – the strength to bear whatever pain I must when the need arises so I can teach Krishna consciousness and take away the pain of others. And let this path of pain lead me – I don't know how many millions of lifetimes it will take – let it lead me to the most blessed of all pains: the pain of separation from Krishna, and forever in your service.

Your undeserving disciple,

Umapati Swami

Initiation: September 1966—New York, USA

Current location: New York, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

This is my time to make an homage to you for the annual *Śrīla Prabhupāda Tributes* book. Under “Submission details,” the editors of the *Tributes* book have informed us that our homage should be glorifications of Your Divine Grace, to bring you closer to your followers in inspired devotional service. The editors warn us that we should not turn our homages into criticisms of devotees. Therefore, although my mind finds faults in others, the Vyāsa-pūjā book is not the forum for airing such grievances. It is a book for expressing our gratitude to you, the Founder-*Ācārya* of ISKCON, for the immensely valuable work you have done in uplifting thousands of fallen souls and guiding them to become servants of God (Kṛṣṇa) and humanity.

We will be telling it again and again . . ., how you, our glorious spiritual master came from India to America at age 70, with no financial or institutional support, in weak health, and how you struggled alone for most of a year with little response. Finally in the spring of 1966, with the help of a few casual young friends, you opened a storefront at 26 Second Avenue in NYC. You lectured there on *Bhagavad-gītā* and gained your first serious followers. They were very attracted to your leading them in melodious chanting of the *mahā-mantra*, *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*. The singing of this “transcendental sound vibration,” brought the boys to expanded consciousness, which they compared to their LSD trips, and found that the LSD experience did not come up to the bliss and purity of the mantra.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had come to the USA with three volumes, in 200 copies, of the First Canto. You proposed to translate and write purports to the entire *Bhāgavatam*, “a herculean task.” And you were doing it single-handedly, typing on a small manual typewriter, etc. It was an incredible undertaking and not possible for a single man. But you did not like being addressed “a man.” You referred to Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura’s prayer where he describes the spiritual master as the direct representative of Lord Hari. Despite this steadfast commitment to your translated work, you continued traveling, opening new centers, initiating new disciples. For the new devotees, you engaged them in your tasks of printing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Time passed, and by encouraging them, and by your disciples then learning by themselves, they developed the ability to distribute your books. They started by distributing your *Back to Godhead* magazine and by growing to distribute your early Cantos of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, then your oversized and richly illustrated *Kṛṣṇa* books, etc. You devised a formula by which the profit of 50% of your books sales would be reinvested to print more books, and the other 50% of the profits would be spent in building grand temples in India, especially in Māyāpur, Vṛndāvana and Mumbai.

Your disciples have written many memoirs of their deep, reciprocal loving relationship with you. This includes the BBT's authorised biography of you, *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta* in seven volumes. This year, work is underway on producing an audiobook of all the volumes of *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*. Although difficulties arise in managing and keeping the purity of your Movement, the majority of your followers, both in official leadership roles and in the wider and extensive grassroots Movement are determined to keep ISKCON on the right path.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your eternal servant,

Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

Initiation: September 1966—New York, USA

Current location: New York, USA

Jayādvaita 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*

Starting just after this past Rādhāṣṭamī, I was present in Vrindavan for the last six months and final departure of His Holiness Kadamba Kānana Swami.

It was my privilege.

The determination he showed, the tolerance, the enthusiasm, the faith and dedication, his mood of care and generosity and personal

sacrifice, his strictness in following (“I *have to* chant”) – all these were qualities of his service to Kṛṣṇa, up to the end. His *kīrtanas*, sweet and exuberant, his preaching, his absorption in hearing, his expertise in managing (“What can I say? I’m *good* at it.”) – all these were extraordinary.

And his departure, too, was extraordinarily wonderful, from the days that led up to it, filled with service, till the last moment, in Vrindavan itself, in the presence of his Girirāja, at a perfect time, and surrounded by loving devotees, and floating in the waves of a deep and sweet and joyful Hare Kṛṣṇa *kīrtana* led by His Holiness B. B. Govinda Mahārāja. What an end! A completely successful departure!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this success—at the end and throughout his devotional life—was attributable not to me but to you. Though he duly honored me as his spiritual master (and with gratitude and sacrifice and love), you were his inspiration, his guide, his object of worship and service. We both knew that.

And that was fitting.

My service was merely to assist you, and in that way serve him as well. He was who he was, and my service was to help clear the way upward so that he could fulfill his destiny by doing the extraordinary service he was meant to do. You said that the guru must be a transparent medium, and that was my job (and his as well): to be transparent, so that your mission and your mercy would always shine through.

And whatever I could do to assist was also only by your mercy.

Kadamba Kānana Swami’s career of service and his perfect departure serve as evidence, as proof, of your mercy, manifest in practical teachings, proof that what you taught is noble and true, that your mission is worth living for, and that it gives us a perfect way to die. “A change of service.” That’s the way Kadamba Kānana Mahārāja spoke of death. And he said it with a smile.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, may I always serve you, worship you, follow you – in this life, at death, and wherever by the will of Kṛṣṇa I may be assigned to next. Let me always be a servant of your lotus feet.

Jayādvaita Swami

Initiation: March 1968—New York, USA

My dear spiritual father,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīnī
namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādī-pāścātya-deśa-tārīne*

You have brought the mercy of Nīṭāi Gaura around the world. Lord Caitanya told Lord Nīṭyānanda that We have descended from the spiritual world with the express promise and purpose of delivering the foolish, the fallen, the lowborn, and the distressed. I qualified in all four aspects before becoming a devotee. You have made good fortune for all devotees around the world by giving them the divine glance of Lord Nīṭyānanda.

I saw how tirelessly you woke up at midnight, every night, and for 3–4 hours you were writing your translations and purports for the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and different kinds of literature. This was a great sacrifice you made, and you chose your words very carefully in writing these books. So in your presence, you had Bhakti-śāstrī exam which I took, and by your mercy, I could pass and receive my Bhakti-śāstrī degree. I noticed that you wanted everyone who takes the second initiation, they should have the Bhakti-śāstrī. For *sannyāsa*, they should have Bhakti-vaibhava, and even in some letters you said that to be a *guru* to give initiation, a person should have the Bhakti-vedānta degree and you were hoping that everyone, men and women, would read your books and would take these degrees.

Actually, in 1969, the definition of a Bhakti-vedānta was the whole *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, plus the *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*. And now Bhakti-Sārvabhauma would mean *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. You wanted that people should read your books, and they prove they are reading your books by having these exams. I have been trying to fulfill your desire, I have a Bhakti-vaibhava degree, and I am studying now for my Bhakti-vedānta degree. Although I have read your books many times, you told us that to get the first initiation we had to read the *Bhagavad-gītā* ten times. You were very insistent that we should know the philosophy and should read your books, and I see this as a very important milestone that we should implement in ISKCON. I am praying that by your mercy we can make your vision come true, that everyone in the

Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement reads your books and gets their degrees. Sometimes devotees are very proud that they have not read your books, and they don't have any degree. Maybe this is not as important for the disciples who knew you personally. But as the generations go on, the only way they can realize, they can associate with you is mainly through your books. So, I do hope that reading your books becomes a preoccupation with everybody. I remember how you were explaining that if someone asks a book distributor what is in the book and the distributor says I don't know, I just sell the books – You did not want that. They should know what is in the book, they should believe, they should preach it, they should give it out – how we can achieve that? Your vision was that we have degrees. So I want to see that your vision is implemented. Our present Minister of Education also wants to encourage everyone to read your books. I think this is very enthusiastic and encouraging. And I pray for your mercy that we can base our growing society on your Kṛṣṇa conscious teachings. Everyone has some different aspect or different idea based on the same scriptures.

The scripture is Kṛṣṇa Himself which is absolute. But different scriptures say different things, in different situations. So we need a judge to understand how to apply the scriptures. You are the judge – you are the person who tells us how to understand the scriptures, and how to apply this transcendental knowledge. I want that your glories be understood by all the generations.

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

All glories to your sincere followers.

Your servant of the servant,

Jayapatakā Swami

Initiation: July 1968—Montreal, Canada

Prahladananda Swami

There are three stages of developing Krishna consciousness: believing, belonging, and becoming. Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us plentiful books, numerous instructions, and copious examples to help convince us that Lord Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that we are all His eternal servants. Prabhupāda has given us the association of devotees in ISKCON, so we can belong

to Lord Krishna's family. He's given us service in Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission, so we can become pure devotees.

Advancement in devotional service cannot be judged only by what we know — it has to be measured by how we act. Many devotees quickly obtain a theoretical understanding of what devotional service and Krishna consciousness are, but only through consistent practice and determination can a devotee gradually experience what life on the spiritual platform really is.

Lord Krishna will reveal Himself as the Supreme when a devotee becomes a *pure* devotee. A pure devotee has the highest devotional character and spiritual qualities. Through cultivating pure devotional service, gaining experience in Krishna consciousness, and receiving the Lord's mercy in our hearts, we develop such character and qualities, which culminate in the awakening of transcendental knowledge, perspective, conviction, and skill.

Transcendental knowledge "refers to understanding what is spirit and what is matter. Ordinary knowledge obtained by a university education pertains only to matter, and it is not accepted here as knowledge. Knowledge means knowing the distinction between spirit and matter. In modern education there is no knowledge about spirit; they are simply taking care of the material elements and bodily needs. Therefore academic knowledge is not complete." (*Gītā* 10.4–5, purport)

Perspective is the ability to understand Lord Krishna and His various energies and to see their comparative importance. This means seeing everything from Lord Krishna's point of view. Perspective deals with understanding, wisdom, and discrimination. It is one thing to study *what* happened in the lives of the Pāṇḍavas; it's another to understand *why* these things happened.

As Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (9.4.47, purport) about Ambarīṣa Mahārāja:

Nārāyaṇa-parāḥ sarve na kutaścana bibhyati (Bhāgavatam 6.17.28). A pure devotee of Nārāyaṇa is never afraid of any material danger. There are many examples of devotees such as Prahlada Mahārāja, who was tortured by his father but was not at all afraid, although he was only a five-year-old boy. Therefore, following the examples of Ambarīṣa Mahārāja and Prahlāda Mahārāja, a devotee should learn how to tolerate all such awkward positions in this world. Devotees are often tortured by

non-devotees, yet the pure devotee, depending fully on the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is never disturbed by such inimical activities.

Conviction includes values, commitments, and motivation. It is said that a belief is something you will argue about; a conviction is something you will die for. We may know *what* to do (knowledge), *why* to do it (perspective), and *how* to do it (skill), but nothing will be done unless we have the *conviction* to do it.

Especially in Kali-yuga, our values are blurred, our priorities are jumbled, and our commitments are diffused. People without conviction often just follow the crowd. Śrīla Prabhupāda's life was absorbed in a deep conviction about his purpose in life. He was completely convinced that he had no other purpose in life than to serve his spiritual master, who desired that he spread Krishna consciousness around the world. Śrīla Prabhupāda was not distracted by other agendas. Members of the Krishna consciousness movement must burn with the conviction that there is no greater accomplishment in this world than becoming Krishna conscious through pure devotional service. It is in the association of experienced convinced devotees that others also easily become convinced.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.8, purport) Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

A Krishna conscious person has realized knowledge, by the grace of Krishna, because he is satisfied with pure devotional service. By realized knowledge, one becomes perfect. By transcendental knowledge one can remain steady in his convictions, but by mere academic knowledge one can be easily deluded and confused by apparent contradictions. It is the realized soul who is actually self-controlled, because he is surrendered to Krishna. He is transcendental because he has nothing to do with mundane scholarship.

Skill is the ability to do something with ease and accuracy. This is developed by practice and experience. Lord Krishna tells Arjuna that he can conquer his mind if he performs yoga with suitable practice and detachment from material distractions. Knowledge and perspective relate to knowing; conviction and character concern being; and skills are related to doing.

Many devotees constantly hear about the importance of studying but are not taught *how* to study. Whenever there is an encouragement

to do something, there should also be instructions on how to do it. Without skill in studying, service, loving exchanges, and time management, we cannot be completely effective in developing Krishna consciousness, or pure devotional service.

Only when we have a clear understanding of what Lord Krishna does and doesn't want us to do, can we decide to act with conviction to serve His instructions and not be deviated by the allurements of the illusionary energy. Only then can Lord Krishna and the spiritual master see our sincerity of purpose and give us — by revelation — true insight into the meaning of pure devotional service in Krishna consciousness. And only then can we develop skills in our services and relationships with Lord Krishna, His devotees, the innocent, and those opposed to Lord Krishna to actually be situated on the spiritual platform of existence.

Character cannot be developed simply in a lecture. In a lecture we can hear the theory of who are pure devotees and how we can develop their qualities. However, Krishna can manifest pure character in His devotees when they apply themselves with sincerity to pure devotional service. As Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.4-5, purport):

All these qualities are manifest throughout the universe in human society and in the society of the demigods. There are many forms of humanity on other planets, and these qualities are there. Now, for one who wants to advance in Krishna consciousness, Krishna creates all these qualities, but the person develops them himself from within. One who engages in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord develops all the good qualities, as arranged by the Supreme Lord.

When we understand that Lord Krishna puts us into different circumstances in life to develop our character, then we can learn how to respond correctly to situations that can build our character. Whenever we respond to our circumstance the way Lord Krishna would expect of us instead of following the demands of our mind and senses, we develop character. It is easy to love people who are lovable, but actual love can fully develop when we have to love people who appear unlovable. Lord Krishna teaches us how to attain peace within ourselves by placing us in the midst of chaos.

We can see that the actual character of pure devotees like the

Pāṇḍavas or Prahāda Mahārāja was revealed when they faced what seemed unfavorable external circumstances. When they used those seemingly adverse circumstances to develop their spiritual character, they turned out to be favorable for their advancement in Krishna consciousness.

Prahladananda Swami

Initiation: February 1969—Buffalo, New York, USA

Current location: Ljubljana, Slovenia

Trivikrama Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you!

We have been thinking about you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and how to keep your movement pure and united. This was obviously your desire! However, the tendency for senior devotees to act independently is always present. Our prayer then is that you take the trouble of becoming directly involved in seeing that your sacred ISKCON remains whole.

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the only one who can do this. We feel utterly helpless to avoid a schism in ISKCON which seems to be at our door.

Yours sincerely,

With humility,

Trivikrama Swami

Initiation: April 1969—Buffalo, New York, USA

Current location: Orlando, Florida... Traveling to Eastern Europe.

Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

This year we are celebrating your 127th appearannine anniversary. With the passage of each day your fame is increasing in every corner of the globe. Leaders around the world are appreciating your contribution to humanity.

After Rūpa Gosvāmī resigned from his government service, Lord Caitanya instructed him to go to Vṛndāvana and write books on devotional service, identify places where the Lord performed transcendental pastimes and construct temples. You also gave similar instructions to your disciples. Currently we have nine temples under construction in North India. By your mercy all these temples have unique architectural designs. In March and April we opened two more temples. One was in Gurgaon, the other the Kṛṣṇa Balarāma temple and Gurukula. The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh appreciated the society's work in spreading Vedic culture including taking care of cows.

The important instructions you gave are:

1. Always stay in ISKCON and never leave ISKCON.
2. Chant 16 rounds every day and read your books.
3. Distribute your books.
4. To keep our temples neat and clean.
5. Worship our temple Deities opulently.
6. To distribute *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*. You wanted everybody who came to our temple to be served *prasāda* – like they do in Gurudwaras and Tirupati temple.
7. To follow the GBC – “Your love for me will be shown by how you cooperate with each other.”

Everything you wanted us to do is there in your books, in your dialogue while preaching to devotees and friends. Recently we celebrated the silver jubilee of your Rādhā Pārtha-sārathi temple and the golden jubilee of Rādhā Pārtha-sārathi's installation. The Deities were installed by you in Delhi 50 years ago. Your Rādhā Pārtha-sārathi temple opened in 1998. This temple, now known as the mother temple, has given birth to temples in Punjabi Bagh, Noida, Rohini, Bahadurgarh, Dwarka, Faridabad, two in Ghaziabad, two temples in Ludhiana, and Chippiwada, your office before you sailed to America.

The honorable Prime Minister of India sent a powerful message to your ISKCON. He said:

It is heartening to learn about the Silver Jubilee celebrations of ISKCON Delhi. Greetings and best wishes to everyone associated with ISKCON Delhi, as well as the innumerable devotees of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, not just in Delhi, but across the nation and the world over.

For the last two-and-half decades, ISKCON Delhi has bound together the fraternity of devotees of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the strand of Bhakti. Guided by His divine inspiration, it continues to work with a collective spirit.

The selfless efforts of ISKCON Delhi to render service to humanity through community service are commendable. ISKCON temples are spiritual and social hubs, upholding the highest traditions of service and devotion.

The moving force behind the establishment of ISKCON, Śrīla Prabhupāda's life and teachings, continue to resonate across the world. His endeavor to further spread the divine message of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is truly inspiring.

A beacon of hope for every individual and society, the essence of *Bhagavad-gītā* continues to guide humanity the world over. Drawing strength from this scripture, the ISKCON family has made innumerable efforts to promote compassion, harmony and brotherhood. "During my visit to ISKCON Delhi, I was deeply impressed by the manner in which the temple has become a symbol of 'Bhāratiyata'."

The President of India's message was also encouraging. In her address she stated:

I am delighted to know that ISKCON New Delhi is celebrating its Silver Jubilee on April 5, 2023.

ISKCON has been at the vanguard of a global spiritual revival, especially by establishing Sanātana Dharma as the way of life. ISKCON's temples across the world act as centers of spiritual learning, nurturing values, peace and prosperity through invoking love of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Every temple is a "spiritual shelter" built to liberate us from fears and ignorance through knowledge and lift our spirits. ISKCON is now a world-famous destination for visitors and tourists to learn more about Hindu culture and the great teachings of the Vedas and the *Bhagavad-gītā* as well as the chanting of "Hare Kṛṣṇa".

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were a true Vaiṣṇava who appeared to

save the suffering humanity. Your followers are trying their best to take your message to every corner – including tribal and village preaching. On this auspicious day I beg you for your mercy so that I may continue to serve you. I do have some health issues, but by your causeless mercy, it seems to be in control. May I become a servant of all the Vaiṣṇavas and continue to serve in your ISKCON movement which is non-different from your body. You often stated that ISKCON was your body and book distribution your heart. You will be pleased to hear that in Pakistan your BBT and ISKCON are legally registered. They are working actively in publishing your books in the Urdu language. All over the world your books are being appreciated.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, since I first met you in Montreal on June 1st, 1968, you have always been very compassionate toward a fallen soul like myself. I want to beg that you may continue to be merciful to a fool like myself. May your fame and preaching continue to spread in every corner of the globe. May you be recognized as the most compassionate preacher who appeared to propagate Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement.

Your eternal servant,

Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami

Initiation: May 1969—Montreal, Canada

Giriraj Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to your Divine Grace and to your unparalleled service and mercy.

When I joined the Boston temple in 1969, Satsvarupa Dasa was the temple president and also the editor of *BTG*, and he always wanted articles for the magazine. So I wrote one, entitled “The Genuine Spiritual Master,” and by the time the issue with my article reached you, in February of 1971, I was with you in Gorakhpur, India.

After reading my article, you called for me. The temple room was dimly lit – only some narrow shafts of light pierced through the slim openings in the wooden shutters along the side. Sitting alone on your raised cushion at the far end of the room, you were the very image of the eternal spiritual master, and your voice resonated with

the truth of eternal time. I sat at your feet, eyes and ears wide open.

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

"I will try," I said. "But why are you asking *me*? I have no special qualification."

"We require many to do this work, and we need you also. So, you travel with me, and I will guide you. You come and stay with me." I felt thrilled and honored. You had never before given me a direct instruction. In fact, we had hardly ever spoken, and now you were inviting me to stay with you. I felt a little intimidated and wondered how it would work. Also, I had always worked under my authorities. Who would tell them about your proposal? So, I asked, "How will we decide whether I should travel with you or what I should do?"

You replied, "By mutual consultation." And you instructed me, "See that my books are accepted in the universities, by the scholarly class." Then you asked if I ever thought of getting married.

"No," I said. "I never think of getting married." And after a moment I added, "The only time I ever thought of getting married was when I saw that all the GBCs were married."

"You will never be GBC," you said. And you continued, "It is best to avoid marriage. Sex desire is like an itch. If you have an itch and you scratch it, it just becomes worse. Similarly, sex desire is there, and if you try to satisfy it, it becomes worse. So it is better to tolerate. Not only sex desire—all the demands of the senses—eating and sleeping also. Better to tolerate. So, you remain *brahmachari*, and after two or three years I will give you *sannyasa*." In a matter of twenty minutes, you had given me my whole life's program in Krishna consciousness.

I was always thinking of you then; sometimes at night I couldn't even sleep—I would just be thinking of how wonderful you were. I would stand at the balcony near your room and look out over the surrounding fields at the stars and the bright moon. I was in so much ecstasy that you had read my article and invited me to travel with you, and I experienced an awakening in my heart of a type of affection I had never felt before.

Over the years, you repeated your instruction for me to write. In a letter to me dated August 12, 1971, you wrote, "In the midst of your heavy duties, go on writing something glorifying the Lord and put

our philosophy into words. Writing articles means to express oneself how he is understanding the whole philosophy. So this writing is necessary for everyone.”

In 1973 I sent you my Vyāsa-puja offering, and on August 23, from Bhaktivedanta Manor, you sent me an encouraging note: “I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter and the nice Vyāsa-pūjā offering you sent. I have sent it to Satsvarupa Goswami for printing in the BTG. Writing is a very important part of our work, and Satsvarupa is always anxious to have new material from the devotees for expanding the BTG. You have a nice talent for writing, and practice makes perfect, so continue. It will be appreciated.”

Eventually *BTG* published my offering, in which I described my first meeting with you and how it—you—had transformed my life:

All glories to you
Who have given me light
To open my eyes,
Which were firmly shut tight.

When we first came to you
In the darkness of night
The words from your lips
Made everything bright.

“What is your goal—
Godhead to find
Or God to become?
Please make up your mind.

“If you want to become God,
You can’t be God now.
Can a non-God become God?
Please let me know how.

“God is within you,
Sitting there in your heart,
Just waiting for your
Loving service to start.

“But if you insist
That you want to be Him,
You’re cheating yourself
And have nothing to win.

“If the seed of devotion
With chanting you sow,
Then God will give sunlight
To help make it grow.

“But if to become God
Remains your ambition,
Why then should God
Help His own competition?

“Krishna is God,
And God He is always,
On Yaśodā’s lap
Or in Dvārakā’s hallways.

“Or in Kurukṣetra,
He’s God all the same—
It’s not that by yoga
The Lord He became.

“You are a spark,
And God is the fire:
You can be Godly
If you truly desire.

“Your qualities match His,
But the quantity’s different,
For God’s nature is infinite,
Whereas you’re insignificant.

“I cannot be God,
For I truly am small,
But He kindly allows me
To serve Him. That’s all.

“That is His mercy,
Transcendent and sweet.
Take it! Be happy!
That’s all I entreat.”

Thus Your Divine Grace
I was blessed to meet,
And thus I was forced
To fall at your feet.

You poured nectarlike words
Through the holes of my ears
To clean out my heart
And vanquish my fears.

Arousing within me
My love for the Lord,
My actual life as
His servant restored.

Now I beg to remain
An individual soul,
Serving the servant
Of the one Spirit Whole.

All glories to you
Who have given me this:
A life that’s eternal,
Full of knowledge and bliss.

Taking me from the darkness,
Cold and alone,
Back to Godhead,
Back to home.

In recent years I have edited *Life’s Final Exam: Death and Dying from the Vedic Perspective* and written *Watering the Seed—With Teachings from His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda; Many Moons: Reflections on Departed Vaishnavas; I’ll Build You a Temple: The Juhu Story*; and now *Dancing White Elephants: Traveling with Śrīla Prabhupāda in India, August 1970–March 1972*.

On this occasion I pray to you to bless me that I can continue to serve you, the devotees, and the world by writing about Krishna consciousness in the right consciousness. As you wrote in *Sri Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 19.132, “It is certainly not good to write literature for money or reputation, but to write books and publish them for the enlightenment of the general populace is real service to the Lord. That was Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī’s opinion, and he specifically told his disciples to write books. He actually preferred to publish books rather than establish temples. Temple construction is meant for the general populace and neophyte devotees, but the business of advanced and empowered devotees is to write books, publish them and distribute them widely. According to Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, distributing literature is like playing on a great *mṛdaṅga*. Consequently we always request members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness to publish as many books as possible and distribute them widely throughout the world. By thus following in the footsteps of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmi, one can become a *rūpānuga* devotee.”

Thank you very much.

Hare Krishna.

Your eternal, grateful servant,

Giriraj Swami

Initiation: July 1969—Boston, USA

Current location: Carpinteria, California, USA

Hridayananda Dasa Goswami

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

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

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I bow to you. Jaya Prabhupāda! All glories to your matchless devotional service to Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi. As I progress on my spiritual path, which you mercifully revealed, and bestowed on me, I am increasingly in awe of your superhuman spiritual qualities.

The clarity, simplicity, profundity and power of your teaching and preaching is unmatched. Your words reveal your pure devotion to Lord Krishna. Your words and conduct reveal that you are truly a great *mahā-bhāgavata*, an exalted pure devotee of Lord Krishna.

Once, in the privacy of your darshan room in Los Angeles, you revealed to me that never was there a time when you did not know Lord Krishna. Your words confirmed what I had always seen in you. Even at the beginning of my spiritual life, Lord Krishna showed me that you are a pure soul who is seeing God face to face.

My consolation is that my debt to you is eternal, and thus I will be serving you always. Thank you.

Your servant,

Hridayananda dasa Goswami

Initiation: February 1970—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Florida, USA

Danavir Goswami

To His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,

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

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

Your Divine Grace traveled all over the world conquering all kinds of opposing forces. For Kṛṣṇa, Your Divine Grace defeated atheism, impersonalism, voidism, pseudo-science, pseudo-religions and every possible opposing element that the material world has to offer. Like the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, Your Divine Grace is highly respected throughout the three worlds, *tri-bhuvane mānyau*.

The great politician and moralist Cānakya Pandita said:

*vidvatvaṁ ca nṛpatvaṁ ca naiva tulyaṁ kadācana
sva-deśe pūjyate rājā vidvān sarvatra pūjyate*

It is not possible to compare a wealthy man or a king with a learned person. Because the rich man or king may be respected in his own village, town, nation or planet, but a learned man, a devotee of God,

is honored wherever he goes.

Your Divine Grace exemplified this *śloka* by receiving honor from all groups of people around the world. The U.S Army recognized Your Divine Grace's movement and deferred devotees from being drafted. Popular musicians and leaders of the youth who were seeking higher knowledge looked up to Your Divine Grace. Your Divine Grace met with many intellectuals and inspired some thoughtful scientists to pursue Your Divine Grace's mission. Your Divine Grace was respected amongst scholars and yogis alike for Your Divine Grace's depth of Vedic knowledge. After considering Your Divine Grace's books, the Supreme Court of the State of New York recognized Hare Krishna as a bona fide religion.

As a matter of fact, all Your Divine Grace's intelligence, bhakti, shakti, charm, compassion and so many other transcendental qualities are perfectly preserved in Your Divine Grace's books. Therefore wherever Your Divine Grace's books go, they create the same phenomenon—they destroy materialism and they bring down the infrastructure of atheism, just like Your Divine Grace personally. Through Your Divine Grace's books, Your Divine Grace has reached so many, and if they repeat something that they've learned from Your Divine Grace or Your Divine Grace's books, and live by it with body, mind and words, they too become highly respected wherever they go.

I experienced this first hand, the first time I went to India. Some of us would get our heads shaved by the local barber who was cutting hair outside, in a public area. I was sitting on a rock, and soon some neighborhood boys came and gathered around. They were having fun at my expense, but I couldn't understand what they were saying, since I didn't speak Bengali. Looking at the fair-skinned Westerner in devotee dress they likely thought I was some sort of pretender or something. The barber did not want to take sides. More kids came up, even some teenagers, they were having quite the time! So, I in the spur of the moment, started chanting and reciting all of the Sanskrit verses I had memorized. I started with *Bhagavad-gītā* 1.1 *dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca, dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre, samavetā yuyutsavaḥ, māmakaḥ pāṇḍavās caiva, kim akurvata sañjaya*. I continued, and exhausted all of my *Gītā* verses. Silence. This stopped the children's prodding in their tracks. The barber was pleased and impressed that I knew some Sanskrit *ślokas*, and he seemed to say "see, so many verses from the *Gītā*!?" He chastised them for making fun. This is an

example of Your Divine Grace’s mercy and strength being passed to Your Divine Grace’s disciples.

If anyone had asked whether I understood what the *slokas* meant, I would say “yes.” This verse means that Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke *Bhagavad-gītā* five thousand years ago at Kurukṣetra. Kurukṣetra is a real place where sacrifices have been performed for a long time. It is not to be taken allegorically. You can go and visit there today, it is 150 km north of Delhi. This means *Bhagavad-gītā* is to be taken literally as a historical record.

Bhagavad-gītā, Chapter 2, text 12: *na tv evāhami jātu nāsam, na tvam neme janādhīpāḥ, na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ, sarve vāyam ataḥ param.* This means that Krishna, Arjuna and all the kings that were assembled at Kurukṣetra were individual spirit souls in the past, in the present and in the future they will continue to be so. The individual soul never merges and loses his identity. It means that God and the innumerable living entities are all eternal individual spiritual persons.

Perhaps then I can go on serving Your Divine Grace for eternity.

Your insignificant servant,

Danavir Goswami

Initiation: February 1971—Los Angeles, California, USA

Badrinarayan Swami

Essential truth spoken concisely is true eloquence. (Cc Ādi 1.106)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, due to his being on the highest level of spiritual realization, could present Krishna consciousness concisely and with great power and impact. This is the potency of an empowered *Ācārya*. Mukunda Mahārāja relates how the London devotees were invited to chant on a Dutch radio show but the radio station would only give Śrīla Prabhupāda a few minutes to speak. When informed of this, Śrīla Prabhupāda replied: “I can explain the whole philosophy in five minutes.”

Before the publishing of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, there were dozens of versions of the *Gītā* in English. However, these had not made one single genuine devotee of Krishna. Yet when Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* began to circulate, it created hundreds and thousands of dedicated devotees all over the world.

Krishna explains the reason why:

That very ancient science of the relationship with the Supreme is today told by Me to you because you are My devotee as well as My friend and can therefore understand the transcendental mystery of this science. (BG 4.3)

In 1974, I was on the campus of the University of Michigan with Tamal Krishna Mahārāja. We met a professor who was the chair of the religious studies department. Tamal Krishna Mahārāja asked him if he had read the *Gītā*. He replied: “Of course I have.” Mahārāja followed up: “Did you understand it?” The professor was a little miffed and replied: “Of course I did.” Tamal Krishna Mahārāja then asked the professor: “So what are you going to do now?” We watched as a look of bewilderment washed over the professor’s face. The idea that the *Gītā* was a call to action, that its message demanded serious changes on the part of the reader, had never entered the professor’s mind.

Hari Sauri prabhu relates how once when Śrīla Prabhupāda was having his massage, his secretary read a letter from a professor reviewing Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books. The professor wrote: “The books from the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust are beautifully produced. The only problem is that the author only stresses Krishna *bhakti*.” Śrīla Prabhupāda slapped his hand on the massage mat and said: “That is my success. I have written these books in such a way that no one can squeeze any other meaning out of them but devotional service.”

At the conclusion of their dialogue, Krishna asks Arjuna:

O son of Pṛthā, O conqueror of wealth, have you heard this with an attentive mind? And are your ignorance and illusions now dispelled? (BG 18.72)

Arjuna replies:

My dear Kṛṣṇa, O infallible one, my illusion is now gone. I have regained my memory by Your mercy. I am now firm and free from doubt and am prepared to act according to Your instructions. (BG 18.73)

What is the essence of those instructions by Krishna?

Always think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me and offer your homage unto Me” and “Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. (BG 18.65 & 66)

As we said at the beginning, one who has understood the message of the *Gītā* can then explain it to others. Like an expert surgeon, Śrīla Prabhupāda's words, infused with the deepest realizations, can enter the heart of the reader and accomplish the goal of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. And what is that goal?

That literature which is full with descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, form and pastimes of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a transcendental creation meant to bring about a revolution in the impious life of a misdirected civilization. (SB 1.5.11)

Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu orders:

Distribute this Krishna consciousness movement all over the world. Let people eat these fruits and ultimately become free from old age and death. (CC Ādi 9.39)

In a *darshan* in Detroit in 1975, Śrīla Prabhupāda said: "My 'disease' is that I cannot think small." Śrīla Prabhupāda set as his goal nothing less than to change the downward trajectory of the world and to open wide the floodgates of the Golden Age of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

Shortly before leaving for America on the Jaladuta, Śrīla Prabhupāda visited Shantipur to pray for the mercy of Sri Advaitacharya. The mahant of the temple narrated how he saw Śrīla Prabhupāda quietly chanting on his beads and crying. As he knew Śrīla Prabhupāda, he inquired: "Why are you crying?" Śrīla Prabhupāda replied: "My spiritual master has given me an impossible mission, but I must try for it." Years later, the mahant was shown a copy of *Back to Godhead* magazine by some visiting ISKCON devotees. Looking through it and seeing photos of ISKCON devotees and temples around the world, the mahant began to exclaim in amazement: "He did it! He actually did it!"

Mahatma prabhu relates how in July of 1970, when Śrīla Prabhupāda visited San Francisco for the Ratha Yātrā festival, he came to the little ISKCON storefront on Frederick Street. It had a small temple room which was packed full of devotees from all over the West Coast and beyond. When Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived, he hesitated at the front door before entering. Then, when sitting on the *vyāsāsana*, instead of singing *Jaya Rādhā Mādhava*, he sang the *Guruvaṣṭakam* prayers. Later in the day, devotees asked Śrīla

Prabhupāda why he paused before entering and if there was a specific reason why he sang the prayers to the spiritual masters? Śrīla Prabhupāda replied: “I was inviting my spiritual master and the previous *ācāryas* to come and see the scene.”

The fact is that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s bold and “against all odds” desire to fulfill the will of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu is still unfolding before our eyes. The international GBC has a weekly Zoom call and before wading into the agenda, each week there is a report by a different GBC member about the activities in his area of responsibility for the last year. These short reports are wonderful. Dedicated devotees are producing impressive and innovative results around the world. Hearing of these is like hearing about the churning of the ocean of milk and all the mystical items that came out of it.

The Lord brought the desire tree of devotional service to this earth and became its gardener. He sowed the seed and sprinkled upon it the water of His will. (CC *Ādi* 9.9)

The branches of the Caitanya tree formed a cluster or society, with great branches covering all the universe. (CC *Ādi* 9.18)

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in his purport on verse 18:

Our International Society for Krishna Consciousness is one of the branches of the Caitanya tree.

ISKCON’s continuing success depends on the degree to which the “branch” of ISKCON stays connected to the “tree” of Lord Chaitanya’s will. That connection of empowerment is maintained to the degree that we present Śrīla Prabhupāda’s message, standards, and practices without modification or dilution. Śrīla Prabhupāda said in a *darshan* in Detroit (June of 1976): “I have given you the structure, just go and decorate it. Actually, I have even given you the decorations. Just go and hang them.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please let me close with a prayer for your mercy. May we in ISKCON always hold tight to your bold and determined spirit. May we be infused with your faith in the power of the holy name. As you were convinced of the potency of your spiritual master’s order, may we have the same confidence in the potency of your orders. May we share your conviction in the guaranteed success of Lord Chaitanya’s mission. May we always stay under the shelter of your lotus feet.

Your insignificant servant,

Badrinarayan Swami

Initiation: 1971, April—Los Angeles, California, USA

Contact: badrinarayan.swami@pamho.net

Kavicandra Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Devotees ask about my experiences with you. I have to say that for intimate *vapuḥ*, almost none. I was blessed to attend many classes and to follow along on a few morning walks. We were told to not write to you so that you could translate and compose your Bhaktivedānta Purports. You kindly gave unlimited access to your *vāñī* with your books and making sure that your lectures were recorded. Also, we were able to hear about you from those who did serve you personally. No one tires of hearing your glories.

So I have to answer that my association with you is the same as what is available to anyone, *vāñī* and service. In the early days it was mostly reading your books and distributing your books. The recordings came later.

Recently we were reading about Lord Śiva drinking the ocean of poison:

Thereafter, Lord Śiva, who is dedicated to auspicious, benevolent work for humanity, compassionately took the whole quantity of poison in his palm and drank it. (SB 8.7.42)

It is said that great personalities almost always accept voluntary suffering because of the suffering of people in general. This is considered the highest method of worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is present in everyone's heart. (SB 8.7.44)

Immediately I thought of you. The purport makes it clear as to why:

Here is an explanation of how those engaged in activities for the welfare of others are very quickly recognized by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.68-69), *ya idaṁ paramaṁ guhyaṁ mad-bhakteṣv abhidhāsyati. .. na ca tasmān manuṣyeṣu kaścin me priya-kṛt-tamaḥ*: “One who preaches the message of *Bhagavad-gītā* to My devotees is most dear to Me. No one can excel him in satisfying Me by worship.” There are different kinds of welfare activities in this material world, but the supreme welfare activity is the spreading of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (SB 8.7.44, purport)

You risked everything cross the ocean to remove the “impersonal calamity” that was spreading widely, “*nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*.” You saved us who were foolishly trying imitate Lord Śiva.

Devotees ask me how I have kept going for so many years? Just remembering what you did for us is enough. You were named “Abhaya,” fearless, by your father. Like Lord Śiva you were not afraid.

Recently it was Rāma-navamī so we heard much of the glories of Hanumān. I was also remembering your qualities and how you are like Hanumān. You fearlessly crossed the ocean for the pleasure of your Lord. You faced and conquered many obstacles along the way, notably two heart attacks. You were surprised at how many joined you. Hanumān also was not fully aware of his own power.

You are fully loyal to your Guru Mahārāja considering yourself to be a servant. Hanumān told Rāvaṇa that he was simply a servant of Lord Rāma. You gave all credit to your Guru Mahārāja. Like Hanumān, you are a great scholar, a perfect gentleman and undefeatable.

I remember the day after Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma’s installation in Vṛndāvana. On the walk you were so blissful, you said “so now Balarāma is here. When you are feeling weak you can pray to Balarāma, He will help you.” I am also weak although too often I think that I am strong. I pray that I can do as you advise. You repeated that three times on a morning walk in 1968:

So the processes recommended, they're very valuable, but it is not possible to follow them all in the present age because everything is reducing. So our method is to pray to Kṛṣṇa to give us the necessary strength. That's all. Otherwise, by regular practice, for this age is very difficult. Unfavorable. First thing is memory is very short. We cannot remember. Life is very short.

Therefore, this one practice – chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, and hearing – that is very nice. And praying to Kṛṣṇa, “Please give me strength.” Hare, “O Energy of Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa, I am fallen; I have no strength. Please accept me.” That's all. “I have no qualification. I am frail. I am trying, but I am failing.” All these appeals should be made. And Kṛṣṇa is all-powerful; He can do anything. Even the..., we do not perform, trying our best, if we fail, Kṛṣṇa will help us. Just like a child tries his best, but he falls down. The mother takes up and “All right. Come on. Walk.” Like that. Yes?

The best thing is to pray Kṛṣṇa, “Please pick me up very soon and let me go back to Your place.” If you have to come back again, oh, you do not know how much miseries we have to undergo. (Morning Walk at Stowe Lake – March 23, 1968, San Francisco)

Please allow me to always have the association of your serious followers and continue trying serve you and follow in your footsteps.

Your aspiring servant,

Kavicandra Swami

Initiation: June 1971—Los Angeles, California, USA

Swami Bhakti Abhaya Āśrama

*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*

I offer my respectful obeisances to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, having taken shelter at His lotus feet. My respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

About five hundred years ago, Lord Kṛṣṇa personally appeared as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the place of the *avatāra* for the Age of Kali. Lord Caitanya had two purposes for coming: to experience first-hand the bliss of serving Kṛṣṇa and to spread pure love for Kṛṣṇa, which is very rare. Writing about Lord Caitanya’s plan for making His mercy widely available, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī says:

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-dayā karaha vicāra
vicāra karile citte pābe camatkāra*

If you are indeed interested in logic and argument, kindly apply it to the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. If you do so, you will find it to be strikingly wonderful” (Cc. Ādi 8.15).

Almost sixty years ago you came, on the order of your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, to the United States to continue that mission. In the poems you wrote aboard the Jaladuta you asserted that your qualification for doing so was the mercy of the Lord and of your spiritual master. And in 1968 you sent your beloved disciple Gaurasundara dāsa here to Hawaii to do the same. This is an expression of your dedication to your spiritual master’s order, and an expression of your mercy. And somehow, through your mercy, you picked me up, accepted me as one of your own, and made me a member of your mission. This, despite my obvious lack of qualification for participating in this spiritual revolution begun by Lord Caitanya and expanded by you. Ignoring that lack, you took a chance and accepted me anyway, writing that I would be glad to know that you had gladly accepted me. But there was even more mercy waiting for me. When I moved into the Honolulu temple in March of 1970, I was soon given the responsibility of caring for the first *tulasī* plants to be grown in the

West, and when you accepted me for initiation, you expressed your appreciation for that service, writing that if I follow your instructions I would make rapid advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness by Śrīmatī Tulasī-devī's mercy.

Over the last 53 years or more, I have found my faith tested and strengthened, only by your mercy. Now I find myself in what I have to admit are probably the last few years of this life. And, again by your mercy only, the only things I have left are the association of devotees and opportunities to serve them. My service here in Hawaii and my travels elsewhere have shown me how your movement is thriving in so many places. I also have seen how so many sincere devotees' spiritual lives are flourishing because of the character, instructions, and mercy of your disciples, which is a further extension of your mercy. And every day I do my level best to follow your instructions and share whatever mercy I have received from you with as many souls as I can.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, it's getting to the point where I can see nothing but your mercy everywhere. So not only am I made entirely of your mercy, but the entire world seems to be constituted of your mercy. Every day I have to acknowledge that, although I don't have a capacity for fully understanding this, it's impossible to deny. It seems appropriate, then, on occasions such as this, to adapt Kṛṣṇadāsa's verse: *śrīla-prabhupāda-dayā karaha vicāra/ vicāra karile citte pābe camatkāra*. Whoever applies logic and reason to your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, must find it strikingly wonderful.

Your grateful servant,

Swami Bhakti Abhaya Āśrama

Initiation: 1971, July—Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Current location: Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Smita Krishna Swami

*omī ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-salākayā
cakṣur unmlītaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

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

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

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu nityānanda
śrī-advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vṛnda*

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

So, another year of devotional service has passed, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

When you came to the USA in the Fall of 1965, your body had just become 70. I have now reached 70 after some years of devotional service, and I am thinking how, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could you do it? What a miracle to keep going at that age under difficult circumstances. You had no fixed place, coming to a big, foreign country, living with the bums in the Bowery, facing challenges, but you kept going without shaking. Or maybe you said that you went to the Scindia office to ask for the next place to return to India. You asked the question but you didn't return...you didn't leave your mission. Sumati Morarjee told you that she thought it was better that you stay there in the USA to finish your business and then return. We could say in a way that you returned having finished your business. You had spread Krishna consciousness so much, but you did not stop, thinking you had done enough. You continued. Yes, you certainly managed to change this civilization by your strong, active preaching and, by your example, we were inspired to preach, following and trying to keep up with that spirit.

When I am sitting here, I am thinking what can I do? What should I do? Well, I try at least to keep some devotional service going for the sake of my own good and the good of the people around.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for your preaching to save me as an individual and the people of the world in a greater perspective.

Many of your direct followers are no more, and let's see how the followers of the followers can continue. I think there is hope. Hare Krishna

Smita Krishna Swami

Initiation: 1971, August—Hamburg, Germany

Current location: ISKCON Almviks Gard, Sweden

Contact: skswami@spray.se

My dearest spiritual master and preceptor for the entire world, I offer my most prostrated obeisances unto your divine lotus feet.

Thank you for coming into my life and saving me from the materialistic civilisation. I am just another example of your causeless mercy on conditioned souls. Your mercy is unlimited. You kindly travelled far and wide to present the message of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. You saw no difference in lecturing to Africans in a stadium in Nairobi or an auditorium full of Scottish people in Glasgow or sophisticated young people in Los Angeles. You saw the Lord in the hearts of all, and you desired their welfare.

Your mission continues under the empowered disciples and grand disciples of Your Divine Grace.

By their steady commitment to your service, we see the Kṛṣṇa conscious communities around the world flourishing. With the changing economic policies in India more temples have been constructed in many cities as well as in holy places. Outside India there is also some progress, but it can never be compared to the development of the India *yātrā*. Now we also see the Indian *yātrā* help to strengthen the preaching overseas. Your books are being studied more diligently than ever before and more and more come forward to take the Bhakti-śāstrī course and Bhakti-vaibhava. We see wonderful schools opening with the emphasis on spiritual education. There are farming projects with herds of dairy cows. We find *saṅkīrtana* parties across the globe so no one can say they have never heard of Hare Kṛṣṇa.

This is all your glory Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You did the real work and got the movement rolling. We offer all at your lotus feet. Thank you for everything Śrīla Prabhupāda. May I always bathe in the dust of your lotus feet.

Your insignificant disciple,

Swami Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha
Initiation: 1971—London, UK

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

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

I am sitting here in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur to write my annual offering to His Divine Grace Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. As we are getting older now and our health is deteriorating, Śrīla Prabhupāda at the time at a similar age and fragile health condition set off to the Western World to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness far and wide. This is simply inconceivable. What austerities he had to accept due to lacking any facilities compared to today's well established ISKCON temples and congregation communities.

At his first visit to Hamburg (Germany) in 1969 the small temple had only a few devotees who greeted Śrīla Prabhupāda at the airport. They were sitting on a rug in the airport's arrival hall and held *kīrtana*. When Śrīla Prabhupāda passed by the sitting devotees, they didn't know whether they should continue chanting or to get up and follow him. They were inexperienced and somewhat confused. No preaching engagements were arranged, except for one Indology professor from the Hamburg University to talk to Śrīla Prabhupāda. Śrīla Prabhupāda tolerated. He wanted to inspire the few newcomers in their practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In a small living room he sat on his bed with a harmonium and sang the *āratika* prayers, while *pūjā* was being offered to his small Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Deities.

On his morning walks only one devotee or sometimes a few accompanied Śrīla Prabhupāda. One time when he was accompanied by one devotee, that devotee in the middle of the walk paid his obeisances and said that he had to go to work. When Śrīla Prabhupāda visited Hamburg, it was pretty chilly in the early hours. One morning, after returning from the morning walk, we were waiting for the elevator and Śivānanda was rubbing his hands together, because of the cold. Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "Are you cold?" and touched Śivānanda's hands. "Feel my hand", he said. Śivānanda was surprised by how warm they were. Then Prabhupāda put his hands on Śivānanda's chest and said, "If you keep this part of the body warm, then the rest will be automatically warm."

Prabhupāda was so kind and affectionate to his disciples. At the same time, he could be heavy when it was necessary to train his disciples not to become slackened and inattentive in their practice of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. We greatly miss Śrīla Prabhupāda and we pray to him for his mercy and blessings to be able to properly continue with our spiritual life and serving his wonderful International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's servant,

Bhaktivaibhava Swami

Initiation: 1971—Germany

Nava Yogendra Swami

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda. You are the savior of the whole world by spreading *sanātana-dharma* and holy name of Supreme Lord, *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*, all over the world.

Today is your divine appearance day, and yesterday was the appearance day of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa who appeared to relieve saintly people and do away with miscreants. But in this Age of Kali-yuga, the Lord appeared in the form of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu to save everyone irrespective of caste, color and creed and bestow upon them the Love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa which is the ultimate purpose of this human form of life. Your appearance is to fulfil the mission of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu to take the holy name of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa to every town and village of the world. So, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I sometimes feel like:

*yadi prabhupāda nā haito
tabe ki haito kemone dharitam deh
gaura rādhā-kṛṣṇa mahima
premarasa-sima jagate janato ke*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you took so much trouble in your lifetime in this world which no one can repay. Whole world is indebted to you for this eternal highest welfare work that shall remain for ten thousand years to come.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you preserved Vedic knowledge and made it accessible to a fresh new global audience. You demonstrated by your own example. You also established the sacred *arcā-vigraha* of the Supreme Lord, restoring brahminical practices and aided for free cow protection.

On this day of your appearance, we pray at your lotus feet for blessing and empowering us to carry on your mission 'as it is'. Without your mercy, I am unqualified to do anything. Your mercy is the only and only hope for me.

I pledge this day of your divine appearance that by your mercy I will try my best to become more serious and enthusiastically work further *ā*for the fulfilment of the goal of this human form of life, a divine way shown by you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī, jaya!*

Your Humble Servant,

Nava Yogendra Swami

Initiation: 1971—India

Current location: ISKCON Udhamdur, Jammu & Kashmir, India

Romapāda Swami

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

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmine
namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

*mūkaṁ karoti vācāraṁ paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī gururṁ dina-tāraṇam*

My dear and most respected spiritual master and eternal father,

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

Years are passing quickly.

Many of your stalwart leaders have already joined you, entering

into some form of eternal service unto your lotus feet. In the coming decade, many additional senior disciples and followers will also be joining you – somewhere, also assisting you as your eternal servants.

That day is coming for all of us, sooner or later. “Simply a change of service, that’s all” – as Kadamba Kānana Swami remarked.

While reflecting on your gifts given so liberally to this dark world, in creating and expanding ISKCON, what was the source of your strength? Unflinching faith in *guru*, Nāma Prabhu and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are three sources of your indominable spiritual strength which I would like to glorify here.

Faith in Guru

Whenever you spoke of your Guru Mahārāja, one could easily and palpably feel the strength of your firm dedication to him – displayed abundantly in your life’s work.

While fearlessly following his instruction to you to carry the teachings of Mahāprabhu to the English-speaking parts of the world, what was your essential message? From the very beginning, “I have simply come to remind you of that which you have forgotten.” This message was repeated again and again. And yet again.

Your power to awaken conditioned souls to what they have forgotten continues; I experience it nearly every day, in worldly individuals of all descriptions who contact your books, long after your physical departure!

The disciple and spiritual master are never separated, because the spiritual master always keeps company with the disciple as long as the disciple follows strictly the instructions of the spiritual master. This is called the association of *vāñī* (words). Physical presence is called *vapuḥ*. As long as the spiritual master is physically present, the disciple should serve the physical body of the spiritual master, and when the spiritual master is no longer physically existing, the disciple should serve the instructions of the spiritual master. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.47, purport]

From my early college days, I became acquainted with your Guru Mahārāja, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami, through an article printed in an early *Back to Godhead* magazine, which was my first Kṛṣṇa conscious literature. That article elevated me to an

experience of consciousness I had never known before in my life. By divine arrangement, events occurred whereby my affinity for him substantially grew over passage of time.

However, when I read a letter you had written to Pradyumna Prabhu on 17 October, 1967, I became particularly motivated to deeply study *Brahma-saṁhitā*, and teach its message to others.

Brahma Saṁhitā is the gist of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* as well as in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Kṛṣṇa is accepted as Supreme Lord and everything about him is nicely described there, similarly in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* everything about Kṛṣṇa is perfectly described. In the very beginning of the book, Kṛṣṇa is accepted as the Supreme Lord existing eternally in his transcendental form and is the cause of all causes. One who reads *Brahma-saṁhitā* very carefully and scrutinizingly can understand everything of Kṛṣṇa without any fault. I recommend, therefore, that all my students read *Brahma-saṁhitā* very carefully—especially because it was translated personally by my spiritual master Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Mahārāja.

In the course of acting upon your instruction to “read *Brahma-saṁhitā* very carefully,” and after painstakingly teaching it several times, a strong urge has arisen in my heart to provide a rendering of this awesome book in easily approachable language for today’s reader. Please empower me to carry out this desire with a proper mood, simply as a tiny assistant within your and Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī’s greater mission.

Faith in Nāma Prabhu

Once, in your presence, Akiñcana Kṛṣṇa dāsa Bābājī asked Bon Mahārāja,

You went to the West, and Swami Mahārāja went to the West. You were both vastly learned scholars, gifted writers, and eloquent speakers. You presented the teaching of Lord Caitanya, and he presented the teachings of Lord Caitanya. You did the same things that he did, but he was successful and you could not do anything. What is the reason?”
And then Bābājī Mahārāja himself gave the answer:
“Because he had full faith in the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.”

In your own words, Śrīla Prabhupāda, “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.”

Please grant this one benediction: may I too come to the stage of chanting the holy name with full attention and absorption, filled with faith in Nāma Prabhu!

Faith in Śrīmad-Bhagāvatam

In 1961, when provided with your very first opportunity to present the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu beyond India to Tokyo, you chose the very theme of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* itself as your message: *Light of the Bhāgavata*.

Today, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has spread widely, in many languages, and is continuing to proliferate worldwide – resting upon your strong faith in its spiritually uplifting value, simply by souls giving submissive oral reception to its message.

Although I am very tiny, I am dedicated to continuing to assist you in this upliftment mission, to my capacity, as I have been doing for decades. As you well know, my life is eternally dedicated to your service, in a feeble yet sincere attempt to assist you in your ongoing mission. By serving you, may these three sources of your spiritual strength be transmitted also to me, at least in some degree, so that I may become a better instrument for you to utilize.

Please accept me as your eternal servant.

Your humble servant,

Romapāda Swami

Initiation: July 1971—Boston, USA

Bir Krishna Dasa Goswami

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

*namas te sāravate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūmyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I often tell the devotees that if they want to understand pure devotional service they need to study your qualities and pastimes, so that they can appreciate your care for others, your determination in all circumstances, your dedication to the pleasure of your beloved spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, your loving relationship with your Godbrothers, your attachment to the Holy Names, your love for the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and Bhakti scriptures, your transcendental humor, and your tolerance. I am certainly not capable of listing all of your qualities.

Daily I delve into the nectar of connecting with you. Daily I deepen my understanding and appreciation of you. Daily I endeavor to follow your example.

I regularly watch the Śrīla Prabhupāda memory videos in which your other disciples reveal their hearts and minds in relation to you by recalling their interactions with your Divine Grace. This soothes my troubled heart, and enables me to come closer to you. My appreciation for you increases exponentially by hearing these memories. I pray that I can serve you by always acting devotionally with others as you have done.

Daily I listen to the recordings of your classes, morning walks, and conversations. In this way I learn how to present Krishna consciousness properly according to time, place and circumstances. I can see that you were always conscious of the mission that you descended to this world to perform. Your focus on your mission helps me understand the *Gītā* 2.41.

*vyavasāyātmikā buddhir
ekeha kuru-nandana
bahu-sākhā hy anantās ca
buddhayo 'vyavasāyinām*

Those who are on this path are resolute in purpose,
and their aim is one. O beloved child of the Kurus, the
intelligence of those who are irresolute is many-branched.

By reading your books regularly, I appreciate more and more your deep understanding and realization of Lord Caitanya's teachings. Your ability to concisely present the *ācāryas* commentaries in a way that is understandable to us is amazing. Krishna has empowered

you to present the highest spiritual truths to the world in a way that the common man can understand. This is amazing, considering that you are on the highest level of devotional service, yet out of your compassion for us, you are taking us by the hand and leading us to the highest realizations.

I often marvel at nursery school teachers who can patiently teach at the level that four year olds can understand. Your reaching out to us is comparable to these teachers. We were infants yet, you patiently lovingly guided us, and empowered us in many ways.

“Gurudeva, give to this servant just one drop of mercy. I am lower than a blade of grass. Give me all help. Give me strength. Let me be as you are, without desires or aspirations.

I offer you all respects, for thus I may have the energy to know you correctly. Then, by chanting the holy name in great ecstasy, all my offenses will cease.

When will such mercy fall to this one who is weak and devoid of intelligence? Allow me to be with you.

If you examine me, you will find no qualities. Your mercy is all that I am made of.

If you are not merciful unto me, I can only weep, and I will not be able to maintain my life.”

“Gurudeva! kṛpā-bindu-diyā”

Bhaktivoinda Ṭhākura

I pray that somehow or other I can obtain that determination to be able to please you as you have pleased your spiritual master. You have often told us that this is the secret of success. I know that all my spiritual advancement is contingent upon my pleasing you.

Your servant,

Bir Krishna das Goswami

Initiation: 1972, January—Dallas, Texas, USA

Current location: Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Contact: birkrishnagoswami@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you.

How can I ever express my gratitude to you with my limited words or deeds? You have given me shelter without fear – even though I am still surrounded by *kuṅṭha-loka* – the world of anxieties.

To meet you is the most important event in my material existence in all the millions of lifetimes I have spent here. In the *Bhāgavatam*, Pṛthu Mahārāja expresses his gratitude to the four Kumāras for coming into his life when they visited him in his palace. He says:

How can such persons, who have rendered unlimited service by explaining the path of self-realization in relation to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and whose explanations are given for our enlightenment with complete conviction and Vedic evidence, be repaid except by folded palms containing water for their satisfaction? Such great personalities can be satisfied only by their own activities, which are distributed amongst human society out of their unlimited mercy. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.22.47)

Before that, Pṛthu Mahārāja had actually met Lord Viṣṇu at the completion of his *yajña*. At that time Viṣṇu showed him His causeless mercy by indicating that the King would meet the Kumāras in the future.

One might ask, why was it at all necessary for Pṛthu Mahārāja to meet the Kumāras after he had already seen the Lord face to face? Your beloved disciple His Holiness Gour Govinda Mahārāja explained once how the Lord has given the power to distribute the nectar of Kṛṣṇa consciousness into the hands of His devotee:

If you go to Kṛṣṇa and say, ‘Oh You are an ocean of mercy, please give me a drop.’ Kṛṣṇa will say, ‘You are such a fool, rascal. That ocean is not with Me now. My dear devotee has taken that ocean and has gone there

to distribute...*he is now distributing My mercy.*'

But alas, there is an illness in me. It requires treatment, and for that I am turning today sincerely to you, as only you have the medicine. Being a conditioned soul stuck in a material body and mind, there are inclinations in me that make me lean towards the material side of life – anxieties, limited willpower, illusions, etc. These material pulls are still present.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura once remarked that the living entity is somewhere between Prahlāda and Hiranyaśipu. Sometimes we show our attraction for devotional service, and then the next moment we are covered by forgetfulness.

Not so long ago, a dear devotee-friend, His Holiness Kadamba Kānana Mahārāja, left his body in Vṛndāvana. His last word that he managed to force out of his exhausted lips was: "Mission." As I thought about this, I leafed through one of his books and found this hope-giving cure against the illness of material existence in the following quote:

It is by the desire to serve the Lord that we can control
the desire to enjoy the world. [Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta
Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Letter, 22nd December 1927]

Somehow you have instilled in me a desire to serve your mission, and in this way, serve the Lord. By this gift, you have already given me the medicine to give up material life, once and for all. When one takes a strong medicine, it might not take effect the very same day, but surely it will work in one or two days. Actually, I feel it's working already. And I am confident that with your continued shower of mercy as well as my uninterrupted service to your mission, the disease will be driven out for good. Please never give up on me.

Thank you for all the gifts that I can already see and also for the gifts I am yet to discover.

Forever begging for your continued mercy upon me.

Your humble servant,

Śācīnandana Swami

Initiation: February 1972 —Hamburg, Germany

Current location: Germany

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your legacy in the form of your books is a gift to the world and especially to those aspiring to advance on the path of pure Bhakti. In the preface to *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* (*The Nectar of Instruction*) you have written:

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī was the leader of all the Gosvāmīs, and to guide our activities he gave us this *Upadeśāmṛta* (*The Nectar of Instruction*) to follow. As Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu left behind Him the eight verses known as *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, Rūpa Gosvāmī gave us *Upadeśāmṛta* so that we may become pure Vaiṣṇavas.

To achieve the highest success in life by becoming a gosvāmī and then a pure devotee of the Lord, one must follow the instructions known as *Upadeśāmṛta*, which have been given by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given many other books, such as *Bhakti-rasamṛta-sindhu*, *Vidagdha-mādhava* and *Lalita-mādhava*, but *Upadeśāmṛta* constitutes the first instructions for neophyte devotees. One should follow these instructions very strictly. Then it will be easier to make one's life successful. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

In verse four you explain Śrīla Rupa Gosvāmī's instructions on how devotees should associate together.

In your commentary to verse five, you have elaborately described the qualities and symptoms of the different kinds of Vaiṣṇavas; *kaniṣṭha*, *madhyama* and *uttama*. And you have further detailed the appropriate behavior towards Vaiṣṇavas according to their *adhikāra* or level of attainment in bhakti.

In verse six you stress the importance of serving Vaiṣṇavas according to their *adhikāra* and to be very careful to avoid committing offenses to them. Thus we are instructed on how to recognize the different levels of devotees and how we should act with them

Those who think that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is limited to a certain section of people, a certain section of devotees or a certain tract of land are generally prone to see the external features of the devotee. Such neophytes, unable to appreciate the exalted service of the advanced devotee,

try to bring the *mahā-bhāgavata* to their platform.

When one thus criticizes a pure devotee, he commits an offense (*vaiṣṇava-aparādha*) that is very obstructive and dangerous for those who desire to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A person cannot derive any spiritual benefit when he offends the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava. Everyone should therefore be very careful not to be jealous of an empowered Vaiṣṇava, or a *śuddha-vaiṣṇava*....

This is the sum and substance of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's advice in the sixth verse.

In the years since you first brought the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to the world outside of India, we have witnessed that flood of love spread far and wide.

As a young disciple during the time of your manifest pastimes, I tried to envision what the future of the Kṛṣṇa Consciousness movement would look like. Working through your International Society for Krishna Consciousness, I assumed that this institution would be the singular vehicle for the spreading of this extraordinary message of love. It did not occur to me that the sacrifice and dedication of your disciples would create a path for the disciples of your godbrothers to follow. Now there are temples, farms, ashrams, schools and other communities under the guidance of ISKCON and various Gauḍīya Maths all over the world. Yet, because of lack of spiritual awareness, I often judge these different groups based on the very external considerations that you warn against. This fault prevents me from recognizing and serving Vaiṣṇavas appropriately. Thus I am unworthy to represent you and our exalted *guru-varga*.

You are the perfect servant of your divine master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and the well-wisher and benefactor of all living entities. It has always been your desire, to bring all the followers of Mahāprabhu into a shared vision and purpose. I am praying to you to purify my heart so that I may, with genuine humility, honor all Vaiṣṇavas properly. When the mood of envy and jealousy is purged from my heart, I will be able to serve you and the greater Vaiṣṇava community and help in some way to carry on your *mano-bhīṣṭha* (inner heart's desire).

Aspiring to be the servant of your glorious servants,

Janardana Dasa
A.k.a. Bhaktivedanta Vaikhanas Swami
Initiation: 1972, April—New York, USA
Current location: On the road somewhere in the USA
Contact: bvvaikhanas@gmail.com

Ganapati Swami

*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*

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

In practical human terms, Śrīla Prabhupāda was an idealist, a realist, and an optimist. Let me elucidate:

idealist: a person who cherishes or pursues high or noble principles, purposes, goals, etc; a visionary realist: a person who tends to view or represent things as they really are
optimist: one who is disposed or tends to look on the more favorable side of events or conditions, and to expect the most favorable outcome.

Śrīla Prabhupāda never entertained compromise, even if it meant he found only “one moon.” His goal was to make the supreme *sādhya* of Kṛṣṇa-prema available to whomever would accept it in its authentic form:

I don’t make any compromise with these rascals. No words. No, no, never make that. Even if I don’t get any disciple, I’ll be satisfied. But I cannot make any compromise as these rascals. I cannot make. *Ekaś candras tamo hanti na ca tārā sahasraśaḥ*. If I create one moon, that is sufficient. I don’t want many stars. That was my Guru Mahārāja’s principle, and that is my principle. What is the use of having number of fools and rascals? If one man understands rightly, he can deliver the whole world. (3/23/74, Bombay)

Yet, Prabhupāda was realistically aware of how challenging his “impossible mission” would be, as he confided to the pūjārī at Śrī Advaita Ācārya’s Śāntipura house:

Many years ago my Gurudeva gave me an impossible mission. He ordered me to go across the ocean and plant Krishna consciousness on foreign soil. (*Our Śrīla Prabhupāda, a Friend to All*)

Decades later, he reminisced:

So when I was seventy years old I decided, “Now I must do and execute the order of my Guru Mahārāja”. And thus this movement was started in 1965 from New York. And I was not very much hopeful, because it is very difficult task, just opposite the European and Western culture. I came... When I first came, I had no money. So I got a free passage through some Indian steam navigation company. So I came by ship. So when I was on the ship at Boston port, Commonwealth port, I was thinking that, “I have come here. I do not know what is the purpose, because how the people will accept this movement? They are differently educated, and as soon as I’ll say, “So, my dear sir, you have to give up meat-eating and illicit sex and intoxication and gambling”, they will say, “Please go home.” Because that was the experience of one of my godbrother... So my godbrother proposed, “Yes, we can make anyone *brāhmaṇa* provided you follow this principle: no illicit sex, no intoxication, no meat-eating, no gambling.” So that Lord Zetland immediately replied, impossible.” (3/2/75, Atlanta)

In spite of that, his innate optimism prevailed:

So I was thinking that “I will propose something which is impossible. Anyway, let me try.” (3/2/75, Atlanta)

He knew Kṛṣṇa could make even the “impossible” possible:

*tabe jadi taba kṛpā hoy ahaitukī
sakal-i sambhava hoy tumi se kautukī*

But I know your causeless mercy can make everything possible because. You are the most

expert mystic. (*Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma*)

Fortunately, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s transcendental idealism, realism and optimism has to some degree shed upon me. Thus, I now aspire for the highest ideal of *bhakti-rasa* with Śrī Kṛṣṇa Rasarāja; and in spite of it not being realistic for countless lifetimes, I maintain a “hope against hope” that, by His Divine Grace, it may in some life come to pass.

Striving to more deeply appreciate my great fortune.

I hope to remain his servant eternally,

Ganapati Swami

Initiation: April 1972 —Los Angeles, California, USA

Bhakti Aloka Paramadvaiti Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are my life and my soul. I can see that your vision is manifesting in many surprising ways – some that I understand and some that I do not. Nevertheless, I am trying to follow the ideal of your vision that we should keep going on preaching Krishna consciousness, in order to save us from returning to our previous state of being hippies. This idea keeps ringing in my ears, and so I recommend to everyone to take up Krishna consciousness and preach, regardless of how good they are at it.

After many years of preaching in many places, I had to conclude that only a very personal and loving attention to the new devotees would match the expectations that you expressed many times – to let local people manage. The idea of controlling and being a big Sannyāsī, running around having disciples in many places, may look very appealing, but it doesn’t fulfil the needs of the local new devotees. Of course, we have the best *śikṣā* gurus in the world – Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, Śrīla Purī Mahārāj and many other great souls. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have definitely defined the principal Shaktyavesha Avatar, teacher who gives us protection.

But at the same time, we have to start to understand that your invitation in your call was for each and every devotee to take the fullest responsibility that they can. Nowadays, we have discussions

on whether women can become spiritual masters or not. But every woman - or man - who has come in contact with Śrīla Prabhupāda and who has accepted the Maha Mantra and the message of Śrīla Prabhupāda is one of the best medical professionals in the world. All the diseased people have hope when they meet them, accept them and follow them.

So, I simply pray to you, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, that I may encourage many people to take up the preaching and that I may stay preaching and practicing for the last days that I have left in this life. I am very sorry if I have created any circumstances due to my imperfections, which caused doubts or disturbance to any devotee in this world. But sometimes, the mistakes we make are there for everyone to benefit, including the one who makes them.

So, I beg you to be excused and to be given a chance to always be preaching in the association of the devotees and supporting each and every devotee who wants to create that decentralized spiritual community where Krishna is the true enjoyer and no selfish motive invades the spiritual community so that one person lives at the cost of the effort of others.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, again and again forever. Your aspiring servant is touching the lotus feet of all my godbrothers in other Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in the world. Because of you, life is worth living. Jay Śrī Rādhē, Sādhu Saṅga kī, jay, Śrīla Prabhupāda Vyāsapūjā kī, jay!

Swami Bhakti Aloka Paramadvaiti
Initiation: July 1972 —Paris, France

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

You compared once the words in Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura's songs to thunderbursts whose cracking sound is self-evident when

resounding in the heart. No need for an elaborate explanation.

Your words act much in the same way. In your books, lectures and conversations there is a treasure trove of hundreds of *sūtra*-like statements, each one of which has the power to act like a powerful burst of thunder, capable of dispersing the dense dark clouds of ignorance and illusion in the heart.

For you and the assembled Vaiṣṇavas' pleasure, I present a small selection of these pearls of wisdom.

108 Prabhupāda-sūtras

1. The cult of *bhāgavata-dharma* can be spread in all circumstances, among all people and in all countries. (Cc. M. 25.120p)

2. If the infinite reveals Himself, then it is possible to understand the nature of the infinite by the grace of the infinite. (Bg. 11.4p)

3. The Lord does no wrong in any circumstance because He is absolute, all-good at all times. (SB 1.9.35p)

4. Nothing is created out of nothing, but everything is created from the person of the Lord. (SB 2.6.23p)

5. Self-realization is the responsibility of every living entity developed in consciousness. (SB 2.9.36p)

6. Human life is especially meant for self-realization—"self" refers to the Superself and the individual self. (SB 4.22.32p)

7. Self-realization means to become indifferent to the needs of the gross and subtle bodies and to become serious about the activities of the self. (SB 1.3.33p)

8. There is no stronger obstruction to one's self-interest than thinking other subject matters to be more pleasing than one's self-realization. (SB 4.22.32)

9. Hearing or associating with devotees is the most important function for self-realization. (SB 3.25.27p)

10. The atmosphere of the subtle body at the time of death is created by the activities of the gross body. (SB 6.1.54p)

11. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is educating people to enlighten the subtle body. (SB 4.29.61p)

12. Liberation means getting out of the clutches of the subtle body. (SB 4.29.61p)

13. The real interest of the living entity is to get out of the nescience that causes him to endure repeated birth and death. (SB 4.29.37)

14. Voluntary endeavor is the only qualification for spiritual perfection. (SB 3.9.38p)

15. Faith is created by association with devotees. (*Bg.* 9.3p)
16. In less than even a moment, a perfect devotee can return home, back to Godhead, immediately after giving up his material body. (*SB* 6.2.44p)
17. Spiritual activities performed early in the morning have a greater effect than in any other part of the day. (*SB* 3.20.46p)
18. The highest perfectional work of charity is to give people in general immunity from the anxieties of material existence. (*SB* 3.7.41p)
19. The eternally conditioned soul is eternally conditioned because he is controlled by the mind. (*SB* 5.11.12)
20. The Lord's feet act like thunderbolts hurled to shatter the mountain of sin stored in the mind of the meditating devotee. (*SB* 3.28.22)
21. The mind is naturally restless, going hither and thither, but it can rest in the sound vibration of Kṛṣṇa. (*Bg.* Intro)
22. Satisfaction of the mind can be obtained only by taking the mind away from thoughts of sense enjoyment. (*Bg.* 17.16p)
23. Except for the uncontrolled and misguided mind, there is no enemy within this world. (*SB* 7.8.9)
24. There is one easy weapon with which the mind can be conquered—neglect. (*SB* 5.11.17p)
25. Mind is the instrument for feeling different material experiences, but intelligence is deliberative and can change everything for the better. (*SB* 2.10.32p)
26. We should know for certain that the cause of all painful life is sinful action. (*SB* 6.1 Summary)
27. Sense gratification is the root cause of material existence. (*Bg.* 4.30p)
28. Unless one conquers the modes of passion and ignorance, and comes to the platform of goodness, there is no chance of one's becoming a pure devotee. (*SB* 6.14.1p)
29. A devotee should never make compromises with non-devotees. (*Cc. Madhya* 12.135p)
30. Kṛṣṇa's hearing the devotee's words of love in offering foodstuffs is wholly identical with His eating and actually tasting. (*Bg.* 9.26p)
31. A devotee should be blameless because any offense by the devotee is a scar on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (*SB* 3.16.5p)
32. Simply surrendering at the lotus feet of the Lord is the cause of all a devotee's enlightenment and awareness. (*SB* 7.13.22p)

33. The curse of a great saint or devotee is not a curse but a benediction. (SB 8.4.1p)

34. An unalloyed devotee is never disturbed by any kind of trying circumstance. (SB 6.12.19p)

35. The Lord is so kind to His devotee that when severely testing him the Lord gives him the necessary strength to be tolerant and continue to remain a glorious devotee. (SB 8.22.29–30p)

36. No one is competent to serve the Lord, but even if a devotee is not competent, the merciful Lord accepts the humble attempt of the devotee. (SB 6.16.25p)

37. All power is obtained from the Lord; therefore each particular power must be utilized to execute the will of the Lord and not otherwise. (Iso 4p)

38. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is known as *bhāva-grāhī janārdana* because He takes only the essence of a devotee's attitude. (SB 8.23.2p)

39. Everyone has dormant *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*—love for Kṛṣṇa—and in the association of good devotees, that love is revealed. (Cc. M. 19.151p)

40. The arguments offered by pure devotees to their disciples are so convincing that even a dull-headed disciple is immediately enlightened with spiritual knowledge. (SB 5.13.22p)

41. For spiritual advancement of knowledge a suitable place and atmosphere are definitely required. (SB 1.7.2p)

42. When a demon associates with devotees engaged in glorifying the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he gradually becomes a pure devotee. (SB 8.22.36p)

43. Knowledge is meant for distribution. (SB 10.2.19p)

44. Agriculture and cow protection are the way to become sinless and thus be attracted to devotional service. (SB 8.6.12p)

45. There is a miracle in milk, for it contains all the necessary vitamins to sustain human physiological conditions for higher achievements. (SB 1.16.4p)

46. Devotional service begins when the mind, intelligence and ego are completely purified. (Cc. *Madhya* 6.235p)

47. If we are not attached to devotional service to the Lord, then we cannot become detached from the modes of material nature. (Bg. Intro)

48. There is no difference between the kingdom of God and the devotional service of the Lord. (Bg. 2.72p)

49. The Lord is always within the heart of the living being, but

He becomes manifested by one's devotional service. (SB 2.8.5p)

50. Devotional service itself is so powerful that by one's service attitude, everything is revealed. (SB 3.25.19p)

51. Mantras and the process of devotional service have special power, provided they are received from the authorized person. (SB 8.16.24p)

52. One should know for certain that without chanting the holy name of the Lord offenselessly, one cannot be a proper candidate for advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (NOI 5p)

53. A sādhu is one who is engaged in devotional service to the Lord without deviation (*bhajate mām ananya-bhāk*). (SB 10.10.18p)

54. Endeavor for material opulence is against the principle of devotional service. (Cc. *Madhya* 12.135p)

55. One must be satisfied with whatever privileges are given to him by the mercy of the Lord. (*Iso* 1p)

56. Unless one is completely freed of all material desires, which are caused by the dense darkness of ignorance, one cannot fully engage in the devotional service of the Lord. (SB 5.18.8p)

57. When it is recommended that one be desireless, it is understood that one should not desire things which are destructive to spiritual values. (SB 3.12.26p)

58. One must fulfill one's desires by surrendering unto the Supreme Lord, for He knows how to fulfill them. (SB 7.13.24p)

59. One's desires and ambitions develop according to the company one keeps. (NOI 4p)

60. The disciple and spiritual master are never separated because the spiritual master always keeps company with the disciple as long as the disciple follows strictly the instructions of the spiritual master. (SB 4.28.47p)

61. A devoted disciple of the spiritual master would rather die with the spiritual master than fail to execute the spiritual master's mission. (SB 4.28.50p)

62. To honor the spiritual master means to carry out his instructions word for word. (SB 3.24.12p)

63. One should not accept a spiritual master without following his instructions. (NOI 5p)

64. If a devotee or so-called devotee purposefully commits sinful activities continually in the hope that Kṛṣṇa will give him protection, Kṛṣṇa will not protect him. (Cc. *Antya* 9.65p)

65. As Kṛṣṇa never falls, when we revive our spiritual

consciousness, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we never fall again to material existence. (SB 7.7.54p)

66. The best friend and benefactor of all people is one who awakens humanity to its original Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (SB 4.22.47p)

67. Even in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, separation and enmity take place due to the prominence of material propensities. (SB 5.14.37p)

68. One who is not free from the contamination of envy cannot advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (SB 4.19.2p)

69. A living entity is so made by the will of the Almighty that he is most happy when placing himself in that condition of absolute dependence. (SB 1.9.22p)

70. When one's instrument of action is broken and cannot function, that is called death; again, when one gets a new instrument for action, that is called birth. (SB 3.31.45–46p)

71. Instead of allowing one to forget one's real position, Kṛṣṇa can revive one's original identity at the time of one's death, even though the mind may be flickering. (SB 10.1.41p)

72. The duty of a pure Vaiṣṇava devotee is to act for the welfare of others. (SB 10.8.4p)

73. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person does his duty to the best of his ability and leaves everything to Kṛṣṇa. (Bg. 4.20p)

74. Our duty is simply to surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead and let Him take charge, for He knows what is good for us. (SB 4.20.31p)

75. A person who is in pure *bhakti-yoga* does not arouse the senses while meeting the demands of the body. (Bg. 6.23p)

76. Once engaged in the *bhakti-yoga* process with all sincerity, one will have no chance of falling down. (SB 4.28.37p)

77. The time of bereavement is a suitable time for appreciating *bhakti-yoga*. (SB 6.5.35p)

78. Just as a father sacrifices many things out of affection for his son, great saintly persons sacrifice all kinds of bodily comforts for the benefit of human society. (SB 5.1.26p)

79. Our very existence is in the atmosphere of nonexistence. (Bg. Intro)

80. Matter dovetailed for the cause of the Absolute Truth regains its spiritual quality. (Bg. 4.24p)

81. We should be satisfied with whatever is offered and supplied by Kṛṣṇa without much personal endeavor. (SB 3.31.47p)

82. *Avidyā*, or ignorance, is undoubtedly dangerous, but

vidyā, or knowledge, is even more dangerous when mistaken or misguided. (Iso 9p)

83. Our hearts are meant for the pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (SB 5.1.38p)

84. The eternally liberated living beings are in the Vaikuṅṭha *jagat*, the spiritual world, and they never fall into the material world. (SB 5.11.12p)

85. The more we engage in austerities, the more we become powerful by the grace of the Lord. (SB 6.4.49–50p)

86. Unless one is meek and humble, to make progress in spiritual life is very difficult. (SB 7.9.8p)

87. By humility and meekness one attracts the attention of Kṛṣṇa. (Cc. *Antya* 4.71p)

88. Although every man and woman is actually eager to enjoy life through sexual unity, the result is disunity and distress. (SB 7.13.26p)

89. The Supreme Personality of Godhead does not disappoint anyone who takes shelter of His lotus feet. (SB 8.3.19p)

90. In the material world, all distresses are due to extravagance. (SB 8.19.17p)

91. There is nothing to be lamented when a matter is beyond the control of any human being. (SB 1.9.15p)

92. Everything can be used to the extent that it can be engaged in Kṛṣṇa's service. (SB 9.4.28p)

93. Unless one is spiritually advanced he cannot influence an audience. (Cc. *Adi* 7.105p)

94. It is a completely mistaken idea that one can worship Kṛṣṇa in any form or in any way and still attain the ultimate result of receiving the favor of the Lord. (Cc. *Madhya* 8.90p)

95. One who is actually advanced in ecstatic love of Kṛṣṇa does not try to advertise himself. (Cc. *Antya* 20.28p)

96. By nature and constitution, every living being—including the Supreme Lord and each of His parts and parcels—is meant for eternal enjoyment. (Iso 7p)

97. As long as *the* living spiritual sparks manipulate the dead lumps of matter, the dead world appears to be a living world. (Iso 10p)

98. Without purification of heart, *sannyāsa* is simply a disturbance to the social order. (Bg. 3.4p)

99. Detachment from matter and attachment to Kṛṣṇa are one and the same. (Bg. 5.5p)

100. Unless we have a pessimistic view of this material life,

considering the distresses of birth, death, old age and disease, there is no impetus for our making advancement in spiritual life. (Bg. 13.8–12p)

101. *Avidyā* (ignorance) perverts the ability to relish the transcendently palatable name, quality, form and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. (NOI 7p)

102. As men are made after the form and features of the Supreme Lord, so also the cows are made after the form and features of the *surabhi* cows in the spiritual kingdom. (SB 1.17.9p)

103. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, qualities and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him. (SB 6.16.50p)

104. True religion instructs people to be satisfied with the bare necessities of life while cultivating Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (NOI 2p)

105. Sacrifice means denying the interest of the senses. (Iso 17p)

106. On the spiritual platform, one does not unnecessarily care for the body. (Cc. *Antya* 6.314p)

107. Every Vaiṣṇava is a spiritual master. (Cc. *Madhya* 24.330p)

108. A spiritual master is recognized as an actual *guru* when it is seen that he has changed the character of his disciples. (Cc. *Antya* 3.143p)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am forever grateful for your wonderful gift of presenting the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in such clear and concise instructions. Any one of these 108 *sūtras*, when applied in one's life, can lead to the highest perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Begging to remain eternally engaged in your service,

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Initiation: July 1972 — Paris, France

Current location: New Vraja Mandala, Spain

Janānanda Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-śvāminn iti nāmine
namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

My obeisances again and again in the dust of your feet.

LOVE – THE GREATEST GIFT. A CRYING APPEAL

The root of all divine qualities – absolute love. The constitution of the living being. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the personification of this love – your every act, thought and deed – saturated with pure love. You gave and continue to give real love to all – the greatest need of every living being. They say, “love makes the world go round”. This is certainly true of the spiritual world. ‘Love makes ISKCON go round’. You have brought that spiritual love into this world of lust, manifesting in your endless love for the parts and parcel living entities, fallen into illusion and seeing themselves separate from their eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

The unique nature of Your love is that is purely constitutional (the nature of the soul connected purely with Kṛṣṇa), unlike the relative love of conditioned souls. By your unconditional love you are doing the otherwise impossible – awakening love for Kṛṣṇa in the hearts of the *mlecchas* and *yavanas* of this world in this Kali-yuga. Miracle done. By the one switch of loving Kṛṣṇa, all is achieved.

“*The Nectar of Devotion* teaches us the science of loving every one of the living entities perfectly by the easy method of loving Kṛṣṇa. If we learn how to love Kṛṣṇa, then it is very easy to immediately and simultaneously love every living being.” (From the Preface of *The Nectar of Devotion*)

No separate endeavor needed. The secret of all secrets.

By giving the process – *yuga-dharma harināma saṅkīrtana* – you uncover the loving propensity in us all. Just expose ourselves to your association and the holy name and focus on acting and dealing in the way you would be pleased.

As Haridāsa Ṭhākura showered his loving compassion on his perpetrators, you also showered the compassion of love for Kṛṣṇa on the world, showing that all living entities are His parts and parcels. To not love one part is to not love Kṛṣṇa.

Out of love for Kṛṣṇa and His parts and parcels you fearlessly chastise and hammer, to try to get the point in. – even your seeming chastisements are tsunamis of mercy because that is who you are – the living embodiment of mercy in its absolute form – no boundaries. It pains you to see Kṛṣṇa’s parts and particles trying to defy Kṛṣṇa and denying their own rights.

WHEN WILL WE CRY LIKE YOU?

Your crying is not the sentimental crying of materially frustrated and fearful, traumatized *jīvas*. Your crying is the manifestation of

your love. The perpetual act of the eternal lovers of the Lord in separation. In its various forms you are always crying. There is a crying need of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness more now than ever before in this spiritual wilderness. You cry out the message of Godhead with your every word – “We must not be disappointed that no one is hearing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We will say it to the moon and stars and all directions. We will cry in the wilderness, because Kṛṣṇa is everywhere.”

It’s a crying shame that people do not take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Yes, the word crying has many connotations. An inseparable response of true compassion.

You also cry to see Kṛṣṇa’s parts and parcels separated from Kṛṣṇa, not bringing Him pleasure. You cry to see the vehicle meant to carry this message, for which you labored so hard for, not being maintained or being misused. You cry when your “army of monkeys” fight with each other and lose the thread. You said it is the western habit to fight.

You cry when your little helpers fall away (sometimes your ‘big guns!’). When Siddha-svarūpa Mahārāja contacted you after separating himself from the movement you cried, remembering him in loving affection. When another early and prominent disciple showed such offensive indifference, you appealed to him, “What did I do to cause you to become like this?” No response. After he left you commented what a rascal he has become, but I still love him. You loved each and every follower – every little speck of devotion means so much to you.

You cry when temples are not being maintained. When we put our own vision and perception in the center. When we stop the *yuga-dharma*. When we compromise the path to genuine love which you gave us. When we reduce the Deity standards. When we stop following our vows, when we leave your lotus feet. You cry when we misuse Kṛṣṇa’s energy. I cannot imagine your heart’s feelings seeing so many occupied in fault-finding and spending countless hours on unproductive social media. The whole world is hijacked. You cried in your last days in concern for your movement and the risk of its failing.

You cry when you see the state of this world. You cry to see souls lost in the meshes of *māyā*. You cry when you see poor little kids starving. “Make sure no one within 10 miles of an ISKCON property goes hungry”. You cry when you see the mindless butchering of

innocent living entities. You cry when you see your spiritual children suffer, and literally when the children of your children are abused. Not only children but everyone. Who has not been or is not being abused? This is the material world – the world where we abuse Kṛṣṇa’s energy. Are we not the abuser also? Only you are teaching us how to become non-abusers.

Your crying is not just one of apparent compassion and concern but also of joy. You cry when you stand in front of your beloved Lordships. When you hear the glorious results of the spreading of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. When you see the austerities of surrendered disciples. (We hope our little efforts in France bring some tears of joy to your heart, especially last year the reprinting of your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in French and the extensive repairs to the buildings and property in New Māyāpura. Decades have passed since you were there and decades of struggle also bringing tears to your heart seeing the situation of your French chapter).

You cry in remembrance of your Guru Mahārāja. You cry when you sing the songs of the previous *ācāryas*. You cry in separation of your beloved.

Your life is one of crying to the Lord. There is no end of causes for crying but your crying is different – it the cry of genuine love.

They say Jesus Christ suffered for our sins – but you suffer for all living beings whoever they are and whatever they are doing. All living entities are sinful if they have forgotten their relationship with the supreme.

A vision remains etched in my heart. sitting at your lotus feet in London airport. Teeming travelers are running here and there with no real idea where they are going. Tears are rolling down your eyes as you gaze over the scene. Is it because you are leaving behind your loving followers. Or is it because your heart burns seeing the pitiful state of the ‘Happy *karmīs*’. Maybe both.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, if only I could cry following in your footsteps. If only I felt genuine repentance with tears in my eyes and heart at my insincerity, my feelings of envy, my attachments to mundane, so-called pleasures, my poor *sādhana* – let the list stop there, but it is a long one. I should be crying in regret for my past and present nonsense. I am also guilty, Śrīla Prabhupāda, of making you cry – if only it were for the right reason.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you taught us how to cry for Kṛṣṇa – unfortunately this baby is still crying for its milk – name, fame,

recognition, adoration – for fulfillment of its whims.

Oh, how much pain it must be for you to see so many divisive subjects, by the hand of Kali, entering in to our midst, threatening to split the movement. The risk – turning us away from what you have given, love for Kṛṣṇa, the *yuga-dharma*. Everything from *guru-tattva* to the definition of abuse, to eating habits, to perceived changes in your writings, to preaching methods, to gender issues, to modern day wokeism, to how we dress, to this to that. All passing clouds that can occupy our consciousness but can leave a trail of disaster in their wake. Oh, how much you taught us to come together and preach – to chant with all our hearts. Is this not the unity in diversity principle? You cry when you see the diversity overwhelming the unity.

Your tears of love have changed the world and continue to do so.

You taught us how to cry for Kṛṣṇa – thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

When oh when will we cry like you in love of Kṛṣṇa and all that is related to him.

Your tears of love are the unifying factor of this movement.

Let us unitedly cry and cry for the right purpose. Let us cry to spread the holy names.

Remembering you and your causeless love I fall, crying at your lotus feet. Crying for a little spot in the dust at your lotus feet - my only hope.

Janānanda Goswami

Initiation: July 1972 —London, UK

Krishna Kshetra Swami

A Beggar or a Giver

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I beg to offer you respects in the form of these words of appreciation and praise, along with my obeisance at your blessed lotus-like feet, at which the masters of loving devotion to the Lord sit.

Recently I was fortunate to spend some days at Govardhana, together with a group of devotees visiting (mainly from Europe) Krishna's holy *dhāma*. We were blessed to circumambulate Govardhana Hill, inspired by the tradition of respecting Girirāja—the King of Mountains—exemplified by Śrīla Sanātana Goswami making his daily walks around this rocky emblem of Krishna's love

for the Vraja-vāsīs. We remembered your wish—as the final days of your presence with us approached—to make bullock-cart *parikramā* of Govardhana, and we prayed for your blessings that we might feel your presence as we made our way with *kīrtana* along the sandy path in the pleasant February sunlight.

And as we proceeded—now south of Jatipur, now through Radhakunda town—we encountered and passed by numerous people seeking alms. Some passively sat and patiently waited for a coin or two to drop in their tin bowls as pilgrims passed by; others approached with outstretched hands, spreading an upper garment and urging with strong voice and persistent pace. One has contrary feelings of wishing there were no beggars to embarrass one with unresponsive, even callously ignoring them, and simultaneous wishing to give generously to them all if one possibly could, remembering Krishna’s order to the Vraja-vāsīs to distribute food generously after offering it to Govardhana in the *annakūṭa* festival.

I also recalled your words, reporting how you had chided some young Indian students at the University of California in Berkeley:

When I was speaking in Berkeley University sometimes in the year 1966, one Indian student stood up, and he said, “Swamiji, what this Krishna consciousness movement will do? We require now technology.” So I replied, “Yes, you are after technology. So you are a beggar. I am not a beggar. I have come here to give something. That is the difference. I have come here to give some culture, and you have come to imitate the Western civilization by technology. That is the difference. You’ll remain a beggar, I shall remain a giver. That is the difference.”

Of course, we can understand that you have given so much more than just “some culture,” you have given the entire expansive and inclusive culture and exacting practice of devotion to Krishna. Your desire, as you once expressed to Bhūrijana Prabhu and Jagattārīṇī Prabhvī (as Bhūrijana Prabhu shared with us at Govardhana), was nothing less than to enable *everyone in the universe* to become Krishna conscious. Such is your spirit of giving.

