

ŚRĪLA
PRABHUPĀDA
TRIBUTES

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PRABHUPĀDA
TRIBUTES

04 SEP

2018

Celebrating the
appearance day of our
beloved spiritual master

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INTRODUCTION

Hare Kṛṣṇa!

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

TRIBUTES
BY
SANNYASI
DISCIPLES

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to your lotus feet.

I am worshiping your beautiful *mūrti*. I was one of the first persons to acquire your 12" *mūrti* as made by Locana Prabhu in 1978. I immediately began serving him by daily massage, bathing, change of dress and offering three meals a day. Now, approximately forty years later I continue this service and it is just like when I was your personal servant in 1974. I no longer am restless and desiring to travel with a party of *brahmacārīs* to preach in many cities. I am 78 years old and I have restrictive health issues. I am content to stay in one place and read and write in Kṛṣṇa consciousness — and worship my Deities.

My Prabhupāda *mūrti* is handsome. His facial patina is smooth and tan and he wears neat, permanent *tilaka*. He wears a different silk garland every day, and a light *chadar* when it is chilly. He sits with his back straight (like your spiritual master used to do) and his hands are folded in his lap. He wears a bead bag around his neck. I take great pleasure in honouring his *darśana* throughout the day (four feet from my chair). I chant my rounds before him and Tulasī devī. All glories to my Prabhupāda *mūrti*.

Your eternal servant,

Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

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

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

Quiet in his room, the middle of the night. Speak, click. . . think, speak, click. . . The message of Bhāgavatam, urgent to present for the benefit of the world – or the upliftment of even one fallen soul – and for the pleasure and enlightenment of devotees. Kṛṣṇa and the ācāryas speak through him. “I have to think carefully about every word.” A monumental project – “I could never think small.” But every night he’ll write some more. “Little drops of water wear away stone.”

Through Śrīla Prabhupāda’s efforts, Nārada Muni “very kindly appears” in the pages. And so do Vyāsadeva, Dhruva, Prahlāda. . . and ultimately Kṛṣṇa Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ultimate substance in his ultimate feature. Satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmaḥi. Our relationship with Kṛṣṇa, how to serve in that relationship, and the highest, most cherished attainment—pure love for Kṛṣṇa—all are disclosed, to become established as an irrevocable fact, as Srīla Prabhupāda speaks, contemplates, clicks, and goes on speaking. He aims at creating nothing less than “a revolution in the impious lives of this world’s misdirected civilization.” “I could never think small.” And he himself appears on every page, divine emissary, bearing Kṛṣṇa’s message as received.

To give the world the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Śrīla Prabhupāda works in the silent hours of the night – and yet his day is only beginning. From morning till night, he will tell us and show us how to serve Kṛṣṇa. He will chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, he will worship the Lord, he will give class, he will attend to Kṛṣṇa’s work – “*Bhāgavatam* in the morning, business in the afternoon.” And he will urge us and plead with us, “Kindly help me.” Those who are fortunate, now and for generations to come, will heed his call.

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

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

My dear spiritual father,

Please accept my respectful obeisances
on the occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

I am reminded how you undertook the great sacrifice of taking Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the Western world and how we are so indebted to Your Divine Grace. You took Lord Caitanya’s mercy all over the world.

You have shown us how we should be dedicated to serving Guru and Gaurāṅga, how we should be following your footsteps. I would like to finish the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium along with the devotees, see the Navadvīpa *parīkramā* expand, see the unification of the Caitanya disciplic succession, and see the distribution of your transcendental literature increase exponentially. There are many other instructions you have given us, your disciples. Following them is possible only by your grace. We can remain together, carrying out your orders, if you give us your mercy. All glories to you!

Your servant,
Jayapatāka Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne
namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Confused by material concepts of life, souls under the spell of the illusionary energy are to different degrees unaware of Lord Kṛṣṇa and try to satisfy their desire for security and love under the inspiration and guidance of leaders who are also spiritually blind.

Because we're eternal and eternally connected with Lord Kṛṣṇa, we're always eternally secure and should experience unlimited spiritual love and pleasure. In the material world, however, a soul has two problems: he's covered by Lord Kṛṣṇa's illusionary energy and thus unaware of his true nature, and, misdirected by illusion, he accepts leaders equally covered by illusion and misdirected.

But a fortunate soul comes in contact with Lord Kṛṣṇa through books such as the *Bhagavad-gītā* and learns of his spiritual nature and his eternal relationship with the Supreme. If he's still more fortunate, he comes in contact with devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who can engage him in Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotional service, by which he becomes eligible to receive the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotee and thus attain spiritual enlightenment.

Less fortunate conditioned souls, guided by spiritually blind leaders, will continue to believe that material gain and sense gratification will bring the highest levels of security and love and happiness. Bound by the illusionary energy, such souls remain in the cycle of birth and death to repeatedly suffer under the laws of karma.

Recounting a conversation with Professor Kotovsky, Śrīla Prabhupāda said:

Just like I told Professor Kotovsky that "Your communism, what is the difference between your communism and our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement? You have selected Lenin as your leader, or master, and we have selected Kṛṣṇa as our leader, master. So on the principle, where is difference?" The professor could not answer. [Lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.1, 14 November 1972, Vṛndāvana]

As a perfect representative of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda is a

perfect spiritual leader. Śrīla Prabhupāda not only perfectly repeated Lord Kṛṣṇa's message, but he also perfectly lived His message. Because Śrīla Prabhupāda had an intense desire to give Lord Kṛṣṇa's mercy to the fallen souls of Kali-yuga, Lord Kṛṣṇa is fulfilling that desire through Śrīla Prabhupāda's representatives in the form of his books, lectures, ISKCON, and his devotees.

Truly fortunate are those who come in contact with what Śrīla Prabhupāda offers and then accept it. The more they follow Śrīla Prabhupāda, the more fortunate they become. The more fortunate they become, the more they become empowered to spread that fortune to others.

Your servant,

Prahlādānanda Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Thanks for giving us this chance to serve you.

Hail, Śrīla Prabhupāda, full of grace!
Empowered to save the human race.

Had you not come with vigor and brace,
Humanity'd fall into utter disgrace.
Following your order, there's a hope
We can live up to and manage to cope.

Simply we have to accept in our heart;
Your order will certainly give us the start.
This order is sweet, so don't retreat.
The end will offset the worst defeat.

Eternal life, full of knowledge and bliss:
This is the goal. Who would dismiss?
If we simply follow your clear example
Then we will get a genuine sample.

Hail! Śrīla Prabhupāda full of grace
Empowered to save the human race!

When surrender is full, without any fuss,
Then we'll see what's in store for us.
It may seem impossible, but don't despair.
We must try our best – that's only fair.

Luckless we hesitate – that's our fate.
Thinking, "Why not try at a later date?"
But why take the risk of another life
in this place of misery and strife?

Give up the bond to chewing the chewed;
See it for what it is; be shrewd.
"Phantasmagoria," "will o' the wisp,"
"Hope against hope" – too great a risk.

Hail, Śrīla Prabhupāda, full of grace!
Empowered to save the human race.

Kṛṣṇa is offering; He doesn't bluff.
"Surrender unto Me!" It's not that tough.
But Māyā is strong; this is her kingdom.
"Let us enjoy!" We think it is freedom

Thus we remain under her grip.
Try as we might – can't give her the slip.
Had you not come, we would remain
serving her illusion, simply in vain.

You appeared to give us the chance
to break this chain of Māyā's dance.
Service to Kṛṣṇa, this is your plea.
Without your example, impossible to see.

Hail, Śrīla Prabhupāda, full of grace!
Empowered to save the human race.

Your eternal insignificant servant

Trivikrāma Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet on your 122nd Vyāsa-pūjā celebration.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu predicted that one day the holy name would be chanted in every corner of the globe:

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

In 1875 Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura predicted that a personality would soon appear to preach the teachings of Lord Caitanya. You were that empowered personality who took Lord Caitanya's message to almost every corner of the globe. You arrived in America in September 1965 on a cargo ship, the *Jaladuta*. You had only eight dollars, a pair of *karatālas*, some books, and an introduction to the Agarwal family in Butler, Pennsylvania. Due to your advanced age, almost everyone in India discouraged you from traveling to the West. But you were determined. You had full faith in your guru's and Kṛṣṇa's mercy. Your only desire was to follow the instruction that your Guru Mahārāja had given you in 1922 and repeated in his letter to you in December 1935.

You struggled for nearly forty years in India to establish Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You struggled again for almost a year in America, and finally, in July 1966, you opened the first temple in a storefront and incorporated the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in New York. In the early days you personally cooked and served *prasādam* to the devotees and guests. Many guests got attached to the *prasādam* and eventually became devotees. You translated over seventy books into the English language. Today, for the first time in history we have the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* in almost every major language of the world. Scholars all over the world have appreciated your translations from the original Sanskrit texts. In a brief span of eleven years you traveled around the world twelve times, gave thousands of lectures, wrote thousands of letters, and met hundreds of scholars and dignitaries. In 1971 you visited Moscow for just five days and planted the seed of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which has developed into a luxuriant *bhakti* creeper in Russia that continues to grow. Under your inspiration the first Ratha-yātrā outside India was held in San Francisco in

1967. Today Ratha-yātrās are held in more than two hundred cities around the world.

This year we celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the inauguration of the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī temple in Mumbai and the 20th anniversary of the inauguration of the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Pārthasārathi temple in New Delhi. The Juhu project was very dear to you, and we all know how you struggled to secure the land and get the construction started. You often said Bombay was your office. Over a hundred senior devotees who had served in Juhu in the 70's came and recalled your wonderful pastimes at Hare Krishna Land. These devotees were very fortunate to have served in Juhu during your stay on this planet. Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī have blessed millions of fortunate souls over the past forty years.

You regularly visited New Delhi from Vṛndāvana to publish and distribute your books. You had a strong desire that a major temple be established in this important city. Unfortunately, we could not get any land while you were on the planet. However, due to your causeless mercy we finally obtained a four-acre plot in a prominent location in New Delhi. The Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Pārthasārathi temple was inaugurated in March of 1998 by Prime Minister Atal Krishna Bihari Vajpayee. Today, by your mercy, we have twelve temples in New Delhi at prominent locations.

On this auspicious day I pray that I never deviate from your divine instructions and keep working to expand your glories. Your glories are unlimited, and your books keep inspiring the conditioned souls to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda-kī jaya!

Your eternal servant,

Gopāl Krishna Goswami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

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

After the conveyance of the Juhu land was finally signed in October 1973, you declared, “It was a good fight. Someone should write a book about it.”

And in Vṛndāvana in June 1977, you repeated the instruction when speaking with Tamāl Krishna Goswami:

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Nobody encouraged. . .
. Nobody, not a single man. Who could see such a big project would come out?

Tamāl Krishna: Only you could see that, you and Rādhā-Rāsabihārī.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Nobody. Still, I was determined: “No, this place is very nice.”

Tamāl Krishna: They should write a book about that.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, it is worth writing—history.

You had already instructed me, in February 1971, “You should write. This is your first business.” Over the years you repeated this instruction, and so I thought you would want me to write that book about Juhu. As it is, I am the only devotee who was intimately involved in the project from the time you got possession of the land in 1972 to the time the temple opened in 1978.

So, with the encouragement and assistance of many well-wishers, three years ago I took up writing about you and Juhu as my first priority. In doing so, I became absorbed in your divine qualities, activities, and words, and I came to understand you—and even events to which I was party—in new, deeper ways. I felt like I was mining a limitless reservoir of precious gems.

Now, by your and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī’s and the devotees’ mercy, I have finished writing the basic narrative of the book, entitled “*I’ll Build You a Temple*”—*A Good Fight and a Promise Fulfilled*. In the process, I have come to appreciate you—and your servants—even more, first and foremost those servants who assisted you in the Juhu project, and also those who have supported me in my efforts to write about it.

Your transcendental desire to establish a center of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the remote Bombay area of Juhu was awakened even before you left for America. When you would visit Sumati Morarji, you would pass the land and think, “This would be a nice place for a temple.” Years later, Mr. Nair sold you the very same land, to be “profitably utilized for big purpose, as yours,” and you brought Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī from Their residence in a posh flat in Akash Ganga, overlooking the Arabian Sea, to a rented pandal on the property. From there They were moved onto a wood-plank platform under cloth supported by bare bamboo poles; then, for the rainy season, into a *chatai* hut with devotees; and on Janmāṣṭamī 1972 into a makeshift structure of bricks and asbestos sheets. But you had vowed to Them, “I will build You a temple.” And finally, after years of struggle, in 1978 we were able to offer Their Lordships the temple you had promised.

You expressed your spiritual desire to build Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī a temple with great, intelligent endeavor. In your purport to Śrīmad-Bhagavatam 10.13.50 you explained, “The word *svakāarthānām* refers to great desires. As mentioned in this verse, the glance of Lord Viṣṇu creates the desires of the devotees. A pure devotee, however, has no desires. Therefore Sanātana Gosvāmī

comments that because the desires of devotees whose attention is fixed on Kṛṣṇa have already been fulfilled, the Lord's sidelong glances create variegated desires in relation to Kṛṣṇa and devotional service." Thus in "a place where there was no temple, . . . a devotee desired, 'Let there be a temple and *sevā*, devotional service.' Therefore, what was once an empty corner has now become a place of pilgrimage. Such are the desires of a devotee."

By the strength of your desire, an overgrown plot of land in Juhu became a place of pilgrimage and devotional service. And in the long process, you engaged so many of us in devotional service. As you explained in your introduction to *The Nectar of Instruction*:

This devotional service is a sort of cultivation. It is not simply inaction for people who like to be inactive or devote their time to silent meditation. There are many different methods for people who want this, but cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is different. The particular word used by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in this connection is *anuśīlana*, or cultivation by following the predecessor teachers (ācāryas). As soon as we say "cultivation," we must refer to activity. Without activity, consciousness alone cannot help us. . . .

We can offer many services with our bodily activities. But all such activities must be in relationship with Kṛṣṇa. This relationship is established by connecting oneself with the bona fide spiritual master, who is the direct representative of Kṛṣṇa in disciplic succession. Therefore, the execution of Kṛṣṇa conscious activities with the body should be directed by the spiritual master and then performed with faith.

You engaged us, your disciples—and so many others—in devotional service authorized by the principles of scripture and the instructions of previous spiritual masters, developing Hare Krishna Land on a grand scale, and after your departure, by your mercy, we were left with tremendous challenges of work and responsibility—for our own spiritual benefit and for the benefit of all those who would associate with the temple.

In spite of all opposition and obstacles, you remained perfect in Kṛṣṇa consciousness—an ideal *sādhu*. During one of your talks on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, you spoke about our situation in relation to a verse describing the qualities and behavior of a *sādhu*:

*titikṣavaḥ kārūṇikāḥ suhṛdaḥ sarva-dehinām
ajāta-śatravaḥ śāntāḥ sādhaḥ sādhu-bhūṣaṇāḥ*

"The symptoms of a *sādhu* are that he is tolerant, merciful, and friendly to all living entities. He has no enemies, he is peaceful, he abides by the scriptures, and all his characteristics are sublime." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.25.21)

You perfectly exemplified the verse, and while discussing it you explained to us your inner mood and motivation, but you did so in such a way as to include us:

Here all the boys and girls—the devotees—they are concerned with Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. That's all. Their whole business, day and night, is Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. From early morning, three o'clock, to night, ten o'clock, their only business is Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. That's all. Therefore they are *sādhu*.

And so many people are criticizing. We are not getting the sanction to build because we have so many enemies. They say we are creating a "nuisance." We are chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, and that is a "nuisance." This complaint is going to the police. So that is very difficult.

[Filled with emotion, you exclaimed:] Therefore a *sādhu* is advised, "*Titikṣavaḥ*, tolerate! Tolerate all this nonsense!" What can be done? We have no other alternative but to tolerate. Nobody's coming to help us. Our business is so thankless. Because we are trying to create one temple, so many enemies are giving hindrance: "You cannot do it." Therefore *titikṣavaḥ*. You have to remain *sādhu*. You cannot become *asādhu*. You have to tolerate. What can be done?

At the same time, you have to become merciful. You know what has happened in this place, Hare Krishna Land? So much attack by the police, by the municipality: "Break this temple!" We could have gone, concluding, "What is the use of taking so much botheration? We have hundreds of temples outside India. If people here are not liking, let us go away." No. *Kārūṇikāḥ*. We have come to distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We must tolerate and give this message to the people. *Kārūṇikāḥ*: very merciful, in spite of all trouble.

These American boys and girls have come to help me—not that they have come because they are hungry. No. My mission is, "You Americans, you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa so the people of India will see, 'Oh, Americans are also chanting. Why not we?'" But unfortunately—such dull brains—that thought is not coming. But still, we have to do it. We have to tolerate, and we have to become *kārūṇikāḥ*, merciful.

Why should you want to be merciful? *Para-duḥkha-duḥkhī*. *Kṛpāmbudhir yas tam ahaṁ prapadye*. A Vaiṣṇava understands, "These

people are engaged like cats and dogs in sense gratification. They are misguided, and in the next life they'll be punished. Let us do something for them." This is *kāruṇikāḥ*: out of mercy. There is no question of getting something, money. No. We have got sufficient money. But just to become merciful upon these fallen, conditioned souls, who are suffering on account of becoming animalistic, without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the preacher, the *sādhu* . . . These are *sādhus*—*titikṣavaḥ*, tolerant: "Never mind. Whatever hindrances and tribulations they are offering to us, never mind. Tolerate."

And *suhṛdaḥ*. *Suhṛdaḥ* means the heart is so nice. . . . The Vaiṣṇava is always thinking how a man can be saved from the clutches of *māyā*. He has no other desire. The Vaiṣṇava is so kind that *suhṛdaḥ sarva-dehinām*: he is kind not only to the human beings but to all embodied souls—cats, dogs, trees, plants, insects. A Vaiṣṇava will hesitate to kill even a mosquito. *Sarva-dehinām*. Not that "I shall take care of my brother only. I am good, and my brother is good." No. *Suhṛdaḥ sarva-dehinām*.

And *ajāta-śatravaḥ*. When one is living in that way, as a *sādhu*, why will others become his enemy? The *sādhu* does not create enemies, but people become enemies out of their own character. How can a *sādhu* create enemies? Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*, and we are simply teaching, "My dear human being, my dear friend, you become a surrendered soul to Kṛṣṇa." So what is our fault? So we don't create any enemy, but they become enemy. Why shall I create enemy? *Suhṛdaḥ sarva-dehinām*. But they become, out of their own nature. . . .

So we are in this society, human society, and because we are spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the envious, who are more dangerous than snakes, are putting so many impediments. But we have to tolerate. We have no other alternative. You see? *Ajāta-śatravaḥ śāntāḥ*. Be peaceful. What can be done? Depend on Kṛṣṇa.

These are the ornaments of a *sādhu*: *titikṣavaḥ kāruṇikāḥ suhṛdaḥ sarva-dehinām*. You must know what is a *sādhu*. First, a *sādhu* is a devotee. And if he is a devotee, then all the symptoms are there. Now, you find a *sādhu* and associate with him. Then your path of liberation will be open.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it has been our greatest good fortune to be able to associate with you, a perfect *sādhu*. And by your words and example, you encouraged us to try to become *sādhus* as well. And by the service of such a *sādhu* as you, one actually develops the

qualities of the *sādhu*.

Along with your desires as a preacher, you also had your personal commitment and service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī. "My dear Sir," you had told Them, "You just stand here, and I will build You a temple." And you did. You fulfilled your promise. And what a temple you built! And what a struggle to do it! But you did it. It was a good fight, but you did it: you kept your promise and built Them a temple.

All glories to Your Divine Grace, to your wonderful service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī and to all of Mumbai, all humanity, and all living entities—including this fallen soul. And all glories to your servants, who, by your mercy, are continuing your sublime mission.

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī-guruṁ dīna-tāraṇam*

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the deliverer of all fallen souls, whose mercy turns the dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains."

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your eternal, dependent servant,

Girirāj Swami

Hridayānanda dās Goswami

I bow to my eternal spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

This year I will reflect on a sublime period that I think of as a golden age of ISKCON's mission in the West. I speak of the time from 1966 to 1970, a time when Prabhupāda personally knew most of his devotees and they personally knew him.

We can structurally compare Prabhupāda's *līlā* in this world to that of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya. Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Mathurā and Dvārakā had the greatest impact on global affairs, in terms of slaying demons and reestablishing pious rulers. But Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vraja are the sweetest, the most intimate, and the most revealing of Lord Kṛṣṇa's highest nature.

Similarly, for six years Lord Caitanya traveled around India,

preaching with extraordinary success. But His pastimes in Navadvīpa, like those of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana, are very sweet. He lived in a smaller community, surrounded by family and lifelong friends.

Prabhupāda repeatedly circled the globe, creating and managing the Hare Kṛṣṇa Explosion. Yet I see his earlier pastimes as analogous to those of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana and Mahāprabhu in Navadvīpa. As stated above, in the early days Prabhupāda knew all the devotees and, in a sense, they knew him. Mukunda Goswami's biography, that of Gurudas and of course Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami, and others, describe these very intimate pastimes the devotees relished in the early days of the movement. In those days Prabhupāda lived in America and declared an American city, Los Angeles, to be his world headquarters. We find in those earlier days that Prabhupāda trusted his disciples to discover effective preaching strategies. Prabhupāda maintained boundaries, but within those generous boundaries he encouraged the ingenuity, creativity, and local experience of his disciples. The result was wonderful.

My dream and goal in life is to help to reestablish what Prabhupāda created then—a truly Western Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in the West. In our hearts, we Western preachers must bring Prabhupāda back, to live in our Western countries. By our love and service, we can relish with him the same intimate, sweet dealings that Prabhupāda's early disciples did. The more we spiritually manifest Prabhupāda in the West, by our genuine devotion, the more Western people will be attracted. Let us work together to fulfill Prabhupāda's great dream of a Kṛṣṇa conscious world.

His servant,

Hridayānanda dās Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Kabe Habe

I know that I can never repay the causeless mercy you are showering on me. I pray that I will never stop trying.

When you gave me my beads and said “Your name is Kavicandra Dāsa,” you commented that Kavicandra was a great devotee of Lord Nityānanda. You knew that I needed that supermost mercy. I thought at that time, “I must do *saṅkīrtana*, book distribution.” I have tried. Depending upon Lord Nityānanda always gives me hope. Thank you for that.

Now I feel like *kabe habe*, when oh when will I . . .

Give up the enjoying spirit.

Develop a service attitude.

Krishna Consciousness is always dormant in everyone's heart & it can be awakened simply by service attitude. [Letter to Jadurāñī, 13 October 1967]

Kabe habe, when oh when will I . . .

Be able to cry for Kṛṣṇa, knowing there is no other way.

I see so many devotees making so much advancement. They are very kind, by your mercy, to keep offering me various services and always encouraging me.

You wrote me only one letter. We were told not to write to you so you could concentrate on translating. You wrote that appreciating devotees was very important.

Please tell me, when will that day be mine—when my offenses will end and the power of divine grace will infuse my heart with a taste for the pure holy name?

When will Lord Nityānanda show me mercy and release me from the illusion of materialism? When will He give me the shade of His lotus feet and let me enter the marketplace of the holy name?

When will compassion for all fallen souls awaken within this Bhaktivinoda, and when will he thus forget his own happiness and with a meek heart set out to propagate by humble entreaty the sacred order of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu? [*Kabe Ha'be Bolo*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura]

Humility seems to be so out of reach for me.

Your potency is constantly manifesting so many new devotees and temples. I wish to be part of that.

Thank you for your causeless mercy.

Please engage me in your service.

Your servant,

Kavicandra Swami

Tridaṇḍi Swami Bhaktivedānta Bhāgavat Swami

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

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

Today is the appearance day of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda. I was thinking about all the times I was with Śrīla Prabhupāda and I was remembering two incidences concerning how he was to be glorified.

The first instance, I was not present but I was told that Śrīla Prabhupāda had requested Śrīla Govinda Mahārāja to create a proper *praṇām mantra* for him that delineated His mission to His Divine Master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

After Śrīla Prabhupāda's departure from this world Śrīla Govinda Mahārāja created this *praṇām mantra* that was edited by Śrīla Bhakti Rakshak Śrīdhara Mahārāja who is Śrīla Govinda Mahārāja's guru and Śrīla Prabhupāda's intimate friend.

I always felt that this *praṇām mantra* to Śrīla Prabhupāda captured every nuance of His Divine essence and glorious pastimes. So as a service to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, I offer this glorious *praṇām mantra* to him on His divine appearance day so that all of his disciples can share the joy of our

Śrīla Prabhupāda's divine glories.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Praṇām mantra By Śrīla Govinda Mahārāja and Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja

*namaḥ om viṣṇupādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhūtale
svāmī-śrī-bhaktivedānta-prabhupādāya te namaḥ
gurovāññām śīrasi-dharyan śaktyāveṣa-sva-rūpiṇe
hare-kṛṣṇeti mantreṇa pāścātya-prācyā-tāriṇe*

*viśvācārya prabhāryāya divya-kāruṇya-mūrtaye
śrī-bhāgavata-mādhurya-gītā-jñāna pradāyine
gaura-śrī-rūpa-siddhānta-sarasvatī-niṣevīṇe
rādhā-kṛṣṇa-padāmbhoja-bhṛṅgāya gurave namaḥ*

Translation:

I offer my humble obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, who is Kṛṣṇa's beloved associate and who came down to this plane from Goloka. Taking the order of his guru on his head, he is the śaktyāveṣa (Empowered) avatar of Nityānanda Prabhu personified. He distributed the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the Eastern and Western world, delivering and uplifting all fallen souls.