And yet, the humble nature of your giving is such that it appears as begging. You beg everyone to listen to and accept Lord Krishna’s teachings, following Haridāsa Ṭhākura and Nityānanda Prabhu as they implored everyone they meet to accept their priceless gift of

Krishna-*bhakti*.

My prayer on this day commemorating your appearance is that you grant me the requisite determination and humility to remain a beggar in your service, to grasp some sense of the expansiveness of your giving spirit. I pray to be able to go beyond my own limited comprehension of your mission and thus to at least try to reciprocate your gift in such ways that others will receive and accept the same. Then I may be blessed to see the Govardhana residents, pilgrims—beggars and all—as Lord Krishna’s blessed associates, and I may be able to share the abundance that is embodied in Govardhana—the giver of unlimited joy to Krishna and His devotees— with everyone I meet.

Your aspiring, begging servant,

Krishna Kshetra Swami

Initiation: July 1972 —Paris, France

Current location: Poland

Lokanātha Swami

My Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble, prostrated obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, to your selfless mercy and priceless philosophy. All glories to Your Divine Grace on your auspicious 127th Vyāsa-pūjā.

In initiating five thousand disciples globally, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had already begun this vision for unity in diversity. These disciples represent a sweeping diversity of nationalities, races, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds. Through your books, Śrīla Prabhupāda, people of all races and nationalities around the globe had begun to perform devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as one united family.

There is ancient verse from *Mahopaniṣad* 6.71–75 which states:

*ayam nijaḥ paro veti gaṇanā laghucetasām
udāracaritānām tu vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*

Only men who think small, discriminate saying that one person is a relative and the other is a stranger. But those people who live magnanimously know that the entire world constitutes their family.

The essential implication of the above statement is that considerations such as “he is mine or another’s” occur only in the low-minded. To the intellectual minds, the entire world is one family. Given the number of continents and countries, Śrīla Prabhupāda you frequently discussed how this boundless world became artificially divided and continues to be superficially maintained by a “disunited” United Nations.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your vision of ISKCON was one of a United Nations of the spiritual world. As I write this dedication, the so-called United Nations, or rather the ‘Disunited’ United Nations has failed to unite the people of the world. I recall you noting that whenever you passed the United Nation Organization’s headquarters in New York, you would say, ‘Another flag.’ After a few months, again ‘Another flag’, ‘Oh! Another flag’. Yet, in spite of the many flags, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you said that this was a symbol of disunited nations, that were constantly “splitting, splitting, splitting.” The present ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia, or the Israel-Palestine crisis, and the many other conflicts around the world are evidence of this disunity, this splitting, this breach of espoused unity.

The Vedic point of view which you propagated is that everybody on this planet is certainly part of our family - *vāsudhaiva kuṭumbakam*. This is clearly evident in your fourteen global travels, during which you nurtured and guided ‘the world tendency of going towards one state or one human society’. You knew there was a need to instill a kinship that engendered world human brotherhood wherein the world would be united as one family.

In the preface of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* you wrote: “We must know the present need of human society which is no longer bounded by geographical limits to particular countries or communities. It is broader than in the middle ages, and the world tendency is towards one state or one human society. The ideals of spiritual communism, according to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, are based more or less on the oneness of the entire energy of living beings.” Those who are Kṛṣṇa conscious, they are broad minded people. They could accommodate the whole world in their heart, accept everybody, as part of their family.

In the early 1960s there was a war between India and China. However, India being friendly and broadminded encouraged its school children to chant this slogan – “*Hindī chīni bhāi bhāi.*” I was from a village so what I understood was, Hindi is a language and

chini is sugar. I was left wondering how a language and sugar could possibly be brothers? When I was older, I realized that the people of Hindustan (India) are called Hindi and Chinese people are called *chini*. It dawned on me that this slogan, *hindi-chini bhāi bhāi* was a call for a brotherhood alliance between the Hindustanis and the Chinese. Without a common father, children cannot be brothers. I further wondered about the common father which you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, clarified for me. In your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, I finally learnt the underlying truth and fully understood the meaning of *hindi-chini bhāi bhāi*. I finally comprehended how the people of India and China are all brothers. It is because Kṛṣṇa says: ‘*ahaṁ bīja-pradaḥ pitā*: (Bg. 14.4), – I am the seed-giving father.’ Kṛṣṇa is the seed-giving father, not the government heads around the world. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the common and Supreme Father of humanity and all creatures who inhabit this world. You advocated that we are one world, one family having one Father.

The concept of *vāsudhaiva kuṭumbakam* which you instilled as one of the foundational principles of our movement has seen the devotees of war-torn countries helping and supporting each other. These two nations are quarrelling and killing each other daily, exchanging bullets and missiles, yet ISKCON devotees are exchanging gifts and obeisances, and exhibiting a “Ukraine Russian Bhai Bhai” ethos in spite of the raging war. This Śrīla Prabhupāda, is the result of your philosophy of interconnectedness of mankind through true knowledge:

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have made us understand that Kṛṣṇa is our common father and head of the family.

*vidyā-vinaya-sampanne
brāhmaṇe gavi hastini
śuni caiva śva-pāke ca
paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ*

The humble sage, by virtue of true knowledge, sees with equal vision a learned and gentle *brāhmaṇa*, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater [outcaste] (Bg. 5.18)

The true meaning of equal vision extends to all living entities, which reminds me of a song written by St. Francis of Assisi who refers to Brother Sun, Sister Moon and the stars, Brothers Wind and Air, Sister Water, Brother Fire and Mother Earth whom he says, “sustains and governs us, producing varied fruits with colored

flowers and herbs”.

In your 1974 lecture you mentioned the following about St. Francis; “This is real God consciousness, yes, not that “I am God conscious, and I kill the animals.” That is not God conscious. To accept the trees, plants, lower animals, insignificant ants even, as brothers... *Samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu*. This is explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Samaḥ* means equal to all living entities, to see the spirit soul, anyone... It doesn't matter whether he is man or cat or dog or tree or ant or insect or big man. They are all parts and parcel of God. They are simply dressed differently.”

‘Ām Ādmī Party’ is a political party in India that supposedly cares and fights for the common man, the *ādmī*. There are many political parties like this one worldwide, who care only for humans who vote for them. Sadly, they continue with their atrocities on other living entities. They encourage slaughterhouses and consuming meat which unforgivingly includes the cow. They strip the forests which has led to serious environmental concerns for all living on this planet. But Śrīla Prabhupāda, your International Society for Krishna Consciousness is the ‘Ām Ātmā Party’. It is a party which cares and is concerned about the welfare of all living entities.

*ekaṁ śāstram devakī-putra-gītam
eko devo devakī-putra eva
eko mantras tasya nāmāni yāni
karmāpy ekaṁ tasya devasya sevā*

And that one world, one family has one common scripture – *ekaṁ śāstram devakī-putra-gītam*: – *Bhagavad-gītā*; we worship one God, *eko devo devakī-putra eva* – the son of Devakī, Kṛṣṇa; chant one *mantra* – *eko mantras tasya nāmāni yāni* – *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*. Universally we all have the one and the only occupation – *karmāpy ekaṁ tasya devasya sevā* – and that is devotional service unto the Supreme worshipable Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (*Bhagavad-gītā-māhātmya* 7)

The original world was one village, Bhārata, but marauding invaders came and burnt universities and libraries and tried to annihilate the ancient Vedic culture. Nālanda was an acclaimed fifth century university in the ancient kingdom in Bihar. The knowledge at this university was so colossal that out of jealousy, in 1200 CE Sultan Khilji set fire to the university's entire library burning millions of books. It took more than three months to burn down this priceless

home of knowledge. Then the British came to India with Governor-General Macaulay “wanted to break the very backbone of this nation which is her heritage and culture.” He minimized the study of Sanskrit and made English the medium of instruction for higher education in India and shut down all colleges where only eastern philosophy and subjects were taught. This is how they splintered and shrunk the original Bhārata.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when you were asked why you had come to England you had replied “Your country, England, ruled over India for many generations, and in the span of that time you took so much of our wealth to London, but you forgot to take our greatest wealth, our spiritual culture. I have come to give you freely what you forgot to take from us.”

Because of your mercy, even after the burning and the shrinking by the invaders all members and followers of your Kṛṣṇa conscious movement are united, worldwide.

Your Divine Grace made a home delivery of Vedic knowledge worldwide. Today all your followers are equipped with the swords of knowledge, your books, uniting the world once again. From the ‘disunited nations in New York’ to the ‘united spiritual nations in Māyāpur’ you have revived that trend and spirit again. The whole world is reading your books and Vedic culture and that is a cultural conquest.

This worldwide knowledge is available at the Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana Institutes for Higher Education that have now become sought-after institutions. Apart from designated educational institutions globally, every ISKCON mandir is a Vidyā mandir where the study of *Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā* is regularly undertaken. The Bhaktivedanta College of Education and Culture offers certificated courses like the Bhakti-śāstrī, Bhakti-vaibhava, Bhakti-vedānta and Bhakti-sārvabhauma. The curriculum is guided by your books which are studied with much enthusiasm globally.

This access to knowledge and higher thinking is all we need to inspire this brotherhood, fraternity, and the spirit of cooperation of all nations across the globe.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you built a house that the whole world can live in, a sacred shelter that accommodates all, irrespective of their race, language or nationality. You have advised that, ‘The material advancement of the Western countries and the spiritual assets of India should combine for the elevation of all human society.’

Your eternal, grateful servant,

Lokanātha Swami

Initiation: 1972, October—Vrindavan, India

Rādhānātha Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my unworthy life in the service of your servants.

Our life's essence is in the opportunity to express gratitude to you with sincere surrender and devotion. I pray for the humility to recognize that pleasing you in the service of the Lord is our highest purpose, above all the inconceivable transformations in the world around us.

In the sea of material existence, we are sometimes charmed by tranquil sunsets. Sometimes we are tormented by turbulent storms. They are both distractions unless we seek shelter of Kṛṣṇa's names with gratitude and devotion.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your life and teachings is our compass leading to the shore of Godhead. I believe that your voyage on the Jaladuta is like a metaphor of life. As our revered and beloved *ācārya*, you taught us how to surrender to Kṛṣṇa with love, and remain devoted to the will of the spiritual master through the apparently insurmountable changes in the sea of life.

In these times we are surrounded with almost continuous waves of despair including wars, quarrelsome divisions, diseases and loss of loved ones. More than ever we need each other to share strength and wisdom to seek shelter in *hari-kīrtana*, *hari-kathā*, *vaiṣṇava-sevā*, and *jīva-dayā*.

It is possible if we earnestly seek shelter in your divine grace as our highest aspiration.

Striving to be a servant of your servants,

Rādhānātha Swami

Initiation: February 1973—New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, in 14.19 and 23, Lord Kṛṣṇa emphasizes the exceptional influence of the three modes of material nature. And in chapter *BG* 3.27, we find His famous statement exposing our foolishness in thinking that we are the doers of activities that are actually carried out by these three modes. Yet the conditioned soul nonetheless remains responsible for his underlying material desires. These, in turn, impel material nature to set up ongoing bodily situations to fulfill such desires, although usually in ways he hardly expected.

Through your books, your lectures, and your ideal example, Your Divine Grace has so clearly and transparently revealed this type of crucial information, along with higher truths. You have indeed “opened our eyes with the torchlight of knowledge.” Under your guidance, we are gradually re-tuning our vision to see through the eyes of *guru*, *sādhū*, and *śāstra*, to hope against hope that, some sweet day, we’ll find our eyes anointed with *premāñjana*, the essential, yet elusive, salve of love of God.

Yet...alas! My own plight is to languish in the miserable pool of materialism. I see, but do not see. I possess cognition and knowledge yet fail to recognize and to acknowledge. I want ambrosia yet persist in licking the outside of the bottle. Moreover, struggling for reform, I merely offend. So, what will become of this “Prabhupāda mercy case?”

Meanwhile, the lower modes of material nature, and the concomitant tendencies of lust, greed, and anger, are ever more dangerously rocking today’s world. O Śrīla Prabhupāda, O Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, O all strong Prabhupādānugas, please keep saving the world in its darkest hour! And while you’re at it, please patiently uplift this wretched wannabe Vaiṣṇava.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, despite my lament, kindly allow me to continue to support the glorious *Saṅkīrtana* movement in some tiny way, in whatever measure I can, however stunted, however faltering.

By your great mercy, I shall better concentrate on the holy name. Therein lies my hope.

All glories to Your Divine Grace on this most auspicious day!

Your most insignificant aspiring servant,

Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami

Initiation: March 1973 —Boston, USA

Current location: Miami, Florida, USA

Partha Sarathi Dasa Goswami

My dear eternal spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Recently while at Govardhana Hill, Vṛndāvana (where I have been religiously residing every winter over the last thirty years), I was diagnosed with stage two thyroid cancer. It was a surprise. And as quickly as it came it also seemingly disappeared. The whole episode lasted three months. But I can't help but think that cancer-type-related problems don't really go away at the age of seventy. They simply reduce for a while and return.

During that period I intensified my most important activity, which is my prayers and feeble attempt at *bhajana*. I experienced what I have always been longing for—a deeper relationship with Your Divine Grace. And felt immensely satisfied. As Your Divine Grace has written in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.9 17, purport:

A devotee's duty, therefore, is to ungrudgingly accept tribulations from the Lord as a benediction.

I feel exhilarated and enlivened about the development of my relationship with Your Divine Grace and your revealing yourself and your moods. It is your causeless mercy.

When will that day come...

When can I actually have some genuine feelings
Of love for Your Divine Grace?

When will that day come...

When tears will flow from my eyes
When I think in gratitude
Of everything that you have done for me?

When will that day come...

When in my meditation I can understand
Your position in Gaura *līlā*
You must be a very close and
Intimate associate of Śrī Caitanya

When will that day come...
When I can understand your personality
Your sentiments and moods?

When will that day come...
When I can associate with you?
When will that day come...
When I can render some personal service to you?

When will that day come...
When I can worship the most important person
In my life with the most important method?

Externally the worship of Your Divine Grace
Means to worship your instructions
And internally, to worship you
Means to worship you with the tears from my eyes
One cannot be separated from the other

Your servant eternally,

Partha Sarathi Das Goswami

Initiation: May 1973—London, UK

Current location: Durban, South African

Candramauli Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to our *paramparā* line of which you are the flower that has spread the sweet fragrance of Lord Caitanya's cloudlike mercy throughout the globe.

With your mercy what is the use of others and without your mercy what is the use of others. Your mercy is your guidance and instructions for us your disciples to practice and eventually spread

that mercy to everyone. For that I am extremely grateful to have this rare opportunity to attempt to act as one of your *aṅgas* in assisting you in your mission of compassion. Although unqualified I understand that success is to fully take shelter of your lotus like instructions and your designed programs for uplifting the miserable living entities.

For the last couple of years we have been witnessing the gradual deterioration of Western civilization as you predicted 50 years ago, and are therefore understanding more how important it is to emphasize your vision for the future of ISKCON and the world by developing *Daiṛī Varnāśrama* centered around Kṛṣṇa Conscious farm communities.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Civilization will collapse very soon, all over the world. It will collapse. Either you may bring this ism or that ism, this civilization will collapse. People will become mad, being harassed in so many ways. When one is harassed in so many problems, he commits suicide. So that position is coming. [Morning Walk Conversation, Delhi, November 29 1975]

By placing more attention, time and energy on the program to help to unfold the way a life “Kṛṣṇa’s Way” Cow protection, brahminical culture and worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As you said:

Kṛṣṇa is the farm Ācārya. Balarāma is holding a plow and Kṛṣṇa is holding a calf’

Simply living Cow care and chanting the Holy names.

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-gītā* 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 lifestyle.

(Letter to Rūpānuga Prabhu, December 18, 1974)

As we travel around, devotees are becoming more and more aware of the importance of establishing *Daiivi Varṇāśrama* based on developing the farm communities. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mercy is pushing me along despite the increased difficulties that come with maintaining the body in this time of advanced age. By your mercy alone, which inspires others to become your mercy givers, we are trying to serve in this way to please you.

Your servant,

Candramauli Swami

Initiation: August 1973—New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA

Current location: Ljubljana, Slovenia

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you, the savior of the world, and of me.

Time passes by. It seems like not long ago that I moved into the temple in London at 7 Bury Place, near the British Museum and not far from Oxford St, the main street. Actually it was 50 years ago on January 7th this year.

You saved me from a fate worse than death. Locked into a way of life full of degradation and unhappiness, I didn't know which way to turn, and all the ways I tried turning were dead ends, full of suffering and confusion.

I was frustrated with materialistic life, and as far as I was concerned I was now retired, albeit at the early age of 21 years. But it just didn't seem worth it to persevere on in working life, so I was trying to find an alternative path, but it was so elusive.

Within about two weeks of moving into the temple I felt my life had become revolutionized. My anxieties dissolved, and I felt a sense of positiveness I had not known before. As you said, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your Vyāsa-pūjā offering to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī in 1935:

Message of service

Thou has brought.

A healthful life

As Chaitanya wrought.

Unknown to all
It's full of grace.
That's your gift
Your Divine Grace.

Where would I be if you had not entered my life, Śrīla Prabhupāda? I hate to think, but there's no doubt it would be far worse than where I am now. Where would the world be if you had not come? Actually the world is in a disastrous condition, and it just shows what can go wrong if people do not follow your instructions. But even so, if you had not come, it would be far worse than it is.

So now I have to try to follow you and make your mission my mission in life. People can respond when Krishna consciousness is presented to them, and many have. We just have to keep on giving it to them and praying for the potency to become worthy instruments in your hands.

By your mercy so much in my life has changed in these 50 years, but much more has to change. I pray at your divine lotus feet to help me remain in your service until this body drops.

Your lowly servant,

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

Initiation: September 1973—London, UK

Current location: South Africa

Bhaktimarga Swami

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*

YOU ARE NEAR

It does occasionally come to mind

That if you were to drop by at any time
Would you be pleased with what you see?
Is the house in order as it should be?
I'm sure you would witness some growth
The standing in queue for many taking their oath
Numbers have always been important to you
Whether people, land, schools, books, buildings anew
You may be informed many people have come and gone
At the same time so many have just stayed on
Apostasy is a reality that would stir in you a reaction
For you are so thoroughly a person of compassion
You taught us to always take note of figures
Because it means we duly reflect on our mirrors
Deserving our count are sacred wisdom, food, and sound
These items identify our three stakes in the ground
Another gauge that would indicate we are moving
In our expansion that *māyā* is so disapproving
Is the happy faces that destroy duress
Happy servants are a clear indicator of success
Conversely you would not be proud of us when we fight
When the tyranny of "either/or" declare "I am right"
You made it known that bhakti is cooperation
A harmony of honey-coated hearts in collaboration
Frankly it is odd to think you are not already here
Your laser perception breaks barriers, keeping you near
Our love for you is shown through our surrender
When we drop the tendency to be a big self defender
We love you because you are the emblem of acceptance
Prabhupāda, in your equal vision you make all of us dance.

Your servant,

Bhaktimarga Swami

Initiation: September 1973—Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Current location: Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to your Divine Grace, and all glories to your divine appearance day.

Some thirty years ago I wrote a Vyāsa-pūjā offering about a granny in Hungary, who by the influence of your movement became a devotee. That story highlighted the transformation you have brought about in the lives of countless people who may live in even the most far-flung parts of the world. Many devotees contacted me about that old lady, and even today I am occasionally asked about her, and how she is.

She has moved on! But her history is not a one off, it was one of many.

Since that time I have seen your movement continue to transform the young and the old. And while every person's story is unique, they all have one thing in common: you are their saviour.

This year I would like to narrate another example of how Krishna consciousness is saving people day by day, and how every story of salvation increases your already endless glories. I will tell the history of Jananī devī dāsī. However, I emphasise that her final words are the essence of my narration, the essence of her life, the essence of the marvel of your influence.

Sometime back in 1991, our book distributors entered a modest ice-cream shop in a very remote part of Hungary. The shop owner, Irene, was in her thirties, a mother of three girls, her husband a simple Christian working in the hospitality sector. Irene purchased whatever *Bhāgavatams* we had in print, and thereafter, year after year, she would purchase every new book that came out, reading them very carefully. In this way Irene became a devotee.

She chanted sixteen rounds a day, was a vegetarian, made her little girls vegetarians, and raised them as devotees by telling them stories from *Krishna* book. After some years the book distributors no longer visited, but Irene continued on with her Krishna conscious life, even though she never saw devotees or visited a temple.

Meanwhile, all was not well at home. Irene's husband was against Krishna consciousness and the changes it was bringing into his house. He tried to burn Irene's *Gītā*, and forbade her practices. But Irene would not stop her Krishna consciousness, neither would she stop teaching it to her children. Needless to say, the

differences between the parents became a source of ongoing tension in the household.

Yet Irene remained her serene, sweet, soft-spoken self. A lone devotee in her home, in her greater family, and in her village, she never faltered, but continued year after year, decade after decade, following what she read in your books. Her girls grew up, finished their education, and married with children of their own.

The middle daughter was named Bea, and she was an economist who worked at a bank as a financial advisor. As Krishna would have it, being a devotee she used to visit the temple, and in conversing with some ladies, she became inspired to work for the Budapest temple, organising festival programs. We all knew that Bea was a devotee, but it took some time before we came to know that almost all her family were devotees, including her mother.

When I heard the story of her elderly Krishna conscious mother, I asked if Irene could come to the temple. How was someone chanting sixteen rounds and following the principles for thirty-years and not initiated? I first met Irene in 2017, and we talked at length. She was such a sweet person, such a sweet devotee. We agreed that in time, she would formalise her relationship with Krishna through initiation.

In the spring of 2019, Irene was taken to hospital for what was meant to be a minor colon operation, only to be told that she had fourth stage cancer that had spread throughout her body. The doctors were amazed that she did not complain of any pain, and they gave her only a few months to live. Irene took the news gracefully, peacefully, indeed so much so that the doctors sent her to a psychologist. But there was nothing wrong with Irene: she understood the temporary nature of the body, and she didn't complain about her fate. She had full faith that everything was as it was supposed to be.

Events moved quickly and predictably. With great difficulty Irene came to see me in August, and we again spoke of initiation, which then took place the next month during the Rādhāṣṭamī festival. Irene received the name Jananī devī dāsī. She was a real mother. Jananī's illness swiftly took its toll, and she was no longer able to travel the distance from home to the temple, or to Krishna Valley.

Then came COVID, a period of two years that I spent almost exclusively in Krishna Valley. It wasn't a time of travel. And from that time, March 2021, Jananī's condition deteriorated rapidly.

In May I began to call Jananī regularly to help prepare her for the final lesson, her departure from this world. I would speak to her

or read to her while her girls took turns nursing her. Bea was with her 24/7, and in that time she witnessed Jananī's non-stop, intense Krishna consciousness, during which she was either listening to your Divine Grace, or hearing *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

Almost up until her passing, Jananī always chanted sixteen rounds and read your books. Then the evening before her passing, I called and read Narottama Dāsa Thākura's prayer:

My dear Lord! Please hear me. The day that I
give up my body absorbed in thoughts of you,
please give me shelter at your lotus feet.

I encouraged her to pray to Krishna so that she may always think of him, that he kindly take her back to Godhead to be either a *gopa* or *gopī*. All night your *bhajana* played as Jananī slept, and in the morning, Bea asked her if she remembered the prayer we had spoken about. She nodded in affirmation. Bea and her sister Rita bathed and dressed Jananī, and at 9.46 am, while the two girls were chanting beside her, Jananī devī dāsī left this world. It was the 9th of June, 2021.

As I said at the beginning, this story is an introduction to its conclusion, which is a summary of Jananī's words spoken by Bea at the ashes immersion ceremony in Krishna Valley. Jananī had said:

From the first day that I began to read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, I accepted everything that he said as truth and followed everything that he instructed. Throughout my life, I never doubted Śrīla Prabhupāda for a moment, for I knew that in him and in his teachings, I had found what I was searching for all my life. I do not lament my imminent death, for I know everything is as it should be, and Krishna will always be with me. Hare Krishna.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I was and continue to be amazed at how this meek housewife had such unflinching faith in your teachings, and how, just by reading your books, she attained such an elevated state of devotion, without any devotee association.

I do not know how many other people in remote parts of the world, unknown to nearby temples or devotees, have been transformed in the same way. It is the wonder of your books and of your teachings. However, I do know that you continue to live and guide sincere souls who, like Jananī, are looking for the truth and want to live by it. Thank you for being so wonderful.

Oh yes! One final thing.

At the conclusion of the ashes ceremony, after having been with his wife all through her illness, after hearing her words of devotion, and after hearing the remembrances at the ceremony, Jananī's husband approached me with tears in his eyes and extended his hand. As we shook hands he said in a choked voice, "Thank you! Thank you for all that you did for Jananī."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I didn't do anything. We just distributed your books.

And another thing!

Ironically Rita, the other daughter, also married a husband who was against Krishna consciousness and her devotional practices. While Jananī could still speak, the last instruction that she gave Rita was that she should make her whole family Krishna conscious. And she did! Her husband has been chanting sixteen rounds for the last year.

And we didn't do anything, other than distribute your books.

Your servant,

Śivarāma Swami

Initiation: September 1973—Montreal, Canada

Current location: Budapest, Hungary

Bhakti Ananda Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances and forgive my offences.

Today, I am remembering how, in the late 1960s, you changed my life forever. You taught me all about Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, His inconceivably 'older' Second Self, Lord Baladeva, and His Beloved Girlfriend-Śrīmatī Rādhā-Rāṇī, and Their Bucolic / Gokula, Go / Cow Paradise!

In Their happy, eternal, deathless pure land, They played and danced with their Gopī (Greek Korae) milkmaid girlfriends and Gopa (Greek Kouroi) cowherd boyfriends. Under Their Yoga Māyā rising Śarat Moon, They danced in Their sacred 'Angel Round of Paradise'! You taught me Their holy names and how to ceaselessly call on Them, day and night, in happiness and distress.

I know that you were betrayed and deeply disappointed by many

of us, your *dīkṣā* disciples, and that because of this betrayal, you said that there should be no more *sannyāsīs*. As I was not ambitious for any leadership position, and would never betray or disobey you, I had no desire to take *sannyāsa*.

However, in 1982 you arranged for your very dear first disciple and spiritual son, Dr. Acharya Prabhakar Mishra, to approach me at the Executive Committee Meeting of the World Hindu Organization in Kathmandu, Nepal. There he requested me to become his *śikṣā* disciple, and to help him to revive and reform your non-sectarian League of Devotees Mission, Worldwide.

Later, for the purpose of Your League of Devotees Mission, my *śikṣā* guru, Dr. Mishra advised me to, “take *sannyāsa*.” As I did not want to disobey your own wish that there should be no more *sannyāsī dīkṣā* gurus in your lineage. I agreed to only “take *sannyāsa*” as a *śikṣā* (teaching) guru, not a *dīkṣā* (initiating) guru.

To fulfill the desire of my own *śikṣā* guru, Dr. Mishra, under the authority of your League of Devotees, I then made my *sannyāsī* vows, with Dr. Mishra’s chosen *pūjārī* priest officiating at my fire sacrifice. That was in 1992.

Since then, through many struggles, I have been keeping my vows, and trying to push-forward your non-sectarian League of Devotees Mission.

Mostly I have failed, but I am still trying. Please bless me to always reside in service at your lotus feet.

Your still aspiring servant,

Bhakti Ananda Goswami

Initiation: 1973

Current location: USA

Rāmāi Swami

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, one time in Melbourne, you told us that for

the general mass of people there should be *kīrtana* and *prasāda* distribution. Those who are more serious will understand the philosophy by reading our books.

In a letter to a disciple, you wrote:

Yes, *kīrtana* and *prasāda* will appeal to even the uneducated. We have means to preach to both the educated and uneducated, the sinful and the pious - *dhīradhira-jana-priyau*. (Letter to Dvārakeśa — Vṛndāvana, 29 September, 1976)

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.24.10 purport you wrote:

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.

We are certainly seeing the results of performing *saṅkīrtana-yajña*. So many have taken up the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For example, at this year's Gaura Pūrṇimā festival in Māyāpur, tens of thousands came to dance and chant in ecstasy. However, much more needs to be done. Today, there are billions of people still suffering from disease, mental distress, natural disturbance and war. We must always plan to increase our efforts.

One time a disciple said: "Śrīla Prabhupāda, I always want to sit by your holy lotus feet!"

You replied: "That will be very difficult because I am always moving."

That should be our attitude, Śrīla Prabhupāda, always moving, spreading Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement.

Around the world he made his way
To lands that were under *māyā*'s sway

His *guru* instructed him once before
To distribute the divine honey store

Lord Caitanya, he wanted to please
But he knew it would not be with ease

Anything was possible by the Lord's mercy
Even if it caused some controversy

Still, Śrīla Prabhupāda tried his best
And all along his attempt was blessed

At the beginning, just a few persons came
And were fortunate to receive the holy name

After a while the gatherings increased
Especially when he served a sumptuous feast

Rice, *dahl*, *subji* and chapatis they relished
Thoughts of the next serving they cherished

It became apparent the movement would spread
Because they had Śrīla Prabhupāda at the head

On and on to every village and town
A transcendental flood of rain came down.

Everyone was amazed to see the effect
Lord Caitanya's desire could not be checked

One man's effort would not go in vain
To transfer all to the spiritual domain

What is the duty of a disciple who is faithful
He must show that he is always grateful

To his *guru* who gave him a precious jewel
Follow in his footsteps, that's the golden rule

We should never imitate the powerful *ācārya*
Otherwise, we will be captured by *māyā*

Nevertheless, we should try our very best
To forward the mission so that he'll be impressed

Satisfying him is our desire and success
The more we do it, the more we progress

For what is advancement in spiritual life
If not to please *guru* who frees us from strife

I pray to always remain at his holy feet.
That one day I may again directly meet

The wonderful person who guided me well
To the abode where I may eternally dwell

*guru-pādāśrayas tasmāt
kṛṣṇa-dīkṣādi-sikṣaṇam
viśrambheṇa guroḥ sevā
sādhu-vartmānuvartanam*

(*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.74)

The first and foremost limbs of *sādhana-bhakti* are taking shelter of Śrī Guru, accepting *dīkṣā*, receiving *sikṣā*, serving Śrī Guru with intimacy and affection and following the path of the previous *ācārya* under his guidance.

Your insignificant disciple,

Rāmāi Swami

Initiation: 1973—Melbourne, Australia

Varṣāṇā Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisance. All glories to your lotus feet. All glories to Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā.

Śrī Krishna's Vraja *līlā*, forever enacted within the heart of His pure devotee, is revealed by the *ācārya* through his pastimes and precepts. Access to Vrindavan is granted to *jīvas* as they advance their *guru bhakti* by serving his *vapuḥ*, while he is present, and his *vāṇī* thereafter. Throughout this transition, Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā has revealed your appearance in more tangible dimensions and deeper realms of consciousness with each passing year. Our service to your instructions, vision and legacy has thereby uncovered a cyclical path to worlds within.

Once, you were questioned about your desire to build new temples when so many already existing ones lay neglected, abandoned, and in disrepair. Your response is illuminating. *Just as parents desire to have their own offspring even while so many children are in need of adoption, we too long to have our own temples.* And truly we have experienced so vividly that the temples you have established bear the image of your heart and the mood of your presence.

Initially, our neophyte consciousness viewed your directives to develop New Vrindaban primarily as a practical and terrestrial initiative intended to enrich your teachings. Over time, by delving more fully into your instructions, we have come to understand it as a rich multifaceted internal mission that offers an invitation into deepening communion with you. Along this path, you bless us with the realization that all the holy places and divine pastimes already exist in the core of your heart. The extraordinary grace accompanying your instructions empowers your servants to translate the spiritual into visual, to create earthly expressions of celestial archetypes, bringing forth the sublime theology and subtle cosmology of your vision into earthly manifestation.

Now at last, for your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration this year, we are pleased to offer the first of the seven temples as you specifically disclosed in your primary mandates for New Vrindaban, initially expressed in 1968. Śrī Śrī Rādhā Gopinath Mandir, on the sacred banks of Rādhā Kuṇḍa, at the foot of Govardhan Hill, integrates all the elements you mentioned for the development of this community.

Your 1972 letter exhorting us to begin construction immediately on the seven temples catalyzed the entire process. You planted the seed and left us with the privilege of bringing it to fruition. There have been fifty years of challenge, sacrifice, struggle, lessons, adversity, and ecstasy in fulfilling your will since then.

The foundation of this stone temple stands on a solid layer of sandstone. Symbolically, this represents the enduring bedrock of our faith in you – the representative of Lord Nityānanda, whose expansion, Ananta Śeṣa, offers additional support from His throne, manifest here as the structure's cornerstone. Situated at the northeast point, this cornerstone has a fifty-year history in New Vrindaban, having been installed simultaneously as the one in the Palace of Gold.

The *mandir's* entrance arch hosts a doorway fashioned from local timber framing a vast inner window embellished with sylvan imagery etched into the glass. On both sides of the entrance way are

artistic renderings of *kalpa vrkṣas*. Their branches, like outstretched arms, hold two peacocks, one on each side, who stand as gentle guardians at the portal to the temple's inner sanctum. These silent sentinels serve invitations for qualified souls to enter within.

Passing through the floral design softens our hearts as we approach the altar where Rādhā Gopināth preside to shower Their blessings upon all. Their *darśana* bestows eligibility to experience glimpses of eternity unfolding into the infinite wonders awaiting behind the illusory scenes which our conditioned minds have falsely accepted as truth.

Adjacent to your Palace of Gold – where you remain with us in a state of *samādhi* – the location of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Gopināth's temple is intentional. With these two structures side by side, a potent synergy unfolds to beautifully integrate your *vapuḥ* and *vāñī* forms, offering the crowning glory to the holy land. An eager anticipation of your next arrival remains prominent here. Being situated at the foot of Girirāj, the temple grounds offer innumerable opportunities to honor, accommodate, and fulfill one of your last heartfelt desires for a picnic at Govardhan Hill.

How the landscape is adorned and the temple decorated is informed by your visit to the ISKCON printing operations in New York City. After graciously acknowledging the services of devotees working on the printing machines, you then spent the remainder of your time in a room alone with the artists, guiding them to create *windows to the spiritual sky*. Those paintings now adorn your books which literally serve as the *gateway to Goloka*.

Contemplating that pastime, I remain here still, like an aspiring artist standing before a vast easel, waiting on the threshold of a spiritual frontier. We are totally dependent on your guidance from within to direct our hands as we fashion the terrain with features reminiscent of Vrindavan. Having awakened remembrance of that effulgent abode within our consciousness, how we long to reveal and share it with others.

Today, in the Vyāsa-pūjā *kīrtana*, we feel your presence from a sacred dimension in a most vibrant form, breathing life into this new temple as we join with you in glorifying the Deities' Holy Name. Śrī Nāma reverberates from the temple walls, rising from the inner sanctum to resound within the dome, expanding across the landscape, echoing from seven hills. The song of your soul is broadcast to all. Hearing its melody, pilgrims, guests, and tourists

alike contribute their voices to the universal hymn of immortality – *Śrī Nāma Saṅkīrtana*.

Feeling reciprocation from Śrī Dhām and inspiration from seeing your vision coming to life, everyone present for this most blessed event experiences a shared connection. How they dance with movements and gestures depicting a journey through various realms of time and space! Through your grace, over the stretch of *sevā*-filled years, we have touched upon the mysterious sacrament of Gauḍīya theology – the embracing of *vāñī sevā*, discerning your presence within the absence, and serving you there by means of love in separation. The union in separation that devotees experience with you grants parallel insight into the inconceivable *vipralambha bhāva* that the Vrajabāsīs endured during the fifty years Krishna spent outside of Vrindavan. Please bless us to continue in deepening this subtle, sacred, intimate, and transcendent communion. While certainly ecstatic, it is agonizing as well, for it demands we acknowledge and confront the implications and repercussions of times our motives have been mixed, or our understandings shallow.

Guide us, please, so that we may surrender the easier relationship we cherished with you during your presence on this earth in pursuit of the deeper realizations inviting us now. Please support us so that we may assimilate, adjust, and update our earlier beliefs, feelings, and services. We must come to terms with the loneliness following your departure from this world to enter the subtler dimension. Surprisingly, there is comfort to be found in mourning our losses, closing preliminary chapters with gratitude, and rejoicing in the new story unfolding before our inner eyes.

Bless us, we pray that our ongoing services pulsate with your heartbeat, convey the ambiance of your presence, and radiate your *prema*. Let them be finely embellished with the hues of your thoughts, flavored with the essence of your feelings, scented with the fragrance of your sweetness, delicate like the gestures of your kindness and care. May your will guide our hands in weaving the tapestry of our lives to depict seasons and cycles in a life of the ripening fruit of devotion, highlighting the central thread of all existence, your sweet Lord of Vrindavan. May our lives contribute a tangible expression of your devotion to Him. May we be forever guided by your perfect example of integrating the worship of Krishna with compassion upon His lost parts and parcels.

May our spiritual lives thus continue and expand into a dynamic

experience as we progress on an internal journey of discovery, revealing deeper dimensions of Lord Chaitanya's precepts and Śrī Krishna's pastimes, made accessible by your appearance in this world. May our annual Vyāsa-pūjā offerings be expressed internally by who we have become, over what we have achieved in the previous year.

Your servant,

Varṣāṇā Swami

Initiation: 1973—New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA

Current location: New Vrindavan, West Virginia, USA

Contact: varsanaswami@gmail.com

Devāmṛta Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet, my only shelter in the unremitting storm known as material existence.

When I contemplate the utter wreckage of my life before encountering your mercy, I shudder and shake.

During BP—the appalling years before Prabhupāda—I superficially thrived as a Manhattan enjoyer, externally living a privileged educated life of elitist benefits. Internally, however, I was a desert, an existential wasteland.

Society goaded and pressured me, reassuring: “You’ve scaled the mountain to the pinnacle—now breathe the rarified atmosphere and delight.” Nevertheless, the thought terrified me: “Is this all that be—the one who dies with the most toys and acclaim wins?”

The overpowering cosmic reality seemed “nothingness is.” A nihilistic pseudo-*siddhānta* reigned supreme: “On this crazy planet devise your own truth, make your own light, as your brief life fades in and out of the vast darkness, coldness, and indifference of the universe.”

The *paribhāsa sūtra* guiding whatever Kali-yuga fleeting relationships: “Don’t try to lead me, don’t try to follow me; just walk together with me through the chaos.”

Dispelling the spiritual and material deadliness of such massive inner devastation, you brought me back to the infinitely attractive Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, especially as They combine as Śrī Caitanya

Mahāprabhu. Not only did you give us consciousness of Them, but also you lavished upon us knowledge of Their pure devotional service, the most precious gem.

Among the six characteristics of pure devotional service that Rūpa Gosvāmī describes, the trait *rareness* is stunning. Knowing this, how can we ever dare to think we deserve the opportunity to render even neophyte *bhakti*—what to speak of a possibility to serve in spotless devotion?

Our material qualifications and achievements cannot even interest Kṛṣṇa, to say nothing of attract him to us. Consequently, I seem trapped in a paradox, a spiritual cul-de-sac, no through road ahead.

The standard of pure devotion is so atypical, anomalous, it sounds beyond supernatural. Yet nothing else can attract Kṛṣṇa. What to do?

Only your eternal status as a pure devotee can resolve my dilemma. Nothing else will suffice.

If I selflessly serve your lotus feet, the impossible attainment of *śuddha-bhakti* becomes within reach. Because of you, Kṛṣṇa can agree to notice me and my juvenile attempts at pleasing Him.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura declares the reality of your place in my life: “Kṛṣṇa is yours; you have the power to give Him to me. I am simply running behind you shouting, ‘Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!’”

Please establish this fallen soul in your service, which will allow Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Pañca-tattva to shine Their grace upon me.

Your hopeful servant,

Devāmṛta Swami

Initiation: January 1974—New York, USA

Mahadyuti Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances. All glories to you!

First of all, I am so grateful for this opportunity to glorify you! One of my greatest pleasures is to glorify you and to hear others glorify you.

Among your innumerable transcendental qualities is your ability to maintain a positive attitude and enthusiasm in spite of what to most people would be debilitating disappointments. Here are just a few of them (among dozens):

- In the early years, hardly anyone you encountered in India was interested in your message.
- Your wife and children also weren't interested; your wife even traded your *Bhāgavatam* for tea biscuits
- The Indian government made it difficult for you to get the No Objection Certificate to leave the country.
- After arriving in America, your pleas for help from your godbrothers went unheeded. A *brahmacārī* disciple of one of your godbrothers intensely desired to join you, but his guru wouldn't allow him.
- In the winter of '65-'66, someone stole your *Gītā* manuscript and your tape recorder and recorded tapes.
- You awarded *sannyāsa* to some disciples, but several fell down.
- You got disciples married, but many couldn't keep their vows or stick with one spouse.
- Sometimes your trusted but naïve lieutenants squandered money on dodgy business deals; sometimes they embezzled money.
- Some of your closest disciples left Krishna consciousness altogether, and some of them even criticized you. I heard that one of them was even so bold as to ask you to surrender to his new guru.
- Mr. Nair tried to swindle you out of the Juhu land.

Yet you always kept going, undaunted by such reversals, like the sparrow who vowed to drink the ocean (in your purport to *Bg.* 6.24)! You were, as your dear disciple, Jayādvaita Swami, once noted, intrepid – which means resolutely fearless and bold. Yes! That's you, exactly! Nothing stopped or swayed you, like the "lamp in a windless place" (*Bg.* 6.19).

This is important for us to see, as life for us in this world is replete with disappointment. It must be, of course, because everything here is temporary. Your sterling example inspires us to also keep going in spite of repeatedly devastating setbacks.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for this and innumerable other transcendental examples and instructions, illustrating your total dependence on Krishna and your resolve to fulfill the order of your spiritual master. Without this we would be lost once again in this dangerous, cold, and unforgiving world.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

May I continue to strive to unconditionally serve your lotus feet forever.

Your aspiring servant,

Mahadyuti Swami

Initiation: January 1974—Puerto Rico

Current location: Mayapur, Nadia, West Bengal, India

Niranjana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I'm writing this Vyāsa-pūjā offering to you a few days before the 126th anniversary of your divine appearance in this world.

The year is 2022, and certain events of this year have created an unprecedented disturbance in the lives of thousands of your servants, many of whom have had their faith shaken from all that you both taught us and perfectly demonstrated to us about every living entity's eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda... your faith in Kṛṣṇa, your purity, your conviction in the order of your Guru Mahārāja, your example as an ideal Vaiṣṇava, and especially your instructions have formed the bedrock for the movement you began in 1965.

"Back to Godhead" was the goal you personally set for everyone who would take shelter in your movement. You then left this movement here in this material world into the hands and into the hearts of your followers when you returned to your eternal service in the spiritual world.

However, I have observed that it has become very difficult for some of your followers, including myself, to prepare ourselves for all the warnings you also gave us about calamities yet to come in this world. You consistently reminded us, not only about the temporary and miserable nature of the material world, but about the inevitability of hardships human civilization would face due to sinful activity and exploitation of this planet's resources simply for economic development and sense gratification.

The following is only one such short example:

"Similarly, this world... Nobody wants war, nobody wants

famine, nobody wants earthquake, nobody wants disease, nobody wants death, but these things happening. It will happen. Even if you do not want, you cannot, I mean to say, combat all these, I mean to say, attacks of the material nature. That is the way of material nature.” [Brandeis University Lecture – April 29, 1969, Boston]

But because the material world is a place of forgetfulness, we tend to forget that there can never be any real shelter here in this material world. We tend to think, “Oh, the calamities about which Śrīla Prabhupāda was talking were about some distant future events and certainly not something that will happen in my lifetime.” We also tend to think that “Back to Godhead” is to be thought about at the end of this lifetime.

Devotees have recently asked me, “Why does Kṛṣṇa make it so difficult here in the material world?” I believe I could give and have already given answers to this question philosophically. But on such auspicious days as the anniversary of your divine appearance in this material world, I prefer to respond to this question with another question... “Why has Kṛṣṇa made me so fortunate to have come into contact with Śrīla Prabhupāda in this lifetime, here in this material world?”

Our good fortune is incalculable. Not only have you given us all the tools required to handle events yet to come, but you have given us the instructions and hope to achieve the shelter of Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet in this life.

This one *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verse and your purport says it all, Śrīla Prabhupāda:

*svayaṁ samuttīrya sudustaraṁ dyuman
bhavārṇavaṁ bhīmam adabhra-sauhṛdāḥ
bhavat-padāmbhoruha-nāvam atra te
nidhāya yātāḥ sad-anugraho bhavan*

[SB 10.2.31]

Translation: O Lord, who resemble the shining sun, You are always ready to fulfill the desire of Your devotee, and therefore You are known as a desire tree [*vāñchā-kalpataru*]. When *ācāryas* completely take shelter under Your lotus feet in order to cross the fierce ocean of nescience, they leave behind on earth the method by which they cross, and because You are very merciful to Your

other devotees, You accept this method to help them.

Purport: This statement reveals how the merciful *ācāryas* and the merciful Supreme Personality of Godhead together help the serious devotee who wants to return home, back to Godhead. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in His teachings to Rūpa Gosvāmī, said:

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

[Cc. Madhya 19.151]

One can achieve the seed of *bhakti-latā*, devotional service, by the mercy of *guru* and Kṛṣṇa. The duty of the *guru* is to find the means, according to the time, the circumstances and the candidate, by which one can be induced to render devotional service, which Kṛṣṇa accepts from a candidate who wants to be successful in going back home, back to Godhead. After wandering throughout the universe, a fortunate person within this material world seeks shelter of such a *guru*, or *ācārya*, who trains the devotee in the suitable ways to render service according to the circumstances so that the Supreme Personality of Godhead will accept the service. This makes it easier for the candidate to reach the ultimate destination. The *ācārya's* duty, therefore, is to find the means by which devotees may render service according to references from *śāstra*. Rūpa Gosvāmī, for example, in order to help subsequent devotees, published such devotional books as *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. Thus it is the duty of the *ācārya* to publish books that will help future candidates take up the method of service and become eligible to return home, back to Godhead, by the mercy of the Lord. In our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, this same path is being prescribed and followed. Thus the devotees have been advised to refrain from four sinful activities—illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating and gambling—and to chant sixteen rounds a day. These are bona fide instructions. Because in the Western countries constant chanting is not possible, one should not artificially imitate Haridāsa

Ṭhākura but should follow this method. Kṛṣṇa will accept a devotee who strictly follows the regulative principles and the method prescribed in the various books and literatures published by the authorities. The *ācārya* gives the suitable method for crossing the ocean of nescience by accepting the boat of the Lord’s lotus feet, and if this method is strictly followed, the followers will ultimately reach the destination, by the grace of the Lord. This method is called *ācārya-sampradāya*. It is therefore said, *sampradāya-vihīnā ye mantrās te niṣphalā matāḥ* [Padma Purāṇa]. The *ācārya-sampradāya* is strictly bona fide. Therefore one must accept the *ācārya-sampradāya*; otherwise one’s endeavor will be futile. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura therefore sings:

*tāṇdera caraṇa sevi bhakta sane vāsa
janame janame haya, ei abhilāṣa*

One must worship the lotus feet of the *ācārya* and live within the society of devotees. Then one’s endeavor to cross over nescience will surely be successful.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all that you have done for us.

Your eternal servant, follower, and debtor,

Nirañjana Swami

Initiation: May 1974—Boston, USA

Bhakti Raghava Swami

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

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master, 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 Goswami. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanya and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this your 127th appearance anniversary.

Despite the advancement of Kali-yuga, the glories of Mahāprabhu's Saṅkīrtan Movement are being heard and sung by more and more fortunate souls who come in contact with your mission. I remain eternally indebted to you for having given me this opportunity to meet your sweet devotees. Please help me to understand how every single Vaiṣṇava is a rare jewel to be eternally treasured and valued.

It is exactly 50 years this year that in the summer of 1973 I first stepped into the Ottawa temple at 222 Besserer Street in the capital city of Ottawa. By the end of that year, I would join as a full-time devotee and on July 21st the following year, the very birthday of my mother, I would be initiated as Rāghava Paṇḍita dāsa by you along with some 40 other devotees mostly from Canada and the USA in the fledgling community of New Vrindaban.

Those years that you were physically present with us on the planet were so mystical, so unique, and so amazing. It's difficult to describe how your very presence, like a powerful magnet, attracted hundreds and thousands of people, mostly young lost souls seeking the real meaning in life. And your magic continues today.

Your two books *Nectar of Instruction* and *Nectar of Devotion* both had a powerful impact on me, as did the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. I remember attending my first Sunday Feast hearing the often-quoted aphorism from the *Vedānta Sūtra*, "atātho brahma-jijñāsā". On that very first day I also came to know about the king of all scriptures, "grantha rāja" *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. To this day, I continue to marvel at the deep and extensive purports that you so mercifully gifted to the whole world, for eternity, as you mercifully shared your deep "emotional ecstasies". Those same ecstasies are also wonderfully displayed in your every lecture.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please help me to continue concentrating on the 50% of your unfulfilled mission, that of assisting to establish *daiva varṇāśrama dharma*. You were such a visionary that you could understand years ago, even before going to the west, how society can only be saved if we return to the basic principles outlined in our

Vedic culture, by protecting our three essential mothers, beginning with Mother Cow, Mother Nature and Mother Sarasvatī, knowledge, all three being the basis for re-establishing *sanātana dharma*.

As you so wonderfully wrote in your essay of Gītā Nāgarī: “There is no other practical solution of the scientific basis of universal brotherhood or of universal religion without understanding this simple truth of the fatherhood of Godhead, motherhood of Nature, and childhood of all living entities.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless all of us who are endeavouring to fulfil your sacred mission. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 7.11, “*kṛṣṇa śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*”: without being empowered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one cannot spread the Lord’s mission.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all that you have given and continue to give today. May your glories be ever spread so that more and more conditioned souls take shelter at your divine lotus feet and engage in your devotional service.

Your humble servant,

Bhakti Raghava Swami

Initiation: July 1974—New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA

Current location: Mayapur, Nadia, West Bengal, India

Contact: bhakti.raghava.swami@pamho.net

Dhanurdhara Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I owe my life to you.

A remembrance came to me today. It was the commemoration of your disappearance two or three years after you passed from this world. Several of your contemporaries were still alive, and an old Vaiṣṇava – I don’t remember his name – made a eulogy beginning with a rhetorical question:

“If Śrīla Haridas Ṭhākura, Śrīla Rūpa Goswami, and Śrīla Prabhupāda were in the same room and Śrī Caitanya walked in, who would He go to first?”

I was a bit startled by his answer:

I say Śrīla Prabhupāda, because who could be more attached to the holy name than the person who spread the holy name around the world?

Now, someone could object that in a eulogy one has a license to exaggerate, especially for an old, learned Vaiṣṇava who is often more concerned with the *rasa* or mood of a statement than its literal meaning, but no one can doubt what Śrīla Prabhupāda accomplished. Does he not, therefore, have a right to be mentioned in the same breath as them and thus belong in the pantheon of the all-time luminaries of Śrī Caitanya's lineage.

As far as I am concerned, there is no limit to your glories, but for me your greatest glory, and one that I think about every day, is that despite who I am and the mistakes I have made, my taste for the holy name continues to increase by your mercy.

Begging to remain your servant,

Dhanurdhara Swami

Initiation: November 1974—Dallas, Texas, USA

Current location: New Jersey, USA

Bhakti Vikāsa Swami

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, devotees often comment that I am a strict follower of your instructions, and that is exactly what I aspire to be. It is a matter of enlightened self-interest, realizing that I have spent countless births wandering on the chariot of my mind (*mano-ratha*) and that there is no way in any number of future births I will ever find solutions to my problems by exercising my meager mental faculties. Now I have found the shelter of a perfect person and all I have to do is to do what you say. Then all my problems will be solved, and I will experience eternal blissful life. Now that I have found that which I was searching for in zillions of births, why should I divert my attention to anything else? Having attained perfect guidance from

your lotus mouth, it would be crazy to think of doing anything else or to imagine that with my feeble intellect I can discover something better than what you have given.

*bahu yoni bhrami' nātha! loinu śaraṇ
nija-guṇe kṛpā koro' adhama-tāraṇ*

O Lord! Hopelessly taking birth over and over, I have now come to You for refuge. Please show Your merciful nature and deliver this wretched soul.¹

*bhavantam evānucaran nirantaraḥ
praśānta-niḥśeṣa-manorathāntaraḥ
kadāham aikāntika-nitya-kiṅkaraḥ
praharṣayiṣyāmi sanātha-jīvitam*

“By serving You constantly, one is freed from all material desires and is completely pacified. When shall I engage as Your permanent eternal servant and always feel joyful to have such a fitting master?”²

There is nothing else for me to do in this life and forever into the future but to catch hold of your divine lotus feet by faithfully following your instructions. With great confidence and enthusiasm, I must recommend this path to others.

Among all your instructions, your instruction to preach the instructions of Kṛṣṇa is, you stated, “the most important philosophical understanding.”³ With this in mind, as an aspiring a servant of your instructions, I find the following statements of yours continually reverberating in my mind:

Book distribution and farms: these are our solid programs. They can change the whole world. The whole foundation of animal civilization can be destroyed. If I have hope for still living, I wanted to organize the farms, make it perfect. Simple living and high thinking.⁴

If these farms become successful then the whole world will be enveloped by Kṛṣṇa consciousness.⁵

1 From *Hari He Doyāl Mor*, an anonymously composed *kīrtana*.

2 *Stotra-ratna* (43), by Śrī Yāmunācārya; Cc. *Madhya* 1.206.

3 Vedavyāsa Dāsa. *Śrīla Prabhupāda and His Disciples in Germany*, ch. 20.

4 *TKG's Diary*. 9 August 1977.

5 Secretary's letter, 10 August 1977.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, with faith in your words, some devotees connected with my lowly self have started some rural communities and *gurukulas*. It has been and will continue to be a great challenge, particularly because we aim to closely stick to your vision and not compromise in any way, which means going against everything modern society stands for, and even much of which ISKCON today stands for. Still, we are happy to report that by your grace, things are going rather well. Families are happy to forswear city comforts like electricity and running water, so as to avail the benefits of simple living and high thinking in a devotionally surcharged community. It is our great pleasure to dance in *maṅgal-ārati* with the naturally enthusiastic *gurukula* boys and everyone else, and to see the cows, bulls, and human residents and visitors happy. We pray to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that these communities can continue to develop well, as we are well aware that by the influence of Kali-yuga, *anarthas* such as envy, discontent, quarrel, misunderstanding, and illicit sex can at any time enter and destroy everything.

We are also very afraid of demons, and are reminded of the situation you described in the *Kṛṣṇa* book (which happen to be the first words of yours that I ever read, in this lifetime):

Vṛndāvana was always absorbed in the thought of Kṛṣṇa. Everyone remembered His pastimes and was constantly merged in the ocean of transcendental bliss. But the material world is so contaminated that even in Vṛndāvana the *asuras*, or demons, tried to disturb the peaceful situation.⁶

We are afraid that misguided altruists will oppose our projects because we do not subscribe to their hellish school curriculum and false egalitarianism. Quite possibly our most dangerous opponents will be those who claim to be your followers but in their attitude toward *varṇāśrama-dharma* are more like *karmīs* and demons. In this atmosphere, while trying to do what you clearly stated you wanted, we feel like Devakī at the mercy of Kāmsa, before Kṛṣṇa's birth, fully dependent on Kṛṣṇa's protection but with no overt sign of Kṛṣṇa's presence, and the presence of Kāmsa being very real and frightening.

Where can we go? What can we do to be safe? We have no answers to these questions but to exclusively depend on Kṛṣṇa's mercy. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you know Kṛṣṇa. It was on His order that

you came to this world and gave us multiple projects for establishing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, among which you especially stressed book distribution, farms, and *varṇāśrama-dharma*. Although we know that you must already be doing it, we pray that you intercede with your beloved Kṛṣṇa to extend His special hand of protection over us, helpless as we are.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless all the devotees who have so faithfully, selflessly, and courageously taken to living on your *varṇāśrama* farms. I am proud to be associated with them, and I take it as your special mercy upon me that I am able to sometimes join them in their happy Vṛndāvana life.

Also by your mercy I am privileged to be associated with some of the most enthusiastic, dedicated, and effective distributors of your books on the planet. Some of them identify themselves as my disciples and are convinced that it is due to my mercy that they can distribute books. But I view them, along with their compatriots on the farms, with awe. I marvel at your profound mercy upon them, and upon myself because of my repeatedly parroting what I have heard from you: “Book distribution and farms – these are our solid programs. They can change the whole world.”⁷

Miracles unfold daily. We see Kṛṣṇa’s mercy manifest in those who believe that you are Kṛṣṇa’s representative and that following your instructions is the only way to go.

So many devotees in so many places are selflessly performing so many services, and they are all glorious inasmuch as they have taken shelter at your glorious lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, may these great souls always continue to glorify you by their lives, and may I one day be fit to be called your servant and the servant of your followers.

*Always aspiring for your glance of satisfaction,
the most wretched and idiotic,*

Bhakti Vikāsa Swami

Initiation: August 1975—London, UK

*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,

My offering to you this year is from the perspective of my present service as a GBC member, as well as a member of the Executive Committee. I have found in these services I vicariously experience the rewards and difficulties that occur during our devotional service by seeing it reflected in others.

Your life, which I consider has been orchestrated by the divine energy Yogamāyā, to give an example of how to conduct every aspect of a Vaiṣṇava's life and behavior, is the sterling and ideal standard for all devotees in ISKCON. At every stage of your manifested external pastime, you created a precedent for the world to follow.

Apart from all your glorious preaching, perfect example in strictly following the process of *bhakti* and your unwavering determination to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the world, your life was fraught with difficulties. We see the same in the lives of our *paramparā*, and those of all great Vaiṣṇava devotees. Such a difficulties also manifest in the lives of every progressing devotee. You have given us the solution in accepting the transcendental knowledge coming from your books, lectures and writings. However, your example, at least, in my case, has been the source of fortitude and determination, to continue unaffected by the external circumstances. It is very easy in an atmosphere of so many challenges that we are facing at this present moment to simply go off on one's own, seeing the differences between ISKCON when you were present and the multifarious trials and tribulations that we are facing today. Difficulties will always be there, but as Queen Kuntī expresses, we can envision them as opportunities to become more attached, and dependent on Kṛṣṇa and your guidance:

*vipadaḥ santu tāḥ śaśvat tatra tatra jaḡad-guro
bhavato darśanam yat syād apunar bhava-darśanam*

I wish that all those calamities would happen again

and again so that we could see You again and again, for seeing You means that we will no longer see repeated births and deaths. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.8.25]

We cannot expect those affected by the results of errors and misjudgments by our leadership throughout the years to accept it and go on as if nothing happened. I can't presume that those of us in leadership positions will come up with viable solutions so that ISKCON can go on and accomplish what you desired it to do. Therefore, I see your life and examples as the beacon and the anchor that allow us to act in such a way as to be inspirational for the present devotees and future generations. I can only beg you to help me develop the sensitivity to properly apply your instructions and examples in such a way that devotees will see how ISKCON is the very best, and for the major part of the world population, the only opportunity to go back home back to Godhead. Certainly, everything you have written and spoken is sufficient and itself. Nevertheless, only by deep prayer, introspection and increasing our dependence on your teachings can I hope to be part of an outcome that will be pleasing to you.

Your insignificant servant,

Guru Prasāda Swami

Initiation: April 1976—Costa Rica

Siddhārtha Swami

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

I offer my humble obeisances unto His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda Guru Mahārāja, who has taken shelter of the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa and very dear to Lord in this earth.

Guru Mahārāja is the pioneer of spreading this *bhakti* movement in *pāścātya* (western) countries and uplifting of millions of degraded souls. He also shows his causeless mercy onto me and uplifted me to the platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

My life was completely changed by a stroke of luck that occurred

in my early days when I first connected with ISKCON and began to offer my service. I once prepared the well-known Indian foods *pakora* and *halavā* as part of my cooking service. When it is served to Śrīla Prabhupāda after being offered to Kṛṣṇa, Prabhupāda instantly begins praising the food and requests to speak with the person who prepared it. Right away His Holiness Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami Mahārāja rushed up to me and asked, “Who cooked the *prasāda* today? Prabhupāda is very eager to meet you!” I initially didn’t take it seriously, but when Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja urged me to meet right away, I realized that Śrīla Prabhupāda is actually the one who wants to meet me. I went promptly to meet Śrīla Prabhupāda. He admired me and bestowed spiritual benediction, pleasure, and auspiciousness onto me so that I can devote my life to serving Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet.

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

[Cc. *Madhya* 19.151]

As a result, by the grace of Guru Mahārāja, I received the bhakti seed of devotion.

That is the day, and as of today, around five decades have passed. I am only able to serve my spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions and propagate the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu throughout the world because of his compassion.

It is just because of you, Prabhupāda, that I am still in a position to deliver your transcendental message to the souls who have forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa.

It is just because of your books and your message in numerous forms we are continuously inspired and able to serve your mission. It is a great fortune for all of us as well as for the entire creation that they have received this transcendental message through your divine literature and discovered this divine path, and by following your footsteps certainly all will achieve the ultimate destination of human form of life.

Your Servant,

Siddhārtha Swami

Initiation: August 1976—Delhi, India

Current Location: ISKCON Raipur, C.G, India

*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,

There, I just read it again! (below)

Some look on the soul as amazing, some describe him as amazing, and some hear of him as amazing, while others, even after hearing about him, cannot understand him at all. (Bg. 2.29)

“Amazing,” what an interesting word to use. (above)

All of this is clearly described, and if we properly utilize the instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā*, then our whole life will become purified, and ultimately we will be able to reach the destination which is beyond this material sky (*yad gatvā na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama*). (Bg. 15.6)

“Beyond this Material Sky.” There is something beyond our Material World! (above)

What, then, is the ultimate truth? The answer is that nondual knowledge is the ultimate truth. It is devoid of the contamination of material qualities. It gives us liberation. It is the one without a second, all-pervading and beyond imagination. (SB 5.12.11)

We hear about the “Ultimate Truth,” about “Nondual Knowledge.” We hear that it is “One without a second, all-pervading”; we hear that it is “beyond imagination!” (above) Then... (below)

The first realization of that knowledge is Brahman. Then Paramātmā, the Supersoul, is realized by the yogīs who try to see Him without grievance. This is the second stage of realization. Finally, full realization of the same supreme

knowledge is realized in the Supreme Person. All learned scholars describe the Supreme Person as Vāsudeva, the cause of Brahman, Paramātmā and others.
(SB 5.12.11)

Now we hear details of the Supreme’s ontological nature. Who could imagine? (above)

Beyond the region of ignorance (the material cosmic manifestation) lies the realm of Siddhaloka. The Siddhas reside there, absorbed in the bliss of Brahman. Demons killed by the Lord also attain that realm.
(CC *Adi* 5.39)

We are told about a world “beyond the region of ignorance.” (above)
Then even a higher realm...(below)

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, the first progenitor who is tending the cows, yielding all desire, in abodes built with spiritual gems, surrounded by millions of purpose trees, always served with great reverence and affection by hundreds of thousands of *lakṣmīs* or *gopīs*.
(BS 5.29)

Here is a description of this Spiritual World! Everything about this world is strangely familiar yet at the same time, not like any that we experience or can remember. (above)

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who is adept in playing on His flute, with blooming eyes like lotus petals with head decked with peacock’s feather, with the figure of beauty tinged with the hue of blue clouds, and His unique loveliness charming millions of Cupids.
(BS 5.30)

More about the Supreme—an actual description! (above)

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, only the tip of the toe of whose lotus feet is approached by the *yogīs* who aspire after the transcendental and betake themselves to *prāṇāyāma* by drilling the respiration; or by the *jñānīs* who try to find out the nondifferentiated Brahman by the process of elimination of the mundane, extending over thousands of millions of years.
(BS 5.34)

Now we hear about the desirability of the Supreme and the difficulty in achieving audience. (above)

That happiness increases endlessly. It is limitless and supremely great. In contrast, the happiness of Brahman found in liberation never increases, because it is limited. (*Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* 2.2.193)

Happiness that increases endlessly. Now, that is something! (above)

All throughout *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and the other literature of the Vaiṣṇavas are all these superlatives, unabashed dual word compounds and hyperbolic adjectives. “Spiritual World,” “Spiritual Food,” “*Ānanda*—(Transcendental Bliss),” “*Śuddha-bhakti*—(Pure Devotion).”

IS THERE NOTHING ORDINARY? Yes, the Material World seen through material consciousness is ordinary...actually worse than ordinary.

These majestic, flowery, melodramatic and overblown sounding phrases, adjectives and descriptive passages can leave us with the impression that we have just left Earth’s atmosphere and are in circular flight around a different orb. Possibly in another solar system or even another galaxy.

Maybe like me, some of you readers have just become calloused, or inured to all these fantastical prose passages. And it would indeed be a glaring weak point of our philosophy, if this were the status—that there is nothing behind these outsized eulogies and incredible absolutes.

Yet maybe also like me, you catch glimpses of that world, only to a few moments later, be yanked back, again having your carriage turned back into a pumpkin, your horses, back into white mice.

Sometimes, yes sometimes, I read and know that these amazing literatures are not concocting colorful passages to galvanize our imagination or faith, but instead I feel the painful lack of depth in my connection with that 4-D world, that very real spiritual world which they represent.

But. I say, “I have seen a few sparkles of it.” “I have heard that strange music.” So I continue in my worn out shoes. I will try not to put on airs, because for all I know, you may already be an internal resident of that internal mysterious place.

These words are my constant reminder that I have a long, long

way to go. The journey from “*ādau śraddhā*” to “*premābhyudañcati*” is a hike up the mountain. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have made it possible. Thank you...that is all I have to say, thank you. Without you, I would have lost out and what is more, I would not have even had the slightest inkling that I had SO MUCH lost out!

Your servant,

Candrasekhara Swami

Initiation: November 1976—Berkeley, California, USA

Vedavyasapriya Swami

My dear spiritual master, His Divine Grace, Śrīmad A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami,

Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my humble obeisances to your most magnanimous and benevolent lotus feet.

Taking utter shelter and dependency on your two lotus feet is my life’s only achievement, even though there was less than a month left after you initiated me through your divine order in 340 West 55th Street, New York, in the month of October, and then you left all of us in November ’77.

Yet I was raised in Krishna consciousness by my godbrothers. You showered your mercy through them even though I did not ever have any face to face contact or communication with Your Divine Grace.

I had *darshan* of Your Divine Grace in July Rathayātrā 1976, as you climbed onto Subhadra’s cart. Then I joined the procession in front of Subhadra’s cart all the way up to Washington Square Park.

When you were brought on the stage to address the public about Krishna consciousness, I saw Your Divine Grace and heard you well. Your spiritual demeanour and courage in conveying the message of Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu despite your coughing and weakness impressed me and touched my heart.

The rest of my upbringing in Krishna consciousness is your mercy manifestation through my dear godbrothers. They never tried to take your place, but they inspired me and made me faithful to your command.

All the years after that passed in progressive march in Krishna consciousness, but I never felt alone without them and Your Divine

Grace. But as the bodily age advanced there was distraction due to sickness of various kinds.

Just three weeks ago, I was trying to rest while watching a video of one of your lectures on my iPhone. I felt sleepy listening, thinking that video would be soon over. It did stop. But in my sleep it continued, with your mood changing all of a sudden, angrily addressing me, “You rascal, stop this business of sleeping, it is sinful!” I was so startled that I got up from sleep and could not rest for a long time.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you chastised me. Then I remembered, my godbrothers in New York told me so many stories about your chastisement of devotees, of how you corrected them and how everyone else would celebrate the good luck of the chastised devotee and glorify him as the lucky one who received the mercy of the spiritual master.

I am feeling that my faith in you is alive because you are living forever in my heart. How could it be that you came to me in my dream to chastise me? Why would I believe that my spiritual master can exist only in *vapuḥ*? Śrīla Prabhupāda, You are real forever. Just like Arjuna accepted Lord Sri Krishna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I accept Śrīla Prabhupāda as the supreme personality of servitor Godhead.

*sarvam etad ṛtaṁ manye yan māṁ vadasi Śrīla Prabhupāda!
na hi te bhagavad vyaktiṁ vidur anyeṣāṁ yathā dviṣat.*

Whatever and however your faithful disciple perceives you, you personally remain with him to guide and chastise, to send him or her back home to Godhead.

Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for coming to me personally and chastising me in my dream. The video is still there, but it does not contain the chastisement. I tried several times to see that video, but failed to see you chastising me. But I cannot remove that chastisement from my mind.

Desirous to get more chastisement,

Your lowly and smallest servant,

Vedavyasapriya Swami

Initiation: October 1977—New York, USA

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Eight Praises of Śrīla Prabhupāda

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

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

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

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

As world *acarya*, Your Divine Grace
Has shown us by example
What we each are—
His infinitesimal spiritual sample.

Your Divine Grace
Has given the principle of bhakti,
The only legitimate business
Of Lord Krishna's *Jivashakti*!

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

Who can sing full of that day
---Our obeisances are simply lame---
When Your Divine Grace, Oh!
Delivered the Holy Name!

Rupanuga Dasa
In Memory of ISKCON Buffalo, N.Y.
Initiation: October 1966—New York, USA

Govinda Devi Dasi

COLORFUL KRISHNA

RAṄGA...color. LĪLĀ...pastimes. Krishna's colorful pastimes. Krishna loves color. His pastimes are filled with color. Colorful variety. His spiritual world is shimmering with brilliant colorful variety.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you used to say, "Variety is the mother of enjoyment." So Krishna likes all varieties of devotional color. He has colorful *līlās*, with cows and friends of many different colors and moods, and His spiritual world is permeated with colorful varieties of emotions as well. This is the meaning of *raṅgalīlā*, the colorful pastimes of Lord Krishna in His world.

You have so kindly given us entry into the colorful *līlās* of the Lord, and given the world a cultural movement, complete with paintings, sculptures, drama, and teachings from the spiritual world. But what have we given you? What can we give you?

In this dark age of Kali, we are faced with the faded color of gray cities, dark omens of war, disease and pestilence, and stereotyped puppets running human society wearing black and gray suits. We are faced with the destruction or demise not only of many colorful species of birds and animals, but also many of the colorful civilizations that have peppered the world. And a Kali driven effort seems to want to homogenize everything and everyone into a pulsating mass of non-gender chemicals without any color, distinction, or even any soul.

Such drabness is the cause of much depression and disconnectness in our own western culture. Even the popular religions are no longer promoting or creating gorgeously carved colorful monuments to God as happened in the Renaissance. Color now seems confined to computer and cellphone screens.

Until you came, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You inspired a whole new genre of spiritual art, sculpture, music, drama and spiritual aliveness. You inspired our *saṅkīrtana* parties, clad in colorful

saris and *dhotis* (yes, you even told the males to wear various colored dhotis!), and our temples are filled with glittering altars, multicolored flower arrangements, gorgeous paintings, colorful artistic backdrops and art forms that would be the envy of the Renaissance masters.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you clearly designed a cultural movement, not a religious hierarchy like the Catholic Church. You introduced Vedic dramas—remember how you enjoyed seeing the dramas of the Vaikuṅṭha players, with Rasajña and Lohitākṣa? You introduced paintings that are “windows to the spiritual world.” You introduced *Harināma Saṅkīrtana* as the main backbone of this cultural movement—essentially joyous song and dance in praise of God. With varieties of instrumentation.

Kīrtana, Hare Krishna *kīrtana*, we all know is the prescribed form of worship for this age of Kali—especially public *kīrtana*, *saṅkīrtana* “in every town and village.” Lord Chaitanya traveled all over India, leading His *kīrtanas*, just to teach people how to glorify God in this dark age. He told them, “Go home, invite your friends and neighbors, hold *kīrtanas* in your homes, in your towns and your villages.” He didn’t encourage them to renounce their home and follow him. Rather he sent them home to teach others the glories of the holy names of Krishna.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you taught us to do *kīrtana* in many different ways. The sweet and soulful morning tunes are my favorite, even though they were often soft mainly due to complaints by irate neighbors. Your evening *kīrtanas* were more lively and energetic. Early San Francisco temple had rip roaring *kīrtanas* with every instrument imaginable (some not even imaginable—like Hayagrīva’s long kelp horn!) and Śrīla Prabhupāda, you often expressed your love and appreciation for their *kīrtanas* and musical creativity.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you loved creativity, in art, music, and drama. Colorful creativity. Variety. This is the beauty of the cultural movement introduced by Lord Chaitanya and promoted by Śrīla Prabhupāda. Certainly an artist’s dream come true. And you often said, “I like any artist!”

Lord Chaitanya encouraged colorful *līlā*. What is more colorful than the *līlā* of Lord Jagannātha, with huge brightly colored chariots and loud music, whirling dancers, and even Holi, where devotees actually throw color onto one another!

Yes, Krishna loves colorful variety. He loves creativity. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you introduced a cultural era of colorful creativity unprecedented in America—even the world!

“Variety is the spice of life,” you would often say. So our natural creativity in *kīrtana* has blossomed into many different kinds of *kīrtanas*. For example, bossa nova beats in South America, electric guitar *kīrtanas* in Europe and USA, with all manner of beautiful and unusual instrumentation. The only caveat you ever expressed is that the instrumentation should not be so loud as to drown out the words of the mantra.

Krishna culture means much more than just Indian culture. It includes the colorful varieties of every culture, only adding the holy names with *kīrtana*, dance, and *prasāda*. Even *prasādam* has taken on the colorful varieties of various cultures. For example, Italian *prasāda* may be spaghetti, whereas Chinese culture may prefer noodle *prasād*. Many varieties of vegetarian *prasādam* have come to be the fare in our Krishna vegetarian restaurants. Even with *dāl* and *chapatis* being the basis (and my personal favorites), there is an inherent desire of the living entity to experience variety.

Where does this desire for variety come from? From Krishna. We, as parts and parcels of Krishna, have similar desires. We also like variety, and the spiritual world is filled with the delights of colorful variety. Even Krishna’s cows and friends are various colors exhibiting various moods of love. His entire spiritual world is sparkling with shimmering color.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave us the job of importing that spiritual world to this dark world. You gave us hints with our artwork and *kīrtanas*, our “windows” to the spiritual world. You designed dioramas and doll exhibits—this was perhaps your most beloved project, next to your books, now mostly forgotten. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you described a traveling *saṅkīrtana* party that would go onstage and perform dramas and *kīrtanas*, and the dioramas would tell the stories from the Vedas. Your early letters have descriptions and plans for this cultural movement.

In our world today, colorful *kīrtanas* are springing up everywhere in the form of festivals, retreats, and yoga fests, often outside the borders of the institution. Like a flood, Lord Chaitanya’s Hare Krishna movement is saturating the world in unexpected ways. *Kīrtana* has even become a popular party addition. And because

Lord Chaitanya predicted it, it will only continue to expand in spite of the evil that currently stalks our world in the form of war and demonic technology. But we must follow through, and take our *kīrtanas* to the streets, to the people, to the towns and villages! That is our prime duty to you and to Lord Chaitanya.

There will be some hard years ahead, for which we must prepare. But rest assured, Lord Chaitanya's movement will go on. Śrīla Prabhupāda, we believe your many predictions, and we are here to serve you to make this earth planet into a spiritual world full of love and color. We know that the most important part of this world revival is public *Harināma Saṅkīrtana*. Let the *kīrtana* parties go out in every city, town and village, for only then will peace and joy and colorful spirituality come to our world!

Govinda Devi Dasi

Initiation: February 1967—San Francisco, USA

Malati Devi Dasi

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

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

As explained by Śrīla Prabhupāda, “According to the Vedic literature, the moon is regarded as a star. The scientists say that the stars are all suns, but according to *Bhagavad-gītā* the stars are of the same nature as the moon. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.21) Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *nakṣatrāṇām aham śaśī*: ‘Of stars I am the moon.’ Thus the moon is just like the many stars. What is the nature of the moon? It is bright because it reflects light from the sun. Therefore although the scientists say that the stars are many suns, we do not agree. According to the Vedic calculation, there are innumerable suns, but in every universe there is only one.” (*The Teachings of Queen Kuntī*, Chapter 14)

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are our only Sun. Around you, many moons appeared and many moons are also disappearing from our vision these days, but you will forever be that only shining sun guiding ISKCON, giving credence to those moons who faithfully

reflect your teachings and mercy. We know that there are other *ācāryas* and we honor them and their contributions, but you are our sunshine, our only sunshine, without whom our lives would wither away. I cannot profess to know who you are, but I do know that my life has no meaning without you.

Once, a former disciple criticized that ISKCON members are too focused on you, intended as a criticism, but I felt it was and is a glorious fact. I am surrounded by your grace, in all directions, your bigger *mṛdaṅga* books and your *vāṇī* deeply embedded in my heart. I will never stop running after the dust of your lotus feet. There is nothing more for me to aspire for.

A fallen servant,

Malati Devi Dasi

Initiation: February 1967—San Francisco, USA

Current location: West Virginia, USA

Contact: malatidevi@aol.com

Dayananda Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

This is a report on my preaching:

Since my letter to you last year, I finished the book that I hope will attract youth in America, Europe, and Australia.

The book recommends the *saṅkīrtana* of Vaishnava culture as the solution to the greed that is now causing the global destruction of nature. The people in Vaishnava culture are generally satisfied without greedily exploiting too many of the earth's resources. They find their enjoyment in celebrating Vishnu, Rama, and Krishna *līlās* and *nāmas* through art, drama, dance, *bhajan*, *kīrtan*, architecture, sculpture, literature, study, lectures, storytelling, festivals, austerity, sacrifice, and home and temple worship—all components of *saṅkīrtana*.

That is why Vaishnava culture is far superior to modern global culture, which I attack in my book. I disprove the Theory of Evolution and challenge the viability of empirical science. I take advantage of the fact that the current godless doctrines and ideologies

disprove themselves due to their association with the destruction of nature (*ugra-karma*).

In addition to my book, I have supporting materials to attract and train young people in various aspects of Vaishnava culture.

Radhanath Swami has kindly given me *vānaprastha* cloth, so at 77 years old, I am traveling and preaching. And I am enlisting other devotees to help me recruit and train youth.

I am hoping that you and Krishna will endorse this project, whose primary goal is to increase the number of young devotees in ISKCON temples. However, even without your endorsement, I would still like to continue to preach until I die. You set that example for me, and many of your disciples have already done that.

*I am your humble servant,
The one who takes pleasure in your mercy,*

Dayananda Dasa

Initiation: 1967, March—San Francisco, USA

Damodara Dasa

Japa Guru

All I'm worth is because of you
royal ruler loyal friend
ecstatic Śrīla Prabhupāda
going around beads you once held
saying the names of your beloveds
early morning in the *brāhma muhūrta*
awakening thoughts of your tender mercy
when at 7 a.m. you enter the temple
quietly radiating love of God
learned teacher heaven sent
fighting demons you are so powerful
ageless prophet of devotion
knower and lover of glorious God
I salute you, Jaya Prabhupāda
my every breath I owe to you
all I'm worth is because of you

Lilasukha Devi Dasi

~ CIRCLE OF PROTECTION~

(keep in a cool place)

Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You gave us Vrindavan
You gave us Navadvīp
You gave us Kṛṣṇa
You gave us Gaurāṅga

You are Guru
Who removes darkness
Who forces open our spiritual eyes
Guru is “heavy” also you are
Your purity and love are unmatched in the world

You were sent by Kṛṣṇa Himself
You are Kṛṣṇa’s Ambassador of Love
Your Appearance Day is Nandotsava
Eternally linked with the son of Nanda
Your curse and your blessing equally benefit
the conditioned soul

You gave us a whole new circle of friends
Who we can really trust
Who we can lean on
Who stand by us
Who we can love – who give us love

You make us laugh – you make us cry
You make us tremble – you make us dance
You’ve revealed windows to the spiritual world
Layers deeper and deeper

From Gokula to Goloka – Queens of Dwarka
Gopīs, Gopas, Mañjarīs, the Kuñjas, the Nikuñjas
Who could have imagined it all
Incarnations . . .

So many “Kṛṣṇas”
One “Kṛṣṇa”
Acintya bheda abheda tattva
Opposites to attract us

So many Gods
One God
2 with Rādhā
3 with Balarāma & Subhadrā
4 Kumāras
5 Pañca Tattva
6 Goswamis
7 Ṛṣis
8 Gopīs
9 Processes
10 Offenses to Avoid
This numerical science of “Kṛṣṇa” math

You taught us of the causal ocean
The science of the universe
The battle of Kurukshetra
The military science
Kīrtan – musical “Kṛṣṇa” science

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given us more
than we could have hoped for
And you keep giving
Through your words, your instructions
Your inspirations, your disciples
Your grand-disciples, Your great-grand-disciples
My wretched life has been transformed

I thank you.
I love you.

I can't live without you.

Lilasukha Devi Dasi

Initiation: December 1967—Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Kanchanbala Devi Dasi

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It is your unfathomable kindness and grace, that you allow me to be here in your loving service.

By taking refuge in you, along with following your divine instructions and devotional service, there is truly relief. Also, immersing in your pastimes and exalted qualities, which are really spiritually uplifting, genuinely joyful, sobering, and with such wit and humor altogether in so many variegated instances is such ambrosia to relish and hear.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, being the most compassionate, he was the most expert too, knowing how to engage everyone in devotional service one way or another. Right from the start, Śrīla Prabhupāda revealed that to us. Many times, when His Divine Grace would take his morning walks, he would greet passersby “Good Morning” instead of “Hare Kṛṣṇa”, as they would reciprocate in positive response. Just that nice mood, interacting with a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, is such a benefit to those souls, steering them closer towards Kṛṣṇa.

One pastime I had read and recorded years ago struck a chord of sheer appreciation of Śrīla Prabhupāda. It was a time when ‘speaking mundane topics to the general public was *maya*’, Śrīla Prabhupāda would instead connect in a practical way, a way of effective preaching according to each individual’s receptivity.

One day, Śrīla Prabhupāda and a group of devotees walked by a convalescent home. An elderly woman in her late 80s approached Śrīla Prabhupāda, starting a regular conversation. She told His Divine Grace about what had happened in her life and the pain she was going through. Śrīla Prabhupāda didn’t shun her and/or engage her in hard core preaching, but engaged in conversing with her. At the end, she said goodbye and wished Śrīla Prabhupāda the best of luck. Then Śrīla Prabhupāda in turn, said, ‘I wish you

the best of luck'. Such profound mercy as he bestowed his priceless blessings on her.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was/is so instructive. In a letter he wrote in 1968; "To surrender to Kṛṣṇa all at once is not generally possible, but as we serve Kṛṣṇa more and more, we gradually become more and more surrendered at His lotus feet. So you please continue to serve Kṛṣṇa in these ways you have mentioned, and do not feel that your service is any less valuable than that of others. In the transcendental loving service of the Lord, it doesn't matter whether we are working, cooking, painting, writing, chanting, or whatever, they are all the same. There are no such distinctions of higher and lower on the transcendental platform. The important thing is that we are engaging our time and energy in the service of the Lord. After all, we are so tiny, what can we do? Kṛṣṇa sees simply that this time is being spent in His service." (Letter to Karuṇāmayī on 25 February 1968)

It just emanated Śrīla Prabhupāda's humility and succinct realization of Kṛṣṇa being all perfect, blissful, full of knowledge, and eternal.

And chanting, glorifying Śrīla Prabhupāda every day, 'The lotus feet of our spiritual master is the ONLY way we can attain pure devotional service.'

It is stated in the "Prayers of the Personified Vedas" in *Kṛṣṇa* book, Chapter 87, stressing the need of having a bona fide spiritual master.....

Our dear Lord, although, great mystic yogis have full control over the elephant of the mind, and the hurricane of the senses, unless they take shelter of a bona fide spiritual master, they fall victim to the material influence and never become successful in their attempts at self realization. Such unguided persons are compared to merchants going to sea on a ship without a captain. Therefore, by his personal attempts, no one can get free from the clutches of material nature. One has to accept a bona fide spiritual master and work according to his direction. Then it is possible to cross over the nescience of material conditions.

Just showing the dire importance of taking shelter of such a bona fide spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda!! Such amazing mercy, I cannot fully comprehend and am so grateful at the same time!!

Another sweet pastime exhibiting Śrīla Prabhupāda's caring

guidance and encouragement:

There was an Indian couple who came to the Temple. Śrīla Prabhupāda asked the wife to sew a skirt for Śrīmatī Tulasī Devī in his quarters. She was happy to do service but panicked, fearing she wasn't a good seamstress, that the skirt she would make would not turn out. She then sewed it and brought it to the Temple upon completion. The devotees saw it and said it wasn't nice. Immediately the wife started crying. Shortly after, Śrīla Prabhupāda came back from his walk, saw Śrīmatī Tulasī Devī's new skirt and said it was beautiful...and again, the wife started crying. Just pleasing Śrīla Prabhupāda is the perfection, changing everything all around!

I know I have no qualifications and am definitely limited, but I am so very grateful in my heart for being engaged in endeavoring to serve you in my humble capacity.

Praying to be forever your devoted spiritual daughter and disciple.

Kanchanbala Dasi

Initiation: December 1967—New York, USA

Current location: San Diego, California, USA

Vamanadev Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

It was over 50 years ago when I first came in touch with your divine movement, now known as the Hare Krishna movement. I was a student at the University of Vermont, majoring in Religious Studies and Philosophy. My professor indicated to me that there was a new "Hindu Temple" in Montreal, Canada, and he assigned me to do a paper on it for a comparative religion class. So I went to Montreal to the address I was given, and proceeded up four flights of stairs to a renovated bowling alley that served as the Radha Krishna Temple. I was met at the door by your student, Shivananda Das. What he told me changed my life. He

said that understanding real knowledge, that is to say spiritual knowledge, one must approach a bona fide spiritual master. I had gone through nearly 14+ years as a student and understood the concept of a teacher, professor or priest. However, the concept of approaching a bona fide spiritual master was quite foreign to me. It seemed to me that it was much more serious; more of a surrender and commitment than just some vague concept. He had peaked my interest, and I researched further, and so ended up writing my paper on: "The importance of the Guru"... for understanding the real meaning and purpose of life. After some time, your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* was published, and in reading 4.34, "Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him..." my life's trajectory was set in motion. There was no turning back. Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, over the years I have been trying in so many ways to understand the deep meaning of that verse. To hear your instructions in a submissive mood, and to serve, regardless of the difficulty and situation. And it seemed so easy to do at first; so direct and so clear. But then life, family, and responsibilities of all sorts came into play. I found myself lost at times, searching for your guidance in your divine teachings. It has been your books that have been my major refuge in my attempt at staying the course. It has been only because of your seemingly unlimited love for your disciples that I have been inspired and thereby able to persevere. I know I'm only trying, and that I am far from perfect, and I know that in order to keep trying for pure devotional service it will only be by your mercy that I am able to continue the effort. My prayer is that you give me the strength to try. I pray to be allowed to be your instrument, to be used as you see fit. Although I have no real qualifications, I vow to try to my best ability to be your faithful and devoted disciple.

Your eternally indebted servant,

Vamanadev Dasa

Initiation: March 1968—New York, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: vamanadev108@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mission was vast, so very vast. You insisted that human life is rare and valuable, a gift from Krishna, and without the attempt to realize one's eternal identity, a human is merely a so-called human but actually is no better than a dog or cat running on two legs instead of four. And, how could one expect peace from an institution such as the United Nations with its halls filled with leaders who identify themselves with their bodies and places of birth and thus possess mentalities that are little different from those of dogs and cats?

Your desire, Śrīla Prabhupāda, was to lift the suffocating curtain of illusion and spread throughout the world true knowledge of the soul's eternal identity, knowledge of Krishna, God, and knowledge of how a soul can live practically in such a way that spiritually uplifts not degrades.

The key to this was the chanting of the holy name of Krishna, reading and hearing your books, eating Krishna *prasādam*, and associating with persons who would act and speak as exemplars of Krishna Consciousness.

Toward achieving this goal, you enacted plans to establish temples, to create ideal *brāhmaṇas*, to publish and distribute your books, to establish *varṇāśrama* dharma, to build big temples in Mumbai, Vrindavan, and Māyāpur, to set the practical example of cow protection, to undermine the lynchpin of contemporary atheism by preaching through science, to establish self-sufficient rural

varṇāśrama communities and thus promote a viable *śāstra*-based way of simple living and high thinking, to operate Krishna-centered primary and secondary schools, to establish *varṇāśrama*-college training institutions, to run a University, to have your followers write further books, to spread the chanting of the holy names to every town and village in the world through *padayātrās* and fleets of travelling temple-buses, to establish the spiritual technology of gorgeous Deity worship, to preach and distribute books and *prasādam* everywhere, from colleges to prisons, to renovate holy places, to show that art and culture and science and business and even politics could and should be used in Krishna's service, to hold Ratha-yātrā in the world's major cities, to offer festival-filled Sunday feasts and powerful *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā* classes in all your temples, and to create a post-post modern standard of true, spiritual morality through the personal conduct of your local and international leaders who would effectively manage it all!

In truth, you desired in an organized way to create a revolution that would uplift the entire world to purposeful, Krishna-centered living from its deadly, suicidal plunge into nihilistic, materialism followed by inevitable destruction.

Such a vast vision gave hope and purpose in life to countless souls who became inspired by your words and actions. They then desired to please you, as your servant-assistants, through acting to fulfill some aspect of your most noble mission.

But within the vastness of these great services was an irresistible essence that was simple and sweet but also so difficult to obtain. You desired that souls take advantage of the gift of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and develop love for Krishna in the mood of the residents of Vrindavan.

You even said to conclude your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* preface that "if even one man becomes a pure devotee of the Lord, we shall consider our attempt a success."

To Professor O'Connell in Toronto in 1976 you commented about the *Bhāgavatam's* Tenth Canto: "Yes. There are ninety chapters. All other cantos, at most thirty chapters. But Tenth Canto is ninety chapters. That is Krishna's face, Krishna's beautiful face. Everyone is attracted by the smiling face of Krishna."

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mission and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission also was to expand the natural attraction of humanity to the "smiling face of Krishna."

For the past two years I have been reading and studying the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, a book that you rushed to publication in 1975. It truly is an amazing book, alive with spiritual potency and infused with the all-attractive “smiling face of Krishna”. It simultaneously entertains and uplifts my flickering mind with its unlimited depth, sweetness, practical instructions and the unique and inimitable pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His followers.