He is the best of millions of jagat-gurus, because he is the personification of divine mercy. He has distributed the sweet nectar of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the transcendental knowledge of *Bhagavad-gītā* all over the world. He is constantly engaged in exclusive devotional service to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, Śrīla Rūpa Goswami, and Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. I offer my humble obeisances unto Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is like a bumble-bee always tasting the nectar of the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Govinda.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA STOTRAM (Composed by Śrīpād Ananta Rāma Dāsa Śāstrī)

This stotram was composed by Śrīpād Ananta Rāma Śāstrī who was a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda and a vaishnava Sanskrit scholar. Śrīpād Ananta Rāma Śāstrī used to travel with Śrīla Prabhupāda in India serving in the Sanskrit department by assisting Śrīla Prabhupāda in translation work. Śrīpād Ananta Rāma Śāstrī was specifically requested by Śrīla Prabhupāda to assist Him in the translation of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* commentaries written by the

various ācāryas in our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava lineage.

Śrīpād Ananta Rāma Dāsa Śāstrī compiled five *ślokas*, which describe many of the transcendental ornaments that decorate Śrīla Prabhupāda's divine character and describe His divine mission. This *stotram* was composed and sung for the first time directly in the presence of Śrīla Prabhupāda at Śrī Candrodaya Mandira, Māyāpur Dhāma during the Gaura Pūrṇimā festival just before the daily morning Guru pūjā in 1976. Śrīla Prabhupāda greatly appreciated the deep *siddhāntic* meaning contained in these five *ślokas* describing his transcendental mission and pastimes.

In late 1976 Śrīla Prabhupāda requested one of the Gurukula teachers in Vṛndāvana to arrange for the children to recite this *stotram* daily. Śrīla Prabhupāda explained that the daily recitation of this *stotram* by the children and devotees would develop their strong faith [*nistha*] towards him. During that time the children and devotees used to sing this *stotram* every morning before Guru pūjā by his Vyāsāsana. I was remembering this *stotram* the other day and some of you who were in Vṛndāvana may remember it also. So I decided to revive this *stotram* for our daily prayers and meditation and to help us, as Śrīla Prabhupāda said, develop our strong faith, *nistha*, towards him.

This *stotram* is recited in the same meter as the Brahma Samhita prayers - a sample of its recitation is on YouTube at the following address <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4pc-TryYdY>

*kṛṣṇaika-cetta mada-moha-vināśa-kārin
mad-dṛṣṭi-gocara prabho prabhupāda-svāmin
doṣābhivṛtti-paridūṣita-manda-buddheḥ
sañcintayāmi caraṇau tava bhakti-hetoḥ*

O Lord, O Prabhupāda, may you always be the object of my vision. Only the name of Kṛṣṇa can destroy my pride and illusion. Although my mind and intelligence are contaminated by wicked inclinations, I nevertheless take shelter of Your Divine Grace by constant meditation upon your lotus feet in causeless devotion.

*vṛndāvanae ramaṇa-reti-prasiddha-bhūmau
tatrāpi kṛṣṇa-balarāma-supāda-mule
jñānānī paramā parama-kṛṣṇa-sudharmīty uktam
dantas tu deva prabhupāda namo namas te*

In the most holy land of Vṛndāvana, in Ramaṇa Reti, at the lotus feet

of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, you are preaching the topmost knowledge of Kṛṣṇa the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is the fountainhead of religion. O master of the senses, O my Lord, Śrīla Prabhupāda, let me offer my obeisances unto you.

*namaste namaste kṛpa-purna-drsti
namaste namaste mahananda-dhatri
namamo namama punar raksa raksa
prasiddha-prabho pahi mam daksa daksa*

I offer my obeisances unto the spiritual master of the entire world, A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, whose glances are full of mercy and who is the bestower of transcendental bliss. O renowned lord, protect me and kindly shower your compassion on me again and again.

*bhaktisiddhānta-sisya
bhaktivedānta-namine
prasannaya prasantaya
tasmai śrī-gurave nama*

Let me offer my obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master, who is a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who is always calm and joyful, and who is known by the name of Bhaktivedānta Swami.

*śrī-vanga-bhumi-jana-bhusana gaura-līlā
gaurāṅga-bhava parisarana-matra-sila
rādhā-madhava-pada-padma-mano-vilasin
ananda-rasi prabhupāda namo namas te*

The land of Bengal is worshipable by the whole world because Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu performed His pastimes there. I offer my obeisances unto my divine master, who is full of bliss. He is always in the ecstasy of Lord Gaurāṅga and is therefore immersed in the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava.

So on this Vyāsa-pūjā day I offer these humble prayers at the lotus feet of my divine master His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda and beg for his mercy upon this most fallen conditioned soul who is wallowing in the mire of material nature.

Your fallen servant,

Tridaṇḍi Swami Bhaktivedānta Bhāgavat Swami

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

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Please accept my most humble obeisances to your lotus feet on this most auspicious anniversary of your divine appearance. Your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration gives me the time to think, reflect, and introspect on the various services I am rendering you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have always stressed the importance of preaching. And often when we asked how we can please you, you would reply, “Distribute my books.” You used to tell us that if necessary we should lock the temples up and all the devotees should go out for book distribution. This was also the mood of your spiritual master. In a lecture you delivered in Māyāpur in 1974, you repeated to us an instruction of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura: “If I could sell the marble of this temple and secure some money, and if I could print some books, that would have been better.”

You expressed your strong desire that we arrange for *saṅkīrtana* buses in various parts of the world to distribute the Holy Name and your transcendental books. In a letter to one of your disciples in 1968 you wrote:

It is very wonderful that you have secured already some engagements for our party, and it is indication that it will be great success. It has just begun, and already there are so many engagements. I am so glad that you have organized the Sankirtana party, and it is very satisfactorily progressing. And at present, I am counting upon you more than anything else, because my program is, after going to New York for some days, then I shall go to Boston, to Buffalo, and to Montreal, and I shall take the Sankirtana party with me, and make an experiment how we get response. I shall then proceed with Sankirtana party to England, then to Holland, to Germany, and

to any other countries, and/or directly to Bombay.

From the very beginning you were so pleased with the reports of these *saṅkīrtana* buses. In recent years I have been trying to assist you in this field and have arranged for a few *saṅkīrtana* parties across India, where the devotees are distributing the Holy Names, books, and *prasādam*—all with the hope of pleasing Your Divine Grace. It may not be happening on such a large scale, but I hope that our sincere efforts bring you joy.

In a room conversation in Bombay in 1973, you nicely summarized our movement: “Preaching is our only business, preaching. Whatever we do, it is aimed at preaching. That is our business. Whatever we are doing, it is for preaching.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, last year I traveled to many countries across the globe, acting as your representative and trying to spread your sublime teachings to as many people as I could. In various places where people had never before heard about Kṛṣṇa, they are now chanting and dancing, wearing *tilaka*, *dhotī*, and *sari*. This, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is undoubtedly your causeless mercy—allowing us to play a small part in fulfilling Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s prophecy that the holy names will be chanted in every town and village.

During my travels I had the opportunity to visit and associate with the devotees in China. Although Kṛṣṇa consciousness is being practiced underground and is very much suppressed by the government, the devotees are extremely enthusiastic and sincere and are an inspiration to all. As you once commented, those who take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness in China may come last, but they will be fixed up and become strong in devotional service.

I was also fortunate to attend the Bhakti Sangam festivals in Ukraine and Russia. It was simply wonderful to see eight thousand devotees chanting and dancing together. It reminded me of when you visited Russia in 1971. During the summer of ’71 you were invited by your disciples to come to India to taste the sweet mangoes that were available. At that time, instead of going to India you went to Russia. You then famously commented, “Preaching in the snows of Russia is sweeter than any mango.”

While visiting Russia, you initiated Ananta Śānti Dāsa and personally trained him in cooking, chanting, and practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, all within a few days. During the 70s the political situation in Russia was extremely unstable, and it was dangerous for you to go. Despite this, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you underwent all risks

and inconveniences to try to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And just as from one minuscule seed comes a massive banyan tree and from that tree thousands of fruits appear, in the same way, from your single disciple, Ananta Śānti, have developed thousands of devotees practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Russia. Many of your stalwart disciples are preaching there, and the fact is, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that everything is going on due to your causeless mercy. You once commented that you are actually doing everything and that your disciples are your limbs. Therefore we again and again pay obeisances to your glorious lotus feet.

On this most blessed day I pray that I always remain engaged with body, mind, and words in serving your divine instructions.

Your insignificant servant,
Subhāg Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace. All glories to the Śrī Kṛṣṇa *saṅkīrtana* which made its way across the globe through your efforts.

As I travel from town to town I am often in situations where I have to sit beside non-devotees. The other day I was on a flight and found myself seated next to man of almost my age. As I sat reading articles from a *Back to Godhead* magazine I observed how he spent his time. He took out a mobile phone and began to play a video game. He passed several hours in this way. I am sure that if I had not had the opportunity to hear from Your Divine Grace, I would have most likely been in a similar situation today. Most of the population of the world have gone to great lengths just to waste their valuable life. Fortunes are spent building holiday homes to allow the rich to waste their time. Golf courses are another example of how the wealthy spend their time hitting balls around, trying to put them in a hole. There are countless examples and more and more innovations every day just to allow us to forget the nature of this world.

This morning, while taking a morning walk through the park, a man seeing me dressed in robes inquired from me about my religion. He went on to say how religion is important for us and how he would like to have more time to pursue his beliefs but he was busy maintaining his daughter's studies and arranging for her marriage. Had I not been blessed with the association of Your Divine Grace, then certainly I could also have been in such a helpless situation.

It is said that all the wealth in the 14 worlds can never repay one's debt to his guru. In any case, I have no wealth of my own to offer to you, therefore I can only hope to dedicate this life fully for your service. My constant prayer is that you will keep me engaged in your service. Please do not give me up, please do not reject me. I know that I have nothing to offer you but please continue to tolerate me as you have done for the past 47 years.

Your unqualified and unworthy servant,
Tridaṇḍi Swami Bhakti Vigna Vināśa Narasiṁha.

I offer my humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Ten Reasons Why Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Books Are Meant for Everyone

1. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books reveal the truth about the temporary material existence.

Different people have different individual interests. There is a vast variety of departments of knowledge the mind and intelligence gets absorbed in. However, the fact remains that every subject matter of mundane study and knowledge is of a temporary nature. And that temporary nature is contrary to the nature of the eternal soul, the eternal living entity.

Human evolution begins when inquiry into the eternal nature of existence awakens in the mind. Every activity of the human being is to be considered a failure unless he inquires about the eternal nature of the Absolute Truth.

If we truly believe that every human being, in fact every living entity, is an eternal soul, knowledge of the eternal nature, described in detail in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books, is for the self-interest of every human being on this planet. In no other literature do we find such detailed and voluminous knowledge about the eternal nature of the soul as we find in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books. Therefore, these books are most beneficial for everyone without any discrimination.

2. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books contain the most detailed knowledge of the material creation and the cosmic manifestation.

Even ordinary people at one point in their lives begin to wonder about the universe, the millions of stars they see at night in the sky. Although they are primarily occupied most of the time with material activities, such thoughts occasionally occur. They create a sense of belonging. Having a sense of belonging is a common experience. A sense of belonging is a human need, just like the need for food and shelter. Feeling that you belong is most important in seeing value in life and in coping with intensely painful emotions.

Most people feel connected with their family members, friends, social media, religion, etc. Similarly, there is a natural sense of belonging related to this world, this universe. What is my connection

to and my role in this creation? What is my purpose in life? Why do I exist in the first place? These or similar thoughts appear like flashes in the mind of every human being.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books answer all these questions in an overwhelming way, leaving no questions open. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books do not “search” for knowledge; they rather transmit knowledge. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books satisfy profoundly the sense of belonging related to the cosmos we are living in and to the overall material creation.

3. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books precisely explain the three modes of material nature, by which everyone is bound and conditioned in a particular way.

The three modes of material nature—a fascinating subject matter. A subject matter entirely lacking in societies’ educational system and yet of utmost importance. Every thought people in material life have, every activity they perform, every desire they have, every food they eat, even hope and faith—all are influenced by the three modes of material nature.

The three modes of material nature condition a person in a particular way. People want to be free, or they think that they are free, but if one does not become free from the influence of the three modes of nature, there is no question of freedom. One is forced to act and behave in a particular way, often against one’s own will. Many times people regret something they have said or done to somebody. It is being imposed upon them by the modes of material nature.

Being educated in the nature and function of the three modes reveals the truth about one’s own psychophysical nature, the particular condition of one’s birth, and so much more. What could be more interesting? Such education gives the answer to a host of questions everyone has. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books educate people in the science of the three modes of material nature. This science is a must for everyone to study.

4. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books inform people about the detailed laws of karmic reactions—the cause of suffering and joy.

Many people wonder why there is so much suffering in this world. Why do bad things happen to good people? And why do good things happen to bad people? Not understanding the rigid laws of karma, people lean toward atheism. How can an all-good,

all-knowledgeable God allow all this suffering to go on without interfering? He could instantly put an end to all the miseries and evil in this world.

The present life is only one frame out of an entire film spool (reel) of material existence. People don't see the whole picture. Reactions to activities one performed in past lives strike or bless us in our present life. This of course should not mean that we justify violence committed against any living being by thinking that whatever happens to a victim is his karma. Perhaps it is, but perhaps it is not. The Vedic injunction states, *mā hiṁsyāt sarvā bhūtāni*: "Never commit violence against anyone." Human beings have a certain amount of free choice. They can create good or bad *karma*. The *kṣatriyas* in Vedic society provide protection against violence. If everything would be karmic reactions, it would go against the laws of *karma* if *kṣatriyas* would interfere to protect humans and animals. The laws of *karma* are extremely complex, and we require accurate knowledge, historical accounts, and examples to be able to understand karmic reactions in a proper way.

Since everybody is subjected to karmic reactions, it is in everyone's interest and for everyone's benefit to understand the laws of *karma*. Such knowledge can potentially instantly change anyone's life for the better by providing an understanding of the causes of suffering. Śrīla Prabhupāda's books provide this knowledge, informing one not only how to avoid suffering reactions to one's present deeds, but also how to avoid suffering reactions to deeds one performed in previous lives.

5. Śrīla Prabhupāda's books remind everyone that there is a higher, spiritual purpose in life.

It is natural that people are engaged and absorbed in their respective studies, occupations, and life's passions. Societies and social life have existed since ancient times and will continue to exist. However, there is a higher purpose in life, a purpose that extends beyond our present life. The soul temporarily occupies a particular body and continues to exist when the body comes to an end. To educate ourselves in understanding the identity and nature of the immortal self, the soul, is a higher purpose in life. Anything related to that which continues to exist is of a higher nature than anything related to that which ceases to exist.

*nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ
ubhayor api dṛṣṭo 'ntas tv anayos tattva-darśibhiḥ*

"Those who are seers of the truth have concluded that of the nonexistent [the material body] there is no endurance and of the eternal [the soul] there is no change. This they have concluded by studying the nature of both." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.16)

This fact is eternally true, independent of whether we might consider this to be important or not or whether we believe it or not. Without contemplating on the topics concerning the soul, one has not yet begun human life. As Śrīla Prabhupāda so accurately phrased it, a materialistic society devoid of ātma-tattva is "a soul-killing civilization." Śrīla Prabhupāda's books are changing the destiny of such a society into a soul-revival society.

6. Śrīla Prabhupāda's books provide the knowledge of everyone's eternal constitutional identity.

In psychology, the term "identity crisis" refers to the failure to achieve ego identity during adolescence. Individuals struggle to "find themselves." Youngsters experience this struggle when everything rapidly changes, especially their own personal looks and their outlook on life. It often reappears as a midlife crisis, when people begin to realize that they are slowly heading toward old age. Is it worth hanging on to things that are transitory, passing? What will happen after death? These thoughts lead to another kind of identity crisis called "identity diffusion," which people naturally try to cope with in various ways. But the questions remain unanswered.

From the spiritual perspective, every living being in this creation forgot his eternal identity. What is someone's position who doesn't know who he is in a deeper sense? Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote an article called "Who Is Crazy?" as an answer to the charge against the devotees that they are crazy people.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, "My dear Arjuna, there are different classes of men. One class of men are sleeping, and the other class of men are awake." To read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books is the process of awakening from an eons-long slumber of forgetfulness. *Tamasi mā jyotir gama*: "Don't remain in this darkness. Go to the light." This call and other similar Vedic aphorisms are meant for everyone, without any discrimination.

7. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books reveal the spiritual unity of all living beings.

People are longing for the unity of all people, for one human race. “We are all brothers and sisters” is a slogan in songs and prayers. Especially in the 60’s this concept was embraced—no restrictions between genders. Human beings were perceived as one broad family. But in time this ideal gradually weakened. The basis of that concept was rather shallow.

The fundamental basis for the unity of not only human beings but all living beings is described in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is the most essential scripture on ātma-tattva, knowledge of the soul. The soul is of the same spiritual nature in whatever body it temporarily resides.

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

“The humble sages, by virtue of true knowledge, see with equal vision a learned and gentle brāhmaṇa, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater [outcaste].” (*Bhagavad-gītā* 5.18)

Sama-darśinaḥ means “who see with equal vision.” This equal vision we find described throughout Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books in philosophy, stories, and culture, the Vedic culture. The more people read Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books, the more they begin to understand the central point, the pivot, of everyone’s existence.

8. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books contain knowledge of the living entities’ eternal relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

“If there is a God, the cause of all causes, how am I related to Him?”

Probability and statistics merely tell us how things happen, but we learn nothing about the causes which lead to these events. In science, causality has always been a fundamental notion.

It is not unusual to hear people suggest that time plus chance accomplished the evolution of simple organisms into more complex entities. There is a logical error in such a statement. There is no such thing as chance. Chance is not an entity that causes things to happen.

There is the tossing-a-coin example: The odds of the coin coming

up either heads or tails are 50/50. What we forget is that one flip of the coin involves a whole chain of causal factors. The weight of the coin, the shape of the coin, the upward impulse of the toss, air resistance, spin—the initial conditions—all interact on each toss of the coin. It is a mathematical convenience to say that the probability of heads is 50% and the probability of tails is 50%. Every individual toss of a coin is controlled by the laws of physics. There is no mechanism called “chance” determining the outcome of any toss of the coin. Chance as a cause does not exist. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books explain in remarkable detail that Lord Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by His countless expansions and energies, is the cause of everything.

9. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books contain the highest knowledge of the different relationships the eternal souls can have with Lord Kṛṣṇa.

The general concept of a relationship with God is that it is one of awe and fear. This is confirmed in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (2.8):

*bhīṣāsmād vātaḥ pavate bhīṣodeti sūryaḥ
bhīṣāsmād agniś candraś ca mṛtyur dhāvati pañcamaḥ*

“It is out of fear of the Supreme Brahman that the wind is blowing, out of fear of Him that the sun regularly rises and sets, and out of fear of Him that fire acts. It is only due to fear of Him that death and Indra, the King of heaven, perform their respective duties.”

We find similar descriptions in other books. However, the living entities can have another relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa, a relationship of a more familiar nature, of friendship, all the way to a conjugal relationship.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books inform everyone about their eternal relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa. The description of the five main *rasas* (transcendental mellows) and their subdivisions is unique. There is no information about these *rasas* in any other scripture or religious teaching. The information stands on its own, waiting to be delivered to every human being on this planet.

10. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books teach the harmonious combination of worldly life and duties with spiritual activities, leading to eternal liberation, freedom from all suffering.

People often shy away from getting involved in anything

religious or spiritual because they think it is incompatible with their mundane engagements and family affairs. Picturing the lifestyle of a monk or nun, a yogī or Buddhist monk, they consider a spiritual path an option for perhaps later in their lives, if at all.

However, spiritual life can be taken up at any time and to whatever degree is comfortable for the practitioner. The progress, however minute it might appear, will never be lost. As Lord Kṛṣṇa states in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.40):

*nehābhikrama-nāśo 'sti pratyavāyo na vidyate
sv-alpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt*

“In this endeavor there is no loss or diminution,
and a little advancement on this path can protect
one from the most dangerous type of fear.”

It is not like a material project, which has to be completed if one is to be successful. And still the option always remains to be fully dedicated to the spiritual path at any time.

In the past, great kings and people from all walks of life practiced spiritual life despite their full involvement in mundane activities. Śrīla Prabhupāda's books give insight into how to harmoniously combine mundane activities with spiritual activities. One kind of activity does not exclude the other.

Therefore, Śrīla Prabhupāda's books are meant for everyone, without any discrimination. There should be no doubt about it.

*Śrīla Prabhupāda's eternal servant,
Bhaktivaibhava Swami*

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

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

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

My dearest Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept my most respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

Savior

Thank you for coming to the USA, and even to Culver City, where some of us lived. Thank you for bringing the *mahā-mantra* and your first three volumes of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Thank you for sending out your followers on *harināma saṅkīrtana* parties. Thank you for accepting this lowly creature as your disciple and trying to train him in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Thank you for traveling around and around the world as a *paramahaṁsa parivrajakācārya sanniyāsī*.

Inspiration

Thank you for introducing tasty, nutritious, and spiritual *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* into our lives. Thank you for inspiring us to dance for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Thank you for creating so many wonderful godbrothers and godsisters for us to associate with. Thank you for presenting the most colorful festival/parade—Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā. Thank you for leading us in circumambulating Tulasī Mahārāṇī.

Example

Thank you for showing us how to live in a decadent world while remaining aloof from it. Thank you for always thinking big and never compromising. Thank you for singing beautiful *kīrtanas* and *bhajanas* with *karatālas*, *mṛdaṅga*, harmonium, and gong. Thank you for daily rising so early to write your nectarean Bhaktivedānta purports. Thank you for demonstrating *namaskuru* (obeisances to the Lord and to the guru).

Visionary

Thank you for going to Russia, knowing that the people there actually wanted Kṛṣṇa consciousness and would join us. Thank you for awakening the people of India by scolding them for abandoning their glorious culture and becoming beggars instead. Thank you for opening our eyes to the moon-landing lunacy. Thank you for painstakingly establishing the legal and organizational basis of ISKCON. Thank you for keeping us out of trouble by making book distribution our family business. Thank you for constructing fabulous temples in *punya-bhūmi* (India).

Teacher

Thank you for enduring our slowness in learning. Thank you for relentlessly convincing us about the detriments of illicit sex. Thank you for showering appreciation upon those who deserved it. Thank you for leading the fight to stop cow slaughter. Thank you for stressing primary, secondary, and higher education in Vedic philosophy, science, and culture. Thank you for teaching us that cooperation and humility must accompany purity. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Begging to remain your eternal servant,

Dānavīr Goswami

Guṇagrāhi dās Goswami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this most auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I would like to share with you that during this challenging period of my life, which is filled with the difficulties of advanced cancer, what is most important to me are your wonderful self and your gifts. And first among those glorious gifts is the divine *kīrtana* of the Holy Name. My first taste of that divine Name, which came at a Sunday Feast *kīrtana* in Buffalo, New York, in 1969, impacted me in a way that I had never felt before: It gave me newfound faith in your Lord Kṛṣṇa, along with faith in the knowledge you were imparting. It forever

changed the direction of my life and established you as the captain of my ship, and my lowly self as the sweeper of its deck.

During those early years, my faith and enthusiasm for *kīrtana* kept increasing the more I heard you and saw your ecstatic smile and transcendental energy, such as when you leaped into the air in ecstasy at those memorable Ratha-yātrā *kīrtanas* in San Francisco and New York in the 70s, and as you chanted and danced enthusiastically in your temples and on *harināmas*, undeterred by your aging body and failing health.

In these and many other ways you never stopped showing, through your example and instructions, that holding *kīrtana*, both among ourselves and for the general public, is our true life and soul. Since that very special moment at the Sunday Feast in 1969, when Kṛṣṇa became real to me, you have led me on a most wonderful adventure that never seems to end.

As the years have passed, I have taken part in thousands of joyous *kīrtanas* filled with the happiness of chanting congregationally. I have experienced the miracle of Kṛṣṇa's Holy Names working magic on me and many others, making devotees out of sinners, eradicating interpersonal problems, inspiring bonding among individuals, and even making friends out of enemies.

Along with some devotees who are caring for me, I've now been in Vṛndāvana—a most special land that I have been given access to by your mercy alone—for over two years. Each night we welcome guests to our *Vṛndāvana Kīrtana Saṅga*, which by Kṛṣṇa's grace has become a well-known event internationally. And also the very highlight of my life! In fact, it has *given* me life, thanks to Your Divine Grace! I never cease to be amazed by the variety of our guests, the excitement we all feel, the joy and affection among us, and my feeling and mood after having taken shelter of the devotees and the *kīrtana*—even after I may have first felt too much discomfort even to leave my bed to enter the adjoining room to attend the *kīrtana*. In fact, many days I feel so inspired by the *kīrtana* that, after getting help to get dressed, I then walk unassisted to the *kīrtana* and dive in. And by the time the *kīrtana* ends and the loving interactions have come to a close, my pains and woes miraculously seem hardly worth paying attention to! What a marvelous natural pain medicine, and what a benediction to have been given that medicine, the holy names, by Your Divine Grace!

Among your many gifts resulting from our *kīrtanas*, Śrīla

Prabhupāda, one I find very special is that young, blossoming devotees who I just met, or who I knew during their infancy, childhood, or youth and who have grown up under your shelter, have been coming to our *saṅga*, playing instruments, and leading the most inspiring *kīrtanas*, having been inspired in their own homes and *yātrās*. The association of these devotees is wonderful. And for me to connect with them while we chant and then to bond with them more intimately after *kīrtana* are experiences I will always cherish. And the friendships continue!

And lastly, I find it of ultimate significance and certainly remarkable that you have shown—by the success of your glorious worldwide movement—that due to your dedication, purity, and unalloyed surrender you have achieved your cherished goal of fulfilling the prediction of Lord Caitanya and the desire of the *guru-paramparā* that the Holy Name of the Lord would be heard in every town and village of the world!! I feel truly blessed and fortunate to be taking part. *Kīrtana* is filling the hearts of your devotees and bringing together people of all classes, nationalities, and ages, who enthusiastically chant and dance together as they gradually break free of all bodily distinctions. Your gift truly offers us all that taste of the nectar we always sought but had never been able to identify until you found us and rescued us.

In our *kīrtana* room is a large, beautiful painting of Your Divine Grace done by a dear friend. In it you are smiling in great happiness and showering your infinite mercy on us all. I so badly need that mercy and the sublime shelter of the Name, especially during this most challenging time. So, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I thank you and thank you again and again. Wherever I am, I pray that your divine self and your simple truth—“Just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa!”—will remain forever foremost in my heart.

Praying to remain your humble servant always,

Guṇagrāhi dās Goswami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who are saving the whole world by spreading *sanātana-dharma* worldwide.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, yesterday was the appearance day of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and today is your appearance day. You are the *jaḡat-guru* because you did the job of the original *jaḡat-guru*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by spreading His message of Śrīmad *Bhagavad-gītā* all over the whole planet. You are doing miracles day in and day out. Your movement is a life-saving movement in this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, i.e., Kali-yuga. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa chose you as the ambassador of the spiritual world, making you part of the *guru-paramparā*. Ultimately a devotee is delivered by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but without the recommendation of a pure devotee like yourself, deliverance is not possible.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I beg for your mercy. Without your mercy, I am a fish out of water. Your mercy is the source of my life.

Your humble servant,

Nava Yogendra Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Recently, I spoke to a very wonderful godbrother who shared a realisation on his relationship with you. He said that the more he grows old, the more he realizes that he has not done much to repay you. He felt troubled by that. Now, this disciple is renowned for having done amazing services, both within our society of devotees and outside by secular society as well.

I was intrigued by his feelings, given what I know of him, and decided to find out more. I listed for him some of the impressive services I was aware of him rendering. He was uncomfortable as I went on and on enumerating his amazing offerings. Finally, he stopped me before I could finish sharing my long list.

I then said, "Objectively speaking, see! You have done a lot...no need to feel uncomfortable!"

He became serious. "Please don't test me. You know as well as I, that in comparison to what Śrīla Prabhupāda has given to us, all that we try to give him is insignificant."

That brought the discussion to another level. Both of us began listing the gifts you've given us, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We could not finish the list.

I just read how you told one of your disciples: *I am giving you the kingdom of God. Here, take it.*

Truly, there is nothing to compare even slightly with that. It's a different league of gift...

The Way of Mercy

Once you asked a disciple: "Which way do you think is better? The monkey way or the cat way?" She couldn't understand or imagine what you meant. So, you continued, "The monkey baby climbs on the back of the mother and holds on, and this is the way he travels. The kitten is carried in the teeth of the mother. So, which is better?"

She could not understand which way could be better; they both

sounded equally difficult to her. Then you gave a hint:

"The monkey baby is very small and very weak, and he is holding on to the mother by his own strength. But the kitten is being supported by the strength of the mother. So, which way do you think is better?"

And then she understood. "The cat way is better."

"Yes," you said, "That is the difference between the yogi and the devotee. The yogi is trying to climb on the back of the Absolute Truth by his own strength, but he is very weak, so he will fall. But a devotee, he cries out for Kṛṣṇa." And as you spoke the word 'Kṛṣṇa', you held your arms up high and looked up at the clear morning sky. "A devotee cries out for Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa picks him up."

This is the way of mercy – the safe way – the descending way. Trying to reach Kṛṣṇa on our own is like trying to catch the moon with our hands. Impossible.

Kṛṣṇa's mercy descends to the disciple through the spiritual master. The guru obtains the gift of mercy – powerful life-giving mercy – from Kṛṣṇa, much like the cloud who receives its water from the ocean. By that mercy, all obstacles are removed from his path and love of Kṛṣṇa is given.

And by that mercy, everything is possible. The disciple only has to keep on serving the lotus feet of the spiritual master.

The Leaping Lion

One of the great poets of the Śrī Sampradaya, Vedānta Deśhika, expressed this in the very apt analogy of a leaping lion:

"When a lion leaps from one hill to another, the little ants on its body are transported with him. Similarly, when Rāmanujācārya leaped over this world of repeated birth and death, we were saved because of our connection with him."

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, for me, you are that "leaping lion", who picked me up from the material world. On your auspicious appearance day, I pray for that mercy – as always. I am your ant-like disciple and I desperately require your kind blessings.

Your humble servant,

Sacinandana Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On the occasion of celebrating your glorious appearance in this world, I offer my most humble obeisance and prayers at your lotus feet, with these words of reflection:

“Dialogical Vaisnavism”

You have delivered to the world a venerable and ancient tradition of devotional dialogue, what I like to call “dialogical Vaisnavism.” Most of our sacred literature is in the form of dialogue, *saivōāda*: Sages speak with kings throughout the Bhāgavatam, and the Lord himself speaks with his dear friend Arjuna the dialogue that comes to be known as Bhagavad-gītā. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu speaks with Rāmānanda Rāya, and more recently, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura fills his Vaiṣṇava narrative catechism, *Jaiva Dharma*, with dialogues. In the same tradition, you welcomed numerous guests into your quarters, engaging them in dialogue on spiritual topics.

I use the word “with” to better understand the richness of our tradition: Sages speak *with* kings, rather than *to* kings. We might want to say that you, in your room conversations, spoke *to* your guests, instructing them, not exactly dialoguing with them. But while you were surely instructing, you were also listening, having exchanges with your guests. And, in effect, you were engaging your guests in saṅkīrtana, community glorification of the supreme Lord, as spiritual dialogue. By such activities, you taught us, as you taught us so many truths, by example.

In his extended free verse poem *Remembering Śrīla Prabhupāda* (Book 3, p. 7), Satsvarupa Dāsa Goswami wrote of “Hari Nama on Hippie Hill”:

On a walk through Golden Gate
they had shown him Hippie Hill
“Hold *kīrtana* here,” said Swamiji.
And on a balmy Sunday
he sent them to the park
and joined them, eager to sing.

They had a flag for each religion:
the blue Star of David,
the Islam Star and Crescent,
the Vedic Omkara,
the Christian Cross.

And universal *dharma* poured forth as *Hari Nama*,
the trumpet, *karatals*, and kettle drum...

Such a spirit of universalism, of inclusiveness, has driven the *saṅkīrtana* movement from its earliest beginnings in the *nagara-kīrtans* of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and his enthusiastic followers to the early times of your nascent congregation in New York and San Francisco. Everyone who took part in those occasions remember them fondly, at times wondering if present-day Vaiṣṇava culture, after your departure, has experienced a shift in its collective disposition. Doubtless much of our nostalgia is just that, a creeping sense that something like a child’s lost innocence has passed.

And yet in our enthusiasm to participate in this glorious spiritual movement, with your felt blessings we continue to extend ourselves outward as best we can to attract anyone and everyone to come closer to the Lord, especially through chanting His holy names. I like to think of those flags carrying symbols of the various religions in that early Hippie Hill kīrtan. What can we do to foster more of such a spirit, one that is more “dialogical”?

Anticipating that some might think the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is sectarian, you once countered, “But Lord Caitanya says, ‘It doesn’t matter. If you have some other bona fide name of God, you can chant that. But chant God’s name.’” You then went on to assure your audience, “Do not think this movement is trying to convert you from a Christian to a Hindu. Remain a Christian, a Jew, a Muslim. It doesn’t matter.” And then you invited everyone, “But if you really want to perfect your life, then try to develop your dormant love for God. That is the perfection of life.”

I pray to remember—and to serve you by doing what I can to help foster the spirit of inclusiveness that you instilled in us by your example. Despite the rumors that atheism increases in popularity, millions of people are firm in their theistic convictions. As you said during one room conversation, we [theists of all sorts] “should make combined effort” to revive people’s God consciousness. In the spirit of dialogue that our Vaiṣṇava tradition holds dear, I pray that we, your followers, may properly represent you in all dialogical

venues for the common good of the world and the glory of our disciplic succession.

Praying to remain always in your service,
Kṛṣṇakṣetra Swami

Anand Kishore das Babaji

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I have a confession to make. I wrote previously here about some burry clover weeds in our yard. They look beautiful when they first appear, with lovely small yellow flowers, but later produce sharp, prickly burrs that make it impossible to walk in the yard barefoot. Despite tremendous effort over several years to get rid of them, they kept coming back. I compared these weeds to ISKCON devotees who appear to be nice but then cause many difficulties for others, and seem impossible to either rectify or remove from your Society.

Recently I had a dream in which a raven appeared and advised me that these burry clovers are very medicinal and that they have come to us to help us! "Make a tea from it and drink it daily!" the raven said.

I then did a little research and discovered that this weed is called "California burclover" as well as "burr medic" and its scientific name is *Medicago polymorpha*. Indeed, it has been used for centuries in countries all over the world, including India, Bolivia and Italy, for a wide variety of medicinal purposes! We are now drinking its tea daily.

From this I have learned, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that I should appreciate all your devotees more. Though some of them may have unpleasant features in their characters or activities, simply by following your instructions, however imperfectly, they are helping you cure everyone they meet of the deadly material disease of forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for having created such a wonderful community of devotees! Please help me serve them sincerely, being thankful for their association and recognizing their great value, instead of simply criticizing and disturbing them.

Your fallen servant,

Anand Kishore das Babaji

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet, my only shelter from the raging forest fire of material existence.

At times devotees ask me what I consider your most outstanding quality. My reply is your unfathomable compassion for us fallen conditioned souls. *Para-duḥkha-duḥkhī*, feeling distress by observing others' suffering. Your mood was similar to that of Prahlāda Mahārāja whom you often quoted as the perfect example of a *Vaiṣṇava* who has no troubles personally but who suffers seeing the foolish materialist undergoing needless miseries in the material world (SB 6.1.6):

“A *Vaiṣṇava* is *para-duḥkha-duḥkhī*; in other words, he has no personal troubles, but he is very unhappy to see others in trouble. Prahlāda Mahārāja said, “My Lord, I have no personal problems, for I have learned how to glorify Your transcendental qualities and thus enter a trance of ecstasy. I do have a problem, however, for I am simply thinking of these rascals and fools who are busy with *māyā-sukha*, temporary happiness, without knowledge of devotional service unto You.” This is the problem faced by a *Vaiṣṇava*. Because a *Vaiṣṇava* fully takes shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he personally has no problems, but because he is compassionate toward the fallen, conditioned souls, he is always thinking of plans to save them from their hellish life in this body and the next. Parīkṣit Mahārāja, therefore, anxiously wanted to know from Sukadeva Gosvāmī how humanity can be saved from gliding down to hell. Sukadeva Gosvāmī had already explained how people enter hellish life, and he could also explain how they could be saved from it. Intelligent men must take advantage of these instructions. Unfortunately, however, the entire world is lacking *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness, and therefore people are suffering from the grossest ignorance and do not even

believe in a life after this one. To convince them of their next life is very difficult because they have become almost mad in their pursuit of material enjoyment. Nevertheless, our duty, the duty of all sane men, is to save them.”

This mood of sacred duty, combined with unconditional surrender to the order of your spiritual master inspired you to leave the holy atmosphere of Vṛndāvana – today we would say “comfort zone” – and enter the danger zone, the unholy atmosphere of Western society. Just as Prahlāda Mahārāja was never afraid of the demons' attempts to harm him but was fully confident of the Lord's protection, so you were also fearless in the midst of māyā's kingdom, confident that the umbrella of the Lord's lotus feet would shield you from all pernicious influences.

During the 50th anniversary of ISKCON in 2016, we had numerous opportunities to remember with awe and gratitude the difficult times you experienced during your first year in New York, your struggle in a hostile environment in an attempt to deliver the panacea of *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness to an indifferent population. On the very first day of your arrival in America, after experiencing a typical *mleccha*-city like Boston for the first time first-hand, you expressed your inner feelings in a poem. Apparently, doubts and questions arose in your heart, and you put them before the Lord:

I do not know why You have brought me here.
Why would You bring me to this terrible place?

I do not know how they will be able to
understand it (the message of Vasudeva).

How will they understand the mellows
of devotional service?

How will I make them understand this
message of *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness?

At the same time, you resolved all these
doubts and questions by placing yourself
fully into the hands of the Lord:

Now You can do whatever You like with me.

I know Your causeless mercy can make everything possible because You are the most expert mystic.

If You like You can make my power of speaking suitable for their understanding.

Only by Your causeless mercy will my words become pure. O Lord, make me dance as You like.

Now, if You like, You can fulfill the real purport of Bhaktivedānta.

And yes, the Lord liked very much to use you as an instrument, to make your speaking suitable for our understanding and to empower you in a way that is unprecedented in Vaiṣṇava history. Your fathomless compassion is our great fortune, so much so that even a fool like me became attracted and convinced by the pure and powerful words emanating from your lotus mouth. Where would we be if you had not come and endured voluntary suffering for our benefit?

*tapyante loka-tāpena sādhanavah prāyaśo janāḥ
paramārādhanaṁ tad dhi puruṣasyākhilātmanaḥ*

“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

We want to imbibe this mood and follow your example by voluntarily accepting all kinds of inconveniences for the sake of bringing the transcendental message of love of God to the people of this world. You felt a keen urgency to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness far and wide because you realized that the influence of Kali-yuga was increasing by the day. The world was in a critical condition, time was running out. You often voiced surprise at the unprecedented levels of degradation that especially Westerners were capable of accepting as signs of an advanced civilization:

“Now they are even granting man-to-man marriage, what to speak of other things. The priests are sermonizing on this idea of man-to-man marriage. Just see how degraded

they have become! Previously was there any conception like this, at least outside America? Nobody thought that a man could be married to another man. What is this?”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, the signs of degradation you observed in the 60s and 70s were only the timid beginnings of an accelerating brazen trend. During the decade you were touring the world and saw the predictions of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* becoming a reality, the suffering conditions became more and more acute, but compared to today’s state of affairs, those days were almost paradise, albeit the paradise of fools. Today, the feverish condition of the world has reached life-threatening levels. Therefore, how much more sympathetic should we be to help the suffering world population. In 1975, in Māyāpur, you said:

“Advaita Ācārya inaugurated this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. When He saw that the people are so much misled that simply they are busy for the bodily necessities of life and completely have forgotten Kṛṣṇa, He became sympathetic. That is Vaiṣṇava behavior. Vaiṣṇavas, they are the best friend of the society, best friend, Vaiṣṇava. Patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ. The Vaiṣṇava is always thinking how to deliver these fallen souls who are so much captivated with this false philosophy of hedonism—Eat, drink, be merry and enjoy. This is called hedonism. So they are always thinking how to deliver them. Advaita Prabhu did it; therefore He is Īśvara. Prahlāda Mahārāja did it. Any Vaiṣṇava who is actually feeling for the poor, conditioned souls, he must make arrangement for delivering these rascals from the death knell of ignorance.”

Falling at your feet, we are begging for your mercy. Let us not be misled by the false propaganda of Māyā’s minions. They try to convince us that your vision belongs to the past, that we should adapt to the world as it is, go with the flow. That was not your mood. On a different occasion, you warned us:

“So don’t spoil the movement by manufacturing ideas. Don’t do that. Go on in the standard way, keep yourself pure; then the movement is sure to be successful. But if you want to spoil it by whimsical, then what can be done?”

It will be spoiled. If you manufacture whims and disagree and fight amongst yourself, then it will be another edition of these so-called movements. It will lose the spiritual strength.” — Room conversation in Auckland, 1976

“Anyway, keep your movement very pure. You don’t mind if somebody goes away. Don’t mind. But we must keep our principles pure.” — Conversation, 1976 Los Angeles

“So I wrote that poetry, that I do not know what for I have come here, why Kṛṣṇa has brought me here. As soon as I shall say that there is no illicit sex, no meat-eating, no drinking, and no gambling, they’ll say, “You go home. Don’t talk.” I knew this. Still I attempted. But these boys kindly accepted. I never made any compromise. I said, “These are the first conditions to become Kṛṣṇa conscious: no illicit sex, no meat-eating, no intoxication, no gambling. Are you agreed?” They say yes, then come. If I would have made compromise, “Yes, whatever you like you can do.” No, I never did. Ask them. I never did. Some of them left, that “It is too difficult. The primary necessities of life are denied here.” (chuckles) But these boys, they have accepted, and therefore it is improving. — Interview with professors in Toronto, 1976

“When my guru mahārāja was present even big, big scholars were afraid to talk with His beginning students. My guru mahārāja was called ‘Living Encyclopedia’, he could talk with anyone on any subject. He was so learned—so we should be like that as far as possible. No compromise—Ramakrishna, avatars, yogis, everyone was enemy to guru mahārāja—he never compromised. Some godbrothers complained that this preaching was chopping technique and it would not be successful. But we have seen that those who criticized, they fell down. For my part I have taken up the policy of my guru mahārāja—no compromise. — Letter to Karandhara, 1973

We want to follow in your footsteps – no compromise. No compromise, beginning with ourselves. Purity is the force. As your wrote to Sivananda after he had arrived in Germany:

“Because we are hearing from the Source of all knowledge, Kṛṣṇa, through His representatives, the saints and ācāryas in disciplic succession, we have got solid basis for understanding. If we are very much convinced to preach in this way, the intelligent class of men will respect and join us, and this will be your success in Germany. If a Marx can change so many men’s minds to follow his imperfect philosophy, what can Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Perfect, accomplish! If we remain pure and teach others purely, then we will achieve all success and the whole world will listen to us and be delivered from their very dangerous condition.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, let your word be my guide in this life and the next.

Begging to remain under the shade of your lotus feet,

Bhakti Gauravāṇī Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances as I fall low at your lotus feet.

To express my gratitude to you for the many beautiful gifts you have given me in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I have produced and offered to you a slideshow called “Purity in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.” It is an audiovisual slideshow illuminating the many aspects of Kṛṣṇa consciousness that have purified me over the years of practice. It is a powerful preaching tool, not only to instruct beginners but also to remind practicing devotees how lucky we all are to have received so many gifts from you, and how grateful we should all be.

You once said, “The greatest disgrace is to look morose in front of the spiritual master.” You have given us so much, and we should be happy and grateful. The secret is not in doing what one likes but in liking what one needs to do.

The meaning of *gratitude* is “the quality or feeling of being grateful or thankful; deeply appreciative of kindness or benefits received.” Here are some of those beautiful gifts you have provided us that have made a dramatic transformation in our lives: the holy name, devotional service, Deity worship, *prasādam*, Vedic literature, devotee association, temples, farms, festivals, initiations, the holy *dhāma*, the Vaiṣṇava calendar, art, drama, and much more.

The more we become purified, the more we see Kṛṣṇa’s gifts of existence all around us. By Kṛṣṇa’s various potencies, many beautiful phenomena occur in the world, such as a spider weaving a web, a caterpillar turning into a butterfly, and countless other wonders. His artistic ability can be seen in the form of beautiful birds, such as the parrot, peacock, and flamingo.

Among all the animals, the proud and majestic lion became their king. The cow is sacred and very dear to Kṛṣṇa. Just by eating grass and water, the peaceful cow produces milk, giving us cream, butter, ghee, cheese, and yogurt.

From the precious earth sprout healing herbs and nourishing vegetables. During the day, the warm sun ripens the fruits, while at night the moon’s cooling rays give flavor to the vegetables.

You have pointed out: “We have eyes, two hands, two legs, stomach, etc., but all these gifts we do not see. What we prefer is to highlight what is missing in our life.” For the materialist, money is significant. But just the fact that we can see is such a great gift

of existence. We can hear. We can walk. All are great gifts. We are already multimillionaires. How can we say we have nothing? In fact, we should dance and celebrate what Kṛṣṇa has given us. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for opening my eyes to the things I previously took for granted.

Furthermore, you have opened my eyes to the spiritual sky, showing what real society, friendship, and love are worth. You have given repeated assurances that if we strictly execute our devotional service we will return to Kṛṣṇa.

You said:

We are opening hundreds of centers to provide training to the people to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness and go back home, back to Godhead. So 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. Going back to Godhead is the most significant accomplishment one can ever achieve.

I feel so much indebted to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and to say I am grateful is not enough to repay you for the causeless mercy you have rained down upon me. The only payment you have requested is our eagerness to serve, and even then, we are awarded again by seeing Kṛṣṇa eye to eye.

Nonetheless, I hope that by showing my audiovisual presentation of your merciful gifts I will attract souls to your lotus feet, and that they too will see the light that has illuminated the world by your causeless mercy.

I beg you to please continue to shower me with your merciful glance, guidance, and protection.

Your servant,

Dhīraśānta dāsa Goswami

My dearest and most beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most prostrated obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet on the most auspicious occasion of your 123rd Vyāsa-pūjā celebration. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on 12 November 2017, the Vice President of India, Mr. Venkaiah Naidu, inaugurated India's premiere screening of the film *Hare Krishna! The Mantra, the Movement and the Swami Who Started It All*, written, produced, and directed by Yadubara Prabhū and Viśākhā Devī Dāsī, in New Delhi. On that occasion the Honorable Vice-President said:

He [Śrīla Prabhupāda] established more than one hundred temples, cultural centers, and farm communities, wrote commentaries for over seventy-five books, and traveled the world more than fourteen times—all in the short span of just eleven years. But to me, Swami Prabhupāda's greatest achievement was that he was an exemplary ambassador of India's ancient civilization. He carried the same traditional values that you, his followers, are now promoting from inside and outside the shores of India.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this epic documentary in many ways epitomizes what you have accomplished as the "exemplary ambassador of India's ancient civilization." On this occasion His Holiness Śivarāma Mahārāja, speaking from the same podium, recalled that in 1977 a gentleman had glorified you by saying "India is the place where Kṛṣṇa is worshiped. Since Kṛṣṇa is now worshiped all over the world due to Prabhupāda's preaching, it is to be understood that Śrīla Prabhupāda is India's greatest ambassador." His statement elicited enthusiastic applause, which triggered a thought in my mind. Globally, wherever we find ISKCON, those very places are like an extension of *Bhārata-varṣa* (India). With the passage of time those "towns and villages" where your ambassadorship of India's ancient civilization has been established will expand, ultimately encompassing the whole planet.

In the Preface to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* you write:

We must know the present need of human society.
And what is that need? Human society is no longer

bounded by geographical limits to particular countries or communities. Human society is broader than in the Middle Ages, and the world tendency is toward 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 human society, nay, of the entire energy of living beings.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the phenomenal worldwide expansion of your Hare Kṛṣṇa movement has proved the truth of your statement that "the world tendency is towards one state or one human society." ISKCON is the global meeting of hearts, minds, and thoughts. No other organization could do this or has accomplished this. They may be talking of some kind of global brotherhood or peace and unity, but it's all very superficial, with no deeper understanding or commitment. Kṛṣṇa consciousness, on the other hand, teaches that all people everywhere are truly, factually, and eternally brothers and sisters. When different persons claim that they are brothers, it means that they have someone in common—a common father, the Lord.

When I was much younger I had heard the slogan *hindi-chini bhāi bhāi*: "Hindi and *chini* are brothers." I did not know any better and took the phrase literally. Knowing that Hindi is a language and *chini* means "sugar," I was left wondering how a language and an edible substance could possibly be brothers? As I grew older, I realized that the people of Hindustan (India) are called Hindi and the Chinese people are called Chini. That made more sense. *Hindi-chini bhāi bhāi* thus means "The Hindustanis and the Chinese are brothers." But there was still that important missing link. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. From your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* I finally learned the underlying truth and fully understood the meaning of *hindi-chini bhāi bhāi*—that all the living beings in India and all of them in China are brothers. As Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-yoniṣu . . . ahaṁ bīja-pradaḥ pitā*: "I am the seed-giving father of everyone." You taught the whole world that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the common and supreme father of all humanity—and not just of humanity but of all creatures who inhabit this world. Saint Francis of Assisi knew this and would speak to his "Sister Tree" and "Brother Bird."

The Vedic viewpoint is *vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*: everybody on earth is certainly part of God's family. To consider some people to be His and others not is a duality that is a reflection of low and

miserly thinkers. The magnanimous, high thinkers think in terms of *vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*, considering every living being in the whole world as members of His family. God does not discriminate on the basis of national boundaries, race, color, or even species. All are His children, His devotees. Godly devotees think like God. Thus the philosophy you propagated is *vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*—nurturing and guiding “the world tendency toward one state or one human society.” You inculcated in us a mental attitude that harbors world brotherhood, wherein the world unites as one family.