It carefully guides readers to the most esoteric of goals that Krishnadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmi dared as author of the book to have Śrī Krishna Himself speak: “My plenary portions can establish the principles of religion for each age. No one but Me, however, can bestow the kind of loving service performed by the residents of Vraja.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 3.26)

As you explained in your purport to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi-līlā* 4.20: (W)hen the Lord took the place of the incarnation of Kali-yuga to spread the glories of chanting Hare Krishna, the system of worship recommended in this age—He also distributed the process of devotional service performed on the platform of transcendental spontaneous love. To teach the highest principles of spiritual life, the Lord Himself appeared as a devotee in the form of Lord Caitanya.”

In speaking these and other esoteric truths, Krishnadāsa said: “All these conclusions are unfit to disclose in public. But if they are not disclosed, no one will understand them. Therefore I shall mention them, revealing only their essence, so that loving devotees will understand them but fools will not. Anyone who has captured Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Lord Nityānanda Prabhu in his heart will become blissful by hearing all these transcendental conclusions. All these conclusions are like the newly grown twigs of a mango tree; they are always pleasing to the devotees, who in this way resemble cuckoo birds. The camellike non-devotees cannot enter into these topics. Therefore there is special jubilation in my heart.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 4.231–235)

I feel awful, dear and sublimely qualified Śrīla Prabhupāda, who Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu personally chose to spread His glory, as I admit that which is clear and obvious—my own camellike qualities and lack of ability to enter into this ultimate, fragrant mystery you are offering.

Getting a glimpse from a distant place of Mahāprabhu’s gift through the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and thereby the value of your magnanimous toil-of-devotion in carrying, translating, publishing,

and distributing it throughout the world—even to me—I offer my most humble obeisance at your lotus feet and beg to eternally serve you and your sincere servants.

Your servant,

Bhurijana dasa

Initiation: June 1968—Montreal

Rukmini Devi Dasi

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

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

*tarko 'pratisthah srutayo vibhinna
nasav rsir yasya matam na bhinnam
dharmasya tattoam nihitam guhayam
mahajana yena gatah sa panthah.*

Dry arguments are inconclusive. A great personality whose opinion does not differ from others is not considered a great sage. Simply by studying the Vedas, which are variegated, one cannot come to the right path by which religious principles are understood. The solid truth by which religious principles are understood is hidden in the heart of an unadulterated self-realized person. Consequently, as the sastras confirm, one should accept whatever progressive path the mahajanas advocate.

[Mahabharata Vana Parva 313.117]

My dear eternal master, and eternal father, Srila Prabhupada,

I offer my repeated obeisances at your lotus feet.

Your mission was first and foremost 'pascatyā desatarīne'- to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the Western world. The secret truth of exactly how to do that was hidden in the core of your heart. Who else but a mahajana like you could have done this?

No one should be so foolish to think that there's a need now to redirect, reimagine, or restrict the tsunami of mercy you've unleashed, following the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Oh most glorious, most generous of masters! You extended your mercy in unprecedented ways- Your invitation to all of us, even to the radical beat poet, Alan Ginsberg- was "Come live with me!" You knew that Western people had no sattvik home or shelter for practicing bhakti. So you created sacred temple ashrams, safe havens where we could all live together without sectarianism and gain a foundation in the practice of Krsna consciousness.

One your god-brothers once seemingly praised himself, while undermining your service- He said, referring to us, your flawed disciples, "It was not my mentality to associate with so many low class people". But your mentality, Srila Prabhupada, was one of extraordinary mercy and selfless compassion without discrimination. Your compassion could not be imitated by anyone of a lesser realization. You risked your life for us, time and time again. You tirelessly crisscrossed the seven oceans and seven seas for us all, time and time again.

Srila Rupa Goswami was celebrated as, "sri caitanya mano bhistam..." He understood the mind, and the intention of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. In the same way you understood the mind and intention of your Guru Maharaj.

You understood how to preach Krsna consciousness in the Western world, creating regular daily programs with the five most important angas of bhakti at their core-as recommended by Lord Caitanya:

*sādhu-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana, bhāgavata-śravaṇa
mathurā-vāsa, śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana*

One should associate with devotees, chant the holy name of the Lord, hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, reside at Mathura and worship the Deity with faith and veneration. [Cc. ML 22.128].

In this way you created significant lasting changes in culture, and societies all over the world.

In the 1960's, the principles you taught were unheard of, or scoffed at, and considered far outside the mainstream. Now so many of these core principles of Krsna consciousness are being practiced and embraced in the public square all over the world.

The chanting of sacred mantras like the Maha Mantra are being practiced in yoga studios everywhere; belief in reincarnation is being accepted by Christians, Jews and other Western people; vegetarianism is being touted by health practitioners as being a way out of so many cancer-prone diets; and a practice of living a “simpler, more natural way of life”, as you instructed, is now being advocated by environmentalists as the only way to resolve our global crisis of climate change.

The tsunami of your compassion was first and foremost facing West, but then you turned East toward India, toward Russia, and toward Africa... Then you directed the attention of your disciples toward China and the Islamic countries as well.

Why? Because the cornerstone of your teaching, and the teaching of Lord Sri Caitanya is, “... all living beings are but a part of the Supreme, or, in other words... they are Mine.” Bhagavad Gita 4.35. You are the great mahajana spiritual master who has seen this truth. As your disciples, we need to see it as well.

The tsunami of Prema Sankirtan originally unleashed by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and brought to every shore of this world by you, cannot be stopped.

At same time, we’ve failed you in so many ways, Srila Prabhupada, and failed your “Vaikuntha children” as well.

Now we must, without finger-pointing, become more vigilant in detecting the finer and finer dirt within our own hearts, within our communities, and within our families- We must now caste out the choking weeds that can destroy the very fabric of our unity and community from within.

Oh Srila Prabhupada! I am so weak. I am so often deluded. And yet I know that you will never abandon me.

“...Mised we are,
All going astray,
Save us Lord,
Our fervent pray.
Wonder Thy ways
To turn our face,
Adore Thy feet,
Your Divine Grace....”

(excerpted from Srila Prabhupada’s 1935 Vyāsa-pūjā poem)

My dear Srila Prabhupada, please flood my heart with the tsunami of your compassion, as you have flooded the rest of this world. Please engage me as a carrier of your compassion, and wash away everything in my heart that is not of service to your mission. You have saved me and so many others by your unprecedented compassion. I pray to never fail to extend your compassion to all others. Your service is my only shelter in this transient world full of so much suffering.

I pray with hope for your extraordinary mercy in these most trying times.

Your eternal servant and daughter,

Rukmini Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1968, July—Montreal, Canada

Tosan Krsna Dasa

*samsāra-dāvānala-līḍha-loka-
trāṇāya kārūṇya-ghanāghanatvam
prāptasya kalyāṇa-guṇārṇavasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

The spiritual master is receiving benediction from the ocean of mercy. Just as a cloud pours water on a forest fire to extinguish it, so the spiritual master delivers the materially afflicted world by extinguishing the blazing fire of material existence.

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.83:

*asyās tatra praveśāya dvāratve 'py aṅga-vimśateḥ
trayāṃ pradhānam evoktāṃ guru-pādāśrayādikam*

Translation: These twenty *āṅgas* serve as the door for entering bhakti.

The first three *āṅgas* – taking shelter of the feet of guru, receiving teaching after initiation, and serving the guru with respect – are said to be the principal ones.

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.

In Śrīla Prabhupāda's summary study of Rūpa Goswāmī's *Bhakti rasāmṛta-sindhu*, *The Nectar of Devotion*, in "Characteristics of Devotional Service" we find:

In the preliminary phase of spiritual life there are different kinds of austerities, penances and similar processes for attaining self-realization. However, even if an executor of these processes is without any material desire, he still cannot achieve devotional service. And aspiring by oneself alone to achieve devotional service is also not very hopeful, because Kṛṣṇa does not agree to award devotional service to merely anyone. Kṛṣṇa can easily offer a person material happiness or even liberation, but He does not agree very easily to award engagement in His devotional service. *Devotional service can in fact be attained only through the mercy of a pure devotee.*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.

Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains in his *Mādhurya Kadambinī*, First Shower Text 3, that *bhakti-devī* is self-manifesting, not caused by any type of pious act and attained by the mercy of Bhagavān. However, he concludes that *ultimately the mercy of Bhagavān's devotees is the actual cause of obtaining bhakti.*

**Śrī Bhagavān is conquered by His bhaktas. ...
only by attaining the mercy of the bhakta
does one attain the mercy of Bhagavān.**

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.32.38:

There are varieties of material existence for the living entity according to the work he performs in ignorance or forgetfulness of his real identity. My dear mother, if anyone enters into that forgetfulness, he is unable to understand where his movements will end.

Purport

Once one enters into the continuation of material existence, it is very difficult to get out. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead comes Himself or sends His bona fide representative, and He leaves behind scriptures like *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, so that the living entities hovering in the darkness of nescience may take advantage of the instructions, the saintly persons and the spiritual masters and thus be freed. *Unless the living entity receives the mercy of the saintly persons, the spiritual master or Kṛṣṇa, it is not possible for him to get out of the darkness of material existence; by his own endeavor it is not possible.*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities

Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 19.151:

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

Translation

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.

Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, in his prayer “Ke Jabi Ke Jabi Bhai Bhava Sindhu Para” describes how one can cross over the ocean of material suffering.

He begins by asking,

“Who will go? Who will go, brothers? Who will cross over this ocean of material suffering?”

He then goes on to explain,

This Kali-yuga in which Śrī Caitanya-
avatāra has appeared is blessed.

At the bathing place of my Gaurāṅga,
a free ferry-boat is waiting.

There is no restriction – everyone is coming,
including the lame, blind and distressed.

All are climbing aboard to cross over.

Locan dāsa Ṭhākura then specifies the *actual means of purification*:

**“Harināma is the boat, Śrī Guru is the
helmsman and the saṅkīrtana party moving
with up-raised arms are the oars!**

“All souls can cross over with the favorable winds of *prema*.

Only Locana dāsa is so unfortunate that, due
to his own fault, he has been left behind.

*I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual
master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.*

Vishvanath Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Gurvaṣṭakam

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*

“By the mercy of the spiritual master one is benedicted
by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Without the grace of the spiritual
master, one cannot make any advancement.”

*I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual
master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.*

Tosan Krsna Dasa

Initiation: September 1968—San Francisco, USA

Current location: Hawaii, USA

Contact: talin500@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my less than humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I do not know where to begin. Your accomplishments are so amazing. You have established Krishna Consciousness in every corner of this planet with your books, your temples, and your devotees, the least of whom is my worthless self. I was allowed to serve You for a few years of my life, at New Vrindaban, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, and Three Rivers, for all of which I am so deeply grateful to Your Divine Grace. You have blessed me with a good wife, two nice children, and a second wife with two wonderful children of her own. She is a sincere disciple of yours, who graciously takes care of me in my declining years.

As generous as you have been with me, my gratitude is completely inadequate by comparison.

I can only beg your forgiveness and pray that you and Krishna will somehow overlook my daily offenses and allow me to continue to serve you in some woefully inept capacity. Your glories are so great, yet I seem to remain disconnected from you and Krishna in my heart. My only prayer is that somehow this connection will be reestablished like an electrical cord that has come loose and needs to be firmly plugged in again so that the current of *bhakti* will once again begin to flow through it. For this I pray daily.

Your aspiring disciple,

Ranadhir dasa

Initiation: January 1968—New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA

Current location: California, USA

Contact: r.nieburgs@gmail.com

Srimati Dasi

All glories to you, my dear eternal father, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

I have been with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for fifty-five years now.

I expect I have a few more years to confirm my eternal relationship with you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have taught me well... I know I am not this body.

I will take on a spiritual form and travel to an appropriate spiritual planet to learn the 64 arts of the ancient Vedic culture to use in the service of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhe Shyām.

Though this is my ultimate service, I am also available to serve with you

Śrīla Prabhupāda, should you choose to serve in the hellish planets.

I know wherever I go with you, I will be safe.

I will always be protected by the holy name.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your eternal daughter and servant,

Srimati Dasi

Initiation: October 1968—Seattle, USA

Current location: Seattle, Washington, USA

Arundhati Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Dear Prabhupāda, you are my heart

Through thick and thin you have been here

It doesn't matter how little I've done

Your mercy it has always come

Over and over I give you thanks
For giving me the holy names
The Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*
Which is the ultimate Vedānta

Bhagavad-gītā As It Is
You gave us very early on
The truth spoken by our dearest Lord
Which sliced down *māyā* with its sword

Explained to us we're not this body
And death for us does not exist
We are not broken, cut, or burned
This profound lesson we have learned

And we have opportunity
To revive our relationship
With our beloved Śrī Hari
To hear His flute and His Form to see

To serve His *līlā* in some small way
As servant or as cowherd friend
With parental love or even this
Mādhurya-līlā full of bliss

You gave us *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*
You gave us Lord Caitanya's teachings
You gave us everything we need
You planted the eternal seed

The *bhakti-yoga latā-bīja*
It's surely incomprehensible
How greatest fortune came our way
And we met you on this earth one day

A million thanks is not enough
To offer you for what you've given
The difficulties you endured
To come to the American shore

You started off with nearly nothing

Only faith in your Gurudeva
Some books, few dollars in your pocket
But gradually you took off like a rocket

The years you spent with us too short
And yet how wonderful they were
Your presence made our lifeblood flow
Opened our hearts and made them glow

We couldn't do enough for you
Because you gave us everything
Your love to us was like the ocean
Vast and great with pure emotion

The love we yearned for all our lives
From parents, teachers, friends and such
It finally came when you arrived
And at last we came to thrive

In this life and in lives to come
May I serve you in some way
Dear Prabhupāda, I know we'll meet
The nectar is at your lotus feet

And of course you are in your books
Which means that you are always here
We need to read them every day
To hear the truth and find our way

*Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*

With sincere gratitude, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for everything,

Your servant always,

Arundhati Devi Dasi

Initiation: January 1969—Boston, USA

Current location: New York, USA

All glories to our beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda!

In October of 1970, I was asked to join the group of devotees going to India with Śrīla Prabhupāda. He told us we were sent to him to help in his mission, and when we landed, I felt like I was meant to be there...like I was finishing service from another lifetime.

In that first group of devotees, there were only five women – Yamunā devī, Mālatī devī, Himavatī devī, Madri devī, and me, and of course one little girl, Saraswati (Mālatī's daughter), so we all became very close. There are so many heavenly stories of Śrīla Prabhupāda from those early days in India – more than can be shared in this tribute.

From the moment I met Yamunā we had a very special connection. I knew that she was a great, great soul, and I wanted to be just like her. She taught me so much and whenever she sang it was like heaven. Yamunā had this wonderful, warm and intimate relationship with Śrīla Prabhupāda and inspired me to feel as comfortable around him as she was. I would follow her lead. I watched how she would interact with Śrīla Prabhupāda, and thought, "Oh, okay, I can do that too."

Amritsar was our first big program after Bombay. It was a Vedanta Sammellan and *sādhus* from all over India were invited. Of the women, only Yamunā and I went on that engagement. After the long train ride we arrived to discover there were just two small rooms on the grounds where we were going to stay. Śrīla Prabhupāda lived in one of the rooms, and Yamunā and I lived in the one right next to him. The men who came to the engagement had to sleep on the ground in the courtyard, and it was very cold. I don't remember all of them but there were Gurudās and Girirāj and about six others...I was very impressed by their austerity!

Every morning we would have *maṅgala-ārati* in Śrīla Prabhupāda's room and then *Bhāgavatam* class. Everyone who could fit in the room would squeeze into the tiny quarters and the others would sit outside on the veranda trying to hear his every transcendental word. Since there were only two women, Śrīla Prabhupāda was very protective and would always be sure to keep us close by.

When it was time for Śrīla Prabhupāda to speak, we would all gather on stage with him. He would usually speak in Hindi so we couldn't understand what he was saying, but we knew he was glad to have us with him. We were his family, and he would show us

off with pride! After he spoke we would have *kīrtana*. Sometimes Yamuna would sing, sometimes I would sing and sometimes we'd sing together. One time after a *kīrtana*, a man in the audience criticized our Sanskrit pronunciation, declaring that these Westerners are not doing it perfectly. Prabhupāda was furious – he shouted at the man saying, "These two ladies have more devotion than you will ever know in your lifetime." This was the first time I saw Śrīla Prabhupāda's lion side – the man was crushed and hung his head in shame. Then Prabhupāda said "chant Hare Kṛṣṇa" and the most ecstatic *kīrtana* followed as the audience showered us with fragrant *pārijāta* flowers.

There were many events throughout the course of the day. Prabhupāda would be invited to different people's homes, and we would go on engagement after engagement – he was always so tireless. The hosts would always send a driver to pick us up, and Śrīla Prabhupāda would always have Yamunā and me ride with him. On one such occasion we were on our way to an event and Śrīla Prabhupāda mentioned he needed new shoes. So Yamuna said, "Let's stop and buy some." And Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "Yes, we will stop at the next Bata shoe store."

We were driving along, and there was a Bata shoe store. The driver pulled over and parked. Yamunā and I and Śrīla Prabhupāda got out of the car, and walked into the store, and he said, "You choose for me." And he sat down in a chair. I still think about this, because I don't remember how we knew his size – Yamunā must have known.

So we walked around the store and picked out these white plastic slip-on sandals. We thought they were perfect for him. We each carried one shoe and walked over to Śrīla Prabhupāda, who was waiting for us to make the selection, and put them down in front of him. And Yamunā said, "These are for your beautiful lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda." She always knew the right thing to say. He started to slip them on his feet, and we guided them on, and they fit perfectly so we bought them. It's hard to describe how wonderful it was to be in his presence; even little things like this could take your breath away. You wouldn't think that going to a shoe store would be so special but going to a shoe store with Śrīla Prabhupāda – now that was thrilling!

From Amritsar, we all left by train for Bombay. Śrīla Prabhupāda rode in a first-class cabin, and we were in second class. As we were riding along, a devotee (can't recall who) came to tell us that

Śrīla Prabhupāda had called for Yamunā and me to come to his compartment. After we arrived and paid our obeisances, he asked us to bring him some fresh cooked rice. We had no idea how to accomplish this but said yes and left. We searched for a conductor and finally found one employee between two train cars. Yamunā asked “Where is your kitchen? We must cook rice for our *guruji*.” The man looked at us as though we had lost our minds. “It is not possible. The kitchen is not for passengers!” We tried to persuade him, but he held firm. Finally, Yamunā stood in the opening between the cars and declared “If you do not allow us to cook rice, I will throw myself from this train.” She was so emphatic, the man believed her. At last, he surrendered and led us to a tiny and extremely filthy, kitchenette barely big enough for the two of us. He gave us rice and left, I’m sure thinking “crazy Americans.” Yamunā and I got busy cleaning the space and scrubbing out a pot for the rice. And when it was done it came out perfectly. When we brought it to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s cabin, he was very pleased and he began eating the big pile of rice with delight. He never asked how we accomplished the task, and we never told him. He just knew that he could inspire his devotees to do the impossible!

And that lesson, the only limitations we have are those we impose on ourselves, has informed my life to this day. I’m so grateful and feel very blessed to have been able to spend so much time with him!

I offer this tribute with love and gratitude for all you’ve taught me...

Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Kausalya Devi Dasi

Initiation: January 1969—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: California, USA

Balabhadra Dasa and Chaya Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Prabhupāda, our beloved spiritual master. All glories to you on this auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

Due to your teachings, cow protection has become our life's mission for the past 33 years. During those years, the cows you have blessed us to protect gave us many joys and sorrows. Some may ask, "Do the joys outweigh the sorrows?" We would answer, "Should they? Is there not joy within the sorrow when protecting cows?"

The sorrow curtails contemplating mundane pleasures and forces us to meditate on our reason for living, the purpose of our lives. Each time a cow becomes old and ill, we must reflect on how every soul must trade their youthful and healthy body for an aging and frail body. There is no escape from that truth. Every time a cow passes away, we must consider our mortality. During those experiences, we pray harder and briefly become closer to you and Śrī Krishna. Peace and joy come to us, a gift from you, to ease the pain of a beloved soul leaving us for greener pastures. Is that not joyous?

Last summer, in the early morning of August 6, Mādhavī passed away. Bārajī (our 13-year-old grandson) found her under the trees struggling to sit up. We had just seen her the evening before roaming the front pasture.

Bārajī was petting Mādhavī's face and trying to console her while we waited for more help. Then Mādhavī calmed down. However, Bārajī was afraid she would pass away. We told him that whether Mādhavī is passing on to another place or staying here, it is best to keep her as calm as possible by touching her and chanting the Holy Names. Then within a few minutes, we sensed she had passed on. As we waited for signs of life, there were none.

Bārajī was upset. We explained to Bārajī that Mādhavī was a very fortunate cow; she had him talk to and pet her, and she heard the Hare Krishna mantra in the last moments of her life. She was also fortunate to be saved from the dairy industry by ISCOWP members.

She lost several children to the dairy industry, had her tail cut off, and she gave 95,000 pounds of milk, something like 11,000 gallons! Her demeanor was always sober. But she spent 11 years having calm and peaceful moments roaming the pastures of ISCOWP West Virginia and ISCOWP Florida. She was 17 when she passed away; in human years, she would have been 78.

When we put a *Narasimha pavitra* around her head, sprinkled holy water from the Saraswatī river on her tongue and body, and covered her with Harināma charters, the cows came to pay their

homage. We buried her that afternoon.

Every time we rescue a calf from a future of abuse and ultimate slaughter, we experience a refreshing renewal of hopeful joy. Mixed with the joy is thankfulness for the financial support and facility to care for another Mother Cow or Father Bull. Sometimes we can rescue an older cow headed for slaughter after years spent in a dairy. Our hearts fill with joy to watch her relax and make friends with the other rescued cows in our herd. Every rescued cow, young or old, brings renewed hope and joy.

We received a text message on March 1, 2022, from a breeder that he had just found the mother of a month-old bull calf dead in the field. He figured he should start bottle-feeding the calf, but he saw the calf eating some hay and grain. The short of it was the breeder wanted to sell the bull calf quickly.

Since the calf was very young, he was at the right age to develop a relationship with a human. So we decided to hook up the trailer and go take a look at him. On the way to the breeders, we got another text message.

The second message was from a young man who services our trees and breeds cows on his large acreage. A female calf was born that day on his farm. The calf's mother was an old cow (16 years old) and did not have enough milk to feed the baby she had before this one. So he took the calf from her mother because he knew she would not have enough milk. He also wanted to sell the calf as soon as possible.

Soon we arrived at the first breeder's place. He was waiting for us with the calf in a livestock trailer with two other cows. In a nearby corral were five more cows. All the cows were agitated and fearful. It is not unusual for most breeders to look at their cows as dollar signs and not handle them or develop relationships. Therefore the cows are fearful of humans.

Since the calf was a little more than a month old, the youngest of the cows there, we thought he could eventually become friendly with some effort on our part. So we took the male calf and drove to the other breeder with the newborn female calf. She was immediately friendly as she was only a few hours old and had no time to become fearful. So we drove away with both calves in the trailer. They are now known as Baladev Daujī and Subhadrā due to the generosity of ISCOWP donors.

Some may say cow protection is burdensome because the cow

protector must work hard, and there is little financial reward. But in addition, cows can live 25 or more years and must be protected and cared for their entire lives. Thus, the cow protector must commit to the lifestyle of cow protection for a good part of their lives.

But a hidden reward is unveiled to the cow protector immersed in cow protection. Through the spirituality of Mother Cow and Father Bull, the cow protector's mind transcends material consciousness. The world becomes Goloka Vṛndāvana, where the reality is the sweet blue boy Kṛṣṇa and his friends frolicking with the cows through the forest.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have described Goloka Vṛndāvana in the *Kṛṣṇa* book, Volume 1, page 77. "At this time Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were given charge of the calves. The first responsibility of the cowherd boys was to take care of the little calves. The boys are trained in this from the very beginning of their childhood. So along with other little cowherd boys, Kṛṣṇa and Balarama went into the pasturing ground and took charge of the calves and played with Their playmates. While taking charge of the calves, sometimes the two brothers played on Their flutes. And sometimes They played with *āmala*kī fruits and bael fruits, just like small children play with balls. Sometimes They danced and made tinkling sounds with Their ankle bells. Sometimes They made Themselves into bulls and cows by covering Themselves with blankets. Thus Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma played. The two brothers also used to imitate the sounds of bulls and cows and play at bullfighting. Sometimes They used to imitate the sounds of various animals and birds. In this way, They enjoyed Their childhood pastimes apparently like ordinary, mundane children."

Unfortunately, the mind wanders, envy and material desires have deep roots in our souls, and we are not always profoundly mindful of the cows. But those moments that we are only thinking of the cows are most treasured and remembered, motivating us to continue to serve them.

That's the reward, the joy within the sorrow, that those dedicated to cow protection begin to glimpse. Materially, some may view cow protection as burdensome and difficult, but the spiritual reward overcomes the material considerations.

As our ever well-wisher, teacher, and spiritual master, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, knew of this reward and wanted your disciples to experience it. You knew if you could inspire us, teach us, convince us to take up cow protection, and work through the difficulties,

we would eventually begin to taste and relish the transcendental spirituality of Mother Cow and Father Bull.

For the cowherd men and the cows, Kṛṣṇa is the supreme friend. Therefore He is worshiped by the prayer *namo brahmaṇya-devāya go-brāhmaṇa-hitāya* ca. His pastimes in Gokula, His *dhāma*, are always favorable to the *brāhmaṇas* and the cows. His first business is to give all comfort to the cows and the *brāhmaṇas*. In fact, comfort for the *brāhmaṇas* is secondary, and comfort for the cows is His first concern. Because of His presence, all people would overcome all difficulties and always be situated in transcendental bliss. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.8.16, Śrīla Prabhupāda purport)

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for gifting us with this reward, which frees us, however briefly, from material anxieties. Because of you, we can not envision life without cows. Therefore, we pray for your blessings to continue caring for and protecting cows until the day we leave our bodies and this material world.

Your aspiring servants.

Balabhadra das and Chaya devi dasi

Initiation: March 1969—Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Current location: Gainesville, Florida, USA

Contact: iscowp@gmail.com

Bhavananda Dasa

*arcyē viṣṇau śilā-dhīr guruṣu nara-matir vaiṣṇave jāti-buddhir
viṣṇor vā vaiṣṇavānām kali-mala-mathane pāda-tīrthe 'mbu-buddhiḥ
śrī-viṣṇor nāmnī mantrē sakala-kaluṣa-he śabda-sāmānya-buddhir
viṣṇau sarveśvareṣe tad-itara-sama-dhīr yasya vā nārakī saḥ*

One who thinks the Deity in the temple to be made of wood or stone, who thinks of the spiritual master in the disciplic succession as an ordinary man, who thinks the Vaiṣṇava in the Acyuta-gotra to belong to a certain caste or creed or who thinks of *caraṇāmṛta* or Ganges water as ordinary water is taken to be a resident of hell. (*Padma Purāṇa*)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Your purports are the instructions for the conditioned souls to navigate our way through the labyrinth of the Kali-yuga. In 1969, you arrived in Boston from London with your servant Puruṣottama Dāsa. Brahmānanda and I were sitting with you in your darshan room of the house we had rented for you. Puruṣottama was re-packing his bag in another room across the hall. He came into your room and simply said, "Goodbye!", picked up his suitcase and walked out.

You turned to us and said, "He is leaving. He does not believe me when I say they did not land on the moon. I can understand him doubting me, but how can he doubt the *Vedas*?"

That was an instance, one of many, where you did not back down from a situation where the Vedic dictum was prime, even in the face of popular, current viewpoints. That single-pointed understanding of the infallibility of the *Vedas* guided you through your entire life, and through your Bhaktivedanta purports, you have given Lord Krishna's absolute directives to all of us, the conditioned souls of this world.

Material philosophies, sociological phenomena and modern thinking, which are based on mundane philosophers and, even more, *vox populi*, are ephemeral, conditioned and spurious. Those opinions are tossed about on the tempestuous winds of the modes of nature. Shelter at your divine lotus feet means acceptance of the Bhaktivedanta purports as they are. It is not that your sublime realisation can be altered to suit and appease the limited understanding of the conditioned souls of this world, even within ISKCON itself.

It has become increasingly disturbing for me to hear, within ISKCON, the dismissal of your authority if a devotee begins a statement by saying, "Prabhupāda said", as if you were just another devotee. In 1975 you told Upendra and me that you only came to this world on the insistence of Krishna. You are no ordinary person. Therefore, let me take this opportunity to declare to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that I have no interest in any literature, treatises or opinions of anyone, if those literatures, treatises or opinions are contentiously opposed to yours. Call me simple-minded, naive or foolish, I will wear those labels and pray for the remainder of my life that I will be a "Prabhupāda said" man.

In 1972, on the veranda of the temple at Albert Road, Calcutta,

you were explaining how dangerous *māyā* is. “It is like walking on a razor’s edge. At the slightest lapse of attention, there will be bloodshed.” Please allow me to always keep my attention upon your sublime lotus feet, and to always be crying for your mercy.

I remain your eternal servant,

Bhavananda Dasa

Initiation: April 1969—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Sydney, Australia

Chintamani Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I am unworthy to be your disciple. With my head at your feet:

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

I am missing your divine physical presence in this world. I’m sorry I haven’t done more for you. If I ever did anything to please you, please kindly remember me. You gave meaning to my life, and I’m honored to be counted amongst your many followers.

ISKCON is a preaching movement, I keep hearing, and it is true. Yet, many times I also heard you say that you wrote your books for your disciples to read, and if we didn’t read them, we would go astray. How can we remain pure and fall in love with Krishna unless we read His enchanting pastimes and hear His holy name, nondifferent from Himself?

If I ever feel bad, I simply remember being in the *kīrtana* in 1969 in Columbus, Ohio, where you magnificently distributed the glorious holy name to those of us in attendance, and how overwhelmingly powerful that holy name entered our hearts and made so many of us dance like crazy, enraptured by the transcendental name descending from the spiritual world. By simply deeply remembering that experience, it’s like the sun shining through the dark clouds, the negativity, darkness and hate in this world fades, and again I’m reinstated in my true nature. If we become Krishna conscious, then we can spread love of God as you did, to whomever we come in contact with.

You said something to me once at the old original New

Vrindaban farm, and I need to fulfill this instruction. We were outside on a beautiful sunny day in May 1969, and the entire atmosphere was surcharged because of your divine presence. Every second of being there was a gift and my most precious memory. You said, “Chintamani, that means place where Krishna stays. Therefore, prepare in your heart a place for Krishna. Is that alright?” Please help me to really do this once and for all. This is all I truly want, but I keep getting distracted, and I’m running out of time.

You came to save all of us, but it is also personal to each and everyone of us. Every pot washer, book distributor, *pūjārī*, cook, householder, guru, male, female, etc. Every single devotee can experience their own connection with their most loving God by your mercy, because you are the one who brought this divinity down to this dark planet for us. You are the one who linked us up to the *paramparā* of Krishna *bhakta* saints. You are the one who came to represent the *yuga avatāra* of the Kali-yuga (Lord Chaitanya) and gave us His mercy and instructions.

So, no matter how much time passes, I pray we all now and in the distant future can remember and honor you. You saved us and may this movement flourish even though there are so many obstacles within and without. Keep blessing all of us please, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thank you for coming here.

Your servant,

Chintamani Dasi

Initiation: May 1969—Columbus, USA

Current location: Detroit, Michigan, USA

Contact: srinandan@aol.com

Jayasri Dasi

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Ideal example and teacher:

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda showed the world such a wonderful example of how to live a life surrendered and dedicated to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His example from his youth until his passing in Vrindavan were such a shelter for the conditioned souls. His humble yet dynamic service to the Supreme Lord gave humanity

footsteps to follow so that we could find our way back home home back to Godhead.

A great commander with great determination, against all odds, came to a wayward country with a mission to encourage the people to pursue their spiritual life...which most of them had forgotten. Without him who knows what our fate and the fate of the world would be now. Planting the seeds of devotion in the hearts of those he met and inspiring thousands to continue planting those seeds was one of his great accomplishments.

All glories to such a kind, compassionate and glorious soul. *Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda.*

Your aspiring servant,

Jayasri Dasi

Initiation: May 1969—Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Current location: New Vrindavan, West Virginia, USA

Contact: jayasri108@hotmail.com

Cathurbhuj Dasa

*om ajñāna timirāndhasya jñānāñjana śalākayā
caṣṣur-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 127th Appearance Day, also coinciding with the terrible events of post COVID and the possibility of world war I think it is especially poignant to re-commit ourselves and 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 previous a Vyāsa-pūjā Tributes offering (see *Śrīla Prabhupāda Tributes* 2015, at pages 162–163) my co-devotees and disciples have spoken of your truly amazing educational programmes for helping humanity at large, this being a vehicle 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 devotees all over the world through your inspiration 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 wonderful services in London, and elsewhere under the leadership of a vibrant community of devotees. It is with devotees along with other devotees' well-wishers that we have an oasis in the middle of London. The London Temple performs such beautiful festivals, Gaura Pūrṇimā, Janmāṣṭamī, Rathayātrā, just to name a few. There are food distribution programmes and *Bhagavad-gītā* classes. Of course there is politics and sometimes discord, but thousands are taking shelter because of the festival and spiritual welfare programmes enacted through your mercy and grace.

This very modest offering is an opportunity to reinvigorate oneself and play catch up? May we all be inspired in your service?

It is estimated that there are now between seven to eight million people plus 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 the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is practiced there should be a perspective 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". By having such a hall this shall become a magnet for attracting devotees rather than narrow sectarian interests.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your blissful and wonderful books (over one hundred) that you've left behind for all humanity we are your guardians. To be true to you and to Kṛṣṇa we must re-commit ourselves in our service to you. In one of your early articles, the book entitled *Easy Journey to Other Planets*, you state:

People dream, of travelling to the stars, but such travel is still far away. Ancient yoga traditions, however, describe subtle pathways by which master yogis transfer themselves to planets beyond the earth.

This book and many others take the reader to the most wonderful places in the antimaterial sky which are eternal and full bliss and beyond the reach of birth, death, old age and disease.

In this Vyāsa-pūjā offering, I would humbly make the following request to your most dedicated Vyāsa-pūjā *Tributes* team who take the trouble, and love to reach out to so many disciples.

I would like to propose that each participant should be invited to give his location, address, email contact details, and possibly a number.

This makes the offering very authentic, and allows others to express their appreciation when they have been moved and enlightened by the offerings and realisation of more senior devotees. In years to come, the contact details will prove valuable for researchers and writers who wish to use the Vyāsa-pūjā Tribute books to advance your mission.

So I finally return to my point which is love of Godhead. By example and by your books, you Śrīla Prabhupāda, 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 of loving Kṛṣṇa, and imbibing the science of Kṛṣṇa without adulation. You have also mentioned the importance of Vaiṣṇava etiquette, and *varṇāśrama*, simple living and high thinking.

Today, of all days, we seek your causeless mercy.

Your humble servant,

Cathurbhuj Dasa

Initiation: December 1969—London, UK

Current location: London, UK

Contact: rajinder.gupta101@gmail.com

101 Marely Walk, Lennon Willesden, London NW2 4PY UK

Karanodakasayi Visnu Dasa Adhikari

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Returning to Soho Street after a week of last minute decisions as to where to hold the 14th Varṇāśrama College Meeting, particularly as I had thought of it as the inauguration or launch of the Varṇāśrama

College at Soho Street proved to be a little premature. Śacīkumāra Nimāi Prabhu had identified it might be a problem of not being aligned with the Temple Management. This was what was causing me depression and a feeling of not really belonging, feeling out on a limb. And so I tried to analyse the solution with the help of Śacīkumāra Nimai Prabhu. I realized that for the 54 years of my life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I had always been out on a limb, never really having connected with the devotees, always having grandiose plans to execute my devotional service, but no real team-working spirit to see things through to completion with someone else. I put this down to when I first attended Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Conway Hall lectures on 6th October 1969, and I made a conscious decision then to take my spiritual life seriously and to stop talking to anyone and everyone. I took it that spiritual life was a lonely journey, and one had to persevere alone to practice it. So, for practically 54 years I took a vow of silence, to cut myself off from the world and execute my devotional service alone. The realization that I needed to confide in the devotees around me was just really dawning on me just now.

*dadāti pratigṛhṇāti
guhyam ākhyāti prcchati
bhuñkte bhojayate caiva
ṣaḍ-vidham prīti-lakṣaṇam*

(Nectar of Instruction 4)

Revealing one’s mind in confidence and inquiring confidentially, accepting *prasāda* and offering *prasāda* are just four of the symptoms of love that Śacīkumāra and I shared yesterday at Soho Street with a view to executing our devotional service together to please Śrīla Prabhupāda by establishing one Varṇāśrama College within every ISKCON center in the next five years by Gaura Pūrṇimā Saturday 11th March 2028. Our health was taken care of, and we were chanting our rounds diligently and doing our reading everyday, so now it was our devotional service to establish one Varṇāśrama College within every ISKCON centre in the next five years.

On a Morning Walk conversation in Vṛndāvana, on March 12th 1974, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave the order to establish one Varṇāśrama College with every ISKCON centre. And then on Sunday 25th July 1976, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave my father Śrīmān Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu Prabhu an order to establish *daiva-varṇāśrama dharma* by practical example when Śrīla Prabhupāda came to our house at Bhagavat Bhavan in

London. Harikeśa Svāmī wrote his book, *Varṇāśrama Manifesto* in 1979, I believe. My father was a *grhastha* at that time and shortly after in 1983 he retired to Vṛndāvana and established Bhaktivedānta Swami Vānaprastha Āśrama in Raman Reti. Then, after my mother passed away in 1995, my father took *sannyāsa* in 1996 and built Śrī Goloka Dhāma, a 40 room Temple for Śrī Śrī Rādhā Rāsabihārī on the Parikramā Mārga in Vṛndāvana opposite the ISKCON Gośālā. During that time my father and I wrote a joint paper to establish Varṇāśrama Dharma together. Then in 1999, Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī wrote her book, *Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaking About Varṇāśrama*, which was a joint seminal work by a lot of senior devotees published by the BBT. In 2001 Bhakti Rāghava Swami went to Indonesia and established six rural projects and youth hostels. Then, in 2006 he started a Varṇāśrama College in Sahyadri, South India, and in 2009 he was appointed the National Minister for the Daiva Varṇāśrama Ministry for promoting rural development in India and wrote many books to that effect. In 2009 I gave a talk on Varṇāśrama at Soho Street and in 2011, I met Bhakti Rāghava Swami in Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana to see how we could establish Varṇāśrama in London, Then in 2012, I wrote my 40 Founding Principles on Establishing a Varṇāśrama College. In 2016, Mahārāja went on a world tour of 13 countries to promote Varṇāśrama and then in 2019 I wrote my first book, *Our Vaikuṅṭha Planet: How To Eliminate Anxiety For 8 Billion People*, in which establishing Varṇāśrama Colleges was key to our Movement's progress. Mahārāja has established Varṇāśrama Colleges in four countries so far – India, Indonesia, Cambodia and Malaysia. In 2020, Bhakti Rāghava Swami set up the Varṇāśrama College website and in January 2022, I launched my Varṇāśrama College at the Gauḍīya Mission and later on that year in May, June and July, I decided to go to America to see if I could establish Varṇāśrama Colleges with some of the ISKCON centres there. Then on 15th December 2022, I launched my Varṇāśrama College Facebook Group and 15 people joined on the first day, now we have 139 members. A week later on Thursday, 22nd December 2022, we started having weekly meetings to see how we could establish some Varṇāśrama Colleges in the UK. Up until now we have had 15 meetings over a period of four months with a view to having a Varṇāśrama College at Soho Street and the Manor this year. I have discussed this with some of our senior devotees who have come into London in that time, such as Girirāja Swami, Devāmṛta Swami and Jayādvaita Swami, and they have fully

supported the idea.

I humbly beg Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mercy for this endeavour.

Your insignificant servant,

Karanodakasayi Visnu Dasa Adhikari

Initiation: 1969, December—London, UK

Current location: London, UK

Contact: mohan.gupta108@yahoo.co.uk

101, Marley Walk, Willesden Green, London NW2 4PY, UK

WhatsApp: +44 (0) 7913 897 406

Svarupa Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Before I encountered your teachings, I was very unhappy, very confused, and frightened. I didn’t understand why there was so much suffering in the world. Everywhere I turned, I saw cruelty and pain, misery and hopelessness. Nothing made sense to me. Nothing seemed to have any meaning. I had no idea what my life was meant for. Like everyone around me, I tried to find some satisfaction in sense enjoyment, but my feeble attempts were always met with frustration. I constantly felt like something was missing. I looked for answers in the writings of mundane philosophers and charlatan gurus. I sought enlightenment by smoking ganja and taking LSD, but instead of having any spiritual realizations, I only became more perplexed and entangled in material life. Just when I was about to give up any shred of hope, I found a copy of *Back to Godhead* magazine in the summer of 1969. Every word and every picture struck a chord so deep within me, and I knew that I had found what I was looking for. I found the Absolute Truth. I was immediately convinced that you were the perfect spiritual master, and I knew that I had to become your disciple. I began visiting the temple at Second Avenue in New York City, and soon after I moved in.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you saved me from a life of misery and ignorance. You gave me hope. By your mercy the seed of *bhakti* was planted in my heart, and from that moment there was no turning back. I continue to stumble and succumb to the illusory energy, but by your grace I have never lost faith and hope, and every day of my life I feel so much gratitude and appreciation for being delivered by

you into the light of Krishna consciousness.

It is customary for the disciple to express his appreciation for his guru on Vyāsa-pūjā, and my only wish is for you to accept this poor fallen beggar’s offering at your lotus feet on this auspicious day celebrating your appearance in this world.

Your servant,

Svarupa Dasa

Initiation: December 1969—Boston, USA

Current location: Oceanside, California

Govinda Datta Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your lotus feet which graced this earthly planet but only spread transcendental benedictions beyond earthly limits!

As time passes my appreciation for your steadfast dedication for pleasing your spiritual master becomes more and more profound. *Yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau tasyaite kathitā hy arthaḥ prakāśante mahātmanah!* “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!”

You are that special soul who totally imbibed all Vedic knowledge through body, mind and soul. You met all obstacles as challenges to your mission as inspirations. You saw losing a battle as an inspiration to win the war. When an endeavor would fail you would immediately rise with renewed strength. You met every day as a new opportunity to push forward Lord Caitanya’s glories. You struggled, you knew loss, you suffered but you always rebounded with new enthusiasm as you were convinced of success because you had implicit faith in the orders of your spiritual master. And you always gave credit to His Divine Grace Śrī Śrīmad Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Mahārāja Prabhupāda! By showing this amazingly miraculous example to us you have made us very endeared to you. And you explained that the only way to possibly begin to repay our debt to you is through becoming Kṛṣṇa Conscious ourselves and by trying to give Kṛṣṇa Consciousness to the fallen conditioned souls.

In my humble attempt, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I had the most wonderful Kṛṣṇa conscious experience in my life last summer as I was allowed to present the Kṛṣṇa Lunch Program at UCLA. I could understand how pleased you were as many students, faculty, professors and other guests were able to taste Kṛṣṇa Prasādam, hear the Holy Name and receive your books! And everyone reciprocated wonderfully by donating, by explaining how the Prasādam made them feel “wonderful” and in general praising Kṛṣṇa Consciousness and Kṛṣṇa Lunch! Currently we are challenged by the university, but we pray for the mercy of all the *ācāryas*, goswamis, Lord Caitanya and Lord Kṛṣṇa to be able to resume soon! We will fight with all resources available to win the right to be able to give Kṛṣṇa Consciousness in this way at the so-called higher education facilities. You were totally correct and justified to call these places slaughter houses because there is no Kṛṣṇa Consciousness offered or encouraged! We have a deep understanding that this Kṛṣṇa Lunch program will be another very magnanimous preaching program to help revive Kṛṣṇa Consciousness in America! Every family in the world is brainwashed to send their child to college or else he will be a loser, a nobody, a failure, a dropout, etc.! So we are at the university greeting everyone with Kṛṣṇa Lunch! And Kṛṣṇa Lunch is trying to expose this bogus propaganda through the ecstatic programs you taught us as the real way to defeat *māyā* in this Kali-yuga age: book *saṅkīrtana*, chanting *saṅkīrtana* and blessed sacred Kṛṣṇa Prasādam!

I pray to you Śrīla Prabhupāda that I may have the intelligence to make this program successful and to be able to start more of these programs—and everything only for the glorification of you and Lord Kṛṣṇa! The more the condition souls learn about you and Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, the more they will embrace this rare opportunity! They have been waiting since time immemorial, wandering hopelessly in bewilderment in this material world, and now being given the opportunity of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness!

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

I beg to remain your servant in Lord Caitanyadeva’s army, Śrīla Prabhupāda! *Hare Kṛṣṇa!*

Govinda Datta Dasa

Initiation: 1969

Current location: Los Angeles, USA

Contact: govdata@gmail.com

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

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

Our dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most blessed day of your appearance, along with devotees throughout the world, we the residents of your Śrī Śrī Krishna Balaram Mandir offer our most humble prostrated obeisances in the holy dust of your divine lotus feet!

One time, you were circumambulating Śrī Śrī Krishna Balaram Mandir and your dear disciple, Viśāla Prabhu, was excitedly exclaiming over and over, “Śrī Vrindavan Dhāma kī, jaya! Śrī Vrindavan Dhāma kī, jaya!” You stopped walking and planted your cane on the ground and asked, “So you like this place?” He replied, “O Prabhupāda, it’s wonderful!”. Then with a flick of your wrist you replied, “Then take it, it’s yours!” This is your amazing power that, simply with a flick of your wrist, you can bestow Vrindavan to anyone.

We often marvel at how you left such a wonderful place at the fag end of your life and crossed the great ocean to spread the divine message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu to the Western World. We are unable to fathom the great compassion for the fallen souls that impelled you on this most merciful mission to a foreign land where you had not a penny or a friend. You struggled alone and mentioned, “Here I am sitting in New York, the world’s greatest city, such a magnificent city, but my heart is always hankering after Vrindavan... I should be very happy to return to my Vrindavan, that sacred place.” Gradually, some persons began to listen to your message and take up the practice of Krishna Consciousness.

You gave Vrindavan to the world and then returned to establish the most beautiful temple in ISKCON, Śrī Śrī Krishna Balaram Mandir and brought the whole world to Vrindavan. It was on an empty plot far from the center of town, and people asked why you built a temple so far away, who will go there? But now, everyone sees that this is one of the most important and visited temples of Vrindavan. In fact, we are amazed by the throngs of pilgrims that visit your temple all year long. Śrī Śrī Krishna Balaram Mandir must

be the most visited temple in all of ISKCON!

We, the most fortunate residents of Śrī Śrī Krishna Balaram Mandir, are striving to fulfil your great desires for this temple. We are most happy to report to you that, without going anywhere, just from the temple alone, we are sometimes distributing more than two thousand of your books every day. We get more than a thousand people a day to chant one full round of the Hare Krishna Mantra in your Samādhi Mandir. Not only that, but we travel every day to various villages of Vraja and get more than a hundred people in each village to chant one round of Hare Krishna.

You were always fond of *prasādam* distribution so we are extremely happy to report to you that daily sometimes more than twenty thousand cups of *kichadi prasādam* are distributed to the pilgrims visiting your temple. Since one year, all visiting devotees can take full breakfast and lunch *prasādam* for free in our large *prasādam* hall.

You were always concerned about Deity worship, and we are happy to report to you that the standard here is one of the highest in the world. You will be glad to know that, as per your desire, all the garlands are lovingly strung by the devotees themselves. Every morning, we're astounded by the incredible beauty of the garlands and flower ornaments they so carefully fashion.

Your desire was that twenty-four-hour *kīrtana* go on in the temple room. We are very pleased to inform you that for decades, *kīrtana* is constantly going on very successfully. The visiting pilgrims love to chant and dance with us and be introduced to the bliss of Hare Krishna *kīrtana*.

Concerned that even in the holy land of Vrindavan, your disciples could not get pure cow milk, you established the Bhaktivedanta Swami Goshala with just a few cows and a small piece of land. Now, we have almost five hundred animals, and you will be very happy to know that to fulfil your last desire, we have acquired a large tract of land not far from the temple. There we have established the Bhaktivedanta Eco Farm to produce our own food and provide more area for the cows.

Like a loving grandfather, you always looked after the health of your devotees. Our Devotee Care Department very efficiently and carefully takes care of all the medical needs of your followers.

In your Samādhi Mandir, we have replaced your *āsana* with a solid carved marble *āsana* that looks glorious. Your devotees have completely remodelled the Samādhi Museum with gorgeous, colorful

dioramas, including the Guru Paramparā on down to yourself receiving initiation from your Divine Master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

Now devotees from all over the world take part in our temple programs, *artikas*, and classes, both in English, as well as Hindi, broadcast live online by Vrindavan TV twenty-four hours a day.

Not only do we have Prabhupāda Vani Ashram, very close to the temple, we have expanded with a Jagannath Mandir in Chaitanya Bihar where many *brahmacārīs* reside. Just recently, we acquired an extension center in Rukmiṇī Vihar to accommodate the crowds of devotees who come to visit. It has two floors and a basement with twenty-four guest rooms, large temple room where Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda preside, and first class festival kitchen and *prasādam* hall.

Very soon, we will embark on the most ambitious plan of construction of an ashram, guesthouse, *prasādam* hall, conference rooms, and other new amenities on the land next to your temple. This will expand our shrinking facilities and provide more services for the resident devotees, as well as visiting pilgrims. We seek your kind blessings on us for the success of this project.

It is our sincere hope that when you look down from Goloka, you will be pleased at our endeavours to beautify and expand that place you affectionately referred to as your home. Please continue to shower your unlimited mercy on the devotees of Śrī Śrī Krishna Balaram Mandir who are striving to please Your Divine Grace!

Deena Bandhu Dasa and your loving
servants of ISKCON Vrindavana
Initiation: January 1970—Boulder, USA
Current location: Vrindavan, India

Bhakta Dasa

Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Prabhupāda

In the beginning of the Nectar of Devotion, your translation of Śrīla Rūpa Goswami's book

explains that pure devotional service is rarely attained. The reason for this is that pure devotional

service is MORE POWERFUL than the Supreme Personality of Godhead because it brings Lord

Krishna under the control of His devotee! Because you are an eternal associate of Lord Krishna, your love for Him has brought Him under your control.

We, who were blessed to meet you and were granted the ears to hear you, and the heart willing to submit to you, can hardly fathom your position. It is inconceivable to us.

54 years ago, you had a small raggedy bunch of “hippie” disciples. We were born in families where sinful activities were practiced 365 days each year. We did not have a clue. But, because

you had the full potency of Lord Krishna coming through your tongue to our ear, you woke us up from the deepest darkness.

Prabhupāda, I tell my children and my grandchildren that everything I know is what I have learned from you. That is not an exaggeration. You taught me how to eat, sleep, mate, and take care of my health – physically, mentally, and spiritually. You taught me how to properly respect others. You taught me how to cook. You taught me how to be responsible and accountable with Krishna’s Laksmi. Because of your teaching and your example, I always keep track of all money that comes in and goes out.

You taught me to make friends with devotees, and how to deal with the various levels of devotees. You have granted me friendships with great saints. When I am with them, I just weep with joy.

Now, many of those friends have joined you in your *nitya-līlā*. I miss them. It is lonely here without their saṅga. My day is coming soon. It is inevitable. When it comes, I am ready to leave here without fear, and in full faith that I am going to be with you birth-after-birth.

I understand that pure devotional service is the goal, and that is the real meaning of going Back to Godhead.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, although I am fallen, I am rascal, my faith in you is unshaking. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I want to remain your servant forever,

Bhakta Dasa

Initiation: 1970, March—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Bangkok, Thailand

Contact: bhakta@saintly.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

What do you want from me? How can I please you? How can I serve you? These are the questions a perfect disciple asks his spiritual master, and these are the questions you asked of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta. But these questions are useful only if the disciple is prepared to accept and follow the answers. By studying your life, I am awed by the numerous examples you set of perfectly understanding and following the instructions of your Guru Mahārāja. Following his instructions was so important to you, so essential to your existence, that you once said that you wasted so much time before being fully able to execute this instruction. When devotees disagreed with you, you said, “No, I wasted so much time.” The order of your Guru Mahārāja was so important that it pained you that you had to wait so long to fully execute that order.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this example is such a precious gift for us, a gift some of us may fail to fully grasp. Of course, as a *gṛhastha* you dutifully took care of your family responsibilities, and this has also set a perfect example for us. But you show us that despite all your material responsibilities, the orders of your guru remained forever deeply ingrained in your heart. Thus, you teach by example how to receive and execute the order of the guru.

There is a famous lecture in which you beckon your disciples to “distribute books, distribute books, distribute books.” In this class you explain that your Guru Mahārāja told you that the building of a new marble temple in Kolkata had resulted in his disciples fighting over which rooms they would occupy. Reflecting distastefully on this reality, he told you it would be better to sell all the marble from the temple and use that money to print books. This statement made a huge impression on you, and this is the reason you put so much stress on book publication and distribution. You told us that it was in this conversation that you specifically marked (and never forgot)

how much he was stressing book distribution. Thus, *your* stress on book distribution was *his* stress on book distribution, and thus a manifestation of your knowing of and alignment with the heart of your spiritual master.

There are numerous other examples of you precisely understanding the desire of your Guru Mahārāja and executing that order, even if difficult, uncomfortable or seemingly impossible. Among all these examples what stands out most for me is how willing you were to work conjointly with your godbrothers to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness around the world. You were already successful without their help, but because you knew how much your Guru Mahārāja wanted all his disciples to work cooperatively, you always encouraged them to cooperate. What I find so amazing is that many of these godbrothers had disagreements with you, disagreements that even destroyed the Gauḍīya Matha's unity. Yet you were willing to overlook all this in order to fulfill your Guru Mahārāja's desire of working together with your godbrothers to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness around the world. There are many austerities we perform in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but working together with devotees with whom we strongly disagree is one of the greatest. Thank you for showing us an example we desperately need to learn.

You did not make choices based on your likes and dislikes; you made choices solely based on what your guru mahārāja wanted. In other words, his desire was your only desire. It has been said that you were empowered to spread Krishna consciousness around the world, and this is of course true. But what may not be so obvious is that this empowerment could only be given to someone whose heart was completely emptied of all personal motivation. In other words, you were fully empowered by your Guru Mahārāja because your heart was his heart. And this explains why you often said that you are nothing, and all your success was the mercy of your Guru Mahārāja. And this also explains why you said that you never felt separated from your spiritual master. If we live only to execute the desire of our guru, then our guru always lives within us.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for giving us the example of a perfect disciple. Let us always remember that it is not about what we think, what we want, or what we feel, but it is about what you think, what you want and what you feel.

Your servant,

Mahatma Dasa
Initiation: March 1970—Los Angeles, California, USA
Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA
Contact: mahat@aol.com

Locanananda Dasa

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who, with the torchlight of knowledge, has opened my eyes which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my prostrated obeisances at your divine lotus feet which are the shelter sought by all sincere followers of *sanātana dharma*, the eternal principles of religion. In the Ninth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead proclaims that the knowledge imparted by His pure representative, the bona fide spiritual master, is the king of education, and the most secret of all secrets. What you have shared with the world, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is the greatest boon to mankind. No one can estimate the degree of good fortune you have introduced into our lives.

I remember a statement you made some fifty years ago when the movement was just beginning to spread like wildfire. I had recently been initiated, and I was considering what role I should play in spreading the teachings of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. It was very timely when word came to us that you had said, “If you have love for me, then go far away from me and open a temple for Krishna.” That instruction entered my heart and it became the greatest motivating force in my life. As an early pioneer in the European countries, I first turned over my apartment in Paris to be used as a center of operations to propagate the *saṅkīrtana* movement. At that time, a list of only twenty-eight centers for Krishna consciousness appeared in *Back to Godhead* magazine.

From Paris, in 1971, I traveled south to Lyon to introduce the chanting of the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* to that great city. From there, it was on to Geneva, Switzerland, where Madame Vauthier provided a place for devotees to stay. On one occasion when I was

showing her photos of Deities in our ISKCON temples, she pointed to Lord Jagannātha and said, “Oh, I have those!” and she pulled out of a trunk the beautifully carved and painted Deities of Jagannātha, Subhadrā and Baladeva. After we offered obeisances, she recounted how her uncle was a great architect and that he had designed the downtown government buildings in Chandigarh, India. The Deities had been presented to him by the city elders as a symbol of their eternal gratitude. To this day, Madame Vauthier’s uncle is known throughout the world as “the great Corbusier.” He surely never could have imagined a Hare Krishna devotee offering *ārotik* to his Jagannātha Deities many years later.

I had purchased a copy of the *Radha Krishna Temple* album when I visited a Spiritual Sky incense customer in Old Lyon, thinking it might be of use in Geneva to popularize our movement. Dressed in full Vaiṣṇava attire, I visited the radio station that broadcast modern music in the French-speaking half of Switzerland and presented the record to the receptionist who asked me to wait for a moment while she sought the person in charge. His name was Jean-Pierre Allenbach, and he was very excited to meet me. He said he had no material for his next thirty minute radio program and asked me if I spoke French well enough to answer a few questions for his audience of a million people. Krishna was opening doors for us to spread knowledge about Him. Mr. Allenbach played three of the Vaiṣṇava songs from our album interspersed with three Beatles songs of my choosing. It amazed me to see how Krishna was making all arrangements for us to broadcast His glories when all I had planned on doing was to drop off the album at the front desk.

In 1972 I was back in Paris working for the Spiritual Sky Company in the sales department. Incense and aromatherapy oils were all the rage, so I decided to pay a visit to the largest department store in France and perhaps in all of Europe, the Galeries Lafayette. Again, dressed in robes with shaved head and *śikhā*, I asked to see the buyer of scented products. Krishna took charge of the encounter. I showed the buyer all of our products, and he said he would buy everything we manufactured.

He said he had just returned from a trip to India and had seen American devotees there. He said he would create a large display on the ground floor of this most prestigious retail store, and he did just that.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you taught us to think big, because Krishna

is the biggest. Nothing is impossible for Krishna or for one who has fully surrendered to Krishna. All that you achieved was, as you said, by the blessings of your spiritual master. Similarly, whatever success we have had over the years since your departure from this world of mortal beings is due to your blessings upon us.

Our constant prayer is that we will always be able to perceive your presence in our lives as you guide us from within. It was in 1973 that you returned to Paris to install the Deities of Rādhā and Krishna. On the day of that most auspicious occasion, I was preparing *samosās* at the Spiritual Sky factory in Fontenay-aux-Roses, the suburb of Paris where we had rented a one family house that you visited in 1971. You even mentioned to Professor Kotovsky in Moscow that your next stop would be Fontenay-aux-Roses. Two years later, our center was situated near the Champs Élysées, and there was an elevator from your room to the temple room which provided a bit of comfort for you to join your devoted followers for the installation ceremony.

When I arrived with nearly two hundred *samosās*, I deposited them in the kitchen and went directly to the temple room to hear your class. Sadly, the room was so packed with devotees and guests that the door would not open even a crack. What to do? I so badly wanted to hear the words emanating from your lotus mouth! I remembered that there was a secondary entrance to the temple room meant for the *pūjārī* to enter near the altar. Somehow or other, I was able to squeeze into the temple room, and there you were, seated as if on a throne, effulgent like the sun. But I was lamenting, "There is no one in the temple room who is farther away from Śrīla Prabhupāda than myself. I wish I could be closer to him than all of these great devotees, as insignificant as I am." Suddenly, the conch shell was blown and Your Divine Grace stepped down from the *vyāsāsana*, walked up the middle of the temple room and stood right beside me, and prepared to perform the first *ārotik* ceremony to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Paris-isvara. Krishna had answered my prayer, instantly! The power of prayer is an irresistible force, as I observed every move and gesture made by the pure devotee by whose call Lord Krishna had appeared in Paris in search of His French girlfriend. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had such a unique way of saying what was beyond the mental power of great yogis and meditators of the impersonal feature of the Absolute Truth to comprehend.

You were shown a picture of yourself offering a ghee lamp to the Deities. Your reaction was, "This picture is confidential. I am looking

at Krishna, and Krishna is looking at me.” You poured water from the small conch shell into your hand and splashed it into my face. I felt doubly purified and infinitely blessed. Devotees were pushing forward, and I was trying to hold them back to keep you from being inconvenienced as you fanned the Deities with the breeze of peacock feathers brushing against my face as I leaned back. You gave me a brief sidelong glance as if to say, “Don’t come too near.” As the *ārotik* ended and the conch shell was blown, you turned and faced the devotees with arms raised and began to dance, jumping up and down. We all followed your example of ecstatic chanting and dancing. I felt like I could hit the ceiling. Even Yadubara prabhu put down his camera and began to dance, being overwhelmed by such an uncommon display of transcendental ecstasy.

All that I have written here is simply a drop from the oceanic pastimes of Your Divine Grace. Your mercy is all that we are made of. You traversed a vast ocean that once separated us and began to promulgate Krishna consciousness throughout the world beginning from my hometown of New York City. You called it “Krishna’s miracle,” not wanting to take credit on your own account. Most humble Vaiṣṇava, when will we be able to follow in your footsteps without faltering?

I offer my obeisances unto him, whose glances are full of mercy and who is the bestower of transcendental bliss. O renowned lord, protect us, and kindly shower your compassion upon us, again and again. (*Prabhupāda-stotram*, Verse 3)

As the empowered representative of the most munificent Lord, Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu, may you always be the object of vision. As our time in this world winds down, our thoughts turn to what we must become so as not to disappoint the spiritual master or oblige him to return to this place of death to reclaim us. You taught us the final lesson of how to leave this body and this world in full Krishna consciousness. We know you will not forsake us as long as we remain attached to your lotus feet and do whatever is in our power to assist you in your mission. As you wrote to me on August 18, 1970:

So far your duty is concerned, it is already known to you that my mission is to spread Krishna consciousness all over the world. Factually, it is only Krishna consciousness that is very rare in the present world. So far our body is

concerned, all our necessities are present by the grace of the Lord. But our spiritual upliftment depends on our sincerity of purpose. The whole world is in suffering for want of spiritual life, or Krishna consciousness. So our line of action is already known to you. Please try to execute them by practical application in your own life.

Your instructions are of universal significance. I pray that devotees throughout the world will embrace your words in the innermost recesses of their hearts as I am trying to do as I write these words of appreciation and indebtedness to Your Divine Grace.

Your lowly servant,

Locanananda Dasa

Initiation: August 1970—Paris, France

Current location: Brooklyn, New York, USA

Contact: lfelda@aol.com

Aditi Devi Dasi

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances to your lotus feet. All glories to you, to your divine spiritual master His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Ṭhākura, and to all of his disciples, and all the preceding *ācāryas*, especially His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

I am becoming more and more incapable, and forgetful, and I want to express to you that I want to be finished with this material world and to be able to go back home back to Godhead one day. Thank you for showing us the goal and the way to achieve it, and help me to keep chanting and fixing my mind on that certain Divine Couple, Who are so sweet and forever in Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma. I remain forever grateful and aspire to always be of service to your mission.

Your insignificant and humble servant,

Aditi Devi Dasi

Initiation: September 1970—London, UK

Current location: Hawaii/Alachua, Florida, USA

Nagapatni Devi Dasi

Your Divine Grace – before I met you my life was meaningless, like a blind person driving or a deaf person singing. It was all a disgrace.

The first time I heard your words the sun began to arise in my dark heart. Life had meaning and purpose. From you I didn't want to part.

The gift of Prasādam you gave sparked a taste of another reality, a place where birth and death were not to be. A place where spirituality is the sum.

Engaging me, a fool and rascal in the highest goal, of serving the Divine Couple, this is incomprehensible.

There's been no limit to your mercy. It comes in waves and relieves my heart of so much misery.

You give so much but ask so little. The few meager things I offer seem so worthless and brittle.

My heart is full of inadequacies and offenses. Please continue to guide me to live under your divine grace.

I bow continuously at your lotus feet, over and over there's nothing that compares, there's nothing so sweet.

Nagapatni Devi Dasi

Initiation: February 1971—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Vrindavan, India

Trai Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept my humble obeisances.

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

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

This is your insignificant disciple who is trying to serve you in some small way. By Kṛṣṇa's mercy you have sent some very nice devotees here in Bologna to serve your mission. They are helping in realising your desires which you expressed in letters you wrote to me.

That (Berkeley) is one of our most important branches especially because it is located just in a very large university area, well known in your country as a famous seat of learning. So now it will be very important to flood Berkeley city with our books and literature, because if we can convince the intelligent class of men of our Kṛṣṇa philosophy then our success for changing the position of your country and the rest of the world from a very dangerous condition is assured.

Then when I was in Boston you gave me the same instructions in two parts:

I understand from Karandhar that you are one of the most staunch supporters and workers for distributing our books and I assure you that it is the highest service to my Guru Mahārāja. Thank you very much.

Then you gave me other instructions:

Recruit some educated men from the colleges, schools in Boston, train them up for preaching mission. In this way develop the quality of your men to be the most surrendered servants of Kṛṣṇa. That will please Kṛṣṇa, and you will feel yourself becoming more and more happy in perfecting your life.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving me a life of service, and now you have sent so many nice devotees to help realise your desire. I pray to you that we can fulfil your desire to recruit some intelligent men and women from the university and flood the city with your books as this is the highest service to your Guru Mahārāja.

Your insignificant servant,

Trai Dasa

Initiation: February 1971—San Francisco, USA

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Only due to your magnanimity are any of us engaged in devotional service to Krishna. I was picked up from a confused state of ignorance, and I can never forget how one day I was in the material world, and the next, I was in your beloved Śrī Śrī Rādhā Londonīśvara's temple. Just like that – taken out of the suffering and pain of material life.

You went to Africa, and fearing I would never see you again, I wrote to you as I knew I had to surrender to you. You wrote me such a wonderful, personal letter that was so meaningful. A few years later, you came to Edinburgh, and I again wrote a short letter to you as it was so wonderful to see you in our temple. I even got to offer *ārotik* to you which was a great honour and such a blissful experience. You introduced us to Krishna and to the worship of the Supreme Lord, and we were also blessed to worship you as the supreme servitor of Krishna. How you changed the trajectory of our lives.

You have made the most mystical and sublime philosophy – to some level simple – for us to understand. You said it is 'simple for the simple and difficult for the crooked'. The miracle is that if we listen to your lectures and read your books, we gain more understanding, despite our history of bad habits and total ignorance of spiritual life. Only by your potency have any of us made any progress, and only because of your kind favour have we been able to stay in your spiritual movement, associating with saintly devotees and engaging as best we can in the preaching mission of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

I know there is danger at every step, and I pray to be able to walk this path until the end of my life and perhaps stay on it thereafter. I also know that the ball is in my court. I cannot do anything without your mercy and the kindness of the Lord. I'm now 75 years old and have been your disciple for about fifty years, yet still, I have not made adequate progress. There is no choice but to keep on trying and depending upon the Lord as well as begging you to please keep me in your company. As I age, I realise day by day how much time I have wasted as well as seeing more clearly how dependent we are upon Krishna. It is such a relief to know that He is there in all circumstances.

I desire to have your association eternally, and I am hoping against hope that I can practice this process of Krishna consciousness more soberly and help others to engage. You have set up everything for us – everything that is required. All that remains is for us to understand that the ball is in our court. You have made such sacrifices to spread Krishna consciousness, and we are recipients of the fruits of your endeavour. We have to understand what is required of us and surrender wholeheartedly. I have to seriously keep trying, and out of love for you, never give up. I pray to remain at your feet and to be able to do something that is helpful to other seeking souls.

Thank you for engaging me. I know I have a long way to go but I pray to have a place near to your lotus feet and to gradually be able to open my heart fully in reciprocation to your saving grace.

Your servant,

Sarvamangala Dasi

Initiation: March 1971—London, UK

Current location: Watford, Herts, UK

Contact: insideoutetc.sarva@gmail.com

Satadhanya Dasa

THE Prabhupāda TOUCH

Śrīla Prabhupāda, being the Founder Acharya of ISKCON, and his books, teachings and life example being the solid and undeniable basis of our understanding, conviction and progress may nevertheless pose a unique paradigm even within Vaisnava parampara history. It may even be said to differ from the inherent connection between Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples and their param guru, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur. The basis is that all ISKCON devotees for the next 10,000 years, regardless of who their current or living Diksha Guru is or will be, requires the Prabhupāda touch or Prabhupāda consciousness to successfully cultivate, advance, and attain perfection in Krishna Consciousness.

For this picture to effectively manifest itself one must nourish and foster a measure of relationship with Śrīla Prabhupāda, which should be quite simple and straightforward given the availability

of ample materials directly linked to him. The next generational devotees thus need two, their living Guru and Śrīla Prabhupāda. I once jocularly said in this regard, “buy one, get one free.” This is exemplified by one grand disciple well known to me, an ISKCON sanyasi, who enthusiastically preaches to all he meets that they should make it a habit to listen to at least one Prabhupāda lecture as a daily routine.

The Madhva Sampradaya gives an example comparing Madhvacharya to a huge pot of sweet rice, and each of their current initiating Gurus to a ladle. The real work and service of the initiating Gurus is to dip their ladles deep into the Madhva pot of sweet rice and distribute it to their disciples and the public-at-large. In that way, we must promulgate the ever-nectarian Prabhupāda pot of sweet rice!

This Prabhupāda touch will enable a critically needed set of transcendental characteristics and qualities to take hold and flourish within ISKCON. These include the assimilation of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s humble yet uncompromising mood, his purity, determination, unswerving dedication, deserving forgiveness devoid of perdition, and pure devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Ultimately, all that really matters is whether or not, and to what degree, we are actually becoming Krishna conscious and experiencing palpable transcendental realization. That, indeed, is the best gift and reciprocation we can offer to Śrīla Prabhupāda. Our own Krishna consciousness is not always completely discernible to others, who may assume and observe that someone is doing things right. Yet, one may have significant remnants of internal flaws which obstruct spiritual advancement. Śrīla Prabhupāda said that a simple test we can conduct upon ourselves is to ascertain to what extent we are honestly becoming free from sense desire and the bodily materialistic concept of life! Because it is a long-cherished habit, such flaws can persist and hold true for even an elder, senior, or highly placed devotee. One should also be aware of the possibility of the element of philosophical miscomprehension or deviation.

“Adu Sraddha...” in the beginning a little ‘faith’. The progressive march of faith, as it increments, denotes a further stage of spiritual advancement. In small, but tangible steps, freedom from doubt, purification, faith, knowledge, and realization collectively constitute the matrix for the ‘vision of the mode of goodness whereby we can gradually perceive things as they are’.

Sri Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is ‘hiding

in plain sight', present everywhere within His multifarious manifestations of energies, and it is this picture and realization that sequentially is revealed to a sincere and faithful devotee. Such a devotee has genuine affection and devotion for Śrīla Prabhupāda, and engages in devotional service for his entire lifetime.

Thus, it is in this glorious combination, along with one's current Guru's blessings, one has to catch-up the lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda, and in-turn Sri Sri Gaur Nitai and Sri Sri Radha Madhava, to make a true victory of Krishna Consciousness and chanting the Holy Names of the Lord!

Your servant,

Satadhanya Dasa

Initiation: 1971, March—New Vrindavana, West Virginia, USA

Vegavan Dasa

Your Presence Perceived

Reading and hearing about you from others
is something I often fear
Your different faces and dichotomies obstruct my view
as you are laid more than bare

Disciples with different needs and hopes and
different minds,
sisters and brothers hoping against hope, a
pure soul to find.
But different contexts are making many a different you
obscuring and confusing as you and I are crowded
with others too
And inside I go looking – Where is **my** you?

But you are **my** master and your words to me – even told
through others – I shall trace
And let others do the same although through different ways
and find their Prabhupāda free to embrace.

My master you are and what happens between me and you is my prime concern.

Our daily laughs and quarrels and exchange of love make my heart burn and turn.

We've grown closer – daring to argue and to disagree but I am happy noting you still remain with me.

My you is a constant need
Truly you are – a presence perceived

Your servant,

Vegavan Dasa

Initiation: 1971, April—Bombay, India

Current location: Sweden

Vishnu Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my eternal obeisances at your lotus feet. I don't know the proper words that can reflect my deep respect and love for you, but I will try.

I worship you daily and feel I owe you my life and work, but whatever I have done has never truly been sufficient.

You are my constant inspiration for whatever I am able to do in your service with this body and mind, though aging quickly as it is.

Your *vāñī* is what keeps me alive and breathing. Repeating your words helps me to grasp the magnificence and vast wisdom of them, although I am still like a parrot, speaking without complete realization.

You set in motion my lifelong dedication to your service. When you told us to create many paintings, and that they are the “windows to the spiritual world”, I never allowed anything or anyone to take that service away from me even though my strength and determination has been tested many times.

But in times of weakness I prayed for your mercy to give me a drop of the immeasurable strength and devotion that you have for your *gurudeva*, Śrī Chaitanya, Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Krishna. You were always there for me, even after leaving this world.

If I can get the strength to do a few more paintings for your pleasure, that may be sufficient, but I know that you, as the external manifestation of Paramātmā, would always encourage us to take this path of *bhakti* seriously and push beyond our physical limitations.

You have many times quoted this verse from *Padma Purāṇa*: *ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*.

“No one can understand Kṛṣṇa as He is by the blunt material senses. But He reveals Himself to the devotees, being pleased with them for their transcendental loving service unto Him.”

Let this verse always be an inspiration to all devotees while in this world of distracting sense objects, which is like a desert storm of tumbleweeds flying by every day trying to knock us down. And we will be knocked down if we cannot be in some way of service to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Without your continued guidance and encouragement, my life would be meaningless, and any work I have done would remain spiritually void.

Please guide my hand to paint as you would like me to, and my words as you would want me to speak.

Let us be your transparent via medium, without personal ego, free of the *anarthas* that try to pull us away from your divine association and which keep us bound up in this hellish world that you have physically vacated forty-six years ago as of this year of 2023.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you spoke the following words just a few months prior to your departure in 1977: “I will remain your personal guidance, physically present or not physically present, as I am getting guidance from my Guru Mahārāja.”

We are the most fortunate to have you, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s dear emissary, as our eternal master and guide.

I remain your servant always in bhakti sevā,

Vishnu Dasa

Initiation: 1971, April—Los Angeles, California, USA

Contact: krishnaland@gmail.com

Anadi Dasa

All glories to His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted to establish farm communities all over the world, and although that is being done to some degree, the endeavor falls short of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s vision.

He also stated “Do not take another birth in Kali-yuga – untold horrors await those who do”. And from the current news of world affairs, those horrors are beginning to manifest.

Śrīla Prabhupāda knew the horrors that Kali-yuga will bestow upon the people of this Age, and he wanted his disciples to be ahead of the curve.

Yet, even if there were a Krishna conscious farm community in say Ohio, one train disaster (as recently experienced) can ruin the whole plan.

Therefore, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s main instruction: “Always remember Krishna and never forget Him,” remains the topmost instruction, even above *varṇāśrama dharma*. Because that instruction, if sincerely followed, will get us back home, back to Godhead. That instruction will save us even from a disaster like the one that unfolded in OHIO.

All glories to A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Anadi Dasa

Initiation: May 1971—Philadelphia, USA

Current location: Los Angeles, California, USA

Narayani Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your name is Abhaya; you preached fearlessly to one and all, and despite all obstacles you sacrificed in the mood of Lord Nityānanda to bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness to everyone. Please give me the courage to preach as you did, without attachment to victory or defeat; please give me the determination to persevere despite all obstacles that may occur; I am your innocent child so please protect me.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you endured all opposition patiently with full dedication to your spiritual master’s instructions. Please give me the patience to tolerate all opposition to my service. Thank you for your reciprocation that you are pleased with my service. Thank you for sending devotees from all over the world and all over India as well who give me encouragement to go on with my service.

You compassionately accepted everyone equally no matter what caste, creed or gender in your service. Please give me the compassion to help those who are not so fortunate to remember Kṛṣṇa. Please let me always think of Kṛṣṇa, feel for Kṛṣṇa and desire to serve yourself and Kṛṣṇa.

Your lotus feet are my most precious treasure; your words are my heart’s delight; your instructions are my standard of perfection; your association is my life and soul. Please give me your guidance as I traverse the path back to you and Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world.

I have no hope to progress without your mercy. Your mercy is all that I’m made of. Please keep me in the association of devotees and empower me to help those who desire to follow you and serve Kṛṣṇa. Please let me help them get your association, to connect with you and also go to you at the end of their lives to live an eternal, blissful life with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Your servant,

Narayani Dasi

Initiation: June 1971—Florida, USA

Puskar Dasa

Sometime in early September of 1974 you arrived in Calcutta ISKCON Mandir. I had taken a rather sudden ‘break’ from Māyāpur and was in the midst of working on a couple of mural sized oil paintings directly on the walls of the Calcutta temple room... Surprisingly, you mentioned that, you had asked [the Calcutta manager] “Why that boy is here and has left Māyāpur?” I mentioned I was working on the murals, and you tilted your head approvingly. One morning two cars came to pick you up, arranged by a barrister. The second car was large enough for several of us to cram in. It was mostly *kīrtana* men, except for me. Our vehicle followed, while you and your servants and the son of the barrister led to a distant

part of Calcutta. The house we entered had several floors and upon your entrance, the boy blew a conch, heralding your auspicious arrival. Prabhupāda, with the rest of us following, was led up the stairs where the barrister's dying father was lying. You were seated opposite the older man about your age, who was bed ridden though partially sitting up.

The five or seven of us sat on the floor listening attentively. You were cordial and sympathetic while conversing in Bengali, asking about his age and exchanging a few more pleasantries. When your attention fell on the photos of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, you started to speak more forcefully and we easily picked up on words like "*yato mat tato path*" and "*bogus*." After that brief exchange, you had us perform *kīrtana* as we sat on the floor. Dīnanātha, Ṛkṣarāja, Viṣṇu Datta, Śrutakīrti, and a few other accomplished *kīrtana* men chanted for a while. We were then led to the lower level where there was a table in a small dining area with some boxed food, obviously store bought. We looked at each other and at you to see your reaction. You broke off a piece of *samosā*, following with a small clay cup of *miṣṭī dahī* exclaiming "this quarter is famous for *miṣṭī dahī*." When Brahmananda honored his portion, we all followed. When we returned to the temple we learned that while driving Prabhupāda had asked the eleven year old son if they ate fish in that household. The boy answered that they did eat fish although he didn't like it.

One day In Calcutta, a few days later, Acyutānanda and I were sitting on the veranda just opposite your room which had a curtain over the doorway, when Śrutakīrti pushed aside the curtain, saying. "Prabhupāda is sitting here if anyone wants to have *darśana*." I felt intimidated but Acyutānanda walked in, and I followed meekly. After we paid obeisances, Acyutānanda said that although the Japanese and Germans had lost WW2, they had taken over ISKCON. This surprised me, and you looked at him quizzically as he explained how some older lady, who claimed to be a Toyota heiress had commandeered the Brooklyn temple and yet another leader in Germany had cheated him and the Māyāpur/Calcutta yātrā. You explained that sometimes a wealthy man leaves money to an irresponsible son and he squanders it. What can be done? and you quoted, "*Yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau*." You continued, "Your business is to have faith and relationship with the guru, and you should not be concerned about what this man or that man does."

You were sitting on the customary white sheet covering a mat with bolster pillows. Śrutakīrti noticed several ants crawling on the mat attracted by the flower petals and asked if the flowers should be removed. You said they weren't biting so leave them. You held a rose up into the light of the window admiringly and said. It is so perfect, and they say there is no God! How dull!" You described how the ants have whole civilizations in the walls which we don't see and how they are becoming intoxicated from sugar. You explained that there were three ways of making liquor....from sugar, grains, and from herbs. You spoke of how as a boy you would help your father collect certain herbs, and how he would bring them to particular businesses. You remembered once waiting for your father and some men asking your name. ...You told them Abhay Caran De and they joked that you were the actual proprietor. "Oh, you know that *De* business? This boy is the proprietor." You spoke of how the British were as downtrodden as the Indians. You stated that the potholes in London were as bad as the potholes in Calcutta. You recalled how in your youth the British tried so hard to introduce Manchester, or factory cloth, although the Indians did not want or need it and preferred *khadi*. You remembered how in your house even the servants would get new home made cloth frequently whenever there was a ceremony at home. Most dramatically, you describe how the rascal British had cut the thumbs of the weavers in Shantipur where they specialized in weaving very fine saris Prabhupāda looked right into my eyes and exclaimed, "If I cut your thumb, it is very painful, is it not?" Your words were so powerful I had to look down to see if my thumb was still there. You spoke of Akbar's daughter coming before her father wearing a very fine sari. Prabhupāda, imitating Akbar and turning your head, said, "Daughter, why have you come before me naked?" The daughter replies, "No father, I am wearing a Shantipur sari." The weaving was so fine you explained that it could fit into a match box. You also elaborated how the British created an artificial famine throughout India by hoarding the grains which caused the prices to rise so high no one could afford to buy them. Prabhupāda, you continued to say that you had seen that even in Punjab alone there were enough grains to feed all of India, but by the hoarding a famine was created.

You told of when the British divided India and Pakistan....you called it a "parting kick."

You shared with us the parable of a cat and a fox fighting over a

cake. A clever monkey came with a scale and announced he could solve the problem. He raised the cake upon a scale with the so-called intention of making the pieces equal. When it was more weighty on one side he would take a bite to make it equal, and then again on the other side to “help” to again make it equal. You said in this way it was all destroyed. “Let them fight perpetually,” you said.

Puskar Dasa

Initiation: June 1971—New York, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: puskar0101@aol.com

Mahasini Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are the person who was chosen to bring the cult of Lord Chaitanya to the West.

You are the person who, arriving here, saw beyond our ignorance, arrogance and confusion.

You are the person who, with super human patience, instructed us, and instructed us and instructed us again.

You are the person who, eschewing sleep, spent countless hours writing; leaving us the great legacy of your books.

You are the person who traveled the globe in advanced age; opening and visiting ISKCON’s temples.

You are the person who advanced the Golden Age of *Saṅkīrtana*.

Let there be no uncertainty: the temples, the books, the holy *prasādam*, the souls lifting their voices in *kīrtana* all around the world.

YOU DID THAT

You are the person at whose feet I will pay my obeisance eternally.

Thank you forever and always.

I remain, praying for the mercy of your disciples,

Your daughter,

Mahasini Devi Dasi

Initiation: June 1971—New Dwarka, Los Angeles, USA

Current location: Roswell, Georgia, USA

Contact: bakaalm@gmail.com

“MAKE UNITY IN DIVERSITY”

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Some of your Russian-speaking followers have an online project they call “Prabhupāda’s Family.” To come closer to you, they like to interview older devotees, particularly your initiated disciples. When they interviewed me, I was struck by the depth and candor of their questions. One was especially moving:

Why do different disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda perceive and represent him and his will in so many different ways?

To answer, I recalled your walking among us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, a spiritual Renaissance man, your personality manifesting so many different aspects that no individual, past or present, can fully grasp or appreciate Your Divine Grace. Some samples:

Your commitment to translate and explain Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava literature each and every night – however meager the facility, no matter how many time zones you had just crossed, despite your advanced age and failing health – while we slept.

Your bold strategy of establishing Deity worship to attract everyone to Kṛṣṇa, over the protests and attacks of iconoclasts from Kali-yuga clerics.

Your plan for “cultural conquest,” especially through festivals, where you chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa and vigorously danced with disciples and guests young enough to be your grandchildren.

Your determination to slay the dragon of “scientific” materialism – which has misled humanity and ravaged Mother Earth – by shifting our provenance from matter to spirit.

Your vision of turning the masses toward Kṛṣṇa by developing rural communities based on “plain living and high thinking.”

The list goes on...

Yet it was the question I could sense behind their question that really moved me: “Why do Prabhupāda’s direct disciples disagree so much?” And compelled me to remember your instruction to “make unity in diversity.”

That instruction came in a letter you wrote, responding to a report

from one of your *sannyāsīs* about dissension in the ranks. Your reply:

Material nature means dissension and disagreement, especially in this Kali-yuga. But, for this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement its success will depend on agreement, even though there are varieties of engagements. In the material world there are varieties, but there is no agreement. In the spiritual world there are varieties, but there is agreement. That is the difference...if we keep Kṛṣṇa in the center, then there will be agreement in varieties. This is called unity in diversity.

So important is this principle that you ended the letter:

I am therefore suggesting that all our men meet in Māyāpur every year during the birth anniversary of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. With all GBC and senior men present we should discuss how to make unity in diversity.
(Letter to Kīrtanānanda, 18 October 1973)

Easier said than done, as the fifty years since then attest. Yet, based on your empowered experience of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world, your everlasting *vāñī* encourages us to unite around timeless, universal principles and to naturally diversify the applicable details. For example:

It is not necessary that the rules and regulations followed in India be exactly the same as those in Europe, America and other Western countries...What is required is a special technique according to country, time and candidate.
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Mādhya-līlā*, 23.105, purport)

To taste even one drop of your sage advice, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we need to expand our appreciation of each other. Unity without diversity is tyranny, and diversity without unity is anarchy. It is only in the well-rounded *saṅga* of your serious and sincere followers, appreciating the contemporary and traditional aspects of your mood and mission, that we'll be fit to "make unity in diversity."

All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Your aspiring servant,

Suresvara Dasa

Initiation: July 1971—Detriot, Michigan, USA

Somadas Dasa

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your lotus feet are the only way by which I can attain pure devotional service. I bow down to your lotus feet with great awe and reverence. By your grace, I can cross over the ocean of material suffering and obtain the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.

My only wish is to have my consciousness, purified by the words emanating from your lotus mouth. Attachment to your lotus feet is the perfection that fulfills all my desires.

You are opening my darkened eyes and filling my heart with transcendental knowledge. Śrīla Prabhupāda you are my lord birth after birth. From you, ecstatic *prema* emanates; by you ignorance is destroyed. The Vedic scriptures sing of your character.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an ocean of mercy, the friend of the poor, and the Lord and Master of the devotees. O, master! Be merciful to me, give me the shade of your lotus feet. Your fame is spread all over the three worlds.

Thank you for accepting me as your disciple.

When will I take shelter of your lotus feet?

Your servant,

Somadas Dasa

Initiation: July 1971—Boston, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Atmananda Dasa

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances eternally. All glories to your pure, perfect and compassionate devotional service unto your spiritual master, the *paramparā*, Lord Krishna, and the entire world!

Strangely, when you were physically manifest in this world, I was able to appreciate you probably more than I do now. My realisation is that because of my conditioning, having a person physically manifest on the planet and sometimes directly in front of me, made

it much easier for me to accept your direction, your authority, your chastisement directly or indirectly – and there's lots of chastisement in your lectures, your conversations, and your books.

I see that without that physically manifest presence, I am not as strict, as determined or as enthusiastic as I was then. There may be other reasons for this, but the more I become purified by doing my best in struggling to follow your instructions, I realise more and more how deeply conditioned I am, and concluding that my degree of surrender is affected by that difference.

I fully accept your various explanations, descriptions, instructions and references to the fact that you are fully present now, as long as I am struggling to progress in my surrender and service to you. You made it completely clear, and by your help, I am gradually realising that you are fully present at every moment, fully capable, and eager to pull me out of my madness; to push and pull me as much as you did in your "physical" presence.

Furthermore, the more I engage in your service according to my psycho-physical nature, doing things that are in line with that nature which I enjoy and I'm good at, the more I feel your and Lord Chaitanya's presence.

So, there is no doubt about it. And I ask myself the questions, "Why am I dawdling here? Why am I not ensuring that I feel that full potency of your association? I know it and accept it, but that seems to me still quite theoretical. I am sad, and disappointed in myself that I haven't taken the fact that you are personally present with me at every moment, and do not constantly choose to be surrendered or progressive in my surrender.

And the next question which arises for me is, if this is also reality for all of us, starting with my godbrothers and sisters? Would we be struggling so much in fulfilling your desire and mission? Would we be so challenged, and experiencing such factions and fractures and disagreements ... sometimes to the extreme that there seem to be two or more different camps, all claiming to follow you?

This is disturbing for me, and I'm asking for your help to understand more deeply, especially in what is best for me to do to resolve this ... starting with myself. And then, with any others I might inspire or combine with, to understand how to cooperate together to fulfil your instruction to do just that, cooperate to please you.

That instruction by which you made it very clear that by cooperation, we will be successful in maintaining and expanding

your International Society for Krishna Consciousness. You also stated emphatically that if we didn't cooperate – if we were bickering, splitting, etc., it would be like beating your very body, which you also described as ISKCON.

I remember that this question arose in relation to a complaint a devotee had about the way some others were distributing your books. You gave several instructions, and the main one was that if you want them to do it better, you show them yourself how to do it better!

If we criticize and fight, influenced by Kali – quarrel – then the preaching is forgotten about! Your *sankīrtana* mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is lost. And I think of your description of what happened in the Gauḍīya Matha, with many individuals each wanting to have proprietorship or control of a particular temple or area. The preaching was diminished or forgotten about. You yourself acted in the most exemplary way, knowing and remaining fixed on the desire and the compassion of your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswatī Prabhupāda! You never allowed yourself to fall into the temptation of criticising, spending time and energy in fault-finding, or proving others wrong. Yes, you did mention it in your books, clearly and specifically, in black and white, and yet you did that for our understanding, not to Lord it over or condescend your godbrothers who were in fact deviating and giving up the mission and instructions of their spiritual master.

So, I'm very clear that part of the answer to my own questions about what's best for me to do, and how to behave, is to struggle to show others how to cooperate – i.e., to become exemplary myself. Instead of complaining, criticising, or finding fault (though not being naïve), I act in such a way that I give my full energy to being progressive; to being more and more engaged in your service.

Recently, I found a relevant quotation, "It is better to light a candle than to complain about the darkness."!

So, I feel clear and strong. And, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am again praying for your help in understanding the urgent necessity of giving up my envy and self-sabotaging tendency to criticise and minimise others by making myself right and them wrong; to quarrel – or debate; to waste your most valuable time and energy. Rather, to absolutely give up avoiding or minimizing your desire, your mission, your great compassion upon seeing the suffering of the conditioned souls, rotting in this material hell.

I have several wonderful examples in my life who are now

preaching dynamically all around the world by being fully surrendered to you and using their energy to focus only on what will please you!

Here in New Zealand, we have a most wonderful opportunity and challenge in establishing a self-sufficient, intentional land and cow-based community. We have named it Krishna Village, and the essential theme is that we do it according to your instructions and example. As we struggle to continue, we realise two things:

Firstly, what a hugely, almost overwhelming challenge it is. And secondly, how much following you is attractive to other serious, qualified, and intelligent people.