In an interview with Mr. Sharma, a United Nations worker, you stated that the United Nations is unable to accomplish anything. It was formed to stop war but has have been unsuccessful in fulfilling that mission. You said, “The United Nation organization, they want to unite. For the last twenty years the United Nations are trying to unite, but the result is that we are disunited. Instead of making one flag, the flags are increasing every year. The United Nations has failed.” During public programs you would proudly point out, “This is my disciple from America. And this one is from England. And this one is from Germany.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, you said, “We are all very fortunate that different nations, from different parts of the world, are now combined together in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” You brought all of us together under the one banner of Lord Caitanya. ISKCON is the United Nations of the spiritual world. Last year’s Māyāpur festival was attended by devotees from over seventy countries. All were united in spirit, staying harmoniously together under one roof, one kitchen, as one family. There is much truth in the axiom “A family that prays together stays together.” We chant and dance together, and all the differences, boundaries, and designations disappear. The ISKCON family is growing from strength to strength.

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

(Gītā-māhātmya 7)

All the members and followers of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement have one common scripture, the *Bhagavad-gītā* (*ekam śāstram devakī-putra-gītam*); we worship one God: Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī (*eko devo devakī-putra eva*); we chant one *mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma

Rāma, Hare Hare (*eko mantras tasya nāmāni yāni*); and universally we all have the same occupation, devotional service unto the Supreme worshipable Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*karmāpy ekam tasya devasya sevā*).

“The world tendency is toward one state or one human society.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, that society is the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, of which you are the founding father, the *senāpati bhakta* of Lord Caitanya.

ISKCON founder-ācārya Śrīla Prabhupāda-kī jaya!!

Your insignificant servant,

Lokanāth Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* 18:66 we find Lord Kṛṣṇa's final instruction to Arjuna and to ourselves.

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja
ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

“Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear.”

It is hard to figure out how to apply this instruction. How can one abandon all varieties of religion? What does it mean to surrender to Kṛṣṇa?

Many other instructions in the *Gītā* are equally challenging to carry out, such as the instruction in 18:65.

*man-manā bhava mad-bhakto
mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru
mām evaiṣyasi satyaṁ te
pratijāne priyo 'si me*

“Always think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me and offer your homage unto Me. Thus, you will come to Me without fail. I promise you this because you are My very dear friend.”

To carry out these and other instructions, one must have a practical example of someone in the modern day and Age who exemplifies them. It is important to have a person *bhagavata* as well as the book *Bhagavata*. One may also say that one must have the person who epitomizes the *Gītā*, as well as the book *Gītā*.

“Not only should we read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, but we should also serve the person *bhāgavata*, one whose life is nothing but *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.” — TLK Vs 16

The key is given above: “the person *bhāgavata*, one whose life is nothing but *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.”

You are the person *Bhāgavata* who practically shows us how to carry out Kṛṣṇa's instructions. You are the perfect example of how to follow the *Gītā*'s instructions in the present day. You are the “teachings of the *Gītā* in action.” You are our role model, our inspiration, and our hero.

It is imperative for all the members of the Kṛṣṇa conscious society to regularly read your biographies, and to hear the memories of your dear disciples. The term ‘Founder-ācārya,’ is not simply a designation or a title. It indicates that your actions should be taken as our ideal. Your actions as well as your words should be studied scrutinizingly.

As I travel, I encourage all the devotees to dive deeply into the nectar of your pastimes, and to apply your example and teachings in their own lives. We are so fortunate to have numerous first-hand accounts of your activities and words. This abundance of direct information concerning an ācārya or religious preceptor is unique in the annals of religious history.

I pray to be always conscious of your example and teachings, to follow in your footsteps, and to inspire others to do so.

Your servant,

Bir Krishna dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

May you be pleased to grant me permission to reveal my thoughts.

Being faced with the realization of my personal, as well as societal, suffering has led me to seriously reconsider how theism attempts to explain this harsh reality. In Western philosophical terms, theodicy is “the attempt to answer the question of why a good God permits the manifestation of evil.” Vaiṣṇavas, and even Advaitins, must also deal with this issue in such a way as to not compromise the immutability of the Supreme nondual Reality. Indeed, Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism itself has advanced various arguments to address the conundrum—from literal *anādi-karma*, to an inceptive choice from a *taṭasthā* region, to the idea of original sin or falldown from Vaikuṅṭha. If I may be so bold, I admit all of these ratiocinations leave me somewhat dissatisfied. Why an omnipotent loving God allows misery and evil is not an easy issue to resolve. Indeed, it is atheism’s most successful selling point.

Turning to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, we learn of different hellish conditions that sinful humans are subjected to at the end of their lives. These descriptions are so severe that they are reminiscent of the Bible’s doctrine of eternal perdition. (Even Śrī Madhvācārya taught his own version of eternal damnation.) Having been raised in the Christian tradition, I can attest that this concept has been responsible for a tremendous fallout from the faith. While it is true that Śrī Bhaktinoda Ṭhākura submitted a figurative interpretation of hell in his Śrī Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā, it is generally accepted as a preaching strategy only. Nor does this interpretation really fit into the context of the conversation between Śrī Śukadeva and Rājā Parīkṣit.

So what are we to make of it? How and why should a loving God—Kṛṣṇa being the *most* loving of all theistic manifestations—allow for such an incredible degree of suffering? Thoughtful persons who pay close attention to this reality—if left solely to their own mental machinations and means—invariably become pessimistic, even suicidal. There seems to be no hope for them.

Enter the Divine Messenger, a being who not only delivers an inspired message but, more importantly, embodies it. No matter how sweet, coherent, or inspiring the message of Godhead sounds, it would have little effect if not for the person exemplifying it. Book

bhāgavata and person *bhāgavata*—both are important, but of the two, it is the living *bhāgavata* who instills faith in and provides access to the book. So when you told the reporter, “I am trying to teach what you have forgotten . . . that is God,” we realized that God and His love were alive and well in you, His Divine Grace. Philosophy and religion are fine, but they don’t have the transformative and staying power of *pratyakṣa*. As one Christian intellectual quipped, “The issue is not whether or not God exists. The issue is whether or not God is available [accessible].” Your living example “gave life” to God. Skeptics turned into believers. The hopeless turned into idealists. Hippies turned into happyes.

It can be argued that the existence of God is not provable by scientific or objective analysis. But no one can deny the love for God that was exhibited in the person of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Love for God provides proof for the existence of God and for His loving nature. Even then, Śrī Caitanya is a distant figure for us. Your love for Kṛṣṇa, and for us, however, was an immediate and tangible experience.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have thanked you for many things over the past five decades. But I feel the most important thing you gave, and for which we must thank you the most, is simply your being what/who you are—a *mahā-bhāgavata śuddha-vaiṣṇava*, compassionately descending into our midst, not only bearing a message of love but being that message in person. Thank you again, and yet again.

Your insignificant admirer and servant,

Gaṇapati dāsa Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

[Śrī Vyāsa said to Nārada Muni:] “Like the sun, your goodness can travel everywhere in the three worlds, and like the air you can penetrate the internal region of everyone. As such, you are as good as the all-pervading Supersoul.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.5.7)

One hundred years ago, in 1918, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura accepted *sanmyāsa* and began his missionary activities in Calcutta, at the Ultadanga Road *maṭha*, where you first met him. That same year the First World War ended and you entered the *gṛhastha* āśrama.

Now, one hundred years on, what is the news? What is my report? Do I have anything I would honestly be happy to report to you? Certainly positive reports from your disciples brought you great pleasure.

The other day I came in with the July BBT report and Srila Prabhupada asked, “Any good news?” I said, “Yes, all about book distribution.” Srila Prabhupada said, “That is real good news. Books will make history.”

Throughout the last month Srila Prabhupada has emphasized the important role the farm communities will play in the future of the Krishna consciousness Movement. Srila Prabhupada explains that it is at these farm communities that the varnasrama system, the basis of civilized society, can actually take place. He desires to organize such ideal varnasrama farm communities. In response to a letter from Tulsi Das Prabhu which described the wonderful farm being organized in South Africa, Srila Prabhupada commented, “These news are giving me new life, although I am a dead man. I wanted to see a little more that the whole world is overflowed with Krishna consciousness. . . . From your description I can understand it is a very, very nice farm. It gives me great pleasure to know that the devotees can eat nicely fresh vegetables, and grains, and pure milk. I am very enthused to know how the local people are responding so much and donating to help construct the project. The project is very nice. You are actually ‘Tulasi Das.’ Your letter is very encouraging. I am very pleased. If our farm projects are organized all over the

world, then we shall conquer. As soon as I see the farms growing fresh vegetables, fresh fruits, and the devotees eating sumptuously and chanting Hare Krishna, O, how wonderful it is! What is this nonsense civilization of the karmis? When I hear this report my chest swells up being so proud of my disciples’ achievements.”

At this point I said to His Divine Grace, “Srila Prabhupada, you are the farm acarya.” But Srila Prabhupada replied, “Krishna is the farm acarya. Balarama has a plow and Krishna has calf. Krishna forced His father, ‘Don’t have Indra-puja. Worship this land, which is giving food to the cows and cowherd men.’” [Letter from Tamāl Krishna Goswami to Rāmeśvara Swami, 22 August 1977]

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What is your news about our palace in France? I am asking you, Bhūgarbha. [Evening *darśana*, Māyāpur, 25 February 1977]

You were eager to hear news about New Māyāpura.

Yogeśvara: We just came to make the report to you, and we were in Vṛndāvana. . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So what is the report in France? Paris atmosphere is all right?

Yogeśvara: Paris? Paris, there is good enthusiasm because there is *saṅkīrtana* party. It is more difficult at the farm, because there is no *saṅkīrtana*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Why? There are so many men. There is no *saṅkīrtana*?

Yogeśvara: Yes. It is far from the nearest city.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But within the farm there is no *saṅkīrtana*?

Yogeśvara: Regular temple activities are going on.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: *Saṅkīrtana* is there.

Yogeśvara: There is once a week a party going out.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, not going out.

I mean to say in the temple.

Yogeśvara: Inside the temple. Oh, yes. Inside the temple regular programs are there.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So why [not] outside? There is no sufficient men? . . . Then not many devotees are there in the farm?

Yogeśvara: There are maybe thirty-five devotees traveling, *saṅkīrtana* devotees, and then . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Centering that farm?

Yogeśvara: Centered at the farm. They come back maybe once every two months. And then there are about eighty devotees at the farm, of which forty are children. Of those children, twenty or twenty-two are *gurukula* children. The others are too small.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So nobody is engaged in production—fruit, flowers, grains, milk?

Yogeśvara: There are not many full-time devotees doing production; maybe four full-time.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: And why part time?

Yogeśvara: Part time, everyone is trying to do an hour a day.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So what they do, others?

Yogeśvara: Well, from the other forty devotees left there is the staff of *pūjārīs*, press, temple maintenance. So not so many are left for doing full-time work on the land.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You are not getting new devotees to join?

Yogeśvara: In Paris.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. . . . From Paris you can bring in the farm.

Yogeśvara: Well, at the farm there is not as much of a new *bhakta* program as in Paris. So the new men are encouraged to stay in Paris to get fixed up first.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: When they are trained up, they can come live, especially *grhasthas*. My point is whether the farm is attractive. Not very much?

Yogeśvara: The potential is wonderful.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: And therefore I'm asking. Potential is wonderful, so why they are not attracted to live in the farm and be self-independent and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa? That is our farm project. Our farm project is they should be satisfied with simple living. That is nice living. If you get milk, if you get fruit, if you get grain and open air, it is very healthy life. Why they should not be attracted?

Yogeśvara: It is still the beginning, and because it's the beginning, it is a little difficult sometimes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That may be. But this should be our aim. We should not be attracted by the modern city life. Simplified life. Save time and utilize for advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is perfect life. Just like Vṛndāvana. Vṛndāvana life means agriculturist—cowherd boys, uneducated girls, cows and calves and trees, fruits. This is Vṛndāvana. The center is Kṛṣṇa.

Yogeśvara: Simple living.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: . . . We want to introduce this farm project means intense love for Kṛṣṇa. And other things—very simple: little milk, little food grain, little vegetable, that's all. And that is very nice. If you get fresh vegetable, fresh milk, and food grain, what do you want more? And from milk you can prepare so many nice preparations, unlimited number, all very palatable, sweet. This civilization we want to introduce, not so-called rascal civilization and become implicated in this cycle of birth and death. This is not civilization. This is killing civilization.

. . . So we have to introduce real civilization. Therefore, we are struggling so hard. So make in such a way. That's a very nice place, center of Europe a very nice place.
[Room Conversation, Bhubaneswar, 31 January 1977]

Today's small report: In New Māyāpura your castle is being slowly repaired, the guesthouse has been renovated, a few new devotees have joined, and construction of a restaurant/preaching center in the nearby city of Tours is well under way. The temple and grounds are being slowly cleaned up. The "woofer" program we introduced last year has proven successful. This is a program in which young people work voluntarily on the land, often resulting in them becoming full-time devotees. *Harināma* is regularly going out at least once a week. Many other small achievements could be cited. On the other side, we have many shortcomings. Please guide us to do better so we can please you and your devotees. There is much to do to fulfill your desires regarding farms. We often pray for devotees to come who will engage in book distribution, etc. Should we pray for devotees to come and farm? Some food and flowers are being grown—I wish it were more. I hope one day we will see New Māyāpura as a leading ISKCON center for Europe and as a magnet attracting countless souls to your lotus feet.

Maybe your most consistent desire was for distributing books:

So France is very important country. So printing and translation must go on. That is my request.
[Room Conversation, Māyāpur, 1 March 1977]

Last December we made a concerted effort to resurrect the yearly book distribution marathon in New Māyāpur. Many devotees, old and young, became enlivened and participated. During the month, around a thousand French *Bhagavad-gītās* were sold, along with more than four thousand small books. Altogether, sixty-three devotees distributed books. We will try to do better this year. Further printings and translations of French books are under way. In time we hope we will again be able to send you a report approaching the following from the French *yātrā*, which you received more than forty years ago, on October 14, 1977. You were then in Vṛndāvana, during the last few weeks of your manifest presence. Please empower us.

Tamāl Krishna [reading telegram]: "Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept our most humble obeisances at

your lotus feet. Knowing how dear your book distribution is to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the devotees in France would like to humbly offer you the results of our week-long marathon *saṅkīrtana*, hoping in some way to please you." Śrīla Prabhupāda? The devotees there, they went out on book distribution for twelve hours every day. All the devotees. They went out every day for seven days in a row, for twelve hours each day. And here are the results of their distribution. This is only for this one temple in France. It says, "We have distributed 25,061 hard-cover *Bhagavad-gītās* in one week." . . . They distributed 25,000 *Gītās* in one week in French, *Bhagavad-gītās* in French. He says, ". . . to the conditioned souls of this country in seven days. We hope that these results are the biggest in the history of your movement and that they will give you some solace. Our top distributor was Bhakta Richard . . ." [laughter] Somebody who isn't initiated yet. "who distributed 1,504 big books in one week." Every day he distributed over two hundred hard-cover books. That's pretty good. [laughter] That means he did about say 240 in twelve hours. He distributed about one book every three minutes for twelve hours in a row, Śrīla Prabhupāda, every day. "Jagad-vāsī dāsa, who distributed 1,125 big books; Ariṣṭa-nāśana dāsa, 864 books; Vṛṣa-kīrti dāsa, 851 big books; Akhileśvara dāsa, 835 big books; Kṛpā-siddha dāsa, 760 big books." Then they say, "Thank you for allowing us to assist you in preaching this message of Lord Caitanya in the Western countries. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your humble servants, the devotees in France." . . . It's amazing. Seems like Kṛṣṇa is giving unlimited facilities to spread His glories, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. We do not want liberation. We want to serve the purpose of the Gosvāmīs, in association with pure devotees. To stop birth and death is not our purpose. *Tāṇḍera caraṇa-sebi-bhaktasane bās, janame janame mor ei abhilāṣ.* [break]

Tamāl Krishna: Śrīla Prabhupāda, if you get stronger, then on our way to America this next time you can

go via France and stay in the Chateau. The French devotees this last time were not able to get your *darśana* because they were busy distributing your books. So they all feel very confident that you will certainly bestow your mercy on them and stop in France next time. Bhagavān said that the cows are giving very sweet milk there. I think that there is also Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma.

In Paris *harināma* on the street is going out at least two days a week, and sometimes five or six times. There is a growing and successful preaching program in the city, attracting many young people of all backgrounds. It is called Bhaktiloka. Some of them are now staying in the temple in Paris. We hope some of them will also settle in New Māyāpura, per your request.

We can only hope that we will see some positive growth in Paris for the pleasure of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Paris-Īśvara—your beloved Deities—and of course for your pleasure. This last year has been a transition period. Time will tell, but we are hopeful we can move forward in your service there.

Around the country there are pockets of young devotees growing up. We are praying for your mercy to reunite many of the older and younger devotees again.

Throughout the world there are countless similar reports from your followers, even more so today, with so many wonderful devotees pushing forward your mission on all continents. I would like to make a report that will please you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. This is the perfection of my existence. At the same time, I must be honest and avoid putting on some kind of facade just to impress you. It would be of no value—you know everything.

As long as my heart is dirty, covered by the mire of material attachments, the pure mercy emanating from you will not shine forth through my consciousness. There is no reflection on a dirty mirror. Thus efforts to please you will be thwarted due to ulterior motives. In this regards, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the report is that this past year of trying to dedicate my time to service in France has made it even more clear how impure I am. On the positive side, I have been feeling your presence more here in France than anywhere else.

Kṛṣṇa comes before the devotee as the spiritual master, just as the sun enters your room by the sunshine. [Purport to *Bhajāhū Re Mana*]

Consequently, in your sunlike presence the dirt in my heart has become even more apparent. It is clear that if I am to be a little instrument to please you, much work is needed at home. My hope is that you will please always remind me to chant your holy names, avoid that which is unfavorable, study your transcendental books, and hear attentively. Please purify my heart so that I can purely reflect your mercy and thus the bright, all-attractive mercy you are giving may shine on others and enlighten their hearts.

It is indeed the causeless mercy you are bestowing on me that allows me the privilege of serving you here in France. If anything positive is taking place, it is due entirely to your mercy and the sincere efforts of your devotees here.

Please root out from my heart whatever is unfavorable to devotional service.

In his *Manah-śikṣā*, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī vividly describes the situation of one with such a duplicitous heart as mine and gives the remedy:

In this condition you must cry out piteously and invoke the mercy of the unalloyed devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the killer of the demon Bakāsura. They will surely protect you from this dilemma. [*Manah-śikṣā* 5]

I piteously cry to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your mercy—the mercy Kṛṣṇa bestowed on the Kāliya serpent, kicking out with His lotus feet all the poisons, to the point of surrender. Please kick me with your merciful lotus feet. May they smash the mountain of sin in my heart.

The lotus feet of the spiritual master are the only way by which we can attain pure devotional service. I bow down to his lotus feet with great awe and reverence. By his grace one can cross the ocean of material suffering and obtain the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. [Śrī Guru-vandanam]

I need that kick of mercy—the fire of ordeal.

Out of His great mercy to His devotees, He purges out, by the fire of ordeal, the root of all karma, viz., nescience and evil desires. [*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.54, purport]

Unless my own sickness is cured, how I can help others? Still, I am praying that the suffering of your children and grandchildren here in France over the last thirty years will be relieved and there will

be a reawakening of the blossoming flower of ISKCON in France, so that we will come together as one family at your lotus feet, pushing forward the mercy mission, and so that we will forgive and appreciate one another and cooperate. There is so much potential—we just need the potency. France is riper than ever and in need of your mercy. Please shower your mercy on the devotees here so that they can share it with everyone. And if you so desire, may I somehow be a little instrument for encouraging them, who are immensely more qualified than I.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*jogyatā-vicāre, kichu nāhi pāi,
tomāra karuṇā-sāra
karuṇā nā hoile, kāndiyā kāndiyā,
prāṇa nā rākhibo āra*

“When I examine myself, I find nothing of value. Therefore your mercy is essential to me. If you are not merciful, I shall simply weep and weep, and I shall not maintain my life.” (*Gurudeva!*, by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura)

Your servant,

Janānanda Goswami

Rādhānāth Swami

*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*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I sincerely offer my life at your holy feet.

Today, remembering you, I am reflecting upon your room at Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara Temple in Vṛndāvana. I heard that you once said this room is your eternal home.

When you first resided there in the early sixties, it was a simple, small room with crumbling stone, mud walls, and an austere Indian bed with crisscross ropes as a mattress. In the seclusion of early morning you would sit on the floor behind a low wooden table. In the light of an oil lantern, you clicked away on a manual typewriter, translating *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and composing purports destined to be distributed by the millions and become the basis of a worldwide movement.

Across a public courtyard was your kitchen, a small oblong room where you cooked your own meals by squatting on the earthen floor and placing clumps of coal into the side of a rustic clay cooker.

Years later, in Los Angeles, devotees offered you a spacious, beautifully furnished residence. There, assisted by thousands of followers, you translated with a state-of-the-art dictating machine and had expert cooks eager to prepare meals for you. One day, while sitting in the elegance of your new room, you shared your heart with a devotee:

I am feeling separation from my home in Vṛndāvana.
You have seen my rooms at Rādhā-Dāmodara Temple?
I am longing to return there. But for me that would be
sense gratification, because my Guru Mahārāja wants
me spread Lord Caitanya’s message all over the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your ecstatic love for Guru and Gaurāṅga and your limitless compassion for all beings form the true foundation of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Still, it is your humble nature to attribute your success to all the devotees who

assist you.

This year, Śyāmasundara Prabhu, one such devotee who served several years as your personal secretary, released the first volume of his memoir, *Chasing Rhinos with the Swami*. A little background of how this book came to be is inspirational. A few years ago Śyāmasundara Prabhu was on the verge of death due to liver cancer. Only an immediate liver transplant could save his life. When the message was released, Gopīnātha Prabhu, who lives in India and had never personally met Śyāmasundara Prabhu, asked his wife Parijātā Devī for her blessings to risk his life and go through the painful ordeal of donating a major section of his liver. Their child Rasanath was then one year old. With tears of gratitude, she said, “Please do it. You may never again have such a special opportunity to please Śrīla Prabhupāda.” In this very real expression of love, we see how you are living in the hearts of the devotees and will continue to do so generation after generation.

Coming out of that difficult surgery with a new window in his life, Śyāmasundara Prabhu is offering his heart to sharing your pastimes with the world.

Armed with the Holy Names of Kṛṣṇa and the philosophy and culture of Śrī Caitanya Mahaprabhu, you are freely giving the essence of *dharma—prema-bhakti*. By your words and example you are teaching us how *bhakti* is to be practiced with a truly simple heart—simply to please Guru and Kṛṣṇa, without selfish desire, arrogance, or the will to control. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You are the light of our lives as you beckon all souls back home, back to Vṛndāvana, the realm of eternal love.

Your fallen and unworthy servant praying for your mercy,

Rādhānāth Swami

Letting Śrīla Prabhupāda Speak for Himself

Part 2

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

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

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you and your spiritually refreshing transcendental books, which are sowing seeds of pure devotion (*bhakti*) in the hearts of conditioned souls throughout a world suffering from the pangs of humanity’s degraded moral and spiritual values. Your books also nourish those seeds in the hearts of sincere souls who read them, especially those who drink the nectarean sound of your writings through their ears.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your purports repeatedly remind us of the marvelous effects of hearing about the Absolute Truth:

Simply by receiving the glories of the Lord through purified transcendental ears, the devotees of the Lord are immediately freed from strong material desires and engagement in fruitive activities. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 9.24.62, purport]

A person trying to be perfectly Kṛṣṇa conscious by hearing the words of Kṛṣṇa from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam or Bhagavad-gītā certainly has all the dirty things cleansed from the core of his heart. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 9.19.25, purport]

A devotee who constantly engages in hearing and chanting (śravaṇa-kīrtana) is certainly freed from the disease of envy, and thus he becomes eligible to go back home, back to Godhead. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 9.11.23, purport]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my offering this year is a sequel to last year’s, which was written in Dallas as I was convalescing from an undiagnosed

fever. As I mentioned in that offering, I felt so weakened from that fever that I took a break from writing to do my daily reading of your books. In that reading you warned me that one should be very careful of relapse from fever if one is still in the convalescent stage.

Having no idea at the time how serious the fever was, I must not have been careful enough because three days after submitting my offering I had a relapse that became a fever so extreme that it nearly took my life. In fact, after I was moved to Houston from Dallas, Doctor Gurubhakti later called a doctor in the UK and found out that the fever had been diagnosed as typhoid two weeks after I had been released from the hospital there and had flown to Dallas.

Just after I arrived in Houston, my health deteriorated to its lowest ebb. The first blood test showed very little water in my blood. How that manifested itself physically and mentally was that my senses could not connect very well to the environment around me and I became so weak that I could barely function. But by your grace, Śrīla Prabhupāda, from years of practice I had developed the habit of reading your books out loud every day; thus, I was able to continue to chant my rounds and read for at least an hour out loud every day throughout that dangerous ordeal.

One evening during the peak of my health crisis, as I was preparing to read *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya-līlā*, I suddenly felt that I possessed nothing in this world. This consciousness was forced on me by my physical condition. It was not a result of spiritual contemplation or qualification on my part; nonetheless, the effect was there. And as I started to read out loud as best I could, the quality of the sound was different than usual. The words were the same, but somehow what I heard was more than I'd ever heard before. Suddenly I was understanding more than I had ever understood before. And the taste of Lord Caitanya's pastimes was sweeter than ever before. Then, to my amazement, all at once my misery disappeared. I was no longer suffering.