Therefore, by struggling to fulfil this desire of yours to create such Krishna conscious farming, family communities, such serious and sincere people are being attracted. And how, especially for me, it is important to find a way to engage them fully according to their own psycho-physical natures and according to their own level of Krishna consciousness and realisation without limiting or squashing their enthusiasm and natural energy.

Again Śrīla Prabhupāda, I return to what is essential for me, which is to pray to you, to beg you to continue to give us the insight, the detachment, the surrender, the inspiration, the enthusiasm and determination to carry out this most important service to you and Krishna.

By your mercy, Krishna has put me in this particular service of establishing a self-sufficient Krishna conscious farm community for you. And the concomitant tests and inspirations are again perfect for me: exactly what I need for my own surrender to you and Lord Chaitanya, the Pañcha Tattva!

With the deepest gratitude and appreciation,

Your aspiring and committed servant (of your servants),

Atmananda Dasa

Initiation: July 1971—Amsterdam, Netherlands

Current location: Whangarei, Northland, New Zealand

Contact: panorama108@gmail.com

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

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

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

Each day in your service
Brings me steadily closer
To the divine world you reveal
Though to me it's just a glimmer

Still its power is so great
I remain captured by its promise
If I simply follow in your footsteps
I'll break free of all darkness

And enter the light
That dispels all ignorance
And reveals who I truly am
Replacing my illusion with substance

I don't deserve this great gift
Rather quite the opposite
Forever wandering in *sarīsāra*
I have served the cruel despot

Of my covetous heart
That bears only selfish desire
And keeps me in chains
That burn like wildfire

Till the rain of your mercy
Born of pure compassion
Rained down on my forlorn life
And broke my cycle of destruction

The flow of your grace
Has reversed my direction
From matter to spirit
I'm now swept up in your mission

Though my old habits die hard
And my progress is crawling
Each day gives me proof
Of your continuing blessing

For which today and every day
My gratitude is limitless
As I pray my offenses
Are met with forgiveness.

And out of your kindness
Overlooking my weakness
You continue to engage me
Each moment in your service

Your unworthy disciple and most grateful recipient of your loving kindness,

Pancharatna Dasa
Initiation: July 1971—Washington, USA
Current location: ISKCON NYC, USA
Contact: pancharatna@gmail.com

Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my fallen obeisances.

I am older now than you yourself were when you undertook your journey, solitary and unsupported, to the United States.

Now, at this time, both body and mind give me troubles, and I know from experience that such hardships will only be getting worse.

No less an authority than the *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.9) sets this down as one of the items of knowledge: “recognition of the afflictions of birth, death, old age, and disease.”

However, you yourself have vividly demonstrated what can be

accomplished, with Kṛṣṇa's mercy, in spite of these impediments.

And in at least one instance you offered a remark that we devotees strive to apply generally: "discouragement is not allowed."

So I will continue to do the best I can to please you and your followers (especially by writing) without discouragement.

I beg for your blessings.

Your fallen servant,

Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa

Initiation: July 1971—Philadelphia, USA

Vishnugada Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

We are in the habit of saying: "All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda." And on this special day I am happy to have the opportunity to remember a tiny portion of those glories.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the learned author of over 70 books, speaker of over 2,000 discourses, composer of over 6,500 letters, and featured commentator in more than 1,000 recorded conversations. All with the purpose of freely giving the gift of Krishna consciousness to fortunate souls to spur their journeys back to Godhead. Contrasting the volume of your work, Śrīla Prabhupāda, with the recorded output of another great soul, Jesus Christ, there is no comparison. How many sermons are known? That is not all. While distributing the message of Lord Caitanya, you circled the globe more than a dozen times, established an institution to revitalize and broadcast pure *dharma*, and nourished that institution carefully by your own hand. It is still growing. All these deeds are incredibly glorious. Yet that is still not the limit of your glories. You are more than an esteemed author, eloquent speaker, commentator, rule-giver, and reservoir of divine truth. You are a person. A person who wonderfully reciprocates uniquely with all kinds of souls and with Lord Krishna.

Your wit, smile, charm, determination, humor, kindness, and even chastisement, as you guided us back home are an added essential dimension of your greatness. And these qualities are very attractive to me. They illustrate how you personally and expertly apply the philosophy of Krishna consciousness with flexibility and

affection, not just as a formula. Within the Christian world there is an abbreviation: “WWJCD.” Meaning when unsure of the best course of action, one should ask oneself: “What would Jesus Christ do?” Among your followers that can be adjusted to “WWSPD,” what would Śrīla Prabhupāda do?

This same strategy was advocated by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira when asked how to understand religion. He responded: “*Dharmasya tattvam nihitanī guhāyām mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ.*” (Mahābhārata, Vana-parva 313.117) That is, the path of religion is hidden in the hearts of the great souls. To understand, one must follow in their footsteps. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are that shining example of Krishna consciousness who we all must learn to follow.

During the time you were physically present among us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, when someone received a letter from you or news of your activities, devotees would gather round to eagerly drink through their ears each drop of spiritual nectar. After the disappearance of your manifest pastimes, many of my senior godbrothers and godsisters have enhanced that valuable nectar by writing and speaking of your activities and their experiences with you. I therefore offer my obeisances to Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami, Mukunda Mahārāja, Gargamuni Prabhu, Brahmānanda Prabhu, Mother Yamunā Devī, Śhyāmsundara Prabhu, Girirāja Mahārāja, Viśākhā Prabhu, Śrutakīrti Prabhu, Kurma Prabhu, and Vedavyāsa Prabhu (and others) and thank them thousands of times. By their efforts, I have been granted access to a large window in order to witness how you apply the priceless teachings of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with all kinds of souls in real-life situations. Thus, I now have a clearer sense of what you would do when meeting challenges, in leading *kīrtana*, in enlightening women, leaders, politicians, or celebrities. As a result, I know I am more appreciative of you and feel closer to you. In thanking them, I also thank you.

Some have commented that focusing on your activities is sentimental and superfluous. Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara Goswami, Lord Caitanya’s personal secretary, screened those who wanted to share their ideas about Śrī Krishna’s pastimes with Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In often finding misunderstandings in those writings, he would tell the aspiring writers: *bhāgavata para giya bhāgavata sthāne*, i.e., you must understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from the person *Bhāgavatam*. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the person *Bhāgavatam* and your activities are non-different from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In

other words, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* go perfectly well together.

*prasaṅgam ajarāṁ pāśam ātmanaḥ kavayo viduḥ
sa eva sādhuṣu kṛto mokṣa-dvāram apāvṛtam*

Every learned man knows very well that attachment for the material is the greatest entanglement of the spirit soul. But that same attachment, when applied to the self-realized devotees, opens the door of liberation. (SB 3.25.20).

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please let my appreciation, service, and attachment for you grow.

Your not so humble servant,

Vishnugada Dasa

Initiation: July 1971—New York, USA

Current location: Philadelphia, USA

Contact: vajra8@aol.com

Sankarshan Dasa Adhikari

My dearmost Spiritual Master, Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

You have given us great hope in your writings that even though it seems to be a complete, total impossibility that we can make the whole world Krishna conscious, it is still a fact that such a thing can be accomplished.

In this regard in your *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā, Chapter 7, Verse 26 we read:

*saj-jana, durjana, paṅgu, jaḍa, andha-gaṇa
prema-vanyāya ḍubāila jagatera jana*

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement will inundate the entire world and drown everyone, whether one be a gentleman, a rogue or even lame, invalid or blind.

And in the purport to *Caitanya-caritamṛita*, Madhya-līlā, Chapter 8, Verse 246 we read:

In the *Itihāsa-samuccaya*, Nārada tells Puṇḍarīka:

*janmāntara-sahasreṣu yasya syād buddhīr īdṛṣṭī
dāso 'ham vāsudevasya sarvāl lokān samuddharet*

“After many, many births, when a person realizes that he is the eternal servant of Vāsudeva, he can deliver all the worlds.”

And then in your purport to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā, 7.83 we read:

A sincere student aurally receives the holy name from the spiritual master, and after being initiated he follows the regulative principles given by the spiritual master. When the holy name is properly served in this way, automatically the spiritual nature of the holy name spreads; in other words, the devotee becomes qualified in offenselessly chanting the holy name. When one is completely fit to chant the holy name in this way, he is eligible to make disciples all over the world, and he actually becomes *jagad-guru*. Then the entire world, under his influence, begins to chant the holy names of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.

So all we have to do to become successful in making the whole world Krishna conscious is to become pure chanters of the holy name. In this regard one could argue, “Since you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are a pure chanter of the holy name, why didn’t the whole world become Krishna conscious during your presence on this planet?”

The counter argument can be your response when Vishnujana asked you what Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura meant when he stated that he was leaving this planet with his work unfinished. You replied, “Then let us finish. We are descendant of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. So he kept unfinished so that we shall get the chance to finish it. That is his mercy. He could have finished immediately.... He gave us the chance, the opportunity. So we should always pray to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to be merciful upon us so that we can execute his unfinished task.”

So in the same way, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we understand that you had the power to deliver the whole world, but out of kindness upon us you have blessed us with this most sublime assignment so that now we, on your order, can deliver the world. In a lecture given in

Los Angeles on 17 December 1973, you especially ordered us, “Just become perfect in the understanding of this science and become guru and deliver the whole world.”

So now, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are begging your causeless mercy upon us that as soon as possible, we can all become pure chanters of the holy name and deliver all the poor suffering souls who are rotting here in this material world back to home, back to Godhead.

Your most fallen servant,

Sankarshan Das Adhikari

Initiation: August 1971—Texas, USA

Sravaniya Devi Dasi

“One should know the *ācārya* as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods.” — Śrī Krishna to Uddhava, *SB* 11.17.27

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the transcendental alchemist, could turn Jagāis and Mādhāis into *brāhmaṇas*. At one point he even called us *sannyāsīs*. In a lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.8.18–19 — Bombay, April 9, 1971 Śrīla Prabhupāda said:

Other *sannyāsīs*, they are thinking like that: “I will do austerities and penances severely. I shall go to Himalayas and execute very rigidly all the principles of *sannyāsa*. But as a result of this, I will get liberated, *mukti*.” Therefore he has got demand. So that *sannyāsī* and this [Vaiṣṇava] *sannyāsī* is different. *Anāśritaḥ karma-phalam kāryaṁ karma karoti, sa sannyāsī*. So this *sannyāsī* can be accepted even in *gṛhastha* life, even in householder life. **Because in one sense, all these boys and girls who are working for Kṛṣṇa, they have no other desire. They are all sannyāsīs because they have no desire to achieve any result out of their work.** The only thing they want: the *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, how Kṛṣṇa will be satisfied. They are engaged in preaching work because they want to satisfy Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*

(BG 18.66). They are teaching all over the world the same principles, the same philosophy, that “Please surrender unto Kṛṣṇa and you will be happy.” That is their message. They have no other message. **Therefore *anāśritaḥ karma-phalaṁ kāryam karoti. They are all sannyāsīs.***

Prabhupāda clearly said “these girls are *sannyāsīs*.” Let me tell you what that was like in America. We shared the quarters in the ashram with whoever was there. In my first days we even shared the saris that were in the drawer. I always took the last one after everyone made their choice of what they wanted to wear. Later on, I had only three saris of my own; one to wear, one for a fresh change, and one for washing. In some temples there were no plates and bowls, we ate off paper on the floor and took whatever they gave us. Sometimes we slept on the floor. We took showers in ice cold water during the winter time. We had to be showered and dressed for the 4:30 a.m. ceremony every morning, off to bed by 9:00 p.m. In the West, the girls got trained up and did Deity worship. Some gave classes and led *kīrtana*, went out chanting on the streets and distributed books and magazines.

I was also in Bombay in late 1974 when Prabhupāda was there for two months during which time he completed *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and laid the cornerstone of the Juhu temple. In the morning when he would go for morning walk with the swamis and men, the ladies would clean his quarters. I got to go and do that many times. Once, my godsister Pālikā Devī Dāsī, who was Prabhupāda’s personal cook, came to me while I was dusting and sweeping. She had a pair of shoes in her hands and offered them to me. “Do you want a pair of shoes?” She asked. “These were bought for Prabhupāda, but when he tried them on they were too small for him. Do you want to try them?”

I was surprised. But I took them and said, “Let me see.” They were those slip-on canvas shoes, light orange in color, that we often see in pictures of Śrīla Prabhupāda. “Yeah, they fit,” I told her. “Good. You can have them.” That took less than two minutes. One might think that I should have kept them for worshipping for the rest of my life. But I was living in the ashram and actually needed a pair of shoes. So I walked in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s shoes, way more than only a mile. I wore them every day for a long time until they eventually wore out. Years later, I took the opportunity to teach the holy scriptures Prabhupāda translated to inquisitive yoga students

and devotees from all over the world. Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted this. He told his disciples, “Every one of you become a spiritual master. This is our mission.”

Kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kena naya/ yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei ‘guru’ haya: any human being from any social or economic status can become a bona fide spiritual master if he knows the science of Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said:

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

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

Only by the order and authority of the Supreme Lord one can become a spiritual master, not by one’s own so-called erudition. (SB 11.3.21, Purport)

I have no qualification other than I accept Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions as my life and soul. If I can do it, anyone can. Jai Prabhupāda!

Your servant,

Sravaniya Devi Dasi

Initiation: August 1971—Missouri, USA

Current location: Hong Kong, SAR, China

Contact: sravaniya@outlook.com

Yadubara Dasa and Visakha Dasi

You are the Supreme Lord, to be worshiped by every living being. Thus I fall down to offer You my respectful obeisances and ask Your mercy. As a father tolerates the impudence of his son, a friend the impertinence of a friend, or a husband the familiarity of his wife, please tolerate the wrongs I may have done You. — Bg. 11.44

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Our obeisances to you hundreds and hundreds of times. Unlimited glories decorate your divine personality.

As Krishna tolerated the “wrongs” of Arjuna, so have you with us your fallen disciples; and unlimitedly more so by tolerating—over the past 53 years—our countless deviations in mind, body and words. And still today, you are extending your mercy despite our repeated offenses. How is this possible?

Could it be that we just need to keep trying to follow your instructions in spite of our disqualification? In a *darśana* you asked a *brahmacārī* sitting in a group of leaders, “Are you trying to understand the philosophy?” He was too flabbergasted to answer but he appreciated you asking “are you *trying* to understand...”

In our fallen condition, often that is all we can do—keep trying: trying to chant, trying to read and understand, trying to follow more closely, trying to reach out to those less fortunate.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your liberality, care, and love are unfathomable—beyond this material sphere. Please, out of your undeserved compassion, give us a glimpse into your reality, the reality of the spiritual realm by which material concerns and ailments no longer affect us. And once getting a glimpse of that long sought-after realm, we no longer hanker for material pleasures but live only to serve you, the Vaishnavas and our Lords.

*In gratitude and submission,
Your servants,*

Yadubara Dasa and Visakha dasi
Initiation: October 1971—Calcutta, India

Adhiyajna Dasa

Greater than the Sun

Material consciousness is devoid of real light,
Despite the sun’s daily rising, all are sunk in Māyā’s night.
The majesty of the sun, we don’t mean to slight (but)
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than
the sun, you gave us our sight.

Following impersonal doctrines is a fruitless occupation,
Like clouds that create shadows but yield no precipitation.
The sun cannot penetrate such clouds, despite
it’s excitation,

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the sun, you gave us loving reciprocation.

The energy of the sun, all life does support,
oblivious to the sun, illusioned beings sport and cavort.
The relationship between the guru and disciple is one
of deep rapport,
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the sun,
so voices all the Vedas purport.

Sunlight takes eight light minutes to reach the earth from
the sun's radius,
by seeing/hearing you, our love's awakening
was spontaneous.
Now you have become fortunate, make others also, your
instruction still faces us,
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the sun,
you are so purely gracious.

As Lord Shiva was required to withstand
Gaṅgā's descension,
and as it is unbearable to directly see the sun without
some reflection,
Lord Śrī Krishna's loving affection is beyond
our perception,
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the sun,
you are Krishna's mercy extension.

Though far away, the sun has the power to purify
an impure place,
but the heart of an offender remains a disgrace.
Countless *jīvas*, your *vāṇī*, their impurities will displace,
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than
the sun, you, we can never replace.

Inspiration, guidance and nourishment all come with ease,
for those who, unto Your Divine Grace, offer their
desires to please.
Your umbrella-like lotus feet change the sun's heat wave
into a cool breeze,
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the

sun, to you we bow on our knees.

After Lord Krishna's departure, guiding light was given via
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,

as brilliant as the sun, *dharma* and *jñāna* were
explained ad infinitum.

But without the Mahā Bhāgavata Ācārya, to understand it
was still a conundrum,

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the
sun, you are the Person *Bhāgavatam*.

Adhiyajna Dasa

Initiation: November 1971—Victoria, Canada

Apurva Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most auspicious day of your transcendental appearance, I acknowledge you for your major contributions to the world. You are coming in the lineage of Lord Nityānanda to save the most fallen souls. You are the fulfillment of the prediction of Śrīla Bhaktinoda Ṭhākura that "A Senapati General will appear in the future to deliver conditioned souls from the grips of *māyā* and bring them from all countries to join in Harināma Saṅkīrtana in Śrīdhāma Māyāpura." Because of you Lord Caitanya's prophecy that "In every town and village my names will be heard" is being fulfilled.

Despite the hardships and struggles you endured from the two heart attacks on the Jaladuta steamship to the LSD drug crazed hippie who threatened your life and the various setbacks in the beginning years, you were still able to establish the worldwide ISKCON movement.

Your translations and Bhaktivedanta purports of major Vaiṣṇava literature like *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *The Nectar of Devotion*, *Śrī Īsopaniṣad* and *Nectar of Instruction* are our

guiding light and a beacon of hope for the masses of people.

Your legacy keeps expanding more and more, and personally I am eternally indebted that you saved me from my previous sinful life in *māyā's* tight grip.

By your mercy I have been benedicted with a wonderful service that I have been given for 52 years of cooking and distributing transcendental *prasādam*. While cooking for 5 years in the Brooklyn, Henry Street, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda Temple, I always looked forward with excited anticipation to cooking for the Sunday feasts. A host of devotees would participate in the preparation, joyously collaborating to create a 12-course feast. We would invite people that we met on *Harināma Saṅkīrtana* and book distribution. A good number of those people joined as full-time devotees.

I was able to meet many of your senior disciples who had learned cooking the original Sunday Feast recipes from the earlier days when you were heading up the Sunday Feast. I had the opportunity to get recipes from gifted cooks from the early days of ISKCON. I also obtained recipes from your godbrother, Ānand Mahārāja, while cooking together for the opening of the Krishna Balaram Temple in Vrindavan.

Over the past 52 years that I have been traveling extensively to engage in cooking services. Also, I have taken shelter of Jayādvaitya Swami as my *śikṣā* guru, and he has always encouraged me in this venture.

In different temples and restaurants I have collected a treasure house of outstanding recipes. My sincere aspiration is to create a cookbook with these recipes, before they become lost in time. I am now 73 years old, so I need to act quickly. This is a monumental task for me.

My idea for a title is “Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Feast Cookbook (As It Was)”. I am asking that if it will please you, could you empower and guide me in this endeavour. Every day we are singing the prayer:

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi
dhyāyan stuvaṁs tasya yaśas tri-sandhyam
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

By the mercy of the spiritual master one receives the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Without the grace of the spiritual master no one can make spiritual advancement. Three

times a day one should offer respectful obeisances
unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master

You know my heart, and so I am asking for an indication.

*Begging to remain your eternal servant and aspiring to have the opportunity
to cook for you as I did for that one glorious week in Chicago in 1975,*

Apurva Dasa

Initiation: December 1971—New York, USA

Current location: New Goloka, NC USA

Contact: cookingforkrsna@gmail.com

Prabhavisnu Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You are truly the most compassionate person, having risked
everything in old age to distribute the great gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness
to fallen souls all over the world. I am one such fallen soul and,
but for your merciful intervention, I would surely have completely
wasted this valuable human life in material activities. That would
undoubtedly have condemned me to many more births and deaths
in material existence. Your teachings, example, and disciples gave
me the opportunity to be engaged in meaningful service to Lord
Kṛṣṇa, by helping to spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Sri Caitanya
Mahāprabhu to various parts of the world. You instructed me to
help spread the “empire of Kṛṣṇa consciousness” just as the British
had spread their empire all over the world. You also gave a similar
instruction to a British school teacher in 1973, when he had your
darśana in Bhaktivedanta Manor. This shows that you had a very
grand vision for ISKCON, and clearly saw the unlimited preaching
potential of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I must admit that I have not always been able to live up to your
expectations or maintain the high standards that you demanded.
However, I have always endeavoured to remain engaged in your
mission as best as I can. A couple of years ago I was given the
opportunity to help organise BBT activities in Thailand. I don’t have
a lot of experience of printing books, having mostly been engaged in

ISKCON preaching and management activities. However, it is a new and interesting challenge for me, and with the guidance, help and support of other similarly engaged devotees, I am gradually learning. We all know how much importance you gave to book production and distribution, and how much you wanted that your books be valued and appreciated by scholars and the intelligent class of men, as well as by the general public. On this most auspicious occasion I therefore pray that you will give me the intelligence and strength to execute this service to your satisfaction, so that we can publish and make available more and more of your books for the benefit of all the people living in Thailand. That will establish a very authorised and solid basis for ISKCON's preaching activities.

Kindly shower your mercy on us all, so that we can cooperate together nicely to please you and push forward your mission, which is non-different from the mission of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Your insignificant servant,

Prabhavisnu Dasa

Initiation: December 1971—Paris, France

Current location: Thailand

Advaita Acharya Dasa

Śrīla Prabhupāda, giving hope and guidance to everyone...

I am proud to have been part of Śrīla Prabhupāda's movement

Bringing sanity to a world lost in ignorance and greed.

His sacrifice and love for Lord Krishna was magnanimous

A great soul indeed

Planting the transcendental seed.

To have had the opportunity to serve such a master was an honour and merciful privilege for me.

He opened my eyes and taught me how to see.

To be free.

Whatever a great man does others follow automatically

This we can understand

So simply walk with Śrīla Prabhupāda and take him by the hand.

Chant the holy names, this is his request

One's true eternal relationship with the Lord will be manifest.

Hare Krishna.

Jai Gurudeva!

Advaita Acharya Dasa
Initiation: 1971—London, UK
Current location: Stockholm, Sweden
Contact: alan.a.hole@gmail.com

Padmanabha Dasa and Lilamanjari Dasi

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

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

To His Divine Grace, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda:
Please accept our humble obeisances.

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

You blessed us with your appearance and association. I feel sad knowing new disciples will never have the experience of sitting in your presence and experiencing your energy of conviction.

And that is our goal, to meditate on your unwavering conviction in this life and the next.

Your disciples,

Padmanabha Dasa and Lilamanjari Dasi
Initiation: July 1971—Brooklyn, New York, USA
Current location: Seattle, Washington, USA
Contact: pbrugalett@comcast.net

Anuttama Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Just recently a spacious new ISKCON temple was inaugurated in Naperville, Illinois, in suburban Chicago, and beautiful marble Deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Śyāmasundara were installed during a gorgeous three-day festival. With the assistance of a cadre of highly trained ISKCON priests from both India and the United States, participants observed three days of elaborate *vaiṣṇava-yajñas*, rituals, and *mantra* chanting. ISKCON *sannyāsīs*, GBC members, *gurus*, Temple Presidents, and other senior devotees were there to honor the event and share words of wisdom. Youthful devotees (and some not so youthful!) led the thousands of attendees in hours of profoundly inspiring *kīrtana*. Members of the US Congress, the Illinois House of Representatives, the County Commissioner’s Office, and the City Council came in person to share their appreciation for ISKCON, and to give their support to this community and new place of worship established in their state, county and city.

Later this year, another large and beautiful temple building will be inaugurated by ISKCON’s community in the Washington, D.C. area, the nation’s capital—one of the most important cities of the world. Here too, devotees of Kṛṣṇa will welcome this new place of worship with *vaiṣṇava-yajñas*, *kīrtana*, feasting, *pūjā*, the presence of senior ISKCON leaders, and dignitaries from the government, academia, and other religious communities.

New temples are also underway in other parts of the United States including Columbus, Ohio, and Parsippany, New Jersey. And, of course, other ISKCON initiatives like book distribution, Rathayātrā, Krishna House, Vaiṣṇava Care, Hare Kṛṣṇa Food Relief/Food for Life, and more, continue to flourish and plant and grow the seeds of *bhakti* across the country.

All of this growth, enthusiasm, and expansion is due to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. It was you who had the vision to come to America. It was you who saw fit to engage half-crazed American youth as your pioneer missionaries. It was you who reached out to the Indian diaspora (and those still in India) asking them to take up and carry forward the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. It was you who envisioned (and built) beautiful temples in the lands of the *mlecchas*, who engaged the downtrodden, who purified the forgetful, and who gave hope to the hopeless.

Now, as your disciples and grand disciples, it is our duty to

remain faithful followers of your mission, your teaching, your mood, and especially your example. Please bless us to know that our connection to you goes deepest when we hanker and strive to understand your unending compassion, your commitment to the order of your Guru Mahārāja, and your willingness to sacrifice for others' well-being.

This brief memory of you below is an eye-opening one. (Recalled by Prabhaviṣṇu dāsa, in the *Prabhupāda Memories Series* by Siddhānta dāsa.)

Once I went into Prabhupāda's room when he was sitting in the corner with his head in his hand. He sat there for a few minutes with a pained expression on his face. Then he looked up at me and said, "This Bombay project is such a headache. It is such a headache."

He paused and then said, "But it is for Kṛṣṇa, so it is all right."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, sometimes ISKCON devotees assume that everything you did to establish the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement came easily for you. The insight above, and others like it, give us a more mature understanding. You bore many burdens, you tolerated many distressful and painful conditions, and you made many personal sacrifices, all for the pleasure of Lord Kṛṣṇa and your Guru Mahārāja, and to alleviate the suffering of the forgetful souls of this world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless me, bless us, bless every member of ISKCON (so-called big or small) to set aside our personal agendas, our argumentative natures, our petty bickering, our seeds of sectarianism, and our unwillingness to sacrifice for the sake of cooperation so that we may better manifest as that transcendental army of mercy you envisioned. We want to help you carry your burdens for the Lord. We want to willingly and lovingly bear the headaches of awakening Kṛṣṇa consciousness, pure love of God, across the globe. We too, want to learn to carry these hardships as you showed us: "But, it is for Kṛṣṇa, so it is all right."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless us to become mature sons and daughters, and grandsons and granddaughters, so that together—despite our differences in generations and in cultures—we will cooperatively carry forward your mission. Please bless us to always remain a united, strong, loving, and exemplary International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Your servant,

Anuttama dāsa
GBC Member and Minister of Communications
Initiation: January 1972—Washington, USA

Jitamitra Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances, my dear spiritual master. All glories to your selfless devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. With your deep convictions, your fearless determination, your energetic enthusiasm, and your loving heart, you have dedicated your every breath, with all success, in helping others achieve Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Your mercy and compassion continues to expand through all of your loving disciples who are following in your example.

I am so fortunate that you accepted me as your disciple, but I feel so humiliated at my lack of ability to emulate even some small fraction of your mercy and compassion for others. None of your wonderful qualities come naturally to me in my very conditioned state of being.

I do not have your deep convictions, but I am deeply convinced that without your guidance I am lost. I do not have your fearless determination, but I am determined to keep my initiation vows for fear of where I would be without the lifestyle those vows demand. I do not have even an ounce of your energetic enthusiasm for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but I pray to remain enthused by whatever little progress I make on the path of *bhakti* and by the knowledge I and so many others receive from your books. I do not have a loving heart, but I pray to at least cause no harm or offense to those engaged in your mission.

I pray that in my next life my soul will be somewhat less conditioned so that I may be able to serve you properly and repay you for the wonderful life your instructions have blessed me with.

Your spiritual daughter and disciple,

Jitamitra Devi Dasi
Initiation: January 1972—New York, USA
Current location: Gainesville, Florida, USA
Contact: jitadasi@yahoo.com

Asokamrita Dasa

I offer my respectable obeisances to my spiritual master, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who has delivered Krishna Caitanya to me. I offer my respectable obeisances to Krishna Caitanya, who has given me the love of Krishna.

My dearest Spiritual Master, after chanting the *mahā-mantra* for over 50 years, I have tasted the vast shoreless and bottomless ocean of sweetness in it...now I am simply mad after it and cannot stay out of it. You have given me a treasure that is unending, a gift that keeps on giving. Chanting the holy name is a boundless joy, which you have distributed so freely, for which I am eternally indebted to you.

Plus you have given us the pure *amrita* of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. You said I will find all the answers in it, and I have found it, having taken full shelter of it. *Bhāgavatam* is the spotless sun, rising in the darkness of Kali-yuga, as a beam of light, showing us our path back home.

As for my service to you and Krishna...My wife Rose and I help TOVP with financial giving. Last year I received a gold medallion for my gift to the Sri Nrsinghadeva project, and this year I intend to double my giving for the grand opening of TOVP scheduled for late 2024.

Śrī Gurudeva, I am holding on to your lotus feet very tightly. Please never let me go. I am your eternal servant,

Asokamrita Dasa

Initiation: February 1972—Mayapur, India

Current location: Alabama, USA

Contact: samtuscaloosa@aol.com

Ragatmika Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your tender lotus feet that have traversed this entire planet, North, East, South and West.

In my life's sojourn, from the perspective of my eternal existence, I had no idea where I stood nor where I was heading. Then one blessed day, by the causeless mercy of the Supreme Lord, you entered, becoming my fixed point in a spinning world, my TRUE

NORTH. You became the one constant in my life, which enabled me to make sense of everything else. Your words, your books, your living example became my guiding principle, the ideal that I can continually strive for, my TRUE NORTH. No matter what life is throwing at me or has thrown at me....good times, bad times, the challenges of youth, *grhastha* life, and old age...I can trust you for guidance and direction because I am certain that you will not steer me wrong. For you are my TRUE NORTH.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray that I will always be blessed with the association of and service to your sincere and serious followers, who also regard you as their TRUE NORTH. If ever I go astray, which I am still shamefully inclined to, please please drag me back to the light of your instructions and the service of your faithful servants.

Your eternally grateful servant,

Ragatmika devi dasi

Initiation: March 1972—New York, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: ragatmika@gmail.com

Nrsimhananda Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Another orbit around the sun or the sun going back and forth in a big arc over a flat earth. Whatever the perception and/or understanding, 365 earth days have zipped by as I hurtle through the eroding effects of old age. Thank God you came into my life when I was young and idealistic. "Time I am," says Krishna, and He certainly tests the mettle of His aspiring devotees. You were so right when you recommended taking up Krishna consciousness when we were young and vital. No naps were required. No canes. No limits in our ambitions to do *sevā* and save the world. Here I am at the fag end of life, but still inspired that you, at my age of near 76, managed to jet around the planet, planting seeds of *bhakti* and nourishing the *bhakti-latā-bījas* already growing strong. In fact, your example continues to inspire generations of new *bhaktas* who have been awakened through your *vāñī*. Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī, jaya!*

Now I understand more fully why you always took morning walks, massages, and kept a strictly regulated life. I had wondered, “Why doesn’t Śrīla Prabhupāda attend *maṅgala-ārati* with us?” In those days, I had no idea that you had already been up, bathed, and translating for hours. I asked myself, “Why doesn’t Śrīla Prabhupāda eat with us.” I didn’t know that honoring *prasādam* tailored for the more sensitive constitutions of the elderly was essential for good health. I also have been able to learn exponentially more about you through the memories of your disciples. Your *vāñī* keeps on increasing year-by-year despite the absence of your *vapuḥ*. This is your mercy.

I ask myself each year at your Vyāsa-pūjā, “Did I slow down in my *sevā*? Did I coast? Glide? Semi-retire?” Until you physically could hardly speak, you did not. In 1977, you got on that plane with the intention to visit your disciples in Gītā Nāgari farm. You wanted to circumambulate Govardharn Hill on a bullock cart. You translated to nearly your last breath. You had agreed to stay with us for another 10 years despite your emaciated condition. And you still haven’t stopped. You continue to live in your instructions. “A Vaiṣṇava dies to live.” You are “living art in sound.” You are present just as the original spiritual master, Nityānanda/Balarāma is always present. When will I realize your spiritual identity? Must I wait aeons of time before the secret of your *siddha-deha* is revealed? If I must, then please give me the strength to serve you always. I am so fallen that I think that I have done some *sevā*. I am a rascal, but I am your rascal.

The secret of success in spiritual life is to carry out the order of the spiritual master. What is that order? To chant 16 rounds/day and follow the four regulative principles? I thought so in the beginning, but I realized there are so many more orders. You ordered me to make films about Krishna. I’m trying. I’ll continue to try. Sometimes I am hopeless and want to go to the equivalent of the Scindia Steamship office. Yet, somehow, as Krishna closes one door, another opens. That is your mercy. Otherwise, I am lost.

In screenwriting, the end of the second act always brings the “all is lost” moment. The protagonist/hero has no options. He has hit a wall. I feel many of those moments. What keeps me going is you. You are the greatest example of faith and determination. You say that determination is an essential ingredient of spiritual advancement. Please bless me with *dhṛti*. I am a fragile flame subject to be blown out by even the slightest breeze. Please always ignite my blackened

wick so that I can continue to serve you.

As I see stalwart devotees depart, I am inspired that they invoke your mercy. Please never leave me, and don't let me leave you. This world is dangerous. *Padam padam yad vipadam*. The mind is flickering, *cañcalam*. We invoke the name, "Prabhupāda" to protect us more than we do "Nṛsiṁhadeva." Your mercy is inconceivable, *acintya*. Thank you for saving us from the lap of the witch called Māyā, "*kota nidrā jāo māyā-piśācira kole*."

I beg to remain your insignificant servant,

Nrsimhananda Das

Initiation: April 1972—Los Angeles, California, USA

Pyari Mohan Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who have sacrificed so much in order to spread Krishna consciousness all over the world.

I am happy to have met you, received initiation from you, served you, and continue serving you to some small extent. I am happy to be part of your ISKCON, associating with your devotees, reading your books, and having some real purpose in life. I am happy my life wasn't completely wasted which it would have been if I never met you.

There is no real happiness in this world, save and accept Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is actually not of this world.

There are 8,400,000 different species, therefore there are many different types of consciousness, and Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the best of them all.

In a *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* class on verse 7.12.6, which you gave in Bombay on April 17, 1976, you said, "One who is Kṛṣṇa conscious, he is conscious of everything..."

I am still very far from being Kṛṣṇa conscious, but I am a lot closer than I was 51 years ago. You have always been merciful to me throughout my Kṛṣṇa conscious journey, and I am very grateful and happy to have received your mercy. You haven't forgotten about me, and I thank you with all my heart. You are truly "Jagat Guru," spiritual master of the whole universe, and conscious of all your

disciples and grand-disciples all over the world.

There is no one I have ever met who even came close to you. I am most fortunate to have actually had some personal association with you, and I remember some of those times very well.

You are my eternal spiritual master, and I am eternally indebted to you and I look forward to serving you eternally and still I won't ever be able to pay you back.

Please continue helping me to progress in my Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Thank you for all you have done for me and for so many other devotees throughout the world.

Your eternal servant,

Pyari Mohan Dasa

Initiation: April 1972—Boston, USA

Current location: USA

Contact: pyari108@gmail.com

Mina Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisance.

What can I say?

[1972 Lecture at MIT] Before you I am dumbstruck! Your presence is overwhelming! Your effulgence spreads everywhere! Your eyes find mine, and I am transported beyond the illusion of temporary anything. I have found what I have been searching for. Someone who can deliver me from my nightmare of ignorance.

[Now] But not just me. You can deliver anyone and everyone since you are living in sound whether physically present or not. Hearing from you is so powerful the bonds of material identification are dissolved, the shackles of Māyā opened, the darkness of the Age of Kali flooded with the *Saṅkīrtana yajña* of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

You are the suitable carrier of the message of Love of Godhead to plant the seed of devotional service in the hearts of those who hear you. Your books sounded out from the *Bṛhat Mṛdaṅga* are a great blessing for the world. What you have given us! Inconceivable good fortune! I take shelter at your feet and hang on for dear life as the movement you initiated swells.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, how am I so fortunate to make a

connection with you? How am I here at this time and place? Only by the causeless mercy of the Supreme Lord Śrī Krishna and His great gift to us all, Your Divine Grace.

Mina Devi Dasi

Initiation: May 1972—Boston, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: jiva34@outlook.com

Manjuali Devi Dasi

My dearest Śrīla Prahupada,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to your holy lotus feet which are my absolute shelter.

Deep gratitude, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for following the orders of your master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and bringing Lord Krishna's name, form and qualities to the Western countries.

I was lost and searching for purpose and meaning in life, and by your pure grace, you invited us to take the Holy Name, Lord Krishna's Mahā Mantra to heart and begin our daily spiritual practice so many years ago.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you sacrificed so much to translate and print volumes of sacred Vedic literature to teach and enlighten our way forward. Sharing reading your books with fellow devotees in our reading groups is bringing you closer and enriching our devotional life.

You set us guidelines – requesting our commitment to follow the four regulative principles and lead a disciplined life of dedication and service to Lord Krishna, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and our beloved Master.

And finally, you requested each of us, your students, to help you by sharing Krishna Consciousness, the path of Bhakti Yoga generously with others.

This year, in the UK, we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Bhaktivedanta Manor and the installation of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gokulānanda.

Your presence in our memories, and indeed in our daily life of service is tangible and timeless as we endeavour to observe this important occasion.

No words can really express my thankfulness to you dearest

Śrīla Prabhupāda for your presence in my life.

I am ever so grateful to the community of your dear devotees who continue to inspire and support our humble attempt to be of service.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

I pray to always remain faithful at your holy lotus feet eternally.

Humbly with gratitude and love, your aspiring servant,

Manjuali devi dasi

Initiation: May 1972—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Somerset, UK

Prithu Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories unto you.

Sometime on a morning walk back in the early 70s, I asked you a question about a verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* I had read in your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*:

*aho bata śva-paco 'to garīyān
yaj-jihvāgre vartate nāma tubhyam
tepus tapas te juhuvoḥ sasnur āryā
brahmānūcur nāma gṛnanti ye te*

O my Lord, a person who is chanting Your holy name, although born of a low family like that of a *caṇḍāla* [dog-eater], is situated on the highest platform of self-realization. Such a person must have performed all kinds of penances and sacrifices according to Vedic rituals and studied the Vedic literatures many, many times after taking his bath in all the holy places of pilgrimage. Such a person is considered to be the best of the Āryan family.

I asked you, “Is it that in my previous life I was born in India, performing all kinds of penances and sacrifices, bathing in all the holy places of pilgrimage that I am chanting the Hare Krishna mantra now?”

You chuckled for a moment, somewhat amused by my naïve suggestion and replied to me with a fatherly smile, “That may be so. However, what you really must understand is that I created your good fortune.”

This for sure was my most intense moment ever with you.

Over the years I thought many times about your answer which not only took the wind out of my sails, but established that it was actually you who ‘created my good fortune’ rather than anything else.

In fact, you had created good fortune for anyone who would hear your message and would follow your instructions, regardless of whether they were your direct disciples or generations of devotees to come.

Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa tells us that 5000 years ago, Gaṅgādevī approached Lord Śrī Krishna with tears in her eyes:

O Protector, Supreme enjoyer, on your departure
for the perfect abode, Goloka, thereafter what
will be my situation in the Age of Kali?

The Lord replied: “On the earth 5,000 years of Kali will be sinful, and sinners will deposit their sins in you by bathing.”

However, here is the plan:

“Thereafter by the sight and touch of those who worship
me by my *mantra*, all those sins will be burnt...

“There will be chanting of the name of
Hari and reading of the [*Bhāgavata*] *Purāṇa*.
Reaching such a place, attentively hear...

“Sinful reactions including the killing of a *brāhmaṇa*
can be nullified by hearing the *Purāṇa* and chanting
of the names of Hari in the manner of devotees.

“Just as dry grass is burnt by fire, by the embrace
of My devotees all sins are burnt...

“O Ganges, the whole planet will become a pilgrimage site by the presence of My devotees, even though it had been sinful...

“In the body of my devotees remains eternally [the purifier]. Mother Earth becomes pure by the dust of the feet of my devotees.

“It will be the same in the case of pilgrimage sites and the whole world. Those intelligent worshipers of my *mantra* who partake of My remnants will purify everything.

“They are more dear to Me than My life, who every day meditate only on Me.

The air and fire become pure simply even by their indirect touch.

“For 10,000 years of Kali, such devotees of mine will fill the whole planet.

After the departure of My devotees there will only be one *varṇa* [outcaste].

“Devoid of My devotees, the earth will be shackled by Kali. Saying this, Sri Krishna departed.

(*Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* 4.129.49–60)

4500 years passed when Śrī Krishna put his original plan into action.

He appeared as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to inaugurate the Yuga *dharma*, the chanting of the Holy name – *kali-kāle nāma-rūpa kṣṇa-avatāra* – “in this Age, Krishna appeared in the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā 17.22)

Indeed, it was Krishna Himself in His appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu who traveled all over India to propagate the chanting of the holy name on the Indian subcontinent.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was a game changer.

However, though the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verse initially puzzled me, “One indeed must have performed all kinds of penances and sacrifices according to Vedic rituals such as taking bath in all the holy places of pilgrimage.” The holy name thus was a secret that was confidentially revealed by a spiritual master to the qualified disciple.

However, all that all changed with Śrī Krishna's advent as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Who actually broke open the storehouse of love to distribute the Holy name of Krishna without restrictions as reported in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

Although that storehouse of love certainly came with Śrī Krishna when He was present, it was sealed. But when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came with His associates of the Pañca-tattva, they broke the seal and plundered the storehouse to taste transcendental love of Krishna. The more they tasted it, the more their thirst for it grew.

Śrī Pañca-tattva danced again and again and thus made it easier to drink nectarean love of Godhead. They danced, cried, laughed and chanted like madmen, and in this way they distributed love of Godhead.

In distributing love of Godhead, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates did not consider who was a fit candidate and who was not, nor where such distribution should or should not take place. They made no conditions. Wherever they got the opportunity, the members of the Pancha Tattva distributed love of Godhead.

The flood of love of Godhead swelled in all directions, and thus young men, old men, women and children were all immersed in that inundation.

(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā 7.20–7.25)

Indeed, as *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* tells us, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself travelled all over India to distribute the holy name of Krishna:

To deliver all fallen souls, the Lord travelled from country to country. He personally tasted the transcendental pleasure of devotional service, and He simultaneously spread the cult of devotion everywhere.

(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Madhya-līlā 25.264)

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu left us the following prediction:

Taking the sharp sword of the congregational chanting of

the holy name, I will root out and destroy the demoniac mentality in the hearts of the conditioned souls.

If some sinful people escape, and giving up religious principles, go to far off countries, then My commander-in-chief (*senāpati bhakta*) will appear to chase them and distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

(*Caitanya Maṅgala, Sūtra-khaṇḍa*, Song 12, texts 564–565)

That commander-in-chief – the *senāpati bhakta*, predicted 500 years ago by Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu was actually you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who arrived September 17, 1965, 5:30 a.m. onboard of the freighter Jaladuta at Boston’s Commonwealth Pier. The rest is history.

It was you, who from then on travelled all over the world, fulfilling Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s prediction of *Pṛthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma, sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma* “In every town and village, the chanting of My name will be heard.”

(*Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, Antya-khaṇḍa* 4.126)

“What if people don’t want to hear our message?” Pradyumna asked you sometime back in Boston.

“The people might not understand our message, but Krishna will be pleased,” you replied. “And that is our mission.

They thought Jesus Christ’s mission was stopped.

They killed him.

But his mission was attained.

He preached three years only, but so many followers -

He pleased Krishna.

“We must not be disappointed that no one

is hearing Krishna Consciousness.

We will say it to the moon and stars and all directions.

We will cry in the wilderness, because
Krishna is everywhere.

We want to have a certificate from Krishna that
this man has done something for me.

Not popularity.

If a pack of asses says you are good, what is that?

We have to please Krishna`s senses with purified senses.

(Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta, “A Visit to Boston”)

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have done something for Krishna, indeed unparalleled in human history.

phalena paricīyate – thousands of disciples, millions of followers, zillions of people, visiting temples rising in every nook and corner of planet earth, unlimited people chanting the names of Krishna by now.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for coming to save us all.

“I created your good fortune,” you said back then to me.

Actually, you created good fortune for the whole world.

Kindly continue to bestow your mercy on this lowly soul.

Your servant,

Prithu Dasa

Initiation: June 1972—Hiedelberg, Germany

Current location: Vrindavan, India

Contact: prithu.acbsp@pamho.net

Rūpa-vilāsa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You are a wonder and a constant inspiration to not only your

ISKCON society, but the entire world, where the mission of Lord Caitanya continues to grow and expand. It may grow more slowly in some places, but so quickly in others. This is your credit.

I feel so grateful to have met you and attempted to serve you. I was not much good to you, but I am so happy to be yours, and I will never give up following your instructions under any circumstances. Some of my godbrothers and godsisters have left this world now, and we miss them. Others are pushing on doing magnificent preaching and service, giving you their best. I admire them. Their followers in your line are also doing magnificent preaching and service, giving their best with you in the center.

Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja prays:

*evam janam nipatitam prabhavāhi-kūpe
kāmābhikāmam anu yaḥ prapatan prasaṅgāt
kṛtvātmāsāt surarṣiṇā bhagavan gṛhītaḥ
so 'ham katham nu viṣṛje tava bhṛtya-sevām*

My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, because of my association with material desires, one after another, I was gradually falling into a blind well full of snakes, following the general populace. But Your servant Nārada Muni kindly accepted me as his disciple and instructed me how to achieve this transcendental position. Therefore, my first duty is to serve him. How could I leave his service? (SB 7.9.28)

I was also gradually falling into a blind well full of snakes, following the general populace. You saved me, and I will never leave your service.

Your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, understood perfectly the mood and importance of approaching and accepting a pure Vaiṣṇava as his spiritual master. He spoke the following words which express how we must appreciate and accept the grace and mercy of a pure soul:

Humbly and sincerely I prayed to the Supreme Lord for His mercy. Later, by His grace, I recognized that without receiving the blessings of this peerless saint and without serving him, nothing good could happen to me. When I accepted that and acted accordingly, and then received the causeless, unlimited grace of my śrī-gurudeva and

refuge at his lotus feet, I deemed my life fulfilled.⁸

Even in unlimited millions of lifetimes I will not be able to find the limit of his compassion, nor will anyone else be able to do so. Although I am unfit, he recognized me as his servant, thus fulfilling my cherished desire, by which I may live forever.⁹

Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has expressed his humility with such feeling and sincerity. I can't come up with anything to approach such sincerity, but I also feel that nothing good could have happened to me, unless I receive your grace and mercy and experience your unlimited compassion. Please allow me to remain your servant. Your Gurudeva also stated:

I do not know whether any transcendental agent equal to him has ever appeared in this plane. How may those who are preoccupied with worldly lust, anger, and so on, ever know him?¹⁰

This is certainly true of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You have exhibited your kindness to the entire world which is certainly “preoccupied with worldly lust, anger, and so on.” And yet, your compassion is boundless, and everyone in your society and indeed everyone everywhere is still receiving your mercy. Despite my disqualifications, I don't believe that “any transcendental agent equal to you has ever appeared in this plane.” How can I think in any other way?

⁸ When Sarasvatī Ṭhākura first approached Bābājī Mahārāja for initiation, he replied, “I once accepted a disciple, but he cheated me and went away. I will not make any further disciples.” (Śrīla Prabhupādera *Goloka-vāṇī*, a compilation of Bhaktisiddhānta Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's teachings, 2.10, spoken on the *tirobhāva-tithi* of Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja in 1930, cited on p. 28 of *Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava*, Vol. One, by Bhakti Vikāsa Swami.

⁹ *Śrīla Prabhupādera Goloka-vāṇī* 2.3, a compilation of Bhaktisiddhānta Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's teachings, cited in *Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava*, Vol. One, by Bhakti Vikāsa Swami, pp. 31–32.

¹⁰ *Harmonist* 30.266 (March 1933). From the speech delivered by Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī during his 1933 Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, at the *samādhi* of Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī, in Māyāpura, cited in *Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava*, Vol. One, by Bhakti Vikāsa Swami, pp. 30–31.

As Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has stated:

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi
dhyāyan stuvams tasya yaśas tri-sandhyam
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

By the mercy of the spiritual master one receives the benediction of Kṛṣṇa. Without the grace of the spiritual master, one cannot make any advancement. Therefore, I should always remember and praise the spiritual master. At least three times a day I should offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master.

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, keep me with you, offering whatever little service you offer me. Thank you.

Your servant,

Rūpa-vilāsa Dāsa

Initiation: June 1972—Dallas, Texas, USA

Current location: UK

Contact: rupavi1008@yahoo.com

Bhavatarini Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my unlimited obeisances at your beautiful rose-colored feet.

It has been so many years since I beheld you with these eyes and heard you with these ears, and was bathed in the beautiful saffron dust particles of *prema* emanating from your divine form. I am missing you so much...I don't want to live without you. You are my only hope, my only shelter. You are my everything. Please come and take my hand and bring me to the lotus feet of your Lordships Gaura-Nitāi.

Your daughter,

Bhavatarini Devi Dasi

Initiation: June 1972—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Vrindavan, India

Contact: bhavatarinidd@yahoo.com

Ekanaṭha Dasa

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

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

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It is only by your sublime grace that the concept of *bhakti-yoga* has given us any meaning. The only way in making tangible spiritual advancement is by pleasing you, by cultivating *bhakti-yoga*, as you have outlined in your *Bhagavad-gītā*. You've mercifully given us access to your *Bhagavad-gītā* that purports the reasons why we should pursue the path of *bhakti-yoga*. The message of your *Bhagavad-gītā* is so utterly sublime that millions of people are waking up realizing their actual constitutional natures.

May I somehow or someday become a sincere follower of your *Bhagavad-gītā*.

With gratitude your servant,

Ekanaṭha Dasa

Initiation: June 1972—London, UK

Gokulananada Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my sincere obeisances at your lotus feet.

You forever remain the perfect example of pure devotion to Lord Śrī Krishna amply manifested throughout your miraculous life. You have blessed the whole world with a continuing flood of Krishna *bhakti's* truth and beauty, that is assuredly pushing back Kali's dark waves of futile materialism and blind atheism. Your rare spiritual potency continues to attract and uplift so many fortunate souls inspired by your amazing legacy.

Recently we were blessed to witness the very auspicious departure of yet another great servant of yours, H. H. Kadamba

Kānana Swami. In his final days, as his body was succumbing to terminal cancer, his true blissful self kept rising with utmost serenity and detachment above the strong waves of inevitable material miseries. What a glorious departure he attained after giving his all-and-all to offer his substantial contribution to your ISKCON mission. And we were also able to hear so many details about his very significant services to your society. His numerous skills were brilliantly engaged throughout his lifelong service to your ISKCON society. He was a master at “*nirbandha krishna sambhande*”: engaging his abundant managerial skills to rally so many resources and persons to successfully complete many major projects, such as the building of both your samadhis, in Śrī Vrindavan and Śrī Māyāpur Dhāmas. By his relentless sincere desire, he became a most effective instrument in serving your mission. Thus we are all very indebted to him for his stalwart example of lifelong dedication in your service. Surely you have lovingly accompanied him towards his next service to the *saṅkīrtana* movement. And you will continue to be the hope and shelter for all future generations of such fortunate souls who will answer your call to join in Lord Chaitanya’s merciful gift of His *Saṅkīrtan Līlā*.

Your grateful servant,

Gokulananada Dasa

Initiation: June 1972—Portland, USA

Current location: Quebec, Canada

Janakaraja Dasa

Divine Memories

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

I have been around your ISKCON for over 50 years. Some devotees might know me. If we have met I am almost sure to have offended you. Probably with some stupid remark, some arrogant assertion.

As you would forgive a child his foolishness, please forgive this fool, and just be amazed that His Divine Grace still allows me to clutch onto his *dhotī*.

I have many memories of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I remember

sitting in a transit van, or rather squatting, behind the passenger seat where you were seated. I just wanted to be as close to you as possible. It was a cold wet day in London, and we were on our way to the park for a morning walk. I squatted down and watched and listened to you.

You looked out the window and, almost inaudibly chanting on your beads, seemed to disparage the materialistic civilization that had created this huge city. Of course I cannot presume to understand what was going on in your mind. My fortune was that I was there, with you, in a van travelling down New Oxford Street in the rain.

I remember the first time I saw you. Your Divine Grace shone. You shone so brightly I could not see the person from whom this effulgence emanated, dazzled by the brilliance of your shining soul.

I was there when you arrived at Bhaktivedanta Manor by helicopter. We had heard that you were coming by helicopter, and were all on the lawn adjoining the lake waiting for that momentous arrival. It had all been arranged by a supporter.

Suddenly, out of the clouds came a helicopter. I remember thinking that it is so appropriate that you arrive like a demigod from the clouds and descend into our midst.

Of course, Śrīla Prabhupāda, when you did descend, you displayed majesty and grace beyond any demigod, and accompanied by your entourage, you proceeded to your rooms (and also commented that you did not ever want to ride in a helicopter again).

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I remember you glowing in your quarters at the Manor. We would just sit in your company and feel like there was nowhere we would rather be and lament that we could not do so forever. Of course we can. It is a matter of the heart.

Neophyte as I was (and still am) I just wanted to remain there forever drinking in your effulgence in the company of that great soul who had accepted me as a disciple. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you indicated that fruit be distributed to us all, and we sat there in the presence of our eternal father, aware that we were the most fortunate souls in the universe.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, such memories of you are my only solace now that you have left us in your physical form. Of course, you are always with us by your instructions and in such memories. My only hope is that by such I might one day, one life, one *kalpa*, always be with you.

May I offer my humble obeisances at your lotus feet and also at the feet of all the Vaiṣṇavas who are your followers and who sat

in your rooms, watching you shine like the sun and grace us with your loving glance.

Your humble servant,

Janakaraja Dasa

Initiation: June 1972—Bury Place, London, UK

Current location: Dunedin, New Zealand

Contact: janaka153@gmail.com

Vishvadevi Dasi

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your glorious lotus feet.

I humbly thank you for having accepted me as your disciple and spiritual daughter. I beg your forgiveness for not being a better disciple, but I will keep endeavouring by your mercy and Lord Nityānanda's mercy. You said in a letter to a godsister:

When I initiated you, I accepted you on that very moment as my daughter. So you are eternally my daughter and I am your father. There is no doubt about it. And our relationship is based on Krishna consciousness, so the more successful you preach and help Krishna consciousness movement, the more our relationship in the transcendental platform is firm and fixed up. Our business is to chant and glorify the holy name of Krishna and wherever we may remain, Krishna is with us, Krishna is within your heart, Krishna is within my heart. So, spiritually there is no question of separation, even physically we may be in far distant place.

I forever thank you for the unique opportunity in this life to reposition our souls in the eternal loving service to Krishna, and the chanting of His holy name. You have engaged us in spiritual service whilst being in the material world, in the same activities that are performed in the spiritual world, having opened hundreds of temples and brought Krishna to them, so we could all have the chance to rekindle our relationship with Him by following the perfect spiritual process you established.

Your beloved spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī

Ṭhākura said, “If we live here in the association of the words of the spiritual world then the memory of this association will keep us at a distance from material misery, wherever you may live, topics of the Supreme Lord will never leave you”. Because of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have the words of the spiritual world, our ultimate shelter. And those words are in all your books which you offer to everyone indiscriminately.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please forgive me for all the offences I committed at your Lotus feet, and at the Lotus feet of the deities, the Dhāmas, and the Vaiṣṇavas, and pray to Krishna to remain eternally at your Lotus feet.

Your indebted servant,

Vishvadevi Dasi

Initiation: June 1972—Hiedelberg, Germany

Current location: UK

Vaisnavananda Dasa

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

*namas te sārāvate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe
nirviṣeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this highly auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, we offer our most sincere heartfelt respects at your lotus feet. You are the spiritual master of the universe, the Jagad Guru for the Golden Era of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu which has a duration of ten thousand years. Those who recognize your exalted and inimitable position as “Prabhupāda” (where all masters sit and find refuge) will follow you and your divine instructions, *śikṣā*. And those instructions, which you have given while physically present, namely how to reach the perfection of life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, are readily available in your books, your divine legacy.

Your legacy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is essentially contained in your lucid presentation of the esoteric *śāstras* or scriptures which you have expertly translated from the intricate Sanskrit language, amongst

them, the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, (*Nectar of Devotion*) *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, et al.

We want the world to know that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are a *śaktyāveśa avatāra*, an incarnation of opulence who has been empowered by Providence, Kṛṣṇa. You are fully capable of presenting even the multi thousand cantos of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* found in the higher planets, which far exceed the twelve cantos on this earthly plane. However, out of your unfathomable mercy you have left the task for us, your disciples, in order that we may receive the spiritual credit, *punya*.

Of all the many translations of scriptures rendered by you, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was not completed as is explained in the following prologue drafted by our humble self for the treatise of verses compiled by your dedicated disciples:

Prologue

His Divine Grace, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda translated the sacred scripture of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from Sanskrit to English literally up until his last breath. His daily schedule was characterized by rising early at 2:00 a.m. to translate the scriptures regardless of his location. In addition to translating the Sanskrit verses, he wrote enlightened purports on this monumental work, which is considered the ripened fruit of all the *Vedas*. Śrīla Prabhupāda was relentless in his endeavor to translate the *śāstras* or sacred scriptures. Despite being over 70 years old, Śrīla Prabhupāda traveled extensively circumnavigating the globe 14 times. Thus, on account of his busy schedule managing the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, the latter part of the 10th canto, the 11th and 12th cantos of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* were not translated or commented upon before his disappearance from our mortal vision.

However, in lieu of the cantos that remain untranslated by Śrīla Prabhupāda, we present this compilation. It is a thorough search of all his books, vast correspondence, available material from recorded classes, lectures, conversations, and morning walks. They reveal a treasure trove of transcendental knowledge contained in the verses

from the aforementioned cantos of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Included herein is an anthology of Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* commencing from the 10th canto chapter 14 and spanning through the end of the 12th canto. The methodology employed is to first identify the verse, followed by corroboration of its source. While not all consecutive verses are covered, many of them are quoted multiple times to provide the reader with different perspectives.

In conclusion, this literary work is humbly presented to perpetuate and preserve the eternal teachings of His Divine Grace, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* constitutes a contribution of paramount importance towards the advancement of human civilization and represents a timeless legacy that will benefit the present and all future generations to come. *The Publishers*

We pray to you Śrīla Prabhupāda, that you are pleased with our humble effort to emulate you and present the quotes from the missing cantos of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* on this glorious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

Your fallen disciple,

Vaisnavananda Dasa

Initiation: July 1972—Atlanta, Georgia, USA

vaisnavananda@yahoo.com

Ali Krishna Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

If I look back, in these late hours of my life, to the decades that I have traversed in my spiritual journey, the first things I see are the innumerable reasons for thanking you and being grateful.

What I owe to you, my dear and divine master, I can only know and express by your mercy and through submission to your holy lotus feet. Actually the greatest benediction you have bestowed upon me is that you have taught me to surrender to your holy feet and

have kept me bound there, not allowing me to move away even in front of my persistent attempts to do so. You have made me aware that this exclusive submission is the only true freedom for the soul. (The freedom from the pangs of this world, desired by everyone, is a mere secondary result.) Such act of unconditional surrender generates in us fruits of sublime sweetness like clearing our vision and purifying our heart, thus making us capable to receive through your mouth the eternal mighty current of transcendental knowledge flowing from the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.

Although each year I promise to improve my service and enhance my devotion, my negligence to maintain this resolution becomes more evident when the day of your auspicious Vyāsa-pūjā is approaching. Then comes the time to sum up the work done during the year, and to personally thank you for all the benedictions you bestowed upon me. I then inevitably realize that what I gave you is always much less than what I received.

Once you said: “You have gone through millions of lives in this material world, serving innumerable masters and innumerable causes. Now just give one life to Kṛṣṇa! Just one!” This is the instruction I have been trying to follow in the past decades: to give my life to you, so you can offer it to Kṛṣṇa. Just like a child buys a gift for the father with the money he got from the father himself, I am trying to return to you, my beloved divine father, the life that you gave me by accepting me as your disciple. Your divine grace gave me the gift of a new life, enriched with the light of knowledge and devotion, a light that has illuminated every single day of my existence. This very same existence I offer back to you, beautified with whatever little service I was able to offer.

After all, who can say in all honesty that it is difficult to surrender to your lotus feet? You are the perfect master imparting the perfect teaching and practicing it perfectly. Everything you have done is a hymn to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, an eternal harmonious hymn that makes us dance in joy, because it reminds us every second how fortunate we are to be able to serve your mission.

Personally I do not have talents or qualifications to offer you. Even the desire, that I firmly keep in my heart, to be a worthy recipient of your mercy is the evident manifestation of your compassion towards this insignificant soul.

Your aspiring servant,

Ali Krishna Devi Dasi
Initiation: July 1972—Paris, France
Current location: Villaggio Hare Krishna, Bergamo, Italy
Written on behalf of the devotees in Villaggio Hare Krishna
Contact: alikrsnadevidasi@gmail.com

Gauragopala Dasa

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 Sarasvatî Gosvāmî. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanya deva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

*śrī-krishna-caitanya prabhu nityānanda
śrī-advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vrinda*

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for accepting me as your disciple 51 years ago.

Your first impression on me was your wonderful conviction that Kṛṣṇa (God) is a ‘person’ and is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes.

Secondly, your teachings destroyed all nonsense ideas of impersonalism (we are all one with God) that I previously foolishly believed.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you taught us that the jīva-souls are eternal PERSONS and have always existed as individuals and were NEVER created.

“There are no new souls, new and old are due to this material body, but the jīva-soul is never born and never dies, so if there is no birth, how can there be new souls?”
(Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letter to Jagadisa Dasa, 7/9/1970)

“For the soul there is neither birth nor death at

any time. He has not come into being, does not come into being, and will not come into being. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.” [Bg. 2.20]

“Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be.” [Bg. 2.12]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you taught us that the jīva-souls are eternal spiritual bodily forms with two arms, two legs like Kṛṣṇa’s body, which is the full potential and original bodily feature of all marginal living entities (jīva-souls).

You further explained that the jīva-soul’s personal relationship with Kṛṣṇa is voluntary in the spiritual world, and their spiritual bodily form can change to a variety of unlimited forms to serve and please Kṛṣṇa.

Devotee: “Is the original body of the spirit soul a human form?”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: “Yes, human form. God is also human form. Man is made after the shape of God. I think there is in the Bible. Is it not? So God is also like human form. Here you see Kṛṣṇa, two hands, two legs.”

Hari-sauri: “How do we understand, then, that there are peacocks and flowers and trees in the spiritual world? Are these not eternal forms?”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: “[describing material form first]: Yes. They are more covered. Just like if you cover your body with blanket, the hands and legs are invisible. But you are not the blanket. So the trees and plants, they are more covered. They are not in full manifestation. The human form is the full manifestation of the soul.”

Hari-sauri: “They are covered in the spiritual world?”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: “Not in the spiritual world. There that is voluntary. Some devotee wants to serve Kṛṣṇa as flower; they become flower there. If I want to be a

flower I shall lie down at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, he becomes flower, voluntarily, and he can change his, from flower to human body. That is spiritual life. There is no restriction. If some devotee wants to serve Kṛṣṇa as cow, he serves Kṛṣṇa as cow, as calf, as flower, as plant, as water, as ground, field, or as father, as mother, as friend, as beloved, anything. It is inconceivable, yet a fact." [SB 6.1.1-4 - Melbourne, May 20, 1975]

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "The spirit soul is NOT formless; it has got form, the spirit soul always has form and is expressed as hands, legs, heads, everything. But with our material eyes at the present, our gross eyes, we cannot see these facts; therefore, we foolishly believe the jīva-souls have no form." [Lecture on Bg. 2.14 - Mexico, Feb 14, 1975]

Devotee: "Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have stated that spirit soul has form."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "There is form just like this material body is compared with the dress. Now, just like in your present material form you have got hand; therefore, your coat has got hand, you have got leg; therefore your pant has got leg. Therefore, it is to be assumed that the spirit soul has got form, and it has developed into hands, legs, heads, everything. It is not formless; it has got form. But with our material eyes at the present, gross eyes, we cannot find it; therefore we say it has no form." [Lecture on Bg. 2.14 - Mexico, Feb 14, 1975]

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for this forever fresh spiritual knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness that is found in all your books, lectures, room conversation, morning walks and in selected letters.

You taught us by hearing and repeating your teachings, we will never forget Kṛṣṇa.

I apologise to you and all the devotees I have offended over the years, and pray that one day there will be forgiveness, and that Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī will allow me to offer my daṇḍavats at the lotus feet of Rādhā-Vallabha, Rādhā-Govardhandhari, and Rādhā-Gopinath and all the devotees.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you taught us long ago that no matter how

fallen we are, or whatever mistakes are made, it is never too late to seek forgiveness, but even if ignored, we should NEVER stop chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, and trying to please you in some way.

Fortunately, in Kṛṣṇa conscious teachings, there is no “eternal damnation” of the jīva-soul for their sins like we see in other religions around the world. In Vedic teachings no offense will cause one to exist in “eternal damnation” for eternity. For a God to send one to hell “for eternity” is a cruel merciless God not worthy of worship.

Even Ashwathama from the Mahabharata, who killed the sleeping sons of the Draupadī after the battle of Kurushetra and cursed by Kṛṣṇa, was not punished for eternity.

Ashwathama’s punishment lasted for 3000 years where he roamed the forests in a broken diseased material body begging for death to come, but death never came during those 3000 years (his punishment).

Vedic teachings tell us if we make a mistake, we must pay for it. However, eventually one again gets a clean slate because Karma (good or bad actions) always comes to an end. Karma is not eternal. Kṛṣṇa has the final say.

“Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reaction. Do not fear.” [Bg. 18.66]

“All of them—as they surrender unto Me—I reward accordingly. Everyone follows My path in all respects, O son of Pṛthā.” [Bg. 4.11]

All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda, the most merciful Spiritual Master and eternal Father.

From your fallen, yet aspiring servant,

Gauragopala Dasa

Initiation: July, 1972—Sydney, Australia

Current location: Australia

Contact: gauragopala@hotmail.com

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances!

We conditioned souls are trying to make our way through life with the hope of arriving at a place that can be called home. We are unfulfilled, we are homesick. Guru comes when we are really desperate in our unfulfillment.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, You came to me when life was full of questions and paradoxes. I remember when I – that tiny little jīva in this huge creation – called out for help. I didn't really expect any response from the overwhelming space around me. By desperate calling like this, I recognized my tininess, my helplessness, and also my arrogance and stupidity of thinking I had control over my life.

Somehow or other you responded to that call. You appeared in my life then, and you are here in my life now. Again and again you deconstruct that artificial constructed existence of mine. You put my life back in solution, back in this flowing, clear river of life, a life, which through Your Grace is not too burdened with the guilt of past mistakes. If I want to proceed in life, I cannot be bound by the guilt of the past, neither can I be imprisoned in a fixed idea about the future. I have to change the parameters in life which means, I have to “just add Krishna”, as you always said. Krishna gives meaning to everything.

This change in life does not mean a life without pain and confusion, but it makes the experience of life in this world more tolerable. And this meaning in life allows me to go through almost any form of change, no matter what the cost. To encourage that change, which is to purify the heart, you gave me the holy name and sādhana. Sādhana softens the edges that keep the soul shielded, encrusted and contained in the false ego and in illusion. With your encouragement I wash away these encrustations, these layers. With your encouragement I am able to dissolve ideas and old habits that block and keep life stagnant and fixed in one place, in the realm of karma. With your help I put all this hard karma stuff in the waters of solution, and through sādhana and reflection it breaks apart and shows itself for what it is. This gives me the opportunity for a fresh start, cleanses me and gives back innocence, gives the ability to be impressed by life's meaning, and allows life to flow again with all the grace of beginning. Your Grace shows us life in its fullness and

not only in a preferred portion of it, that looks superficially positive. We don't need to hide away our suffering and don't need to escape and regret the past. We can weave the past with its happiness and distress into the fabric of our life. It's all meaningful.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, your most precious gift to us is that you connected us to Mahāprabhu, you bestowed us with Krishna's name, His beauty, and His love. Krishna's beauty takes us out of our cramped, narrow minded world, away from our small worries, and directly sets us down in a field of eternity, bliss and knowledge. When you speak about the spiritual realm, it enlarges our vision and cracks open the limitations of this world. The experience of your association may last only for a moment, but the memory of a morning walk, a lecture, a kīrtan... a moment is enough. Something happens and it becomes very clear; the soul is not satisfied with striving and ambition, or with unlimited growth and evolution towards perfection. That's not the characteristic of the soul. The soul is homesick and circles all the time home, circles around a life with Krishna. We long for real love, long for a loving exchange with the original Person, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Krishna. We long for that love that extends beyond ourselves.

Your love, Śrīla Prabhupāda, brings us to Vrindavana, where we wake up, bowing down in ignorance, confessing our limitations, but can also show our brilliance...that spark, that lies in all our hearts. You implanted faith, śraddhā, in our hearts.

I hope I can make myself available and help to encourage that faith in others too, even if I reach only a few. That is your desire and instruction to us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I will always hear your encouraging "chant".. Thank you so very much.

Your insignificant son,

Janmanalaya Dasa

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories over and over to you on your sacred appearance day.

I was just remembering a conversation that you had with some of your disciples:

“As for courage, on a morning walk in Calcutta you were reminiscing about your childhood days. You described how you climbed up the scaffolding to the top of the Victoria Memorial. A devotee remarked, ‘Śrīla Prabhupāda, you must have been very brave.’ You countered, ‘And I am still brave! Otherwise, how have I come to the West all alone?’”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you showed the greatest courage in coming to the West alone, at an advanced age where you experienced several life and death crises while alone, having no money, not knowing anyone, not knowing what would happen. Would anyone listen to the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu? You said that one time you didn’t know whether to turn right or left. No one could do what you did, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You had full faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa. Complete trust in Him and in His holy names. You are the topmost *paramahansa*.

You always held your head high in complete confidence. (Some people would say it was pride, but we understood this as your surety of purpose.) Though not knowing what would happen next, you bravely took the first step, all the while depending fully on Kṛṣṇa. You taught us by example to endeavor, but to leave the results to Him, to accept Kṛṣṇa’s plan and whatever He arranged. You always made a beeline to that which you wanted to accomplish, never faltering, never being sidetracked. You were always 100% determined to please your Lord. Your determination and bravery and faith started this movement and it is still going strong. Your will is instilled in this movement.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I know that bravery is very important. Since you’ve left our physical view, we’ve had to be brave to carry on this movement. Time can change everything, and we have to be very brave to maintain what you started and do that with humility. Please bless

me that I can stand behind you and be brave enough to do what is required to push on your movement, to be unwavering in my resolve.

I am ashamed I cannot write something worthwhile, and I lack humility, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I therefore eternally place my head at your lotus feet for your protection and empowerment, without which I am completely lost.

Soon it will be Lord Narasimha's appearance day. I am reminded of the demon Hiranyakaśipu when he asked Lord Brahmā for many benedictions. I therefore, with my demonic heart, beg for this one benediction: that I think of you at the time of my death, so I can come back to you. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for being who you are – the most magnanimous well-wisher.

Your eternal and fallen servant,

MadanMohanMohini Dasi

Initiation: July 1972—Paris, France

Current location: USA

PS: Śrīla Prabhupāda, I want to explain why my name is spelled as you see it and not as it is normally spelled. A long time ago I changed my name legally to the spiritual name you gave me. I did that because, being in touch with so many people, I wanted them to have the opportunity to chant Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's name and hear the meaning, if they asked. I also didn't put "a's" at the end of each part of my name because there is a singer who has a name pronounced like Madana, and I didn't want people to associate me with her. When they would ask what I would like to be called or do I have a nickname (because it is a long name), I would jokingly respond that they try and get out the full name (and I would help them practice), but please, don't call me Madonna! I now have countless stories of people trying to say my name and learn its meaning. (One man wrote my name down and he said he kept saying it over and over all week! Another wrote my name on a piece of paper, put it in his shirt pocket and took it out from time to time to practice so he could say it the right way.) Everyone loves the name, and so do I! Thank you so much for giving me my beautiful name and explaining it to me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and for such sweet preaching opportunities!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble obeisances.

You are my guru, my master, my teacher, and my worshipable lord. Thank you for bringing Krishna consciousness and ISKCON to my mundane eyes. I pray that I may always be your disciple and never forget you or your teachings.

Thank you for accepting me as your disciple and teaching me about Krishna and Rādhā and introducing me to the disciplic succession. I don't have enough words to explain my love for you and my hope for spreading Krishna consciousness to every living entity, following your example of servitude and love for the disciplic succession, Lord Caitanya and Rādhā-Krishna.

Thank you for allowing me a new life on the path of going back to Godhead.

Your servant and disciple,

Vilasi Dasi

Initiation: September 1972—New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA

Contact: cgravele@yahoo.com

Gokularanjana Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most respectful obeisances at Your Divine Grace's lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

You gave us shelter at your lotus feet. You taught us what and how to eat. You taught us how to think and speak. You taught how to desire so we could get out of the forest fire of perpetual birth, death, disease, and old age. You gave us the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. You gave us the holy name, Kṛṣṇa's sound incarnation, the Yuga Dharma. You taught us how to die, and you taught us how to live. You showed us how to get back to our eternal home. You gave knowledge of who we really are. We had nothing and we knew nothing, and all of our acts were causing more pain and suffering. Even though I do not have any qualifications, you allowed me to be part of your association. I just pray I can stay as a particle of dust at your lotus feet.

Your silent servant,

Gokularanjana Dasa

Initiation: September 1972—New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA

Tamohara Dasa

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were here but a moment -

Scantly a decade of Earthly time, a flicker of light in cosmic eternity.

Though brief in time, your impact was mighty, swaying the battle of Kali toward light, toward truth, toward complete transcendence.

And diving deeper, in full spiritual glory, you unveiled that great secret, that *rāja guhyam*, of pure loving service to the Lord.

And into each heart, and into my heart, the mantra implanted, the *Gītā* was sung, and truth was revealed – as a dark blue cowherd boy.

His names are Kṛṣṇa, Gopāla, Govinda, and numberless more. He offered delight to His mother, joy to his cowherd friends, and sweetness to the young girls of Vrindavan.

He plays carefree in Vraja’s forest, yet is the Supreme Brahman, the Absolute Truth, creator of the worlds, the oldest and yet an eternal youth.

But how could we understand such truth, schooled in knowledge of only Durgā’s domain? We had merely vague notions of transcendence, an uncertain glimmer of the inner self, and surely nothing of the Personality of Godhead.

Philosophers and theists strive to grasp God, but he is not found through logic nor study, nor austerity, nor meditation.

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.2.4) says, “The Lord reveals his form to whosoever he chooses.” And who does he choose? In *Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa states that *only by undivided devotional service can I be known as I am.*”

But how to pursue and practice and perfect this esoteric art of bhakti? Pure devotional service seems impossibly elusive, beyond our outstretched grasp.

The answer seems simple yet is deep and sublime. Take shelter of the guru, the pure sage, who is *tattva darśinaḥ* – he who has seen the truth.

Guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja – by the mercy of both Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master, such a person receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service. (Cc. Madhya 19.151)

And the Absolute Truth that lives in the heart of the guru, is

given to the sincere disciple fully with love. The only price is our faith. “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]

Faith is increased by association with advanced devotees. And there is none better than His Divine Grace. Association means we feel close to him – through his service, his worship, his words, books, and instructions. The heart becomes purified, and faith blossoms.

Implicit faith, total faith, in His words and instructions is an order, not an option, for the devotee. Rather, it is our lifeline to the boat of transcendence over the turbulent dark waters of this material energy.

My prayer is simple – that somehow or another I may stay on the path of perfection to bhakti yoga. This is the path of Lord Kṛṣṇa, of Mahāprabhu, the saintly *ācāryas*, and our beloved guru, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Let me always follow your instructions, which are the gateway to realization. Let me take up your mission to retrieve the deluded souls, thus inspiring your compassion and the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Let me dive deeply into this eternal philosophy, which you have presented purely but easily understood by our meager intelligence. And through this divine knowledge the curtain is opened toward understanding the Divine Couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Śyāmasundara.

These prayers and goals seem lofty, but what is our choice? To linger another few lifetimes in this dark world of suffering? In the waning years of our life, let us do more than simply recall past deeds and acts of service. Let us re-dedicate our lives to you, giving freely our love, our appreciation, and whatever small service we may perform.

Your most fallen servant,

Tamohara Dasa

Initiation: October 1972—Winnipeg, Canada

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, Hare Krishna. Please accept my humble obeisances.

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

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

Learning about *sanātana dharma* (eternal religious principles) really removes the sincere spiritual seeker from the bewilderment brought about by illusion. Heaven, earth and hell are all places of birth and death; plus, the impersonal brahman effulgence only gives a negative freedom from pain, since, after we annihilate our personality, there is no pain, but neither is there any pleasure.

Therefore, only in the authentic spiritual world can there be eternal knowledge and bliss. We want to enjoy completely and forever (our eternal birthright), but until we gain the association of advanced devotees, elevation to the Kingdom of God is unavailable.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are counted amongst the foremost spiritual masters to ever walk on this planet, because, instead of preaching something relative and temporary, you have brought information of the Absolute Truth, which is completely beyond sectarian dogma.

So, I must fall at your feet and beg for your mercy. Please do not consign me to the eternal repetition of birth, old age, disease and death. I am interested to learn how my soul can revive my eternal constitutional position as a submissive, loving servant of the servant of the servant of Bhagavān Śrī Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Hare Krishna.

Your humble follower,

Vaninatha Dasa

Initiation: December 1972—New Dwarka, Los Angeles, USA

Current location: Arizona, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances,
A swan has swum among us
your feathers touched us all;
A few threw down our broken lives
and listened to your call.

Bedecked in robes and saris
we went out on the streets,
we sang, we danced, we beat on drums
inviting those we'd meet.

To awaken a world transcendent,
a world within us all.
A swan-like world just waiting for
the mighty, meek and small.

Swan words deep and truthful,
wisdoms of the past;
we watched as you applied them
as if a spell were cast.

We watched our hearts grow softer,
our eyes do actually clear.
We now have ways of dealing
with anger, lust and fear.

Swan among the lotuses
calling us to come;
giving all good council
and paths on which to run.

Please overlook our stumbles,
our many awkward ways;
we wish to only please you
and progress day by day.

Your humble servant,

Adideva Dasa
Initiation: 1972—Austin, Texas, USA
Current location: Florida, USA

Sevananda Dasa

~Feeling Overwhelmed with Grace and Thankfulness for Your Causeless Love and Mercy,

Śrīla Prabhupāda – *om ajñāna timirāndhasya jñānāñjana śalākayā cakṣur-unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī gurave namaḥ.*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am feeling overwhelmed and thankful at your causeless love and mercy! Now, in my old age of 70+ years, my days and thoughts are filled with feelings, memories and prayers of being overwhelmed and thankful for your causeless love and mercy.

Your Mercy and Love for Your Guru Mahārāja, for Krishna, for your disciples and for all His parts and parcels.

When you sent out the call on the radio in 1969 with The Hare Krishna Mantra Single, there was no center, or temple in my home city of Phoenix, AZ. I was then 16 years old. Nevertheless, I and other American boys and girls came running.

Even then I felt so grateful, thankful and in complete awe at your inconceivable love, Mercy – like escaping from an inferno and then taking shelter in a cool alpine lake.

Words after all, are too small and shortly measured to give much import. I am filled with feelings of gratefulness and thankfulness towards you for accepting me into Your eternal, Spiritual Family – family and purpose!

There are, in fact, no words to adequately express my feelings and tears of thankfulness, love and gratitude for you!

You were living in *braja-bhūmi*, in perhaps the most famous and powerfully pure temple in Vrindavan, Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara, and you were already rightfully very famous and much loved as a great devotee and scholar, by both pilgrims and the local *brajabāsīs*.

Nor would, or could anyone have criticized you for staying there for the remaining part of your life, if indeed that was what Lord Krishna desired to happen. After all, you were nearly 70 years of age. You had no money, no family and no friends in the USA. What could anyone have normally expected? But no, that was not to be... not what you and your Lord Krishna desired .

Śrīla Prabhupāda,... You are after all, the external manifestation of the supersoul – *paramātmā*; and, a paramount expression of Lord Krishna’s greatness and love for His parts and parcels. You are the person, *Bhāgavat!* You truly were and are an especially empowered *Śaktyaveśa Avatāra*, a *Nitya-Siddha*, *Mahā-Bhāgavat*, *Uttama-Adhikārī*. No one else could possibly achieve all that you did! If, I were somehow able to catalog and document all of your achieved milestones in developing this, your Divine Mission, Your ISKCON and all of your transcendental books, lectures, talks, walks and letters, your disciples, your temples, etc.,this humble offering would be hundreds of pages long and would never happen.

You told us several times that “Krishna asked me to go down to the material world and to write some books about Him. I said Oh no, Krishna, I don’t want to go. It is a horrible place! Please do not make me go! Then, Krishna repeated Himself...this time more forcefully. You just go down and write your books. I will provide everything which you could possibly require. I will give you palaces and servants to await you wherever you go!” And so it unfolded and so it was. You were and are the perfectly empowered *Nitya Siddha*, transcendental person sent by Lord Krishna from Goloka Vṛndāvana,...sent on a mission of love and mercy!

Nevertheless, you appeared to the untrained eye to have struggled in countless ways. You appeared to have undergone a long lifetime of apparent struggling and apparent suffering in your transcendental *līlā*.

You explained your unlimited love and compassion further in the way you daily extended your unlimited transcendental Mercy and Love. Your personal servant, Śrutakīrti Dāsa Prabhu related, “ Śrīla Prabhupāda received a letter from a disciple asking to be allowed to divorce his wife and then to remarry someone else. Although you often told us that there is no divorce and remarriage allowed, on this instance you counselled him that, “yes, you may divorce your wife.”

Śrutakīrti Dāsa Prabhu relates further that he asked Śrīla Prabhupāda how is it that you told this disciple that yes, he may divorce his wife? You then mercifully explained that, in fact, this disciple will go on and divorce his wife anyway. Therefore, I want to instruct this disciple like this. “Yes, you may divorce your wife.” In this way his offense will be much less.” This was an example of your ongoing compassion and love!

Again I say,... Who can understand the transcendental

characteristics, pastimes and qualities of Lord Krishna and His pure devotee?!

Nevertheless, ... I am filled with amazement and thankfulness at your unlimited compassion and love and I am looking forward to joining your Service to you and with you in the future, be it in another universe, in Gokula Vrindavan, or down in the *Pit* on Pātāla-loka. I hope and plan and pray to be there serving your Divine Grace, by Lord Krishna's Mercy.

Hoping to become and begging to remain your eternal servitor,

Sevananda Dasa

Initiation: September 1972—New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA

Current location: New Nandagram, West Washington State, USA

Contact: stevenjananderson108@gmail.com

Bhrgupati Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

April 16th of this year will mark 50 years since I moved into the temple on Henry Street in Brooklyn, New York. I sincerely believe that my life is a lot better than it would have been as a result of having done that. Your teachings have provided me with an understanding of life that I find sensible and meaningful. They've given me a compelling reason to try to improve myself and a realistic hope for something better in the future. Before coming in contact with you, my life was a mess. I had dropped out of college, and was living with my parents with no aim or purpose. It was just a matter of time before I got myself into some real trouble. When I got books from your followers and subsequently joined the temple I got everything: a meaning and purpose to my life, friends who were always encouraging me, a lifestyle that helped me and other people, delicious healthy food...

literally everything. It was like being promoted from a zero to a hero. Unfortunately, I'm not a very good disciple. I haven't been able to do any significant service, and am still attracted to *māyā* to a certain extent. Despite that, I'm truly grateful for what you've done for me and pray that I can continue serving you and hopefully come to a better standard in the near future. Thank you for allowing me to be part of your great movement.

Your disciple,

Bhrgupati Dasa

Initiation: April 1973—New York, USA

Current location: New Dwaraka, Los Angeles, California, USA

Jagarini Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

A time of confusion, age of quarrel in tow,
you descended, a sadhu, a child who would grow
to fulfill the desires of saints gone before
and bring *Bhāgavat Dharma* to America's shore.

A humble start, your father's pride,
your knowledge and devotion amplified.
A devotee of Krishna, with spiritual ambition,
your guru's order would become your mission!

A life in preparation, with patience and the will
to preach in the west, to attempt to instill
Lord Caitanya's message, "chant the holy name"!
Please give up bad habits! Become happy & sane!

But would anyone listen? Would they want to hear?

You prayed to the Lord, and His message was clear.
So many hippies who were seeking the truth,
you transformed into “happies”, a generation of youth.

Your mission successful, your movement has grown.
Distributing your books, many seeds have been sown.
Our study has deepened, we’re chanting with care.
Your mercy abundant, *prema bhakti* our prayer.

And though I feel your presence, each and every day,
I also miss you terribly, and I pray
that I may execute this Kṛṣṇa Consciousness very expertly
and diligently, just as you request.
You wrote this to me years ago, I strive to do my best.

To follow you completely, the perfection of my life.
To always remain your servant, and end material strife.
To serve your mission faithfully and save the human race.
I prostrate myself at your feet, Your Divine Grace!

Your aspiring servant,

Jagarini Devi Dasi

Initiation: May 1973—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: jagarini.dasi@gmail.com

Kalakantha Dasa

The Cherished Suffix

A nice devotee has the same
initiated *Vaishnav* name,
as, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave to me.
And though it means I’m growing old,
I’m very fortunate to hold
the cherished suffix, ACBSP.

This suffix, ACBSP,
is not MD or PhD,

or something giving one the Midas touch.
However, since it came to me
from Krishna's dearest deputy,
it quite fulfills me, thank you very much.

The 'A' stands for *Abhay*, a word
that indicates a self-assured
devotee who's protected all around.
The 'C' is *Caraṇāravinda*,
lotus feet of Śrī Govinda,
where such perfect confidence is found.

The 'B', *Bhaktivedānta*, means
that love and knowledge can convene
within one great, extraordinary soul.
The 'S' is *Swami*, his divine
and graceful presence, so refined,
it makes the broken heart again be whole.

The "P" for *Prabhupāda* is he
who other *prabhus* constantly
take shelter of by sitting at his feet.
Your shelter, Prabhupāda, goes on,
accessible to everyone,
not merely to us ACBSPs.

It's true that fifty years ago,
some fifty times, I saw your glow,
your brilliant presence right before my eyes.
I was so new, so immature,
nineteen, naive and insecure.
You were more kind than I could realize.

Today, your followers can read
your books and your biography
and savor your disciple's memories.
So any thoughtful person can
reach out and take your kindly hand
whomever or wherever they may be.

Today's Vaishnavs, and those to come,
shall do much more than we have done
as ACBSPs all fade away.
My namesake's more advanced than I,
so Prabhupāda, please hear my cry:
don't kick this Kalakantha das away.

Kalakantha Dasa
Initiation: 1973, May—Portland, USA

Arjuna Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances at your lotus feet. I approach them with deep humility and gratitude, both of which increase with each new sunrise.

I have seen that our offerings to Your Divine Grace please you very much according to their zeal and *bhāva*. I hope you will be able to detect at least a morsel of that within this offering, and therefore feel pleased.

In a blink of my eyes, over fifty years have passed since you appeared in my life.

Back in the early days, your physical *darśana* seemed to have eradicated all misery, instead replacing it with immense joy. This dark world suddenly became so full of light, which to this day continues to appear on all horizons.

As I presently offer *ārotik* to you each morning, I can understand more and more that your lotus feet are the perfection of all desires that lay hidden within my heart. Even though I am so unworthy, I pray for your most beautiful *darśana* to appear within it once again before I leave this mortal world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are awakening all of our spiritual potentialities. You have left behind so many divine purports, letters and lectures which are available as loving guidance for the whole world. They are like mines of mercy, waiting to be excavated by all living entities roaming this material prison house as they undergo the miseries of birth, death, old age and disease.

A more benign, gracious and beloved person than you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, can hardly be found in this world. You are the Supreme

Personality of the Servitor of Godhead, fully empowered to carry out the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. We therefore loudly chant “*Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda! Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda! Jaya, jaya, jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!*”

As I navigate this blessed life, I often find myself repeatedly uttering these words of glorification of you. I just can’t help but do so when I think of what you have given us, and what we ourselves are duty-bound to also give to others. We attempt to take on this responsibility as a means of assisting you and lessening the burden that you have so compassionately taken on in service to your own *gurudeva*. This means of transforming your teachings into a practical reality is the way in which your grace can be attained, as opposed to merely performing mechanical prostrations.

You have taught that the perfection of human life is to accept a spiritual master and faithfully follow His instructions. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have tried to act according to your pure words as opposed to the dictates of my crazy, polluted mind. Having this complete obedience is a difficult task, but by trying with sincerity, it becomes easy. I ask that you please pardon me for all my failures and shortcomings in trying to progress on this path of surrender. May I rise above envy, indecency and hypocrisy which have come upon me time and time again.

I seek your blessings to have the strength to be cent percent loyal to your ISKCON mission, which is non-different from your own body, eternally. Please dear Holy Father, empower me to serve you in this way.

I pray to be corrected, inspected and not neglected.

Your aspiring servant,

Arjuna Dasa

Initiation: May 1973—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Texas, USA

Govardhan Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you and to your ISKCON movement.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your early 10th Canto purports you express your motherly concern for your fledgling society, just like Śrīmatī Devakī Devī, the mother of the Lord, was concerned for baby Krishna's safety in the prison of Kāmsa. And so that meditation came to me over the last few days – that you were and are both the mother and father of ISKCON.

Prabhupāda – you are not gone. You are still here, but the difference is that when you were physically at the helm of the movement, no shipwreck could occur. And now your mission is in our hands, in the hands of your followers, of whoever is in ISKCON. And you are watching over.

Last year I wanted to tell you about the Bhakti Recovery Group but my offering ended up being mainly about my beloved mother's passing away. You made her life and death auspicious, O beloved Prabhupāda, and she was an ideal candidate for your mercy.

Every year I find it hard to write this open letter-offering to you, Prabhupāda. This year has been harder than most, because I am very afraid of having a voice. What I wanted to say is that a relatively new offering has been made to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and that is the Bhakti 12 Step Recovery Group. It is for healing of all sorts.