I had been writing year after year about how important it is to read your books every day, especially out loud. I had also been stressing the number of pages to read that would allow one to finish the entire *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in just one year to get a continuity of the subject. But I had never paid enough attention to the quality of hearing and how important it is.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the effect of submissively hearing the Supreme Lord's pastimes is confirmed throughout *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī*

Caitanya-caritāmṛta. For example:

The author requests every reader to hear these talks with faith and without argument. By studying them in this way, one will be able to understand the confidential truth of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 8.308]

Anyone who desires to cross over the ocean of nescience, please hear with great faith the life and characteristics of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 11.107]

Just try to hear these topics with faith, for there is great pleasure even in hearing them. That hearing will destroy all miseries pertaining to the body, mind, and other living entities, and the unhappiness of false arguments as well. Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta is ever-increasingly fresh. For one who hears it again and again, the heart and ear become pacified. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 19.110–111]

I was forced by circumstances to hear submissively, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I can't honestly say that I was able to maintain the degree of freedom from misery I experienced that night, but the incident did greatly increase my already strong faith in hearing your books. Thus, my sense of mission to help revive the taste for hearing your books in devotees who, for whatever reason, have stopped reading them has increased exponentially. And my faith in reading them to newcomers as the best way to give them a taste of Kṛṣṇa consciousness has become fixed.

Toward the end of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Kavirāja Gosvāmī goes on to say:

I now worship the lotus feet of all my readers, for by the mercy of their lotus feet there is all good fortune.

If one hears the pastimes of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as described in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, I wash his lotus feet and drink the water.

I decorate my head with the dust of the lotus feet of my audience. Now you have all drunk this nectar, and therefore my labor is successful. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 20.150–152]

Therefore, the readers of your books also become deserving of worship. And the active principle that underlies hearing with proper consciousness—with complete faith, without argument, in rapt attention—is the blessing of an eternal associate of the Lord. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the eternal associate of the Lord who made it possible for the world to taste real relief from the sufferings of the degraded Age of Kali and to feel true happiness by reading your books, especially out loud.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, my heart overflows with gratitude to you. I have no love or pure faith, but by force of circumstances and by your blessings and training I was able to hear in an especially helpless condition, without the ability to think of anything except what I was hearing, without the capacity to mentally argue, doubt, or embellish. This was the silver lining in the dark cloud of a life-threatening disease. You taught us that we are all helpless in this material world. The difficulties and suffering we face are all Kṛṣṇa’s mercy, meant to help us hear His holy names and pastimes with a feeling of complete helplessness.

Whatever our social position, whatever our level of realization, whatever our service, however busy we may be, we must all find time every day to hear the teachings and pastimes of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. And this near-death experience of mine increased my conviction that if we systematically hear, from cover to cover, the main books you gave us, again and again for the rest of our lives—along with following the regulative principles strictly, chanting daily at least sixteen rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* while trying to avoid offenses, and distributing these jewels of wisdom to others less fortunate than ourselves—we will gradually become eligible to enter the pastimes of the Lord. Your translations and purports are transcendental, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Hearing them sincerely is as good as hearing the original Sanskrit. There is no other explanation for how Kṛṣṇa consciousness has spread across the globe in these degrading times. As you repeatedly tell us:

It is not that because one has once finished the *Bhagavad-gītā* he should not hear it again. The word *abhīkṣṇam* is very important. We should hear again and again. There is no question of stopping: even if one has read these topics many times, he should go on reading again and again because *bhagavat-kathā*, the words spoken by Kṛṣṇa and

spoken by Kṛṣṇa’s devotees about Kṛṣṇa, are *amṛtam*, nectar. The more one drinks this *amṛtam*, the more he advances in his eternal life. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.14.3–4, purport]

In the *śāstras*—the *purāṇas* and other Vedic literatures—there are so many narrations describing the transcendental activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and everyone should hear them again and again. For example, even if we read the entire *Bhagavad-gītā* every day, all eighteen chapters, in each reading we shall find a new explanation. That is the nature of transcendental literature. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.14.8, purport]

And what will happen if we stop hearing and studying your books?

During the rainy season the roads, not being cleansed, became covered with grass and debris and were thus difficult to make out. These roads were like religious scriptures that *brāhmaṇas* no longer study and that thus become corrupted and covered over with the passage of time. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.20.16]

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the following excerpt from a lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* you elaborate on how intensely you want your followers to read your books out loud:

Vidura particularly came to enlighten Dhṛtarāṣṭra and to give him a lift to the higher status of spiritual cognition. It is the duty of the enlightened souls to deliver the fallen ones, and Vidura came [for] that reason. But talks of spiritual enlightenment are so refreshing that while instructing Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Vidura attracted the attention of all the members of the family, and all of them took pleasure in hearing him patiently. This is the way of spiritual

realization. The message should be heard attentively, and if spoken by a realized soul, it will act on the dormant heart of the conditioned soul. And by continuously hearing, one can attain the perfect stage of self-realization.

Therefore, *śravaṇam* is very essential. *Śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ smaraṇaṁ pāda-sevanam*. So in all our centers, this process should be followed. We have got now so many books. Simply if we read books . . . Our Yogeśvara Prabhu is very enthusiastic to read books. So everyone should read books, and others should hear. That is very essential, *śravaṇam*. The more you hear . . . We have got so many books. Whatever is already published . . . Just like we are describing one verse daily. So at least . . . There are so many verses already in stock, you can go on speaking for fifty years. These books already published, you can go on. There will be no want of stock.

So this practice should be adopted. Don't waste time. As much as possible, try to hear about this transcendental subject matter, *Bhāgavatam*. *Yad vaiṣṇavānāṁ priyam*. It is stated that "The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is very, very dear to the Vaiṣṇavas, to the devotees." In Vṛndāvana you will find they are always reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. That is their life and soul. So now we have got already six volumes, and further . . . How many? Eight volumes are coming? So you will have enough stock. So you should read. *Śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ*. That is the main business. That is pure devotional service. Because we cannot devote twenty-four hours in hearing and chanting, therefore we have extended our activities, program activities, in so many ways. Otherwise, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is so nice, if you practice anywhere, any condition, simply by reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, you will be happy. So adopt this practice and make your spiritual life perfect more and more. Thank you very much. [Lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.13.12–14, Geneva, 3 June 1974]

In your 1975 visit to Perth, Śrīla Prabhupāda, a situation arose that compelled you to correct your devotees' thinking. Kūrma Prabhu described what happened next in his book *The Great Transcendental*

Adventure:

Prabhupāda's chastisement went on for some minutes more. Then he suggested that someone bring a book and begin reading. As the devotees read aloud, they felt their ignorance dissipate. It was as if a heavy curtain was being lifted. Prabhupāda, the transcendental physician, had once again supplied the medicine—hearing and chanting about the glories of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa—to wipe out the disease of ignorance. The afternoon thus ended on a pleasant note, with an inspiring question and answer session before Prabhupāda spoke to his scheduled guest—a young Indian boy. [10 days in Perth, 1975]

In your purport to the verses in which Prahlāda Mahārāja describes the nine processes of devotional service, you analyze each one individually. In the first paragraph of the section explaining the process of hearing, you write:

Śravaṇam. Hearing the holy name of the Lord (*śravaṇam*) is the beginning of devotional service. Although any one of the nine processes is sufficient, in chronological order the hearing of the holy name of the Lord is the beginning. Indeed, it is essential. . . .

And in the second paragraph of that same section, you write:

Hearing from the text of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is considered the most important process of hearing. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is full of transcendental chanting of the holy name, and therefore the chanting and hearing of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are transcendently full of mellows.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, great devotees like Śukadeva Gosvāmī have specifically described Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy name, form, and qualities. Unless one hears about the holy name, form, and qualities of the Lord, one cannot clearly understand the other processes of devotional service. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.23–24, purport]

In another purport you state:

Hearing about the activities of Kṛṣṇa is the beginning of purified life. *Puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ*: simply by

hearing and chanting, one becomes purified. Therefore, in discharging devotional service, śravaṇa-kīrtana (hearing and chanting) is most important. Then, with purified senses, one begins to render service to the Lord (*hṛṣīkeṇa hṛṣīkeśa-sevanam bhaktir ucyate*): this is called *bhakti*. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.6.34, purport]

In this way, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on practically every page of your Bhaktivedānta purports you enlighten us about the importance of hearing your books along with the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. You insist that they are both *kīrtana*. They are equally important—essential, in fact. And you also confirm this same truth in discussions with your disciples. For example:

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Both of them are *kīrtana*. When you chant, that is also *kīrtana*; when you distribute book, that is also *kīrtana*. When you read book, that is also *kīrtana*. [Morning walk, Honolulu, 19 January 1974]

In researching this subject, I came across the following statement of yours in a letter:

Along with the restaurants there can be “Bhaktivedanta Reading Room” where all my books can be kept and people can come and sit comfortably and read. The people will like these restaurants and reading rooms. They will take them as non-sectarian. [Letter to Śubhaviḷāsa, 16 March 1977]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please forgive me if this suggestion seems impertinent: Recently, the leaders of your movement have recognized the importance of reviving the reading of your books—for so many devotees have fallen away from reading them—and to place you clearly in the center of your movement again as its *founder-ācārya* by placing your books in the center once again. A revival has begun, and many ideas are being put forward. When I read your words “Bhaktivendanta Reading Room,” I had a related idea: “Bhaktivendanta Reading Groups.” I seek your blessings to establish as many such reading groups as I can and to inspire ISKCON leaders to do the same. I can think of no more efficient way to put you solidly in the center of your movement. From devotees who have set up such reading groups and sustained them over the past year, I’ve heard that their spiritual lives have changed for the better by reading your books out loud together.

To help propagate this revival, I’ve made a vow to live-stream my daily reading of your books. On the Facebook App, if one searches for “Daily Readings of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Books” and “likes” the page, one can hear your books, either live or at one’s convenience. Now I’m reading the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. But when I finish the *Bhāgavatam* I’ll move on to *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and read it out loud cover to cover; then the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, cover to cover; then back to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and so on, for the rest of my life. I seek your blessings, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to complete this vow.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in 2015 I wrote this to you in my Vyāsa-pūjā offering:

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

*asādhu-sādhutā-dāyinn ati-nīccatā-kara
hā na muñca kadācin mañ premṇā hṛt-kanṭhayoḥ sphura*

O [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*] bestower of saintliness to the unsaintly, O exalter of the most fallen, please never leave me. Always appear in my heart and my voice with pure love. [*Śrī Kṛṣṇa-līlā-stava* 416]

I am completely unqualified to fulfill this desire of mine, Śrīla Prabhupāda; thus, it will be possible only by your causeless mercy. On this auspicious day of the anniversary of your appearance, September 4, 2018, let me express my unending indebtedness to you for giving me a taste for reading out loud your sublime books and sharing that taste with others.

Your eternal servant,

Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this most auspicious day of your appearance anniversary in this material world, I offer my obeisances at your lotus feet śata-koṭi times.

You have two purely spiritual and divine forms. One form, we have perceived by our knowledge acquiring senses and this form was present before us for 81 earthly years. Your followers play your sound recordings, see you in films and videos, read your Bhaktivedānta purports and adorn the ISKCON temples and their homes with your pictures and deity form. On my altar, I have your toothbrush, silk kurta, remnants of sandalwood soap, and also a marigold garland you wore some 40 years ago.

You also have another form — that of an eternal associate of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava. Both forms are *acintya bhedābeda*, the same, yet different. The form we saw with our eyes is *naimittika* or occasional and your other form is *nitya*. One form is *prakaṣa* and the other form is *aprakaṣa*.

As your sincere followers, our prayers and meditations should be directed towards both — your *sādhaka* form and your *siddha* form.

“One should always think of the spiritual master in terms of his intimate relationship with Mukunda (Śrī Kṛṣṇa).” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 1.46, purport)

The word intimate would infer to one’s *stāyī-bhāva* or eternal relationship with Lord Mukunda, which is in one of five primary relationships. The word “always” reminds me of the word *nirantara* [constantly, continuously, and without cessation]

You write in the same purport,

“In all the ancient literatures of devotional service and in the more recent songs of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and other unalloyed Vaiṣṇavas, the spiritual master is always considered either one of the confidential associates of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī or a manifested representation of Śrīla Nityānanda Prabhu.”

I humbly pray that at some point in the course of my feeble attempt to practice devotional service I will be able to realise even to

some small extent, your personality as one of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī’s confidential associates. Since, I am not qualified or advanced, it will take me many lifetimes.

In the meantime, I worship you as a manifested representation of Lord Nityānanda. Just as Lord Nityānanda is the *kṛpā-avatāra*, so you are the *parama parama patita pāvāna kṛpā avatāra*.

Your disciples and sincere followers are manifestations of your mercy. Therefore I also bow down to them and roll in the dust of their lotus feet.

On my altars in South Africa and Vṛndāvana I have the remnants of your numerous disciples and grand disciples. As Śrīla Kṛṣṇadas Kavirāja Goswami says in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā* 16.60-61:

*bhakta-pada-dhūli āra bhakti pada jala
bhakta-bhukta-avaśeṣa—tina mahā-bala*

*ei tina-sevā haite kṛṣṇa-premā haya
punaḥ punaḥ sarva-śāstre phukāriyā kaya*

“The dust of the feet of the devotee, and the water that has washed the feet of a devotee and the remnants of food left by a devotee are three very powerful substances. By rendering service to these three, one attains the supreme goal of ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa. In all the revealed scriptures this is loudly declared again and again.”

I humbly pray that at some point in my future existence I will be able to see you again, serve you and attend to your every need. In the meantime, I shall worship your instructions, and deity form, and remain loyal to your personal preaching mission ISKCON.

Please always grant me the benediction that I can remain in the association of your exalted disciples and granddisciples.

Your worthless, immature and fallen disciple,

Pārtha Sārathi Das Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

A few days ago I was writing the outline for this offering based on a talk you had given in Jagannātha Purī in 1977. As I was preparing to write, I received a Viber message from Sanātānī Devī Dasi, one of your Budapest book distributors and a truly wonderful Vaiṣṇavī. I read the message and it was so amazing that I decided to make it the basis for this offering and put the Purī talk off for next year. Her message read:

“Yesterday I met a man on book distribution, maybe he is from America but I’m not sure. He gave some lakṣmī and I gave him a *Chant and be Happy* and when he saw the book with Prabhupāda’s picture he said ‘I know this man’. I asked ‘You mean personally?’ He said, ‘Once, I gave the last money from my wallet to a Hare Kṛṣṇa temple and that night this man, Prabhupāda, appeared in my dream and he said ‘I will guide you and I will help you through your life.’ He said that this dream was a strong experience in his life. He was spending just three days in Budapest, but I invited him to Kṛṣṇa Valley, maybe he will go. And of course he took the book. He was a very kind man. I was just thinking how merciful Prabhupāda is.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda! If a little devotional service performed just once means you are willing to guide a stranger for life—no doubt to Kṛṣṇa—, then what benefit do you have in store for devotees who have given their lives, homes, and souls to you? This is just like Lord Brahmā’s prayers, where he makes the same observation about the fathomless reaches of Kṛṣṇa’s mercy:

“You have already arranged to give Yourself to Pūtānā and her family members in exchange for her disguising herself as a devotee. So what is left for You to give these devotees of Vṛndāvana, whose homes, wealth, friends, dear relations, bodies, children, and very lives and hearts are all dedicated only to You?”

I share Brahmā’s bewilderment. If this is what you give to a one-off

donor, what will you give to those who give their everything? Your transcendental opulences bewilder me.

Therefore, on this glorious Vyāsa-pūjā day I can only bow at your lotus feet and, paraphrasing Brahmā’s words, admit that while some devotees may say they know all about Śrīla Prabhupāda, I can only say that your kindness and opulences are beyond the reach of my mind, body, and words.

Your amazed servant,

Śivarāma Swami

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your lotus feet, which are the shelter for the three worlds.

Time is moving on for me. Gradually my material body is becoming old. I remember when I used to visit my mother in her later years, and each time she would tell me who of her friends had died since the last time I was there. Then one time she told me, “They’ve all gone. Every one of them.”

We have also lost a number of your disciples as time has passed, and it will come to me in due course. There is not so much time left, and I have to try to do something of some value for you before I go. I’m not sure what that could be, but at least I have to keep preaching your message and trying to help your devotees in their Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I would like to be known as a “Prabhupāda man”. To be remembered like that would be very nice.

When you came to the Western world, you were five years older than I am now, and look what you did! It is completely inconceivable. Could I do something like that? Definitely not. So should I give up? Definitely not. When I listen to your classes from the early days in New York I feel the extreme sense of urgency in your voice, and it gives me a little insight into your heart. Sometimes your voice breaks momentarily into a higher pitch as your emotions of concern for the fallen souls overpower you. It becomes overwhelmingly clear that you are convinced that there is no question of there being any alternative other than serious Kṛṣṇa consciousness, striving for unalloyed devotional service. Convinced is not the right word.

Actually you have clearly realized it.

Not that this sense of urgency was only there in those days. All the way through you showed it, every day.

In the purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.13.53 you say: “One should understand that no one is independent, for everything is part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa and is acting and moving by the supreme desire of Kṛṣṇa. This understanding, this consciousness, is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” When we read that it sounds like straightforward Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy – nothing so very unusual.

But I remember a little while ago watching the movie *Your Ever Well Wisher* and to my surprise it showed you, emaciated on your deathbed, reciting this very sentence, surrounded by a small group of disciples, with Jayadvaita Mahārāja holding the microphone to your mouth. Your physical condition was well beyond hopeless, but despite that you were continuing with unbreakable determination to give us the priceless gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Not only that, but you continued translating and commenting on the *Bhāgavatam* for another eleven verses before stopping.

In your association, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have witnessed something beyond the constraints of this material world. We have been given, not just a glimpse, but a clear view of what is a resident of the spiritual world, and how they think, feel and act. As time goes on, along with aging, I am slowly digesting this more and more.

So what to do now? Not much time is left, and I have to try to do something more than what I have been doing. I don’t know exactly what, and that is sometimes a dilemma for me. But I guess I have to keep preaching your message and trying to help your devotees in their Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If I carry on like this to the end, hopefully the devotees will say, “he was a Prabhupāda man”. It would be very nice to be remembered like this.

Your servant,

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Thank you for your mercy
And fulfilling a dream.
In some mystical way
It flows from the Supreme.

I have a troupe of actors;
They play their parts so well,
Pushing folks’ emotions,
Lifting hearts from hell.

The performers learn a *līlā*,
They merge into a person,
Exploring a new character
Of purity or perversion.

From Kamsa to Lord Kṛṣṇa,
From Rāvaṇa to Rām,
Leaving aside the ego,
The actor has us in his palm.

In college you played Advaita.
The audience was in tears.
Those souls were transported
Through hearts, eyes, and ears.

You once said of theater:
“The play [is] better than the book.”
The impact it can have:
The world—a different look.

With Kṛṣṇa in the middle—
That’s surely where it starts—

Culture conquest on horizon,
Channeled through the arts.

You encouraged Loka, Sudāmā,
Nanda, Lohi, and Ras.
These actors, and so many more—
Just every drama: *dās*.

I'm thrilled about this service,
A connection I have with you
For enlightening the masses—
They stand in eager queue.

You gave us all the stories;
They are found on every page.
"Take one or two, perfect them,"
And take them to the stage.

"All the world's a stage," he said.
Shakespeare had this view.
We play out all these mundane roles
Instead of surrendering to you.

Prabhupāda, you asked us to serve.
Servant is the only post.
All else is but a myth:
Dās is what we boast.

Your servant,
Bhaktimārga Swami

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-salākayā
cakṣur unmīlitam 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."

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

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

Dearest Guru Mahārāja Śrīla Prabhupāda

We are especially blessed to have the good fortune to offer obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

It is only your mercy which is our qualification for being able to engage in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Bereft of the qualities necessary to approach devotional life you have created our good fortune and this is evident by simply observing our fallen situation. Yet we have become fortunate by your mercy.

Bhāgyavān means fortune, or supremely fortunate. That is our situation. Having come in contact with Your Divine Grace means we are supreme fortunate. Bhakti Devī is independent and comes of Her own accord. Who she comes to is only the mercy of those who are her pure servants. Because she, resides fully within you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have received her mercy. This causeless mercy is fueled by your desire to bring Kṛṣṇa's Bhakti Devī to all living beings. The path back to Godhead is only available by your kind and causeless mercy.

At the 1971 Ardha Kumbha Mela, after hearing Śrīla Prabhupāda's class, one devotee asked a question: "You said by taking devotional service, you'll cross through so many preliminary stages of *yajñas*, *tapasyas* and pious activities, but when I look back at my life, I don't see any of that. I was simply engaged in materialistic activities, so how did I receive devotional service?" Prabhupāda exclaimed forcefully, "I have made your good fortune for you!"

Having received our good fortune, we access it only when

we carefully, with determination, follow your instructions. Yet we are spiritually weak and at times find it difficult to follow your instructions.

Yet with careful chanting of our rounds of *japa* and with the association of your devotees who are fixed-*dr̥ḍha vrata*-in serving your lotus feet, can we gain the determination with a proper understanding of how to serve you in the best way possible way.

“Kṛṣṇa is very kind upon you because He has given you so many responsible tasks. So always think of the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and you will find no difficulties in executing the tasks allotted to you by Kṛṣṇa. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura used to say all difficult tasks he had to execute for Kṛṣṇa were considered as great pleasure for him.” — Śrīla Prabhupāda Letter, Aug. 28, 1973

Only by remembering you Śrīla Prabhupāda, can we cross over all the hurdles thrown at us by the illusionary energy and eventually reach the shore of spontaneous devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhām.

Your love for all living entities is the substance of *bhakti*. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupada!

Your servant,

Candramauli Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Among the host of your guru’s disciples
You alone fulfilled the order
To carry his message, more brilliant than the sun,
To dissipate darkness on western shores.

Through storms that swept the ocean
You brought tidings from afar
To proclaim that night was ending
Like the early morning star.

Seemingly alone...impoverished
You arrived within our midst
Giving to all...looking for one
Who might understand

The treasure of divine love
Overflowing from your heart.

You found a generation born of wealth
Who nothing of this world could satisfy
Children lost...unfulfilled
Our hearts starving...dry...suppressed.

Drawn to follow you
Leaving all else behind
We found spiritual fulfilment
And our hearts were satisfied.

Bhakti became our daily bread
Rasa quenched our deepest thirst
And in Kṛṣṇa’s holy name
We found life’s very breath.

What followed would be unbelievable
Other than the fact that it is true
The prophesized Golden Age
Dawning in your words, before our very eyes.

As you sang praise of Lord Gaurāṅga
And chanted Kṛṣṇa's name
Sleeping souls arose to the light of truth
Finding new hope in the dawning day.

Śuddha-nāma descended
To dance upon your lips
Resonating in our hearts
Awakening our love.

You sang of your beautiful homeland
Surrendered souls' most treasured goal
Where there is neither birth nor death
Though years of eternity roll.

Successive chapters have opened
As previous ones have closed
Twilight has come and darkness ensues
Shades of night cast shadowy hues

The messenger of the waters
Is with us no more
Jaladuta's last voyage sailed
Back to her eastern shore.

Yet you still hold the helm
And continue to chart the course
Guiding the way
To our final destination.

With the music of your homeland
Resounding in our ears
Our hearts are drawn to join you there
Beyond the veil of tears.

The way you lead us now
Is deeper than before.
For communion speaks through separation
Cleansing comes through tears.

By hearing we can see
You are closer to us
Than we are to ourselves
In the loving embrace of your *vāṇī*.

The treasure of our inheritance awaits
In the literary temple you created
Admittance to the inner sanctum granted
To those who serve your mission.

The lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga
Are there enshrined
Leading beyond majestic Vaikuṅṭha
To that charming land, Cintāmaṇi-dhām.

The enchanting pastoral realm
Where the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's love abounds
Eclipsing the notion that He is God
Proclaiming that *bhakti* reigns supreme.

From there, your eternal residence, so far away from here
We hear your voice calling ever so clear
Even though I lag behind, bound to mortal frame
In your words I find my guide, my life,
my home – everything to sustain.

It is with this assurance
That we celebrate this day
When you blessed the earth
By your glorious birth.

On this most sacred occasion
Please enrich our remembrance of the love we found in you
Who remains our faithful companion
In times of joy as well as tears.

Unite us in the memories
 Growing fonder every day
 Bestow the faith and patience
 To nurture us all the way.

Bless our attempts to follow your footprints
 In word and deed as well
 To harmonize through endless praise
 Every heartbeat, moment, breath and day.

May the Divine Grace of Śrīla Vyāsadeva
 Who descended with your appearance
 Continue to sing in your living words
 To breathe new and eternal life
 Into the hearts of all the world.

Your *dāsa anu dāsa*,
 Varṣāṇā Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Today I am observing your appearance day for the forth-fifth time. After standing before you like this annually for forty-five years, offering homage to your divine lotus feet, I'm thinking that I need to take a serious look within my heart and pray that my attempt to glorify you will some day become worthy of your attention.