There are smatterings of Vyāsa-pūjā offerings to you which remain in my mind, Prabhupāda – offerings that Godbrothers and Godsisters have made to you. I remember vividly what Bhagavān dāsa once wrote:

How is it now that you are gone
When our new love begins its dawn?

And when Akhandadhi Prabhu left the Manor to begin his Buckland Hall project, he read out an offering expressing his earnest hopes for the Manor. It was composed rather like the Prayer of St. Francis. One of the lines was: 'May those who have been hurt find healing'.

And now I have seen and am part of one important tool for healing which is the Bhakti Recovery Group. It is the most wonderful thing to happen – in my humble opinion – second only to your coming to the West to cast the seeds of love of Krishna far and wide.

I need to quickly finish this clumsy offering of my heart to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I pray that during the coming year my confusion will lift. My main confusion is: ‘Which is better, your words about the glories of Krishna or your disciples’ words about your glories, Śrīla Prabhupāda?’ It’s impossible to say that one is better than the other. Each is growing and growing until delirium ensues.

As long as I am hearing or reading one or the other, I am safe.

Falling at your feet and begging you to excuse my clumsiness this one time.

Your servant,

Govardhan Dasi

Initiation: May 1973—Edinburgh, Scotland, UK

Current location: Norfolk, UK

Kantimati Dasi

Dearest Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda, I fall at your divine lotus feet in all humility.

What you have given us is so far beyond anything anyone anywhere in the 14 worlds could even attempt to do. It is the most sublime information and access to what EVERYONE is looking for, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Krishna, even though we may not know it.

No one can ever replace you. You are the deliverer of so many fallen forgetful souls...only the most magnanimous compassionate pure devotee could possibly be capable of handing the formula for spiritual success over to millions of suffering living entities in this material realm. Selflessly leaving Goloka to come to the degraded consciousness on the Earth planet to save us from the greatest danger and fear of death and the unknown.

I beg to be able to always follow your perfect instructions and render some menial service at your most merciful lotus feet.

I miss your physical presence immensely, thank you for leaving us so much we can rely on in this complicated unsure world in Kali-yuga. You knew EVERYTHING!!

With full *danḍavats* and aspirations to be a good disciple,

The most fallen of the fallen,

Kantimati Dasi
Initiation: July 1973—Seattle, USA
Current location: Seattle, Washington, USA
Contact: kmdasi@hotmail.com

Ramya Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

It is 50 years this year since I joined your wonderful mission...50 years since my life irrevocably changed through Your Divine Grace

I remember...

When I first saw your disciples parading down Oxford street
Just 16 years old then fascinated by those dancing feet
Back home I read the *BTG*, given by Kula Shekar
It was exotic, weird, amazing – wished I didn't live so far
Four years later I met them again, in Oxford once more
Invited me to visit Bury Place where I could learn much more

I remember...

Bury Place! That magic realm where problems and sorrows
vanished
Filled with devotees, flowers, *kīrtan*, Kali-yuga banished
Opening that heavy door, exotic scents would waft
Cooking, ghee and incense, singing loud or soft
Working nearby, I'd forgo lunch and hurry over there
Clad (inappropriately) in mini skirt, and long, loose hair

I remember...

The *prasādam*, exotic, strange and pure, no animals killed, all cruelty
free
Sweet *halavā*, chutney, *samosās* and *pakorās* cooked in ghee
Then at the end of the evening, in the *prasādam* room, on the floor,
We'd sit and wait for hot, sweet milk, like nothing I'd tasted before!
Śrīla Prabhupāda, I loved it all, all my questions answered
About Jesus, God, love, death and sin – everything transcendental

I remember...

When you were there, Śrīla Prabhupāda, pure, effulgent,

saffron-clad

Your words, a beautiful sharp shining sword cutting through all the bad

The *kīrtan* loud, sandalwood scent, flowers flying through the air

All was bliss, we danced and danced, were demigods all there?

In our youth and innocence, we never thought one day

That you would go and leave us here, to try and make our own way

I remember...

Those days as though they're yesterday, now 50 years have gone

Service, marriage, children, since I joined that shining throng

Śrīla Prabhupāda, one day you left, and then dark days descended

My guru, teacher, father, friend – the glory days had ended

So many years have gone by since, we miss your shining light

We must fight even harder now to keep things pure and right

Now...

I am at the age you were when you came to save us all

I understand the sacrifice, the hardships you endured

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you haven't gone, it's illusion, smoke screen, lies

For you're still here, in sound, on screen, still there to delight our eyes

My dearest Master, I'm getting old, please don't abandon me

I know I've not done much for you, but you're everything to me.

With love and gratitude from your aspiring daughter,

Ramya Devi Dasi

Initiation: July 1973—Bhaktivedanta Manor, London, UK

Current location: Watford, Herts, UK

Contact: rosmurphy22@gmail.com

Badarayana Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your divinely powerful lotus feet.

I would genuinely love to write an offering that made no reference to the current state of affairs and instead concentrate fully on your glories. But your glories and more importantly your instructions are

woven into the fabric of the time.

The question often comes up, Is it appropriate for devotees to delve into current affairs when we hear statements from Your Divine Grace such as this:

Instead of contemplating what will happen to this world – you have got a short duration of life, say fifty, sixty years – you should chant Hare Krishna and go back to home, back to Godhead. Don't consider what will happen to this world. Nature will take care of it. Don't puzzle your brain with these thoughts. You [should] utilize whatever time you have in your possession and go back to home, back to Godhead. (Morning walk in Caracas, February 21, 1975)

When I spent time with Śyāmasundara dāsa (ACBSP), I asked him about the most quintessential observations in relation to his personal association with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. One thing that struck me was this: He often observed that you would give one instruction to a certain devotee in the morning yet later in the day give what appeared to be the exact opposite instruction to another disciple. However, he noted that each instruction was always impeccably perfect according to time, place and the circumstances of that particular devotee.

As you on one hand cautioned against involvement in mundane affairs, you also spoke dire warnings regarding the prevalent asuric agendas. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.14.41, the sages spoke up during the reign of King Vena, and you clarified in your purport:

Brāhmaṇas, the topmost section of human society, are mostly devotees. They are generally unaware of the happenings within the material world because they are always busy in their activities for spiritual advancement. Nonetheless, when there is a calamity in human society, they cannot remain impartial. If they do not do something to relieve the distressed condition of human society, it is said that due to such neglect their spiritual knowledge diminishes.

You spoke numerous times of the insidious destructive influence of atheistic communism disguised in modern times as globalist ideology (dominate society with a one-world godless technocracy). This calamity is now in full force and is not only outside our gates but perhaps within. But as it is a sophisticated psychological operation,

it is expertly disguised as acting for the greater good.

Now they are trying to destroy us. And we are trying to destroy them. The conflict is already there. And this is now psychological fight. And then there will be actual fight. And we must take part in that fight. (Jan. 21, 1977, Bhubaneswar)

So if the world becomes full of communists, then the human civilization will be finished. All rogues and rascals, that's all... this communistic movement will finish the civilized human society. (Morning walk, Los Angeles, Dec. 12, 1973)

You pinpointed a clear and present danger. The question is, How do we recognize it? You warned us against the centralization of power by an asuric ruling class (and warned against centralization of power within your movement as well). We currently see in the world the growing prevalence of a New World Order of elitist technocracy based on godless scientism. We also observe the systematic silencing of any voices which question its authority. We observe an erosion of God-given freedoms via censorship and fear-mongering in the guise of promoting "the greater good." To influence organizations to align with a demonic agenda, we see seemingly benign "save the world" propaganda for notions not congruent with the understandings of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (notions like the world is going to be destroyed on such-and-such a date due to global warming or climate change). We observed with alarm that during the recent pandemic, even in your ISKCON all ISKCON social media sites had all-out censorship of any view other than the mainstream narrative.

You warned us to be vigilant about the demonic influence which threatens humanity, now more than ever, as their technology has become so advanced. You confirmed that powerful families who own the central banks run the modern world. In the name of "the greater good," they play off the sentiments of those not privy to their techniques of long-term subversion, infiltrate every aspect of society, undermine traditional cultures, degrade, confuse, and sexualize our youth, destabilize our institutions, and weaken the male protector class of *kṣatriya* nature.

And yet, despite your clear warnings, within your mission honest discussion of this destructive influence are conspicuous

by their absence.

Did we all miss that memo?

As *Śrī Īsopaniṣad* clearly states in mantra 11:

Only one who can learn the process of nescience
and that of transcendental knowledge side by side
can transcend the influence of repeated birth and
death and enjoy the full blessings of immortality.

You also stated on July 11th, 1973, in London:

In fighting the first thing is to take estimation of the
enemy's side, how much they are strong, how they have
arranged. Then one should calculate how to counteract, how
to fight with them. This is intelligence. Without taking any
calculation of the other side, if you are not prepared, then
how you can become victorious?

If we are to follow your directives above and become strong to fight
against the influence of this insidious agenda, wouldn't it be wise
to understand how this enemy of theism is working in our modern
world? If we as a society fail to do so at this critical juncture, the
proverbial wool will easily be pulled over our individual and
collective eyes.

You state:

At present, this world is being managed by the *rākṣasas*.
The *rākṣasas* are man-eaters who eat their own sons"
(*Rāja-Vidyā*, p. 41)

At present. . . the Rākṣasas and demons . . . have
taken charge. Therefore there is no protection of
brahminical culture and cows, which are the basic
prerequisites for all kinds of good fortune. This age
is very dangerous because society is being managed
by demons and Rākṣasas. (*SB* 7.3.13, purport)

Have we become such easy targets for Rākṣasa manipulation?
How did we fare during the recent controversial pandemic? Did we
allow open honest dialogue? Or did we follow in lockstep with a
well orchestrated top-down agenda?

Are these words too strong? When we contemplate what's at
stake—the influencing and weakening of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness
movement due to a sentimental lack of understanding of the issues

and threats at hand—I think not.

We cannot sit idly by and simply chant and be happy while the enemy’s influence has infiltrated our camp. What would you do, Śrīla Prabhupāda? You demonstrated historically a strong arm when there were similar threats. You excommunicated Kīrtanānanda Swami when he returned from India wearing black robes and preaching Māyāvādā philosophy. You excommunicated four *sannyāsīs* when you felt they were preaching the *apasampradāya* philosophy that he was God. When you heard about the abuse of the children in Dallas you said of the abusers, “They should be hung!”

From Nanda Kumara’s Śrīla Prabhupāda memories:

Śrīla Prabhupāda told me something personally. His Divine Grace said, “There are those among us wearing *dhotī, śikhā, tilaka* and neck beads but they are not devotees. They are agents of Kali who are here to try to stop our movement. You (said to me, but meaning all of us, especially those with a *kṣatriya* nature) should find out who they are and weed them out. That’s an exact quote.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura:

After the time of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, those faithful to Him kept apart from nondevotees, to avoid contamination. Seeing this, the personality of Kali sent his representatives in disguise to pollute the Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*. Posing as Vaiṣṇavas, they spread their wicked doctrines, and appeared so intelligent and devoted that only pure devotees could detect their real identity. Most devotees – not only the most neophyte – were enchanted by their tricks. In this way Kali’s agents expertly introduced karma, *jñāna*, and *anyābhilāṣa* in the Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* and caused *śuddha-bhakti* to vanish from the world.

We should not be so naive to think this cannot happen. You clearly warned us, Śrīla Prabhupāda. But it is happening. How do we prevent it?

By carefully studying the nature of the current situation with an open, unbiased and discerning mind, we can understand the dangers inherent in the warnings and directives you’ve given, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

And then, following your example, I pray these Kali-esque

influences can be weeded out, carefully and methodically, with emotionally balanced maturity and yet without sentimentality.

We need strong, wise leaders not compromised or influenced by demonic agendas. Leaders far more committed to the pursuit of truth than to being accepted by society. Where are such fearless men and women? Please step forward for the sake of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mission!

And so: While you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, gave the instruction to not concern ourselves with the affairs of the world, you simultaneously gave the instruction to fight these threats and educate ourselves as to their very nature, especially if the proverbial ship has been hit by an iceberg with water gushing in. Many of us feel that this is such a pivotal “all hands on deck” moment in history, a Kurukṣetra 2.0 if you will.

Simultaneously we must enthusiastically inject the public at large with the real panacea in the form of the *saṅkīrtana yajña*. As Rūpānuga Prabhu states: “Prabhupāda gave ‘battlefield commissions’ to fight the demons, but that fight was to bring the truth of the *mahā-mantra* to the people, to overcome their ignorance and poor fund of knowledge about the Yuga Dharma, the Saṅkīrtan Yajña—hearing and chanting the *mahā-mantra*.”

This then must be brought into everyone’s home as the basis for the real cultural revolution. “Everyone can execute the cult of Krishna consciousness at home, as ordered by the Lord.” (Cc. Madhya 3.190, purport, see the verse as well)

May Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda guide us and give us strength. May Lord Nrsīmhadeva protect this great movement from malefic, often well-disguised influence and make way for the pure golden age of the *saṅkīrtana* mission! You sacrificed everything to this end. You gave your life, your every waking moment, your every breath, every drop of your energy and life blood, so that we could spread this great movement for the benefit of all suffering humanity. To honor you and show our love for you, we must work to preserve your superhuman magnanimous legacy of uncompromising compassion and unalloyed devotion so that it is not destroyed from within. That is our task at hand, and it is no easy one.

And so I fervently pray that you please bless me, bless us all, that we can embody this mission with patient perseverance, keen discernment, genuine humility and fearless dedication.

Your lowly aspiring servant,

Badarayana Dasa

Initiation: July 1973—Denver, USA

Duryodhana-Guru Dasa

My dearest Gurudeva,

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

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

Daṇḍavat praṇāma... All glories to your divine appearance and causeless mercy! Where would I be without it?

All souls in the material world are tightly bound by the ropes of illusion. A man bound by the hands and feet cannot free himself — he must be helped by someone who is unbound. Because the bound cannot help the bound, the rescuer must be free. Therefore, only Kṛṣṇa or His liberated representative can release a bound or conditioned soul. Without such superior help, one cannot be freed from the bondage of *samsāra* — repeated birth and death." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.14, Purport)

I never felt worthy around you and didn't want to waste your time with the likes of my fallen self. Within a year and half of joining the ashram, you fulfilled my greatest wish by calling me to Los Angeles to continue my studies of Sanskrit and join your BBT Sanskrit Editorial Dept. and work directly on your translations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and numerous other publications. I was blessed beyond my dreams! That is why you never saw me scrambling to get in to see you in the mornings in Los Angeles when the devotees would try to squeeze past the *sannyāsīs* and big devotees and take your *darśana*. You had already placed me exactly where I wanted to be in terms of serving you and your mission. I always thought that serving you was more important because you had awarded me such rare service. The following year, I was promoted head of your BBT Sanskrit Editorial Dept. — all due to your causeless mercy, my

Gurudeva ...

You had already changed my life and shifted me completely with *bhakti* when I read your translation of the *Bhagavad-gītā* cover-to-cover at the age of 22. I felt like you had told me all I needed to know. And that it would take me a lifetime to truly understand what Kṛṣṇa was explaining in His *Bhagavad-gītā*. My understanding increased as I read the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and on and on.

Many of your disciples cannot seem to get along without your *vapuḥ*... so, they cleave to your godbrothers. Some even got re-initiated by them. I am not sure why. I guess for some, your *vāñī* is just not enough. They need a physical presence to gather round. I have always found your *vāñī* more than enough to inspire and invigorate me spiritually.

It's no use pretending, Gurudeva, I am a fallen soul and certainly not the most austere among your disciples. However, I do absorb myself daily in Vaiṣṇava and Vedānta philosophy. Nothing brings more joy to my heart. And I present Sunday Feast lectures regularly in two of your temples in Ireland. But of course, that is due only to your mercy! I thank you for always keeping me close to you and not forgetting me.

If you need my help with anything, please let me know. Although I can never repay your mercy and kindness toward me, I am still here and still want to serve you, my beloved Gurudeva!

Your most fallen disciple and servant,

Duryodhana-Guru Dasa

Initiation: July 1973—New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA

Current location: Dublin, Ireland

Contact: drewjlawrence@gmail.com

Rukmini Priya Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You have been described around the world as A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, the ever well-wisher of humanity.

That phrase describes yourself exactly, you are devoid of lust,

greed, anger, and you are the well wisher of all beings on this planet.

Starting with that little storefront aptly named “Matchless Gifts”, you have emanated goodness and purity throughout the world through your transcendental connection to the spiritual world.

Now, you have the respect of all the sages and demigods throughout the ages.

I humbly beg that by your mercy I may always be connected to that transcendental light which emanates from you and connects to all that is good and pure in this world.

I hopefully will remain your eternal servant,

Rukmini Priya Devi Dasi

Initiation: July 1973—Bhaktivedanta Manor, London, UK

Current location: San Diego, California, USA

Contact: rwinter@protonmail.com

Praghosa Dasa

To my Savior

O Krishna, Lord and Master of the multiple spiritual and material worlds, You have chosen among your most faithful devotees an exceptional being in the person of A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, and you have given him the mission of spreading Your Sāṅkīrtana movement by following in Your footsteps as You appeared in the form of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

Since the origin of this universe Your name has been known only to those who follow in the footsteps of the great *ācāryas* but in this Age of Kali You have broken the tradition of secrecy and given the chance to all to hear the divine vibration of the *mahā-mantra*.

Under the expert guidance of Śrīla Prabhupāda, thousands of lost souls have been able to find their way back to You. I count among these miracles because I was in a pitiful forgetful state before meeting him.

O Lord Krishna, You know me better than I can know myself, and You know how grateful I am to my spiritual master.

Sometimes I look behind to see if I could try to extirpate a little more so-called enjoyment in this material world. This is because Your energy of illusion is so strong. But I hasten quickly to recover

from this torpor, thanks to the teachings on devotional service that Śrīla Prabhupāda knew how to inculcate in me.

The magnificence of His Divine Grace is immeasurable. In his great humility he surpassed the results of all the other *ācāryas* who came forward to point the way back to the eternal home.

With all my heart, my eyes filled with tears of gratitude, I prostrate myself at the feet of Your dear servant and beg him to please allow me to continue my journey back to You by following in his footsteps.

Praghosa Dasa

Initiation: September 1973—Montreal, Canada

Current location: Montreal, Canada

Contact: pragosh@videotron.ca

Prithusrava Dasa

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

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

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who has appeared just to bestow the wonderful benediction of Śrī Caitanya's mercy to the residents of all countries of the world.

Śrīla Sanātana Goswami, at the very end of his *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā Stava* (428–430), has elaborately glorified the mercy of the Lord in this way:

Your mercy is a great wonder, nondifferent from You. It is pure eternity, knowledge, and bliss. It can empower me to always remember and glorify You in pure love. It can obtain for me Your loving sidelong glance. It can enable me to see You immersed in the company of the cows and the cowherd boys and girls. Thus for a helpless person like me it is the ultimate resort of all hopes. Your wonderful mercy is ancient and eternal but also ever new and fresh. To Your mercy, again and again, I offer my obeisances forever.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Lord has bestowed His great mercy upon you (Śaktyāveśa) and has empowered you to distribute it to

all others. Only by Kṛṣṇa's mercy can one bestow and nurture all levels of pure loving relationships with Kṛṣṇa. This is the will of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and symptom of His pure devotee—that the devotee enables all living entities to progress toward the ultimate goal of Kṛṣṇa *prema*.

Now, after performing superhuman nectarean pastimes, giving mercy to your followers and others, you have disappeared from our vision (*aprakāṣa*). You still remain in your recorded words (*vāñī*), giving perfect direction and inspiration for our advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and for our service of giving the same mercy to others.

Without your combined *vāñī* and *vaṇḥ*, it would be a great challenge to push on this mission as you established it. I am simply praying for one drop of your great mercy that I may be sincere and serious to follow in your footsteps without deviation and to always remember and glorify Kṛṣṇa with pure love.

With a desire to remain your eternal servant,

Prithusrava Dasa

Initiation: September 1973—Boston, USA

Current location: New Talavana Farm, Mississippi, USA

Contact: prithusrava@hotmail.com

Sarvani Devi Dasi

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādī-pāścātya-deśa-tārīne*

All glories to your Divine Grace, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Please accept my humble obeisances.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, as time continues to rapidly move along, I again try to find the words to express my heartfelt gratitude for your saintly appearance in this material world. As I reflect on the past 50 years, since I encountered Your Divine Grace, it has been increasingly and repeatedly proven that you have graciously, in your humble way, made it possible for the light of the ancient eternal Vedic truths to become available to the darkest and most fallen regions of

Kali-yuga. Among the countless teachers, philosophers, scientists, and others who have speculated and expounded upon this material nature and reasons for its existence, you stand superior.

With great effort and energy, you have successfully given the whole world transcendental knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by revealing His pastimes and spiritual abode. You have supplied this valuable supreme knowledge through your many books, lectures, and letters, which give answers to questions that have been asked since time immemorial, such as: Who is God? Who am I? What is my relationship with God? How and why was this world created? Why am I suffering? How does one find eternal lasting happiness? How does one end this repeated cycle of material birth, disease, old age, and death? How does one qualify himself to go back home back to Godhead? Your wisdom in teaching others is indeed unsurpassable, and through your tireless efforts and mercy, these transcendental teachings are now available throughout the world for future generations to come.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your lifetime you have exhibited a level of inexhaustible knowledge, sincerity, wisdom devotional example, and transcendental experience that is rarely seen in this world, what to speak of the love and dedication you have demonstrated in wholeheartedly serving the wishes of your beloved spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, to propagate Lord Caitanya's holy *saṅkīrtana* mission to every continent, town and village on this planet.

In fulfilling your service to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga, you encountered many obstacles, yet despite any hindrances in your path you never wavered in your determination and full reliance upon Kṛṣṇa's merciful intervention to succeed.

You were fearless! Through your saintly example you gave us glimpses of how Kṛṣṇa's magical potency was determining the outcome, clearly demonstrating to us how Lord Kṛṣṇa was ultimately in control of all pure endeavors to serve Him. In this way you helped to increase your students' faith, enthusiasm and determination to serve you.

As I increase in years, having become elderly myself, I continue to be amazed at your fortitude and miraculous ability to have served in such a superhuman capacity as you traveled the world at an elderly age many times over! Now it is up to each of your devoted students to follow in your footsteps to the best of their ability and to

stay true to your teachings and instructions. Please continue to bless our humble attempts.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the world is indebted to you, as are all of your students. How fortunate it is to have encountered your divine presence and mercy this lifetime!

I can only humbly pray that I may someday please you and actually become qualified to serve your lotus feet and continue to somehow serve Lord Caitanya's mission in future lifetimes.

Begging to remain your humble servant, with heartfelt sincerity and loving gratitude.

Your spiritual daughter,

Sarvani Devi Dasi

Initiation: September 1973—Laguna Beach, California, USA

Current location: Colorado, USA

Contact: spirit_soul7@yahoo.com

Kadamba Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I was 22, almost 23 years old when I began living in one of your ISKCON temples. It seems so young now – I am surprised I had the presence of mind to comprehend the instructions that you were giving to your disciples, let alone attempt to take them up and live by them.

It was a blessing that my older sister, Mahāsinī, was your initiated disciple, and in life I guess I often followed her lead. Our mother used to call me “me, too” because whatever she did, I wanted to do also. I'd like to think my decision to become your initiated disciple was a little more thoughtful than that, but even if it wasn't, it was to my benefit that I followed in her footsteps. That choice has saved my life; actually has given me life; has given my life purpose.

Many times, I have wondered how people live their lives without the spiritual knowledge you have given to us. It seems existence in this world is almost impossible to reconcile with the world's events without having a deeper understanding of the material energy, and especially of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and also of ourselves as part and parcel of Him.

So many world events are catastrophic. By your grace I could

understand a little bit that every living being is struggling here in this material nature, and I could relinquish other ambitions and goals for my life and become your disciple and Kṛṣṇa's devotee. It is really the only thing that matters.

It is by Kṛṣṇa's grace and mercy that any understanding comes. The "we" that we think we are is even such a gross misunderstanding of ourselves. Without you, we would be lost. And thank you for introducing Deity worship in your Western temples to an audience unfamiliar with *arcā-vigraha* incarnations of Kṛṣṇa – so we can serve Him in that way, in His Deity form.

How did I deserve such mercy and grace to be part of your mission? I didn't realize it at the time, but it was the most auspicious event in my life, and my life has been blessed because of you. I know that I still do not understand your magnanimity and probably never will. How do you thank someone for rescuing you from the ocean of birth and death?

Thank you for accepting me as a disciple and giving me shelter at your lotus feet.

Forever grateful,

Kadamba devi dasi

Initiation: October 1973—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: California, USA

Contact: r.nieburgs@gmail.com

Ramanya Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, eternal Spiritual Master, Guru and Father

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your beautiful lotus feet. We are trying to glorify all your transcendental activities on your glorious Vyāsa-pūjā day. There is not enough time to do it.

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, help me to always be fixed at your lotus feet and let me be purified on this meditation.

Your lotus feet purified the whole world; everywhere you went you transformed to Śrī Vrindavan Dhām by your presence, your *kīrtanas*, your lectures.

You demonstrated and showed to us all the great qualities of a great *paramahansa* and great *ācārya*; all this is described in all the Vedic literature and confirmed by Guru, Sādhu and Śāstra.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are representing all the 4 bonafide *sampradāyas* by your sincere preaching. The Vedic knowledge is all over the world.

There are so many wonderful statements that you mention in all your preaching lectures, your transcendental books and letters. There is not enough space here to mention here.

Certainly you represented your Guru Mahārāja Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura all over the world. One very good statement you mention is:

Your Guru Mahārāja opened so many temples all over India; He initiated thousands of disciples and so many other spiritual activities. But you were practically speaking, traveling and preaching all over the world the vedic knowledge and the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and your Guru Mahārāja.

Unlimited *daṇḍavats* at Your beautiful lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most blessed day of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

Śrīla Prabhupāda please help the devotees who are dedicated to finish the most important project of your ISKCON mission at Śrī Māyāpur *dhāma*: THE GLORIOUS T.O.V.P.

Please help us to work together to push on your *saṅkīrtana* movement all over the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda please help us to protect and keep maintaining nice preaching programs and distribute your transcendental books.

Please protect and maintain a very nice standard of deity worship all over ISKCON.

Please help us to celebrate a very nice festival at Your ISKCON temple in Mexico City.

We are trying to celebrate the 50th anniversary festival for the installation of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā Madan Gopāla Deities that you very mercifully sent to us in Mexico City.

You had the transcendental beautiful Deities of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa at your preaching pandal program in Bombay, now Mumbai in 1973. After many days of your *kīrtanas*, lectures and glorification you sent the Deities to Mexico City for us to worship.

Thank you so much, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for such a matchless gift.

Your Insignificant servant at the dust of your beautiful feet,

Ramanya Dasa dāsa dāsa anudāsa

Initiation: October 1973—Mexico City, Mexico

Current location: Ramanya.dasa@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most auspicious day of your appearance.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for coming to America when you did and lifting us up from our fallen condition and teaching us the real meaning of this human life. Without you, we would never have known our true purpose and responsibility.

Thank you for instructing me from the first time I wrote to you in 1972 when I was only 16 years old. I asked you two questions. One question was, "How can I serve you?" In response, you patiently explained how, if I followed your instructions, then, "Very quickly the problems of this material world would shrink to no more than the size of the hoofprint left by the calf." Your letter was so encouraging that very soon I moved into the Los Angeles temple. I received first and second initiation within a year, and my entire life did, indeed, turn around. As you had said, you "made hippies into happies." I quickly became joyful as I served Their Lordships in the *pūjārī* room from early morning until late at night each day. Only by your mercy, I have been allowed to serve you ever since.

Now in my older years, I am begging you with folded hands, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to please allow me to continue to serve you by caring for your devotees for however long you wish. Please allow me to continue to serve your devotees when they are ill and at the end of their lives throughout the worldwide organization I co-founded in 2000 called Vaishnavas C.A.R.E. International. By Your Grace, hundreds, if not thousands, of devotees in the United States, Europe, and throughout Latin America have been trained to render this service as well, and we now have Vaishnavas C.A.R.E. teams expanding throughout the world. One of our goals is to have teams "In every town and village" so your devotees can be cared for when they are acutely ill, chronically ill, and terminally ill and facing the end of their lives. Please continue to bless all of your sincere devotees who are caring for your disciples and the second-generation devotees, young and old, when they become sick or as they prepare to leave this world. Please bless our Vaishnavas CARE volunteer caregivers who give so much to render this difficult *sevā*, as well as your devotees who are dying and need and depend on your mercy to face their final days with faith, courage and hope.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your continued blessings upon your disciples, your grand-disciples, and all of the fortunate souls who come in contact with this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement each day. By the mercy and hard work of your dedicated devotees, hundreds of thousands of children and adults are receiving Kṛṣṇa's *prasādam*, often the only meal they eat the entire day. By your grace, thousands more of these fortunate souls are receiving your transcendental books each day and by your dedicated followers chanting the *mahā-mantra* on the city streets, throughout small towns and within rural villages around the world, it is inconceivable how many more souls are receiving your blessings by hearing the Holy Names of the Lord.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please continue to bless the *Saṅkīrtan* Preachers within your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement who sacrifice so much to distribute your books and to spread the Holy Names around the globe. Please continue to inspire, enliven and smile upon these "Spiritual Warriors" who go into battle each and every day in your honor. Please keep all of us, who depend on Your Divine Grace for our very life, forever at your lotus feet.

Your eternal servant,

Sangita devi dasi

Initiation: November 1973—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: ISKCON Philadelphia, USA

Partha Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most auspicious day of your appearance, I am drawn to the memory of the birthplace of the seed for the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Bhaktivinode Assan, Ultadanga Junction where you first met His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati Ṭhākura. This Tīrtha has been purchased and restored exquisitely by your loving disciples who have understood its profound spiritual significance.

You described that meeting of Providence where Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupāda, immediately requested. "You are all educated young men. Why don't you take up Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's cult and preach all over the English

knowing public? Why don't you take up this matter? You described your reaction, "I accepted him as my spiritual master immediately. Not officially, but in my heart."

The immense power of the disciplic succession was transferred in that event. A powerful seed sprouted that would change the hearts of hundreds of thousands and result in close to 1,000 temples worldwide. Within that seed was an existing vision destined to manifest which transcended time and space. Ruben, a man you met in New York in 1966, told me in 1977 how he was astonished, (knowing you only had one small center and a few hippie followers in 1966) when you pointed out into Tompkins Square Park and stated firmly. "We have disciples, and temples, and printing presses and farms all over the world. They are only separated from us by time. We simply have to move through time and have faith in Krishna." I offer my repeated obeisances to your divine vision.

He reasons ill who tells that Vaishnavas die
When thou art living still in sound!
The Vaishnavas die to live, and living try
To spread the holy name around!

(Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura)

All around the world the sound of your instructions, books, tapes and letters continues to expand from that *bīja* and inspires devotees to create remarkable multifarious projects. The more we travel the world, the more we are in awe at how your infallible faith in the words of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati continues to inspire others to serve you in manifesting this ever-expanding spiritual vision.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most auspicious day, we pray that you grant us some small residence in your great and ever-expanding vision in which we may assist you in bringing people closer to each other and to Lord Krishna.

Your servant,

Partha dasa

Initiation: December 1973—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Saranagati, Ashcroft BC, Canada

Contact: gvtcanada@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I humbly offer my obeisances at your lotus feet, Your Divine Grace.

You are the spiritual master who has illuminated our lives with the teachings of Lord Krishna, enabling us to find our true purpose and meaning in life.

You have mercifully descended into this world to deliver the fallen souls and bestow upon us the highest spiritual knowledge. You have tirelessly preached the message of Lord Krishna throughout the world, transforming the lives of countless individuals and establishing the International Society for Krishna Consciousness as a vehicle for spreading the message of divine love.

I vividly remember the morning walk we had in Los Angeles on December 02, 1973, after my initiation. I sought your blessing for a service that I thought would interest you, which you kindly approved. This and the other occasions when I had the good fortune to be close to you and observe your behavior generated faith and inspiration that will last for lifetimes. Such was your potency!

One of the amazing qualities that inspired my faith and trust in you was the way you handled wealth, fame, and followers without at least being tempted to use them for personal convenience. When Lord Brahma granted the benedictions requested by Hiranuyakasipu warned him that such opulence was difficult to manage, and as we know, his misuse of them led to suffering and destruction. But you were detached from the material world and convincingly preached detachment to us. How else can one effectively preach detachment to others without being detached oneself?

Your teachings have illuminated the path of bhakti-yoga, showing us how to cultivate a deep and loving relationship with God through devotional service. You have shown us the way to transcendental consciousness, beyond the limitations of this material world, and into the eternal spiritual realm.

By connecting us with the previous members of the parampara and the greatest sages who have ever lived in this universe, all declaring the same conclusion about the Supremacy of Lord Krishna, you have inspired us to dedicate our lives to serving the Lord and spreading His message of divine love and compassion. Your legacy lives on, and we are forever grateful for your mercy and guidance.

Through your teachings and example, we have learned the true meaning of selflessness, humility, and dedication. Your life is a shining example of devotion and surrender to Lord Krishna, and we are eternally grateful for the opportunity to follow in your footsteps.

On this auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, we offer our heartfelt gratitude and devotion to you. May your blessings and inspiration continue to guide us on our spiritual journey, and may we always remain firmly rooted in the principles of Krishna consciousness. May we always remain steadfast in our commitment to spreading the message of Lord Krishna, and may we continue to be inspired by your life and teachings in our journey towards the state of pure loving service to the Lord.

With all our love and devotion.

Your eternal servant,

Citraka Dasa

Initiation: 1973, December—New Dwarka, Los Angeles, USA

Sarva-drik Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances at your lotus feet, accepting me as your eternal servant.

This is the Age of Kali. There is no doubt. All the symptoms are there. International war may break out any minute, local conflicts are raging, thousands are dying, mass manipulation of public opinion teaches the public what to think, what to eat, what to believe and what is true. And even devotees are found to be engaged in perennial, intractable, philosophical conflict that forbodes institutional fracture. Is there a miraculous resolution to the problem that can change all of that? Very unlikely; Kali is expert, he is doing his job with enthusiasm, power, and expertise. So, the influence of his age of quarrel is sure to continue. What are we, the refugees of Kali-yuga, to do?

The best we can hope for is to establish spiritual sanctuaries where Kali's harassed inmates can find association, knowledge, friendship, food, and shelter. These are the real assets of life, not paper money, paper relationships and paper-thin guarantees of safety. To this end you called for establishing *varṇāśrama* communities, actually, you

insisted on it.

We have repeatedly stressed that human culture does not begin unless one takes to the principles of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. (SB 7.15.38–39)

The whole Vedic culture is dependent on *varṇāśrama*. It is meant for everyone, not that it is meant for Indians only, no. (class on *Bhagavad-gītā* 18.45, Durban, October 11, 1975)

Without this *varṇāśrama* system nobody can understand that we are individual person, we existed in the past, and we shall exist in the future, and we are existing at present. (class on SB 5.6.10, December 28, 1976, Bombay)

There should be a thorough overhauling of the social system, and society should revert to the Vedic principles, that is, the four *varṇas* and the four *āśramas* (SB 4.29.54, Purport)

The distinction between human life and animal life therefore begins with the scientific system of *varṇa* and *āśrama*... In the Age of Kali, the first attack of the venomous snake strikes against the God-made *varṇāśrama-dharma*... (SB 1.16.31, Purport)

There are scores of similar instructions given by you Śrīla Prabhupāda, and they all tell us the same thing. We need to do this. But are we taking heed? Do we even believe you? Devotees talk of many things. Some are busy shopping for *rasika* gurus outside your society, others waste time and energy in fruitless internet debate, and others consider themselves to have entirely transcended the necessity of *varṇāśrama*, as if they are better a *paramahansa* than you. What is the difficulty? Let us discuss the necessity of following your directions regarding *varṇāśrama*, understand them, and know how to implement them for the welfare of suffering society.

But, as an institution that claims to have an interest in the welfare of the masses, it appears that your instructions have fallen on deaf ears. Lord Chaitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement offers the "prime benediction to humanity at large" but have we understood how that will manifest? There is an urgent need to understand this.

Please guide us Śrīla Prabhupāda, correct us, chastise us;

whatever it takes to manifest the “second half” of your glorious mission. Hare Krishna.

Your eternal servant,

Sarva-drik Dasa

Initiation: December 1973—Portland, USA

Havi Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I am writing to you from the home of a lovely Vaiṣṇava family in London. They welcomed me and are taking care of me for a few days during my visit to the UK.

How important it is for us American and European devotees to have had closeness with families of Indian background. We, who thought we knew it all...sometimes decades later discover that our Western education and our values system are of a very low level. Yes, it is true that there are all kinds of people in all kinds of places, but I am convinced that those of us who inhabit the Western hemisphere perfectly qualify as those you constructively criticize as the “cats and dogs” of our times. This is personally evident to me after I’ve lived closely with Indians in India, as well as other parts of the world. I’ve especially appreciated the behavior and manners of Vaiṣṇavas who hail from India. This has been my experience with the hosts who have recently received me in their home for a few days. The devotees that hail from the land of Bhārat are naturally good-natured, gentle, hospitable, humble and respectful. What to speak of the intelligence and astuteness they possess. In the subjects of arts, finance, science or technology, they shine brightly.

Rishabjī, the eldest son of Dīnanāth Gaurāṅga Prabhu and Mohinī Rādhā Devī Dāsī, who is only 16 years old, is not just fascinated by the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, but also by quantum physics. This same human treasure of India can be found in the Vaiṣṇava communities of Silicon Valley, Texas, Alachua or Africa.

In a room conversation in San Diego, on June 29, 1972, you said:

What you’re destined to achieve, you will have it

because as soon as your body is manufactured, your standard of comfort and discomfort is also manufactured. In Bengal there is a proverb that wherever you go, your fortune will go with you.

So, Caitanya Mahāprabhu said one thing; “Any Indian, any man who has taken birth on the soil of Bhāratavarṣa, India, he has got a special duty. And that duty is to spread Krishna consciousness.” Dīnanāth Prabhu, even when he is busy in affairs related to technology and business, periodically goes out to distribute your books in the homes of North London, and also organizes *saṅgas* in his home, where the *kīrtana* and *prasādam* are first class.

It is part of your plan to be close to the Indian community. This is actually what is happening, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You are a resident of Goloka Vṛndāvana, and we Western devotees have been given access to the most profound culture in the world due to your departure from the land of Bhārat. As members of ISKCON, it is our duty to offer respect, consideration and gratitude to the noble Indian devotees, whose personal qualities and professional capacities are a clear reference and example to follow.

On this day of your appearance in this world, while I celebrate with conviction the knowledge that eventually – and for countless centuries – you will be recognized as the most important personality in the three worlds, I ask you kindly to help me become worthy of your merciful glance, and to be respectful of all living entities.

Your eternal servant,

Havi Dasa

Initiation: December 1973—Los Angeles, CA, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Jaya Bhadra Devi Dasi

My dear spiritual father, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer you my humble obeisance at your lotus feet. You are so glorious in all respects. Your mercy upon me, a most insignificant and fallen soul, is testimony to this.

Although I don't deserve it, I get to take care of your *mūrti* here in Radhadesh: wash and iron your clothes, dress you, make

your garlands. This is amazing for so many reasons, but two are prominent. One is that I *may* render these services, and the other is that I *can*. That I am allowed to render the very personal service of dressing you is astonishing, as you are Jagad Guru and a *sannyāsī*. A glory of serving you in separation is that this bodily designation no longer applies. A saintly Vaishnavi whom I admire very much, and who is very devoted to you, has reassured me that although I am in a fallen woman body, this service is on the transcendental platform and therefore beyond bodily designations.

That I *can* dress you is the mercy of one of your transcendental grandchildren, who very kindly and patiently taught me very systematically how to do this service. Before that, I could never imagine being able to dress you because I would feel very overwhelmed and lost dealing with so much cloth. Since I am a person with ‘two left hands’, so to speak, I am always surprised that I can dress you and know each time that you are so causelessly merciful upon me.

I inherited taking care of your clothing from another grandchild of yours. He was doing so many services in the *pūjārī* room, and I was upbraiding him because he would iron your clothes and then put them in the closet in such a way that they became wrinkled again. He finally told me, “Dear Mātājī, I just have too much service in the *pūjārī* room and cannot be so detailed with taking care of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s laundry.” That’s when I realized that instead of bothering him, I could and should just take care of your clothing, which I have been blessed to be doing for some years now. I love to wash and iron them and meanwhile listen (online) to lectures by you and your devoted followers.

About the garland-making. The first service I was asked to do when I joined your Vancouver temple in 1973 was to make a garland – with petals. I looked at the needle, thread and flower petals and started crying. At that time it was unimaginable that I could have enough patience and skill to do such a task. I was quickly reassured that I didn’t have to do that particular service and was blessed to do other services in the *pūjārī* room. Many years later, when I came to Radhadesh, I noticed that you were receiving *mahā*-garlands that were not always very fresh, so I insisted that you had to have freshly-made garlands. That was accepted, and I was sometimes making the garlands also, but eventually, yet another of your transcendental grandchildren allowed me to take it up as a daily service. Some years

ago, a new *pūjārī* was pressuring me saying that I could not use fresh flowers to make your garland, but had to offer *mahā*-garlands so that the flower supply would not be unnecessarily diminished. My false ego flared, but I soon realized that I could refresh many of the flowers from the *mahā*-garlands by collecting them, putting them in water, and placing them in the fridge overnight. Then, I could make garlands with these flowers, and after you received these garlands, they would become *mahā-mahā*. It has become a whole meditation to gather the flowers and try to ‘engage’ them in your service. I feel that even though they’ve been offered to Their Lordships, these flowers are still eager to be offered to the most exalted representative of the Lord, so I try to use as many as I can so that they can all have that privilege.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am so grateful that you allow me to do these tiny services for you, even though I often wonder if you find them satisfying. You may be asking why I am not contributing more directly to front line preaching and other valuable services. I can say nothing in my defense, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda. I can only pray that you continue to bestow your mercy upon me so that I may stay close to you in the company of your devoted servants and followers. Otherwise my life has no meaning.

Your hoping against hope daughter,

Jaya Bhadra Devi Dasi

Initiation: December 1973—Vancouver, Canada

Current location: Radhadesh, Belgium

Contact: jayabhadradevi@gmail.com

Svavasa Dasa and Tadit Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Today, on this most blessed occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, we come together to offer homage to you and to also praise your amazing accomplishments and unlimited glories. We also remind ourselves that to truly worship you is to follow your instructions in preaching the message of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

You gave us the process of how to fix our minds on Kṛṣṇa. You said, “How to become fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that art will be

given to you by the spiritual master!" You then quoted Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, saying: "*Vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ* means to take the words of the spiritual master as our life and soul. I don't care for liberation. My only business is to serve my spiritual master."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you personally demonstrated that by maintaining firm faith and conviction in the order of the spiritual master you were successful in spreading Lord Caitanya's message all over the world.

Once you were asked if you can perform miracles and you replied that we are your miracles. You have done what no one else was able to do, and that was giving us devotional service and chanting of the holy names.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you are certainly performing the highest welfare work for all humanity through your books, *kīrtana*, and lectures. There is practically nowhere in the world today where they have not heard about Kṛṣṇa. Almost every country in the world has received your books.

You came to the West because of the instruction of your guru, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja, and to preach the message of the most munificent Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. You wanted us to go to every town and village and give Kṛṣṇa *prema* to everyone we met. We felt that you were our general in the war against Māyā, and a pure messenger of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you wrote: "The instruction is that a devotee must know what Kṛṣṇa wants him to do. This understanding comes from the medium of the spiritual master who is a bona fide representative of Kṛṣṇa. One must take shelter of a spiritual master who comes in disciplic succession from Kṛṣṇa. Without that one cannot find out the real purpose of devotional service."

Here in New Dvārakā we feel your presence everyday when we see your form on the *vyāsāsana*, and the ecstatic Guru-Pūjā *kīrtana*. Going to visit you upstairs in your personal quarters, and seeing your *mūrti* with the dictaphone mic in your hand makes me remember the Karate studio in the alley by the temple, and the noises they would make while you were meeting with devotees.

Your beloved Śrī Śrī Rādhā Rukmiṇī Dvārakādhīśa are well taken care of, and the *pūjārīs* are becoming more expert in dressing Our Lords gorgeously. The whole temple becomes ecstatic in the *kīrtanas*.

We preserved your favorite sitting place in your garden with a very nice *śimhāsana*, and a beautiful picture of you sitting

comfortably on your pillows. The book distribution has been very steady with very dedicated devotees going out daily, and the scores have increased exponentially through the years.

Our festivals bring life to the temple, and thousands attend the annual Rathayātrā festival.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda! Without you taking the risks of traveling all over the world and distributing the *mahā-mantra*, we would never have known the blissful chanting and dancing of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *Saṅkīrtana* movement.

Your servants,

Svavasa Dasa and Tadit Dasi

Initiation: December 1973—Denver, USA

Current location: Los Angeles Temple, California, USA

Contact: ejbeca@gmail.com

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are an *ācārya* like no other. Your writings and conversations leave no doubt what is the ultimate goal of life, and how to achieve it. The essence and mood of even difficult subjects like the *rāsa* dance can quickly be ascertained through your brilliant explanations. After only a few months in the temple, practicing under your guidance and reading your books, there was no way I would mistake the Gopī's love as mundane lust, or Kṛṣṇa as a licentious person. I could understand the Gopī's love as the purest devotional service, completely unmotivated. And that when such unmotivated desire to please Lord Kṛṣṇa manifests, He naturally reciprocates. Remarkably, He doesn't see His reciprocation as sufficient to repay their devotion.

You have distilled the essence of the Vaiṣṇava conclusions in your wonderful purports. Without reading your books first, one could easily misinterpret even some of the writings of the previous *ācāryas*. They may have included some necessary adjustments for their time and place, but that becomes clear after understanding from you. Also, there are many flowery words in the Vedas, and without your understanding of the true essence, one could easily take a single teaching of the Vedas, like *varṇāśrama* for example, and mistake it as higher than bhakti. Seeing through the lens of your Bhaktivedanta purports, however, all other literature becomes clear.

I pray that your strong conviction that nothing other than bhakti can really be of eternal benefit, may be strongly rooted in my heart. My heart is naturally covered by the modes of nature, and it is only by your illumination and mercy that I may hope to cleanse this heart, thus mitigating my false ego. I pray to continue to develop my real ego, my eternal serving ego, and become aligned with your mood of loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa. Kindly bless me that I may serve, following in your footsteps, life after life.

With the deepest gratitude,

Your humble servant,

Uttama devi dasi

Initiation: December 1973—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Saranagati, Ashcroft, BC, Canada

Contact: uttamadasi@gmail.com

Vīrabāhu dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Prostrated at your lotus feet, paying my humble obeisances, I have come once again to beg for your mercy and request that you please accept my attempt to chant your glories. On this most blessed occasion, I humbly offer the prologue I wrote to the Spanish version of your *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, a book that we subtitled as “Secrets From Other Times.”

PROLOGUE

WERE OTHER TIMES BETTER TIMES?

We placed our hopes in technology with the belief that its inventions would fill all the gaps. Candidly we entrusted ourselves to “the Space Age” for organizing our societies and order our lives. And we were feeling very proud of the first results: there began the parade of devices and artifacts promising that, unlike other ages, this one was really the age.

You didn’t have to think anymore. “Science knows everything. Science will fix everything.” You didn’t have to think anymore. Philosophy..., just for leisure; religion..., for the elderly..., and for the fools. We needn’t take life so seriously anymore., we were just to enjoy the advancements. Ideals, habits, morality...

everything changed, everything became modern: “Down with all prejudices!” We were all feeling so fortunate of having taken birth at this precise moment. The entire human history had been looking for it. It was what man had always been looking for. “And it just happened to be for us”—so we thought.

Yes, we thought ourselves very different from the man of all other times. In our case the dream had become true: we would have eternal happiness in this world!

But time has taken care of undecieving us: we’re not happy, and much the less eternal. What we called “reality” was just the last part of the dream. The dream in which man has been romancing for thousands of years. The dream that you can be happy just with the body and matter.

And the dream is over. The age has failed us. What we were regarding as knowledge was just our playing with ignorance. And now we are just left with the ignorance part. We thought ourselves different, but we have ended up the same... or worse! There’s even he who says that we are on the threshold of the extinction of man, just one step away from the destruction of the entire planet. “Is it now too late?” we ask.

But, fortunately, not everything about the age was fatal. Something very good it brought us: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, and with him the Vedic scriptures, the oldest known by man. Śrīla Prabhupāda came with the mission to teach the West the essence of those scriptures and to teach how to put this knowledge into practice. Both things he accomplished: he translated into English from the Sanskrit and Bengali the fundamental texts, and established and saw the growth of an international society that would serve as a model and guide for the application of the principles presented in those works.

The importance of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s coming to the West can be found in the Vedic scriptures themselves. According

to them, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Being, never leaves His creation adrift. The original Vedas and their supplementary literature say that the world and life do not appear by chance, nor are they maintained or annihilated by chance. Absolutely each and every thing, entity, and activity of the world is subjected to superior laws, and their combined interaction puts together an individual and collective masterplan. And all of it under the final supervision of Kṛṣṇa. We are not, therefore, independent. We cannot act and live as we like if we want to be happy. We have to live in harmony with the higher laws. If not, society faces self-destruction. That is today's impending danger.

Śrīla Prabhupāda came to mitigate the ills of the age. In his Preface to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (also known as the ripened fruit of Vedic literature), he made an accurate analysis of the situation:

“Human society, at the present moment, is not in the darkness of oblivion. It has made rapid progress in the fields of material comforts, education and economic development throughout the entire world. But there is a pinprick somewhere in the social body at large, and therefore there are large-scale quarrels, even over less important issues. There is need of a clue as to how humanity can become one in peace, friendship and prosperity with a common cause. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will fill this need, for it is a cultural presentation for the re-spiritualization of the entire human society.”

It was the year 1962. Śrīla Prabhupāda had not come yet to the West, but nevertheless he understood perfectly the situation. Today, those words are more valid than ever. And what has caused this catastrophic state of affairs?

“Disparity in human society is due to lack of principles in a godless civilization. There is God, or the almighty one, from whom everything emanates, by whom everything is maintained and in whom everything is merged to rest. Material science has tried to find the ultimate source of creation very insufficiently,

but it is a fact that there is one ultimate source of everything that be.” – said he in the same Preface.

And, we insist, Kṛṣṇa doesn't leave His creation adrift. Later on, in the same *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.32.38), we find these clarifying words from Śrīla Prabhupāda:

“Once one enters into the continuation of material existence, it is very difficult to get out. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead comes Himself or sends His bona fide representative, and He leaves behind scriptures like *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, so that the living entities hovering in the darkness of nescience may take advantage of the instructions, the saintly persons and the spiritual masters and thus be freed. Unless the living entity receives the mercy of the saintly persons, the spiritual master or Kṛṣṇa, it is not possible for him to get out of the darkness of material existence; by his own endeavor it is not possible.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda proved to be that bona fide representative of Kṛṣṇa, and he left with us spiritual masters, saintly persons and the scriptures. Among the latter, the *Śrī Īśopaniṣad*, which constitutes the first part of the book, stands out. The *Upaniṣads* are very ancient works of the Vedic literature, in the form of a collection of 108 philosophical dissertations, out of which the *Śrī Īśopaniṣad* (or *Īśa Upaniṣad*) is the chief. In it a study of the Absolute is made, and Śrīla Prabhupāda, with his explanations, goes on to apply it to our lives and the present world. *Upa-ni-ṣad* means “to sit near,” and this work certainly enables us to “sit near” the most prominent spiritual master of our times to receive his wise teachings about the Truth that can fix our world.

For the second part of the book, we have selected an article by Śrīla Prabhupāda that complements the message of the work, a message that intends to give encouragement and bring order and agreement in these turbulent times. It's not a message that he has manufactured, but instead one he has brought from other times, times that were

unknown to the West but that, of course, were better times.

(End of the Prologue)

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

Out of many millions of wandering living entities, one who is very fortunate gets an opportunity to associate with a bona fide spiritual master by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. By the mercy of both Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master, such a person receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service. [Cc. *Madhya* 19.151]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please keep me always in the shade of your lotus feet. May I always remain there as one of your innumerable and fortunate servants. Eternally grateful, may I go on incessantly chanting your glories in your service, all of which has made me forever fortunate.

Your lowly servant,

Vīrabāhu dāsa

Initiation: December 1973—Los Angeles, California, USA

Draviḍa dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most heartfelt prostrated obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you on this Vyāsa-pūjā day, the 127th anniversary of your all-auspicious appearance in this world!

Well, Śrīla Prabhupāda, a few weeks ago I celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of my moving into your glorious Henry Street, Brooklyn, temple. It was your *Teachings of Lord Caitanya* that finally convinced me that there was nothing worth striving for in the world of *māyā* and that what I really should do was follow the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a place where I had the best chance of success.

It wasn't long before I was working as a proofreader at the forerunner of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, ISKCON Press, which you had established early on to produce your invaluable books. My first service as an editor began in 1975 during the seventeen-books-in-two-months marathon, in the spring and summer of that year,

when I filled in for Jayādvaita Swami (then *dāsa brahmacārī*) at your *Back to Godhead* magazine so he could devote all his energy to editing the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and the Fifth Canto for the marathon.

Then, as the deadline loomed, I also got to participate in the marathon, and this brings me to the essence of my humble homage: my eternal gratitude to you for engaging me in the service of your words. Of course, the most important way to serve your words is to follow your instructions strictly, and such following insures that the disciple always enjoys the association of the spiritual master, as you write at *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.47 purport:

[T]he disciple and spiritual master are never separated, because the spiritual master always keeps company with the disciple as long as the disciple follows strictly the instructions of the spiritual master. This is called the association of *vāñī* (words). Physical presence is called *vapuḥ*. As long as the spiritual master is physically present, the disciple should serve the physical body of the spiritual master, and when the spiritual master is no longer physically existing, the disciple should serve the instructions of the spiritual master.

Well, I certainly feel your presence when I follow your instructions and attend the full morning program every day here at the New Govardhana temple in San Diego, and also when I listen to your lectures whenever possible and give classes on the *Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*. But I *also* feel your presence when I'm performing my practical service for you—editing your words for “force and clarity,” as you instructed your first editor, Hayagrīva Prabhu, to do in his work on the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and the *Bhāgavatam*.

So just as other devotees often recount a life-changing interaction with you in their Vyāsa-pūjā homage, I'd like to recount a few memorable high points in my lifetime work of helping to present your words to the world with maximum “force and clarity.”

My first example involves the 1975 book production marathon. Part of my assignment was working on several chapters of the Fifth Canto, including the 18th chapter, entitled “The Residents of Jambudvīpa Offer Prayers.” One of those residents is Prahāda Mahārāja, who leads other residents of Hari-varṣa in offering the following prayer to Lord Nṛsimhadeva:

I offer my respectful obeisances unto Lord Nṛsimhadeva,

the source of all power. O my Lord who possesses nails and teeth just like thunderbolts, kindly vanquish our demonlike desires for fruitive activity in this material world. Please appear in our hearts and drive away our ignorance so that by Your mercy we may become fearless in the struggle for existence in this material world.

At the end of your purport to this verse you write, “Any devotee aspiring to be free of material desires should offer his respectful prayers to Nṛsiṁhadeva as Prahlāda Mahārāja did in this verse.” Wow! I was already planning to memorize this verse (which is actually prose but which still has wonderful rhythm and euphony), but now I had an added impetus—your direct instruction. I felt blessed to be the first to memorize and recite this potent prayer to Lord Nṛsiṁha.

My next editing highlight concerns my work on your *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, not during the marathon but twenty years later, when I was asked to go through and correct any errors that had been made in the first printing. After all, getting seventeen books produced in two months required practically a superhuman effort on the part of the typists, artists, and other members of the production team, especially the editors. So it was understood that the books should be gone through thoroughly and any mistakes corrected.

Here are a few highlights from what I found.

At *Madhya* 9.362, you dictated this translation:

In this Age of Kali there is no other genuine principle of religion except Vaiṣṇava devotees and the Vaiṣṇava scriptures, devotional books. This is the sum and substance of everything.

In 1975 this was rendered as follows by a rushed English editor:

In this age of Kali, there are no genuine religious principles. There are only the Vaiṣṇava devotees and the Vaiṣṇava devotional scriptures. This is the sum and substance of everything.

I felt very happy in 1995 when I could present to you basically your original translation:

In this Age of Kali there are no genuine religious principles other than those established by Vaiṣṇava devotees and the Vaiṣṇava scriptures.

This is the sum and substance of everything.

Later in the *Madhya-līlā*, at 19.157, in the 1975 printing, we find this sentence near the end of the purport:

If one thinks that there are many pseudo devotees or nondevotees in the Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Society, one can keep direct company with the spiritual master, and if there is any doubt, one should consult the spiritual master.

But what you dictated was

If one thinks in the Society there are many so-called devotees or there are so many nondevotees, still one should stick to the Society, and if one thinks the Society members are not pure devotees, he can directly keep company or in touch with the spiritual master, if there is any doubt he should consult the spiritual master.

I figured you probably would want to include that part about sticking to the Society, so I rendered this passage as follows:

Even if one thinks that there are many pseudo devotees or nondevotees in the Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Society, still one should stick to the Society; if one thinks the Society's members are not pure devotees, one can keep direct company with the spiritual master, and if there is any doubt, one should consult the spiritual master.

My final example is my favorite catch of all time, which occurred when I was reviewing *Madhya-līlā*, chapter 13. This chapter recounts Lord Caitanya's ecstatic dancing and chanting at the Ratha-yātrā festival, and at verse 137 we find this translation:

Speaking in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, "For most people, the mind and heart are one, but because My mind is never separated from Vṛndāvana, I consider My mind and Vṛndāvana to be one. My mind is already Vṛndāvana, and since You like Vṛndāvana, will You please place Your lotus feet there? I would deem that Your full mercy."

Unfortunately, because the purport you dictated for this verse was handwritten on the reverse side of the manuscript page, the typist missed it and instead appended the purport for 138, which then had

no purport. Here is the missing purport to verse 137:

The mind's activities are thinking, feeling and willing, by which the mind accepts materially favorable things and rejects the unfavorable. This is the consciousness of people in general. But when one's mind does not accept and reject but simply becomes fixed on the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, then one's mind becomes as good as Vṛndāvana. Wherever Kṛṣṇa is, there also are Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the *gopīs*, the cowherd boys and all the other inhabitants of Vṛndāvana. Thus as soon as one fixes Kṛṣṇa in his mind, his mind becomes identical with Vṛndāvana. In other words, when one's mind is completely free from all material desires and is engaged only in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then one always lives in Vṛndāvana, and nowhere else.

I felt very blissful when I rescued this gemlike purport of yours from oblivion, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I pray that for the few remaining years I have in this body I can continue to associate with you by serving your words, Śrīla Prabhupāda, both by following your instructions and helping others to do so.

Your immensely grateful servant,

Draviḍa dāsa

Initiation: January 1974—New York, USA

Sesa Dasa

A TRANSCENDENTAL ENCOUNTER

(Based on true events)

Prabhupāda emerged first at the top of the stairs followed by all the big men

Alone, I stared up from the bottom... desiring acknowledgement
"You clean his room while WE walk with him" I was told, "the position for which you are meant."

Familiar words, I'd heard them often, but would Prabhupāda give any acknowledgement?

Suddenly I remembered words I'd heard Prabhupāda say,
'One should not neglect to offer respect upon seeing one's guru'
So, I shouted out JAYA ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA! Would I
get a response?

Yes, surely I would, I prayed...but what would he say?

Then, from the stairs above, came a response, as if descending
from the spiritual world, meant just for me.

Prabhupāda said but one word...*"Jaya!"* One word which
established our relationship for eternity.

Sesa Dasa

Initiation: January 1974—Boston, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Divyanga Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances,

All glories to you!

It's me, your fallen rascal disciple Divyanga das, kindly forgive me.

Thank you for picking me up from the gutter of Kali-yuga.

You freely give anyone and everyone an equal opportunity to
take shelter at your lotus feet.

I've been trying to come to your standard for 50 years, and I
really appreciate your compassion and leniency.

You write, "But an ordinary man with firm faith in the eternal
injunctions of the Lord, even though unable to execute such orders,
becomes liberated from the bondage of the law of karma.

"In the beginning of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one may not fully
discharge the injunctions of the Lord, but because one is not resentful
of this principle and works sincerely without consideration of defeat
and hopelessness, he will surely be promoted to the stage of pure
Kṛṣṇa consciousness." (Bg. 3.31)

I read your books daily, and these jewels of nectar keep me
going, ignoring "hopelessness and defeat."

I practice *sādhana bhakti* every day praying for your special mercy.

I go out and distribute your books as you said, "making your
lifetime plans in book distribution" and constantly ask your
forgiveness for my offenses.

In your "Vṛndāvane Bhajana" you write:

*kṛṣṇera lāgiyā yebā nitya yuddha kare
ṛddhi siddhi jñāna tāra muṣṭira bhitarē*

“Whoever daily fights the battle of life only for Lord Kṛṣṇa’s sake discovers prosperity, mystic perfection and transcendental knowledge in the palm of his hand.”

So my “lifetime plan” is just that –

Daily fight the battle only for you and Kṛṣṇa. Thank you for tolerating me.

Śrī Nāma Saṅkīrtana Bhakta *vr̥nda kī, jaya!*

Please don’t kick me off your party, and I promise I’ll try to be a better disciple.

Please forgive me.

*sarva vaiṣṇavera pā’ye kori namaskāra
ithe aparādha kichu nahuka āmāra*

Oṃ tat sat.

Hare Krishna.

Divyanga Dasa

Initiation: April 1974—New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: divtskp@gmail.com

Dhanesvara Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Vyāsa-pūjā is the day of remembering and glorifying Your Divine Grace. When the sages glorify the Supreme Lord they do so by recounting His wonderful activities, and thus today I want to recount the many wonderful activities you performed.

As a child you enacted Lord Jagannath’s Rathayātrā as your play. This foreshadowed the time when, advanced in age, you enacted Lord Jagannath’s Rathayātrā in a very grand style, in major cities all over the globe. You displayed what can only be called transcendental bliss at the London Rathayātrā, where you danced for the entire parade, and where the Ratha cart rivalled Nelson’s column. Indeed, it was as if you were throwing down the gauntlet, challenging the demonic powers of the world headquartered there.

Your spiritual master instructed you to preach in the English

language which you began in 1944 with your *Back to Godhead* magazine, that you wrote, printed and distributed single-handedly. You instructed your disciples to continue it, which they did from several dozens of mimeographed copies, to a gargantuan *one million copies a month*, which you dubbed the backbone of the Hare Krishna Movement.

A friend later encouraged you to write books instead of periodicals which people discard after reading, and you took this as a message from the Supreme Lord. Thus you undertook another colossal task of translating the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. After the arduous effort of typing the First Canto on one of the earliest typewriters, you then raised the funds for printing several dozen sets, which became your means of sustenance until your followers took over the task setting up the ISKCON press exclusively to print your books. You continued to write at a prodigious rate, seemingly impossible for a person of your age. And the more the titles came off the press the more your dedicated disciples were inspired to distribute the mercy, far and wide, to every town and village. The numbers quickly grew from the thousands, into the millions, and then the tens-of-millions, and translated into more than 80 languages creating a truly global spiritual renaissance.

Back to Godhead magazine and these books became the spiritual seeds you distributed all over the globe that sprouted into temples of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā Gaura Nītāi, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna. In the attached ashrams you carried out the impossible task of transforming the sinful lives of thousands of youth, as they transformed from hippies to happies, as they took on the discipline of spiritual life, learned the principles of Vaishnava *siddhānta*, and performed the purifying practices of Deity worship and *japa* yoga. Under your instruction these youth carried out the *yuga-dharma*, Harinām Sānkīrtan, risking repeated arrest as they challenged the police powers as to who would emerge victorious, and they won! Doing as commanded by you, their guru, and Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, “Hare Krishna” became a global phenomenon of the 60s and 70s, and a household word all over America and Europe.

Through your temples the entire culture of Krishna Consciousness, which is the culture of the spiritual world, became widely recognized. Your temples became attracted to the Indian diaspora as being the only ones authentic to their culture. Your temples that continue to remain true to you continue teaching the

world about that transcendental culture as well as the means of achieving it at the end of this short life.

You instructed your disciples that no one should go hungry within 10 miles of your temples, and many of temples, as well as individual stalwart devotees, took this command to heart, to the point that Hare Krishna Food for Life now feeds multiple millions, and some individual temples distribute tens of thousands plates daily. Food for Life Global now races anywhere in the world that disaster strikes to feed those unfortunate souls, creating good will through the universal language of food. Although it is not just food, but transcendental meals that relieve karma along with hunger.

With all of that accomplished there is yet a tremendous amount yet to be done, and by your estimation, an entire fifty-percent of your legacy – the establishment of the spiritual culture of *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma*. Indeed, we now stand at the threshold of the time when that will become the foremost necessity. You predicted in 1973 that this materialistic “civilization” would be finished in 50 years, and along with all of the aforementioned impossible feats, this prediction is coming true, precisely on schedule. During a morning walk in Atlanta you once predicted that these glittering cities would become uninhabitable, and that people would be fleeing by the thousands. The smart ones can see that the edifice is crumbling and are fleeing, and in a very short time that trickle will become a flood. I have no doubt that by your grace your devotees assisting you in carrying out the second half of your mission, will likewise perform many seemingly impossible tasks, just as they were able to perform in the first half, due to the blessing and grace of both your divine grace and the Supreme Lord Śrī Krishna.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, in understanding our past prior to meeting you, and then seeing the abysmal degradation that has transpired in this world within our short lives, we can begin to realize how, but for you, we, and especially, I, would have been carried with along with the current of this wretched and loathsome demonic culture to many future hellish births. Thus it is impossible for us to measure our good fortune and eternal indebtedness, in having come in contact with you, and the words of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* speak for us in saying: “We think that we have met Your Goodness by the will of providence, just so that we may accept you as captain of the ship for those who desire to cross the difficult ocean of Kali, which deteriorates all the good qualities of a human being.”

We pray that you will allow us to offer as some token of appreciation for our eternal debt to you, the opportunity of allowing us to assist you in your next impossible feat – the establishing the spiritual culture of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. I beg you to give me some part to play in this task, however seemingly small and insignificant.

I am but a fallen wretch, begging for your mercy. Please cast your favorable glance upon me and uplift me by your grace.

Your servant,

Dhanesvara Das

Initiation: April 1974—Gainesville, Florida, USA

Current location: Whangarei, New Zealand

Contact: dhanesvara@gmail.com

Aristaha Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

You are so kind that you have accepted such a fallen person like me. How can I show my gratitude? By service and surrender only. For your pleasure I wrote this poem dedicated to Your Divine Grace. I feel like a dwarf trying to touch the moon.

Your servant,

Aristaha Dasa

Initiation: April 1974—Stockholm, Sweden

Current location: ISKCON Almviks Gard, Sweden

Contact: ekstrand108@gmail.com

O Master who is kind to the fallen!

I felt that when I was travelling through the darkness,
you never left me alone and without hope,
it was like I was falling down in the deep well of illusion,
and you were handing me the rope.

O Master who is kind to the fallen!

You became the moon who made my path visible,
it was like stars had fallen down to clear the way,
to give light when there was no need any more to fight,
in the near presence of death still everything was alright.

O Master who is kind to the fallen!

Through all these trials and tribulations,
all these traps of temptation,
being lost in forgetfulness and wrong imagination,
pressing my mind and body to illusion and frustration.

O Master who is kind to the fallen!

Still you never left me alone,
although my heart sometimes felt harder than a stone,
and the light was gone and my world seemed to collapse,
into deep, deep, painful chaos.

O Master who is kind to the fallen!

I try to pray to clear my voice,
when I am left with no other choice,
please dear Master, let my faith grow like a fragile rose,
and never die, because there is no reason to give up and cry.

O Master who is kind to the fallen!

Again I turn my face to you who is so kind,
please include me in Your plan, let the rose
of my faith grow,
may its fragrance please Your senses,
I don't want my spiritual life to be empty,
like a lifeless, mundane show.

O Master who is kind to the fallen!

We should never think that the spiritual path is
simple and smooth,
there may be so many thorns under the soft leaves,
but I take shelter of the holy name,

it will one distant day dissolve my mortal frame.

O Master who is kind to the fallen!

I meet you every day in sound although my
vision is clouded,
devotees greet me friendly, they wish me well,
but it is so easy to misinterpret heaven to be hell,
how unfortunate we are who from
Lord Krishna's embrace fell.

O Master who is kind to the fallen!

My spiritual master is my saviour,
he came when I was lost in pain and darkness,
he never gave up on me, he showed such
unprecedented kindness,
and still he is saving me daily, lovingly,
from the hodgepodge material mess.

O Master who is kind to the fallen!

Please wake me up from *māyā's* sleep,
it is so painful, loveless, dark and deep,
O Śrīla Prabhupāda, your compassion
make the heart both burn and softly weep.

O Master who is kind to the fallen!

O Master, I want to serve you with all my heart,
Please promise me that never, we shall separate, depart,
I cannot live a materialistic life, then it would
be better to die,
a life without devotion to you, I am
simply left behind to cry.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda who is kind to the fallen!

O Divine Master who is so compassionate and kind,
please show your grace to your insignificant servant,
only you can purify and heal my crazy mind,

you represent the love and hope I always sought to find.

O Divine Master who is kind to the fallen!

Krsnavesa Dasi

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In your unfathomable mercy, you created a connection for me, a lost and ineligible soul. A connection to the great *paramparā* of the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya *sampradāya*, to the teachings and blessings of the *sampradāya*'s long succession of *ācāryas*, to God Himself—Lord Krishna. You are my one and only...my link to it all.

You are not possessive or jealous in your fatherhood of me. Your heart is the abounding heart of a *mahātmā* that jumps with joy at seeing a child of yours able to access wisdom from any one of your distinguished forebears—a meeting between baby and grandpa; a spiritual bounce on the lap of great-grandma, perhaps.

The generous, vulnerable, self-disclosing words of the *avadhūta brāhmaṇa*, featured in the Eleventh Canto of the *Bhāgavatam*, shed further light on this expansive loving quality in the relationship between guru and disciple. The *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* disclosed that as he wandered the Earth, he took lessons not only from the teachings of his initiating guru and predecessor *ācāryas*, but also from the ordinary creatures and phenomena of the world. He learned important lessons from a pigeon and a python, from water and from fire, and even from a prostitute, to name a few, considering all these to be his gurus. How was it possible for the *brāhmaṇa* to have so many random gurus, not connected in *paramparā*, without his becoming hopelessly confused? I think I know the answer. When, by the grace of the primary spiritual master, a disciple starts to see with the eyes of scripture, suddenly all his life's experiences are seen in that light, and transform into illustrations of the primary guru's teachings. Thus, at every turn, one recognises—*Ah, there's another example of what Prabhupāda told us!* Following in the footsteps of the *avadhūta brāhmaṇa*, I can develop the expansive loving heart of a *mahātmā* and give credit to the people and things of my world today that have helped me understand your teachings better. A movie and a factory, every single place I see, a moon landing, and the late Queen of

England—all these, to name a few, have served as my gurus.

But through all the happy encounters I've had, with predecessor *ācāryas* in your books, with people and things in the world, that have helped me grow in understanding as your student, venturesome and intriguing as they've been, you have had the natural expectation of a father that I will hold on to you as my centre, and always return to you. And I do—with the secure attachment of a well-loved infant.

Each year, when it's time to write my Vyāsa-pūjā offering, I panic a moment, wondering what on earth there is that's new for me to talk about. But when I stop and ask myself what's exercising me currently, I see how my spiritual life is ever rolling onwards, with new developments all the time. So there is actually always something new that's going on for me, to tell you about each year. Lately I've been thinking about how you created your movement, ISKCON, to serve Lord Caitanya's purpose of distributing the topmost level of love of God to the unfortunate, but most fortunate, masses of Kali-yuga. In your movement, Śrīla Prabhupāda, following in the footsteps of your predecessors, you give most emphasis to the service of Rādhā and Krishna, and the mellow of *mādhurya rasa*. Yet you said that in practice a neophyte devotee like me should worship Rādhā-Krishna with the mood in which Lakshmi-Nārāyaṇa are worshipped—the mood of awe and reverence. That is the mood with which God is worshipped in the paths of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and other religions of this world. It is the mood of *dāsyā rasa*, servitorship, and this year I have been reflecting on how *dāsyā rasa*, though not given centre stage in our line, was made to shine very brilliantly, and demonstrated extensively, by Lord Jesus Christ, who referred to Krishna as his father in heaven. Who would have thought that *dāsyā rasa* could be such a tremendous and beautiful thing, but I see it when I read the Bible. You know that I joined your movement very young, at the age of fifteen, running away from home and from my parents. Although I prize above everything my coming to ISKCON and becoming your initiated disciple, I did not understand at the time the emotional damage I did to myself in prematurely "flying the nest." Unconscious of it for many years, I eventually realised that as soon as I started living in the temple, although I greatly relished and enjoyed my life there, I also began to suffer from a constant underlying, deeply submerged anxiety and insecurity, which led to continuous mild depression and low self-esteem. I understand now that this was due to leaving the shelter of my parents before I was

really ready. As a result of this, I have gone from one sort of trouble to another in my life, looking for security in all the wrong places. At some point this year, I started envisioning myself as a child of God, in the sense of a very small baby being held in the arms of Lord Krishna, and I asked Lord Krishna to accept me in that way and to be my Father in heaven and on earth, as Jesus referred to Him. I hope that this is okay and can be supported by your teachings about the appropriate mood of service of a neophyte devotee, and that I will not offend you with any sort of *sahajiyā* mentality or activity. I've found this meditation is helping me a lot. I can honestly say I am not anxious anymore, and that at last, after fifty long years, I have a continuous feeling of peace and security. I have told my husband about this, and will listen to any guidance that comes to me from the devotees. This is the best way to receive guidance from you in your physical absence, and thus I hope to stay correct in my devotional practice, and pleasing to you.

Your humble servant,

Krsnavesa Dasi

Initiation: April 1974—Hamburg, Germany

Current location: Nottingham, UK

Contact: rose.sharanya@outlook.com

Nirantara Dāsa

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master,
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who has
opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness
of ignorance, with the torchlight of knowledge.

My dear ever well-wisher and eternal spiritual master,

As I write this offering, I am listening to you sing “*Gurv-aṣṭakam Prayers*” in 1966. There are so many reasons why I am still attracted to you. Your voice, your singing, even up until now, is unlike anyone else I have ever heard. You sing with all your heart and soul, and I try to emulate you in my own singing. Of course, there is a vast

difference between us because your vibration is pure, without any material desire, while I am still trying to come to the offenceless stage of chanting, and struggling to do so, even after 50 years. Thus I expose myself as a fallen disciple.

Another major reason why I am still attracted to you is the power of your written word. Every day I spend an hour or more cramming your “Bhaktivedanta purports”. My meager preaching efforts are strictly based on your books, and I *simply* rotate your four major works: *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Nectar of Devotion*, and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. But still my favorite book of yours is *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*. When I read your most potent *Krishna* book, I am transported to the spiritual world. It was this book that convinced me to join you and your ISKCON movement.

Without your ISKCON movement the world situation would have been all but destroyed by now, as I am seeing day-by-day how vicious, sinful and intolerable it is to live in this Kali-yuga. But your temples, your members, your movement is somehow or other staying unified under your guidance. I worry that after all of your initiated disciples finally leave this world to join you in assisting where you are preaching currently in the universe, what will happen to your ISKCON? I have concerns whether the next generation of leaders will keep you in the center, keep it your movement, or will they deviate and become *asāra*, or useless? You warn about this in one of your purports:

*ācāryera mata yei, sei mata sāra
tānra ājñā laṅghi' cale, sei ta' asāra*

The order of the spiritual master is the active principle in spiritual life. Anyone who disobeys the order of the spiritual master immediately becomes useless.

“What pleases you the most?” I once asked you in 1975, when you lectured in Atlanta. But your reply, “If you love Kṛṣṇa”, shocked the entire congregation. Perhaps because we were all expecting a different answer. And since then I have taken those words as your direct instruction to me. Somehow or other, only because of you, I have some attraction for Kṛṣṇa. I like to sing Kṛṣṇa’s name, I love to speak about Kṛṣṇa, and I love Kṛṣṇa’s devotees.

I do not know how much longer I will be able to serve you in this body, but my prayer on this Gaura *pūrṇimā* day is that when I leave

my body, may I join you and try to assist and serve you wherever you may be preaching at this time?

And that reminds me of yet another reason why I feel eternally indebted to you. It was you who saved me from the “suicide course” I was traversing, trying to lord it over the material energy like all the other conditioned souls. You sacrificed your personal comfort just to start this movement. You had to tolerate so much to create ISKCON, to maintain it, guide it and make it secure. Without you there would be no ISKCON. But you never rejected the order of your spiritual master, and in 1965 arrived in America and changed the course of history.

My wife and I composed a song in this connection sometime back in 1992...

A devotee of Kṛṣṇa
the savior of the human race
he came as a messenger of the Lord
unaware of the hardships he'd face
With but very few possessions
he set sail for the Western world
to fulfill the order of Guru
was his duty, a calling of the Divine
Kṛṣṇa is God!
so let us tell the world
by preaching the knowledge he gave to us
we'll be purified
As he traveled for many days
until he reached the Boston Pier
he wrote down in his diary
“My Lord Kṛṣṇa,
why have You brought me here?”
After struggling alone
Kṛṣṇa sent him many followers
to help him in his mission
of printing books on Krishna consciousness
Kṛṣṇa is God!
so let us tell the world
by preaching the knowledge he gave to us
we'll be purified
by living the knowledge he gave to us
we'll be purified

by teaching the knowledge he gave to us
we'll be purified
by giving the knowledge he gave to us
we'll be purified

Composed by Nirantara Dāsa, March 6, 2023 (Gaura *pūrṇimā*)

Nirantara Dāsa

Initiation: 1974, April—New York, USA

Current location: Aliso Viejo, California, USA

Contact: nirantaradasa@gmail.com

Ramabhadrā Dasa

Om tat sat

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

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

Everyone Loves Prabhupāda

Sadhus' BTG, Touchstone to me, I see
Prabhupāda's picture and ask who is he?

Vaiṣṇava smiles most blissfully, "Prabhupāda is
our father, everyone loves Śrīla Prabhupāda".

Daydream and nightdream, Maya's temporal
realm, shackled by modes, forlorn in hell.

Prabhupāda delivers Krishna, *śāstras* of
wisdom, *śabda brahman* delights,

benefits to thee, loving thanks to His Divine Grace.

Expands Gaura Nitāi's love, delivers causeless relief.

Episodes of illusion, a nightmare it seems,

Birth, old age, disease, death, three-
fold miseries, O what a bad scene.

Bondage in Māyā's domain, suffering
souls desperate so sweetly sing,

*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.*

Revolution of love, did no one foresee?
Prabhupāda presents Krishna most perfectly,

Prabhupāda journeyed West, one blessed Calcutta day.

Across an ocean of nescience, churned violent waves,
mystical Krishna's blessing, mission amazed.

Krishna's chosen *ācārya* in whom all weary
souls find peace, bliss, relief from distress.

A wiser soul we have not found, sharing Śrī
Krishna's mercy, Prabhupāda's glories abound,

Grace our fellow man, vibrate Krishna's holy
name in every village, every town,

Prabhupāda, well-wisher, master, O lord
thou art living still in sound,

We desire to serve and please His Divine Grace
forever, with limits knowing no bounds.

Lost in Māyā's masquerade three-fold miserable
conditions common as night follows day.

"The Wander Lust" Māyā's ship, a Funhouse
of fear, in Māyā's nightmarish scenes,

Like rats in a maze, bewildered and dazed, trap
of distress in Devī's tough lusty schemes,

Foolish, misguided, lazy, freezing cold,

scorching heat, driving rain,

Deluded desires, drinking poison, abuse the
senses, unfortunate lives punished with pain.

Episode of delusion is confusing our brains,

Misuse of independence Krishna makes us insane,
foolish enjoyers suffer repulsive disdain,

Samsāra of time, a bad circle game, stranded in
Māyā's confusing multi-dimensional plane,

Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy delivers the fallen,
most misfortunate, even the badly mundane.

Guided through treacherous terrain,
Prabhupāda's *kīrtan* kings reign,

Awaken from darkness in Kali's Tompkins domain,

Ignorance, quarrel, hypocrisy, short-lived, mundane,

Though one great hope for peace, bliss, love, and freedom.

San̄kīrtana so mystical, illumined translucent,
eternal peace, heartfelt of joy, reservoir of love,

Golden Gaurāṅga's Benediction Moon,
gifting Śrī Krishna *prema*.

On the desolate horizon devastation awaits,
blazing, scorched, laments bittersweet.

Your transcendental benefactor is knocking,
please open your mind's door,

Receive matchless gifts, eternal peace, ultimate
happiness—Krishna's holy names—

ecstatic Krishna *prema*, overcome by evil nevermore.

Vibrations of love, like a pebble in a stream,

Expanding from the spirit, never-
ending, wake-up from dreams.

Sweeter than spring, *Jaya Prabhupāda*, *Jaya Prabhupāda*, all the world sings.

He enlightens us with wisdom, Krishna
consciousness reigns king.

The sweet mood of spring, Prabhupāda's mercy in May,

Ācārya of all in Kali's mundane display.

Preach and please Prabhupāda, shine Krishna's
Bhagavat Light, eternal love divine.

We adore His Divine Grace, to our dear
master and loving father we pray,

Please forgive our offenses, engage us faithfully today.

Episode of reality, Prabhupāda's mercy—a favorite scene.

His Divine Grace distributes love, apples,
and oranges, quite a wonderful treat,

Simply Wonderful, *gulab jamuns*, cookies,
luglus, *Krishna-prema* so sweet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, transcendent chanter,
and dancer most pure.

He taught us "the Swami," step lively, sweet cure.

Chant and be happy, Dance and be sublime,

Honor Krishna *prasādam*, nourish a
temple, purify hearts divine,

awaken sleeping impoverished minds.

Inspirational mercy, guru, loving
father, well-wisher, and friend,

We always adore thee, while your mercy and
love all true beggars humbly implore.

Please make us steady on Krishna's path of devotion,
bless us perfectly realized, forevermore.

Now illusions short-lived daydream,
nightdream, nevermore.

Krishna Prema bhakti conscious,
awakened eternally we're sure,

Prabhupāda's *bhakti prema* blossomed,
Krishna Nitya-līlā assured,

for Gaura Nitāi and Rādhā Govinda *saṅga*,
absolute true love absolutely is pure.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, everyone loves you.
We desire forever to say more ...

*caṅṣu-dāna dilo jei janme janme prabhu sei
divya-jñān hṛde prokāśito*

He who has given me the gift of transcendental
vision is my lord, birth after birth. By his mercy
divine knowledge is revealed within the heart.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to your *bhāva bhakti* blissful and most blessed
Appearance Day Vyāsa-pūjā celebration.

My great good fortune is being your eternal disciple. The
magnanimous mercy and kind heartedness of my eternal Spiritual
Master can never be underestimated to have less than priceless value
in my heart and soul.

*saṁsāra-dāvānala-līḍha-loka-
trāṇāya kārūṇya-ghanāghanatvam
prāptasya kalyāṇa-guṇārṇavasya*

The spiritual master is receiving benediction from the ocean of mercy. Just as a cloud pours water on a forest fire to extinguish it, so the spiritual master delivers the materially afflicted world by extinguishing the blazing fire of material existence. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, after 55 years of reading *Bhagavad-gītā* and being spiritually awakened, contacted, connected and positively affected by wonderful elements of the great Hare Krishna movement, I am certain beyond any shadow of a doubt Your Divine Grace is Śrī Śrī Rādhā Gaura Nitāi's and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govindadeva's self-effulgent Vaishnava Ācārya Ṭhākura.

Their transcendental representative, beyond the inebriety of the three modes of material nature namely, *Tamo Guṇa*, *Rajo Guṇa*, and *Sattva Guṇa*.

Your Divine Grace stands infallible in the Krishna consciousness enlightened state; sober, steady, practical and perfectly sublime. Śrīla Prabhupāda, Your Divine Grace is indeed the leader of all wonderful Vaishnavas, a true *nitya siddha* self-effulgent Ācārya.

Chosen and empowered by the Golden Avatar Himself, Śrīla Gaurāṅgadeva, and Śrīla Nityānanda Balarāma, the transcendental Oceans of mercy and the greatest distributors of Krishna *prema*.

The empowered Ācārya Ṭhākura, yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda Your Divine Grace is the *Shaktyaveśa Avatāra*, messenger of the Supreme Absolute Truth Himself namely Bhagavān Śrīla Govindadeva, Bhagavān Śrī Krishna Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Bhagavān Śrīla Nityānanda Balarāma, and the most munificent merciful Mahārāṇī of Vṛndāvana Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī whose complexion is like molten gold and is very dear to Bhagavān Śrī Krishna.

Therefore, Your Divine Grace is an empowered deliverer of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's pure *bhakti yoga*. Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's pure devotional service which blesses the fortunate practitioner with eternal peace, ultimate blissful happiness, and eternal ecstatic love (Krishna *prema*). Once, Bhagavān Śrīla Nityānanda Balarāma recommends such a Vaiṣṇava's service to the most wonderful and most merciful Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, then such a pure self-realized empowered Ācārya Ṭhākura's words of wisdom may be required

to describe the magnitude of such a Vaiṣṇava recipient's unlimited great good fortune.

Śrīla Prabhupāda says:

We should worship Rādhārāṇī first. That is our business. Instead of offering directly one flower to Krishna, you just put it in the hands of Rādhārāṇī: 'My mother Rādhārāṇī, Jagan-Mātā, if you kindly take this flower and offer it to Krishna.' 'Oh,' Rādhārāṇī says, 'Oh, you have brought a flower?' Krishna said, *patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam yo me bhaktyā prayacchati* (BG 9.26), but don't try to offer Krishna directly. Just offer through Rādhārāṇī. It will be very much appreciated by Rādhārāṇī. So, this is our philosophy, to please Krishna through Rādhārāṇī. So, we should offer *puṣpāñjali* and pray to Rādhārāṇī that 'Rādhārāṇī, kindly be merciful and tell about me to Your Krishna. To Your Krishna. Krishna is Yours.' Krishna, Rādhā-Krishna. Krishna is not independent. Krishna is Rādhārāṇī's property. So, you have to approach Krishna through Rādhārāṇī. Worship Rādhārāṇī very nicely and be happy. (Rādhāṣṭamī — London, September 5, 1973)

Being a pure *bhakti sevā* conduit illumined by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's causeless mercy, Your Divine Grace as Śrī Krishna's messenger of *Bhāgavata Truth* is curing the all-pervasive super spread of the primary disease of *Mṛtyu-loka*, birth, old-age, disease, and death, which is mired in a constant dreary cloud of *avidyā* and *nirānanda*, and in a dangerous atmosphere of non-existence; no one is spared from this disease as it is an absolute total perpetual bondage of fear and punishment of *ādhyātmika*, *ādhibhautika*, and *ādhidaiivika* interactions. Your Divine Grace provides the cure for *māyā* shakti's three-fold miseries in this dark iron-age of Kali-yuga, the unfortunate age of quarrel and hypocrisy and ultimately of mass assured destruction. Simply chant these names of God and your life will be sublime; *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, all others following the *bhakti* path you so wisely propound in your Bhaktivedanta Purports are following in the protective, soothing, and sacred benediction dust of Your Divine Grace's pure lotus feet. Perhaps Your Divine Grace's most mystical achievement may be in converting so many unfortunate conditioned

souls into wonderful, surrendered disciples, flawless *sādhana bhakti* practitioner perfectionists, and into pure Vaiṣṇava devotees, great *mahātmās*, and great spiritual leaders in Kali-yuga's wasteland of so-called civilized humanity. Their glory is also Your Divine Grace's glory, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, deliver us to the soothing shelter of your divine lotus feet. Please protect your insignificant *śikṣā/dīkṣā* disciples from this tabernacle of Kali-yuga slaughter, and punishment and deliver us to the safe and soothing eternal shelter of the abode of truth, bliss, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Gaura Nitāi's love and devotion. Please give me shelter at your lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda. I belong to Your Divine Grace birth after birth. Please engage your foolish children, your dedicated daughters and sons as you mercifully choose. Everyone loves you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please be kind to so many of your stranded endangered disciples.

Begging to remain your servant forever.

Das O' Smi

Your foolish, insignificant, unfortunate, unqualified menial servant,

Ramabhadra Dasa

Initiation: April 1974—New York, USA

Current location: Brooklyn, New York, USA

Contact: rbd108@aol.com

Indriya Damana Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my beloved spiritual father,

On the occasion of your most auspicious advent on the earth, once again, I am confronted with my inability to glorify you properly; how can a candle contribute to illuminate the sun? One thing I know though, for sure, is that you saved me from a very confused and distressed condition and enabled me to have a taste of the happiness of devotional service under your divine guidance and grace.

What struck me the most in your divine personality is the combination of extreme humility, simplicity, sweetest kindness, and power. In New York, in the beginning phase of your preaching, not only were you cooking for your guests and serving them prasādam, but after everybody was gone, you were washing the pots. About ten years later, you was giving *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class in Krishna

Balaram Mandir in Vrindavan, your deep voice emanating from somewhere in the transcendental plane; you was explaining the conversation of the Vishnudūtās and the Yamadūtās on the occasion of Ajāmila’s departure. During the whole class, I clearly felt that all the important personalities of the universe like Lord Śiva, Lord Brahmā, Nārada Muni, and innumerable demigods were present in the air, above your disciples, to attend this historical moment when you were preaching in Vrindavan, in Krishna Balaram Mandir to these blessed souls you had caught in your net, from the countries of the *mlecchas*.

The depth of your dedication to the order of your beloved Gurudeva Oṁ Vishnupāda Paramahaṁsa Parivrajakāchārya Aṣṭottara-śata Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda is unfathomable. Your glory will continue to shine more and more in the three worlds as the fruit of your Saṅkīrtana will become manifested.

Your insignificant,

Indriya Damana Das

Initiation: June 1974—Paris, France

Tattvavit Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Fifty years ago, your servants in America and Germany delivered to me Lord Caitanya’s help and hope: the chanting of Kṛṣṇa’s names, and faith in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Bhāgavatam*. Eventually, I felt free to move out of Minnesota, my native state, and restart life at ISKCON temples in California.

On my first day as a *bhakta*, the temple commander (Kṛta-karma Prabhu from Cuba) arranged a ride for me (on the second day) from northern California to Los Angeles, so I could attend your morning class at the temple on Watseka Avenue on the third day. This happy commencement of my new life in ISKCON showed me that the Supreme Personality of Godhead could reciprocate with my desire to be included in the ranks of the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees.

From Los Angeles you departed, in mid-January 1974, on an international tour, but you returned to California in July for the San Francisco Ratha-yātrā parade. Wearing a long white sweater and

a red rose garland, you raised your arms and danced on the large stage during a *kīrtana* with thousands. You told the audience that if we Westerners chant and dance, the whole world will follow.

During the first half of 1974, in that city you had renamed New Jagannātha Puri, I was serving with Jayānanda Prabhu and others. A week before you arrived in July, your letter came in which you accepted some of us as disciples and gave us spiritual names — enjoining that we strictly follow the four rules. You offered this enjoinder to the West's frustrated younger generation to replace our impermanent enjoyment. Deluded by *māyā's* illusory influence, we had all believed something untrue.

At the busy time of Ratha-yātrā, scheduling an initiation ceremony was not what mattered most to the organizers. Then, too, the Los Angeles leaders needed your time next, so you agreed to leave maybe the day after the parade.

While you stood for a minute or two and waited to “greet the Deities” early in the morning just before you left the city, I closely watched you. I thought about having missed out on the crucial moments of truth, when the disciple makes a vow to the guru, takes part in a sacred fire sacrifice, and collects remuneration for the guru. But you also taught that the real initiation and transmission of spiritual truth takes place when a humble and sincere disciple is willing and determined to adopt the prescribed purificatory process that the tolerant and self-controlled guru had mastered.

During the last four years of your physical presence (1974–77), I was a beginner in ISKCON. Our exchanges were rather limited, but at least I saw you and heard your classes in eight cities — Dallas, Denver, Chicago, Detroit, Toronto, etc. — for I was traveling with “the library party,” which followed you during your summer tours. Together with these devotees who sold standing orders of your books to librarians and professors, strategically moving to thousands of North American campuses for two academic years, I was driving and accompanying Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami, our leader, to hundreds of classrooms, where he spoke to many students. I also did the research for his first book, *Readings in Vedic Literature: The Tradition Speaks for Itself*, which was especially written for students and published by the BBT. In the summer of 1976, that book was presented to you in Detroit.

What I lacked in personal direction from you (and in my own character) was compensated for by all that you did for us to gradually

perfect our human lives. Thriving and well off, you proclaimed that you are ever accessible in your books and teachings. We require a spiritual master to guide us how to act on the spiritual platform, so thank you for helping us realize our freedom from matter and our immortality in relation to Krishna.

You practiced the deepest yoga and imparted the highest wisdom. Your restraint of the senses and withdrawal from the materialistic world were perfected through “appropriate renunciation,” or *yukta vairagya*, and by your staying linked with Krishna and remaining exclusively under Krishna’s shelter. Whenever speaking, you were rooted, grounded, firmly established in profound knowledge, and endowed with a steadfast devotion wholly intent on Krishna. All these qualities are implied in text 2.61 of the *Gītā* by the meanings of the Sanskrit words: *tāni sarvāṅi samiyama yukta āsīta mat-paraḥ | vaśe hi yasyendriyāṅi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā | |*.

As of 2020, I am co-editing and managing the production of the revived, revamped *ISKCON Communications Journal*, which returned in 2021 and has come out annually thrice.

Subservient in the pressure of the faith about me (as Nathaniel Hawthorne described the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, the Puritan clergyman in *The Scarlet Letter*),

Tattvavit Dasa

Initiation: 1974, July—San Francisco, USA

Krsnadasa Kaviraja Dasa and Purnamasi Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who so compassionately left the shelter of Śrī Vrindavan Dhāma to travel the world. Thus you enlightened each and every soul, either directly or through your books, regarding the ultimate purpose of their lives. Through your books, your audio and video legacy, and through your surrendered devotees, this enlightening will continue for at least ten thousand years.

Somehow or other we were fortunate to receive the association of your early disciples who gave us your association. Thus they bestowed upon us the gift of Bhakti to you and to Krishna, the most valuable gift we will ever receive. We pray that we will unwrap this gift more and more by chanting the Holy Name, scrutinizingly

studying your books and passing on this great gift to others. By doing so, we will be assisting you with your original mission to help everyone receive their gift of Bhakti.

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, purify our consciousness by the words emanating from your lotus mouth enabling us to engage in your service and the service of all devotees of the past, present, and future. The dust of your lotus feet and of all the devotees is our only hope.

Help us clear our *anarthas* so that we can be effective in carrying your message to everyone we meet.

Your mercy is all that we are made of,

Your servants,

Krsnadasa Kaviraja dasa and Purnamasi devi dasi

Initiation: July 1974—Ottawa, Canada

Current location: Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Contact: krsnadas.chris@gmail.com

Rasaliladevi Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet, which are the shelter of the Vaiṣṇava devotees.

It is a little known fact that in May of 1969, you graced the town of Athens, Ohio, with your holy presence.

The next day, on May 20, 1969, *The Post*, published an article that described how you had held a *kīrtana* and addressed a group of about 60 people, comprised of “students, faculty, and members of the Krishna Consciousness Society.”

After chanting with the audience for 20 minutes, the Swami spoke on the importance of chanting, and what it can do for the human being... With chanting, there is no religious or sectarian movement, only happiness. Happiness, the swami continued, is man’s nature. It is one of man’s inherent qualities...

Since that day, this place has never been the same. You turned Athens, Ohio, into a *tīrtha*, and Lord Caitanya’s divine influence has been spreading here, ever since, by your grace.

Increasingly, after that visit, your disciples and grand-disciples

became active in Athens with an aim to water the seed of Krishna consciousness that had been planted by Your Divine Grace. In the fall of 1982, a center was established at 89 Mill Street, near the campus of Ohio University. The center did not remain in that particular building, but the spirit of *bhakti* continued on in different locations over the years. Presently, there is, once again, an Athens Krishna House, which opened its doors and began holding regular programs in November of 2021. I seek your blessings in continuing the work which was started by you, on your one and only visit here. Please guide my attempts to serve your mission sincerely and authentically. Please sustain my enthusiasm and energy for this important service.

I pray that my life continues to be a testament to the transformative power of your amazing spiritual potency, to the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and to the unconditional love that you extend to us, your disciples and followers.

Please allow me to remain in the fire of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, serving you with body, mind and spirit, to the best of my ability and in a state of complete humility. May I always remember and be inspired by your example of selfless service in devotion to the Supreme Soul and all His separated parts and parcels. May the people of Athens, Ohio, become happy by the chanting of the holy name and hearing about Lord Kṛṣṇa. Only by your grace will any of this be possible!

I remain eternally grateful for your having accepted me as your disciple and daughter. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for taking a chance on me and for giving me spiritual shelter within the ISKCON family.

Your humble servant,

Rasaliladevi Devi Dasi

Initiation: July 1974—New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA

Current location: Athens, Ohio, USA

Contact: rosemaryrader@gmail.com

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It is only by your unlimited and causeless mercy, that a poor fallen soul such as me, can claim to be the disciple of such an exalted soul as you, my eternal master.

I am simply praying for your mercy, so that I may continue on the path of *bhakti*. I am weak and susceptible to *māyā's* repeated attacks, but by remembering you, and especially by chanting 16 rounds and daily reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, I am somehow remaining enthusiastic in my service of preaching the glories of the Lord.

It is utterly amazing to me, that I am more excited than ever to go out weekly for *harināma saṅkīrtana*. By your mercy, a few devotees regularly join me, and we feel spiritually rejuvenated each time that we go out. You will be pleased to know that I have trained several young devotees, in the mood of simple *kīrtana*, focusing on the holy names. Some of them started as young as two years old. Now these kids can lead *kīrtanas* at various events, and they get extremely excited when they sing “Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda.” We also distribute your books during the *harināma*, and the reception is very encouraging.

My desire is to become completely immersed in reading your books, performing public *kīrtanas*, and inspiring devotees to focus on the example that you set for all of us, disciples, and future generations of devotees as well.

When I think of the sacrifices that you endured to start this movement, it moves me to tears, and it inspires me to endeavor more consistently, despite numerous difficulties.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please continue to bless me with faith, determination, and commitment, to your vision for this movement, which you so clearly defined in the Seven Purposes of ISKCON.

Your eternal servant,

Balabhadra Bhattacharya Dasa
Initiation: July 1974—Chicago, USA
Current location: Georgia, USA
Contact: btillman108@yahoo.com

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

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

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

Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, for kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism. My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

One short week after submitting my last report to you in April, 2021, Greece opened its borders for tourist visits, so Nartaka Gopala and myself planned a trip for September immediately.

Meanwhile, back in New Talavana Dhāma the effort to develop our community's self-sufficiency had identified a need to departmentalize the various responsibilities of the Temple President to reduce his workload, and to outline progressive goals for each department, coordinated by the Community Management Team (CMT).

As May progressed, we developed a Department Heads list with prevalent service requirements for each, to establish an integrated self-sufficient management model.

Next, we developed a schedule of quarterly report dates for the departments to present a 15–20 minute report to the CMT 4 times a year. These reports would outline the previous quarter's progress on a department's particular goals, and define where the next quarter's efforts would be applied. In this way, quarterly budget requirements could be ascertained, and funding be planned. It remains the CMT responsibility to implement this process!

In early July, I was back in Alachua to assist Nartaka Gopala with the media campaign for the 50th Anniversary celebrations of your UF Gainesville Krishna Lunch Program. Our subsequent Media Release was on 07-15, and on 07-27-2021 we had a wonderful 50th anniversary celebration of your lecture and initial "Krishna Lunch" at UF Gainesville, Florida.

Both the Mayor of Gainesville and the university president, spoke very fondly of your lecture 50 years ago and the decades of Krishna Lunches that have followed to this day!

The following week, it was time to prepare the media notifications for the Alachua/Gainesville Festival of Chariots (Rathayātrā parade) in Jacksonville Beach, Florida, for mid-August.

Our trip to Greece was from 09-15 to 09-28-2021, which gave us an opportunity to visit the Athens Temple, where another of your good disciples, HG Dayānidhi dāsa Vanacāri, is Temple President.

He explained that this was the 9th attempt to open an ISKCON branch in Athens despite eight previous failures, due to the strong influence of the Greek Orthodox Church over the Greek Parliament. Preaching religious philosophy is not allowed unless from an established historical doctrine that is proven to be as ancient as their own. At this point, their legal system was investigating the historical validity of our Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

It was very inspiring to find the Greek people very interested in philosophical thought and thus susceptible to Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy – when given the chance to hear and share. Dayānidhi Prabhu informed us that they had translated 50,000 volumes of your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* into the Greek language. They were in storage waiting for the day when legal distribution could begin.

The morning and evening programs are live-streamed on the Temple Facebook social media page every day which has several dozen followers.

After our return to Alachua, I had little time to do the last-minute fertilizing of the productive trees and plants at Nartaka Gopala's place before heading back to New Talavana, Mississippi at the beginning of October.

During October and November I continued to encourage the community to come to a participating and cooperative platform of "team" spirit in developing the various departments without much success. There is too much competition for independent projects and little mutual objectivity; although I see some slightly-improved interactions developing.

It is with great heartache and sustained anguish that I failed to implement the coordination of the community into 'departments-with-a-purpose' after a full year of sustained encouragement to all community members!

About three months after we returned to Florida, we heard from

Dayanidhi Prabhu that the Greek Government had finally (after nine attempts over five decades) agreed to legally legitimize our ISKCON organization, and allow the Athens Temple to be recognized as a legal entity in their country! Finally, the books could be shared with the Greek population.

I had a beautiful *mūrti* of you that I wanted to gift to Nartaka Gopala on her 70th birthday in mid-December. So, I returned to Alachua for two months during the holidays. It was a quiet and peaceful visit during the winter agricultural slowdown in December and January.

I returned to New Talavana, Mississippi, at the beginning of February, and pruned the Fruit Orchard trees in preparation for the Spring fertilization cycle. This is the first year that developed fruits should begin manifesting.

The “Cow Department” (Mother Katia) collected 10 gallons of fresh cow urine and 10 gallons of fresh cow dung for me. These were mixed and put into the 55-gallon drum, then I added a gallon of molasses and 34 gallons of water; which then had to sit for 1-week of fermentation and accelerated microbiological development before administering 1/2 gallon to each fruit tree. This was completed during dry-spells in the April rainy season.

I pray ceaselessly for the community’s collective realization and compliance with Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s “Vṛndāvana-like village” concept, that you have come to deliver to us!

As you have described, Śrīla Prabhupāda: “AFTER the war, preaching will be good”!

Hare Kṛṣṇa!

Your struggling servant in the groves of New Tālavana Dhāma!

Langaganesa Dasa

Initiation: July 1974—Miami, Florida, USA

Current location: Carriere, Mississippi, USA

Contact: langaganesa@aol.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

While every word and sentence you spoke are important and nectar, I am most heartened and enlivened by the below conversation that took place within yourself and a reporter in the US...

Reporter :What will happen when you die?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: I will never die! I will always live in my books, and they will utilise.

Indeed these books are the *sanjeevani* for all of humanity. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had said that just by reading these books one is initiated into Krishna consciousness:

*bhrama, pramāda, vipralipsā, karaṇāpāṭava
ārṣa-vijñā-vākye nāhi doṣa ei saba*

Mistakes, illusions, cheating and defective perception do not occur in the sayings of the authoritative sages. Cc. *Ādi 2.86*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I would like to thank you for your causeless mercy. We will never be able to liquidate the debt that we owe you even in a lifetime of Lord Brahmā.

The worship of the spiritual master is worship of Smt. Rādhārāṇī and vice versa.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my life is only for you. Please always keep me under the shelter of your lotus feet.

In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Lord Rāmacandra praises Hanumān and says to him that there are three classes of disciples: first class disciple does more than what his master asks. The second class disciple, even though able, does only what his master asks and the third class disciple does not follow his master.

My fervent prayer to you is that you bless me so that I may serve you fully to your satisfaction.

Thanking you.

Your unworthy servant,

Mahamana Dasa
Initiation: July 1974—London, UK
Current location: Madhya Pradesh, India

Krishnarupa Devi Dasi

To my eternal beloved master and true father,

Please accept my humble obeisances, again and again.

I've been doing this for 50 years, yet I can never summon up enough sincerity to deserve your loving glance.

I owe everything to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We as a society owe everything to you, and it is a debt that we can never actually repay because it is a debt of such significance, such intensity that it is beyond calculation. You single handedly gave us Rādhā and Krishna; you taught us to leave our lost and speculative lives and make our first, tentative steps on the often-difficult path back home, back to Godhead.

Although so many decades have passed since I first saw you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, time has not diminished your presence in my life.

Sometimes during *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class, when devotees are chanting *Jaya Rādhā Mādhava*, I think of you sitting on your *vyāsāsana* in Māyāpur. Your eyes are closed in deep meditation as they always were when you sung *Jaya Rādhā Mādhava*, your thumbs lifting off the *karatālas* at the third beat, as they always did. Your head moving in time, totally absorbed as you glorified Rādhā Mādhava. I think of that a lot.

When you visited your temples, it was to us as if Krishna Himself was visiting. And as His personal emissary, you were representative of Krishna, and in that way, as good as Krishna Himself, just as the ambassador represents his head of state.

I am not a particularly qualified devotee. In my heart, I'm pretty sure that I am a disappointment to you overall, but I am confident of one thing: that taking shelter of you is the most momentous thing I have ever done. You transport us 'into another realm', a realm where we awaken our eternal, constitutional position as loving servants of Rādhā Krishna.

Your every moment was absorbed in thoughts of Krishna, and your actions reflected that absorption at all times. As you said once when asked, you never forgot Krishna.

I am so forgetful of Krishna that I may go for hours not even thinking of Him, but I think I am more conscious of you. So much around me reminds me of your devotion, your unique position, your supremely inspiring enthusiasm and your dedication to spreading your Guru Mahārāja's mission.

Just looking at the strong determination of your grand disciples and great grand disciples inspires me to continue to try and serve you – and them – in my limited capacity. They are carrying on your mission with such devotion, it is so clearly apparent that future generations are as connected to you as your direct disciples.

We are going through troubled times as a society, but if we maintain our integrity and justice to others, following procedural fairness where I sometimes see that is lacking, then we can be confident that we are pleasing you. As individuals, we must ensure that we are acting properly and as members of your ISKCON, we also must ensure that our managerial bodies are acting justly.

You are 'no ordinary spiritual master' a phrase you used to describe your Guru Mahārāja, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. You transcend boundaries of time and space, living for generations to come in your books and teachings.

I beg you to one day allow me to see you again, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I pray fervently that I can stand under your ISKCON banner in the spiritual world and once again bask in the purifying rays of your divine effulgence.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servant,

Krishnarupa devi dasi

Initiation: August 1974, —Vrindavan, India

Aja Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I was born in the darkness of ignorance, and only through Your Divine Grace was light injected into my dark heart and mind. You followed the orders of your Guru Mahārāja, depending fully on his

mercy and the mercy of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and brought to the Western world, the perfect teachings of Lord Caitanya, and filled the world with the holy names of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Because of Your Grace, I chant Hare Kṛṣṇa when I am sad.

Because of Your Grace, I chant Hare Kṛṣṇa when I am anxious.

Because of Your Grace, I chant Hare Kṛṣṇa when I am happy.

Because of Your Grace, I chant Hare Kṛṣṇa when I'm with others.

Because of Your Grace, I chant Hare Kṛṣṇa when I'm alone.

And I pray, that due to Your Grace, I will chant Hare Kṛṣṇa at that most important time of death and beyond.

By Your Grace I KNOW that I am not this body, and through your divine instructions, I have recognized the truth of this material world as *duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam* – a temporary place of misery. For some reason, that does not stop me from trying to enjoy it, or at least to minimize the pain of it. But in the end, your words echo in my heart and consciousness, and I know that no matter how badly I mess up, you are eternally there and always calling me forward to come to a higher platform to serve at your lotus feet.

Beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, forgive my innumerable offenses. I have no good character, and the one thing that is most dear to me is the great blessing of being accepted as your disciple. Please continue to bless this soul, that I will never forget you and never stop chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*.

Your insignificant servant,

Aja Dasa

Initiation: September 1974—Seattle, USA

Current location: Portland, Oregon, USA

Bhima Dasa

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda I offer my prostrated obeisances in the dust of

your lotus feet.

The active principle in Spiritual life is to please the Spiritual Master by rendering service unto him. The more service given the more I come to realize my true position which is that I am just a speck of dust at your feet. The misconception that I am an “advanced” devotee or “senior” devotee is like a cancer eating up my Krishna Consciousness. The only remedy for this disease is humble submissive service.

It is mentioned in the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by Lord Kapila to His Mother Devahūti about the different paths of devotional service. Not that because one wears *tilaka* automatically one is performing devotional service in the right way. Your devotional service, which you performed solely for the pleasure of your Śrīla Prabhupāda and Krishna, is the perfect example for everyone to follow. Your devotional service, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is pure because there is no demand from your side to be fulfilled by the Lord. Generally, I have so many demands in performing devotional service.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* 7.16 four types of persons are described that come to devotional service. A person in distress may come to perform devotional service to get rid of the distress. A person in need of money approaches the Lord to improve his economic condition. Others who are not in need of money or distressed sometimes are seeking knowledge and they inquire into the nature of the absolute truth. “Devotional service is one without a second, but according to the devotees’ condition, devotional service appears in multifarious varieties.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.29.7, purport)

“In pure devotional service the only motive should be to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. . . . If one has a motive for personal sense gratification his devotional service is manifested differently. Such a devotee may be violent, proud, envious, and angry, and his interests are separate from the Lord’s.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.29.8, purport)

“When one has even a tinge of personal interest, his devotion is mixed with the three modes of material nature.” “There can be no excuse for personal or material interest.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.29.10, purport)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your devotional service is free from any desire except to please Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus, you exhibited behavior just like a perfect gentleman. You

related to everyone perfectly because of your constant engagement in devotional service.

As your follower I request your special mercy on this special day of your appearance. Please bless me so that I can go beyond the mixed devotional platform and come to the point of not desiring any material or spiritual prosperity. Bless me so that I simply aspire to serve the Lord. If I can attain this, I will be in the highest happiness.

“Everyone’s prescribed duty is glorious if it is performed in devotional service to the Lord without desire for profit. Such loving service must be performed without reason, without impediment and spontaneously. Krishna is lovable and one has to serve Him in whatever capacity one can. That is pure devotional service.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.29.15, purport)

Devahūti, Kapila’s mother, asked questions related to the well-being of the conditioned souls. This pleased Lord Kapila, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, very much. In the same way, if I try my level best to concern myself with the upliftment of the conditional souls suffering in this material world very soon, I may find I am advancing towards that devotional service mentioned above.

May this be my fervent hope and only desire.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all you have given like the Holy Name, the service of Śacīsuta Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the shelter of Vrindavan Dhāma and Māyāpur Dhāma, the association of the Six Goswamis of Vrindavan, Govardhan Hill, and Radha Kunda. What more could we want than these precious jewels? Please bless me to be able to hold these gifts and to always appreciate their value.

Your useless servant,

Bhima Das

Initiation: October 1974—Mayapur, India

Current location: India

Mahakarta Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I offer my respectful obeisance unto my spiritual master, who with the torchlight of knowledge has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance.

In this world of suffering and ignorance, the greatest blessing in my life was to meet Your Divine Grace fifty years ago and get your association. I was able to understand the importance of servitude to the spiritual master and how that is the only way to get out of suffering in the material world. You have given me the gift of Krishna consciousness, and because of your mercy, I am able to continue my services to you in Śrī Laṅkā.

Kindly bless me to continue to remain in your service, life after life.

Your humble servant,

Mahakarta Dasa

Initiation: November 1974—Germany

Current location: ISKCON Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka

Contact: mahakartadas@gmail.com

Phalini Devi Dasi

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my repeated obeisances at your soft lotus feet.

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktioedānta-svāmīn iti nāmine*

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

All glories, all glories to Your Divine Grace. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, once when you came to New Dwarka, when I was still a fairly new devotee, our eyes met. I had never had personal darshan with you, nor had I ever had the privilege of speaking with Your Divine Grace directly. Yet at that moment I felt you were able

to see me, the real me. You could see right through all my phony masks, all my clown costumes, all my egotistical facades, all my myriads of lifetimes, right into my heart of hearts. You were able to see way down deep inside the slimy coal-black blob of despicable pride that was thickly molded around my heart from lifetimes of playing charades. I was not consciously trying to hide anything from you, nor was I even aware that I was proud, but at that moment, I felt your love pierce through the black coal surrounding my heart. I felt connected to you and I also felt lovingly corrected by you. And right away, your penetrating gaze started working on me. I felt an immediate desire to improve myself. I wanted to please you by becoming purified, by raising myself to a higher level. Your presence, your darshan, had a way of uplifting me by increasing my desire to become a pure devotee.

A few mornings ago at Maṅgala Ārati, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I was struggling to sing. It was difficult. Long ago, my voice used to work. I could sing low notes and high notes and everything in between pretty smoothly and with comparative ease. Now, I can barely sing at all. That morning, in the form of a painfully embarrassing revelation, it occurred to me that I had once been proud of my singing voice. Immediately after that embarrassing revelation struck me, it then dawned on me that I also used to be proud of how I could sustain notes for a fairly long time. Nowadays, I can barely squeak out the notes, and I also have trouble breathing, what to speak of holding a note for longer than four or five seconds. I have to take a breath after every few words of the *Gurvaṣṭaka* prayers.

While struggling to sing and feeling embarrassed that I had once been proud of my voice and my ability to sustain notes for considerable lengths of time, I remembered that Kṛṣṇa does not like false pride. Mortified, I recognized that I had been found guilty. Guilty of that very thing, that *anartha*, known as false pride.

While struggling to sing and to breathe, I found myself contemplating, ‘what is false pride, anyway?’ and it hit me at that moment: false pride means *thinking that we are Kṛṣṇa! Thinking that we are the controller! Thinking that we are the enjoyer! Thinking that we deserve to be glorified!* Just then, another lightning bolt struck me—I realized that it was *Kṛṣṇa* who had taken away my voice! It was *Kṛṣṇa* who had reduced my lung capacity! Because I had been feeling proud of my voice (false pride) thinking that I was in control of my vocal abilities and because I was proud of my breathing abilities (again,

false pride), He took away both my voice and my ability to sustain notes. He took them away to teach me that I am not in control! It is HE who is in control!

I looked at Lord Caitanya's lotus feet. I contemplated the phenomenon that from His lotus feet come all blessings. Simultaneously, I meditated on the last verse of the *Gurvaṣṭaka* prayers—*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo, yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*—and I realized that whatever blessings are coming from those lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga are coming to me *through your divine grace!*

I remembered that it is only by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa that we get Guru, and it is only by the mercy of Guru that we get Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa's wonderful Vedic culture is set up that way. 'Kṛṣṇa's arrangement,' as we say. Kṛṣṇa has instructed us to surrender to a spiritual master and learn the truth from him 'because he has seen the truth.' (Bg 4.34) This instruction is not just for Arjuna. It's for every one of us. It's Kṛṣṇa's scientific arrangement for human society. It helps souls become released from the cycle of *samsāra*. It is scientifically created to assist each and every soul in a human body to make progress toward the supreme goal of returning back home, back to Godhead.

My epiphany that morning:

THERE'S NO WAY A SOUL CAN RETURN TO HIS ORIGINAL POSITION IN THE SPIRITUAL SKY UNLESS HE SURRENDERS UNTO THE LOTUS FEET OF A BONA FIDE GURU.

That morning's realizations were a gift from Lord Caitanya, communicated to my heart through Your Divine Gracae, As I meditated on your auspicious qualities during Maṅgala Ārati. I felt deeply grateful for that 'ah-HAH' moment. Those revelations were especially eye-opening because they showed me how very prideful I am, although truthfully, I am completely and utterly helpless and dependent on the Lord for every little thing, and incapable of doing anything without His mercy and empowerment.

Thank you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, for coming to this planet. Thank you for teaching us how to chant the *mahā-mantra*. Thank you for requiring us to chant a minimum number of rounds daily. Thank you for requiring that we follow the four regulative principles. Thank you for Maṅgala Ārati and for teaching us the *Gurvaṣṭaka* Prayers. Thank you for *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class. Thank you for preaching the teachings of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Thank you for

calling Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi to come here to this planet to grace the altars of all the temples Your Divine Grace and your disciples and grand-disciples have established all over the world, so that we could worship Their Lordships and meditate on Their effulgent, mercy-full lotus feet. Thank you, thank you, thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us realizations, and for telling us to write about them. Thank you for recording Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s songs and the songs of other great Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, and for recording commentaries to those songs. We never tire of hearing those recordings. Thank you for writing your own songs which we treasure as the most rare gems of literary and musical significance. Thank you for working so hard to write and publish your wonderful books which are the flagship of all the numerous transcendental ships you have sent to rescue us from this turbulent ocean of material existence.

Speaking of your beautiful, transcendental books, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I recall that when I was searching for the Absolute Truth back in the early 70s, those lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga were the very place where I was able to find Your Divine Grace, a *bona fide* guru who could teach me about the Absolute Truth. That’s where pure devotee preachers can be found, at the lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga. That’s precisely where I found you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, preaching the message of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu—*gauravāṇī pracāriṇe*—through your amazing book *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, a copy of which, by your causeless mercy only, was gently placed in my eager hands by a merciful disciple of yours back in 1973.

Thank you for instructing us to distribute your books to other fallen souls. By the mercy of Your Divine Grace and Lord Paramātmā, I was one of those lucky fallen souls who got a book.

Your forever grateful daughter,

Phalini devi dasi

Initiation: November 1974—New Dwarka, Los Angeles, USA

Current location: Prabhupāda Village, North Carolina, USA

Contact: phalini@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

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

If a fool can compose poems and a lame man can climb mountains with your mercy, then even I can say something about your greatness. Perhaps...

Gifts. How many and what gifts you gave me! I have been showered with unmotivated endless gifts from you, Your Divine Grace. My whole life has been a gift from you. My life would have been another without you, and not better. Next year, 2024, it will be 50 years since I met my godbrothers and my initiation. So many years and if I had to list all the gifts you gave me, this tribute to Your Vyāsa-pūjā would become too long. I would like to write it all, but I think it would bore those few who will read this offering.

Let's just say something.

The first gift was the desire for something different, *śraddhā*, which came from the heart, from *caitya guru*, of whom You are a worthy representative.

Then came the devotees, my dear godbrothers, who had the brilliant idea of opening the first temple less than 200 metres from my home. Looking back, it's not normal. It is mystical, it is your mercy.

Then who brought me to the temple? Your Divine Grace of course, thanks to the posters with which the devotees had plastered the city advertising the arrival of whom I immediately knew – my eternal spiritual master.

And then, the first service. What was it? Correct your book, the *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*. I don't know if I did a good job because I was too attracted to what you were saying rather how it should have been in my birth language. Your words came from an ancient time, full of divine sounds. How could you write such wonderful things? Perhaps as did Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa who claimed that what he wrote was dictated by Śrī Govindadeva. In my heart I am convinced that it was so.

After your philosophy came the *mahā-mantra*, your supreme gift,

which leads from belief to realization.

Then the initiation, in the same year, two months after I came to live at the temple. This has allowed me to preach better, as devotees rightly give extra respect to those who are direct disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, Your Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, I could go on writing for days, weeks and months glorifying what you have done for me and for all of us. But I will continue in my heart to do as long as I live, following your instructions and in particular the only one you gave me personally: “Those who claim to be Vaiṣṇavas must dedicate their entire lives to preaching Krishna consciousness.”

Bless me to keep doing it until my last breath.

Thank you.

Your disciple,

Manonatha Dasa

Initiation: 1974, November—Rome, Italy

Current location: Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Jagadvira Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances.

With the Hare Krishna *mantra* you came from the East and very soon introduced the Sunday feast.

At 26 Second Avenue it did expand quickly becoming popular all over the land.

From the *Bhagavad-gītā* you spoke philosophy and opened our eyes so we could understand and see.

“You are not the body – you are a spirit soul”

you said to become Krishna conscious should be your goal.

We were young and confused and did not know what to do, but many books were written and translated by you.

So reading your purports we could understand your goals, then we distributed books to the conditioned souls.

I am praying for your mercy on this special day
and to follow your instructions is the only way.
Thank you for teaching us about the Absolute Truth
now we know that Lord Krishna is the eternal youth.

Your servant,

Jagadvira Dasa

Initiation: November 1974—Sydney, Australia

Current location: Okinawa, Japan

Contact: jv27648@yahoo.co.uk

Mayesa Dasa

Your Divine Grace,

When the soul is ready, Lord Kṛṣṇa who resides in every heart sends him a genuine spiritual master. By hearing from the spiritual master attentively and rendering him service, the Lord and the soul's eternal relationship as servant of the Lord is revealed to the disciple.

Your Divine Grace,

By dividing the orbit of the sun 791,681,348.7 miles by 360 and multiplying by the sun's declination 23.60928249 we derive the arc of the sun 51,919,523.9 miles.

By adding to that arc 800,000 miles we derive 52,719,523.9 miles for the arc of the moon.

Dividing that arc by declination of the moon 28.66545273 and multiplying by 360 we have the orbit of the moon 662,087,174.5 miles.

Morning Walk Dec 17, 1973 Los Angeles

Prabhupāda: In *Bhāgavatam* there is regular calculation what is the distance from one planet to another.

Your Divine Grace,

It is my prayer that I may remain at Your Lotus Feet.

Mayesa Dasa

Initiation: November 1974—Dallas, Texas, USA

Current location: Dallas, Texas, USA

Contact: srutidasa@yahoo.co.in

*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*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories unto you, my Divine Master!

You overcame many problems and personal inconveniences to create your International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in New York City. You then inspired your disciples and non-initiated members of ISKCON to cast your mercy net amongst the materially contaminated residents of that vast metropolis. In 1973, I was fortunate enough to get entangled in your mercy net and inexorably drawn into your ever-expanding sphere of influence.

As the fog of material ignorance gradually cleared from my consciousness, I came to understand that you were not just a guru but an *ācārya* empowered to save the unfortunate, misguided residents of this planet. As an empowered *ācārya* you taught your disciple and followers everything we needed to know to become materially stable and make spiritual progress. Cooking, cleaning, personal hygiene, Deity worship, you patiently instructed a small group who then taught newcomers. You also enlightened us how to deal with devotees, non-devotees, relatives, government authorities...there seemed to be nothing that you could not teach us.

One very important lesson that you taught us is how disciples should relate to their spiritual master. Your constant meditation on your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, was evident in your commitment to following his orders. In a letter to Pusta Kṛṣṇa Dasa you said:

It is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission, my Guru Mahārāja's mission, and my mission. . . . As I am trying to discharge my Guru Mahārāja's mission, you also try and things will go on nicely.

In your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.6.2 you state:

Every living entity has an intimate relationship with God.

One should therefore glorify the Lord in the adoration of *śānta-rasa* or revive his eternal relationship with Viṣṇu as a servant in *dāsyā-rasa*, a friend in *sakhya-rasa*, a parent in *vātsalya-rasa* or a conjugal lover in *mādhurya-rasa*. All these relationships are on the platform of love. Viṣṇu is the center of love for everyone, and therefore the duty of everyone is to engage in the loving service of the Lord. As stated by the Supreme Personality of Godhead (SB 3.25.38), *yeṣāṃ ahaṃ priya ātmā sutaś ca sakhā guruḥ suhṛdo daivam iṣṭam*. In any form of life, we are related with Viṣṇu, who is the most beloved, the Supersoul, son, friend, and *guru*. Our eternal relationship with God can be revived in the human form of life, and that should be the goal of education. Indeed, that is the perfection of life and the perfection of education.

Due to stubbornness my spiritual progress is slow. However, by continually hearing from you I am convinced that by your mercy the day will come when I will achieve the perfection of life!

Your aspiring servant,

Arcita Dasa

Initiation: December 1974—New York, USA

Current location: New Dwaraka, Los Angeles, California, USA

Contact: arcita108@hotmail.com

Jaya Gouranga Dasa

My Divine Lord and Master, my beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Once again I am attempting to write an offering to you who are above and beyond any words of praise and descriptions.

Although someone as fallen, as sinful, as offensive and as unqualified as my lowly self is most incapable of saying or writing anything appropriate to your divine lotus feet, it is my duty to make a humble attempt.

So please do forgive me dear Father for everything bad that I am and have been, which stops me from writing correctly what my heart feels for you my divine lord.

The truth is, that You reside deep within my heart and without You I am worse than a dead man, I am nonexistent.

Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda, so many beautiful things I do remember about being in your divine presence.

So much mercy I received from you in so many ways and as I have said it before, not only did you give Your mercy to me personally and directly, you also gave that mercy to my immediate family members, my material father and mother, my brothers and sisters, my cousins, my son, my daughters, my grandmother, my uncles and aunts, so many of my material family members met you, bowed down at your feet and received your divine mercy. Some of them even became devotees.

I remember when I brought my father to see You and how, although he was such an arrogant man due to his material qualifications, being a doctor, a University professor, the conductor of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Opera Company orchestra, a classical music composer, a highly intellectual man, etc.

When he saw you and saw that we devotees were bowing down, he immediately without hesitation put his head on the floor and bowed down to your lotus feet.

Some time later when I asked my material father why he bowed down at your feet, something he would never do for anyone and specially, since he originally thought that the movement was just another hippie fad, he said to me: “Śrīla Prabhupāda commanded that respect, he was not an ordinary person, but someone in complete goodness”.

My material father actually put that in writing along with other very nice things he wrote about You.

What about the time when you walked into the LA airport, You were accompanied by three other devotees and myself.

As we walked in, there were two metal detectors a little further ahead, where people were lined up to walk thru, there were about 25 people in each line, but when You walked into the airport, Krishna made them all turn around and see You and without anybody saying anything to all these people, automatically they all moved to the one side to let you walk thru without having to stand in line. That, I saw and experienced with my own eyes, how anybody who saw you, could immediately recognize that you were not an ordinary person from this world.

Another time, when I had the great fortune to travel with you by plane, from Los Angeles to Mexico City. During the flight, you had your lunch, and afterwards we all enjoyed the transcendental

remnants from your plate. Then, the stewardess came, and standing in front of you, with folded hands, asked you: “Can I get you anything?” To which You answered in a most gracious manner: “Yes bring 7-Ups for everyone”

I couldn’t believe my luck, flying on an airplane with my Lord and Master and drinking a 7-Up which I had long before given up when I joined, because I thought it was Māyā.

What a blissful moment in my life.

Then when we got to Mexico City, as you got off the plane, there was a limousine waiting for you on the runway to take you to the temple escorted by two motorcycle policemen.

As the biggest and most important personality in the three worlds, you didn’t even have to go through immigration or customs or anything of the sort.

Oh Divine Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for letting this insignificant nonsense creature as myself be part of your divine *līlā*.

I could go on describing your divine pastimes, specially those that I experienced myself being in your divine presence, but I think I should not make this writing attempt a very long one.

I just want to be with You, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You once said in a lecture here in Los Angeles:

So Vaiṣṇava, the servant of Nārāyaṇa, *nārāyaṇa-parāḥ sarve na kutaścana bibhyati*, they are not afraid to go anywhere for the service of Nārāyaṇa. *Nārāyaṇa-parāḥ sarve na kutaścana bibhyati*.

Nārāyaṇa may order, “Go to hell and preach.” “Yes.” *Tulyārtha*. “Then if You send me in heaven or hell, I don’t mind.” (June 7, 1976 – Lecture on SB 6.1.41 – Los Angeles)

So I say: Śrīla Prabhupāda, if You wish to go to hell to preach to the demons, please take me with You. Wherever You go Divine Master please take me with You, let me serve You and be with You, keep me as one of the specks in the Dust of Your Divine Lotus Feet, then my life will have some meaning, otherwise I will never be complete nor happy nor satisfied.

Thank You Divine Master for all the wonderful mercy You’ve always given me.

All glories, all glories to Your Divine Lotus Feet, forever and ever.

Your most unworthy, low and humble servant and dog,

Jaya Gouranga Dasa

Initiation: February 1975—Mexico

Current location: New Dwaraka, Los Angeles, California, USA

Contact: jayagourangads@sbcglobal.net

Maha Punya Devi Dasi

*śrī guro paramānanda
premānanda phala-pradā
vrajānanda pradānanda
sevāyām mā niyojaya*

My dear Spiritual Master, who bestows the fruit of the highest bliss (*prema-bhakti*), please engage me in devotional service to Lord Krishna, who is the bliss of the land of Vraja.

My very beloved and respected Śrīla Prabhupāda:

On this blessed day of very auspicious Vyāsa-pūjā, I first want to give thanks for arriving alive and healthy so that I can continue to glorify you, and therefore once again surrender to His divine lotus feet with great respect and admiration, remaining faithful to His perfect and immaculate instructions.

You are a prodigy of a personality, because although you functioned as a human being among us, in reality you were never fully human, because you came directly from the spiritual world, and you did so by direct instructions of the Blessed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and you treated us with infinite compassion and mercy for these fallen souls in this age of Kali-yuga, where passion, ignorance, anger and lust predominate.

You were present as a spiritual master, teacher in front of the classroom, spiritual guide, counselor, doctor, cook, father, friend, brother, spiritual illuminator, and many more titles that may exist.

You covered and exceeded all educational levels successfully, and everyone who listened to You, even with a high academic level, could never refute you, and you left everyone silent.

You gave hundreds of classes and lectures around the world, always willing to do so to awaken Krishna Consciousness in all people, you never showed tiredness or annoyance, because you were doing your favorite pastime, talking about Krishna (*kṛṣṇa-kathā*).

That is Your greatness and the divine power of You.

We are very lucky and blessed to have you with us, out of millions of beings that exist in this world.

Your transcendental pastimes are innumerable and very auspicious.

The Blessed Lord always empowered you, and that is why You succeeded in everything you set out to do, all the time depending on the infinite mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is the avatar in this age, no one else.

I am neophyte, sinful, imperfect, that's why I cling to Your divine lotus feet and live surrendered to Your eternal service, life after life, body after body, you can do with me whatever You want.

Your Divine Grace has taught us to live according to the Vedic mandates, to the *vaiṣṇava* etiquette, because it is the most correct way, showing the world what it is to live in a perfect society with God as the center of everything, to stop suffering under the modes of material existence.

Devotional service along with spiritual knowledge is the highest goal of existence.

At this time, there is no one like you, or similar to you, and in many years, there will be no one like you.

Infinite thanks for your having come in this age to show us the way back home, back to Godhead.

You left us everything to be happy, divine and perfect books, which do not belong to this world, where you embodied everything we need to know to advance spiritually, living in harmonious brotherhood, inviting people to know the correct way of life on this plane material.

Not even 1,000 lives can we repay You for everything You have done, is doing, and continue to do for us, only remaining surrendered to Your instructions and Your perfect example of life.

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

Always surrendered at your divine lotus feet, as the Supreme Lord allows it.

VERY HAPPY AND AUSPICIOUS
DAY OF YOUR VYĀSA-PŪJĀ!!!

A would-be servant of His servant's servant,

Maha Punya Devi Dasi
Initiation: February 1975—Mexico
Current location: Celaya, Guanajuato, México

Mrtyuhara Dasa

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṅī-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.

Most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble and respectful obeisance at your divine lotus feet.

Your glories have reached beyond the boundary of this material world. Many spiritualists, even some of your god-brothers, have defined Your Divine Grace as *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*.

*jñāna-śakty-ādi-kalayā
yatṛaviṣṭo janārdanaḥ
ta āveśā nigadyante
jīvā eva mahattamāḥ*

(Cc. Madhya 20.373)

Whenever the Lord is present in someone by portions of His various potencies, the living entity representing the Lord is called *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*. That is, an incarnation invested with special power.

*vibhūti kahiye yaiche gītā-ekādaśe
jagat vyāpīla kṛṣṇa-śakty-ābhāsāveśe*

(Cc. Madhya 20.374)

As explained in the Eleventh Chapter of Bhagavad-gītā, Kṛṣṇa

has spread Himself all over the universe in many personalities through specific powers, known as vibhuti.

Just like millions of material universes manifest from the pores of Mahā Viṣṇu’s transcendental body, millions of books that are filling this planet have come out of the transcendental “pores” of your spiritual body.

Mahā Viṣṇu’s act is so immense. His omnipotence has no comparison.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have accomplished something so great and wonderful that none can ever compare to you. And, even more astounding, your achievements are perpetually increasing!

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhakura comments: “Without being empowered by the direct potency of Lord Krishna to fulfill His desire and without being specifically favored by the Lord, no human being can become the spiritual master of the whole world”.

That is the reason why Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī has chosen you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your small room in New York, with your authentic knowledge, you recorded on a dictaphone the first words that would then transform into the vast spiritual literature that spread like never before on this planet.

That literature, which had practically lain dormant in some of the old Vṛndāvana’s temples and some museums in Bengal, came to life under your gaze, as the *mahat-tattva* comes to life under the gaze of Mahā-Viṣṇu.

You have manifested your spiritual potency in millions of books, printed in every language of the world.

Today, these books are found in thousands of homes, shops, offices, hotels, government buildings, shopping malls, restaurants and nursing homes, in every nation, among people of every color and race and persons of many different religious beliefs.

Because of its purity, such literature has changed and will continue to change the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

Sometimes we hear rumors that you have said you left your work unfinished, that something was still missing.

No, Śrīla Prabhupāda. That is not true.

We lack nothing.

We have plenty of everything.

We are overwhelmed with what you have left us.

As far as we are concerned, fulfilling the mission assigned to us will be very difficult, but you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have done it perfectly.

We are spoiled for choice!

You have given us the practice of devotional service, which is hardly obtainable even by demigods.

You have offered us devotional service, and we are practicing it.

Is this not a miracle?

Is this not an extraordinary event?

You have been able to engage us in loving devotional service to Śrī Krishna, according to time, place and circumstances, depending on our different personalities.

You have adjusted devotional service for each one of us, without fail.

Who could perform such a miracle but a great personality like you, who received such power directly from the Supreme Lord Śrī Krishna?

You are so great, infinite, powerful, overwhelming and at the same time so simple, happy and benevolent that very few have been able to resist you.

Undoubtedly, you are the one whose character fully embodies the personality of a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We will never be able to repay Your Divine Grace.

Your eternally menial servant,

Mrtyuhara Das

Initiation: February 1975—Rome, Italy

Current location: Italy

Nartaka Gopala Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my loving obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you!

Thank you for making us all aware of the spiritual world and of Lord Kṛṣṇa's presence. I recently heard from my godbrother Ātmā Tattva Dāsa a remarkable account of your dealings at the January 1977 Kumbha Melā in Allahabad, which I would like to relate here for your pleasure.

Some devotees in Vrindavan were traveling by bullock cart traveling *saṅkīrtana*, which means most of them were walking. They were to meet you at Kumbha Melā, roughly 350 miles away. Before they left, you gave them instructions: always stop near a well where people get their water. Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and tell them you are *sādhus* from Vṛndāvana going to Kumbha Melā. They will give you a place to stay. Do *kīrtana* and collect rice and vegetables; cook and distribute everything in the same village and distribute small books.

In the town of Fatehpur, 77 miles before Allahabad, they saw a house called Nitāi Gaura Bhavan. Inside were Gaura Nitāi Deities. The owner, a lawyer, was an initiated Gauḍīya Vaishnava who invited the devotees to stay at his house. He introduced them to his family priest from the Ramanandi group (also called the Ramayats or Ramavats). They are a branch of the Śrī Vaishnava Sampradāya, also known as the Rāmānuja Sampradāya, which has millions of followers in North India and Nepal.

The devotees stayed there for a week and had many heartfelt devotional discussions and *kīrtanas* with the entire family. When they left the family walked 8 miles with them to the main road. The man was weeping, and the devotees told him to come to Kumbha Melā to meet you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The devotees reached Allahabad and you got there two days later, on Ekādaśī, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You were feeling ill but you gave a darshan and told all the devotees that “Ekādaśī *prasādam* means lotus seeds fried in ghee.” The room was crowded, someone came to the door, and you told them to let him in. It was the Ramanandi priest from the family in Fatehpur’s house. He put a bundle on your desk and said, “Swamiji, some Ekādaśī *prasādam*.” You opened it, and it was lotus seeds fried in ghee, and you took some. Everyone exclaimed, “*Jaya!*”

The priest asked, “Swamiji, you remember me?”

You replied, “Yes, Nitāi Gaura Bhavan, Fatehpur.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had been there about forty years before, but you still remembered. When you had visited, the lawyer who owned the house was a young boy and his father (who had since passed) was the host. This priest was also a young boy at that time, but he could remember you, and he was in ecstasy that you remembered him.

Then, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you looked at the priest’s young son, whose name was Prapanna (it means “surrender”) and you said, “Give him to me and we will make him an *ācārya*. He will preach

everywhere." The priest said, "He's yours, Swamiji, just as soon as his grammar training is over."

Then you asked him if he had gone to the confluence of the rivers to take bath. The Kumbha Melā was at Triveni Sangam, the confluence of the three holy rivers Gaṅgā, Yamunā & Saraswati. Along with hearing from the many holy saints there, taking bath in the holy waters is one of the most important things to do. The priest replied, "I have come to the confluence of the rivers, Swamiji." And he suddenly brought out a brass plate and slid it under your feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda. He then took out a waterpot and poured water on your feet while lovingly chanting: "*Saṅgam, saṅgam*, confluence, confluence." The tent was crowded and he threw the water on everybody present, to their great joy and elation.

Fast forward fifteen years to the 1992 Kumbha Melā. Ātmā Tattva Prabhu took the Māyāpur gurukula children around to the different religious groups. When they came to the Ramanandi camp, one of the devotees told him that they had elected a leader, a young *sannyāsī*, so he took the boys to see him. They went in, paid obeisances and chanted some mantras. The *sannyāsī* was so happy to see them. He spoke in Hindi and told them that after his education he had gone to see you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and you gave him a magazine about Ratha Yātrā in Los Angeles.

Then he got the idea in his heart that because you were spreading dharma all over the world, he should at least unify his *sampradāya* which at that time was broken into many groups and did not have a cohesive leader. He spent time studying the commentary of his line, then called all the different Ramanandi groups together and they elected him as their leader. Their *sampradāya* has millions of followers now.

As he was talking he reminded Ātmā Tattva Prabhu of someone, but he couldn't place who that was. Then he said that Swamiji had been a great inspiration to him and had saved their *sampradāya*. At one point Ātmā Tattva looked at him and asked, "Are you from anywhere near Fatehpur?" The *sannyāsī* looked closely at Atma Tattva and exclaimed, "Atma Tattva Prabhu!", remembering the times they had closely associated when the *sannyāsī* was a child.

Atma Tattva said, "My Guru Mahārāja told your father to give you to him and that he would make you an *ācārya*. You did become an *ācārya*! The great *sādhu's* words never fail. You have unified something that people thought would never come together."

The *sannyāsī* said, “At the Kumbha Melā in 1977 when Swamiji spoke to my father I wanted to say, ‘Father, why don’t you give me to him?’ But because it is not proper to speak contrary to one’s father I did not say anything.”

This is just another example, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, of how your association has inspired others and ended up affecting millions.

Please help me to serve you and push on your mission, so that others may be given the blessings of your association as well.

Aspiring to serve you,

Nartaka Gopala dasi

Initiation: February 1975—Miami, Florida, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida/ISKCON Miami, USA

Contact: nartaka@windstream.net

Rathayatra Dasa

Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My dear Guru Mahārāja,

Accept this trivial offering on this auspicious day of your holy celebration of Vyāsa-pūjā throughout the world: We are taking refuge in your books.

Everything is there as you told us it was.

Your books have changed my life, and I continue to read them every day. Your presence remains very much alive.

Your living *vāñī* inspires us to distribute your original books to anyone we meet to connect with you, the genuine spiritual master.

My only wish in old age is to come back again and again, life after life, to this material world to print and distribute your pure, non-adulterated, unedited books with like-minded devotees.

Praying at your lotus feet and always
begging for your mercy,

I remain your eternal servant,

Rathayatra Dasa

Initiation: February 1975—Chicago, USA

Current location: Karuna Farm, Kodaikana, South India

Contact: rathayatradasa@gmail.com

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We are working hard to progress your preaching on farming with cows and growing of food.

In these uncertain times it is becoming more and more obvious to us that this is an essential facet of your preaching work.

There has been much debate on different social media over veganism and how some devotees reject vegans and some try and work more with them. Yet, with the farm programmes we are involved in, we are finding that the best approach is to show them LOVE by working with them rather than trying to preach philosophy to them which can result in looking like we are fighting against them.

We know from our own philosophy that as individual spiritual living beings, we are all looking for eternal steadfast love that we can only find in KṚṢṂA. So similarly we must offer that love to the very people we find ourselves dealing with in this material world, because somehow or other we are meeting with vegans here, there and everywhere.

One of our team said to a vegan leader the other day we are Ahimsā vegans. This got them thinking because it is also becoming obvious that the Ahimsā projects around the world are having a serious impact on society.

One year at our previous demo farm near Bhaktivedanta Manor, we ran a Permaculture course with the standard fifteen or so people for 12 days. At the end of the course, we announced we were running a trip to the Manor farm and all would be welcome to attend. Several of them came, and afterwards one of them wrote to us and said...oh yes, I can see the bigger picture now.

We must pick up and exemplify this sentiment that cruelty in the farming system is bad, then it will help stop it rather than trying to tell them there is a higher understanding that only we have. There is no better preaching than preaching by example. Studying the life of our Param Guru, we can see that even when he wasn't speaking he was teaching by example. So the best thing we can do is love the cow, and protect her. From an early age we work with the calves to show them love and who they can depend on for mercy and friendship. This of course affects the mother too. What better thing can we do for the mother than to show affection for her child? That's all we have to do. We don't have to try and preach to her with

philosophy or reason. We just have to show her the greatest love we can. We accept her service and by this show of goodwill she will automatically be happy. And we know if the cows are happy and protected, Kṛṣṇa will be happy.

This show of love is the most powerful thing in the universe. This is how we must conduct ourselves. Then there will never be any problem. Only by example and compassion can we reach the other poor conditioned souls of this world. Then they will understand we are on their side; we have their true interests at heart. We can unite with them and become the best of friends; and become devotees together.

Your servant,

Radha Kṛṣṇa Dasa

Initiation: March 1975—London, UK

Current location: South Wales, UK

Contact: rkdhiggins@gmail.com

Medhavi Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

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

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

The BOTTLENECK

I wasn't able to find the reference to 'bottleneck' in the Vedabase, but, I remember a lecture or room conversation where you mentioned that the human form of life was the conduit for getting out of the 8,400,000 species and going back to Godhead. You gave the example of a bottle. The bottle's construction, in even ancient societies, was to carry a large amount in its belly but allow the contents to be drunk or poured neatly thru its spout or neck. The 400,000 human forms are a relatively small percentage of 8,000,000 species but the number of actually civilized, cultured and principled humans makes the percentage miniscule. You mentioned that human society was the

opportunity to leave the material forms of life and attain to our eternal spiritual form, but instead of moving upwards, those in the human form were reversing direction back into animal and lower species. (You even once boldly declared that “We want to finish the human form of life.”) This action was creating the bottleneck, a word very commonly used in traffic congestion but not in spiritual progress.

As I write this offering during a electricity black-out (load-shedding), your society around the world in many places, notably South Africa has been deeply affected by the disappearance from our midst of your most worthy follower, H.H. Kadamba Kānana Swami, disciple of your also glorious H.H. Jayādvaita Swami. Śrīla Prabhupāda you created many moons. Kadamba Kānana Mahārāja exhibited practically a perfect life as an enlightened preacher, inspirational leader and as a highly effective manager. He also left this world in the most exemplary manner. He showed, as you did, how to live a dedicated and devoted life and also how to leave it and accept promotion to more intimate service to Śrīla Rūpa and the other members of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa’s confidential circle.

With Mahārāja’s departure, as for many of your own disciples, it reminded us of that day in November ’77, when you travelled on from this world back home to Godhead, or to another location in Lord Caitanya’s *līlā* of delivering fallen souls. We try to advise Mahārāja’s followers that he continues to “live in sound” as you live in your books, lectures, bhajans, morning walks, etc. In the same mood, we try to re-dedicate ourselves, those like my unfortunate self who are not fully dedicated, that our only real purpose is to carry your instructions to others. But also that our “time” is coming soon. That we shouldn’t be loitering in the material world but should ‘do our business and get out of here’, not creating more of the bottleneck.

We have been studying more intently *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* First and Second Cantos and the review of our original *Ācārya*, Lord Brahmā’s gigantic service of arranging the sub-creation is ultimately to offer the conditioned souls the opportunity to return back to Godhead – “*nirodho muktir āśrayaḥ.*”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, as my material body continues to deteriorate (I leave for cataract surgery in a few minutes), I pray that my enthusiasm to delve deeply into your writings and to distribute their knowledge and your instructions to others will only increase until that time that I breathe my last breath.

Your tardy, but becoming more determined, servant,

Medhavi Dasa

Initiation: April 1975—Vrindavan, India

Current location: Cape Town, South Africa

Contact: michael.vyas396@gmail.com

Vimala Devi Dasi

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your mercy and divine intelligence, you strove hard to make Krishna Consciousness easy and accessible, especially for us fallen souls struggling in this Kali Yuga environment. At an initiation lecture in Boston of 1969 you once stated...

It is very simple thing. It is simple for the simple, but it is very hard for the crooked.

Tribuvanātha Prabhu once related that you stated during a lecture:

Krishna consciousness is so simple that you will miss it.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I know for myself that my mind wants to make everything complicated and difficult. This is another way Māyā diverts our attention. So to keep it straight and simple has always been your message to us...

So this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant for making things very simplified. Accept God, accept your position as God's servant and serve God. That's all. (Lecture, Mexico City, February 12, 1975)

The process of Krishna consciousness is very simple. Everything belongs to Krishna, so our only duty is to give everything for Krishna's service, and chant Hare Krishna. So you chant regularly and make advancement. (Letter, December 11, 1975)

In Melbourne, 1976 you gave a series of *Bhagavad-gītā* lectures which I had the good fortune to attend. There you gave us a simple formula for advancing in spiritual life. You described that even though we get a father and mother in every birth, we cannot always get the guidance of guru and Krishna in every life. This made me realise just how fortunate we are and how precious and rare such an opportunity is...

So we have got this chance this life, how to get Kṛṣṇa, how to get guru. We have got intelligence. We should not miss this point. This is the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Take advantage of this movement. This is not a manufactured thing. Take advantage of it. Make your life perfect.

(*Bhagavad Gītā* Lecture, Melbourne, April 22nd, 1976)

After this lecture one young girl asked a direct question that I really appreciated and you gave her such a wonderful and sublimely simple reply...

Guest- (Girl) – “So how does one surrender to Kṛṣṇa?”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: “Surrender to Kṛṣṇa whatever you possess. What you possess? You possess your body, you possess your mind, and, it may be, you possess a home, wife, children, or husband, children. This is our possession. So when we surrender, “My dear Lord, whatever I have got... I have got this body, I have got little mind, speculation, and some, a home or husband, wife, children— everything surrendered to You.” *Mānasa deho geha, jo kichu mora*. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says. We don’t possess much. We possess whatever God has given us, little. So anyway, whatever we possess, everything is surrendered to You without any reservation. That is surrender.”

So my meditation on your sacred Vyāsa-pūjā this year of 2023 is a desire to keep, keeping it simple.

In a letter to Devananda Prabhu on November 23, 1968, you wrote how we should pray to Krishna...

Simply our prayer should be, My dear Krishna, please remind me to always chant Your Holy Name, please do not put me into forgetfulness. You are sitting within me as Supersoul, so you can put me into forgetfulness

or into remembering You. So please do not put me into forgetfulness. Please always remind me to chant, even You send me into the hell, it doesn't matter, just so long as I can always chant Hare Krishna.

All Glories to You Śrīla Prabhupāda! You are simply the Best!

Your lowly daughter,

Vimala Devi Dasi

Initiation: April 1975—Melbourne, Australia

Current location: New Zealand

Lelihana Devi Dasi

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You have so many glories that it is impossible to explain them all.

One of the greatest is that you have saved millions and billions of lost souls who are loitering in this horrible material world of birth, disease, old age and death. Because you have given us the greatest knowledge ever, we know about these four items that are inescapable. You have told us the way out, the way back to Krishna's spiritual kingdom where these four unwanted things do not exist.

By your Divine Grace, you have told us all about the spiritual world and have given us the best way to get purified of our misconception that we are this body. Now we know we are eternal, blissful living beings. And the easiest way to realize this is to chant Hare Krishna.

You explained in *The Science of Self-Realization*, Chapter 4:

Vedic scriptures recommend chanting
the name of God in this age.

The easiest way is to chant the *mahā-mantra*:

*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*

Rāma and Krishna are names of God, and Hare is the energy of God. So when we chant the *mahā-mantra*, we

address God together with His energy. This energy is of two kinds, the spiritual and the material.

At present we are in the clutches of the material energy. Therefore we pray to Krishna that He may kindly deliver us from the service of the material energy and accept us into the service of the spiritual energy.

Hare Krishna means, “O energy of God, O God (Kṛṣṇa), please engage me in Your service.” It is our nature to render service. Somehow or other we have come to the service of material things, but when this service is transformed into the service of the spiritual energy, then our life is perfect. To practice *bhakti-yoga* (loving service to God) means to become free from designations like “Hindu,” “Muslim,” “Christian,” this or that, simply to serve God.

And you have made it simple for us. In *The Nectar of Devotion*, Chapter 2, you explained:

Always remembering Krishna and never forgetting Him in any circumstances, is the most basic of all regulative principles. Within this order and prohibition all regulative principles are found complete. If this injunction is followed, all other rules and regulations will automatically fall into line. All other rules and regulations should be treated as assistants to this one basic principle.

Simply put,

“Always remember Krishna
and never forget Him
in any circumstances”

All glories to you my dearest Guru Mahārāja, millions of times for all eternity.

Aspiring to be your true servant,

Lelihana Devi Dasi

Initiation: April 1975—Vrindavan, India

Current location: Karnataka, India

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, oh beloved Gurudeva,

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?

I have become addicted to this Mahā Mantra and cannot stop chanting the Holy names of Rādhā and Krishna from the morning through the night.

You have injected into my spiritual veins transcendental knowledge which leaves me in great wonderment as I observe the World around me and know it to be a temporary place of duality. Yet the conditioned souls are constantly amused by it.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?

My family looks upon me as one gone mad with the appetite for hearing of the sweet pastimes of Rādhā and Krishna as well as those of the golden Lord Caitanya and the most merciful Lord Nityānanda. The transcendental cinema of Krishna's Līlā comes alive through the pages of your books. And I am compelled to read them every day hoping in one birth to be part of Krishna's Līlā.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?

Sometimes I cry and sometimes I laugh out loud as I gaze upon my most worshipable Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā Rādhā Kānta. From their brightly colored toes to their most beautiful smile, I am constantly amazed at their beauty. Seeing their lotus-shaped eyes glance upon me causes time to stand still, and this intoxication is a drug whose potency is beyond my comprehension.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?

Throughout the day I find it impossible to do my daily chores as I ponder what relishable discussions Lord Caitanya and Rāmānanda Rāya experienced as they relished the intimate pastimes of Rādhā and Krishna in the forest of Vrindavan.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?

You have made it impossible for me to forget Śrī Vrindavan Dhāma, the sweet-flowing Yamunā, Śrī Rādhā Kuṇḍa, and Govardhan, which make all other places seem as unattractive as a dried fruit left in the desert sun.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?

I now have no desire to associate with anyone who is not a serious Vaishnava. I avoid all such people who embrace this material world and at the same time when I hear a devotee speak Krishna Kathā my burning addiction is satisfied. Just as one addict is happy when he sees another captivated condemned soul, I become enlivened to be with a devotee in hopes that we may share the drug of *kīrtana* and Krishna *kathā*.

I NOW KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE DONE TO ME!

You have given this most unworthy soul the most precious gift one can receive. Bhakti, pure and simple. I can only try to repay you by sharing this jewel with others who seek it.

Your disciple,

Krishna Gopal Dasa

Initiation: April 1975—Washington, USA

Current location: Lakeway, Texas, USA

Mokshalaksmi Devi Dasi

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

All glories to you, my divine Spiritual Master.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had such a spectacular adventure when you left India at the ripe old age of 69 guided by your spiritual master's order and your deep faith in Krishna. Fearlessly, you faced the oncoming challenges that for most would seem insurmountable, like the true leader of an army that you are. The 'Senāpati Bhakta' destined to lead an army. But at that point there was no army manifest...just you, seemingly alone, but I am sure Krishna never left your side. Although this is a glorious story it is not without its sadness; your heart attack on the Jaladuta springs to mind, although of course Krishna, who you describe as your Friend and Philosopher, came and personally rescued you by 'taking charge of the ship'. You describe your heart attack as 'a great crisis in the struggle for life and death'. It is so very saddening to think about the way you suffered in your resolve to save us. Also the feelings of separation you felt for Vrindavan and its predominating Deities must have

been very painful.

A zillion medals would not come near to rewarding you for your bravery. For you stood alone on the battlefield facing many adversaries, powerful enemies able to defeat the strongest warrior, but you Śrīla Prabhupāda, our Senāpati Bhakta, was gloriously victorious. Against the odds, and the odds against you were very high, you established your ISKCON, thus fulfilling the orders of your spiritual master. I am simply in awe of your accomplishments.

One time I was privy to your remarkable determination. It happened in Vrindavan when you were already sick. You wanted to go to New York to preach. You were leaving Vrindavan at midnight, and naturally, all the devotees waited up to see you depart. In my Bombay days when we accompanied you to the nearby airport, we would always wait until your aeroplane had departed, and we could not see the white trails of the aeroplane anymore. Our inspiration to do this came from the *gopīs* and when Akrura took Krishna and Balarāma to Mathura. They watched the chariot depart until all the dust had settled. Remembering the happy days of your good health, I stood on the side of the Chhatikara Road hoping to get a glimpse of you as you passed in your maroon Ambassador car. Fate was on my side, for as your car was driving, it suddenly stopped in such a position that I was looking down on you lying in the back of the car, and you were looking up at me! Our eyes locked for an instant. I was deeply shocked seeing your bodily condition for it looked like the skin of your body was lying on top of your bones with no fat or muscles in-between. I wondered if the two guesthouse mattresses you were lying on would be enough to protect your fragile body from the bumpy road to Delhi which was full of large potholes. But mainly, I wondered why, in such a fragile condition, you would undertake such a journey. I was awestruck by your determination to preach. It is a very humbling experience to see such determination on this battlefield of life.

I was recently in a situation that reminded me of this glorious pastime of yours. I met some brave devotees who must have been motivated by your bravery because they really impressed me with their determination to serve your mission despite extreme adverse conditions. Accompanying my husband, we had driven through seven countries in a roundabout route to reach Ukraine where we drove to the eastern border to deliver supplies. In these eastern temples I met these brave, determined devotees located so close to

the fighting in this current war between Russia and Ukraine. Daily, they continue their devotional service unperturbed by the bombing. One temple in Kherson was occupied by the opposing forces and used as barracks for the Russian troops. Even though the Russian forces have retreated to the other side of the river it is still too dangerous for the devotees to return in case of booby traps and the danger from the snipers on the other side of the river. They found a remarkable alternative for their Food For Life kitchen in an empty swimming pool. Apparently, being below ground level is safer. They were insisting it was a safe area, but I could see the rocket damage to a nearby building.

It was an impressive kitchen with a large wood burning stove with a large integral wok-like pot for cooking either the delicious borsch or the *halavā* that is distributed to the people daily. They also had bottled gas for another cooker.

Going out to see the *prasāda* distribution was a real pleasure although there was an air of desperation amongst the people. I could understand that this delicious *prasāda* was a lifeline to them. What you have given us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is so perfect, not only are we nourishing the bodies of the poor people of Ukraine but their souls are also being nourished. Everything you have taught us is so perfect.

To see the destruction caused by war, what to speak of the fresh graves is a sobering affair. People's homes destroyed. The windows of schools blown out leaving them empty and without the sound of life that children bring. The destroyed tanks abandoned on the side of the road. I even saw an unexploded missile sticking out of that unique black soil that Ukraine is famous for. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I never doubted your word when you told us about the misery of the material world, for after all who has not experienced adversity. But seeing war certainly adds credence.

But amongst all this destruction there is still joy amongst these brave devotees as they continue their daily activities of cooking and distributing *prasādam*. And of course there is a *Harināma* to accompany the food distribution thus changing a distressing day into one of hopefulness. The bombs can be heard in the background, but nothing stops this blissful activity. All glories to your wonderful followers, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who carry out your instructions regardless of the risk to their personal safety. Such an inspiration you are to them and to me, our beloved Senāpati Bhakta.

I have a favourite story, it is not my story, in fact I cannot remember

whose story it is, but it goes something like this. Forgotten devotee tells you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that he sometimes feels compassion for the conditioned spirit soul and your answer is,

‘Only sometimes?’

This short story kind of sums you up, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Just full of compassion for all the undeserving souls in this world. You really are the proverbial ocean of mercy. So I thank you again and again for this mercy you showered on all of us. Somehow some of it landed on me, and without that where would I be? So once again I wish to thank you for allowing me to be your devotee, and please don’t let me leave this wonderful position of serving you.

Begging to remain your servant,

Mokshalaksmi Devi Das

Initiation: April 1975—Vrindavan, India

Prabhava Dasa

The very first time I saw Śrīla Prabhupāda was in 1974. He was arriving the day prior to Gaura Pūrṇimā. I was in the Māyāpur gurukula, I was 8 years of age. We were all appointed and assigned to assist in serving in the various duties for Śrīla Prabhupāda’s arrival.

Down the road further away towards the birthplace of Lord Caitanya, there is a curve with a huge banyan tree at the corner. I was asked to go there and wait for Śrīla Prabhupāda. I had a red flag with me. If I was to spot Śrīla Prabhupāda’s car coming, I should wave the red flag so that the devotees at the main gate can be ready with their team.

So I was waiting and waiting, and hours went by without any sign of any car. The banyan tree was providing a nice shade. I thought to myself, since I had to get up for *maṅgala āraṭi* that day and had been up since 3:30 in the morning, now was a good chance to catch up on some sleep under the cooling shade of the banyan tree. Keeping the red flag beside me, I was about to snooze, and heard a big loud ‘Hari bol’ from the window of a car. It was Tamal Krishna Mahārāja.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s car was in the center between two other cars and was decorated with flowers.

I ran behind it waving the red flag in the air. The devotees were overjoyed and ecstatic upon seeing Śrīla Prabhupāda coming.

There were two *kīrtana* parties on both sides of Śrīla Prabhupāda. He walked from the main gate to the temple under the Lotus Building.

My service was now to put the red flag down and, along with another gurukula boy, carry a basket of roses. One boy on his right side and the other boy to his left, we carefully and precisely placed flower petals at Śrīla Prabhupāda's lotus feet at every step.

Initiation: April 1975—Vrindavan, India
Current location: Melbourne, Australia

Prassannatma Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

It is that time of the year again to send our offerings to your lotus feet. I am humbled and honoured to say a few words to glorify you. We were fortunate to walk on the same ground you walked and breathed. We were young and had no understanding of your potency. After many many moons we have less than one present understanding. You taught us everything. You taught us the most important knowledge of not taking birth again. You taught us how we can save ourselves and others. Just chanting *mahā-mantra* and taking *prasāda* most of your disciples went back home to you. You taught us without the mercy of our spiritual master we cannot make any advancement. I beg and remain your servant forever. Begging for your unlimited mercy to make further advancement in my spiritual life. You alone can help us to come home.

Your eternal servant,

Prassannatma Dasa
Initiation: April 1975—Vrindavan, India
Current location: Vrindavan, India
Contact: prassann@cs.com

Rāmeṣṭha Dāsa

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

*namas te s̄arasvate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe
nirviṣeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

To my beloved Spiritual Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Thank you for your mercy by giving me the chance to be of some small service to Lord Chaitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement.

It's been said that there is no way to ultimately thank someone for planting the seed of bhakti in their hearts. As I grow older and continually become more Krishna Conscious, I see the truth in that statement.

The magnitude of what you have gifted me, when you initiated me in April of 1975 in Vrindavan, India, is beyond description.

Every day I still pinch myself thinking I won the Spiritual Lotto. You gave me 'keys' to break out of this prison that I've been in for an unlimited number of lifetimes.

It's not just breaking out of here with my other cellmates that is amazing, but then to be offered the chance to go to Goloka.

You have passed on Lord Chaitanya's gift, that no other incarnation has ever given before, and one that is only possible in one day of Lord Brahmā and only on one planet. The odds of me finding you (or vice-versa), and then being accepted as your disciple, are in the trillions. Actually, it is incalculable!

Prabhupāda, someone once asked me if I bought Lotto tickets and I responded, "I've already won the biggest lotto there possibly could be in the entire universe." Nothing could even come close in comparison.

I think of you many times a day, and in my mind, I thank you many, many times a day and pray for your blessings and mercy. I try to pass on to as many people as I can, the gift that you have given me.

Every time one of these individuals 'lights-up' as the knowledge hits them, I know it's only possible because of your grace, and I see your smiling face.

Sharing this gift and seeing it getting through to people is one small service I enjoy. I pray that my humble efforts will please you and that I will continue to receive your blessings.

The first time I read your books I felt relief and joy. I still feel that same joy today, only more intensified. This joy ride just keeps getting better and better and the realizations never stop.

Your fallen and worthless servant,

Rāmeṣṭa dāsa

Initiation: April 1975—Vrindavan, India

Current location: Mayapur, Nadia, West Bengal, India

Contact: ramestadadas@gmail.com

Adikarta Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It's always amazing to see how much you achieved in such a short space of time: the books, the letters, the lectures, the conversations, the walks, personal instructions. All of this, simply to help other souls trapped in this *martya loka*, planet of death. Your compassion, brilliance, humor, wit, all for that single goal of helping others.

You created ISKCON, as a vehicle to spread the message of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the most beautiful and merciful of all incarnations. You asked your followers to cooperate together to spread the glories of Lord Krishna. The leaders of ISKCON have a huge responsibility, to ensure that your movement becomes the ideal society to carry forth the only message that has the capacity to take our demon crazy society to a civilized human society.

You had said that ISKCON was your body; that you were a member of ISKCON, and that ISKCON is one of the main branches of Mahāprabhu's tree of devotional service. Most of your disciples, hardly ever, if ever, spoke a word to you. We had the faith that serving you was better performed by serving your society, and thus we have dedicated the last half century to maintaining, increasing, and protecting your society. Many have sacrificed their lives for this one goal.

Now your society is under attack. For many reasons, your leaders, the GBC have become objects of criticism, and many, who had previously served the society, have become very averse and critical. Many younger devotees think they have a better idea of how ISKCON should progress. Many of your disciples have become bitter and distanced themselves.

It's true that mistakes have been made, and that there has been negligence in some areas. Devotees, even leaders, are humans who

may be defective. However, I see leaders who have tried their very best to improve and increase your movement, people who have sacrificed everything to maintain your mood and message. Some have become lost to m̄yā, but I see many who have stayed the course and faithfully tried to keep ISKCON together

Over and over and over again, you spoke of your Guru Mahārāja's Gauḍīya Math institute, and how it had fragmented after his disappearance, and how disappointed he had been that his disciples could not work and cooperate together. I never thought that ISKCON would ever follow the same path, especially after all your begging us so much to cooperate. It seems I underestimated the power of Kali, the age of quarrel. So much, bickering and arguing, criticizing. It's sad to see, and I can only imagine that you would be very upset.

I feel we're also in danger of losing the culture that you gave us. So many of the standards and practices that you introduced have been put aside in the name of preaching. However the basic principles you gave us still work very effectively.

You may be happy to hear that I go out every day and distribute books in *tilak* and *dhotī*. I go to different universities here in Florida, and I meet so many young people who are very attracted to our message. They are so thirsty to hear the truth that they will often sit and talk with me for an hour or so. Of course, I make sure they get a book before departing. My goal is to follow your example of preaching, not just by selling them a book, but by taking time to answer their questions and doubts.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the following verse is found 4.30.8:

*śrī bhagavān uvāca, varam vṛṇādhvam bhadraṁ vo
yūyaṁ me nṛpa-nandanāḥ
sauhārdenāpṛthag-dharmās
tuṣṭo 'haṁ; sauhṛdena vaḥ*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear sons of the King, I am very much pleased by the friendly relationships among you. All of you are engaged in one occupation, devotional service. I am so pleased by your mutual friendship that I wish you all good fortune. Now you may ask a benediction from me.

It seems, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that you would be very happy to see a cooperative mood amongst your followers. After all in *SB* 10.7.13-15, Nanda Mahārāja says:

When *brāhmaṇas* are free from envy, untruthfulness, unnecessary pride, grudges and false prestige their blessings never go in vain.

In the purport to that particular verse, you say how you would like to create a class of *brāhmaṇas* who could bless the world. Grudges and envy are demoniac qualities and as long as we, as your disciples, are still infested with these, it will be very hard to give blessings to the world.

Therefore I am praying that we, your disciples, can work together in a mood of respect and love for you, to bless this world with your wonderful teachings and association.

I am sure you will pour your blessings upon us, if we can do that . Please help me become a qualified messenger of your love.

Your eternal servant,

Adikarta Dasa

Initiation: May 1975—London, UK

Jivanausadhi Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

On our last visit to India, I was overjoyed at one temple near Rādhā Kuṇḍa where I saw a set of your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams*. When I pointed it out to the others in our small group, the *pūjārī* came over and said that they hold classes using your books. He went on to say that you are not just for ISKCON, but you are for the whole world, you are *jagad-guru*. He then continued to glorify you and your books for quite some time.

We look forward to the day when the whole world, or three worlds, recognize and sing your glories, *ebe yaśa ghuṣuk tribhuvana*.

For you are Kṛṣṇa's greatest gift to the world.

Your eternal servant,

Jivanausadhi Devi Dasi

Initiation: May 1975—Seattle, USA

Current location: USA

Sandamini Devi Dasi

Prabhupāda, you never settled for second best,
Always first-class, unlike the rest
You put the devotees to the test,
Serving Krishna, always blessed.

You struggled without much aid
Alone in New York, but were never plagued
Challenges came, but you weren't afraid
Strict Vaiṣṇava principles, you always displayed.

With Krishna by your side,
Success came when you tried
Remaining humble, not a shred of pride
Guru's orders, willing to abide.

Traveling the world, always on the move
Encouraging devotees – try and improve
Anarthas in our heart removed
By serving you it is proved.

India projects caused you stress,
Politics & cheating, what a mess
To give to all the Dhām's access
Our shortcomings you did redress.

Early morning rising, purports to write
Day for *sādhus*, for the *karmīs* it's night
Lord Chaitanya's message, bringing the light
Defending Lord Krishna, such a good fight.

Circling the globe, putting health aside,
You entered the airport, and just seemed to glide

The devotees struggled to keep with your stride
To the world you were guru, friend and guide.

Our good fortune is beyond compare,
Mahā-mantra our daily prayer
Such opportunity indeed most rare
To veer from you, we wouldn't dare.

Just at your lotus feet we stay,
Some may defect, but we never stray
With your instructions every day
To follow with loyalty ever we pray.

Sandamini Devi Dasi

Initiation: May 1975—San Diego, USA

Current location: Tucson, Arizona, USA

Contact: sandamini108@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We fall at your lotus feet. Please give us your mercy to continue on this path of *bhakti*, and not deviate from your instructions. Empower us to build a new temple complex for you and spread your glories and the teaching of *Bhagavad-gītā* far and wide in the desert southwest. Your mercy is all that is keeping us engaged in this wonderful movement of yours.

Sukhavaha Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I bow my head low,
Honoring your presence and the gifts you bestow.
You came to the West, *bhakti* seeds to sow.
You created a culture in which we could grow.
You revealed Vaikuṅṭha through your heart's window,
Showered your compassion to the point of overflow.

Although this gradual process seems rather slow,
Please keep me in your shelter, don't let me go.
Reveal where I'm weak and somewhat shallow
Or where I may be stuck on a "spiritual" plateau.

For your mercy and care, what do I owe?
To give up the righteous attitude that "I know"
To integrate all parts, seeing none as foe,
To cooperate with others, my love to show.

Though it seemed you were here so long ago,
I continue to feel you, above and below.
My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I bow my head low,
Grateful for your compassion that will forever flow.

Your daughter and servant,

Sukhavaha Dasi

Initiation: May 1975—New Vrindaban, West Virginia, USA

Dhruva Maharaja Dasa

Written on behalf of the New Raman Reti Alachua Temple

Phalena paricīyate, judge every action by its result.
(Bg. 3.1–5 Lecture — Los Angeles, Dec. 20, 1968)

Question: In 2023, where on earth is the largest concentration of Śrīla Prabhupāda's directly initiated disciples?

Answer: Alachua, Florida USA

By a conservative estimate, there are some 100 devotees directly initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda living in the Alachua area, and if we consider each one has been performing devotional service for forty-five years or more, that equals more or less 4,500 years of combined devotional service (100 × 45).

Many of these *bhakti-yogīs* have families, which means these disciples' children are also followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda....and some of those children also have children, and even some of their children have children!

There are also countless followers who are not connected by family relationships, but have been drawn like iron filings toward a

magnet to worship Śrīla Prabhupāda here by following his teachings and associating with devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya. Such is the congregation of the New Raman Reti Alachua Temple.

Śrīla Prabhupāda visited nearby Gainesville, Florida, in July 1971 and stated: “Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu predicted that in every village, town, country on the surface of the globe this *saṅkīrtana* movement will be spreading. So we are very much obliged to you that in this remote place, which is thousands and thousands of miles away from Lord Caitanya’s birthplace, Navadvīpa, you are carrying out, to fulfill His desire, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.”

Three years after Śrīla Prabhupāda’s visit, in 1974 Gaura Nitāi Deities were installed in Gainesville at the Depot Avenue Temple, as Prabhupāda’s disciples continued following his instructions spreading Lord Caitanya’s message focused mostly on campus at the University of Florida.

As the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement exploded around the globe, Śrīla Prabhupāda encouraged devotees to establish farm projects to complement nearby city temples. His idea was to grow food and milk cows on the farms, which would in turn supply milk, grains and vegetables to the temples in nearby cities and large towns.

By serendipity, during the day of November 14, 1977, Amarendra prabhu closed the deal of purchasing 125 acres of farmland in nearby Alachua, and later that evening heard the news that Śrīla Prabhupāda had passed away on that same day in Vṛndāvana.

Early days on the farm were not easy, but day by day, week by week and year by year the group of devotees expanded, to the point where Gaura Nitāi were transferred from Gainesville out to the farm in 1981, where They were installed in a single-wide mobile trailer with a simple extension built by devotees.

In 1989–90 several parents of devotee children organized the first schools which also inspired other devotee parents from around the United States to check out Alachua searching for a stable environment for their Kṛṣṇa consciousness and education for the their children.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s program of temple worship, education for children, preaching throughout North Central Florida and farming the land nourished Lord Caitanya’s prediction as His tree of devotion grew strong branches in this remote area thousands and thousands of miles away from Navadvīpa.

Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi-līlā 9.7–9 explains Lord Caitanya thought, “My name is Viśvambhara, ‘one who maintains the entire universe.’”

Its meaning will be actualized if I can fill the whole universe with love of Godhead.” Thus the Lord brought the desire tree of devotional service to this earth and became its gardener. He sowed the seed and sprinkled upon it the water of His will.

As a follower of Lord Caitanya, Śrīla Prabhupāda traveled the globe introducing people to the methods and teachings of Lord Caitanya...and Śrīla Prabhupāda’s followers continued the same in and around Alachua.

In 1999 The Alachua Learning Center (a government subsidized Charter School) was established, which encouraged even more parents to move to this remote area, and then along with that school The Bhaktivedanta Academy expanded its educational complex on five acres northwest of the temple. This dynamic growth of schools created a ripe environment for even more families to move to Alachua, and to accommodate their devotional love and desire to worship the Lord, deity worship also expanded to facilitate this growing congregation. In 1995 Gaura Nitāi’s single-wide trailer was replaced with a beautiful nearly 8,000 square foot temple, and a few years later an attached kitchen had to be added to handle cooking for hundreds of devotees who now regularly visited the temple.

In 2000 Their Lordships Rādhā Śyāmasundara were installed, then again in 2010 Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma blessed this community with Their divine appearance.

Aside from daily temple programs, there are also:

- 8 Annual Ratha-yātrās and Parades throughout Florida
- Village of Vrindavan — night of Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī
- Festival of the Holy Name — the last weekend of November
- Special Department to serve the Indian Community
- 12 Acre Eco Teaching Farm

In this brief overview it would be impossible to include names of all the devotees who contributed to making the Alachua Temple community what it is today. Hundreds and thousands of people have freely volunteered their time, energy, money and life’s aspirations to help build this thriving congregation.

Now replete with gorgeous deity worship and steady temple programs, good schools for children, growing opportunities for financial security, increasing preaching programs, and abundant devotee association the Alachua congregation represents what the future of Kṛṣṇa consciousness will look like in the Western World as more infant communities similarly develop their congregations

in years to come.

On this blessed occasion, the celebration of Śrīla Prabhupāda's 127th birth anniversary, we offer our collective obeisances unto his lotus feet and pray for his continued guidance and mercy.

Following his instructions now for more than five decades, the growth of this community proves "He Lives Forever By His Divine Instructions, and the Followers Live with Him."

"Phalena paricīyate, judge every action by its result."

Dhruva Maharaja Dasa on behalf of the
New Raman Reti Alachua Temple
Initiation: June 1975—Chicago, IL, USA
Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Ambarisa Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my fallen obeisances. All glories to your mission to deliver the degraded souls of Kali-yuga. I am sorry that this is so late, but as you told me once in Hawaii, "better late than never".

Śrīla Prabhupāda, all that you told us about old age and this fallen age are unfolding as you have said. You have given us the science of Krishna which is completely untouched by the unfortunate events of today. Thank you so very much for this blessing which you struggled mightily to deliver.

I am personally so grateful for being tasked by you personally to deliver the big temple in Śrīdhām Māyāpur. It is keeping many of your faithful servants busy for many years. Please encourage and guide us to complete this for your pleasure. The world is in great need now for the beacon of light which you brought to New York in 1965.

Thank you unlimitedly Śrīla Prabhupāda! You are my Lord, birth after birth.

Your insignificant servant,

Ambarisa das
Initiation: July 1975—Honolulu, Hawaii, USA
Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances. All glories to your lotus-like feet.

We cannot glorify you enough. But let us try. You showed us how to perfect our lives by your miraculous example. You told us to give up our animal propensities and that would make us advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You told us to reduce our eating, sleeping, mating and defending. It's a hard thing to do but let us try and become spiritually advanced.

Your example was nonstop. It's no exaggeration; you were always on the go. You only slept a few hours a day and sometimes not at all! Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, there are hundreds of gurus, but none of them match you. You are a super guru. We know you by your works. Your books are showing the way, showing the way back to Godhead where we fortunate souls can meet you again.

I first saw you at the San Francisco Rathayātrā in 1974. You wore that big white sweater and that big red rose garland. You raised your arms preaching to the masses and the clouds parted, shining a spotlight of light on Your Divine Grace! At that point I accepted you as my spiritual master. The next day I joined your movement with Visnujana Swami and the Śrī Śrī Rādhā Dāmodar Party. Śrīla Prabhupāda, we met you in your room, and after offering you a rose and our obeisances, you told us: "You are all very bright-faced and fortunate to come to Lord Chaitanya's movement. Now that you are fortunate; make others fortunate...preach this message of Lord Chaitanya's all over the world."

Thank you so much, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for showing us the truth, the way, the love, and the life.

I beg to remain your servant, life after life.

Your eternal servant,

Gauridasa Pandita Dasa

Initiation: July 1975—Chicago, USA

Current location: Oregon, USA

It's hard to glorify a place, where danger's at every step.
No matter what we've come to know, or how we are adept.

In this realm no one survives beyond his counted breaths.
And for this we can be sure, we've all had many deaths.

To paint a picture of this world, it might look very gloomy,
to see the exploits of this earth, and cry for Mother Bhūmi.

But somehow here I am as Kali-yuga rages,
confronted with disease and death
that comes to all who ages.

How can I glorify this place where misery's perpetual,
and sacrifice to get relief by any means effectual?

I'm not so proficient to tell of all these woes,
though everyone whose path I cross
speaks as though he knows.

Packed up in illusion we look for happiness here,
while every satisfaction seems to always disappear.

No matter how this life has ripped apart my soul,
and vicious ways of the world demolished every goal,

If this was set in motion so that we could finally meet,
and thereby dedicate my life to service at your feet,

Then I do glorify this world of many tears,
For you've awakened hope and faith
that deepens through the years.

And I will follow you performing worship to this place,
that all the while broke my heart, to offer me your grace.

Embarrassed by the modes of nature I stand
covered with shame.
Yet by your infinite kindness you gave me Kṛṣṇa's name.

There is no merit I am worth, to receive what
you have given.
But to please you best I can is how I am now driven.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for your sacred glance.
By granting us eternity you've taught us all to dance.

Your fallen, but devoted daughter,

Samapriya Devi Dasi

Initiation: July 1975—San Francisco, CA, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: samapriya.dasi@gmail.com

Tejapraakash Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to You on this most auspicious day of Your divine appearance!

I pray to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Lord Nityānanda Prabhu and all of Their associates to be given a drop of intelligence in my meager attempt to glorify You.

By studying Your life and activities and everything that You accomplished, it becomes obvious that You are that great personality that the Lord Himself and the previous *ācārya*'s predicted would come. Your qualities and activities will be glorified for the next 10,000 years and beyond. Being a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*, directly empowered by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, You are delivering the whole world. Without Your mercifully coming to the west none of us would be here today. Everyone who is in Krishna Consciousness has an enormous debt to You, which in fact can never be repaid. Unfortunately, the owl-like do not understand this. They equate You with other contemporaries when in fact You stand far above.

...And *nitya-siddhas*, they belong to the spiritual world. They never come in contact with this material world, and even they come for some business under the order of the Supreme Lord, they do not touch these material qualities. They remain always transcendental. As Kṛṣṇa remains always transcendental, even though He is in this material world, similarly, Kṛṣṇa's *nitya-siddha* associates, they are also transcendental. They never touch this material world. [Bg. 1.13–14 class, July 14, 1973, London]

You have descended from Goloka Vṛndāvana. You confirmed this fact to the devotees and hinted at it in different places in Your lectures and books. Your exalted nature is so great that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu predicted Your appearance:

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

In every town and village of the world, the chanting of My name will be heard." [CB Antya-khaṇḍa 4.126]

You are that personality that fulfilled His prediction. As Śravaṇānanda prabhu remembers:

"Then he (Mr. Trivedi) also brought up something about, may have been Janmāṣṭamī at the Gauḍīya temple, that if Chaitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to have the holy name spread all over the world He would have done it Himself. So we told Mr. Trivedi, "Tell Prabhupāda. Tell him that." So he told him that. Prabhupāda said, "Yes, He's left the credit to me." So Prabhupāda strongly said that Lord Chaitanya left it for him. And all the devotees were like, "Haribol! Śrīla Prabhupāda kī, jaya!" It was probably one of the most memorable experiences because no one can make a comment like that unless they're pure and perfect like Śrīla Prabhupāda. It didn't come from any false ego. It came from fact. It came from Absolute Truth and because he was so intimately connected to Lord Chaitanya, and the disciple succession, and his *guru*, he could make that comment."

When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu recited and heard about the activities of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī, He went into ecstasy and fainted. In a similar way He and Lord Nityānanda also become ecstatic

and faint when They remember Your transcendental pastimes of spreading Their *sankīrtana* movement. When carefully studied, Your life and Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī's life have many similar parallels.

The Lord always desires to be in the company of His intimate associates. Lord Krishna, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs* would personally appear to the Six Gosvāmī's and other intimate associates. They appear in order to give pleasure and service to Their dearest devotees. In many places in the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* it is stated that when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was performing His pastimes many demigods from all over the universe would come to this earth planet daily to see the Lord and take part in His pastimes.

In Your pastimes here on earth on several occasions You mentioned that Lord Brahmā and Śrī Nārada Muni were coming regularly to see You. They were coming and attending Your different programs and *kīrtanas*. Yamunā Devī writes about her personal experiences of these pastimes in her memoirs. Padmalocan Dāsa and others also give their accounts in the Śrīla Prabhupāda Memories video series.