When you were with us, you once told us:

So my Guru Mahārāja used to say that "Instead of seeing Kṛṣṇa, you serve so faithfully that Kṛṣṇa will see you." That should be the process. Kṛṣṇa is omnipresent. He can see you; He can understand you, what you are doing. So we have to execute devotional service in such a faithful way that Kṛṣṇa will see us. Then you will be successful. "Don't try to see Kṛṣṇa. Try to become seen by Kṛṣṇa." That was my Guru Mahārāja's instruction.

How can I ever expect Kṛṣṇa to look at me unless you ask Him to look favorably upon me? My only hope is for capturing your merciful glance along with your benevolent smile of approval. I live for that. Without hope for it someday, there is no value to my life.

Kṛṣṇa remains passive with me as *upadraṣṭā* and *anumantā*, the overseer and permitter. There is no reason for me to think that other than through your mercy He will respond to me in any way other than that. I have no love for Him. I cannot therefore invoke His divine intervention. But you love Kṛṣṇa and He surely listens to you.

It is my greatest fortune that you magnanimously accepted me as your servant almost forty-four years ago, when I promised you that I would faithfully execute devotional service to your divine lotus feet for all of eternity.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has instructed how a faithful *sādhaka* must think:

"Kṛṣṇa must be merciful to me either today or after one hundred years or in some other birth. I will take shelter of His lotus feet with determination and never leave."
 This type of *dhairya*, patience, is most desirable for the

practitioners of devotional service. [Śrī Bhaktyāloka]

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most auspicious day of your divine appearance, I humbly submit that I have complete faith that you will be merciful to me, either today, after one hundred years, or in some other birth. I have firmly taken shelter of your lotus feet and will never leave them. Please keep me as your servant birth after birth, and continue to engage me, as you see fit, in service to the Lords of your life.

Your eternal servant,

Nirañjana Swami

Bhakti Viśrambha Mādhava Swami

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Generations to Come Should Never Forget . .

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

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

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

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

Your servant,

Bhakti Viśrambha Mādhava Swami

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

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

om śrī surabhyai namaḥ! om śrī gurave namaḥ!

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this, your 122nd sacred appearance-day anniversary.

Today is my first morning in a new place called Janagaon, in the state of Telangana, some twenty kilometers from the Narasimhapally Vedic Village, a new *varṇāśrama* project taken up by local devotees of Hyderabad, still in its early stage of development. I am here to officially begin my doctoral research work in 108 villages of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The topic of my research is Vaiṣṇava Vedic Perspective in Sociology—Its Practical Application in the Twenty-First Century.

While taking up this task, I naturally think of your strong desire to preach in the villages of India, where you so frequently and so strongly pointed out the importance of preserving the natural lifestyle of traditional Indian villages, a lifestyle based on the principles of self-sufficiency and sustainability, meeting our basic necessities of life by growing our own food, depending on the gifts of nature, learning to live in the lap of Mother Nature, and protecting cows, from whom religious principles can be extracted. We have yet to succeed in fulfilling your desire, and I can only pray that you bestow your kind mercy for this to take place.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, although I find myself most unqualified to take up this most important service of research and village outreach, somehow I find myself involved at this advanced age of 71 not knowing how successful the attempt will be but convinced that this was one of your strong desires in order to help bring about the needed changes in society, or as you would so boldly state, to bring about a complete overhaul in society.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you remain my inspiration to continue

servicing in order to help realize the 50% of your mission that is yet unfulfilled. You fully dedicated yourself to the mission of your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. Because of your full and unconditional surrender to the instructions of your Guru Mahārāja, Kṛṣṇa has reciprocated wonderfully by sending you many sincere devotees and by firmly establishing the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world.

I sincerely thank you for this wonderful gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness you have given me and countless other fortunate souls. Your instructions remain forever fresh and relevant in a world torn apart due to increased sinful activities and deviation from the principle of *sanātana-dharma*. Kindly allow me to serve you and your mission by helping in whatever way possible to fulfill your desire to redirect society toward the Vedic way of life. Without your kind mercy, this will not be possible. *Kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*. Without becoming empowered by the Lord Himself, no one can succeed in the mission of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I am witnessing more and more of my godbrothers and godsisters passing away. My day is not too far away. The first phase of transplanting the Vedic culture in the Western countries is soon coming to a close. Now the second and third generation will need to take up your mission and carry the torch and banner of Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement forward to higher levels and new venues.

I wish to thank you again and again for this opportunity to serve. Please forgive my numerous shortcomings and kindly allow me to engage in your devotional service life after life. May your glories spread far and wide, as more and more conditioned souls get an opportunity to read your transcendental books and begin to engage in Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement, the only hope for today’s suffering humanity.

Always praying and begging for your kind mercy.

Your humble servant,

RP Bhakti Rāghava Swami

Bowing down with my head on the floor, I offer my obeisances to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

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

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

I can see so, so many faults in my character and actions, but I have followed the four principles strictly again this year and chanted a minimum of sixteen enthusiastic rounds daily. I am sure that this is 99.9999% by your mercy and austerity.

I am up for *maṅgala-ārati* and join with your other disciples in singing and dancing for the Divine Couple early in the morning.

I have been joining the *saṅkīrtana* party with Nītāi-Gaurasundara Dāsa, the president of our North American Institute for Oriental and Classical Studies, and the many devotees in South and North America, India, etc.

I also have the honor of being a member of the Ministry of Education, under the direction of His Grace Śeṣa Dāsa.

The donkey I am riding through this world is now seventy years old, and my vision, respiration, teeth, and memory are all diminishing, but my doctors and I are amazed at how good my overall health is. I see absolutely no cause for this other than the *yoga* you have given us. I also remember that you write in Kṛṣṇa Book that the old men in Dvārakā would be filled with youthful energy because they were able to see the smiling faces of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in their city each day.

I hope to be a small feature, creature, in your orchestra, delivering messages to Sītā from Rāma in a scarf tied by you around my neck. Please accept my humble obeisances. I will try to minimize the number of disturbances I create at your lotus feet daily.

Hanumatpresaka Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

Especially on your divine appearance day, I first strive to express my unbounded gratitude for your purely transmitting the *mahā-mantra*—a bestowal apparently so simple yet truly so miraculous. As the years and decades in *bhakti* pass, increasingly even this lowly disciple can catch a glimpse of the reality that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura declared: “In all fourteen worlds there is nothing to be had except the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa.”

Next, I urgently thank you for opportunities to engage the senses in Kṛṣṇa’s service. For the past two weeks I have been meditating on the words in your Purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.12.13:

A devotee has no other ambition than to serve Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement was started to engage people twenty-four hours daily in the service of the Lord and in His glorification.

So that was one of your foundational motivations? You began ISKCON as a device “to engage people twenty-four hours daily”? In the current ISKCON context, how can we fulfill this desire? It would seem that whether devotees live in their own home, in an āśrama, or in a devotional community, somehow every devotee, regardless of one’s accustomed level of *bhakti* intensity, should have ready access to the impetus (the inspiration) and the capability (the techniques) for engaging in devotional service morning, noon, and night.

To you I acknowledge, although so inadequately, my eternal indebtedness for your pure gifts of the *mahā-mantra* accompanied by absorption in devotional service. We call out to the whole world, tactfully yet persistently proclaiming that even in this most desperate and degraded era, your process, inherited from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, certainly works.

Aspiring to be your servant,

Devāmrita Swami

Rādhā Bhāva and Prabhupāda

This is not about Śrīla Prabhupāda's eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. I will leave that for other discussions. What I want to share with you is a realization I had recently in my reading of the last chapter of Śrī Caitanya *Caritamrita* by Krishna das Kavirāja called *The Śikṣāṣṭakam Prayers*, a realization that highlights how Śrīla Prabhupāda gave us the most practical path in understanding our own relationship with Kṛṣṇa.¹

In that regard, I found particularly relevant the discussion of the last verse of the *Śikṣāṣṭakam* that describes the mood of Śrī Rādhā at that height of Her devotion:

“I know no one but Kṛṣṇa as my Lord, and He shall remain so even if He handles me roughly by His embrace or makes me brokenhearted by not being present before me. He is completely free to do anything and everything, for He is always my worshipful Lord unconditionally.” (v. 8)

Before I continue with my thesis, it is important to understand the context in which this verse is recited. According to Krishna das Kavirāja this verse is a paraphrase by Śrī Caitanya of what Śrī Rādhā told Her friends after they advised Her to disregard Kṛṣṇa. He had apparently spurned her. In other words, She loved Kṛṣṇa so much that just the suggestion to ignore Kṛṣṇa, even when seemingly justified, ignited the depths of Her unconditional love.² In Śrī Caitanya's ensuing explanation of this verse to His most confidential associates Svarupa Damodar and Rāmamanda Roy, He further elaborates on how this concluding verse expresses the nature of Śrī Rādhā's love at its height.

“I do not mind my personal distress. I only wish for the happiness of Kṛṣṇa, for His happiness is the goal of my life. However, if He feels great happiness in giving me distress, that distress is the

¹ It is worthy to note here that the *Śikṣāṣṭakam* prayers are particularly significant because they are the only verses, eight in number, that Śrī Caitanya composed

² Also significant is that this verse is the last verse of the *Śikṣāṣṭakam* and represents the fulfillment of the internal reason for Śrī Caitanya's appearance, to experience the love of His topmost devotee at the height of Her love.

best of my happiness.”³ (Cc. *Antya-līlā* 20.52)

Now back to my original inspiration. After reading the eighth verse of the *Śikṣāṣṭakam* and its explanation by Śrī Caitanya Himself, it struck me how this final verse not only expresses the mood of Śrī Rādhā at the height of her devotion but accentuates the basic foundation of *bhakti* in a manner very reminiscent of the way Śrīla Prabhupāda and his own spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, preached. This is clearer when understanding the history of their mission.

Without retreading a long and complex history, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta appeared at a time when the teachings of Śrī Caitanya had become very much degraded. The people coming to Śrī Caitanya's lineage were mostly guided to higher and esoteric meditations in Krishna-consciousness without the prerequisite foundational sacrifice and proper behavior. Śrīla Prabhupāda describes Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's concern about this and how he called out those called *prakti-sahajiyās* who cheaply concentrated their meditation on Kṛṣṇa's intimate pastimes without the recommended step-by-step process to first purify their hearts.

“Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura says that a devotee does not care about his own happiness and distress; he is simply interested in seeing that Kṛṣṇa is happy, and for that purpose he engages in various activities [...] Those who are materialistic, [...] like the *prākṛta-sahajiyās*, regard their own happiness as the aim of life. Some of them aspire to enjoy themselves by sharing the happiness of Kṛṣṇa. This is the mentality of fruitive workers who want to enjoy sense gratification by making a show of service to Kṛṣṇa.” (Cc. *Antya-līlā* 20.52 purport)

Seeing this tendency, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, and Śrīla Prabhupāda after him, stressed unconditional surrender to the spiritual master and stringently warned of entering realms of esoteric *bhakti* prematurely. As a result they were often criticized for not giving what Śrī Caitanya came to give, *rāgānuga bhakti*, a practice based very much on meditating on Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and visualizing one's own spiritual identity within them.

The last verse of the *Śikṣāṣṭakam*, however, implies clearly that what Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta and Śrīla Prabhupāda stressed

³ Śrī Caitanya's explanation of the *Śikṣāṣṭakam* comprises thirteen verses. I have only chosen one for the sake of the clarity and force of my post to highlight the mood of them all.

was not just for beginners, but also the essence of the highest attainment in Kṛṣṇa-consciousness, a practice that only needs to be ripened by the pure chanting of the name to achieve its fruition.

So that's my realization today while reading the *Caitanya-caritamrita* – that if you want to awaken your eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa then faithfully follow the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda by unconditionally surrendering to Śrī Śrī Guru and Kṛṣṇa in service of Śrī Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* mission. Certainly one who sincerely does this is embracing the essence of Rādhā *bhāva* as expressed in that ultimate verse:

“I know no one but Kṛṣṇa as my Lord, and He shall remain so even if He handles me roughly by His embrace or makes me brokenhearted by not being present before me. He is completely free to do anything and everything, for He is always my worshipful Lord unconditionally.”

*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*

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in the Sixth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṅguṁ 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. As advised by Lord Brahmā, one should remember this śāstric injunction if one desires success in his life. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.7.23, purport]

In the Seventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we find this passage:

Yamarāja once asked Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, “What is the most wonderful thing within this world?” Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira replied (*Mahābhārata, Vana-parva* 313.116):

*ahany ahani bhūtāni gacchantīha yamālayam
śeṣāḥ sthāvaram icchanti kim āścaryam ataḥ param*

Hundreds and thousands of living entities meet death at every moment, but a foolish living being nonetheless thinks himself deathless and does not prepare for death. This is the most wonderful thing in this world. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.2.57, purport]

Yamarāja, who appeared in the form of a crane by a lake, asked further questions, and Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira replied:

“I shall try to answer your questions to the best of my ability. Please ask me what you will.”

“What makes the soul rise out of his entanglement in matter? Who keeps him company, who is his guide on that spiritual journey, and on what is he established?”

“It is knowledge of the Supreme Lord which makes the soul rise. Godly qualities are his companions, *dharma* is his guide, and he is established on truth.”

Yamarāja asked Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira many more questions and was completely satisfied by his answers.

In the journey of life one needs profound knowledge, not only of the material world but of the method to go beyond it. Unfortunately, most people in Kali-yuga have no true understanding of these things. Only those on the path of devotional service under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master can begin to comprehend.

In the Australian *yātrā*, over the last few years a number of devotees have left their bodies and gone back home, back to Godhead, or at least to a higher position in this material world. One in particular, my dear godbrother Veṅugopāla Dāsa, I’m sure went back home, back to Godhead.

I had known him since we were young *brahmacārīs* traveling and serving in different temples together. From early on I knew he was a special devotee, and as the years went by I became more and more convinced of his Kṛṣṇa consciousness and spiritual advancement.

Veṅugopāla was the type of devotee who could have a loving, affectionate relationship with anyone, regardless of who they were. I visited him in his last days and was so inspired by his association that I thought, “Somehow I have to become like him.”

Veṅugopāla was very attached to you and dedicated to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and it was you who showed us how to live our lives and prepare ourselves for the future.

By your instructions you paved the way,
By your example turned night into day.
You showed us how to live and die,
To go beyond the material sky.

Your mercy and grace for us to gain,
Although for some it was a strain.
Within our hearts pollution stored;
Still your lips sweet nectar poured

At your feet we bowed and said,
“Let the dust fall on our head.”

We wanted to hear more and more;
You were a great sage of holy lore

In *śāstra* so divinely skilled,
Perfection of life to be fulfilled,
You lay so clear before the eye
The spiritual deeds of days gone by.

Caitanya’s messenger, lofty souled,
You preached to us, so uncontrolled.
Siddhānta’s disciple, the lion’s son,
Went to the West—you were the one

People were in awe to have your sight;
From that moment their futures bright.
For most it was a gigantic leap
From conditioned life so very deep.

The human span should not go in vain:
Ignorance and bondage must be slain.
It’s useless to suffer and lament
For something so quickly spent.

Give us the strength to keep up the fight.
Māyā is strong, with tremendous might.
By your compassion the mercy bestowed,
With your grace reach the spiritual abode.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

*Your lowly servant,
Rāmāi Swami*

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

“Just Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa”

Recently, as I was reading Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, you reminded me that of the nine processes of devotional service chanting the holy name is the most essential. I have read and heard you say this many times before, but this time seemed special. Profoundly affected, I felt the idea penetrate my stonelike heart more deeply than in the past. Naturally, realization is born from such an experience. Let me share how your words purified and shaped my consciousness.

When Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya asked Caitanya Mahāprabhu, “Which item is most important in the execution of devotional service?” the Lord replied that the most important item was the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 6.241)

In the next verse Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu quotes the *Bṛhan-nāradya Purāṇa* (38.126) to confirm His statement:

*harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

“In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, the only means of deliverance is the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way.” [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 6.242]

In His teachings to Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu singles out chanting as the most essential practice:

Of the nine processes of devotional service, the most important is to always chant the holy name of the Lord. If one does so, avoiding the ten kinds of offenses, one very easily obtains the most valuable love of Godhead. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya* 4.71]

In your purport to this verse you quote from Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s *Bhakti-sandarbha* (270):

Chanting the holy name is the chief means of attaining love

of Godhead. This chanting, or devotional service, does not depend on any paraphernalia, nor on one’s having taken birth in a good family. By humility and meekness one attracts the attention of Kṛṣṇa. That is the verdict of all the *Vedas*. Therefore, if one becomes very humble and meek, he can easily attain the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa in this Age of Kali. That is the fulfillment of all great sacrifices, penances, and austerities because when one achieves ecstatic love of Godhead he attains the complete perfection of life. Therefore, whatever one does in executing devotional service must be accompanied by the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya* 4.71, purport]

We find a similar discussion between Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rāmānanda Rāya. There, Mahāprabhu asks, “Among all worshipable objects, which is the chief?” Rāmānanda Rāya replies, “The chief worshipable object is the holy name of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 8.256)

These quotes and others like them establish that chanting the holy name is undoubtedly the most essential process of devotional service. Is it any wonder, then, that ācāryas such as Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī feel compelled to share their hearts:

“I do not know how much nectar the two syllables ‘Kṛṣṇa’ have produced. When the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is chanted, it appears to dance within the mouth. We then desire many, many mouths. When that name enters the holes of the ears, we desire many millions of ears. And when the holy name dances in the courtyard of the heart, it conquers the activities of the mind, and therefore all the senses become inert.” [*Vidagdha-mādhava* 1.15, cited in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā* 1.99]

“All glories, all glories to the all-blissful holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which causes the devotee to give up all conventional religious duties, meditation, and worship. When somehow or other uttered even once by a living entity, the holy name awards him liberation. The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is the highest nectar. It is my very life and my only treasure.” [*Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.9, cited

in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā* 4.71, purport]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, through your teachings and practical example, you stressed the importance of chanting the holy name.

Of all the regulative principles, the spiritual master's order to chant at least sixteen rounds is most essential. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 22.113, purport]

All of you must chant at least 16 rounds of beads daily and without fail. That is first and foremost. [Letter to Rāmeśvara and other initiates, 28 April 1971]

The first management is that each and every member in the temple is chanting sixteen rounds regularly and following the regulations. . . . But sixteen rounds is not very large number. The lowest in India is twenty-five. . . . That is our spiritual strength—to observe the regulative principles and chant at least sixteen rounds. Then you do other things. [Room conversation with GBC, 25 May 1972]

At the same time, you stressed the importance of chanting without offense as the means to realize that Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's name are nondifferent:

One must come to the understanding that the holy name of the Lord and the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself are identical. One cannot reach this conclusion unless one is offenseless in chanting the holy name. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi* 8.16, purport]

If chanting is the most important *aṅga* of devotional service, then the most important principle in relishing the fruit of chanting (*prema-bhakti*) is to chant in the mood of complete helplessness, fully depending on Kṛṣṇa as our only shelter:

It is the aspiration of a devotee that while he chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* his eyes will fill with tears, his voice falter, and his heart throb. These are good signs in chanting the holy name of the Lord. In ecstasy, one should feel the entire world to be vacant without the presence of Govinda. This is a sign of separation from Govinda. In material life, we are all separated from Govinda and are absorbed in material sense

gratification. Therefore, when one comes to his senses on the spiritual platform he becomes so eager to meet Govinda that without Govinda the entire world becomes a vacant place. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi* 7.81, purport]

Having mined these priceless gems from your Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, letters, and room conversations, I feel deeply inspired and committed to strive to chant the holy name purely, calling out sincerely from my heart rather than just mechanically from my lips. Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for gifting me the holy name nearly fifty years ago. There is no way I can ever repay you for this gift, but if I can please you by sincerely trying to chant the holy name without offense and helping others to do the same, I will take that as your causeless mercy upon me.

In anticipation of receiving your mercy, although most undeserving, I will take solace in these words of yours:

Just chant Hare Krishna and everything will be all right. [Letter to Madhukara, 19 August 1974]

Your humble servant,
Giridhārī Swami

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

“My respectful obeisances to 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.”

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you very much for nourishing and enlivening my famished and ignorant soul daily with your awesome books and incredible lectures. Without these, I would be truly dead.

Your unworthy servant,

Amala-bhakta Swami

*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*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I got off at the Ashby BART Station. Berkeley was unknown to me. I never spent time there. I had lived for close to two years across the bay, in the West Bay, in San Francisco. There had been a growing and uncomfortable feeling of desperation, although the exact cause was hard to pinpoint. It was a fairly warm day, but in the Bay Area mostly days *are* warm especially in the East Bay. San Francisco can be moody and cool giving you the impression that the weather wishes you would leave soon, but the East Bay was different, warmer. I did not know what to expect, but subconsciously I expected, I guess, everything. It was like a treasure hunt or an adventure novel. I was going to a location to which I had never been, in a city in which I never spent time; searching for something “I could not even give a name to” that would answer all questions, even the ones I didn’t even know how to ask.

When I arrived there was a *Bhagavad-gītā* class in progress. I had never read *Bhagavad-gītā* but the devotee was knowledgeable and friendly and I was at the end of my rope. Like an expert chess player, Kṛṣṇa had brought me into checkmate. There was no other avenue to pursue, no other cards to play, no other piece to move. I was not even slightly aware of the full ramifications of *that day, that day* that would forever change my life; how could I have known? That day had started out exactly like any other. It had started in my room on Oak Street, near Golden Gate Park. My life had been sinking into a dark airless void emotionally and existentially. I was not specifically isolated nor alienated from the people with whom I had spent the last months, but I was isolated from the human race as a whole in a way that I thought was unique to me. Now I know that such internal experiences are a part of the spiritual awakening. The time was most probably the fall of 1975 in the so-called real world of material existence. The hippie-era was in full swing. There was plenty of dog poop on Haight Street and many of the businesses that

had been boarded up were starting to reopen in this high capital of modern culture.

It would come to be that I would join the Kṛṣṇa consciousness Movement that very day and stay that very night in the Berkeley Temple with people I had never met before. When I saw Rādhā-Gokulananda I started to cry, though I could not say why. The next day was nothing like any that I had lived before. I rose up from a cot at 3:30 am, the light suddenly flipped on from pitch darkness and the threat of cold water from a bucket erasing any thought of languishing one more moment in the cot. Zero to 60 in five seconds.

I washed and found some clothes to wear from the clothing merge; everything hinged on who got there first. All cloth was a faded orangey color. I had never worn a *dhoti* or *kurtas* or *kaupins* (?!?!!) before. My life was externally, profoundly unfamiliar and this was a strange contrast to the day before where things were externally familiar, but inwardly alien. I struggled to memorize Sanskrit songs—how do these people remember these words in this ancient language? It was amazing to me. Prabhupāda’s voice on lecture tape over the PA system was almost undecipherable and peppered with Sanskrit terms which were opaque to me.

I was assigned to doing the laundry for everyone, the famous laundry merge. There was no toilet paper in the bathrooms. A devotee informed me that Rsabhadeva’s stool smelled like roses. I learned about chanting the maha-mantra. I helped in the kitchen and I was busy all day long doing something. At night when the lights went off so did I, just like a rock dropping into deep mud.

Inside, my mind raced and screamed; I had intense nightmares; I wondered how I could explain what I was going through to any of my former friends or my parents. I knew that it “waren’t gonna happen.” We ate from waxed paper sheets laid on the floor. I learned about the four regulative principles and feared that I would fail in following them. I learned that if we wanted even one sweet ball, we would have to come back to this material world. I tried to control my mind and quickly realized that I couldn’t.

As crazy as things seemed and as full-scale as my life-change had been, I still felt that somehow I was really home, for the first time in my life. I learned about the glories of ginger which at that time I loathed and tried to force myself to eat it. Sweet rice was transcendently experienced by me for the first time, significantly altering the outcome of my life and cementing my relationship with

spiritual life.

My body seemed to mock me saying, “You think you are going to control me, ha...ha...ha!” I was afraid the senses would win and of course in many ways they did, but only all the time. I got wiped out easily, couldn’t stop eating *prasada*, felt doubtful and felt internally very crazy. My mind felt like a patchwork quilt and a tornado, but at the same time I felt—whatever else—at some unknown time in the future, things would even out if I just held on.

I was put in *saṅkīrtana* van and dropped off in a parking lot with a small lunch and some candy lollipops to distribute for donations. Often it was THE Spanish K-Mart in San Jose which was one of those spots for devotees that were not gifted on *saṅkīrtana*. The van would return eight hours later to scrape me up off the pavement with a scraping knife. Some of the *bhakta* friends that I had recently made and who, like me, had recently joined would disappear in the middle of the night. The next day you could see their eating plate in the prasadam hall or book-bag hanging as if some kind of monument to their “valiant-but-now-on-hiatus” go at spiritual emancipation. I would learn that they had “blooped”.

I would try to read the *Bhagavad-gītā* on my “stay-back” day. Immediately I would fall asleep vowing never again to eat sweet rice before trying to read. I took to walking while I read and then I could read for extended periods of time even stretching to 25 minutes. Afterwards I would ask myself, “What did I just read? What did I just read?” If there had been an EEG connected to my scalp, the read-out would certainly have been a flat line registering no electrical disturbances. How would this KC thing ever work out for me?

Sometimes leading devotees would do things that made no sense to me, disturbing me, and I would think, “One day I will understand!” Now I look back and understand that indeed some of the things they did, actually DID make no sense at all—ever. On *saṅkīrtana* people would ask questions and I did my best to answer usually resulting in long rambling arguments. Often people would tell me that I was controlled by some leader who was preying on my gullibility or that I was working directly for the devīl.

I could not piece out, how in the world, the *Bhagavad-gītā* had any kind of flow to it—it seemed like a giant *non-sequitur*. Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna changed subjects apparently arbitrarily every four or five śloka. Soon, reading the *Bhāgavatam*, I wondered why things were not in some sequential order or at least in some topical order.

On the other hand, in contrast, the philosophy never showed any seams or cracks. Looking back, I am glad that this problem arose for me because it led to my effort to understand the deeper structure of Vedic literature.

Was I working for the devil? Would I one day wake up and re-join Christianity? My mother was praying for it to be. But around me I saw other devotees going through the same struggles as I and this gave me courage. As many doubts as I had, still I could not shake the explanations that Krishna consciousness has about our predicament here in the material world and the explanations that it has about the simple solution to them. There really are no other answers. No other convincing answers. Blow on about your devil and your “only way”, blow on. Whatever, blow on!

I kept thinking over and over that if I just held on, things would even out, I would get mentally stabilized. And I am here to tell you that that day certainly did come; it certainly did happen, but, alas, it was not early on as I had hoped. Only when I had been in Kṛṣṇa consciousness for about 25 years did things really mellow out mentally and emotionally. Now I can only thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Also I am grateful that somehow or other, in spite of all the raging mental chaos, I did not leave Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

This collage of my early impression from my beginnings in Kṛṣṇa consciousness makes me understand what a journey I have taken and how easily it could have all gone bad. Today I marvel at the fact that I would not trade lives with anyone—really. I am neither rich, nor famous, nor good looking, nor intelligent, yet I am happy being myself, even though I have such a long way to go. I wish I was more deeply devoted, of course, but I also marvel at the distance that I have come and the purification had I *have* received. Externally these things surely must be invisible, but I write about them here as I shudder to reflect on the other possible ways that my life might have turned out.

Your servant,

Candraśekhara Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. That dust is *mora pañca-grās*, the ultimate foodstuff for those wanting to advance in spiritual life.

Karuṇā, compassion, the next quality in my quest to demonstrate a drop of those qualities by meditating on your transcendental *līlā*, is among the most salient. Progressively, the previous qualities of *kṛpālu*, mercy, *sarva-upakāraka*, working for the welfare of others, and *vadānya*, magnanimity, all culminate in compassion, being related attributes. Compassion includes mercy while being demonstrated practically in spiritual welfare activity. It embodies magnanimity to the fullest extent.

Everything you did and said was bathed in compassion. However, since compassion manifests in many different forms, it cannot always be recognized as such. You explained to us that the real mercy of the spiritual master comes in the form of chastisement and correction, for the duty of a merciful ācārya is to rectify his followers. We see throughout Kṛṣṇa’s creation so much tribulation, which is just a manifestation of His compassion.

To try to individually enumerate all of the manifestations and appearances of compassion throughout your dealings, writings, and spoken words would be too voluminous for the purposes of this offering. Lord Brahmā’s statement *tat te ’nukampāṁ su-samīkṣamāṇo bhujāna evātma-kṛtāṁ vipākam*, accepting whatever happens in one’s life as the Lord’s mercy, can be compared to everything you did and said as yielding the same benefit, and must be taken in the same way.

Your loving and caring demeanor, especially during the beginning days of ISKCON, might be seen as classical compassion, such as cooking for, and waiting on, the devotees. Still, perhaps the most wonderful display of your kindness, warmth, and sensitivity was when you would chastise someone and then buffer it, eliminating any apparent harshness, with your loving smile. However, there is no doubt that anything and everything that emanated from you was one of the multifarious aspects of compassion.

Although your compassionate nature is all-pervading, still someone as reluctant as myself to take advantage of it must beg you to give some special charity to this most foolish soul. I thank you a hundred million times for accepting me as your aspiring servant.

At the dust of your sheltering-giving lotus feet,

Guru Prasād Swami

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet on this auspicious anniversary of your empowered appearance on this planet.

In the context of my advancing age, the more I try to put energy into serving your movement, the more opportunities for service open up. I feel like I am being empowered, but when I look at my actual achievements I feel so incognizant that I turn my attention to your biography, Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta, written by His Holiness Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami, who captured the mood of your divine empowerment in everything you did.

You instructed us, “*Phalena paricīyate*—judge the success or failure of an activity by its result.” This instruction inspired me explore your divine intimacy with your Guru Mahārāja and with Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. I feel elated and filled with awe and reverence as I reflect on your relationships with Them.

Again, you instructed us:

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

“If one has unflinching faith in executing the instruction of both Guru and Kṛṣṇa, all the conclusions of the *Vedas* will be revealed to him.” Yes, one has to see the harmony between Kṛṣṇa’s instructions and Guru’s instructions, because Kṛṣṇa and Guru are intimately related. Therefore, in a humble state of mind one must execute their instructions without hesitation, material expectations, or personal calculations. Thus one will become free from false ego and all claims of proprietorship.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am inspired to relish your relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa and your Guru Mahārāja, and I also wish to deeply cultivate my relationship with you and Kṛṣṇa. As Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote, “Thou art living still in sound.” You created a system for us to cooperate for your ultimate pleasure and that of your Guru Mahārāja and Kṛṣṇa. I can find no fault in this system; the only fault

is in me, in my noncompliance. Therefore I realize that I will become empowered in ISKCON only by cooperating with the other devotees for your pleasure.

This is my humble offering at your lotus feet.

Your insignificant servant,

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

Bhakti Chāru Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet on this auspicious anniversary of your divine appearance. Please bless me that I can remain engaged in your service life after life.

Last year, as chairman of the GBC, I had to become involved in the activities of our movement all over the world. Previously, I could focus on my own zone and projects, but now I had to be concerned with all our problems and activities. Fortunately, I had support from the two other members of the GBC Executive Committee—Madhusevita Prabhu and Bhaktivaibhava Mahārāja—without whom I would not have been able to shoulder this awesome responsibility.

It was a wonderful experience, and an opportunity to see how you created ISKCON both to fulfill the prediction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and also to provide a shelter for those who surrender to His teachings—a house where the entire world can live in harmony and experience the most profound joy and satisfaction.

This past year I also decided to support our Ministry of Cow Protection and Agriculture. I know how concerned you were about developing these two crucial areas of Vedic culture. Human civilization rests on these two gifts of Kṛṣṇa in the form of Mother Nature and Mother Cow.

When Kālakaṅṭha Dāsa from Brazil became minister of this department and I saw his sincerity and enthusiasm, I decided to give him the support he needed. I met with devotees involved in cow protection in the West and became aware that it was especially difficult in colder regions, because when the cows grew old and stopped giving milk, taking care of them in winter became very expensive, and their numbers increased every year. Ordinary farmers sell cows to the slaughterhouse when they stop giving milk,

but this is out of the question for us. So caring for the older cows had become an ever-increasing liability and a crisis.

I thought that if we could find a large piece of land where the weather was not so severe, we could let the retired cows graze in the pasture throughout the year. I looked for land in the southern United States and came across a 116-acre property that had been a Christian youth-retreat center. With the help of several other devotees, we succeeded in acquiring it—a beautiful piece of land along a lake, with facilities from the retreat center already available. We decided to utilize the property not only for taking care of the cows but also for preaching.

The facility is situated about thirty-five miles from Orlando, a city that attracts tens of millions of tourists every year from all over the world. The area is also home to well-known universities and multinational companies employing hundreds of thousands of people.

We started our Sunday-feast program less than a month ago, and it is already gaining popularity. Those who attend are impressed with the beauty and serenity of the place, and people have started to volunteer to help.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless me that I can develop this project as my humble offering to your divine lotus feet and contribute in some insignificant way toward your mission of making this world Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Your humble servant eternally,

Bhakti Chāru Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

What you have given in the form of your various “matchless gifts,” including the Holy Name, your books, your ideal example, your practical instructions, the temples along with their Deities, your genuine loving caring for us—all this is utterly beyond compare. And although you humbly deny any personal credit beyond what is due one who faithfully delivers the teachings coming down in the line of our disciplic succession, your particular articulation of its message is, so to speak, finely tuned to open the vault of the hearts of the denizens of Kali-yuga. You poetically prayed to be used as Kṛṣṇa’s instrument, and He has clearly reciprocated fully with your urgent plea.

All of us worldwide, greatly fortunate recipients of your mercy, may easily relate to Śrī Uddhava’s mood of supplication:

*daṣṭāṁ janāṁ sampatīṁ bile ’smin
kāḷāhīnā kṣudra-sukhoru-tarṣam
samuddharaiṇāṁ kṛpayāpavargyair
vacobhir āsiñca mahānubhāva*

“O almighty Lord, please be merciful and uplift this hopeless living entity who has fallen into the dark hole of material existence, where the snake of time has bitten him. In spite of such abominable conditions, this poor living entity has tremendous desire to relish the most insignificant material happiness. Please save me, my Lord, by pouring down the nectar of Your instructions, which awaken one to spiritual freedom.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.19.10)

But unlike the most exalted Uddhava, we have mainly come from greatly fallen backgrounds, especially the many thousands of us brought up outside of India, Bhārata-varṣa, where some remnant of true culture still survives. At least in my own case, the words “brought up” or “raised” cannot even apply to my upbringing. Rather (and with all due respects to mom and pop!) my so-called “up”-bringing was (as we used to say) a “bring-down,” a “bringing down.” However, as Kṛṣṇa poured His merciful instructions down

upon Uddhava, you have mercifully poured down upon me and millions of others the nectar of ultimate, essential instructions, thus extinguishing the forest fire of blatant materialism, along with the embers of insidious impersonalism. As some unknown sage has reminded us:

*janame janame sabe pitāmātā paya
kṛṣṇe guru nahi mile bhaja hari ei*

“Birth after birth one receives a mother and father,
but one who gets the benediction of guru and
Kṛṣṇa conquers the material energy and returns
back to Godhead by worshiping the Lord.”

To connect with any bona fide spiritual master is the rarest blessing. Indeed, as stated in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, one must be *bhāgyavān*, extremely fortunate, for the genuine guru plants the seed of devotional service in our heart. Properly cultivating the *bhakti* creeper that sprouts from this seed brings us closer to Lord Kṛṣṇa, endows us with *parā vidyā*—authentic spiritual knowledge—and makes us blissful, even while we yet inhabit these temporary material bodies.

But then there’s the *yuga* factor . . .

In the 1968 Collier-MacMillan edition of your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, you permitted the famous poet Allen Ginsberg to contribute something in the way of a foreword:

Kali Yuga we really are in it, heavy metal Age, where
Spiritual common sense seems like magic because
we’re ensnared in brainwash network—the mechanical
conditioning of our unconditioned consciousness. . . .
How terrible to be trapped (Ourselves!) in that worst
the Kali Yuga. Well, at least nothing more bad can
happen, we’re at the bottom of the material barrel. . . .

Of course, Mr. Ginsberg may have been overly optimistic with his “at least nothing more bad can happen.” Unfortunately, Kali-yuga is in fact destined to get a lot worse and has, arguably, tangibly worsened during the decades since Allen penned the words just quoted.

But then again, are we not in the Golden Age of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu? Moreover, are we not again blessed by the guidance and protection of the predicted great general (*senā-pati*) who is

none other than Your Divine Grace? Yes, Śrīla Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs were also recognized as specially empowered, great generals of Mahāprabhu, and we are in fact designated as *rūpānugas*. But without your mercy, how would we have had even a ghost of a chance of gaining the shelter of the Six Gosvāmīs, of Lord Caitanya, or of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa?

All right, this writer is but a classic “mercy case,” hardly fit to be serving as your disciple, what to speak of carrying the *tridaṇḍa*. But by your unfathomable kindness I may be— or, more realistically, *may* I be “wising up” in my old age. Let me now serve you as you please.

At your divine lotus feet,

Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami

Mukunda Goswami

*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*

Eighteen ninety-six Calcutta,
A heart was born softer than butter,
And when Armageddon
Would in later years threaten,
He taught Kṛṣṇa’s names one must utter.

From the start liberated
And always elated;
The *mṛdaṅga* he beat
Made a sound so sweet.
Then in sixty-seven, when a drum came from heaven,
His playing excitement generated.

* * *

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda:

The parade you'd stage
At an early age;
The *rath* you towed
Was Kṛṣṇa's abode;
All these were signs of a budding sage.

In just a short time
Your peers you'd out-climb;
You trotted the globe,
Your home was the road.
Hare Kṛṣṇa! Your life was sublime.

You're here to stay:
Kali's at bay
For ten thousand years.
Music to ears.
Oh happy, happy day!

Friendly to guests who came in streams,
You tore to bits their impersonalist dreams.
Against "progress" you railed,
You said science had failed—
It fell apart at the seams.

You wrote in the night,
While disciples slept tight.
You changed the world,
And with texts unfurled
You made many sinful wrongs right.

Your books were your mace
For a dying race.
With logic and reason
Always in season,
T'was a philosophy many'd embrace.

In public you'd speak—
You were never meek.
With words profound,
Your cherished sound
Was loved by the strong and the weak.

Before you was madness,
A dreary blackness.
You answered questions
And found the connections
That always turned sadness to gladness.

You taught God's Supreme,
That He plays with a team
And conquers all,
Not as a puff-ball,
Not as an out-of-reach dream.

Your devotees, infallible soldiers
With actions stronger than boulders—
They made people think,
Brought them to the brink.
Some bowed, dipping their shoulders.

The trail you blazed
Left scholars amazed.
You questioned the knowledge
They learned in college.
They left your *darshan* with consciousness raised.

You're here to stay:
Kali's at bay
For ten thousand years.
Music to ears.
Oh happy, happy day!

Your words, sugarcane,
Sweetened stout and lame.
Always the master,
Your wit was faster,
Yet humility named the game.

One saw oceans of cream,
As in a dream—
A miraculous thing.
We wanted to cling
To what seemed a bright sunbeam.

When you'd appear,
T'was like "Spring is here!"
All would kneel,
And things got real
For the far and the very near.

When Bangladesh preaching
Was unleashing,
Your followers were bolder
Than a British soldier
With a Bengali mom's heart a'beating.

When you'd reminisce,
Moments not to miss,
Your past you'd remember
With full surrender,
And disciples would roll in bliss

What you had to say
To us every day:
"Serve the Lord
With lotus or sword."
We'd choose the most practical way.

You're here to stay:
Kali's at bay
For ten thousand years.
Music to ears.
Oh happy, happy day!

Your servant,
Mukunda Goswami

TRIBUTES
BY
INITIATED
DISCIPLES

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you and to Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu!

Prahlād Mahārāja prayed to Lord Nṛsimhadev, “How is it possible for me, who has been born in a family of *asuras*, to offer suitable prayers to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead?”

I feel like that. I’m not qualified to praise you. I’m still conditioned by my birth in an ungodly family.

However, I aspire to achieve pure *bhakti* to you and to the merciful Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Now that I’m closer to the end of my life I realize that I should be eager to offer my mind, words, deeds, wealth, and life to you—that is, to your *saṅkīrtana* movement. In that way, I’ll truly be qualified to glorify you. And in that way, perhaps you’ll give me your mercy so that I might achieve pure *bhakti* to you.

I know that you don’t need my service. Even composing these words of praise to you is not for your benefit, but it benefits me.

Still, I must submit them to you with feeling. Śrīla Prabhupāda, when I chant and serve you, feelings of affection come and go. Eagerness to surrender to you comes and goes. It’s mixed with desire for prestige, adoration, and distinction. But I’m anxious to become purified of these desires. I want to serve so that my sentiment is without any tinge of selfishness. Mahāprabhu has shown the way. Let me serve you without selfishness.

My service is for your pleasure. You’re so kind that you came to this world to reclaim the fallen souls on behalf of Mahāprabhu, but in my self-centered way, I think that you’ve come to save me. Yet sometimes, in my right mind, I don’t care for saving. I just want to serve you wherever I go in the material universe.

Sometimes I lament my condition here in the world and cry out for you, but how am I qualified to do so, when I am the one who was eager to enjoy the illusory fruits of this world in the first place? I was excited at the prospect of false enjoyment, and now I’m bound by *māyā*. So, naturally I want liberation. Let me remember to love you so that I don’t get myself in that predicament again.

Sometimes I long for your association and I think that when I die I might go to serve with you and the others at Mahāprabhu’s lotus feet, but unless I purify my mind, it’s a false hope. So, as I try to do just that, kindly show your mercy to me. I am Dayānanda. You

told me that my name means “one who takes pleasure in the Lord’s mercy.” So, kindly fulfill the name you gave me and allow me to bathe in your mercy.

Like Prahlāda, you’ve done a wonderful thing by converting the sons and daughters of the ungodly people of the West. Previously, we followed the *yavana* religions, which are meant for those conditioned by passion and ignorance. But you brought the *saṅkīrtana dharma*, which is pursued by those even beyond goodness.

Our forefathers conquered and enslaved the peoples of this world. They did this so that they might live like kings and queens without a thought of offering anything in sacrifice to Kṛṣṇa. Now we, in our arrogance, turn to machines to serve us. And those machines give us the enjoyment of kings and queens without the embarrassment of having to enslave other humans. Our ungodly societies are still based on the desire to enjoy this world. We don’t even offer sacrifice to the demigods. Our societies are truly absorbed in ignorance. And America is at the forefront. The people of our nation assume that they have the right to enjoy and control, and so our military and our businesses roam the world looking for opportunities to do so.

My relatives and countrymen and women kill billions of animals each year. The sin is unfathomable. But I stand by helplessly and complain that they are just not interested in *saṅkīrtana*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I beg to be an instrument in the conversion of these demons. They are my relatives and friends. Unfortunately, I still have affection for them. How will they be saved if I stand idly by? Please use me to liberate them like Kṛṣṇa did with Arjuna. Let me burn up their sins, not by extinguishing their bodies, but by using the great power of Kṛṣṇa’s name.

There’s no other hope for me in this world. And there is no other hope for those trapped here with me. I’m trying to have attachment for chanting and serving. As I do, please help me. Make me your instrument.

Your humble servant,

Dayānanda Dāsa

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the dearest person within my life and within my heart:

Please accept my humbly offered obeisances at your lotus feet again and again and again.

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

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

*namas te sāravate deve gaura-vāṅī-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.

In all the three worlds, you are not to be equaled (and that is a fact).

So it is that each day I submit my head at your feet with the same plea: “Please allow me to be of service to you today.” And each night, I again plead: “Please allow me to do better tomorrow.” While this practice may appear routine, those moments with you are supremely real. At the same time, while that reality can be blurred by so many factors, the supplication remains the same and my intention remains the same: “Please allow me to serve you, day after day after day. Please tell me what I can do for you (in particular situations)?”

The blurred reality tries to find a manner in which to remain true to you and your mission even when it seems that every once in a while this could mean closing my eyes for a moment to certain “realities” on the ISKCON ground, or remaining silent like a dull doll when it’s obvious there’s something askew that is not being addressed or acknowledged by us, your timeworn soldiers.

So I continue to ask you, “Please let me serve you,” but the real question is how to do so in such times. For that to be understood, I clearly must improve and increase my own level of devotional aptitude and surrender. In the meantime, I am forced to beg you to please give me an indication of what I should do in what seem like perilous times, both for your mission and in my fading life.

Your fame is spread all over the three worlds (and that is a fact). You are famous because you are a cent per cent pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa and have not deviated from your spiritual master's instructions (and that is a fact). You are glorious because you have used your life to rescue fallen souls without consideration of your own convenience (and that is a fact). You are incomparably compassionate because you gave up your position of frolicking in the forests of Vraja with Kṛṣṇa and his cowherd boys to come to this wretched world (and that is a fact). You are most dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and therefore He personally came to speak to you when you sat down to write your books about Him (and that is a fact).

Therefore, I could never bear to leave your service (and that is also a fact).

Your forever dāsī,

Mālatī Devī Dāsī

(as named by you in Jan. 1967)

At Your Feet

When we offered our food
saying Śrī Viṣṇu
and Jagannaths hung round our necks,
before we ever knew
what it was to miss you
and Who Is Crazy was a major text,
we'd ride in the morning
by subways and buses
to the storefront by 7am,
following a yearning
to practice a process
of transformation via Sacred Hymn.
You'd slip off your humble
gray Hush Puppies
and mount the plain Vyāsāsana –
we the assembled
were so very lucky
to bathe in your Kṛṣṇa *kīrtana*.
Years have passed by –
decades indeed –
the mantra is still on my tongue.
And no matter where I
direct my feet,
I'm at your feet and I am still young.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I humbly prostrate myself at your lotus feet. I actually typed “prostate” first, because this body is pretty old now and sadly, my mind (what’s left of it) is still very much attached to it, despite the ever-increasing demonstrations of its frailness and temporary nature.

Looking back, I am so grateful to have been honored by your presence in my life. I wish I could have been a better servant to you, but my material desires got the best of me and your message only partially resonated in my heart. However, I still consider myself to be among the most fortunate beings on this planet (and many, many other worlds) to have had the opportunity to meet you, bask in your presence, take initiation, and follow just a few of your instructions, though poorly.

Looking at the present, I see the incredibly wonderful expansion of your movement, and it fills my heart with awe and joy. I cannot begin to fathom the depth of your influence on so many people who continue to spread your teachings to this world with such devotion and enthusiasm. I have newfound respect for your disciples, who have sacrificed so much to please you. I can only pray that one day a small spark of their love for you will ignite the embers of service in my selfish, mundane heart, at least what’s left of it.

For the future, I pray that until my last breath I will not lose this small appreciation I have for the gift you have given me: a path that leads home, back to Godhead. Though I stray, the path remains, and at least I am aware of it now. And of course, all your wonderful disciples are there to remind me in word and deed of the true purpose of life, to love and serve Kṛṣṇa, as they do day in and day out, despite so many obstacles. May your glories and the glories of your beloved Kṛṣṇa spread to every corner of this world, to every town and village, as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya desired.

Thanks, one more time, for letting me be of some incalculably small service at your lotus feet.

Your servant,
Ranadhir Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
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I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa on this earth, having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of 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 actions and accomplishments stagger my mind, for they appear impossible for even the most powerful persons of this world. You translated and wrote commentaries on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, you traveled worldwide and while doing so lectured twice each day—once each morning on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and once each evening on the *Bhagavad-gītā*. You sought to challenge the underpinnings of contemporary atheism by establishing the Bhaktivedanta Institute, and even during your morning health-maintaining walks you were preaching to your disciples and followers. At every opportunity you criticized impersonalism, impersonalists, cheating spiritualists, and hypocrites, and you relished speaking to scholars, professors, and various dignitaries of limited knowledge. You wrote thousands of letters and personally counseled and guided numerous disciples, and you simultaneously managed ISKCON and trained your senior, more accomplished followers to lead, preach, and manage on your behalf. You struggled and forcefully fought to build great temples in Mumbai, Māyāpur, and Vṛndāvana, pushed the publishing and distribution of your books, and dealt with managerial problems and disciples’ personal issues as they arose, which they regularly did. In the midst of all this, you daily met with life members, guests, and

disciples in your rooms, in whatever country those rooms were in.

Although the issues that confronted you day after day may have caused you anxiety, your overall demeanor was astoundingly calm, a state that clearly stemmed from the secret depths of your heart. As we sat in your room in Fiji in 1976, observing you after you'd spoken to the devotees and guests present, you leaned back, relaxed, with your hand gracefully resting on your head. "In the beginning," you said, "I had nothing and there was no anxiety. Now Kṛṣṇa has given so much and still there is no anxiety." You then smiled in your unique way, illuminating the room as the sun illuminates the earth at sunrise.

Yet despite the peace born of your deep Kṛṣṇa consciousness, your service demanded you to struggle on countless fronts as you tirelessly worked to establish the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement throughout the world. Despite managing a worldwide movement as well as errant, unsteady disciples, you nevertheless described yourself as free from all anxiety! How was that possible?

The only reason I can discover for this is that for you, your mountain of work was not quite work—it was *sevā*, service, born of your intense *bhakti*, which flooded the world like a tidal wave of desire to serve and please your Guru Mahārāja, Śrī Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. And that mood of *sevā* transformed difficulty into ecstasy.

In a song describing *ātma-nivedana*, the soul's offering of himself to Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote: "Troubles encountered in Your service shall be the cause of great happiness, for in Your devotional service joy and sorrow are equally great riches. Both destroy the misery of ignorance."

And as you yourself wrote in a purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.8.6, the ecstasy of loving surrender transforms hardship to pleasure and work into *sevā*: "[S]uch difficulties are very gladly suffered by the devotees in preaching because in such activities, although apparently very severe, the devotees of the Lord feel transcendental pleasure because the Lord is satisfied."

In a Māyāpur lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.9.27, with strong feelings you expressed the principle of service that underpinned your life:

You don't make Kṛṣṇa your order-supplier. That is mistake. Therefore *anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam*, pure devotion means first of all you learn not to order Kṛṣṇa: "Kṛṣṇa, give me this, give me that, give

me that." Don't bother Kṛṣṇa. That is the beginning of spiritual life. *Anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam*. You prepare to carry out every order of Kṛṣṇa. Then it is spiritual life. Don't make Kṛṣṇa your order-supplier. You become order-supplier of Kṛṣṇa.