This universe is filled with millions upon millions of planets. The size of this universe is inconceivable to our tiny brains. The creator of this vast universe, Lord Brahmā, was leaving His most important post in Brahmāloka and descending to this earth to see You. The greatest preacher of this universe, Nārada Muni, was also coming to get Your association. How valuable is Your association! Some may not believe this but it is easy to understand and believe if we consider that, what to speak of Lord Brahmā and Śrī Nārada, you are constantly in the personal association of the Supreme Lord. We can only imagine what a dearest and confidential devotee You are!

And by so doing the devotee is able to relish
the fruit of love of God and thus live practically
with Lord Kṛṣṇa, even in this life, and be able
to see the Lord in every step. [SB 2.2.30]

In New York on July 14, 1976, a reporter asked You how You make day- to-day decisions. You replied that Lord Krishna tells You directly:

Interviewer: In the same way I'm curious with respect to the way Krishna communicates with you, whether it's in a similar kind of way that He gives you your necessities.

Bali-mardana: In other words, when you decide that someone is to be in charge of a particular temple does Krishna tell you that this person should be in charge.

Interviewer: Or do you by judging him say this person is qualified.

Prabhupāda: Yes, because a devotee always consults Krishna and He gives order.

Interviewer: It's a more direct communication.

Prabhupāda: Yes. And He gives order.

Ramesvara: Because intelligence, our philosophy is that intelligence comes from Krishna. So if I have some...

Interviewer: And your philosophy is that your daily necessities come from Krishna as well.

Ramesvara: Yes, try to understand. Suppose my intelligence sees that this person is qualified, that means Krishna has told me.

Prabhupāda: No, not necessarily, Krishna will tell directly. A devotee always consults Krishna and Krishna tells him, "Do like this." Not figuratively.

Interviewer: Does that apply then to other kinds of decisions and other kinds of activities as well?

Prabhupāda: Everything. Because a devotee does not do anything without consulting Krishna.

Bali-mardana: But that applies to a very greatly elevated soul, that is not an ordinary person.

Prabhupāda: That is, therefore the minor devotees, they consult the spiritual master. That is our process. *Yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādah.* end

premānjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena

*santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti
yaṁ śyāmasundaram acintya-guṇa-svarūpaṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

I worship the primeval Lord, Govinda, who is always seen by the devotee whose eyes are anointed with the pulp of love. He is seen in His eternal form of Śyāmasundara, situated within the heart of the devotee.

Sudāmā prabhu remembers:

One afternoon after his nap I was bringing him a little *rasagulla* and some drink. The sun was going down when I started to enter his room, which faced the backyard. The whole room seemed purple and gold. There was a certain energy in the room. Śrīla Prabhupāda was chanting and crying tears of ecstasy. Well, we didn't even have *The Nectar of Devotion* yet. I got alarmed, backed out of the room with the tray, went to Govinda Dāsī and said, "Govinda, what's happening? Is Prabhupāda OK? Is he having a fit?" She said, "No, no. That's just Śrīla Prabhupāda having a relationship with Krishna. That's Krishna consciousness." I said, "Wow!" I went back in five minutes later. Śrīla Prabhupāda was still there, and this time he stopped me from leaving. He said, "Sudāmā don't leave. I am crying because of the mercy of my Guru Mahārāja. By his mercy I am allowed to see Krishna. I see Him right now over those grasses." Oh, man. It was so heavy that I started crying. He said, "Why are you crying?" I said, "Because you are so powerful and merciful. I have never met a soul like you." He said, "That is Krishna's arrangement."

At that time Prabhupāda told me that he saw Krishna as a cowherd boy. I didn't know anything about cowherd boys. I just knew Prabhupāda. He was my life. If he said so, okay. He talked about how beautiful the grass was and how fortunate he was to have the mercy of his Guru Mahārāja. That same week Puruṣottama, Himavatī, Haṁsadūta, Tamāl, Dayānanda, his wife Nandarāṇī, and I entered Śrīla Prabhupāda's room. Again this is in the afternoon. Śrīla Prabhupāda was sitting at his desk chanting while tears flowed down his face. We were not

aware of this because we were just aware of ourselves. We paid our obeisances and sat up. There was Śrīla Prabhupāda, crying. Hamsadūta said, “All glories to you, Swamijī,” and we all started crying. By the pure devotee’s mystic power, neophytes were allowed to experience this. We had no idea why we were crying. We just felt an overwhelming mercy. We fell down again and paid obeisances. Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “Why are you crying? Sit up.” We said, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are crying because you are so merciful.” “No, no,” he said. “It’s my Guru Mahārāja. Without his mercy, I’d be nothing.” These were my first lessons in accepting a pure devotee of the Lord.”

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for blessing us with Your presence and Your many wonderful pastimes. They help remind us neophyte devotees of Your inconceivable exalted nature. We should always hear and keep these pastimes within our minds and hearts.

On many occasions You would be unable to control Your ecstasies of love of God and fall into ecstatic trances. Sometimes while lecturing, during *kīrtana*, while singing “*Jaya Rādhā Mādhava*.” Many devotees had the fortune of experiencing these pastimes including this fallen soul. Some of these special moments are recorded in Your audio library. Then there are Your photographs and videos that show Your different ecstasies of love of God. Yet as a topmost *paramahansa vaiṣṇava*, decorated with all the 26 qualities of a devotee in full, You were truly humble and prideless. You associated and related to Your disciples as if seemingly on an equal level. In the beginning at 26 Second Ave., You would personally serve the devotees by cooking for them, serving them *prasāda* and attending to their personal needs. You even waited in line to use the restroom!

In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* it is stated that when an exalted pure devotee of your caliber raises their arms, it removes all disturbances in the heavenly planets. Being on the topmost level of love of God, You have conquered the Supreme Personality of Godhead by your love, and therefore the Lord has voluntarily come within Your grip. Because You have the Lord within your grip, You are fully empowered to offer all of us incredible benedictions so we can be delivered from this ocean of *māyā*:

Even the devotee or the servant of Kṛṣṇa says something, even it is wrong, Kṛṣṇa upholds this. *Kaunteya pratijānīhi na*

me bhaktaḥ pranaśyati [Bg. 9.31]. So even it is wrongly done, still, Kṛṣṇa fulfills because He thinks that My servant has promised; it must be fulfilled. Therefore Prahlāda Mahārāja, in the previous verse he has said, *tava bhṛtya-pārśva*. So to serve the servant of Kṛṣṇa is better than to serve directly Kṛṣṇa, because if the servant of Kṛṣṇa promises something, if the servant of Kṛṣṇa says, I'll take you to Kṛṣṇaloka, you must go there. Even Kṛṣṇa cannot do that. He can; I mean to say that He does not say very easily. But if a servant... *Yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādah*. Therefore our philosophy is to please the servant of God, *tad-bhṛtya, bhṛtyasya bhṛtya*. Then it is very nice. [SB 7.9.29 class, March 7, 1976]

So the same thing – Deity worship and watering the *tulasī* plants, chanting sixteen rounds at least, and observing the rules and regulation, regulative principle... Then your life is successful. Don't neglect. Very seriously, continue. And in this one life you are going back to home, back to Godhead. It is sure. I am not flattering you. Kṛṣṇa says, *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī mān namaskuru, mām evaiśyasi asaṁśayaḥ* [Bg. 18.68]. *Asaṁśayaḥ*, Without any doubt, simply following these rules and regulation, *mām evaiśyasi*, you come back to Me. [SB 6.1.49 class, Aug. 1, 1975]

You mentioned that your pathway has become filled with stumbling blocks, but there are no stumbling blocks, I can kick out all those stumbling blocks immediately, provided you accept my guidance. With one stroke of my kick I can kick out all stumbling blocks. [Letter to Kṛṣṇa Dasa, Sept. 9, 1972]

Who among us today is so bold, so confident and so empowered to offer such benedictions to their followers as you have? Only one who has become fully self-realized and has conquered the Lord by their bhakti can offer such benedictions. As Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura prays:

Kṛṣṇa is yours. You have the power to give Him to me. I am simply running after you shouting, "Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!"

Your full mercy and benedictions are there for every single one of Your followers, whether a new or seasoned devotee. One simply

needs to put himself in the direct sunlight of your mercy.

Very often you instructed that we must become sincere and serious. Please help us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, help us to become strong and steady enough to tightly catch hold of your divine lotus feet and never let go. All devotees worldwide pray to You daily in your *guru pūjā*, “My only wish is to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from His lotus mouth. Attachment to His lotus feet is the perfection that fulfills all desires”. This daily prayer is specifically meant for You and is from all of Your followers. Why are we so foolish to desire anything else, whatever it may be, then to become fully attached to Your lotus feet?

*na dhanam na janam na sundarim
kavitam va jagad-isa kamaye
mama janmani janmanisvare
bhavatad bhaktir ahaituki tvayi*

As Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prays and instructs us, all of our desires, whatever they may be, will be fully satisfied by serving Your lotus feet.

Our spiritual master is the ocean of mercy, the friend of the poor, and the lord and master of the devotees. O master, be merciful unto me! Give me the shade of Your lotus feet. Your fame is spread all over the three worlds.

Jaya, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your fallen, insignificant, aspiring disciple,

Tejaprasad dasa

Initiation: July 1975—Philadelphia, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: tejaprasad@gmail.com

Karnapura Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to your selfless service.

All glories to your dedication to the order of your spiritual master.

All glories to you for all of the sacrifices that you made trying to fulfill the order of your spiritual master.

Your unconditional love for all living entities knows no limits.
Your determination goes far beyond my comprehension.
The glories of your character are far more than I can even
begin to imagine.

Thank you for taking care of this insignificant conditioned soul.
I pray that someday I will be able to please you.

I beg to remain the humble servant of your servants,

Karnapura Dasa

Initiation: July 1975—Chicago, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Sarvopama Dasa

Dear Jagat Guru A. C. Śrīla Bhaktivedanta Swami Goswami
Mahārāja,

Please accept my humble but nearly worthless obeisances.

All glories to your inimitable and unparalleled service to the
Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Krishna.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I find myself in a real bind. Trusted and
honest godbrothers have told me that within our ISKCON society
the divorce statistics are embarrassingly high. I have an idea why this
might be the case and can even see a possible solution. Unfortunately
when I present my ideas many seem disturbed and seem to wish I
would not say anything at all. Is there any way you could let me
know how to go forward? I need your guidance now more than ever.

Your miserable and confused disciple,

Sarvopama Dasa

Initiation: July 1975—Chicago, USA

Current location: Illinois, USA

Contact: sarvopama@gmail.com

Satyaraja Dasa

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda! Obeisances galore from my heart, as
always. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

Today, on your appearance day, I want to express an unusual idea that has kept cropping up for me throughout the years, an idea that speaks to your special glory as a unique *ācārya*, showing how yet again you transcend both ordinary and extraordinary standards, expectations, and ways of being.

My gnawing idea begins with a modern expression: “Never meet your heroes.” That is to say, in general, it is unwise to seek out personal association with those we respect or admire, for they inevitably fail to meet our expectations, resulting in disappointment. Indeed, it is not uncommon that we put our teachers and superiors on such a high pedestal that meeting them could only result in revealing their weaknesses and imperfections, for our assumptions about their character and qualities are usually unrealistically high.

But that was never the case with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda—you never let anyone down. Most of the people you encountered deeply appreciated your numerous assets, both material and spiritual, from your practical, worldly wisdom and pragmatic know-how, to — need it be said? — your profound devotion, scriptural knowledge, and spiritual realization.

What is particularly amazing to me, however — and this is the specific recurring thought that has besieged me over the years — involves the people who have served your physical form, knowing an intimacy and proximity that few have had the good fortune to achieve. I am talking about glorious individuals, such as Brahmānandaji, Hari Śauri, Śrutakīrti, Śyāmasundara, and Tamāl Krishna Mahārāja, the latter of whom famously cared for you during your final pastimes, when you went through the *līlā* of physical infirmity and bodily ailment. These wonderful souls regularly engaged with your “material body,” divine though it is, and might have thus, consequently, seen you in a more mundane way, superficially, losing sight of the obvious truths of your overall transcendence. As the saying goes, familiarity breeds contempt.

But they didn’t go in that direction at all. Almost counter-intuitively, they saw you as divine, despite appearances that may have at times suggested otherwise. *By your grace, they saw you spiritually, not materially.*

By Your Grace, I have known all of these people personally and had opportunity to ask them about their personal experience with you. Tellingly, they vouch for your “perfection,” and while they use the word cautiously, according to your teachings, they are insistent

that you embodied that word like no one else.

For example, in a recent email exchange with Śyāmasundara, I asked him about the spiritual master making mistakes, thinking he would surely admit that, being human, the guru can falter in this way. But he said nothing of the kind. Instead, he wrote as follows:

As for your question about Prabhupāda making “mistakes,” I can only cite his purport in First Canto SB 3.24, where he comments that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* “is without any trace of mistake, illusion, cheating and imperfection, which are the four flaws of all conditioned souls. The liberated souls are above these flaws.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda is a liberated soul. In nearly a decade of VERY CLOSE observation, whenever I thought Śrīla Prabhupāda was making a “mistake,” it always turned out to be just the right thing, perfect in every way. So I must contend that Prabhupāda was the quintessential perfect person, beyond error. This is my informed, eternal opinion.

His point was well taken. In other words, as imperfect souls, we don't see the entire picture. And so even when Your Divine Grace appeared to be mistaken, your so-called mistake was just what was needed for Krishna's plan to unfold as it should. That is to say, there is more to life than overt “right” and “wrong,” and who is to say what is ultimately right when it comes to Krishna's plan? Śrīla Prabhupāda, you alone, as Krishna's pure representative, are privy to that plan, and this is the very definition of what it means to be right. That fact is now clear to me through the grace of your disciple Śyāmasundara—and who would know better than someone like him, who had physical proximity?

Your perfection speaks to the subtlety of the guru being “as good as God,” which does not mean that he *is* God, of course, but that he is God's representative, and thus he — and he alone — unveils Krishna's plan in the world before us.

Indeed, the scriptures say, “One should know the *ācārya* as Krishna's very self [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.17.27]. The word used is *vijānīyāt* — “one should know them to be the same,” which is slightly different than saying they *are* the same. It is basically saying that they should be seen as one, even while being aware that they are different as well. It is a matter of perception, not ontological oneness.

As Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura reminds us, “The spiritual master is honored as much as the Supreme Lord because he is the most confidential servitor of the Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and is followed by all authorities.” They are “honored” as the same, but that very act of honoring indicates that there is distinction, too.

And you have highlighted this point: “But that does not mean guru is Kṛṣṇa. *Kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya*. Now, that, if you accept, you... Accept means you honor spiritual master as good as Kṛṣṇa, because he’s representative. But not that Māyāvāda philosophy that guru and Kṛṣṇa is the same. [Lecture on BG 7.9 — Vṛndāvana, August 15, 1974]

But I veer away from my main point: It seems that the people closest to you—“closest” in that they served in proximity to your “physical” form—are the ones who see your perfection more clearly than anyone else. This speaks volumes about your singular qualification as the perfect guru. Again, in the material world, we are taught to never meet our heroes, lest we open ourselves to terrible disappointment. In a sense, you turned the entire *vapuḥ/vāñī* ideology on its head. While physical presence (*vapuḥ*) is usually deemphasized in Gauḍīya thought, in your case, that simply did not apply. As your immediate followers knew, your form brought with it a certain enhanced spirituality. This was so even if, ultimately, your association would be fully nurtured and understood by your spiritual instruction (*vāñī*).

To be sure, the mass of devotees mainly know you through those who surrounded you while you were physically present—yet their vision of you never seems as developed as that of those early devotees. There are exceptions, of course, since *bhakti* is a spiritual phenomenon. But in my experience, the above seems to hold true, with the earliest devotees having what some might perceive as an exaggerated view of your transcendence. Why is this? Is it because they imbibed something special in your physical presence? Was your physical form like a spiritual touchstone, imbuing all who came near with spiritual wisdom and insight?

To play Devil’s advocate: One might think that, being more removed from your physical form, latter-day devotees would see you in a more divine light. To be sure, this was the case with the followers of Jesus—when he was on the planet, he was considered the Messiah, the King of the Jews, and only later was he deified, or

seen as God Himself. Later deification seems natural, because his immediate followers interacted with his physical form, while later generations pushed him into the clouds, so to speak, perceiving him as a full divinity for the first time.

With you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, it was different—your immediate followers, it is well known, practically deified you, sometimes admittedly taking it too far, as when dear-hearted Brahmānanda and his three associate *sannyāsīs* were temporarily asked to leave the movement: You would not tolerate your disciples confusing the spiritual master with God in any absolute sense. No. You demanded proper *siddhānta*, wherein they understood the ways in which you were one with God—and the way in which you weren't.

My bottom line and recurring thought, then, is as follows: If the people who served your physical form were able to have such a developed understanding of who you are—without the apparent mundanities of that form blocking or interrupting their spiritual perception—then something special was going on there, fully affirming your unique transcendence and otherworldly identity.

Let me conclude with this: One of the oldest accounts of the phrase, “Never meet your heroes,” is from “Madame Bovary,” a novel by French writer, Gustave Flaubert. The original French quote is rendered like this, *Il ne faut pas toucher aux idoles: la dorure en reste aux mains*, which roughly translates as, “Don't touch your idols: a little gold always rubs off.” The obvious meaning here is that the “gold” of most heroes is false, falling away at the slightest provocation. Well, with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, gold may rub off as well, but, for all who have the eyes to see, it is the gold of Lord Chaitanya, the Golden Avatāra.

Satyaraja Dasa

Initiation: July 1975—Chicago, USA

Current location: New York, USA

Sukhada Devi Dasi

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

The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.

Waiting in the Miami Airport in 1975 for you to appear, I felt I knew you already as I had associated with your devotees and read your books. I wanted to be a devotee; I wanted to serve you. When you emerged, effulgent and smiling, Nartaka Gopāla and I placed rose petals in your path. I knew that this moment in my life totally changed everything.

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

The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment’s association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.

During your stay in Miami you gave class every night under the banyan trees. Your words of wisdom reverberated throughout the atmosphere, and still do. “A bite of *prasādam* and you are guaranteed a human birth,” you exclaimed. After considerable applause you added, “But there are some species of monkeys that are considered human!” We had to seriously think about that.

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

The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment’s association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.

While on traveling *saṅkīrtana* we stopped in Philadelphia for initiations and your association. It was so crowded that I was unable to squeeze into the temple room or onto the porch. I decided to walk down the long walkway in front of the temple, and pick some marigolds to offer when you were ready to leave. However, it started to rain, and I felt foolish standing there in the rain waiting for you to come...but not foolish enough to alter my plan. When you came by I put out my marigolds, and you graciously accepted them. “Thank you very much,” you kindly said. “*Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda*,” I chanted with a heart full of gratefulness.

*‘sādhu-saṅga’, ‘sādhu-saṅga’ — sarva-śāstre kaya
lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi hay*

The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment’s association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.

In New York, in 1976, Nartaka Gopāla, Andharūpa, Harestanu, and myself were flown up for the occasion. Upon arrival, everyone rushed to the Ratha site. I decided to stay at the temple with my friend, Dhīra, as I wanted to see Śrīla Prabhupāda before anything else. Dhīra and I petaled flowers waiting for Prabhupāda to come down from his room. We were expecting *karatālas*, *mṛdangas* and voices to precede his appearance, but suddenly he was present before us. I dropped to the ground to pay obeisances while Dhīra thoughtfully took a photo. Off Prabhupāda went, and off we went to try to catch up with his car to shower him with our petals! Miraculously, we were able to offer our petals and pull Śrīla Prabhupāda on Subhadrā devī's cart down 5th Avenue!

*'sādhu-saṅga', 'sādhu-saṅga' — sarva-śāstre kaya
lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya*

The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.

In India we were invited to take your *darśana* upon arriving in Mayapur after a long flight. I had endeavored to find raw macadamia nuts as I knew you liked them, and I knew they shouldn't be cooked by non-devotees. When we bowed down after entering, Nartaka Gopāla was wondering if it was ok that we came. She turned her head and saw Śrīla Prabhupāda mercifully looking at us while smiling and nodding. I offered him the gift of nuts as he was departing, and he asked three times what the gift was. Finally, I was able to respond, and he smiled, saying "Acha."

*'sādhu-saṅga', 'sādhu-saṅga' — sarva-śāstre kaya
lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya*

The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.

There was a large pandal in several cities we traveled to with you. We eagerly distributed books and listened attentively, even though we couldn't understand the language. It didn't matter. One day in Delhi while distributing books, though we were feeling quite ill, you came by in a car. You held up your hands in *praṇāmas*, blessing us all. All of our physical and mental maladies vanished!

'sādhu-saṅga', 'sādhu-saṅga' — sarva-śāstre kaya

lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya

The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.

At the Calcutta temple we heard Śrīla Prabhupāda was arriving and Nartaka Gopāla and I sat on the stairs chanting in anticipation. One hour, two hours went by....'Prabhupāda isn't coming,' someone reported. Disappointed, we went up the stairs....then again we heard...Śrīla Prabhupāda IS coming. Back we went to take our position on the stairs. Another hour later....we heard Prabhupāda ISN'T coming. This time we stayed put. We didn't believe it. Shortly after, Prabhupāda arrived with great fanfare. Our garlands were placed on Śrīla Prabhupāda as he smiled ecstatically.

*'sādhu-saṅga', 'sādhu-saṅga' — sarva-śāstre kaya
lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya*

The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.

The incredible nature of a pure devotee's mercy is that it is ongoing, so that even though Śrīla Prabhupāda has left this world in his *vapuḥ* form, his mercy and moments are still available through his books, his instructions, his videos, his conversations and his devotees that carry on his mission. These moments are as powerful now as they were then, and the proof is that many souls are still taking up the process! Let's always hanker for these moments while culturing an appreciation for each other and the service that we all do together in Śrīla Prabhupāda's honor.

Sukhada Devi Dasi

Initiation: July 1975—Philadelphia, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Dayanidhi Dasa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer you my most heartfelt obeisances at the dust of your divine lotus feet. *Bando mui sāvadhāna mate!* In this special occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā 2023, I feel your presence more! Because I meditate

on your great mission to save the world and feel very inspired to participate more and more and with new energies.

As if time never passes or even as if time invigorates me more and more. I'm fortunately busy these last two years preaching Kṛṣṇa Consciousness in Greece! I feel a bit like you when you arrived alone in your old age in America! I cannot fully express the great joy of being able to do something for you! My old little heart can't contain all the joy I feel! I feel you close like never before! I smell the same perfume I smelled when I was cleaning your room or when you were near! That sandalwood scent and above all that solemnity that emanated from you! You have struck my intelligence forever with your words of knowledge, and you have kidnapped my heart which has been unable to forget you since that time!

How can I stop talking about you? Lord Kṛṣṇa made me touch with my senses your enormous purity, your infinite mercy has flooded my life! I can't forget you anymore.

Somaka Prabhu and Mṛdā Mātāji engaged me in your service. My life was empty and always in search of the Truth that I had not found in the life of a monk or in that of a young boy. I wandered the streets of Rome and Italy without real results. I remember when, still very young, I joined your wonderful Movement and served you with your disciples in Via Mistretta 2 in Rome. We were preparing the small temple for your much desired visit. We were all so excited and thrilled with the idea of your arrival. The small building / temple resembled an anthill of devotees who went up and down happy and very busy with the preparations. You arrived early in the morning and despite the long ten-hour flight from Bombay, you were fresh and excited to be with us. Your presence was majestic and solemn. So I had the unlimited good fortune to see you and above all to serve you. I helped the devotees clean up your room, and I was very impressed by the fact that for the whole week you were with us, your simple bed that we had set up for you was always intact as if you had never used it! A simple and humble rocking chair that we bought for you in the nearby Piazza Vittorio was your bed of rest! The light in your room was on all night! And we could hear your deep and merciful voice translating!

You were always busy working for the benefit of others, not thinking of your health or personal convenience! Recently we had the opportunity to present you the new full edition of the Greek *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is!* – years of work of few devotees that want to

please you! I feel your happiness exactly as I saw you in 1975 in New Māyāpur, France when Bhagavān Prabhu offered you the new *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* in French language. You were so happy and blissful, and you gave your garland to him speaking his name : “His Grace Bhagavān Prabhu kī, jaya!”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for allowing me to serve your divine lotus feet in your mission! Oh divine master please allow me to give all my days for your glorification. Please allow me to present you everywhere to everybody! I want to live remembering, speaking and serving you! Like in the beginning the devotees put me to support with my hands, behind the back of the newly built *vyāsāsana*, while you were preaching (May 1974) from your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* at the Hotel Parco dei Principi in Rome. I pray to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa that by obeying the request of the devotees, I may always remain a preaching assistant of the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* of you, Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda!

The servant of your servants,

Dayanidhi Dasa.

Initiation: 1975, August—Paris, France

Current location: Athens, Greece

Contact: dayanidhidasacbsp@gmail.com

Anandamaya Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

The miracle wrought by your *Kṛṣṇa* book continues to this day in my life! I discovered it in the Victoria, B.C., Canada public library in 1974, after having quit smoking ganja and not feeling fully satisfied studying other so-called gurus and god-men.

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

Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Chaitanyadeva and delivering the western countries, which are

filled with impersonalism and voidism.

In my estimation, *Kṛṣṇa* book was most likely placed there by Satsvarupa Mahārāja's library party. The pictures immediately grabbed my attention, although at the time I thought that the stories were fables. I had a book of Aesop's fables and a book about prophets of the Old Testament as a kid, so I was primed for pictures of mystical significance. Your Divine Grace had so very cleverly interspersed Bhāgavat philosophy within the story line that by reading this philosophy, I became convinced of its viability and began chanting Hare Krishna immediately. I also gave up the last remnants of my non-veg food and took to a veg diet. Later that year, I met some of your disciples who were preaching on the streets of Victoria, B.C. Initially I met Pārtha Dāsa and Uttama Devī, a nice householder couple, currently heading up the Grihastha Training Courses, then later met some of the *brahmacārīs* who, in their overweening enthusiasm, insisted that I move into the temple, and I also hosted Vishnujana Mahārāja and his crew in my apartment for a week while they did a program in Victoria. But after that I left Krishna Consciousness. and let myself literally drift away from Krishna. I went backwards rather far until I realized that I needed to reverse course or I would never get back to Him, so I joined Vancouver, B.C., Canada temple in January 1975 and accepted first initiation from your good self via Bahudak Das, the temple president, in October 1975. The miracle that your Krishna book begot in my life continues to this day, because after 49 years of *sādhana*, I am finally beginning to see light at the end of the tunnel. I know that I will continue a while longer in this tunnel of myopic misconception, this vale of tears, this world of sorrow, for how long I know not, but it is a question of when, not if, I will eventually approach Krishna's lotus feet. As some insignificant payback for your matchless gift of *Kṛṣṇa* book, as your foot soldier I seriously continue distributing your books to the Little Free Libraries in my locality, and Supersoul keeps revealing more locations. I am ever indebted to your causeless mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in writing your wondrous and transformative books.

Praṇāmas, Your disciple,

Anandamaya das

Initiation: October 1975—Vancouver, Canada

Current location: Soquel, CA 95073, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances, and please accept this offering in gratitude for your worldwide grand Rathayātrā processions, your many dancing pastimes, and for delivering to us the holy name.

The Swami Step

In Hawaii they like to hula.

Tango's the dance in Argentina.

In Jamaica they do reggae, and ramba down in Cuba.

They dance ballet all over and samba in Brazil.

Everyone likes to disco
and even foxes like to trot.

Now there's a new dance craze that's taken
the world by storm

From San Francisco to Boston, Paris, London, and beyond.

When *mṛdaṅgas* boom and *karatālas* ching, it seems that
folks just can't help themselves.

The Swami step is a thing.

All around the world,

Rathayātrā chariots roll down the most famous avenues
and devotees dance and sing.

The Swami step is a thing.

You can add a twist, a twirl or spin, you can even do a jig.

Or two can lock their arms and try some swing.

The Swami step is a thing.

But let's get back to basics...

Raise your arms and just join in.

From side to side a gentle sway.

The Swami step is a thing.

This started back in '67, San Francisco was the place.

Where Swami Bhaktivedanta hatched a plan
to save the human race.

And just so you know, so you get the whole story
there's a song that goes along.
It will get in your head, and you can't get it out.
A transcendental ditty.

So, tune in and feel the bliss.
It's a happening you don't want to miss.
Just raise your arms and get in step
because it goes like this.....

*Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*

Thank you for all that you continue to do.

Your grateful servant,

Kriyashakti Devi Dasi

Initiation: November 1975—Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Current location: Oahu, Hawaii, USA

Contact: spiritsoul_108@yahoo.com

Mahavisnupriya Devi Dasi

Dearest Divine Gurudeva, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

It is yet another year for reflection on our annual Krishna Consciousness status and being able to share our love and thoughts with you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, our wonderful founder-*ācārya* and savior of our world.

You know me well, internally and deeply, as you can see all my faults and *anarthas*. You know all my past lives, my weakest points and all my failures. However, I am still struggling to come closer to you. You told us all that we must hang onto the hem of your *dhotī* because you have the key to the back door, back to Godhead. I pray to be able to do that – hang on to your *dhotī* hem as often as possible.

I have seen the passing of so many of your senior disciples who have left with peacefulness, happiness and joy. What great saints they all are. I know my time is also approaching. Or as mother

Nanda Devī calls it, “We are now waiting in the exit line for our time to depart.”

You crossed so many seas, braved so many austerities, heart attacks and culture shocks just to bring this Krishna Consciousness to us, the most fallen in the Western world. You saved us by your sheer determination to follow your own spiritual master’s instructions. How very rare and special a soul that you are to your best friend, Lord Śrī Krishna.

Near the end of 2022, I was praying for some service that would please you. Something that I could engage my heart and soul in and something that I had been trained for most of the years of this life. You so swiftly answered those prayers which began from little thoughts that kept repeating, popping up and expanding as I meditated upon them from time to time.

What seemed to me to be “out of the blue”, an email and a phone call, fell right into my lap. I can not thank you enough dear Śrīla Prabhupāda as you provided the answer to my prayers. Your love gave me the opportunity to do some *sevā* that I have been committed to for years in this lifetime as well as in previous lives also.

I heard one devotee speaker giving *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class say:

We must go out into the world, enter the workforce to get trained up over time. And by perfecting this opportunity that *paramātmā* has guided us to with deep sincerity, we then can get the opportunity to do this very same *sevā* for the Supreme Lord and our divine spiritual master. Or another real goal of our lives which is giving service to all the Vaiṣṇavas.

I have been happier than I have ever been working in this career field because now it is working for the Lord by helping others. I have been benefited with a great gift which I am truly grateful for and plan to keep doing for all the years of my life left allotted to me.

Everyone I contacted to assist me in this service also, commented to me, “I was praying for just this kind of *sevā* to do for Śrīla Prabhupāda.” Thank you for this beneficent opportunity, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thank you for hearing my prayer. I am so eternally indebted to you.

Praying to always be in your service,

Mahavisnupriya Dasi
Initiation: November 1975—Honolulu, Hawaii, USA
Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA
Contact:.mvp1081@gmail.com

Narakantaka Dasa

Most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept our humble and respectful obeisance.

All glories to Your Divine Grace!

All glories to your divine lotus feet, beneath whose shade every fallen soul can find shelter from the scorching heat of the fire-like material senses' gratification.

Even the great souls, who derive their uttermost joy from the uncontaminated devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Krishna, sit at your lotus feet in great ecstasy.

Reading from Your Divine Grace's "*Vrindavane-Bhajan*", even those who are very fallen can have a hint of what it really means to be Krishna conscious.

Your realizations penetrate profoundly within our consciousness, making us appreciate how undeservedly fortunate we are to have met Your Divine Grace.

You are the embodiment of Lord Gaurāṅga's mercy.

You are an exalted *mahā bhāgavata*.

You can truly see Śrī Vrindavan Dhāma manifested within your heart.

Never forgetting your inner relationship with Śrī Krishna, you waged war against material illusion, going right into the heart of its realm. Free from all material attachments, you bravely defeated the hosts of Māyā, turning against them their own weapons, using it to broadcast the Supreme Mantra – Śrī Krishna's Holy Names.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Based on Śrīla Prabhupāda's "Vrindavan-Bhajan"

And I'm here, sitting alone, now retired in Vrindavan,
Getting deep realizations by this mood in the Holy Dhāma.
Yes, my wife, my sons and daughters, my grandsons, I've got them
all,

But they are now just fruitless glory, for I have got no bankroll.

Today Lord Śrī Krishna has shown me the real *māyā's* naked form.
By His strength, that all now appears to me just tasteless and worn.
*"All, one thing after another, swiftly, I am taking away
From all those upon whom, fully, My real mercy I'm going to lay".*

Now, being penniless, gone broke like this, as everyone can see,
Wife, relatives, friends, brothers, they have all abandoned me.
Misery! But makes me laugh. And I'm here, laughing alone.
In this endless *samsāra*, where my so-called "loved" have gone?

No one here is "mother", "father", nor a relative as well.
Like the sea-foam, they remain for just the time to say farewell.
But, oh brother, everybody is your relative as well
On the real spiritual plane, with no tinge of *māyā's* smell.

Of the eternal living creatures, the Supreme Lord is the Soul;
All your kin! An infinity of *jīvas* as a whole.
All is harmony, when Krishna is the center of their life,
But when Krishna is forgotten, all becomes unending strife.

Then, drawn into selfish actions, when reactions become ripe,
Each soul wears a different body, each engrossed in its own type.
Although bobbing up and down in that ocean of misery,
He still thinks, "I'm very happy! What a great felicity!"

Sick in bed, troubled by pain, he laughs and says, "I'm feeling well!"
And I laugh at his "I'm well". He is raving under *māyā's* spell.
Unaware that he is being cheated, with his false aim to pursue,
Although *māyā* kicks and beats him, he will keep his point of view.

And this is the giant cosmos, filled with lost, wandering souls
Who, by Guru and Krishna's mercy, can regain their missed roles.
Far, beyond this sorrows' ocean, are divine varieties.
There, they'll find eternal bliss, free from all anxieties.

Who's mad says, "all there is formless, like a kind of nothingness".
But the Lord is full of "tastes", more than what we can assess.

Connoisseurs of divine flavours serve Him as subordinates.
In awe, servants, friends or parents; love Him as His associates.

With its flavours that sweet nectar all pure bhaktas will enthrall,
And the best, **the lover's love**, is the essence of them all.
One who worships Krishna is clever, but who worships *māyā* is not;
Being a pauper without knowledge, he's bound up in *māyā*'s knot.

Duryodhana and Arjuna, in the same warfare they vied,
But Arjuna was the best devotee and Duryodhana died.
One who knows his true relationship as he fights the war of life,
He will see everyone perish, while he will remain alive.

By not following that path, all those *jnana* and *karma*'s "heroes",
Never reached true liberation, they just earned a bunch of zeroes.
Without serving Rishikesha, fighting lust as best they can,
They resume working for *māyā* after only a short time span.

What to say about the *jñānīs*, if *yogis* also fall down,
And the *karmīs* are all asses bound by suffering all around.
Those who follow Krishna's order, thereby attaining the Lord's
grace,
Will become just like Arjuna, with the same fortune to embrace.

One who fights the war of life for his own happiness' sake,
He will die, like Duryodhana, with those whom with him partake.
Understand the *Gītā*'s message and of false comments be wary!
You'll attain Śrī Krishna's service and will worship the Lord Hari.

Śrī Hari teaches living beings by means of His devotees.
One such helper is Arjuna, for his right proclivities.
Him, as if tied to his kin in a knot, so strong and tight,
Was so grieved and bewildered that was not ready to fight.

"Violence against my relatives, just to enjoy this earthly kingdom?"
"How could this sin make me happy?" "How could that be an act
of wisdom?"

Then he heard *Bhagavad-gītā*, the most sacred "Song of God"
and got free from all ignorance, free from all that it was flawed.

He severed his material bonds but did not ape a renunciate.
And this is how, the *Gītā*'s meaning, family men will appreciate.
“*karishye vachanam tava*”, “**I will do everything You say**”,
That’s why the war he fought is glorious and why his fame is here
to stay.

“The Vaishnavas have no desire. They chant *japa* on their beads.
So what kind of a Vaishnava is Arjuna with his deeds?
Free from all duality, as endorsed in the *purāṇa*,
The Vaishnava simply chants!”, says he who eats the mind’s
bananas.

Those who have no eyes to see say Vaishnavas are inactive.
But to serve and please the Lord, the Vaishnava is always active!
Lifeless *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs* perform no service at all.
For cheap fame, money, and worship, they dwell in their lonely
hole.

Nityānanda Prabhu worshiped by Vaishnavas and devout men,
Suffered blows, but still went on to give God’s love ever again.
Lord Gaurāṅga taught the *jīvas*, showing by His own example,
Pretentious *nirjana-bhajan*, it’s no more than ornamental.

In His acts, the Supreme Lord follows the Vaishnavas’ will,
Then the mercy of a Vaishnava can bring the illusion to nil.
The Vaishnavas have the power to wake up the sleeping world.
By their mercy, sinful men become devotees of the Lord.

Therefore, they do not perform *nirjana bhajan* for Śrī Hari,
Which is the world’s cheating process of the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*.
Lacking *sāstric* understanding, such neophytes, unpurified,
They just hunt *chapatī* and *dāl*, while “being lonely” is their pride.

One well versed in the scriptures, an unflinching devotee,
He is an *uttama-adhikārī* and can make the whole world free.
Was the *līlā* of the Lord, relish the *nirjana* mellow,
But is not to be imitated by a true Vaishnava fellow.

Nondevotees have no taste for serving God with pure devotion.
Being mundane, they don’t experience such sublime love and

emotion.

I see what happens in Vrindavana. The plight is utterly severe.
Therefore, I can understand that there is work to be done here.

The *prākṛta-sahajiyās* all commit adultery,
Taking someone else's wife their "*līlā*" relish, vulgarly.
"This is not Śrī Vrindavan!" let my mind always repeat.
Just remember, without fail, the six-goswamis' lotus feet.

The goswamis saved pure bhakti from degraded situations,
and by Śrī Caitanya's order they removed all deviations.
They are Krishna's associates. Rādhā-Krishna is on their mind.
Just by thinking about them, one will leave his sins behind.

But if one tries to imitate them, feigning their dress and devotion,
He becomes the toy of *māyā*; lost in the material ocean.
Always preach! Go out and preach! Go from *jīva's* door to door!
Then your life will be a success as an employee in God's love store.
Śrī Dayita Dāsa prabhu warned and gave this orientation:
"**Chant out loudly Hare Krishna! This is my real initiation**".
Māyā's is all these newspapers. Growing illusion, everywhere.
Preach that boldly to the world. Get up and fight. It is warfare!

Sitting lonely in your room shouting, maybe you'll increase your
bile,
Countless births will not be enough to please Śrī Hari and see His
smile.

Come out of your little cage! Stop objecting! Get things done!
Everything belongs to Krishna, Who belongs to everyone.

Chant this "**Hare Kṛishna**" loudly, while going out in *saṅkīrtan*,
Then you'll find within your heart, "*nirjana bhajan has begun!*".

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, now, by your mercy, we know the real
meaning of "*nirjana-bhajan*".

Your exhortation "**Go out and preach!**" is the life-motif of your
ISKCON Movement.

Please, allow me to remain eternally with Your Divine Grace as
part of your great transcendental army.

Your humble and respectful servant,

Narakantaka Dasa

Initiation: November 1975—Rome, Italy

Current location: Terni, Italy

Contact: segreteria@associazionevedica.it

Sri Kama Dasi

Geneva '74

Icy stagnant pool
cold empty darkness...
moon rising

I cross Geneva town, approach the front door of the temple clutching an invitation leaflet.

I'm ushered into the back garden, a modest grassy area at the rear of a suburban house,

noticing a small fire burning in the centre of the lawn encircled by a handful of young men

clad in saffron robes with shaven heads. My eyes are drawn to a stately Indian swami sitting

on a raised dais, a lady in a sari prostrated at his feet. He hands her a string of beads.

I am looking in wonderment at this sight when suddenly the swami turns his head towards me

and stares right into my eyes...a long lasting soul searching and penetrating gaze that I have never experienced before. At the same explosive moment in time as our eyes meet, I am wishing the ground would open up and swallow me as the sudden awareness of my impurities overwhelms my very being.

More profoundly, though, the realisation that I have finally found my eternal spiritual master strikes a joyful and soulful chord in my heart.

a warm summer day
fire crackling in garden
eyes meet
piercing soul

grass warm underfoot
heart is opening
love flows
connection

coming to save us
in the winter of our lives
a lotus appears

*With immense gratitude,
Your aspiring seroant,*

Sri Kama Dasi

Initiation: November 1975—London, UK

Current location: Hertfordshire, UK

Bhutiha Dasa

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

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

While most of the population of this planet lives without following a goal to discover the true purpose of life, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have shown it to us.

You have introduced us to Krishna, you have brought us Lord Caitanya's message. I can say that I and all those who follow you are the most fortunate in this life.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have brought us the holy name which can lift us from the lowest condition of material existence to the highest spiritual position by realizing the true perfection of life.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your humble seroant,

Bhutiha Dasa

Initiation: December 1975—Italy

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you on this most blessed occasion of your divine appearance.

Thank you for accepting such a fallen soul as myself as your disciple. You make the difference between Goloka or Narakaloka. You've made Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, Vamśīdhara, Rādhā Śyāmasundara available to me. Through the inconceivable mercy of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda all this is possible.

It is so nice travelling with you and Gaura Nitāi on the Padayātrā Maharashtra party. Since I joined you, with Dāmodara Līlā Prabhu managing the party, and Suryavamśī Prabhu as his assistant, in Parbhani, my life has never been so sweet. I'll be 73 years old in a few days and will be completing 48 years in your service in a month and half, and I've never been happier. The people in these towns and villages have such an enthusiastic taste for chanting the holy name and hearing Kṛṣṇa and Rāma *kathā* on a daily basis. I've never distributed so many *Bhagavad-gītās* and *Bhāgavatam* and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* sets, small books and *BTGs* in my life. After the evening *ārotik*, I speak to the public and then we distribute books and *prasādam*. We also distribute books while walking with you and Gaura Nitāi village to village. And after evening *prasādam*, at around 5:30 p.m., we go out in the village we're staying in on *harināma* and to distribute your books. The devotees are also reading your books individually and in a reading group together daily.

Unless you come out here and experience life on the road with the *padayātrīs* you can't understand the special experience of living like this. It's not for everyone, but anyone who has a taste for pilgrimage and preaching is more than welcome.

Actually all of this is only possible because of you, Gaura Nitāi and Lokanātha Swami.

As my most dear godbrother Lokanātha Swami has taken your instruction to organize *padayātrā saṅkīrtana* parties throughout India and all over the world to every town and village as his life and soul. In this way I can only pray to remain in your eternal loving service.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving me a life truly worth living. Hare Kṛṣṇa!

On behalf of all the Padayātrā Maharashtra devotees, all of us remain always in the shelter of your lotus feet,

Akhiladhara Dasa

Initiation: December 1975—Amsterdam, Netherlands

Ashalata Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances unto your lotus feet again and again.

Today is a very auspicious day, your appearance day.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are a great, great, great *mahātmā* who appeared on this earth to propagate Krishna consciousness, to deliver mankind, to spread *harināma*, to make Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *vāṇī* come true that Krishna's name will be sung in every town and village, and to follow the instructions of your Guru Mahārāja Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Mahārāja to preach in the western world.

In order to follow the instructions of your Guru Mahārāja and to please him, at such an advanced age when other people retire to relax, you packed up and left India to come to the western world with nothing but a few books in hand and your faith in Krishna.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you arrived in Boston, then went to New York, in such a big city, did not know which way to go – imagine how hard it was. But you made it through, not only in New York, but all over the globe.

Many obstacles, obstructions and hindrances came on your path, but you faced them all. You did not get discouraged and kept going on your path, because of your purity and firm determination. You worked extremely hard day and night to complete the mission single-handedly.

Everything came true. You accomplished what you wanted.

Krishna consciousness has spread far and wide all over the world in all the cities, towns, and villages. People call us *Hare Kṛṣṇa* people. Yes, we are *Hare Kṛṣṇa* people and are all over the world chanting *harināma*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, because of you there are so many temples and centres and so many books in different languages. Millions and millions of books are being distributed and so many devotees around the world.

Your TOVP is a landmark, a wonder of the world, which will open the door to millions of people to have darshan of Their Lordships.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, what you did, no one could have done. You are an extraordinary personality.

I want to glorify you, but don't know how. I don't have the capacity or the words – it is beyond my limit.

But I can say you are a genuine guru, *jagad-guru*, *mahā-guru*.

And you are my guru. I am fortunate to have a guru like you. Because of you, I hope to cross the material ocean and go back to the real home, back to Godhead.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, if we did not meet you, we would have missed the boat. You made my life meaningful and successful.

Thank you so much for accepting me at your lotus feet and giving us so much mercy and association. Years have gone by, but your pastimes and sweet memories are still fresh.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please always keep us in the service of you and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa regardless of any circumstance.

Thank you very much for everything.

Your worthless servant,

Ashalata Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1976, January—Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Current location: Ontario, Canada

Drutakarma Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept this offering in primitive verse

Where I have ended each line for better or worse

With words ending in the syllable “tor”

Without repeating any I've used before

In last year's offering you may recall
I used many but not all.
So today I beg your grace divine
Hear my "tor" verses just ones more time.
You crossed the ocean on the Jaladuta freighter
On the world stage you move like an actor in a theater
Of your students you are the wise educator
Of my future you are the true prognosticator,
Of Kali Yuga's captives you are the emancipator
You are never a mundane mental speculator
May I follow your order not be an impersonator
You show us how a leader should be a delegator
You told us of Gajendra and the alligator
Of Krishna's form you are the careful decorator,
Of Krishna's pastimes you are always a spectator
And therefore are fit to be their narrator
Of my place in devotional service you are the allocator
Of my *anarthas* you are the attentive devastator
Of my lost love for Krishna you are the excavator
Of you or your words may I never be a deprecator,
Of my tiniest service you are the appreciator
Of my desire to serve Krishna you are the stimulator
To your first followers you brought chapatis like a waiter
Of the successful disciple you are the congratulator
Of truth and illusion you are the separator
Of Māyā's realm you are a heroic infiltrator
In matters of finance you are a most careful calculator
For my misbehavior you are the stern remonstrator
For my shortcomings in service you are the compensator
Of my armor of false ego you are the penetrator
As a child you rode with your friend Moti
in a perambulator
Of this planet you have been the boldest circumnavigator
So many times your mission took you across the
earth's equator
In Krishna *līlā* you're an eternal participator
Of the essence of devotion you are the concentrator
Of disparate disciples you are the integrator
For the heat of material desire you're the
cooling refrigerator,

Your behavior is exemplary for every fortunate observator
Of the Lord's mercy you are the patient anticipator
Of my faults you are the watchful tabulator
Of the quality of my service you are the evaluator,
Of my tendency to deviate you are the inhibitor
Of failing in my vows you are the prohibitor
To your movement's progress may I always be a contributor
Of the qualities of a devotee you are the exhibitor
Of my level of advancement you are the true estimator
You hunt down my *anarthas* like a prowling predator
Of the ranks of devotees you are the populator
Of Krishna's existence you are the expert postulator
Of the bomb of pure *bhakti* you are the detonator
Please explode my ignorance and leave a big crater,
filled with your divine merciful favor
make me a God lover instead of a God hater

Your servant,

Drutakarma Dasa

Initiation: January 1976—Miami, Florida, USA

Current location: California, USA

Subhivilasa Dasa

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

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

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Today is the most auspicious, merciful, and special day – your appearance, Vyāsa-pūjā day.

Not only today, but every day is to glorify you. Your glories are so greatly unlimited, it is not possible for me to describe them by my words.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given everything we need in Krishna bhakti to take us back to Krishna. Your appearance has brought unlimited mercy and the way for mankind to end suffering with your instructions. Just by following your path of Krishna bhakti is the simple way that everyone can go back home, back to Godhead.

You have made Krishna consciousness so simple and attractive that not only can anyone follow this but can relish it with happiness and joy while doing it.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, now your books and teachings are available in almost all the languages of the world. No one has any excuse to not follow you.

You have brought *harināma saṅkīrtana* all over the world which everyone can take benefit from while getting the mercy of Rādhārāṇī and Krishna.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have opened ISKCON centres all over the world with the most wonderful, top class deity service which attracts so many people to these temples.

Your prasādam distribution system is also a way back to Krishna Loka just by people eating at your Govinda's restaurants and the Sunday feasts.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have made Krishna service fun and enjoyable by introducing so many festivals like Ratha Yātrā all over the world, which was previously only at Jagannātha Purī, as well as Janmāṣṭamī, Gaura Pūrṇimā, and more. Krishna consciousness is definitely not boring!

You also prioritized the association of devotees giving us so many ways towards spiritual advancement.

Only because of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, do we have the opportunity to change from lives of sin to lives of bhakti.

What you have done is incredible and beyond miraculous. Your ISKCON is flourishing because of your power and purity. You have fulfilled the mission of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu to spread *harināma* in every town and village. You are the real messenger of the Lord by giving a chance and mercy to each and every soul.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we know we cannot repay in anyway what you have done for us. Thank you, thank you, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

There is no one more merciful than you who has given us the practical way to go back to Krishna Loka. You have done the ultimate to save mankind. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the real, genuine,

pure guru, and it is only with your mercy and kindness that our lives are complete.

I am so fortunate that you have accepted me as your disciple. Thank you very much for your kindness, personal association, and instructions. As always, my request is to keep me in the service of your lotus feet and your ISKCON. Please continue to be merciful to me because I am only dependent upon you.

Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your insignificant servant,

Subhivilasa Dasa

Initiation: January 1976—Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Current location: Ontario, Canada

Aniha Dasa

*namaḥ om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhūtale
svāmī śrī-bhaktivedānta prabhupādāya te namaḥ*

*guruvajñāṁ śīrasi-dhāryaṁ śaktyaveśa-svarūpine
hare kṛṣṇeti-mantrena pāścatya-prācyā tāriṇe*

*viśvācārya pravaryāya divya kārūṇya-mūrtaye
śrī bhāgavata-mādhurya gītā-jñāna-pradāyine*

*gaura-śrī-rūpa-siddhānta-sarasvatī niṣevine
rādhā-kṛṣṇa-padāmbhoja-bhṛṅgāya gurave namaḥ*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Without rendering service to the lotus feet of the spiritual master, offering of flowers at *guru-pūjā* and flowery words of eulogy on the Vyāsa-pūjā day are of limited value. Therefore, disciples must always hanker for opportunities to engage in the service of their Gurudeva. After years of night shifts and foaming at the mouth, since retirement Kṛṣṇa has very kindly given me the service of joining other devotees in going on *harināma saṅkīrtana*, while Mahāprabhu Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda and Girirāja Govardhana are in charge of our home. This is

possible only by your mercy.

This last year it has become more evident than ever that as disciples we have failed in many ways to preserve the legacy you gave us. Those entrusted to maintain standards have demonstrated that they themselves are sadly lacking in standards. We cannot put blame solely on the shoulders of the leadership because if sufficient numbers of disciples had followed Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions purely there would be no room for the deviants, the criminals, and the pretenders to flourish. What can we do but pray that justice will be done and the rotten branches will be cut away so that the tree regains health.

Praying to always remember to chant 'Jaya Prabhupāda!' and asking forgiveness for all the times I have forgotten that you are my Lord and Master,

Your servant,

Aniha Dasa

Initiation: February 1976—France

Current location: Leicester, UK

Hansarupa Dasa Adhikari

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

*caḅṣu-dān dilo jei, janme janme prabhu sei,
divya jñān hṛde prokāśito
prema-bhakti jāhā hoite, avidyā vināśa jāte,
vede gāy jāhāra carito*

Every day I listen to your heavy words of knowledge and meditate on your instructions while praying for your continued guidance to keep this fallen servant on the path back to home, back

to Godhead. By your *vāṇī* I find the strength to remain faithful to serve Your Divine Grace in any capacity that may be required. I find enthusiasm in the memory of your loving exchanges as you chanted, “*Jaya Rādhā Mādhava*” in the assembly of ecstatic devotees and then came down from your *vyāsāsana* and danced before Their worshipable Lordships, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, in the Henry St. temple.

If some sinful people escape and giving up religious principles go to far off countries, then my *senāpati-bhakta* (military commander) will come at that time to give them Krishna consciousness.

[Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in *Śrī Caitanya Maṅgala*,
Sūtra-khaṇḍa, by Locana dāsa Ṭhākura]

I am one of those sinful persons who became fortunate by your arrival in such a far off country, and you are certainly “Mora Senāpati Bhakta” as predicted by Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself. Therefore, I am eternally indebted to Their Lordships for this chance to serve one so dear to Mahāprabhu as you. I can never hope to repay that debt in this one short lifetime. My only prayer is that I may take birth again and again, wherever you are, and serve in the shade of your lotus feet perpetually.

*cakṣu-dān dilo jei, janme janme prabhu sei,
divya jñān hye prokāśito
prema-bhakti jāhā hoite, avidyā vināśa jāte,
vede gāy jāhāra carito*

“He opens my darkened eyes and fills my heart with transcendental knowledge. He is my Lord birth after birth. From him ecstatic *prema* emanates; by him ignorance is destroyed. The Vedic scriptures sing of his character.”

Please bless me that I may stay in the association of those great souls who have such implicit faith in Guru and Krishna. They alone continue to faithfully propagate the mission of Your Divine Grace as you so clearly indicated in your 1958 Vyāsa-pūjā offering, excerpted from your powerful *Viraha-Aṣṭaka* poem, which defines your commitment to the mission of your beloved spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Goswami Prabhupāda:

“From sea to sea, crossing the earth, penetrating the universal shell, all of us should unite in purpose and flood the lands with the inundation of Krishna conscious preaching.”

“One who tries to enjoy the assets of his spiritual master (*guru-bhogī*) and one who renounces his guru’s order (*guru-tyāgī*) are two kinds of useless persons. But one who actually serves his spiritual master (*guru-sevī*) will clearly understand all these things.”

“There is only one all-opulent Supreme Lord; therefore, if one’s personal opulence increases, a true saintly person rejects it, knowing it to be the cause of a dangerous position in the material world.”

Understanding your concerns in this regard a foolish person knowingly drinks poison if he ignores these admonitions. Your position is not that of an ordinary person and your instructions are not diminished by the passage of time.

You wrote in the dedication of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, for which you sacrificed so much to save the world:

To
Śrīla Prabhupāda
Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī
Gosvāmī Mahārāja
My Spiritual Master
On the 26th Annual Ceremony of His
Disappearance Day
“He lives forever by his divine instructions
and the follower lives with him.”

All glories to Your Divine Grace Oṃ Viṣṇupāda *paramahaṁsa parivrājakācārya aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda!

I beg to remain, your follower servant,

Hansarupa das Adhikari
Initiation: March 1976—Vrindavan, India
Current location: Rādhā Govinda Temple,
Brooklyn, New York, USA

On the occasion of the 127th Birth Anniversary of His Divine Grace Oṃ Viṣṇupāda *paramahaṁsa parivrājakācārya aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

The Friday morning in 1965 when you arrived in America, radios all over the land were playing songs sung by members of a new generation emerging in the western world. In 1958 you wrote that, “Māyā’s deluding potency is perfectly expressed in the blaring mundane noise of the radios we hear everywhere.” (Vrindavan Bhajana: part 26). Everywhere included Boston’s waterfront district where you perhaps heard some of this new generation’s songs blaring from radios in shops as you passed by while taking your first walk in America beside Captain Pandia. We may also have heard and been awakened that day by this new music as it blared out from our clock-radios. We likely woke to one of three songs that were the most popular that day according to the music industry trade papers: *Help! (I need somebody)* . . . *(I can’t get no) Satisfaction* and *(We’re on the) Eve of Destruction*.

We listened to those songs and suffered as we searched for a place to fit into a world which we had deeply conflicted feelings about, and we wondered what our futures held. No amount of gratitude is enough to offer you for giving us hope and a life in Krishna consciousness we could never have imagined.

You came beating the drum of Śrī Krishna Saṅkīrtana on a one-sided bongo in a modest storefront in the biggest of skyscraper-Kali-yuga cities, where you sang the greatest of songs and delivered the Holy Name of Śrī Krishna to all who would hear. With great force enriched by purity of heart, your love-laden voice drowned out the noise of *māyā* with transcendental sound vibration. Filled with faith in the words of your spiritual master and the Holy Name of Śrī Krishna, you led a spiritual revolution to “Save Earth Now,” a revolution that continues to resound around the world today.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam describes the experience of living in the material world as being immersed in an “. . . ocean of tears caused by intense grief.” Such an ocean is no doubt as turbulent today as it was when you arrived in Boston on that Friday, September 17, 1965. In *Bhagavad-gītā* 8.15 Śrī Krishna has described the material world as “A temporary place full of miseries.” So it was the day you arrived in America and so it will always be. However, the ocean of tears,

again says *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, can be dried away by meditating on the benevolent smile of Śrī Hari. May our humble service to you inspire Śrī Hari to one day smile upon us all. Bowing before you, I pray you kindly engage me as you like.

Your servant,

Haridasa Dasa

Initiation: March 1976—Mayapur, India

Current location: Montgomery, MD, USA

Jalatala Devi Dasi

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

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

Respected Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

On this auspicious day, devotees are seeking your blessing. Without your blessings no-one can do any preaching. Without preaching how can anyone become happy? In this material world people are suffering so much they do not know what they are losing by misusing this human form of life.

Mahāprabhu predicted [Cb. Antya-khaṇḍa 4.126]:

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

The holy names will spread all over the world.

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

[Cc. Madhya 7.128] We see Māyāpur devotees are preaching very nicely. So many visitors come to Māyāpur and see the beautiful Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava, Aṣṭa sakhī, Śrī Pañca Tattva, Lord Nṛsimhadeva.

Plus, they hear the holy names and take full *prasādam*. When the TOVP opens, Māyāpur will become famous all over the world.

Every morning, the devotees attend *maṅgala-ārati* in your Puṣpa

Samādhi Mandir. Visitors are coming all day long. Even after Gaura Pūrṇimā, the crowds continued, and people enjoyed so much that they didn't want to leave Māyāpur. Big lines are there with people waiting to get *prasādam*. Thousands of people take *prasādam* every day. This is all your special mercy and your desire to serve the *paramparā* by making a wonderful facility for people to visit Māyāpur.

In Mumbai, devotees distribute *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to the people coming to have darshan of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Rāsabihārī, Sītā Rāma Lakṣman and Hanumān, and Gaura Nitāi. On Makara Saṅkrānti and Rāma-navami 100,000 people took *prasādam*. In Vrindavan the boat festival was attended by many people who enjoyed the Deities' water pastimes. Wherever you built a temple, people are coming from far away just to enjoy the spiritual atmosphere.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this auspicious day, please bless us so that we can do more preaching and engage in your service and the service of your most beloved Lord.

Your servant and obedient daughter,

Jalatala Devi Dasi

Initiation: March 1976—Mayapur, India

Current location: India

Arjuna Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Last week I had a vivid dream of your lotus self. Going to a small ISKCON center I see that you are present there. Immediately I offer my *daṇḍavats* which you graciously accept while simultaneously ignoring me for being so lazy and negligent in following your instructions, *aham apy aparādhānām, ālayas tyakta-sādhanāḥ*. The devotees invite me to take *prasādam* and it is so magical, a *dhokla* like *sabji* with broccoli and cauliflower, that it blows my mind. While

coming out of the *prasādam* dining room with my plate you walk by, and I enthusiastically cry out, “Śrīla Prabhupāda kī, jaya!” You graciously smile in appreciation, which you allow me to see even from behind your back as you walk away on your morning walk. I am astounded how you look so exactly the same in every detail as you were when you were still with us 47 years ago, wearing your winter coat and scarf with a slight bristle on your chin as your oceanic smile peels around your lotus face. You are so merciful to this unworthy fallen foolish disciple who is still endeavouring to faithfully continue serving your ISKCON institution despite serious health issues and old age as this bodily machine gradually breaks down. Thank you dear Sir, you are my only hope! Śrīla Prabhupāda, kī jaya!

Last year on your blessed Vyāsa-pūjā day celebrations (20/8/22) our most venerable Temple President Prabhu Śrīniketana requested me to offer the 108 preparations. While chanting the offering mantras and chanting *gāyatrī* behind my closed eyes I see Lord Caitanya lovingly feed you with His lotus hand, while tears flow from His eyes, just as family members feed one another birthday cake. Then, when everyone was reciting the *puṣpāñjali* prayers, I saw your *utsava-mūrti* on the *vyāsāsana* become visibly alive and intensely look out at the devotees who were lovingly and adoringly worshipping you, casting your most merciful glance overflowing with love on us all. Thereafter the *mahā-mahāprasādam* we all honoured had an otherworldly blissful effect and was incredibly tasty. Verily we are all in Mahāprabhu’s *parivār* (family). From Gautam *gotra* we have become Gaurāṅga *gotra* by your divine grace.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for your infinite causeless mercy. I am forever yours, my dearest lord and master. Thank you again and again for engaging me constantly in the service in your ISKCON here in Mauritius, even though I am so unworthy. In your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, you give such a powerful purport to verses 6 and 7 of the 12th chapter, where you say. “It is explicitly stated here that the devotees are very fortunate to be delivered very soon from material existence by the Lord. In pure devotional service one comes to the realization that God is great and that the individual soul is subordinate to Him. His duty is to render service to the Lord—and if he does not, then he will render service to māyā.

“As stated before, the Supreme Lord can be appreciated only by devotional service. Therefore, one should be fully devoted. One should fix his mind fully on Kṛṣṇa in order to achieve Him. One should work only for Kṛṣṇa. It does not matter what kind of work

one engages, but that work should be done only for Kṛṣṇa. That is the standard of devotional service. The devotee does not desire any achievement other than pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His life's mission is to please Kṛṣṇa, and he can sacrifice everything for Kṛṣṇa's satisfaction, just as Arjuna did in the Battle of Kurukṣetra. The process is very simple: one can devote himself in his occupation and engage at the same time in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Such transcendental chanting attracts the devotee to the Personality of Godhead.

"The Supreme Lord herein promises that without delay He will deliver a pure devotee thus engaged from the ocean of material existence. Those who are advanced in yoga practice can wilfully transfer the soul to whatever planet they like by the yoga process, and others take the opportunity in various ways, but as far as the devotee is concerned, it is clearly stated here that the Lord Himself takes him. The devotee does not need to wait to become very experienced in order to transfer himself to the spiritual sky.

"In the *Varāha Purāṇa* this verse appears:

*nayāmi paramam sthānam
arcir-ādi-gatiṁ vinā
garuḍa-skandham āropya
yatheccam anivāritaḥ*

The purport of this verse is that a devotee does not need to practice *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* in order to transfer his soul to the spiritual planets. The responsibility is taken by the Supreme Lord Himself. He clearly states here that He Himself becomes the deliverer. A child is completely cared for by his parents, and thus his position is secure. Similarly, a devotee does not need to endeavour to transfer himself by yoga practice to other planets. Rather, the Supreme Lord, by His great mercy, comes at once, riding on His bird carrier Garuḍa, and at once delivers the devotee from material existence. Although a man who has fallen in the ocean may struggle very hard and may be very expert in swimming, he cannot save himself. But if someone comes and picks him up from the water, then he is easily rescued. Similarly, the Lord picks up the devotee from this material existence. One simply has to practice the easy process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and fully engage himself in devotional service. Any intelligent man should always prefer the process of devotional service to all other

paths. In the *Nārāyaṇīya* this is confirmed as follows:

*yā vai sādhana-sampattiḥ
puruṣārtha-catuṣṭaye
tayā vinā tad āpnoti
naro nārāyaṇāśrayaḥ*

The purport of this verse is that one should not engage in the different processes of fruitive activity or cultivate knowledge by the mental speculative process. One who is devoted to the Supreme Personality can attain all the benefits derived from other yogic processes, speculation, rituals, sacrifices, charities, etc. That is the specific benediction of devotional service.

“Simply by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa — Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—a devotee of the Lord can approach the supreme destination easily and happily, but this destination cannot be approached by any other process of religion.

“The conclusion of *Bhagavad-gītā* is stated in the Eighteenth Chapter:

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

[Bg. 18.66]

One should give up all other processes of self-realization and simply execute devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That will enable one to reach the highest perfection of life. There is no need for one to consider the sinful actions of his past life, because the Supreme Lord fully takes charge of him. Therefore one should not futilely try to deliver himself in spiritual realization. Let everyone take shelter of the supreme omnipotent Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. That is the highest perfection of life.”

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, your purports are so powerful that, with time, they will transform this miserable and illusory material world into Goloka. If anyone wants to know the goal of life and how to easily achieve it I urge them to read the verses and purports of your astounding *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā*, chapter 7, chapter 8, verses 20 to 32 and chapter 9, verses 28 to 43.

In my experience I am simply a botheration for your Lord

Krishna and His glorious associates. My only desire is to always be able to think of you, always serve you and finally to come to wherever you are.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*I humbly beg to remain,
Your eternal servant,*

Arjuna dasa

Initiation: April 1976—Vrindavan, India

Jagannathesvari Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my obeisance to your lotus feet, again and again, with love and gratitude.

The day before writing this, I was visiting my 98-year-old bedridden father, who was fortunate to meet you once at Bhaktivedanta Manor, and I was reading to him from your biography. My husband, who gave him the book, and my son Gaurāṅga were also there, taking turns to read, and we were all deeply moved by the story of your first journey to the USA, and the challenges you faced and survived during that first year in New York City. Although we have heard the story many times before, it seems to become more and more real and amazing every time it is told. This is no ordinary story, but the story of the sacrifices you made, that only you could make, to open up the treasure house of Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement, and deliver Krishna consciousness to the Western world. It was nothing short of a miracle. The way that you dealt with every challenging situation that you faced reveals the beautiful qualities of your personality.

The prayer that you composed on your arrival in Boston demonstrates your deep and perfect humility, and your total dependence on the will of Krishna. Your friendly dealings with the Agarwal family and their friends in Butler, Pennsylvania, reveal your broad-mindedness, tolerance, and kindness, and your innocent child-like curiosity about new things, such as frozen foods and vacuum cleaners. Your departure from there to go alone to New York highlights your courage, determination, and detachment. Your philosophical conversations with Dr. Mishra in his ashram, and your

daily cooking for him and his students, show both your unwavering preaching spirit and your loving generosity. And the risks you took, at that age, with no money, such as leaving the security of Dr. Mishra's ashram to get your own tiny room, only to be robbed of everything, and then moving into the Bowery, a dangerous neighbourhood, and living in a slum with a drug addict, who eventually became crazy and threatened you, forcing you out on the street with nowhere to go, powerfully demonstrate your courage and absolute commitment to the mission of your guru.

You went through so much for us that my only desire is to reciprocate with you by serving your mission. Please engage me always in your loving service.

Your lowly daughter,

Jagannathesvari Devi Dasi

Initiation: April 1976—Vrindavan, India

Current location: Watford, UK

Atitaguna Devi Dasi

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

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

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my most humble and sincere obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. This is the inconceivably auspicious day of your appearance.

Please forgive me for my inadequacies. I need to strengthen my determination to serve you.

You have brought real peace to the hearts of untold numbers of persons in this world.

You have taught us that service to Krishna and the Vaishnavas is where we will find peace. You left peaceful Vrindavan and Māyāpur and went to the most hectic and agitated city in the world: New York. I am in New York now. You created real peace in New York when you came in 1965. In fact, you called New York the “fatherland

of Krishna consciousness”.

Every few months, my husband Pancharatna and I travel to different countries to preach. We have just come from Japan where your movement is doing very well with many coming on Sundays to be part of the *saṅkīrtana* movement. We chanted in the streets of Kamakura where the residents were appreciative of the devotees’ enthusiasm to do *saṅkīrtana*.

You traveled so much to many countries around the world to go to the temples to preach. Even though you were at an advanced age, you rested only a little, but you would be up in the early hours of the morning translating the most wondrous *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* for the benefit of mankind.

As of now, the devotees are going out on the modern-day battlefield, the city streets. Since 1966, 581 million books have been distributed worldwide. These books bring peace and spiritual understanding to the distraught populace. This is all done by your grace.

We are so grateful to you for what you have done. You are giving a valid solution to this world filled with materialism and voidism. You are helping us all rise to the plane of pure spiritual consciousness of trust in Krishna. You are the perfect example of total glorification of Lord Krishna and Lord Caitanya.

Personally, I want to dedicate my whole being to spreading the *saṅkīrtana* movement. Your *saṅkīrtana* movement will save mankind as the world totters on the brink of ecological and economic chaos. Also, we must fight against Māyāvādī philosophy.

You have shown the whole world that Krishna *kīrtana* will push back Kali-yuga’s invading darkness.

Every day, the devotees here in the temple go out on *saṅkīrtana* led by that valiant *saṅkīrtana* warrior, Rama Raya prabhu to bless the people of New York with the sounds of the holy name, to help them come closer to Krishna. Also, your incredible books are being distributed here.

Please continue to bless us and guide us.

Your insignificant servant,

Atitaguna Devi Dasi

Initiation: April 1976—Vrindavan, India

Current location: UK

Contact: atita108@gmail.com

Dearest beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda:

Please accept my sincere and humble obeisances at your Lotus Feet.

Only by your causeless mercy and special grace are we able to lovingly endeavour to carry on your mission together, spreading the “Holy Names” around, distributing your books and *prasādam* and learning daily how to teach Bhakti Yoga: The Art of Eternal Love.

Where would we be without your guidance, training and devotional services, teaching us many new lessons as we learn together now in 2023 how to die before dying.

Please kindly forgive this meagre attempt to write this year on your 127th Vyāsa-pūjā Celebration, life on its terms showed up last year, but thankfully I will be heading to the Bhaktivedanta Hospital in Mumbai to repair a fractured vertebrae.

Only by your causeless mercy was I able to pack and move to Śrī Navadvīpa-Māyāpur, India (your place of Worship) early December 2022. Thank you for showing me each day, through this temporary pain, how to rise above all the challenges and acknowledge weaknesses.

The “Devotee-Care” (end-of-life team here in Māyāpur) continue to serve hands-on and on-line to comfort your devotees and families through two new on-line website platforms, which are beginning to blossom now. Each ISKCON Community could use this first website platform example to assist devotees in all areas of need and now we have a two-year example of how it works: www.south-care.org and the www.karunacare.iskcon.org website for support, training and education.

With the help of many third generation devotees, we are finally seeing the light on how to better protect and teach “Krishna’s” children through new writings, podcasts and being present when they ask for guidance. Your Māyāpur Institute, colleges and academies are a huge part of the world of Your ISKCON, now with global on-line training available.

“Krishna Kīrtan” Melā’s are also blossoming around the world and a Harināma Saṅkīrtana revival is happening once again.

With a heart full of gratitude and love for You, dearest Prabhupāda – I beg to remain a humble servant engaging all my love daily, thanking you with every breath.

Your prayerful daughter,

Damayanti Devi Dasi

Initiation: April 1976—Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Current location: Canada/India

Gaura Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

All glories to you! Thank you for asking me to write this Vyāsa-pūjā offering every year for your book Vyāsa-pūjā book and thank you to Jayādvaitya Swami for making this alternative book available, since the BBT one only has offerings from the official leaders of your ISKCON. This is an opportunity to reflect on your transcendental instructions and my relationship with you, as your disciple. My relationship with you is dependent upon continuing to hear from you daily.

*guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete koriyā aikya,
ār nā koriho mane āśā*

My only wish is to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from your lotus mouth. Amongst your many instructions, you have given us the *The Nectar of Devotion*, which is a summary study of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. In BRS 1.2.91, Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī has described about the various limbs of bhakti, of which *nāma saṅkīrtana* stands out for me. Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī has described what the criteria is for associating with Vaiṣṇava devotees [*sajātīyāśāye snigdhe sādhaḥ saṅgaḥ svato vare*]:

Always associate with like-minded,
affectionate and superior devotees.

The words *sajati* and *snigdhe*, like-minded and affectionate are significant. Although we should be friendly and respectful to all devotees, the conclusions or *siddhānta* of our philosophy and convictions should be shared with like-minded and affectionate devotees. The *Śikṣāṣṭaka* verse #3, *ṭṛṇād api sunīcena*, that you have given to us, gives us in the guideline of how to interact.

You said that humility means be bold for Krishna. To go on *harināma*

in all circumstances requires boldness. Regarding tolerance, in your translation of the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, you have written:

Haridāsa Ṭhākura is exceptional for his forbearance because although he was beaten with canes in twenty-two marketplaces, he was nevertheless tolerant. [Cc. Ādi 10.84]

Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura was brutally beaten, dragged through twenty-two markets, thrown in the Ganges, yet never stopped doing *harināma* in any circumstance. Absorbed in remembering Lord Hari, he miraculously survived by Lord Caitanya personally absorbing all of his wounds.

Lord Caitanya’s principal assistant, Nityānanda, was violently attacked by Jagāi and Mādhāi. But still they were tolerant because their mission was to deliver the fallen souls. One of the qualifications of a sādhu is that he is very tolerant and is merciful to all fallen souls. He is merciful because he is the well-wisher of all living entities. [SB 3.25.21]

Lord Caitanya was forgiving of the Chand Kazi trying to impede the chanting of the Holy Names, yet he approached him for debate, and inspired the Kazi to declare that the *saṅkīrtana* movement must never be stopped in the Navadvīpa region for any reason. In this mood, devotees in New Zealand, Canada and other parts of the world went out on *harināma*, despite fear of the increasingly tyrannical Kali-yuga governments.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I want the association of those with this strong faith, to not allow anyone or anything to hinder our chanting of *harināma* and the distribution of your books. Thank you very much for providing me with such association, and I pray for more in the future, that I may be surrounded by such devotees. On this day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I am praying to you to always use me as your instrument to spread the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra to every town and village, birth after birth, if you desire.

Your aspiring servant,

Gaura Dasa

Initiation: June 1976—Detriot, Michigan, USA

Current location: Erin, Ontario, USA

Contact: gauradasa2@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

Your divine glories are unfathomable. You are the summation of all the previous *ācāryas* and spiritual masters in our line.

You have fulfilled the desire of our entire disciplic succession to give Krishna consciousness to everyone, in all places in this world. Previously, Lord Chaitanya directed the six Goswamis to excavate the holy places of the Lord's pastimes, and study all the revealed scriptures to extract the conclusions of devotional service. After that, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura appeared and engaged in the same task. He revived Lord Chaitanya's teachings, and also reestablished many sacred places and wrote many books and songs expounding devotional service to Lord Krishna. For this reason he is called the Seventh Goswami.

Now you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are engaged in the same task. You are reestablishing Vedic culture and Krishna consciousness all over the world. You have revived many places of pilgrimage, especially Vrindavan and Māyāpur, and all the places of Lord Chaitanya's pastimes. Therefore you are like the Eighth Goswami. You have fulfilled the desires of all the previous Goswamis and spiritual masters. And not only are you like the Eighth Goswami, but you are an especially empowered servant of the Lord to fulfil the desires of the entire spiritual lineage.

Recently I was listening to a conversation you had in Geneva with some professors and PhDs. I was wondering how you would handle those intelligentsia. They were asking questions, and some of them were a bit challenging. From your answers it was clear that they were no match for you. Whatever questions or responses they made it was clear that your intellect and wisdom was far beyond theirs. In the end they started asking more spiritual questions about our process and how to attain spiritual perfection. In this way you are delivering Krishna consciousness to everyone.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your teachings are very relevant to the situation in the world today. You made many predictions about what would happen in the future of this current civilization, and they are gradually coming true. But, you have given us the cure for all these problems: the holy names of Lord Krishna, and your transcendental books. Please continue to engage me in your mission of spreading the

holy names through *harināma saṅkīrtana*. Chanting the Hare Krishna mantra gives the highest ecstasy and realization. And chanting in public is especially important. Please give me your blessings that I can continue engaging in *harināma saṅkīrtana* and distribute your books, in whatever time I have left.

Begging to be your servant,

Cakri Dasa

Initiation: June 1976—Detriot, Michigan, USA

Current location: Dallas, Texas, USA

Contact: chakridas@yahoo.com

Drumila Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, Please accept my humble obeisances.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my savior. Through thick and thin, you have been there for me, always my 'ever well wisher. This I can fully attest to! Throughout my entire life undoubtedly you have prayed on my behalf to our dear Lord Kṛṣṇa for my protection and deliverance from this horrible material tabernacle. Of this I am positively sure. Your love for me has NOT wavered, even for a moment.

I read something recently that while you were with us, you said that when you were not here physically with us, that our grandfather spiritual masters, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, Gaura Kīśora Dāsa Bābājī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, etc., would remain to help us through all difficulties. You told us not to fear or worry. No one but you has shown such unconditional love. I am eternally indebted to you for the mercy you have shown me. I am wretched and fallen, yet somehow you have never rejected me or forsaken me.

I listen to your transcendental *bhajans* and lectures every day. The sound vibration soothes, purifies, and nourishes my soul. Because of you, I always feel hope to push on. I would like to become a better devotee so I can serve you and please you and dedicate my life and soul to your mission, more and more.

Thank you unlimitedly for not giving up on me, and thank you for continuing to give me shelter and for the wonderful society of devotees you have created. Thank you for allowing me to do some 'small part' in distributing some of your precious Bhaktivedanta purports in your wonderful book distribution program. Please let

me have an eternal loving relationship with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your aspiring servant,

Drumila Dasa

Initiation: June 1976—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: New Orleans, Louisiana, USA

Contact: drumila@gmail.com

Nitya-tr̥pta Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, dear master,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

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

You have made the Bhakti *śāstras* of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Bhagavad-gītā, The Nectar of Devotion, and many more available to everyone throughout the world. Your purports have enlivened my soul and are the guiding light of my life. Your contributions to the world of Bhakti philosophy and wisdom are immeasurable, and I am grateful for the opportunity to offer my prayers to you today.

As I reflect on my personal journey in the study and practice of *bhakti-yoga*, I am filled with gratitude for the many blessings I have received. Your teachings have been a constant source of inspiration and guidance for me, and have helped me navigate life's challenges with greater clarity and equanimity.

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

I offer my heartfelt gratitude to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your invaluable contributions to the world. You are giving world the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering all who can hear from impersonalism and voidism. Your role in preserving and disseminating the timeless Bhakti texts has helped to ensure that these life-giving and saving teachings are available to future generations. Your wisdom and insight into the nature of the divine have inspired countless seekers on the path of Bhakti. At the Bhaktivedanta Archives we are dedicated to assisting you in this invaluable service

On this auspicious occasion, I offer my aspirations for spiritual growth and for the greater good of the world with my service at the Bhaktivedanta Archives. May I continue to deepen my understanding of your teachings and integrate them into my daily life. May I also be a source of inspiration and guidance for others on their own spiritual journeys. And may the world be blessed with greater peace, harmony, and understanding through the practice of Vaishnavism.

aiṁ gurave namaḥ

I offer my prayers with devotion to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and ask for your blessings and guidance as I continue on my journey back home back to Godhead and to eternally serve your lotus feet.

Your Grateful Servant,

Nitya-ṭṛpta Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1976, June—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: USA

Ramiya Dasa

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

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

Dear beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this most glorious occasion of your appearance, we are eager to present our offering unto you. For your pleasure, we humbly submit this offering.

You are opening our eyes and those of everyone we preach to with your storehouse of knowledge. As we read your books and discuss them more and more, then Krishna is pleased and we awaken our dormant love for Krishna which is the ultimate goal of our life. We are so grateful for your gifts to us which are saving us from a hellish life and worse future lives. Gradually, by following your instructions,

prema which seems so far away comes closer to our grasp.

You have a very expansive vision of saving the fallen souls of Kali-yuga for the next 10,000 years. The world desperately needs this as all standards of behavior and all knowledge of God becomes lip service at best as they plunge into ignorance. You have shown us the real knowledge of our spiritual existence and how to remain absorbed in it. Such kindness is rare to see in this material world. Help us to take the steps to train the newer devotees to carefully follow you and preserve your instructions and standards and remain focused on fulfilling your desires.

Your mercy is so great that not only your disciples can take shelter of it, but by carefully following, everyone can gain that shelter as well.

I personally am quite insignificant and struggling to keep my eyes on the goal. *Māyā* is ever vigilant and never gives us a moment's peace unless we are fully engaged in Krishna's service. We underestimate her power due to our conditioned nature. From time immemorial we have been accepting all of her offers with great eagerness. Now, let our face be turned away from her alluring charm and be directed to the service of Krishna. Your mercy is all that we are made of. Thank you for bestowing that mercy on us without considering our qualification.

We hope that this offering is pleasing to you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please bless our efforts to preach to the devotees in the North Florida communities.

We continue to beg for your mercy so that we can continue to expand the glories of the Supreme Lord Krishna and bring more and more conditioned souls to surrender at your lotus feet.

Your humble servant,

Ramiya Dasa

Initiation: June 1976—Detriot, Michigan, USA

Current location: North Florida and Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: ramiyadasa@gmail.com

Bhaja Govinda Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you and to

your dedicated service to your divine spiritual master.

Your life, your service and your determination gives me an example and goal to strive for. Your dedication is something to aspire to follow. You accepted me and my daughter Vrajalalana at the same time. She had just returned from India after six months learning to cook and relish your dear sister's association. She and so many of my dear godsisters and godbrothers have gone on to serve in another realm. I am so deeply grateful for having had their association.

Every day I wake up and offer my heartfelt obeisances to you with gratitude for my fortunate circumstances. Material circumstances seem to change like the wind, but your guidance and inspiration is a constant in my life.

Begging to remain your eternal servant, situated at your lotus feet,

Bhaja Govinda Dasi

Initiation: July 1976—Florida, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: bhajago@yahoo.com

Brahmatirtha Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My obeisances at your feet. You are the well-wisher of everyone.

Forty-six years ago, just one month before you left us, I was a presenter for the Bhaktivedanta Institute (BI) at the First International Conference on Life Comes from Life held at the Krishna Balaram Temple in sacred Vrindavan. Though you could not physically attend our sessions you invited your scientists each night to visit you in your bedroom and report our '*sañkīrtana* scores'. For us the scores were our arguments in the conference in opposition to the atheistic paradigms. You were quite pleased, which gave all of us great encouragement.

Now, somehow or other, I have become the Director of the Bhaktivedanta Institute for Higher Studies (your original name for the Institute) and the five of us in 1977 has grown to a hundred scientists and philosophers taking an interest in our efforts to establish that "Life Comes from Life."

The challenges are great. The citizenry trusts science and often trusts that science can solve the problems of life and even death. Yet

the pinprick in their paradigm is present, and more and more of the educated are becoming aware that a physicalist view or reality is woefully incomplete.

At the BI we are teaming up with other institutes of qualified scientists who understand that consciousness, rather than matter, is fundamental. These scholars offer evidence of the supremacy of consciousness. We offer the insights of the *Bhāgavatam* to explain how to understand consciousness. By teaming with great scholars, as our beloved Svarūpa Dāmodara Goswami did, we can produce significant literature to impact society. We also build on the absolute genius of Sadāpūta Dāsa in establishing that life must come from life. With the support of our great mentors of Sadāpūta and Svarūpa Dāmodara Goswami, we pray for your blessings to produce something wonderful.

Your servants at the Bhaktivedanta Institute,

Brahmatirtha Dasa

Executive Director

Initiation: July 1976—Houston, Texas, USA

Current location: Gainesville, Florida, USA

Contact: bobcohen@ivs.edu

Jaya Madhava Dasa

Dear Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet On Your Holy Vyāsa-pūjā Appearance Day – 2023.

Fifty years ago, (this May 2023) you warned us that the USA / West would collapse. We are seeing this really happen now.

You also said 50% of your Krishna Conscious work is unfinished. What's that work? That's establishing real *varṇāśrama* farm communities for your disciples and followers and well wishers.

The *karmī* systems of government/economy is failing right before our very eyes in real time!!!

In the late 1970s, I clearly remember your instructions. You wanted to protect your disciples and future devotees to be self sufficient, when the collapse happens in the Western countries, when big war ensues.

Now the question arises, why mention this in Vyāsa-pūjā?

Why would I mention this in my Vyāsa-pūjā offering?

The answer is I'm gravely concerned about your disciples' and grand-disciples' welfare.

Also, the WHY is because I'm forever grateful to have met you and become your disciple and to be trained by your disciples.

I'm grateful to have their association, friendship, support and training of your direct disciples (when I joined), when you were here.

Now, I'm grateful for the association and love of your grand disciples. Here in Russia, where I've been preaching for over 20 years now, I ask for your continuing blessings and protection for me to continue this.

Had I not decided to join ISKCON, to leave my family, friends, job...everything, and even my country...I'd be eternally LOST!!!!

I'd be forever in the cycle of birth and death and *māyā* and not have any chance to go back home—Back to Godhead with Lord KṚṢṂA and His devotees, in the Spiritual Sky.

I'd be doomed without your causeless mercy Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I'm always grateful to preach from your original books to Russian devotees, and I always encourage them to follow you as it is without change or compromise to Krishna Conscious practices...I am grateful for everything you blessed me with in KṚṢṂA Consciousness and I only hope that in my lifetime I see more devotees committed to studying your books and following your exact instructions (to the letter).

Now we live in 2023, very scary and dangerous times in America, immorality worldwide, Godlessness has advanced 1000% in the West. You predicted this to us and told us to get out of the cities and establish Vedic farm communities.

Worldwide, now we see crooked leaders pave the path to hell with inflation that has grown to the point people will not be able to buy food and survive. Meanwhile politicians illegally support war. Homelessness causes joblessness, poverty, false propaganda / shameless politicians with their deviant lies...galore!!!

In the USA crime goes through the roof, huge medical scams, fear mongering, cheating and deception, etc.,...has increased a thousand fold since the 1970s when you were personally here with us. Now I see it's getting worse in Kali-yuga each day.

It's by your mercy to the devotees to get these Krishna Conscious instructions, and I pray they will take your exact instructions for Krishna Consciousness very gravely and seriously before

it's too late!!!

Since I have taken shelter of your lotus feet and by doing that taken shelter of KṚṢṂA I am convinced everything you told us was 100% TRUTH, a pure devotee of KṚṢṂA.

Make no mistakes...you even told us, If I made any mistake, it was accepting so many unqualified disciples. Also, I worry about my godbrothers and sisters who fell through the cracks, and I ask you to bless them all...ALL Nearly five thousand of them!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I want you to know my innermost commitment to you as far as I'm concerned.

There is no one equal to you as a pure devotee in our lifetime. I appreciate this as a factual fact. Your Divine Grace has blessed me, I hope to appreciate this in my lifetime

Once again, I ask you to bless and protect your grand disciples in Russia and Ukraine in these difficult and scary times. I ask you to ask Lord KṚṢṂA to protect them all!!!

I ask your prayers to KṚṢṂA for Protection of ALL your sincere followers.

Thank you, Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda, for KṚṢṂA Consciousness and devotees.

Your fallen servant,

Jaya Madhava das

Initiation: 1976, July—New York, USA

Current location: Novosibirsk, Siberia, Russia

Palaka Dasa

*O my lord, great philanthropic souls travel on the earth
on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead to
show compassion to the fallen souls who are averse to
the sense of subordination to the Lord. [SB 3.5.3]*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I wanted to thank you personally for accepting me as your disciple but never had the opportunity. Since officially joining your mission in 1976, we were told not to write or bother you as this would only distract from your desire to finish the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. I regret

not thanking you then, so today I want to wholeheartedly thank you again and again for accepting me as your disciple.

I pray at your lotus feet to never let me forget just how fortunate I really am having come in your direct association. To have your causeless mercy and continued opportunity for endless association via your eternal *vāṇī* is the greatest gift one could ever have achieved in millions of lifetimes. Yet, I realize still I am not qualified for returning back to Godhead, back to home. Therefore, I beg you to please let me take birth again and again wherever you are preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness and assist you however you see fit.

Some years back when I was totally engrossed in earning money, you sent a mystic into our store to remind me... a wake up call of sorts. This short, little man appeared out of nowhere. He approached and asked to see my hand. Sure, why not, I thought. After all, he looked Indian, and my spiritual master is from India. He took my hand, looked at it, said he was from a family of Christian mystics, and that he was sent here. He came with something he needed to tell, it was to remind me that at age 20, an event took place, which had it not happened, I'd already be dead. Heavy, but I was in the middle of a large sale, and seeing I was busy he reminded me once again that he was sent to deliver this message, and off he went.

It wasn't until the following morning your mystic messengers' words sank in as I remembered becoming your initiated disciple at age 20. What came next was the realization of his words in the form of my daydream funeral. Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you really saved me from a miserable life. Had you not left your home at the feet of Rūpa Goswami and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Dāmodara in the most sacred land of Vrindavan, God only knows what or where I'd be right now. Again, thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are so kind and loving, so merciful and tolerant, so jolly and poetic, so grave and mild, so expert and loving, so compassionate and steady, so faultless and clean, so peaceful and sane, and so completely attached to saving the entire world by calling us all back to Godhead. And so very much the real Prabhupāda, the master whom all masters bow down at your lotus feet. The master whose fame is spread all over the three worlds. The master who opens our darkened eyes and fills our hearts with spiritual knowledge.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, despite all my frailties, thank you for being generous with your mercy, giving this lowly servant the opportunity

to continue to bow down before you, offer my obeisances at the exact same *vyāsāsana* where I was accepted into your family, and proceed with devotional service.

Great unalloyed devotees of the Lord are compassionate towards the fallen, and therefore they travel all over the world with the mission of bringing souls back to Godhead, back to home. Such pure devotees of the Lord carry the message of Godhead in order to deliver the fallen souls, and therefore the common man who is bewildered by the influence of the external energy of the Lord should avail himself of their association. [SB 3.5.3, Purport]

All glories to You, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your aspiring servant,

Palaka Dasa

Initiation: July 1976—Washington, USA

Current location: Rockville, Maryland, USA

Vaikunthadeva Dasa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

How can I even begin to offer a tribute to the one who saved my life? There are no words that can adequately convey the importance of what you achieved, and whatever words I contribute here have already been written countless times before. Yet you tolerate my feeble attempts at glorifying you, such is your mercy!

You showed us the path by which we can save ourselves, and that path is by rendering service to the Vaishnava devotees of the Lord. Nobody in this modern world has exhibited the twenty-six qualities of a devotee more than yourself. Therefore, even so many years after your departure, we can all still benefit from these offerings. That is but one feature of your munificence.

Although I had never demonstrated any qualification or devotional sentiment, somehow or other by your compassionate glance so many years ago, you took root in my heart. And that seed of love you planted has sprouted to become a mighty tree that continues to bear unlimited fruits. I have heard this same account from so many other souls, and yet this is only but *one* of your mystic potencies!

When you announced that the spiritual master should be worshipped the same as God, many of your followers blanched. I myself didn't understand it at the time. Now that the seed of love has grown in my heart, I can see the validity of that statement. Just as Krishna is all-attractive, so you have included so many aspects to your service that one can approach you from practically any angle of vision. You have accepted service from scholars, scientists, artists, cooks, musicians, writers, philosophers, engineers, military leaders, politicians, laborers and even those like me, who have no capabilities, but are simply suffering the pangs of this material world. *Anyone* can bring themselves to you, and you are so compassionate you accept *all* of our offerings. This is *impossible* in the material world! The only place such things can occur is the spiritual world. Therefore, we must conclude that wherever you go is Vrindavan.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray you never give up on this useless soul. After a lifetime of floundering like an armless man in a turbulent sea, I am now in a whirlpool circling the drain. Your love is my only refuge.

Your eternal debtor,

Vaikunthadeva Dasa

Initiation: July 1976—New York, USA

Current location: Encinitas, California USA

Contact: spiritof108@gmail.com

Jayagurudeva Dasa

kṛṣṇa-bhakta — niṣkāma, ataeva 'śānta'
bhukti-mukti-siddhi-kāmī — sakali 'aśānta'

Because a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa is desireless, he is peaceful. Fruitive workers desire material enjoyment, jñānīs desire liberation, and yogīs desire material opulence; therefore they are all lusty and cannot be peaceful. [Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 19.149, from Lord Caitanya's instructions to Rūpa Goswami]

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My most revered Spiritual Master. Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet, again and again.

Your Divine Grace is a true *Krishna Bhakta* – totally peaceful,

because you have no material desire, you are free from lust, unlike the *karmīs*, *jñānīs* and *yogīs*. I remember that day in summer of 1974 in Geneva, Switzerland, when I first saw your portrait on the *vyāsāsana* at the Hare Krishna Temple at the Rue du Crédo in Petit Lancy. The photograph was taken in 1973 on the *vyāsāsana* at the Hare Krishna Temple at Fonteney aux Roses in Paris, France. You look completely peaceful and perfectly happy. You are blissfully smiling, looking straight into the camera, playing *karatālas* during a *kīrtana*. It is a unique portrait. I am very attached to it. In fact, in 1990, I brought it from Geneva all the way to my home in Prague, Czech Republic, my Prabhupāda-*deśa*, where I am trying to serve Your Divine Grace to my best capacity since the past 33 years. In 1974, I prayed to your portrait for the first time: *please allow me, a fallen soul, to be a servant in your mission, the mission of the pure devotees of Krishna, Krishna Bhaktas*. To this day, I still pray in the same way: *please allow me, a fallen soul, to be a servant in your mission*.

In the one and only authorized English translation of the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* by Your Divine Grace, with Your Bhaktivedanta purports, we read in *Madhya-līlā*, chapter 19, that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu visited Prayag on His way back to Jagannath Purī, after His pilgrimage to Vrindavan (in February 1514 AD). Mahāprabhu met Śrīla Rūpa Goswami and his younger brother Anupama on the banks of the river Ganges and instructed Rūpa during ten days about the science of devotional service. After instructing Rūpa Goswami, Mahāprabhu ordered him to go to Vrindavan and write books based on various *śāstras*, in order to establish devotional service scientifically, thus giving Krishna *bhakti* a solid foundation. That order has ever since become the sacred mission of many bona fide *ācāryas* in the line of Lord Caitanya, starting with the six Goswamis of Vrindavan. Your Divine Grace came to the US from India in 1965 with that very same mission.

Please allow me, a fallen soul, to always, no matter what, be a servant in your mission, in whatever way or function you deem necessary or useful. Also, please allow me to always have the association of those devotees, who serve your mission full heartedly.

You ever-indebted aspiring servant,

Jayagurudeva Dasa

Initiation: August 1976—New Mayapur, France

Current location: Czechia, Czech Republic

Gaura Keshava Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda. All glories to you.

Thank you for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Thank you for teaching Vaiṣṇavism to people all over the world. Thank you for preaching in such a way as to inspire people of all different societies to understand their essential spiritual natures as servants of the Lord. Thank you for being so broad-minded as to attract all people to become Vaiṣṇavas and adopt the ancient principles of *bhakti-yoga*. Thank you for being the inspiration for your disciples and followers to branch out and represent many different facets of Vaiṣṇava philosophy and culture.

Thanks for Lord Kṛṣṇa and His divine consort, Śrī Rādhā. Thanks for all the avatars of the Lord. Thanks for Lord Caitanya and Pañca-tattva. Thanks for the saints, sages and *ācāryas* of all the Vaiṣṇavas *sampradāyas*. Thanks for the holy name and *harināma-saṅkīrtana*. Thanks for the Deities in your temples and in our homes. Thanks for the opportunity to worship them. Thanks for *prasādam*. Thanks for Food for Life. Thanks for the temples, restaurants, farms and schools. Thanks for the life membership program and its members. Thanks for the devotee association. Thanks even for the devotees we don't know, who we may never meet. Thanks for your books – big and small – and the *Back to Godhead* magazine. Thanks for the BBT. Thanks for the Archives and Vedabase. Thanks for your lectures. Thanks for your room conversations. Thanks for your letters. Thanks for your *bhajans*. Thanks for your *kīrtans*. Thanks for your example in every way.

You are the common source of all these things. You are the common center for all of us. Practically everything known about Vaiṣṇavism today in the world can be traced to your preaching efforts. Your teachings – in one form or another – fill the internet. All other Vaiṣṇavas and Hindus praise you and your teachings. Even the Western scholars and clergy praise you. You have led a Vaiṣṇava renaissance. You have inspired the revival of Vaiṣṇavism. You lit the fuse of the Hare Kṛṣṇa explosion.

No words can fully describe what you have done. All we can do is thank you as we observe your influence in awe. We are indeed

fortunate to have been touched by your grace, to have taken part in a minute way in your mission, to be part of it all. Please continue to shower your mercy upon all of us. No matter our faults. No matter how little we contribute. No matter how insignificant we are. You saw us as worth saving. This is your humility. You gave us your association even though we were low born. You gave us a chance when no one else would. You changed our lives. What more can be said.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Gaura Kesava Dasa

Initiation: August 1976—Sydney, Australia

Current location: 51 Haahaa St Makawao HI 96768 USA

Contact: jay.greg@gmail.com

Jayagauri Devi Dasi

My dear Gurudeva, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

All glories to Śrī Śrī Rādhā, Guru and Gaurāṅga!

Another year has gone by, and your guidance stirs me towards service to Lord Caitanya's mission, thank you. You always said we should share realizations (from your teachings) with others, and my *haṭha-yoga* students are benefiting from this advice. It delights me to see their eyes shine with interest while discussing topics on self-realization, while showing them the beauty and qualities of Śrī Krishna, and the possibility of loving God with degrees of intensity culminating in Śrī Rādhā. These topics, unique to our *bhakti* tradition, brought to light in the western countries by your spoken and written word are a gift that keeps on giving!

You are so out of this world with your demonstrations of perfect character, perfect timing, quick brilliant answers, making everyone feel heard and recognized even in the middle of a crowd! Also your words are always fresh and full of wisdom! These are qualities of a mystic *yogī* and have been described as such in the sacred texts.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, with pure *bhakti* to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Śyāmasundara, have graced the world with your wisdom!

Material education, austerities, high intellect, are all *māyā*'s toys to lure inattentive souls. None of them can guarantee a way

back to Godhead.

I pray to stay aware of my insignificance, and to always be ready to render service and do my part for the betterment of my fellow living beings.

Some worldwide services rendered by your disciples are broadcasted on the internet, and it is a source of great happiness and inspiration to me seeing the holy names being spread far and wide.

O Master, please keep me close and under the shade of your lotus feet as I have no other shelter in this world of birth and death.

Gratefulness fills my heart to have had close contact with you because it places you in my palpable physical reality! The memories of you live on, fresh in my mind, and I pray to serve you always and forever.

Thank you, thank you, thank you,

Your eternal servant and disciple,

Jayagauri Devi Dasi

Initiation: August 1976—Nouvelle Mayapur, France

Current location: Florida, USA

Rāmasarana Dasa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-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 Krishna, 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 Chaitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

On this auspicious occasion of celebrating your Appearance Day, I would like to submit my humble and feeble attempt at glorification of Your Divine Grace and also submit a plea!

Firstly, I am still amazed at my extreme good fortune of having you as my spiritual master, guide and mentor, sentiments that I am certain are shared by many!

I realize that Your Divine Grace is indeed the embodiment of the causeless mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krishna and the Supreme instrument of Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga, and was specially empowered to spread the Krishna consciousness movement worldwide! Relentlessly expounding the prime objective of our human existence; appealing to us to awaken to our real and absolute purpose; to kindle our divine love for Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna. Your Divine Grace did this consistently with utmost love, care, dignity, grace, determination and humility.

As I study the books that you translated and in which you provided such deep and insightful revelations of the Absolute Truth, captured in your 'ecstatic' purports, I marvel, and get a glimpse of the miracles that you exhibited and continue to exhibit.

As generations come and go, they might question some of your stances and commentary on social, cultural or behavioral issues. But they should neither fear nor doubt you, as you were the perfect messenger of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the pure representative of the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* presenting pure Vaishnava *siddhānta*, unadulterated and without compromise. Younger generations will eventually discover that everything you expounded in in fact truthful, and if they find some of your words puzzling or challenging, it's due to their lack of spiritual insight and maturity and their power of deduction shackled by their false ego, steeped in identification of themselves as their material bodies.

We should approach you with humility and genuine questions and you will provide them with the truth, as descended from the Spiritual realm!

*tad-vāg-visargo janatāgha-viplavo
yasmin prati-ślokaṁ abaddhavaty api
nāmāny anantasya yaśo 'ñkitāni yat
śṛṅvanti gāyanti gṛṇanti sādhaḥ*

"On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, forms, pastimes, etc., of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world's misdirected civilization.

Such transcendental literatures, even though imperfectly composed, are heard, sung and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest”.

In my case, the only qualifications I have is my utmost respect and love for Your Divine Grace and although I am unable to reach the standard of Krishna consciousness you expect from your disciples, I pray that you not abandon me, even as I clutch your lotus feet! Even though I had expectations of reaching a state of purity required to fully taste the nectar of the holy names, I have realized that I am far from reaching that standard due to my offensive nature! The song of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura resonates:

*“kabe ha’be bolo se-dina āmār
(āmār) aparādha ghuci’, śuddha nāme ruci,
kṛpā-bale ha’be hṛdoye sañcār*

When, oh when will that day be mine? When my offenses ceasing, taste for the name increasing, when in my heart will your mercy shine? When, oh when will that day be mine?

But, I shall endeavor to the best of my limited abilities to continue trying to be a worthy disciple of your divine grace by trying to remember your instructions and follow them the best I can.

The essence of divine love as you constantly remind us: “Always think of Krishna! And never forget Him!”

Prostrating at your lotus feet, I remain your eternal servant,

Rāmasarana Dasa

Initiation: September 1976—Bhaktivedanta Manor, London, UK

Current location: UK

Atmatma Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

You crossed the sea to the land of those who thought they were free.

Landing just like a dove bringing real love to set us free.

The order given, 'Print Books and preach all over the English knowing public'.

And so it was, the journey had began. Guided by the Lord within they came to hear you sing.

Soon many started to come, the Miracle had began.

Many souls came searching for the real High and found it, not in the sky, but chanting the Holy Names, dancing and especially *Prasādam*.

Best of all was your smiling face full of Divine Grace. You gave the answers so clear and sweet and Simply wonderful.

Philosophy that is so sublime, answers that had been lost in time.

And now the smiling face of the Lord completed everything.

Then you spread your wings and flew to further lands, everywhere you went

became blessed by the purity of the message.

Wherever you walked was graced by the feet of a pure devotee.

Temples, festivals, chanting and dancing on the streets, spread around the world, and the basis of all this, your Transcendental Books with masterful purports and the mercy of Lord Caitanya.

Millions of books are being distributed, translated in many languages and changing the lives of millions of souls.

How fortunate is this world that you have walked on her.

What if you did not come. Where would we be?

Lord Caitanya has come, and because He has come you have come. We are Blessed with being born at this time and to be able to take part in Lord Caitanya's Movement.

You are the empowered representative of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, in the line going to Lord Caitanya. You are the fully empowered *Ācārya* of this age.

Thank you for accepting this insignificant person as your disciple.

Your servant,

Atmatma das

Initiation: September 1976, —London, UK

Current location: Alresford, Winchester, UK

Contact: atmatma@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet. “The lotus feet of our spiritual master are the only way we can obtain pure devotional service – by your grace one can cross the ocean of material suffering and obtain the mercy of Krishna.”

Since meeting you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, my life has been turned around and moved in a different direction. Your teachings and personal example have been the catalyst that has enabled even one such as me to turn the trajectory of my life onto another course – a worthwhile course – a life of devotional service with a clear goal – the reawakening of my lost relationship with Krishna – *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ, sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ, anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*. The original Supreme Personality of Godhead, source of all spiritual and material worlds, the cause of all causes, knower of past, present and future, within the heart of every living entity as the dearest friend and witness. Krishna, the all-attractive One, Bhagavān, Who possesses all opulences in full. *Rāsa-rasika, kṛpāmoḃa* – the enjoyer of loving pastimes and full of mercy...

You came to bring the message of Lord Chaitanya, fulfilling His prophecy that the holy names of Lord Krishna would be spread all over the world – breaking open the storehouse of love of God and freely distributing its nectar like a flowing ocean.

Every year, we have this opportunity to offer our homage unto you. To offer our deep heartfelt gratitude for this wonderful gift that you have bestowed upon us. The greatest gift one could ever hope for, to even dream of – the gift of eternal life in loving relationship with the Divine, Śrī Krishna. “I came to teach you what you have forgotten,” you told us. Nothing new, showing us who we really are, eternal spiritual beings in loving *rasa* with our soul of souls Śrī Krishna. More than these mortal coils – endlessly roaming around in the cycle of birth and death, desperately trying to find happiness and satisfaction.

Your boundless compassion, unflinching faith, selfless service, dedication to your spiritual master – all these qualities enabled you to take the risk, the discomfort, of coming to the West at the ripe old age of 70 – to begin your greatest adventure – establishing the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. But mere words are not enough

to repay our debt to you – to really show our gratitude we need to listen carefully to the message you are giving us through your Bhaktivedanta purports, through your recorded lectures, personal letters, your personal example. It is in taking seriously your instructions in our daily lives and sharing this message with others, becoming your ambassadors, showing compassion and empowering others to also change their lives for the better by also taking up this sublime process of devotional service.

This year, I had the greatest good fortune to visit your holy place of birth, beneath the blessed jackfruit tree in Tollygunge Road, Calcutta and listen to the story of how the devotees finally, after 125 years, acquired this sacred place and turned it into a powerful place of pilgrimage. We also had an opportunity to visit Ultadanga Road – the rooftop where you first met your beloved spiritual master, HDG Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, in 1922 – and he first gave you the message, “You are an educated young man, take this message of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and teach it to the English speaking people of the world”. I was so pleased to see how meticulously and tastefully it has been restored and renovated for the benefit of the whole world to come and see. Thank you, dear devotees for all your endeavours and labours to enable these two very important places of pilgrimage to become available for us all.

I also turned 70 this year. Life marches on, swiftly. I have witnessed a number of devotees leaving their bodies this year – the final test. It sets one thinking.... Are we ready? Have we done enough? No... and yet here we are, fast approaching the final countdown. I pray that you will continue to guide me, protect me and accept me as your daughter disciple. I’ve made many mistakes, poor choices, held onto unwanted things, faltered and failed in many ways. But I pray that you will see beyond all that, will bestow your loving glance and grace upon me so that I may be a useful instrument in your hands, in the hands of our esteemed Guru Paramparā, so that whatever remaining life and energy I have left in this body be dedicated to your service in a way that is pleasing to you. Take me and make me your own. Your mercy is all that I am made of, I bow down to your lotus feet.

Your aspiring servant,

Janaki Devi Dasi

Initiation: September 1976—London, UK

Yogindra Dasa

Last year I described how, on Śrīla Prabhupāda’s order, the Swedish devotees acquired and now maintain the ISKCON Almvik farm. This year I want to describe how the Finnish devotees present Krishna consciousness in schools. The Finnish ISKCON devotees have worked very hard for decades teaching the children of Indian families in the Finnish school system. The School Board recognizes this and has now entrusted the formulation of the national curriculum guidelines for this teaching to Finnish scholars of religion who are initiated devotees. The scholars, Brighu and Jayananda prabhuh, judiciously decided to broadly present the variegated Indian religious traditions from the point of departure of Gauḍīya Vaishnavism which, for simplicity’s sake, is called “Krishna Religion”. Here is an excerpt from the curriculum guidelines:

Grades 7–9

II The relationship to one’s own religion:
In the course, the pupil becomes familiar with the Vedic culture, Vaishnavism and with the international community for Krishna consciousness (ISKCON) and with its founder, Prabhupāda. One explores Krishna consciousness teachings on the three *vastu-traya* principles of existence (*sambandha, abhidheya, prayojana*) and the methods of devotional service. The central content of the course is the teaching about God’s inconceivable nature (*acintya-bheda-abheda-tatva*), about the three material nature qualities, about the universe and knowledge according to the Vedic scriptures. The pupil becomes familiar with yogic methods and with the holy scripture, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. One examines the spread of Krishna consciousness, the relationship with other religions and the relationship to societies

and cultures around the world. The student analyzes his own relationship with Hinduism, Krishna consciousness and Finnish identity.

This Spring term, I have the assignment to commute one day a week across the Swedish-Finnish border to teach “Krishna Religion” to students at an English-speaking school in northern Finland. A group of the parents meet regularly, worship Tulasī and recite *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. Thanks to Śrīla Prabhupāda, the parents and I are helping the youngsters get a healthy dose of Krishna consciousness in their formative youth.

May I always remember the instructions of Śrīla Prabhupāda and recite them without difficulty.

Yogindra Dasa

Initiation: September 1976—Stockholm, Sweden

Current location: Sweden

Contact: yogindra.acbsp@pamho.net

Atmarama Dasa

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

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.

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Even if we were only 20 years old when you passed away we are now at least 66. Many of us are 76 or older. It’s difficult to avoid having to take stock, at this, the “fag end”. So, this was our life, this is what happened, this is what it all amounted to. I cannot say that kind of reflection leaves me either happy or satisfied. Very little has worked out as gloriously as I had hoped. On the other hand, we

cannot be but grateful, ever so grateful, for all of which we have been a part. I feel a great sadness though, at having fallen so short of the bright hopes we started out with, that you inspired within us. As Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura laments, having achieved this human form of life, we still neglected to serve Krishna. Instead we have willingly drunk poison. All we can do is pray that somehow Rādhā and Krishna will yet be merciful to us.

On the other hand, it was around our current age that you embarked for the West and first ignited the Hare Krishna explosion. In a few short years, apart from changing our personal lives you changed the entire course of human history. In this regard your example, your faith, your unfailing sense of duty and purpose loom large over us. How can we but try to follow. Try to respond at least a little to the example you set, the attitude you showed in the course of your own life. It was not that back then you had any great cause to feel optimistic, no clear reason to expect success. There was certainly no assurance of the great unfolding set to take place. As always therefore, as you yourself did, we must simply look to our duty, look to your example of faithful service, and carry on. As you often reminded us, success or failure, that is up to Krishna. Our business is simply to serve. So, whatever the future may hold, however much I may feel disheartened, or a bit sad at times when I reflect on unfulfilled hopes, or certain failures in honouring your legacy, in this regard at least I pray I will not fail. That I may continue on, as best I can, trying to execute your mission. To – at least in this regard – remain determined. At least this much...

Your humble servant,

Atmarama Dasa

Initiation: November 1976—Melbourne, Australia

Current location: Sydney, Australia

Lilananda Dasa

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, all glories to you, all glories to your service, all glories to your followers who are continuing your mission. Please accept my humble obeisances.

Your message is spreading much faster than your ISKCON society. Throughout the world we are seeing the influence of your

teachings. Here are some examples:

1. Yoga and Meditation: Your teachings on the practice of Bhakti yoga and chanting of Hare Krishna have become increasingly popular in modern times. Many people now practice yoga and meditation as a means of reducing stress, improving mental health, and achieving spiritual balance. Your teachings have become an integral part of these practices for many.

2. Vegetarianism and Sustainability: Prabhupāda, you would be pleased to know that vegetarianism is gaining significant traction in modern society. Your teachings on the cruelty of meat-eating and the importance of living in harmony with the natural environment have inspired many people to adopt a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle and to embrace eco-friendly practices. Veganism, Prabhupāda, is a way of life that avoids the use of any animal products.

3. Consciousness and Mindfulness: Your teachings on simple living and high thinking have influenced many people to raise their level of thinking and to live more simply and charitably. As a result, many people, including a significant number of opinion influencers, have embraced practices such as meditation, yoga, and mindfulness in their daily lives. They have incorporated aspects of your teachings into their personal growth and development, and some have even accepted your followers as their spiritual teachers.

Discussions about selfless service and a servant leader are widespread, and some of your followers are gaining recognition and respect as they share your message in a way that resonates with the modern audience. Some of their books have even achieved the prestigious status of *New York Times* bestsellers, reaching and influencing millions.

Alongside your official followers, there are also influential individuals who are spreading your teachings around the world, whom I refer to as “UPF” or Unofficial Prabhupāda Followers. For instance, I recently watched an interview with the most successful hedge fund manager in history, a person who triangulates with heads of state and other global political figures, and he mentioned practicing mantra meditation on a daily basis. Furthermore, I learned that he is a friend of one of your grand-disciples. While they may not be recognized as official followers, these individuals are making a significant impact in disseminating your message globally.

These unofficial followers of your Divine Grace are contributing to a movement towards higher personal and societal values, a

more compassionate world, and a world free of animal cruelty and environmental degradation. When I contemplate the impact these modern-day preachers are having, I realize that my own contribution is minuscule in comparison.

Most exalted master, *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 landmark decision by the U.S. Supreme Court that established a woman's constitutional right to have an abortion, is facing unprecedented challenges, and there is a strong possibility that it will be overturned. They are listening to you, Prabhupāda.

The impact of the unofficial Prabhupāda followers in the world is significant, and they are often welcomed with open arms by millions of people. This reminds me of your statement, "in like a needle, out like a plow." Recently, I have come to realize that my identity as your initiated disciple and official follower does not necessarily translate into the expansion of your mission. You were a pragmatic and results-oriented person who measured the progress of Krishna consciousness expansion based on actual numbers, not official positions. You used to ask, "How many books sold? How many temples opened? How many new members?" It reminds me of the famous Deng Xiaoping's quote "it doesn't matter if the cat is white or black as long as it catches mice".

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, I thank you for continuing to expand your mission in this world through your followers, both official and unofficial, and for inspiring us to do more. As you used to say, "Double it." And "My only disease is that I cannot think small," which suggests that you had a grand vision and were not content with thinking small. You were not content with so many cities without temples, billions of people who never heard about Krishna, or those who never had a chance to listen to your teachings due to inadequate packaging or lack of exposure. Perhaps the many wise UPFs out there have something to teach us.

Dear most practical master, please help us cultivate a pragmatic and results-oriented mindset, to establish metrics to assess the impact of our preaching efforts and gain a clear understanding of what is working and what is not. This way, we can take practical steps to perfect our approach and make progress towards achieving your grand vision.

All glories to your service, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please continue to inspire us.

Your humble servant,

Lilananda Dasa

Initiation: December 1976—Brazil

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Vasanta Dasa

I offer my prostrated obeisances to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda who has saved countless *jīvas* from remaining in this world of ‘*janma mṛtyu, jarā, vyādhi*’. As Lord Brahmā once said, these are really the only problems to be found here. Without guidance, however, these four problems are insurmountable, everlasting, and taller than a mountain.

Only the knowledge emanating from the lips of a pure soul, a *mahā bhāgavata*, offers the purity and strength required to graduate from this world of darkness and be invited into the Lord’s service.

Somehow, by Krishna’s grace, I was able to meet Śrīla Prabhupāda, the most transcendental mentor. One whose knowledge offers guidance and shelter for *anyone* making serious inquiries about the meaning of life. I certainly was when my cousin handed me a *Śrī Īsopaniṣad* one evening in Florida. The trajectory of my life changed completely. There is no way I can measure or express the gratitude and appreciation for what has been brought to me since. Anyone who has met Śrīla Prabhupāda and has taken the time to hear him will agree.

Among the many things Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us is access to eternal spiritual music. Transcendental sound. Songs and mantras which have been revered and sung since the beginning of time. Who else has done this? Yes, we were also taught how to dress, how to sit, how to cook, how to worship the Deity, and so many other things. Yet for me – and many others also – we received from him the gift of music, chanting and his recorded lectures.

Why is this important? Music is portable. One can hear and benefit anytime regardless of one’s station in life, education, income, heritage, etc. We were SO fortunate that Śrīla Prabhupāda came to America when he did. By that time we could capture His voice while using reel-to-reel tape recorders and the most basic video cameras. By Krishna’s grace, his music and his words were preserved and are available to anyone anywhere.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for allowing me to meet you and learn a little bit about you. In spite of my countless faults, kindly permit me in any capacity to serve your mission nicely.

Your servant,

Vasanta Dasa

Initiation: April 1976—Vrindavan, India

Current location: San Francisco, California, USA

Contact: vasantasemail@gmail.com

Nidra Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances. All glories to you and your beloved Vyāsa-pūjā.

Thank you for visiting Denver in the summer of 1975, when the warm dry weather reminded you of the “Up-Country” (Punjab) in India. The mountain range in the distance reminded you of the Himālayas, so consequently you named ISKCON Denver “New Badarikāśrama.” Also, you named our *Choṭa* Rādhā-Govinda, although devotees had thought of another name, it seemed that our deities reminded you of your own Rādhā-Govinda. When you took your morning walks in the park, the devotees were reminded that wherever a pure devotee goes becomes a place of pilgrimage; therefore, the park became non-different than Vrindavan, with the Rādhā-Kuṇḍa and Śyāma-Kuṇḍa, and even Govardhana Hill, present. During our 50th anniversary of devotees in Colorado, we had a park *parikramā* with His Grace Deena Bandhu Prabhu, and he narrated Vrindavan pastimes in the various parts of the park. All in attendance recalled your divine visit and the wonderful *līlās* of Rādhā-Govinda. We were reminded that without your arrival in the west, we would not have any of these memories nor would we have our lives engaged in the *saṅkīrtana* mission. How grateful we are and how enthusiastic we should be to engage in devotional service! You also remind us to always take Deity *prasāda*. You encouraged the devotees to continue dramas and dedication to nice Deity worship and book distribution. These days, not only are we reminded of your pastimes, but we know that you are actually with us and guiding sincere devotees to fulfill your desire, not just in Denver, but in every

town and village. Your TOVP will accelerate the Golden Age.
Thank you for everything, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your aspiring servant,

Nidra Devi Dasi

Initiation: January 1977—Denver, USA

Current location: Denver, Colorado, USA

Contact: nidra.devi@gmail.com

Guruprasad Dasa

*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 Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I feel privileged to offer my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet, which I take shelter of. I also convey my gratitude to you for establishing ISKCON to give people around the world, including me, opportunities to learn about our true spiritual nature and get well established in our relationship with the Supreme Spirit Lord Śrī Krishna through love and service. Before meeting with the devotees I had no idea about the purpose of life, especially in human life.

I am indeed very fortunate to have been accepted by you as your servant. I know I need to work on my stubbornness and occasionally improper attitude towards others, in general. I'm more careful now in my dealings with other devotees. Somehow by trying to become a sincere servant, I'm getting the association of your dear servants.

Recently I happened to tell another devotee, how I got connected with you. Yes, I did get the association of devotees, the main cause of my connection with you and with our glorious "Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya paramparā". I came to an ISKCON temple out of curiosity only. I became a bit serious only after some years, again due to the association of your dedicated servants. The need of the association of devotees serving the mission of Śrīmān Mahāprabhu is very much emphasized by our *Ācāryas*, both to start on the path and to offer us protection from deviation on the path of devotional practices to

achieve the perfection of unmotivated love or Krishna *prema*.

In the early days of my encounter with ISKCON in Montreal, I was visiting as a guest at the popular ISKCON Sunday program. Noticing that I was eager to know more about ISKCON and what the devotees are busy with, a kind devotee invited me to stay overnight at the temple, an old church which had been bought some months earlier and was undergoing some basic renovations inside the premises.

Being a newcomer to Canada and a bachelor, I wanted to check it out, especially after I was given an invitation to stay overnight at the temple. One Friday night I stayed at the temple. I was already informed about the early morning program. So I got up when this devotee woke me up, took showers and along with him went to the temple hall. Upon entering I noticed him offering obeisances to your picture on the *vyāsāsana*. (Your *mūrti* was yet to manifest on the *vyāsāsana* of the ISKCON temple.) I too did as the devotees did.

Soon the curtains of the altar opened. All devotees paid full *daṇḍavats* to the Deities on the altar. I too did so. Then the “*Gurvaṣṭakam*” prayer was sung accompanied by *mṛdaṅga* and *karatālas*. That was followed by the *ārati* of Śrīmatī Tulasī devī.

Then there was the Japa session. Afterwards, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class, Guru Pūjā and Greeting of the Deities. The Deities were nicely attired and were wearing different ornaments and fresh flower garlands. That was my first experience of getting the darshan of Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi Deities. Later on I would get to know more about Them and the other Three great personalities comprising the Pañca-tattva.

The entire experience was so wonderful and I was fully absorbed in every part of the morning program that I didn’t feel tired or out of place. I wanted more of that experience. So I started to stay over every weekend and thus came to know many wonderful devotees at the temple. Each had a story to share with me. Their sincerity and enthusiasm rubbed on me too to some extent. Later I had the good fortune of being in your physical presence during your visit to Montreal temple in early summer of 1975. It’s an unforgettable event in my life when you gently encouraged me to chant the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*.

Eventually I moved into the temple. I was given different services to do in the mornings. During the day I was at my job which continued for two more years. Upon getting *harināma* initiation in early 1977, I served full time at the temple for two years.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it took me quite some time to understand the glory of the *mahā-mantra* and its efficacy. I had some confusion due to different perspectives on spiritual perfection in life. After attending regularly daily programs at the temple and chanting the *mahā-mantra* and doing some services at the temple and reading your books I gained much better understanding of the purpose of human life and its ultimate perfection.

As stated many times in the *śāstras* and retold by great personalities, there is no way a disciple can repay the debt owed to the Spiritual Master. However the disciple can please the Spiritual Master by carrying out his instructions sincerely. In every birth, should it happen so, let me become and remain your sincere servant.

Personally I have no specific talents or skills. I beg for your mercy to remain motivated to serve your mission in the association of the devotees.

*gurudev!
kṛpā bindu diyā, koro ei dāse,
tṛṇāpekḥā ati hīna
sakala sahane, bala diyā koro
nija māne sprḥā hīna*

“Gurudeva, give to this servant just one drop of mercy. I am lower than a blade of grass. Give me all help. Give me strength. Let me be as you are, without desires or aspirations.”

Your humble servant,

Guruprasad Dasa

Initiation: January 1977—Montreal, Canada

Current location: Ottawa, Canada

Contact: rajraoca@gmail.com

Paurusa Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to you, my Spiritual Master.

Thank You for giving me the strength and conviction to accomplish the numerous Kṛṣṇa conscious undertakings I began in 1975, and that You entrusted to me. Thank You for escorting me through every moment of my life and directing my intelligence honestly and truthfully prevailing over the many difficulties in my way and rising above the impediments of my nature. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

Thank You for helping me. Thank You for your continuous shelter and for providing countless signposts, hints, and clues, along the path. Thank You for righteousness and goodness that came via You, that I may have given the world. I hope I have done well, and pleased you in a way you would approve. Please forgive the many wrongs I have committed and the time and energy I wasted. Thank You for the Vaiṣṇavas I have met and befriended, please stand guard over them all as You in turn watch over me. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

Although the illness that has now taken most of my potency and vitality, still allows me to rise at 1:08 am each morning, and chant a minimum of fifty-five thousand two hundred and ninety-six names for God daily, read your transcendental books and write for many hours each day, worship my mind deities, care for and offer *ārotika* to Tulasī Mahārāṇī each day, partake of Kṛṣṇa *prasādam* for each meal, and watch ISKCON lectures and videos on YouTube, and listen to countless hours of Kṛṣṇa conscious audio books spoken by Amala-bhakta Swami through the afternoon and night. Also, I am ever grateful to You for Your causeless mercy that continuously rains down upon me in book and audio form, and in the vast variety of Vaiṣṇavas Your ISKCON has created and is ever increasing. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

Thank You for ultimately sanctioning my passing, my body is now worn out and fatigued, and exhaustion and weariness has become my steady friend. As I easily enter the state of broken sleep at night, I similarly let go of life so effortlessly. Kṛṣṇa has undoubtedly bestowed His special mercy upon me by taking away the distractions of family, bodily strength, wealth, and false prestige; and with confidence I can say, by His grace, that material desires have no hold upon me, I have broken free from the desire to enjoy the body and mind, while lust, anger and greed, and sex desire along

with the subtle forms of sex desire, such as profit, adoration and distinction have long been left behind and forgotten and no longer factor into my life. I am confident that I have done well by others that have come near, giving respect, recognising their individuality, and giving a kindly helping hand, which in itself would produce a better world. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

There are auspicious times to leave one's body, but I place no value on such things, for I have no control, I simply depend on any arrangement You may wish to make for me..., Your servant, to keep me engaged in Your service. I have no desire to go back home for wherever Your devotees reside and pure devotional service is performed is my only overwhelming desire. My time in this world is coming to a close, the body is old and ravaged by disease, where above average strength and martial skill once resided now I am constantly overtaken by weariness feeling weak and tired, yet strangely, in complete contrast, because of Your wonderful causeless mercy I've never felt so alive and energized in my mind and heart. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

Thank You for permitting me to communicate your teachings, and in turn impart my resolve, and show the world my exemplary behaviour, you showed me how to articulate my faith, express my endurance, and unveil and explore the depth of my love for You.

As the apostle Paul said to Timothy, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith". I bless that you may all persevere in your own race, may you never fail to remember the objective, and may you cross the line victorious. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

Your Eternal Servant,

Paurusa Dasa

Initiation: February 1977—Bhubanesvar, India

Current location: Australia

Contact: paul.j2484@hotmail.com

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*

A few days ago I saw an old picture of a red Indian warrior who was performing an extreme type of austerity. He had pierced his chest in two places with hooks attached to ropes that were tied to the top of a bent sapling. According to the text accompanying the picture, the warrior would endure extreme pain for days, standing there in all weather, day and night, fasting and stretching his flesh by increasing the pressure from the bent sapling. Only when the warrior received a “vision” would he cease the austerity by pulling away from the sapling causing the hooks to cut through his flesh.

This is obviously an example of an austerity in the mode of ignorance, similar to that performed by Hiraṇyakaśipu.

Since seeing that picture, in every lecture that I happen to listen to, I hear you speak of the necessity for a soul in a human body to perform *tapasya*/austerity. This morning, I heard you speaking of how one type of *tapasya* is simply giving up a bad habit, such as smoking cigarettes. Another *tapasya* you describe is the chanting of the *mahā-mantra*.

There seems to be little comparison between the severe austerity performed by the Indian warrior and the simple *tapasya* that you require of a disciple: chanting at least 16 rounds and following the four regulative principles. However, it does seem obvious that if I want to escape the clutches of the illusory energy that has enslaved me since time immemorial, that my chanting will have to eventually be driven by a desire as intense as the desire that allowed the Indian warriors to endure unimaginable pain.

Please bless me with the transcendental greediness to be able to call out to Kṛṣṇa and His internal energy with as much determination as the warrior in the picture. I am your eternal daughter, and I’m begging you to help me navigate a very awkward situation.

Since your physical departure, the situation on our planet has deteriorated as you predicted and the world is on the brink of

war, as you predicted. Apparently the demons think that they've bamboozled the people to the point that they can promote practically any crazy idea, and they can get the people to believe it. It is so crazy that some parents are taking their toddlers for surgery to have their gender "affirmed (changed surgically)", people are injecting their children with experimental "medicine" for no valid reason, and even though it is obvious that the financial system/economy is on the verge of collapse, people are continuing to eat, drink and be merry, oblivious to the impending chaos.

What is really sad is that, while you warned us decades ago that this collapse of the materialistic civilization was coming, so many of your disciples seem to either be oblivious to the impending chaos, or have resigned themselves to being unable to be in a position of strength to continue your mission.

I am very grateful for the guidance that you have provided me in the form of your books and in the form of the association of my godsiblings. I feel that because my husband and I have embraced your instructions regarding lifestyle, that we have been rewarded beyond our dreams in the form of realizations. You told us that living a sattvic lifestyle will make us happy. Although we were conditioned to live a rajasic/tamasic lifestyle, when we made the endeavor to produce our necessities from the land and to depend on Kṛṣṇa, we did, indeed experience a happiness that is far more peaceful than any enjoyment procured from our former lifestyle: job, mortgage, complexities. This slower, simpler lifestyle really does condition me to happiness! Thank you so much!

You have given me so much that I feel a little awkward asking you for more, but things are so crazy right now that I have to shamelessly beg you for extra mercy. Please empower me to be able to help you push on your mission. The second half of your mission is basically at a standstill, but you have assured us that after the coming war, people will come to their senses and we will have a very favorable field for preaching. I have learned a lot from living this simple living, high thinking lifestyle and hope that my experience and realizations will be a help to your mission. I hope that my body will survive and pray that if it does, I will be empowered to distribute the message of love of Kṛṣṇa in that future receptive environment.

Please forgive my offenses and fall downs. Please help me become more determined than an Indian warrior, steady in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Please let me serve you.

Your eternal daughter,

Anuttama Devi Dasi

Initiation: February 1977—Seattle, WA USA

Current location: Glenoma, Washington, USA

Contact: anuttamadd@gmail.com

Karunaksi Devi Dasi

*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*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Krishna, having taken shelter at His lotus feet. Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanya deva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My unworthy obeisance is my humiliation unto your lotus feet.

In 1975, as a life-long Christian, I had been searching for the name of God. But no one knew, even the Chaplain of the Episcopalian convent school I attended in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

One day I asked him, “Father, Who is it that stands behind the gold ring the Sisters wear on the wedding finger – and I don’t mean Jesus Christ! I MEAN... WHO IS THAT!”

He looked at me and very firmly and clearly, said, “I DON’T KNOW!”

That told me everything I needed to know!...No one knows.

He gave me a prayer he said might help:

“O my dear Lord, please help me
To See Thee more clearly,
Love Thee more dearly and
Follow Thee more nearly!”

I uttered that prayer seriously – very strongly – from that time...

In 1969 I heard from George Harrison (Who loved and honored you)...

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

This sound sent me reeling...

I went running through the house madly yelling, “WHAT IS THAT!? WHAT CAN I DO WITH THAT?” I did not know about *mantras*...and this was THE *mantra*. This was a piece of the reality for which my soul was “dying”.

But more time and penance was required of me...until he found me five years later, enjoying a wonderful piano-bar engagement playing and singing in a lounge five nights per week. He came in my heart firmly and made it known I should take his shelter.

I did take his shelter, and that brought us, my two truth-seeking daughters and me, by his mercy, from Grand Rapids, MI to Laguna Beach, CA, November 15, 1975. Here, a month and a half later we met the devotees, and four months after that we met YOU, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

We blissfully met you in May 1976, and four months later we left everything in place and moved into the Seattle Temple. By the mercy of Nitāi we were picking up where we left off in our former lives in India (where else?).

NITĀI—akhaṇḍa-guru-tattova—brought us from Grand Rapids, Michigan to His beloved pure devotee, YOU, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in Los Angeles, California...

From that juncture, we had only a short time in your manifest presence, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We found out that your health was not good, so we were life-threateningly concerned that your desperately-needed love and guidance would be lost.

We had been so fortunate to receive Śrī Harināma initiation from you by letter in February, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and we still each have that precious letter!

And as we blissfully learned how to live your Kṛṣṇa-conscious culture of cleanliness, wondrous devotional arts, cooking, worship, honor and service to the Lord, His Deity form, and to each other, our hearts began to soften...and life began to shine sweeter.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, our minds began to firm in the ecstasy and discipline of the divine *śāstra* of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, of

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, of *The Nectar of Devotion*, and other divine scripture, ecstatic histories and commentaries that were unknown and unavailable to the Western people—the Western mind.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your unlimited surrender and intense study, mission, tireless translation – even up to the moment of your departure from this plane, the world has gained the treasure of the riches of the handbooks of creation that are the eternal *Vedas* in which all knowledge is contained.

And even more wonderful than that, dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have brought us into the deepest and most precious gift of all – and of all time – the priceless gift of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The Avatārī of Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Who descended as His own devotee to show us how to come to Him in love. That by chanting His transcendental names: *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*, we can ultimately join the Lord and His associates in His Spiritual Planet of Śrī Goloka Vṛndāvana—in a relationship of our desire – reverence, servant, friend, parent, lover. Once we attain the end of this *saiṁsāra* – endless cycle of birth, disease, old age, death, rebirth, etc...we will never have to return to it.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Kṛṣṇa picked you out of all of His very many beautiful saintly devotees as His beloved, purest devotee who could have the surrender, love and perspicacity required to accomplish this seemingly impossible mission in just a few short years, a task the Lord seemingly decided to be necessary.

I became and shall eternally remain aware of the fathomless depth of gratitude required and felt by me to come near to your pure love for God and tears for souls—a slight taste of which has given me the beautiful necessity of my life—the eternal, ongoing endeavor to serve the lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, if you can accept my faulty service at your lotus feet, I shall always feel encouraged in that transcendental endeavor.

Karunaksi Devi Dasi

Initiation: February 1977—Seattle, USA

Current location: Gopinath Bhavan, Braja/Bay Area

Vaisnava Sanga, USA

Contact: msdidimaa@yahoo.com

Eternal obeisances with dedication to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, O Gurudeva, beloved Guru Mahārāja! I was born in the darkness of ignorance, but you came all the way from India practically to my doorstep on your final visit to California with your torchlight of transcendental knowledge, simultaneously dissipating that darkness and showing me the glowing way forward, out of all ignorance and towards the light of pure loving remembrance of and reconnection with the transcendental source of my very own existence, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-salākayā
caṣṣur unmlītaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

Jaya Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura! He wrote this perfect prayer so easy to remember that encapsulates for each of us your disciples what I have expressed above. We know about Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura by Your Grace. He has written many songs full of perfect pure devotional moods, and pouring our own emotions into these perfect songs is one of the elements helping us along, like favorable winds in our sails, by Your Grace.

*nāma-śreṣṭhāṁ manum api śacī-putram atra svarūpaṁ;
rūpaṁ tasyāgrajam uru purīṁ māthurīṁ goṣṭhavātīm;
rādhā-kuṇḍam giri-varam aho! rādhikā-mādhavāśāṁ; prāpto
yasya prathita-kṛpayā, śrī gurum taṁ nato 'smi*

Jaya Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī-pāda!

Here, another *sūtra*-prayer that says volumes very concisely about what kind of debt we have towards Śrī Gurudeva, by another significant *mahābhāgavata-ācārya* we take help from by Your Grace, is enabling me to express from your fathomless glories some essence of gratitude by dipping a cup into the ocean of that perfect prayer.

Nāma-śreṣṭham: You have given us the holy NAME of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *mahā-mantra*, the great prayer! A *mantra* invested by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu with all of the Lord's potencies so alive and powerful that the practice of chanting and serving which, upon freedom from our ignorance and offences, has the potential to deliver us all the way to our soul's highest limit of latent perfection, *Vraja-prema* in Goloka Vṛndāvana. From now until we reach perfection the single-most important thing for us will be guidance, and the guidance that is certainly given along the way in support of this

sublime service to the holy name also comes to us via your merciful grace, appearing to remind and guide us, for you are *sākṣāt* Hari, playing your big role in the Lord's own *Ācārya-Līlā* for reclaiming the conditioned souls. Śrī Hari tells Uddhava in the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, "Know the *Ācārya* to be Myself. I appear in an infinity of forms to teach you, and all others."

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written in English: "He reasons ill who tells that Vaiṣṇavas die, when thou art living still, in SOUND. The Vaiṣṇavas die to live, and living, try to spread the holy name around!" You're still and forever present in the transcendental Vedic literature Your Divine Grace manifested in English in over 250 other languages worldwide! The only way I can imagine attempting to repay you for giving us the 700 verses of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, the 18,000 verses of the *Mahā-Purāṇa* known as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) and the voluminous *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, all with your elaborate commentaries, is to read and study them daily, in the association of devotees. Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your grace, our nightly Śāstrīya Śraddhā conference call is in its fifth year. Some beautiful variety of us aspirants of Śrī Guru-Kṛṣṇa's mercy gather every evening to simply read and help each other digest what you have given in these great *bhakti* literatures. We keep finding quotes that affirm that Śrī Guru-Kṛṣṇa's mercy is definitely coming through to those who will worship these *śāstras* with their intelligence merely by suspending other activities to give their attention to them.

In the earlier times, for my family, such as in 1976, you also gave us each a place to live. We were able to drop our past-conditioning like old worn-out clothes, move into your temple-ashrams and GIVE our energies to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in uplifting association of devotees for our great eternal souls' highest benefit, very possibly shortening the amount of time it might otherwise take to reach the ultimate perfection of life, real love for God or Kṛṣṇa-*prema*.

My sister and I were young and had the privilege of learning some Sanskrit and all manner of devotional arts. We would perform *Daśavātāra* Odissi dance (after learning and practicing for one year*) at temple and Rathayātrā festivals. I remember that occasionally we would have guests who were of Indian origin from 'Hindu' families who were somewhat attracted to what we were doing. I once asked one such guest about the meaning behind some devotional thing we were all doing together, figuring she would be able to enrich my own understanding. She laughed and said, "Oh, we don't know why

we do these things, we've just always done it in our families."

Now, Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your astonishing service to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and your beloved Śrīla Guru Mahārāja, Kṛṣṇa consciousness has spread everywhere, reached India again in a fresh, enlivening way, starting from the time you brought your first Western disciples with you back to Vrindavan. The depth of the influence of Kṛṣṇa consciousness spreading profusely in India has reached back into the Western countries through these Indian Vaiṣṇavas who, with their Vedic culture already part of them, take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness so naturally. And because these devotees classically come from strong, connected families who instill discipline, education and culture so favorable for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they are well suited to leadership positions in your temples worldwide.

Now, Śrīla Prabhupāda, whenever I visit an ISKCON temple, it is more like 99% Indian devotees. I went to New Orleans for a work-related seminar and prioritized visiting your temple there (in January 2019). I was surprised that it was like this there. A few of your elder western disciples are still there, distributing books. One, named Rajendranātha Prabhu, finding out that I live in the San Francisco Bay Area, wanted me to carry a message to Śrīpād Vaiṣeṣika Prabhu full of his greetings. They used to distribute books together. I was ready to get out my phone to help connect them, but he shook his head, "No. I only want you to personally carry my message." Old school. I didn't ever remember to do it, but am remembering now. Maybe it'll reach Śrīpād Vaiṣeṣika Prabhu through this.

My husband Rādhānāth Prabhu (who also used to distribute books with Śrī Vaiṣeṣika Prabhu) and I took a road trip in December 2019 and visited Laguna Beach. We very excitedly visited the temple there. It was the first time I'd been there since joining your mission in 1976 when the temple was relocated to the church building with Śrī Pañca-tattva. We came for the evening *ārati* and met the beautiful Indian devotees who seemed to be taking care of Pañca-tattva and managing the temple. How incredible it was to have darshan of Pañca-tattva there. I didn't want to leave! We looked around and found a donation board for monthly support of the temple. Mostly all Indian families, except for one, Kṣudhi Dāsa Prabhu, \$250 per month. Wow, Kṣudhi Prabhu was there when we left our home in Laguna Beach to join your mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda. He's still there, supporting your temple. That was comforting, like coming full circle and finding continuance of this eternal process of serving Kṛṣṇa

that you came to give which has transformed so many of our lives. So even though we are seeing a massive demographic shift in your temples nowadays, there are threads of your original, pioneering early Western disciples, older and wiser, battle-worn and beautiful, shining bright with Your Divine Grace still pouring through them. We met Kṣudhi Prabhu recently at a program in the Bay Area, and he spoke of serving you in Africa, sometimes alone, overcoming huge dangerous obstacles. His stories need to be included in the annals of this era's historic and explosive spreading of Kṛṣṇa consciousness!

But the tapestry of the story as a whole, though dominant currently with grounded earthy threads of the stable, disciplined, cultured devotees of Indian origin who now sustainably manage and maintain many of your temples in large part, still present are the accenting neon standout threads of those who have persevered over all these past five decades to deeply follow you and who still serve to nourish, maintain and spread the organization you established. Some from within and many, with you simply in our hearts, serving wherever the Lord plants us.

*Begging your causeless mercy upon me always,
Your eternal servant,*

Kilimba Dasi

Initiation: February 1977—Seattle, USA

Current location: Oakland, California, USA

(*by a teacher who came twice per week to the temple to teach us—whose own dance guru descended from the Dev-Dāsīs of the Śrī Jagannāth Temple in Purī Dhāma)

Nrisimha Dasa

I grew up with Śrīla Prabhupāda's voice in my ears every night for years. Despite being so far from a temple and the *satsaṅga* of devotees, thanks to the Bhaktivedanta Tape Ministry, I was able to have a daily relationship with Prabhupāda's *vāṇī*.

With the passing of years, my attachment grew stronger to his grave and profound voice and his instructions. I used to play and replay the tapes again and again, till they became part of me.

Throughout the years, his *vāṇī* has been the only steady thing in my life and the safe harbor to which my soul yearns to go.

Śrīla Prabhupāda has saved me so many times – from myself and from the pain of loneliness and death in this world.

I would never be able to repay that debt, so I can only try to follow his instructions and pray to Śrī Nityānanda and Gaurasundara to be worthy of his association one day.

Nrisimha Dasa

Initiation: March 1977—Caracas, Venezuela

Current location: Pamplona, Norte de Santander, Colombia

Contact: lafundacion108@gmail.com

Ankotha Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

As Krishna is perfectly reciprocating with all his unlimited devotees, you too are reciprocating with all your disciples and followers. This reciprocation is a spiritual function and beyond time and space. We have to simply remember you and in that remembrance we gain your spiritual association.

I did not get a chance to spend much time with you personally during your manifest pastimes. So, wanting to appreciate more of your transcendental moods and behaviors, I have recently started to read the many wonderful memoir books that have been coming out in the last few years from your early disciples who spent much time with you, and whom you personally nurtured and trained.

Reading these books is so enlivening and pleasing to the mind and heart. And many times the memories are so loaded with emotion and immediacy I feel that I am right there with you. The very definition of personalism is embodied in these dealings that you displayed with your surrendered disciples. These books are definitely wonderful gifts that your senior devotees are leaving for the benefit of generations of devotees to come.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all that you have done to make into a reality the desires of Lord Chaitanya and Lord Nityānanda and the previous *ācāryas* who so much wanted to make this wonderful spiritual philosophy and way of life available to all the living beings on the planet.

Someday, I pray that I will again be able to come into your personal association and render some pleasing service directly to Your Divine Grace. Until that time, I will do my utmost to serve you in separation to the best of my ability, taking upon my head, your orders and directions that you have so kindly left behind.

Your eternal servant,

Ankoththa Dasa

Initiation: March 1977—London, UK

Current location: Kansas, USA

Contact: onkarankotthasandal@gmail.com

Indranuja Dasa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Prostrated *daṇḍavats* at your feet. May your glories continue to be sung for millennia.

What great good fortune to be born at the right time and place to see you. But still, I wonder, how did we get your mercy? As with many things in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, this seems like a question that has no answer. On a morning walk when a devotee asked this question, you suddenly stopped, and with wide eyes thrusting your arms out (like you were giving the devotees something) said, “Take it, take it! But you cannot.” Your mercy is available to anyone who simply pays the price; absolute, unwavering faith. Yet being born in *māyā*, we are naturally faithless in anything we cannot perceive directly. But still the offer is there, and every night I try, before I lay my weary head down to rest, to remember the mercy that I got today and I thank you, my Ṭhākura Jī’s, and the devotees for allowing me one more day to practice something. It’s easy in this world to become a cynic. That is the path of atheism. Such a miserable way to live life, and in the end we simply die a miserable death.

One of my meditations this year has been to consider that you left India just before your 70th birthday. I also am facing my 70th birthday

soon and I think how little of an impact I have made and how much you did in your short sojourn to the West (and back to India). A mere blink of an eye, yet here I am remembering sitting at your lotus feet as you prepared to fly to France in 1976 for yet even more preaching. Such an effect you had on us, picking us up from our miserable existence to become Vaikuṅṭha men in Lord Chaitanya's *saṅkīrtana* party. Such grace, such kindness.

I know one life I will see you again, and together we can play and frolic in the pastures of Goloka with Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and the cows. Such a nice meditation to remember you by. Thank you Gurudeva for allowing me entrance into this holiest of realms.

*Praying at your lotus feet and always begging for mercy,
I remain, your eternal seroant,*

Indranuja Dasa

Initiation: March 1977—London, UK

Current location: Bhaktivan, Kansas, USA

Contact: edmacmillan@yahoo.com

Jiva Pavana Dasa

My Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*mukam karoti vācālam
paṅguni laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam aham vande
śrī-gurum 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."

*rādhā-sammukha-saṁsaktim
sakhī-saṅga-nivāsinīm
tvām aham satatam vande
mādhavāśraya-vigrahām*

"O spiritual master, I continually offer my obeisances unto you, who are always in the presence of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and very much devoted to Her. You always reside in the association of Her confidantes, the *gopīs*, and you are the abode of loving

devotion to Krishna.”

*he guro jñāna-da dīna-bandho
svānanda-dātaḥ karuṇaika-sindho
vṛndāvanāsīna hitāvātāra
prasīda rādhā-praṇaya-pracāra*

“O spiritual master, O giver of divine wisdom, O friend of the fallen, you are the giver of your own bliss and you are the only ocean of mercy. Although dwelling in Vrindavan, 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.”

As a young confused teenager growing up in NYC I had no previous pious or spiritual activities from my past lives. Also I was perusing the most degraded and sinful of Kali-yuga’s distractions. However you mercifully pursed me and “created my good fortune”. Songs like *My Sweet Lord* made anything from India “cool” and your *Back to Godheads* and small books were EVERYWHERE chasing me. On my first day at the University of Buffalo, I bought your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* from a student selling his books at the Student Union.

By the following summer I was a complete vegetarian and enrolled on a scholarship with a dance studio in Cleveland. My friend Lloyd and I had no money to eat so we were in the habit of breaking into cigarette machines for 25 cent quarters and shoplifting in supermarkets and health food stores. Once day as we came out of one such health food store we heard a lady yell, “Hey yogīs!” (We were accustomed to wearing shorts and not wearing shoes or shirts.) She also yelled, “Are you vegetarians?” We spun around ready to defend vegetarianism only to find a lady wearing a sari with a ring in her nose. “We do a free vegetarian feast every Sunday at our temple”, she said, and handed us a BTG pointing to the address. I gave her the last quarter I had (from a broken-in cigarette vending machine of course). The next day we walked several miles to get to the temple. At the door another lady at the temple wearing a sari with a ring in her nose said, “WELCOME HOME!” (This did freak us out a little, and we almost turned back).

To make a long story short after associating with the devotees in Cleveland and returning to NYC I tried to join the temple in Brooklyn. However when my father tried to strangle me for joining on the steps of the temple I suffered from the trauma and had a nervous breakdown. (Years later after reading Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books my

father repented and asked for his “sinful bones” to be cremated.)

Eventually I recovered and saw your Divine Grace at your skyscraper building in mid-town Manhattan. During a class you pointed to me and said. “Anyone who thinks he is this body is a mad man!” It hit me like a guided missile and removed all the cobwebs in my mind. For that brief moment I realised I was not this body and that material activities in this world were simply a useless waste of time. I had made friends with Śrīmān Lohitākṣa Prabhu and his wife Rasajāña Devī Dāsī from the Vaikuṅṭha Players. Knowing they were going to perform for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I had sat myself in the middle of a roped off area in the theatre. When the devotees rushed in I found myself seated with the *sannyāsīs* on all sides and you, Śrīla Prabhupāda just in front and to left of me (the then president of the temple His Holiness Ādi Keśava Mahārāja) sat to my right, gave me a big grin with a thumbs up and said, “Very good Bhakta Jeff!” I became mesmerised with your features. You were wearing garlands of roses, gardenias from Hawaii and sandalwood from India. You held a lotus flower with the stem in a small tube of water in your hand. I gazed at your *śikhā* and large ear lobes, and your aroma was like a transcendental garden from the spiritual world.

After the most amazing rendition of the play *The Age of Kali*, the house lights came on. All the devotees fell silent, in fact you could hear a pin drop because Śrīla Prabhupāda was about to speak. His Divine Grace was perfectly still, and his mouth slightly open as in trance, he said in the most bombastic way with a voice descending from the spiritual sky.

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Lord Śrī Krishna Chaitanya, who is the most merciful incarnation of the Supreme Lord because He is bestowing freely what no one else has ever given – pure love of Krishna.

At that time Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave me goose bumps, and I became very excited. I said to everyone as we exited, did you hear what he said? Lord Chaitanya is the MOST merciful! The devotees told me, “Oh he has said this many times before.” But for me it was a

major revelation. From that time I danced with the *saṅkīrtana* devotees in front of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Gaura Nitāi. I went to all my favourite book stores to distribute Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books. The owners would recount to me how an elderly Indian gentleman had come years before with *samosās*, chutney and similar books. One owner showed me an original set of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams* printed in India. I bought them and the temple put them in a display which would be the first entry to a museum to remember Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Joining the temple the authorities knew that the deprogrammers were after me so they sent me on the Rādhā Dāmodara Traveling Saṅkīrtana Party. Eventually I was initiated in Ohio and then joined the devotees in Chicago to do book distribution at the “O’Hare Airport”. Most of the devotee’s like Pragosh Prabhu and the “incarnation of book distribution” Tripurāri Prabhu were much better at it than I was. When you (Śrīla Prabhupāda) were ready to display your disappearance pastime most of the distributors like Śivarāma Prabhu, Sura Prabhu and others went to India. I wasn’t considered important enough to be allowed to go and was told that Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted me and others to stay. However at the time (without the transcendental competition) I finally made it to the top of the distribution list (LOL).

You came to me in a dream. As you went to the departure gates at the airport you turned to me and said. “I’m going but you should stay behind fight”.

Thank you so much Śrīla Prabhupāda, when I think of you and your causeless mercy, I cannot continue to write, it is too hard to hold back the tears. All Glories to you, my eternal spiritual master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda!

Dāsa-anudāsa,

Jiva Pavana Dasa

Initiation: March 1977—RDTSKP

Current location: UK

Contact: jivapavana@gmail.com

Mahendrani Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Thank you for coming to us. Thank you for always being with us. Thank you for all that you gave us. Thank you for connecting us with Kṛṣṇa and teaching us how to practice the process of *bhakti*.

Krishna only accepts items made of a pure *śuddha sattva* nature, filled with *prema*. In the spiritual world, everything – the bodies, the clothes, jewels, flowers, food items, all are made of pure *prema*, not earth, water, fire, air, etc. There is a description in *Kṛṣṇāhnikā-kaumudī* 3.19 of one of Kṛṣṇa’s servants carrying an artistically designed flask filled with camphor-scented drinking water and covered by a soft red cloth. It appeared as if he was caring his pure liquefied mind colored by his internal attraction to the Lord.

How then can we offer Kṛṣṇa items composed of elements of this world? The items are a container for our love. Kṛṣṇa is taking only the love. But most of us have no real love to speak of. We have only a tiny sliver of a beginning of love. But you take the offering, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and mix it with your pure love and offer it to your guru who mixes it with his love, and on up through the *paramparā* into the hands of Rādhā Kṛṣṇa/Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. We are benefited, and our relationship with Kṛṣṇa increases. All through your mercy. Without you we have no access to Kṛṣṇa, Vrajendrananda Śyāma and His associates.

When we pray, it is you who hears our prayers, mixes it with your love and gives it to Kṛṣṇa. When we cry out “Gurudeva!” Kṛṣṇa sits up, takes note, and hears that prayer more than He hears prayers directly addressed to him.

Thank you again and again for giving us this precious, life-giving connection.

Your servant,

Mahendrani Devi Dasi

Initiation: March 1977—Trinidad

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Prahladanatha Dasa

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my Lord and Master, I am touching your feet, please let me stay here some time....all the time.

The world is full of fear and uncertainty, but I prefer to stay close to you and have the strength to convince people about Krishna the way you taught us. Maybe I should not have heard so many truths, but I did.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please do not let go of my hand. Many friends do become confused, but I tell them to keep on chanting the holy names until they are ready to leave.

My Lord and Master, please keep me by your side. Teach me how to serve, how to love.

Your Prahladanatha Dasa

Initiation: March 1977—Lima, Peru

Current location: Florida, USA

Baka-satru Dasa

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, accept my humble obeisances.

My very dear spiritual father and guide, Prabhupāda, I would like to thank you so much for having accepted me to as your disciple.

You offered me the alternative to leave my miserable existence and to return, by your unlimited mercy, to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna's abode as Their eternal servant!

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I thank you eternally!

Baka-satru Dasa

Initiation: May 1977—Hyderabad, India

Current location: Montreal, Canada

Matsya Avatar Dasa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

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

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

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

For over half a millennium, albeit to varying degrees, the whole world has been under the cultural influence of the West.

In the last 300 years the West has been pervaded by a growing and varied materialistic influence, which, however, somehow still dialogued with religion.

In the last half century, a large part of the population of western culture has gradually lost its spiritual, religious and cultural identity, and today no longer believes in its founding values.

The prolonged systematic and unscrupulous use of lies in the media has seriously polluted consciences and damaged the cognitive abilities of peoples.

The imposition of crazy ideologies has caused the destruction of cognitive abilities, the use of common sense, the desecration of traditional religiosity and the loss of cultural identity.

At the same time, the spread of a positivistic, relativistic, reductionist scientific culture which denies a priori the existence of God, of the soul and of transcendent reality, is weakening in body and mind a humanity in the process of dehumanization, with all the ruinous ethical-moral repercussions on customs.

Today's hegemonic culture of death appears to me as the most serious and all-encompassing attack on God, humanity and nature that history remembers. A new form of slavery is underway, the worst that mankind has ever experienced: the colonization of consciences. The aim of the new demiurges is to reduce poor people to the condition of voluntary slavery: slaves unaware of being such.

Recently I have read and re-read the transcript of your speech of March 13, 1974, in Vrindavan, I have linked it to what you said to me on August 30, 1976, in Delhi, and I was once again struck, shaken, called urgently to the fulfillment of my highest duty: to understand the profound meaning of the ongoing catastrophe in order to propose to my contemporaries conscious socio-religious solutions of Krishna, both on the immanent and on the transcendent level, solutions in dialogue between Earth and Heaven: the *daiṅ varṇāśrama-dharma*. For clarity, I quote the following extract from your aforementioned 1974 speech:

Their business will be to exploit the poor citizens. And they will be embarrassed and harassed so much – by one side, no sufficient rain, and therefore scarcity of food; and the other side, taxation by the government. In this way, the people will be so much harassed that they'll give up their home and go to the forest. Very piti... Unless they take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they'll not be saved. The *varṇāśrama* college has to be established immediately. Everywhere, wherever we have got our center, a *varṇāśrama* college should be established to train four divisions – one class, *brāhmaṇa*; one class, *kṣatriya*; one class, *vaiśya*; and one class, *śūdra*. But everyone will be elevated to the spiritual platform by the spiritual activities which we have prescribed. There is no inconvenience, even for the *śūdras*.

Noting once again your foresight and wisdom, I reflect on what you said 49 years ago, in particular on the urgency with which you proposed solutions capable of making us immune from the devastating effects of the mighty advance of Kali-yuga.

Today, more than ever, your heartfelt request to immediately activate an institute that teaches philosophy and scientific practice of the socio-religious model known in the Indo-Vedic civilization with the name of *daivī varṇāśrama* dharma, reaches me clear and strong, adopting which the whole of humanity she may save herself before she is fully infected by the dark psychism of Kali-yuga.

I welcome your heartfelt request in my heart, and I am preparing to satisfy it in order to be part of the solution, at your service, to redeem people of good will from the tremendous deception set by those who have the duty to defend them.

Since lying is the main weapon used by the powerful *asuras* to confuse, deceive, subjugate and exploit the distracted and confused people, our pragmatic answer should be inspired by the teaching of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, with particular reference to 17.15, in which Śrī Krishna explains to Arjuna the characteristics of the virtuous word: the Truth.

At a time when propaganda is all about the new “Green” ideology, it is urgent to promote the ecology of the word, the four regulative principles and the supremely purifying daily practice of the Holy Name:

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

In our disturbing contemporaneity, thinking of you, of your great work of spreading Krishna Consciousness in the world, I feel an unceasing and growing feeling of gratitude, which gives rise to the ever-increasing desire to serve the project founded by you to the best of my ability, and that you have left us with the exhortation to spread it with the purity with which you have delivered it to us.

So that we in turn can offer it as a model of life to all people of good will as an antidote to the pervading existential fear, please give me spiritual strength to understand your teachings more deeply and satisfy your desires.

On the occasion of the bountiful day of your Vyāsa-pūjā 2023, I renew my sacred spiritual vows and humbly request your blessings to understand the holy scriptures and strengthen my ability to relate everything to Śrī Krishna by serving Him with pure devotional sentiment and effective in spreading theory and practice of His and Your divine teachings.

*With immense and heartfelt gratitude,
Your servant,*

Matsya Avatar Das

Initiation: May 1977—Rome, Italy

Current location: Pisa, Italy

Gopimata Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

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

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

I am remembering some of the early experiences I had with you that aroused my curiosity on such a deep level that I had nothing else to compare them to. They were distinctly beyond the mind and senses.

When I first received that *Easy Journey to Other Planets* book on my adventure in Europe back in 1977, I kept it in my pocket for days, occasionally pulling it out to gaze at your picture. I was not able to understand any of your teachings in the book, but one day I heard

myself say, “I feel like all the events in my life have brought me to the point of learning what this book is about.” I was so fortunate to see the addresses on the back page!

When I attended your first darshan at the Manor, I felt a transcendental thrill when tasting the fresh fig *mahā mahā prasādam* from your plate.

When hearing you speak in the temple room, I felt you acknowledging my soul – not in an impersonal way – but allowing me to experience an eternal love I had forgotten and always craved.

I saw this comment that you made in a class on *Cc. Adi-līlā* 1.35:

This is the process of approaching the Supreme Lord by gradual appreciation in devotional service. If one desires unalloyed devotional service, one must associate with devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, for by such association only can a conditioned soul achieve a taste for transcendental love and thus revive his eternal relationship with Godhead in a specific manifestation and in terms of the specific transcendental (*rasa*) that one has eternally inherent.

It is comforting on such a deep level to know that we are already someone dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, even though we have forgotten.

In a class you gave on *Cc. Madhya* 20.137–142, you said:

Love of God is not that you can immediately go and purchase from the market, in the store. You have to practice it. The love is there within you. It is not artificial, neither an imposition by some person or... No. It is already there. If you kindly become submissively hearing this, by hearing only, and if you practice, it will be very nice, and quickly we shall develop.

So, with your expert guidance, quickly (perhaps over many lifetimes of practice), we can finish with all the distractions of this world and become fixed up at the lotus feet of dear Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Thank you always.

Your servant,

Gopimata Devi Dasi

Initiation: July 1977—London, UK

Current location: Baldwin, Kansas, USA

Contact: gopisandal108@gmail.com

Prahlada Bhakta Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

When this homage is published, I will be 75 years old. Hopefully I have managed to gain some sanity over that time. I was 28-years-old when I joined your ISKCON, and so I was dubbed, “old Prahlada”.

But we are all old now, and more and more frequently I read the obituaries of godbrothers who were alive to experience the unique opportunity that was norm at that time, when:

- Everybody attended the whole morning program (no exceptions)
- Everybody took a cold shower
- Everybody slept on the floor
- Everybody spent the whole day out on the streets to provide the finance to keep the temple in existence. (*pūjārīs* excepted)
- The *kīrtanas* were wild
- And it was us against the rest of the world (and the rest of the world was against us).

Those were the best days of my life. There could not have been a better way to spend my youth.

Thank you, thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, for that special undeserved mercy.

Your fortunate servant,

Prahlada Bhakta Dasa

Initiation: September 1977—Sydney, Australia

Current location: Ireland

Jivananda Dasa Vanacari

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet on this most auspicious occasion of your merciful appearance in this material world.

nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale

śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine

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

My realization, again and again, is that I am completely helpless and, therefore, completely dependent upon your mercy and kindness. You are my only hope to ever leave this material world, and I pray that I never forget that. The forces of the material energy are so strong that once the living entity finds himself here, there is no way out unless one is so fortunate enough to make contact with the pure devotee of the Lord. Therefore, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am fully aware that, without your help and guidance, I would be stuck here for eternity with no chance of escape.

How is escape even possible unless one realizes that he is imprisoned and is caught up in something that he must escape from? Until I read your *Bhagavad-gītā*, I was convinced that this world is my home, that I belong here, and that all I can do is try to make the best of it. Your writing expertly brought me to the understanding that this world is not my home and that I should strive to leave it rather than attempt to find happiness and satisfaction here.

You not only showed me that this material world is a bad bargain, but you also made it possible for me to escape it and return to my true home, back to Godhead. You introduced all of us to Kṛṣṇa and described to us His abode which is also our eternal abode as well. This gave us true hope, it gave our lives a true purpose, and you enlightened us to our ultimate destiny as loving servants of Kṛṣṇa. This was the greatest act of kindness and mercy that I had experienced since entering this material world. You were the first to define unconditional love by demonstrating it.

Through your words, writings, and pristine example you have empowered all of us, if we follow strictly in your footsteps, to save some of the fallen conditioned souls that are trying to make a home in this material world in the same way that you have saved us. Therefore I pray to you, again and again, to bless me with the intelligence to surrender to your perfect guidance and not deviate even the slightest from your example. I pray to Lord Kṛṣṇa to provide me with all of the resources required for me to become and remain a useful instrument for you to use in your mission to establish Lord Caitanya's movement all over the world. Please continue to empower me to serve you, I have no ability of my own. I only have the desire

to serve you in your mission by sharing the loving mercy that you have given to me.

Only by avoiding the poison of self-interest and finding fault in others while finding none within myself can I be successful in assisting you. You have always been free of self-interest while showing only interest in serving your spiritual master. Just as you have demonstrated, please help me to put others' needs first and to stay focussed only on my service to you, the devotees, and the souls that so desperately need your mercy. This is the example that you have shown us, and I pray for the intelligence to follow it.

As all of your disciples leave this world to assist you elsewhere we must focus on replacing ourselves with competent, confident, well-trained, sincere, and enthusiastic replacements. As you have empowered us, let us share that empowerment with those that we teach and mentor so that they too can taste the ecstasy of bringing lost souls into Kṛṣṇa Consciousness and getting them on the road back to Godhead. Training and assisting those who join our movement with a desire to preach is a top priority. Therefore, only by fully understanding your mood can I be effective in sharing that understanding with others who desire to assist you in your mission.

I pray to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to always keep me engaged in assisting you in your mission. Please never let me forget the mercy that you have shown me, and please empower me to share that mercy with others. Even with all of my faults, you have engaged me in your service. Therefore, please empower me to look past the faults of those who I preach to as I engage them in your service.

As you have given us Kṛṣṇa, please empower us to give Kṛṣṇa to the world.

Your humble servant,
Jivananda Dasa Vanacari

Initiation: September 1977—Pennsylvania, USA

Current location: USA

Contact: jivananda.dasa@yahoo.com

Kratu Dasa

*nnama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-soāminn iti nāmine*

*namas te s̄arasvate deve gaura-v̄āṅī-pracāriṇe
nirvīṣeṣa-s̄ūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

My dear Spiritual Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your glories are unlimited. You are very dear to Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and Rūpa Goswami Pāda. Lord Chaitanya selected you to spread *harināma* all over the world. You have spread Śrīla Rūpa Goswami's teachings to the entire world without any discrimination. Carrying the *bhāva* of Lord Nityānanda, you very mercifully spread Kṛṣṇa *prema* to everyone. For that you had established ISKCON and gave a clear view about Lord Kṛṣṇa. All over the world, many were infected by impersonal philosophy, but your teachings and preachings delivered many souls with a proper understanding of God.

Even after reaching an unknown country like America, being elderly, you were very bold and never compromised with Vaishnava principles. No one knew about Lord Kṛṣṇa in those countries, yet, you put Kṛṣṇa's name first for establishing the Society. Many suggested keeping the name, International Society for 'God Consciousness', but you kept it simple with the name 'Kṛṣṇa' instead of God. That clarified any doubt about who God is. You established this Spiritual University to give Vedic Science to all of us, so that we can perform our duty.

You established big temples where we can come together for *maṅgala-ārati*, chanting, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā* classes, *sādhu-saṅga*, darshan of beautiful Deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa and Gaura Nitāi. Delicious Kṛṣṇa *prasādam* and Sunday Love Feasts are the main attraction today and in times to come. You had personally cooked for Western people and took all the pain to make them devotees. They transformed from hippies to happies forever.

Your wonderful dedication to your guru is incomparable. You were a true example of a pure devotee who is not dependent on money, machines, materials, but only on Lord Kṛṣṇa. When you reached the USA, you had no money, but only *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. You were distributing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to those people who never even heard about it. But you convinced them and distributed the most wanted books of the Spiritual World.

No businessman is as successful as you, who encouraged the most qualified people to serve without any salary. Many worked

with full surrender and love so high that they could even give up their lives for you. No businessman can earn such loyalty and trust without giving a penny. But you did this miracle. You gave all of us selfless love and Krishna *bhakti* without any discrimination. All over the world you established 108 temples and appointed devotees for different services. In this material world no one can easily leave their nature and character. But your training transformed thousands of *śūdras* into *brāhmaṇas*.

You trained us on how to live just by farming and taking care of cows. How Vedic life was so blissful. You wrote so many books in such a small time period which also includes big books like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* commentaries, this is just impossible for any writer. Your every book's every page can change one's heart. What to talk about pages, each word is so powerful and full of blessings that drastic change can happen within a few minutes. Your Food for Life is still serving many good Krishna *prasādam* meals.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you taught the standards on how to do Deity worship. The standards followed big temples such as the Jagannātha temple and Tirupati Bālājī; and you set appropriate higher processes in ISKCON temples. Not only that, you made every *grhastha's* house a temple of Lord Kṛṣṇa. You are the greatest magician. You can do anything just by desiring. You taught us how to do *kīrtana*, how to dance in front of the Lord, *harināma saṅkīrtana*, *nagara saṅkīrtana*, Jagannātha Rathayātrā, how to observe various fasts, how to celebrate festivals, how to maintain cleanliness of body and mind. You gave us Vaishnava *tilaka*, Vaishnava dress, *karatālas* and *mṛdanga*. What not, you gave us everything.

Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for everything! On this very special occasion I want to request a boon from you so that I can always serve you tirelessly. You told me to become a preacher. May I preach my whole life and fulfill your words.

Your forever servant,

Kratu Dasa

Initiation: September 1977—Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Current location: Vrindavan, India

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you on the most auspicious celebration of your transcendental appearance on this planet. Thank you for coming into this dark, hellish Kali-yuga on behalf of your predecessor spiritual masters and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, giving us the pure message of Love of Godhead, *premā pumartho mahān*, in the most sublime, empowered fashion.

Even at advanced age, you took all risks to come to the western countries at great personal sacrifice and austerity, humbly carrying the order of your Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda on your head at all times. He stressed the importance of compiling and distributing transcendental literature, strictly in *paramparā* and you fulfilled his desire, even up to your last breath. You also worked tirelessly to establish temples and holy places of pilgrimage for the benefit of future generations of devotees, who have now appeared as your transcendental grandchildren and great-grandchildren to carry your incredible legacy forward.

I regret that, due to my low birth and lack of spiritual qualification, I have been incapable of assisting you more in your transcendental mission ISKCON, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. I pray for your merciful empowerment to carry your astounding service forward in a positive and helpful way. I've been a bit hampered by the current pandemic and a decline in my own health, but at the same time I feel your mercy upon me, increasing at every moment. I beg that you allow that mercy to manifest as a tangible, practical contribution to your service with the remainder of life I have left in this limited body. Kindly show me how I can best serve you with my current situation of life's energy.

I remain ever more and more grateful for the chance to serve you, your servants, Lord Caitanya and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Krishna, in whatever capacity you will have me, life after life. I beg to remain,

Your eternal servant,

Dhira dasa

Initiation: September 1977—Washington, USA

Current location: Orange Park, Florida, USA

Guru Carana Padma Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your lifetime of service!

You had a lifetime of preparation before you journeyed to America. Fulfilling your duties as a *gr̥hastha*, preparing your writings, walking the streets of Delhi selling your *Back to Godhead* magazine, residing at Rādhā Dāmodara Temple. You waited.... waited for the right moment to fulfil the order of your Guru Mahārāja – through all the immense challenges – to bring bhakti to the West!

Through that incredible sacrifice, what you have given us has been a lifetime of immersion, a lifetime of service, a lifetime of opportunities, a lifetime of loving and nurturing friendships, a lifetime of deep purpose.

Fifty years ago you installed the divine forms of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Gokulānanda and inaugurated the incredible community we all know as Bhaktivedanta Manor.

By this act, and with your vision, you have created a haven of peace for all the pilgrims who visit this community. You have established a seat of education on many levels, and laid the foundations for a thriving *gośālā* – Gokulānanda’s cows being nourished on the expanses of fields available to them and by the loving care of the devotees.

Today, the farm project is a model for us all in living from the land, relying on the bounty that Mother Earth generates and involving so many in the community – planting, sowing and growing.

The *mṛdaṅga* beats and melodies rise into the clouds above Bhaktivedanta Manor, and the magical energy of the holy name through *kīrtana* disperses for miles around.

There are countless opportunities for service, and the smiles and laughter bring unity and cross barriers that may normally exist. They also bring us closer to Krishna.

This year we are engaging the creativity of the community to create a beautiful offering in the form of a mosaic – even depicting you on the actual installation day – and celebrate fifty years of Bhaktivedanta Manor. This project has brought together more than

fifty devotees from all parts of our community and was a creative meditation on the gifts you have given us. As we focused, laughed, shared stories, it brought us all closer to you and the mission you have entrusted us with. With each tile laid – and there are thousands of them – we meditate on all those who have visited over the years and how many thousands are yet to come. It is a patchwork of love and all diversity highlighting the exceptional elements of bhakti, all encompassed within the holy name!

You have certainly brought the bhakti into Bhaktivedanta Manor, and for this we are eternally grateful to you. This year, the story of Bhaktivedanta Manor will be told and you are the star! I pray that I may be a small tile in the mosaic of the wonderful story of Bhaktivedanta Manor, and I am forever grateful for whatever small service I have been able to offer over the years.

This year is one of gratitude and celebration....may your vision, your legacy, your wisdom radiate from Bhaktivedanta Manor to every town and village in the UK.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *ki, jai!*

Your servant eternally,

Guru Carana Padma Devi Dasi

Initiation: September 1977—Chicago, USA

Current location: Bhaktivedanta Manor, London, UK

Vṛndāvan Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In 1965 you arrived in the USA. You began your sacred mission in New York City. It was a mission to revive humanity's dormant relationship with God.

Then, in January 1966, the *New York Times* declared that "God is Dead". As atheistic pessimism permeated, you directly and boldly declared that, "No, God is not dead! Not only is He very much alive, He is all attractive! He has now appeared as His holy name and He is inviting one and all to join Him! Sing His holy name, dance joyfully and celebrate His causeless mercy through sacred foodstuffs offered with love!"

The entire world was thus saved from the soul crushing calamity of humanity's denial of God's love and grace.

Beyond the stale methodologies of ritualistic religion and dogmatic belief, you reminded the world that love of God is the answer. Love of God is the solution to all our woes and conundrums.

You reminded one and all that true religion is about the soul's crying out for God, Kṛṣṇa, the All Attractive Lord. When one cries out God's names in the manner of a child crying out for its mother, then the Lord hears and reciprocates with love and compassion.

By associating with God through His holy names, devotion thus grows in the heart and becomes the *hr̥daya*, the auspicious sitting place of Hari.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for embarking on your compas-sionate world rescue mission.

I am also personally and forever grateful and indebted to you. I thus humbly request your mercy and beg forgiveness for my failings. I have no power and am fully dependent upon your affectionate mercy.

Without your arrival and sharing of this good news, the soulless calumny that God is dead would have condemned countless billions to a lifetime of sorrow.

Thus the world at large is eternally indebted to Your Divine Grace.

Offering my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet. I pray for your loving affection and merciful association once again. With love and gratitude,

Your humble servant,

Vṛndāvan Dāsa

Initiation: October 1977

Current location: Hawaii, USA

Krishnanamananda Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet! All glory to Your Divine Grace!

Our luck is unlimited! We met you! Our family came to Māyāpur, fleeing from the war in Bangladesh. We got the opportunity to get in touch with you. My father and mother accepted you as a spiritual master, and we, children, were sent to gurukula.

We grew up in ISKCON, in a house created by you for everyone who wanted to live a spiritual life. Thanks to you, we have learned about the true purpose of human life and the path leading to it. You have become a captain for all of us on the ship of the Society you created, leading us into the spiritual world.

Years have passed, and your departure was a shock for everyone. But as a caring father, you stayed with us in your books, instructions, true followers and

the organization you created.

Your organization continues to expand, helping the spiritual development of followers. Thanks to you, more and more people learn about Krishna and embark on the spiritual path.

Every year, devotees from all over the world come to Māyāpur, from Russia, Europe, Asia, USA. And, despite physical and mental differences, take part in singing the names of God together.

Your faithful followers try to carry on the mission of Lord Chaitanya: build temples, preach in one way or another. Through joint efforts, the Temple of TOVP will soon be opened!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my only wish is to remain your faithful servant and not to let you down in any way.

Your insignificant servant and disciple,

Krishnanamananda Dasa

Initiation: September 1977—Mayapur, India

Current location: Mayapur, Nadia, West Bengal, India

Contact: yasasvinisrs@mail.ru

Devadeva Dasa

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda *kī, jaya!*

His spirit is eternal in words and effect.

I am very fortunate to be influenced by him.

I pray to devote my life to Kṛṣṇa consciousness,

as I play my role in fulfilling my material responsibilities.

I am blessed to have this platform to associate with Vaiṣṇavas.

Praying for nourishment of my *bhakti-latā*,

Devadeva Dasa

Initiation: October 1977—Vrindavan, India

Contact: dfour108@gmail.com

Śārṅga Ṭhākura Dasa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. May my whole life be engaged in your service, humbly engaged in every way possible.

Every day I seem to be more aware of the depth, meaning, and expansiveness of your achievements. They just go on expanding by your divine potency and desire and the sincerity of your disciples and followers.

It's a bit scary to know how far I have to go, but it's reassuring to know I am in the best place to make progress. It all becomes an impetus to cling even more to your instructions and the holy name, which never seem to leave me, especially when I am suffering.

Such difficulties – however they may act – bring me closer to Your Divine Grace and to the holy name. It's such a blessing.

I listen to your talks everyday. I love hearing how you are in command of every situation. You know perfectly how to guide and teach us by your every word and deed.

Your faithful disciples and followers are so inspiring by the consistency and extent of their services to you. I pray that I can follow in their footsteps, and become engaged in new ways to please you (we are opening up our Saturday class again at the local prison). My desire is to always serve your devotees with my whole being.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your ongoing blessings and mercy in my life.

I beg to remain your grateful servant,

Śārṅga Ṭhākura Dasa

Initiation: October 1977—Potomac, MD, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: thakur853@gmail.com

Satyavati Devi Dasi

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi
dhyāyan stuvaṁś tasya yaśas tri-sandhyaṁ
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

“By the mercy of the spiritual master one is benedicted by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Without the grace of the spiritual master, one cannot make any advancement. Therefore I should always remember the spiritual master. At least three times a day I should offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master.”

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

“By the mercy of the guru, even a dumb man can become the greatest orator, and even a lame man can cross mountains.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you came to teach us the real meaning of *dharma*:

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

“Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear.” (Bg. 18.66)

From your purport:

One may perform a particular occupational duty according to one’s position in the social order. . . . One should be confident that in all circumstances Kṛṣṇa will protect him from all difficulties.

I am aware of the incredible mercy it is to receive this knowledge from you, a bona fide representative of Sri Kṛṣṇa. And to know the essence of *Bhagavad-gītā* “devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, in full consciousness, is the most confidential part of knowledge.”

*na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin
nāyaṁ bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhūyaḥ
ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yaṁ purāṇo
na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*

“For the soul there is neither birth nor death at any time. He has not come into being, does not come into being, and will not come into being. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.” (Bg. 2.20)

Therefore, consciousness is the symptom of the soul.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you give to us Krishna, the source of knowledge so one can obtain perfection.

*aham sarvasya prabhavo
mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate
iti matvā bhajante mām
budhā bhāva-samanvitāḥ*

“I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from Me. The wise who perfectly know this engage in My devotional service and worship Me with all their hearts.” (Bg. 10.8)

Back when I was young I was a book distributor by your causeless mercy. I was granted a special favor by Your Divine Grace. Now in my old age with one foot in the grave I beg to call on you to be by my side forevermore. Let this ignorant fool be able to serve your devotees by propagating this knowledge.

Your servant,

Satyavati Devi Dasi

Initiation: October 1977—Mexico

Current location: New Raman Reti, Florida, USA

Contact: maricelasilberman@gmail.com

Krishna-kīrtana Devi Dasi

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. O Spiritual Master, servant of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami, please give me shelter under your lotus feet.

You are mercifully preaching the message of Lord Chaitanya and delivering the western countries filled with impersonalism and voidism.

We are feeling very grateful for having learned how to reach our goal in this human form of life and get rid of sinful habits by rising gradually from the mode of ignorance to passion and goodness and finally transcending these modes of nature by the miracle of your daily *sādhana*, regulative principles and service, first in the ashram, then at home and ultimately anywhere in the world.

You have so diligently translated in English the main texts leading to pure love of God and have asked your faithful disciples to correct, edit and publish with utmost care and attention your message in every language of the world so that your 80 books and more volumes be available to everyone around our planet, through your International Bhaktivedanta Book Trust for the next 10,000 years of this golden time in the Kali-yuga.

Because of your endless sacrifice and the cooperation of your first disciples, your Movement is now growing steadily and firmly all over the world in different languages and cultures, with new disciples seriously trying to follow your instructions as much as possible in various conditions, as per your desire. Such a joy and relief in this age of quarrels and hypocrisy! Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for remaining with us.

We are happy to participate in sharing your teachings and assist these new generations of disciples in your temples, rural communities and centers. That is your great success, as we began to cooperate more and more with one another to prove our sincere love for you. We now pray for your blessings to remain humble servants in your mission.

Your Krishna-kīrtana dasi

Initiation: November 1977—France

Current location: New Mayapura, France

Contact: v.verrier108@gmail.com

Mahapurana Dasa

We bow to your beautiful lotus feet, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

By your causeless mercy we have obtained the sacred *mālā*, the supreme holy names, the divine mantra, the service of the sons of Padmavatī Mātā & Śacī Mātā, the association of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara Goswami, Rūpa Goswami, his elder brother Sanātana Goswami, Śrīla Murāri Gupta, the supreme abode of Mathurā, the blissful abode of Śrī Vṛndāvana, the divine Rādhā-Kuṇḍa and Giri Govardhana, and the “budding desire” within our hearts for the loving service of Śrī Rādhikā and Her Śrī Kānta in Vṛndāvana.

Please bless us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that we can fully realize the significance of these sublime gifts, that we can perfectly utilize them to purify ourselves and that we can convince others to take up the exalted process of Krishna consciousness.

Please continue to protect and guide us. We offer you our most respectful obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet, begging for your continued blessings and mercy.

Your servant,

Mahapurana Dasa

Initiation: November 1977—New Orleans, USA

Current location: USA

Devaprastha Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thanks to your infinite mercy, I have the honor of serving in your movement of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. I am driven and protected by your lotus feet as well as the strength and shelter of great devotees who manage your movement, ISKCON.

Despite the storms and challenges I face, I move forward knowing that your grace and support are constant, thanks to the great source of inspiration that your books provide, connecting me to chant the holy names.

When I joined your movement at 17 years old and surrendered to *sañkīrtana*, any external circumstances, positive or negative, were not seen by me. I was only focused on distributing your message and being faithful to chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra without duality, like a soldier to his general. I felt a joy that I had never felt before.

Although I interact with the material world and its three modes of nature, I feel that my spiritual solvency is limited. Nevertheless, I am committed to fighting to secure your legacy in the lands of Nueva Vrajaṃḍala in Spain.

It is my wish that these lands are not stolen, misused or sold, and I am dedicated to protecting them. This desire has been ingrained in me thanks to your instructions, especially in your letters* and discussions* regarding the protection of the lands, the prohibition of property sales under any circumstances, and the importance of avoiding external actors interfering in your ISKCON.

*Letter to Gurukripa - Dallas, 29 July 1975. *Discussions - Vrindavan 2 June 1977.

*Letter to Pradyumna, Los Angeles, 17 February 1968.

I feel immense gratitude to the great and eternal Vaiṣṇava, H.H. Kadamba Kānana Swami, who is an unstoppable warrior and an example of the power of your great ISKCON. He has inspired me with his determination and warrior consciousness to serve with devotion the eternal legacy that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have left for us. Every time I hear his message or remember his service, my heart fills with deep emotion and my spirit is renewed with strength to continue on this path of service to your lotus feet. I am deeply grateful for his influence in my life and for the impact he has had on the preservation and protection of Nueva Vrajaṃḍala in Spain.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I thank you for your causeless mercy and kindness because, despite my being a fallen soul, you are always in my thoughts and heart. I fight day by day to offer you my insignificant services with the hope that someday you will make me a qualified devotee always at the feet of the great devotees in your eternal movement.

I will always be your eternal pawn, faithful to the feet of your eternal servants, who are the eternal powers of the movement of Lord Chaitanya Mahārabhu in ISKCON.

Your eternal servant,

Devaprastha Dasa

Initiation: 1977

Current location: New Vraja Mandala, Spain

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