And then later in that same lecture:

You wanted some rotten things; you get it. You wanted some stone and wood, you take it. But if somebody wanted to serve—"I have given Him service"—all right, you serve. . . . This is the process. . . . *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*. Therefore the principle is *sevānurūpam*. Always remember this . . . Kṛṣṇa is always ready to give you *prasāda*, all favor. Why not? Without doing something, you are getting so much favor. Without Kṛṣṇa's favor you cannot live even for a moment. He's so kind. Even the cats and dogs, they are also getting Kṛṣṇa's favor. [But the] real facility is how to serve Kṛṣṇa. That is real facility. So we should always ask, beg. That is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's instruction:

*na dhanam na janam na sundarim
kavitam va jagadisa kamaye
mama janmani janmanishvare
bhavatad bhaktir ahaitukī*

This facility we should always ask: "Kṛṣṇa, I don't want any facility of this material world. I am not worthy to serve You; still, I am begging. Give me this facility so that I can get the chance to serve You." That is life's success.

And what is the result of one who possessed, as you possessed, a mood of "everything for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure"? This the demigods reveal in a prayer to Lord Śiva: "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." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.7.44)

In you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we see manifest that intense, ecstatic desire to do whatever is required, no matter how difficult, to please Kṛṣṇa. Your ability to accept any austerity was born not so much

out of your tolerance as out of your *bhakti*, your devoted, loving desire to serve and please Kṛṣṇa. May I realize even a fraction of your glory, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and may your glory become known throughout the world.

Sadly, I find myself unable to either imitate or follow your full-hearted, compassionate example. I find myself only able to pray to be allowed to serve you in at least some small corner of your movement. May your brilliant example of unselfish, devoted service remain always the light of ISKCON. May your effulgent *bhakti* enlighten my midnight-black heart.

Your servant,
Bhūrijana Dāsa

Rukmiṇī Devī Dāsī

The rainy season,
In Śrī Vṛndāvana,
To hear from you,
We had such fortune.

As Nārada heard,
From the Bhaktivedāntas,
In the rainy season,
But in rapt attention.

I pray to hear as young Nārada heard,
As Parikṣit heard those last few words,
As Arjuna heard with attentive mind,
His bow again lifted, with arrows aligned!

To chant as a child who cries for her mother,
To drink your words as a calf to the udder,
To be simple, sincere, no other motivation,
To hear in this way brings deep realization.

To sit near you again, and again to hear,
With longing heart and open ear,
To carry Vṛndāvana as you have done,
My heart ignited through sacred sound.

When, oh when will that day be mine?
All seasons, all places, become sublime!
Such fortune still mine in this very moment,
To hear your dictation and words most potent.

The rainy season
in Śrī Vṛndāvana
To hear from you
We *have* such fortune!

Your eternal servant and daughter,
Rukmiṇī Devī Dāsī

Sachi Devī Dāsī

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your sublime lotus feet today and forever, I fervently pray for your divine mercy.

Forty-nine years ago, on Easter Sunday 1969, at the La Cienaga temple in Los Angeles, I beheld a mystical image of your holy self, through an ever-increasing sacrificial fire, as you accepted and initiated young new disciples. One month later, as a fledgling resident at this same *sanga*, you noticed me, now a very blissful soul who had found relief from what had been a very anxious existence. Your holy self smiled and inquired, "Are you happy now?" That same theme came up many times over the course of the next eight plus years, and in your personal association I was always happy regardless of my circumstances.

Today, I am in grateful awe of your ever-flowing countless gifts to further my path to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. Even though I am currently residing a distance away from any well-established temple program, through your lasting spiritual association and example I am still able to make some spiritual progress by rising early to hear and chant my

rounds in the Brāhma-muhūrta time. I am experiencing wonderful results from this sacred time, a time that seems untouched by bodily aches and pains, material anxieties and preoccupations, as well as the daunting reality of old-age and possible disease at my doorstep, to try to surrender to Nāma Prabhu.

During Brāhma-muhūrta, I find that hearing, chanting, remembering, and associating with you through your *vāṇī*, is so much more within my reach and thus a well-spring of hope and joy is relished. Through your example and instructions you have made it attainable, even to me, to experience the magic of the transcendental internal potency that you promised to us through your lectures and your books. So, here I am Śrīla Prabhupāda, similar in age to you when you embarked on your miracle journey to the West, to reclaim us for Kṛṣṇa by gifting us with the inspiration, the method, and the strength to cling to your lotus feet. Please keep me forever in the glow of your love, compassion and blessings and may I be of some service in attempting to repay your mercy upon me.

Your eternal daughter,

Sachi Devī Dāsī

Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu Dāsa Adhikārī

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

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

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

I was born in the darkest of ignorance, but you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, my spiritual master, have opened my eyes with the light of knowledge and although I am now able to see somewhat spiritually, still my material vision is yet to improve.

O my Lord and Master! O soul of the universe! O divine son of Bhaktisiddhānta! Your glories and fame are eternal and no one will be able to take that from you, and they continue to leave behind an

eternal legacy.

People may taunt me time and time again, thinking I am much too puffed up to be of any use to myself, let alone to anyone else. They may shun or neglect me, or even ostracize me from their societies, parties or groups. I might be considered to be completely mad and deranged, a rascal of the first order and nothing but a demon and trouble-maker in the garb of a so-called devotee and a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda. I could be criticized for my thinking, my words, and my behaviour.

I humbly submit this is all and only your unlimited mercy upon me. My Lord and Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I beg, may that continue, if you so desire.

Only you are able to fathom the depths of depravity that we see around us. Please bring upon us the bright, brilliant, light of knowledge into the eyes of the people of this world and give them the hope they are so anxiously seeking for. They are all suffering due to gross ignorance and will continue to do so until they actually decide to follow your instructions.

People may consider you to be long gone. But just as night follows day, as the moon continues to give its soothing moonlight and as the stars in heaven continue to twinkle, similarly the bright sun of your divine instructions can never be destroyed. Your divine instructions will once again shine forth again and the planet will become a Vaikuṅṭhaloka, as you so desired.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Yours faithfully,

Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu Dāsa Adhikārī

*om ajñāna timirāndhasya jñānāñjana śalākayā
cakṣur-unmīlitaṁ tena 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 122th Appearance Day, also coinciding with the 52nd Appearance year of your movement in America, I think it is especially poignant to recall some of the precious gifts that you have given to us all, through which to conduct devotional service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa.

I recall in a previous Vyāsa-pūjā *Tributes* offering (see Śrīla Prabhupāda *Tributes* 2015, 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 toils 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 some wonderful services in London and elsewhere under the leadership of Jai Nitāi Prabhu and others. It is with his grace, along with other devotees, that we have an oasis in the middle of London. The London Temple performs such beautiful festivals — Gaura Pūrṇimā, Janmashtami, Rathayātrā, just to name a few. There are food distribution programmes and *Bhagavad-gītā* classes. Thousands are taking shelter because of the festivals and spiritual welfare programmes enacted through your mercy and grace. This very modest offering is an opportunity to reinvigorate oneself and catch up. May we all be inspired in your service.

It is estimated that there are now between six to seven million people practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the Western world in one form or another. It seems to us that we should all strive to inculcate

principles which are actually directed at making ourselves purer and purer and thus, forwarding the movement in a way that is compatible with your personal instructions to us.

Within centres of excellence and in buildings and temples where science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is practiced, there should be a prospective where visitors are always reminded of your valuable contribution and message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I feel there should be a grand hall called ‘Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Hall’ which will become a magnet to attract devotees.

So I finally return to my point which is love of Godhead. By your example and your books, you have provided us with a method and 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 with adulation.

Today, of all days we seek your causeless mercy.

Your humble servant

Cathurbhuj Dāsa
London, April 2018

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I am hanging on to your words, your teachings and your instructions for dear life. I'm without good association Śrīla Prabhupāda, and I'm surrounded by people who are full of lust, hatred, envy and anger and who are so lost in darkness. My only shelter – my only oasis on this desert of hot burning sand – is your words, your *vāñī* presence in this world.

I have a little bit of contact with my godbrothers and sisters thanks to the technology that has been introduced into human society for instant communication and information, but otherwise I'm drowning in the ocean of nescience.

Please Śrīla Prabhupāda give me the strength to overcome my egoism and lethargy so that I may become an instrument – a tool – in your hands since that's the only way I can taste the nectar for which I'm always anxious and craving.

I am so thankful and so fortunate that I met Your Divine Grace when I was young and I am so unfortunate that I have squandered that good fortune all these years.

I will try to do better Śrīla Prabhupāda. I will. May my head always find shelter at your lotus feet.

Your servant,
Swarup Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālam
paṅgum laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam aham vande
śrī-gurum dīna-tāraṇam*

He reason 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 — His Divine
Grace Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the summer of 1969, by the will of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, I was fortunate to meet your disciple. I had been praying to Lord Jesus to bring me to a genuine perfect person, and clearly my prayers were heard and answered. The moment your disciple showed me a photograph of you, my life made perfect sense. I knew I was here for you and within a moment I asked your disciple, "What should I do?" He directed me to meet him the following day at 14:00, and he would take me to the Sunday Feast at the nearest temple which was in Los Angeles.

Since that memorable day in August 1969, I have been chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa under your direction happily. By your grace my faith in you and in the Supreme Lord has grown with each passing year.

In 1969, your family of disciples was only a couple of hundred young boys and girls, yet in my heart I could understand that in the decades and centuries to come, all Godly souls will bow down and offer their respect and love to Your Divine Grace.

These days, wherever I go in the world, people see the beads on my neck and the tilak on my head and they spontaneously say, “HARE KṚṢṂA”.

You are the agent of Lord Caitanya who has brought the divine name of Lord KṚṣṅa to every town and village, in every language and culture.

In 1969, when I’d say I don’t eat meat, fish and eggs, I was looked upon as if I was a person gone mad! Today, we see that all over the world people have become conscious of the rights of animals to enjoy their life. This too is your mercy.

In 1969, Śrīdhām Māyāpur was a sleepy little village, where a few Gauḍīya Maṭhas “rang the bells”. Today tens of millions come to Śrīdhām Māyāpur, and soon, when the temple you envisioned is open, many millions more will come.

It is my view that you are the greatest preacher and teacher to ever set foot on this earth. Some might disagree with me, but the vastness of your dedication and service, the vastness of your accomplishments means you are truly the Greatest of All Time. (G.O.A.T.).

I am falling flat at your feet again and again and again. I am imploring you to never forget me and bless me to remain forever – birth after birth – as a humble servant of your servants.

All glories to Your Divine Grace, Jagad Guru Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Vaiṣṅava dāsa anu dāsa,

Bhakta Dāsa
Bangkok, Thailand

Kusha Devī Dāsī

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga!

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My heartiest daṅḍavat pranams to your holy lotus feet!

I beg to remain in the shelter of Your Divine Grace forever. Our lives have become fortunate by your accepting us as disciples. Your direct instructions remain the jewels of our existence. Those jewels light up your *shishya’s* path back to the spiritual world. Following in your footsteps keeps us safe.

Thank you for releasing us from the clutches and obligations

of the material world and allowing us the blissful life of dancing, chanting and feasting.

Although our feasting days are numbered and our ability to enjoy our senses have diminished, you have given us so much more than the veneer of sensory pleasure. You have given us enduring indelible vistas and *sudha sattvic* sound vibrations that produce within us the beatitudes of Rādhā and KṚṣṅa’s divine pastimes and glories. Your glories are beyond comprehension and more. Thank you for letting us borrow a glimpse of your *adhikar*, allowing us to hold on to your *dhoti* and go with you into the spiritual realms, even though we are without passport or visa.

Your temples are embassies to the spiritual world. Sanctuaries where the pastimes of Their Lordships take place daily and we are allowed to enter in and get Their gorgeous *darśana*.

I thank you for giving us the encouragement to reside in the Dham back when we were young children, for it has facilitated untold volumes of compassionate realization and merciful unearned advancement.

It is we, tiny lonely *jīvatmas*, who meander between joyfully remembering KṚṣṅa and miserably getting distracted thus forgetting KṚṣṅa. You bring us back into remembrance through the simplicity of chanting the holy names of the Lord in a humble state of mind. The spiritual sound vibration purifies the surroundings, benefiting whole societies, whole nations, whole worlds. We congregationally give thanks to you, every day of our lives. Thank you for this life of song and dance.

Some say we are sentimental, it’s true, but the reality is Their Lordships’ miraculous exchanges with Their devotees are certainly profound and faith exhilarating. Confidence and enthusiasm replace confusion and chaos. Our lives have a glow of joy, due to your simple instruction to ‘chant and be happy!’ Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! I remain forever in your debt!

I pray to remain yours truly in your divine drace,

Kusha Devī Dāsī
Camp Vrindavan

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

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

O glorious Spiritual Master, you introduced Guru-pūjā into the morning program with a beautiful prayer composed by Śrīla Narottama dās Ṭhākura: *Śrī Guru-vandana*. Not because you wish for any worship or honor, but to give us the opportunity to give proper homage to you, because it's in giving honor to the spiritual master, the disciple can attain so many blessings and make advancement. This time has become dear to me as I feel your presence very deeply, every morning.

śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma, kebaḷa-bhakati-sadma... My dear eternal Spiritual Master, your lotus feet are the source of my life, source of my true happiness, and source of my priceless connection to the Divine Couple. It's impossible to achieve the mercy of the Supreme Lord without taking shelter of your lotus feet. These two feet are the most amazing. As no other two feet before has traveled to the wicked Western world and empowered numerous lost souls to take up Bhakti-yoga. Those feet didn't leave until they set a course for the world to follow, for the next 10,000 years. You are giving pure devotional service, devoid of fruitive activities, mental speculation and material desires. Let me serve your lotus feet in humility with great awe and reverence.

bando mui sābadhāna mate... With great care and attention I bow to these lotus feet. Dear mind please understand it's only by his mercy that I can cross over this miserable material existence and obtain Kṛṣṇa. Give up your pride, take a straw in your teeth. After wasting birth after birth in trying to enjoy one painful material body after another, finally we have met our savior. Jagat Guru! This may be my last chance for billions and trillions of years. Don't let it slip away! Bow continuously, serve selflessly and cry sincerely for his mercy.

guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete kariyā aikya... Make the instructions from the mouth of the spiritual master one with your heart, and do not desire anything else. Śrīla Prabhupāda you are expert in the science of devotional service. Your teachings

are completely in-line with all the revealed scriptures. Not only that, you are expert in imparting this knowledge. Your words are inconceivably powerful. They are so potent if one is eager to attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they should take your words into their hearts as their life and soul. I beg for this blessing, guild your words to the deepest part of my heart and take residence there, then empower me to wholeheartedly follow those sacred instructions.

śrī-guru-caraṇe rati, ei se uttama-gati je prasāde pure sarba āsā... These instructions on the science of a loving relationship in devotion to Kṛṣṇa is the highest destination, the best of anything that can be obtained. This is *prema seva* or service in love. Please give us that transcendental greed to achieve the loving service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa. *yasya prasādād bhagavat prasādah*. Only by the mercy of the spiritual master can one attain the mercy of serving the Lord. Only by pleasing the spiritual master can one please Kṛṣṇa. Begging for the mercy to please you.

caḅhu-dāna dila jei, janme janme prabhu sei... Birth after birth he opens our dark eyes, covered by nescience and gives this transcendental knowledge. Birth after birth I need to devote my existence to his lotus feet. There is nothing else. Wherever you want me to go Śrīla Prabhupāda, for whatever number of births, as long as I can be immersed in your service I will go to serve you.

divya-jñāna hṛde prakāśita... Knowledge through which one can learn how to worship Kṛṣṇa. This sacred knowledge can be revealed in one's heart only by the mercy of Śrī Guru. You will always be my worshipable lord. Please give me this knowledge in my cold dark heart so it can transform into a suitable vessel to serve you.

prema-bhakti jāhā haite, abidyā bināśa jāte... Bestowing *prema-bhakti* and destroying ignorance. This is your only business. The Vedic scriptures sing of your character. They proclaim you as the greatest of all personalities. Kṛṣṇa says to Uddhava in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11:17:24 *ācārya mām vijaniyat*, "One should consider the spiritual master as non-different from Me" By associating with you, through your books we become familiar with all the Vedic knowledge. Such a perfect arrangement for any sincere devotee.

śrī-guru karuṇā-sindhu, adhama janāra bandhu... O spiritual master, ocean of mercy and friend of the fallen souls, you are the teacher of everyone and the life of all people. No one can estimate the power of your mercy. The world has never seen such a magnanimous personality. This material realm is in such a precarious condition. We

are expecting calamities can come at any time. How can I remember you under stressful conditions? How do I appropriately honor you to show my gratitude? Please let me always remember your words.

lokanāth lokera jībana... You are the life and soul of the devotees. Please continue to spread your shelter to every town and village so everyone will know your true glories and have relief from the burning fire of material existence. Please give me a place in this army you have gathered to serve you.

hā hā prabhu kara dayā, deha mora pada-chāyā... O my lord please be merciful to me, give me the shade of your lotus feet. There is no pleasure in this world beyond service to your lotus feet. No other shelter can be found other than following your instructions. Your glory is in saving the most fallen souls and this one stands with hands folded before you begging that I be included. Please don't neglect me. Forgive me for all my faults and shortcomings. Please mold this broken heart so it's suitable to serve you. As you have shown you can do anything.

ebe jaśa ghuṣuk tribhuvana... May your glories now be proclaimed throughout the three worlds. Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda! Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda! Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Begging to be a dāsī anudāsī,

Nāgapatnī Devī Dāsī

What is the one thing in ISKCON which is taken for granted as well as professed the most?

“You’re not that body, Prabhu”, is the ubiquitous phrase and concept bandied about and relied upon in numerous and varied instances to resolve any particular situation. Once, in 1970, a devotee in the temple rushing to do something stepped on my foot in such a heavy and forceful way that I fell to the floor writhing in pain. Looking down at me on the ground, no doubt with sincerity and enthusiasm, he said: “Prabhu, you’re not that body.” Although not very appreciated by me at that moment, albeit philosophically true, there is a gulf of difference between our theoretical understanding and our actual realization of ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*’.

Devotees often tend to pooh-pooh and berate ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*’ as either a Māyāvādī mindset or something inferior, unnecessary or totally contrary to, or deviant from Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*. Nothing, however, could be further from the truth. Yes, “*Brahmeti, Paramātmēti, Bhagavān iti śabdyate*” is a sort of package deal for devotees, but that does not mean that we devotees are exempt from, bereft of, or abhor the experience of actually realizing that we are not this material body. The same also goes for the understanding that the Supreme Lord as Supersoul can give us directions from within. Granted, of course, we have to gradually become purified and chant inoffensively, at least to some degree, to be enabled to enter this exciting, wonderful and exponential realm of Kṛṣṇa conscious realization.

Rupa Goswami bears this out by his statement: “Unless and until one is situated beyond the bodily concept of life, one can fall down at any moment.” To be situated beyond the bodily concept of life is the inceptive stage of transcendence, *liberation*, and a prerequisite for further advancement, albeit not requiring a devotee to make a separate endeavor. It doesn’t matter who we are or what position we hold, within or without ISKCON, it is equally applicable to each and every one of us. Therefore, we all are responsible and accountable to become and remain qualified by strictly following the four regulative principles, chanting sixteen rounds of Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra daily, and carrying out sincere and uninterrupted devotional service. In conjunction with, and arising from these devotional practices, we should also become fixed and dedicated to Śrīla Prabhupāda and his movement, and cultivate genuine affection for him by *catching up his*

lotus feet. No one, and I mean no one, regardless of who we think we are, is absolved from adhering to these basic qualifications being the direct instructions of Śrīla Prabhupāda. If one believes otherwise, he may go on for some time but will certainly not enter that *amazing realm* of Kṛṣṇa conscious realization.

Now, we, the aging disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda, must, with all seriousness and determination, detach ourselves from material sense gratification and factually surrender at Śrīla Prabhupāda's lotus feet. This can be accomplished only by living and rendering devotional service *beyond the bodily concept of life.* We ought not, dishonestly or falsely, presume that we are already there, having left that lower thing behind long ago— and now are free to be absorbed in the *higher thing of Kṛṣṇa Līlā and Raganuga Bhakti.* Śrīla Prabhupāda said: "*Pretension cannot stand.*"

Let us please Śrīla Prabhupāda in this way, because it is the only way!

Your worthless servant,
Śatadhanya Dāsa

Nārāyaṇī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We deeply pray
Please show us the way
To with you always stay
And lest we stray
We sincerely pray
Saranam prapadye
Let us follow your way.

Of Kṛṣṇa's sun you're a ray
And with Kṛṣṇa you play.
So today we pray
On your path to stay
Though difficult the way
Pick us up if we stray
If attention does splay
Let your purports be our way
Our intention to pay.

Let us always say
we will follow your way
Till we again meet one day.
On this day
I eagerly pray
To serve you in every way.

As the sun relieves
Darkness of night
So you relive ignorance,
Giving spiritual sight.
You show us
what to do right,
Take our hand
And lead us to light.

We follow your orders
Due to your might
Holding on to
Your lotus feet tight.

Please never
Go out of our sight
Till we meet again
In Goloka's light.

Although this life
Will some day end
We pray to you
Kṛṣṇa's mercy you'll send
So every moment
We will spend
With mind on Kṛṣṇa
And your service never end.

Please give us a sign
Of compassion divine
of love's design
Mercy of thine
Please let us shine
In love divine
Your instructions divine
Are mercy's sign.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda
For always making me
Beautiful Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa
To always see.
My desire is to always be
At your lotus feet
A honeybee.

Your servant,
Nārāyaṇī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

On this day, the anniversary of your appearance, devotees around the world rejoice that you came and changed the trajectory of our lives.

Devotees *around the world*. This worldwide *saṅkīrtana* movement was predicted by Lord Chaitanya; confirmed, revived and propagated by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who passed this mission on to his son, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who recognized in you the personality who would finally and fully deliver Lord Chaitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement to the whole world.

Let us all, the extraordinarily blessed recipients of your teachings, embrace the power and simplicity of what you so patiently taught us. Let us chant Hare Kṛṣṇa without guile. Let us try our best to think of Kṛṣṇa always; to strive to embody Vaiṣṇava qualities in all that we do.

You have told us that you are always with us in your books. Let us, on this, your appearance day, recommit ourselves to live our lives as you instructed. This worldwide *saṅkīrtana* movement is continuing on the strength of your teachings. You are so dear to Lord Chaitanya. Our tiny brains cannot fathom who you really are. But this we do know: you are our ever well-wisher.

Thank you for bringing Lord Chaitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement to the world and delivering your disciples from continuing life in the manner of hogs and dogs.

We owe everything to you.

Your humbled, grateful daughter,

Mahāśinī Devī Dāsī

THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU

(Part One)

The last time I saw you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, was in Los Angeles, in June 1976. You had flown in from Honolulu, where the climate had helped you translate up to six times faster than usual. We were behind again at the BBT, where devotees still spoke in hushed tones about “the rush,” the round-the-clock production of 17 of your books the previous year in just two months. Now I was your rookie indexer, struggling to keep up with the latest book in progress: *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Canto Seven, Part Three.

You arrived at LAX in the evening, the grandest airport reception I'd ever seen. It seemed like all the devotees on the West Coast had converged on New Dwaraka, the largest ISKCON community of the time. “Śrīla Prabhupāda appeared like the full moon crossing the night sky,” Hari Sauri Prabhu would later write in his diary, “surrounded by an entourage of bright stars, all gathered to pay homage to their lord and master.”

A few months earlier, a BBT devotee had invited me to join a group studying your newly published *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. I hadn't read any *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* yet, so I looked forward to going. When I entered the room, though, I overheard someone dismissing the value of your *Bhagavad-gītā*. “It's just the ABCs, you know, like Prabhupāda said. *Gopi-bhava* is the real nectar.”

An alarm went off in my head. Since Vyāsa-pūjā Day 1972, I had been memorizing your *Gītā*'s verses. Although I was a typical American, burfi-chomping *brahmacārī*, memorizing the *Gītā* inspired and protected me. Who was this guy minimizing *my Gītā*? Throughout the readings, I noticed, the topic was the same: Kṛṣṇa's intimate exchanges with His cowherd girlfriends, the *gopis*. I also noticed the listeners exchanging sappy smiles. *Dopey-bhava*, I mused. I never went back.

Pretty soon I noticed the same smiles popping up around Venice and Watseka, where the BBT had its offices across from the temple. Day by day the meetings were becoming a kind of movement, inviting devotees to adopt the mood of Lord Kṛṣṇa's cowherd girls described in the recently published CC volumes. When temple and

BBT managers noticed the devotees' service slacking, they tried to stop the meetings, so the would-be *gopīs* started meeting in secret – one group men, one group women.

* * *

On the third day of your visit, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I missed your walk on Venice Beach. A devotee told me you were repeatedly challenging the knowledge of materialistic scientists, who don't even know, for instance, what ancient cultures have understood for millennia: that the days of the week follow the order of the planets. To my wonder, you pursued the point during *Bhāgavatam* class:

"This morning I was asking that why there is Sunday first and Monday second? Who can answer? Is there anyone in this meeting who can answer my, this simple question? Why, all over the world, everyone accepts Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Somavāra, Maṅgalavāra, Guruvāra, the same thing? There may be different language. And Saturday is last. Why this arrangement? Who can answer? Is there anyone?"

I was sitting close to you when a devotee called out from the back, "Because Sunday is God's day. Sunday is Kṛṣṇa's day."

"That is your sentiment," you called back with a laugh. "Speak scientifically. Nowadays, the scientific days, you have to speak scientifically."

"The order of the planets," said a devotee who had been on the walk. "Yes," you assented, "that is the answer."

* * *

That afternoon, I would later learn, the BBT general manager came to you, concerned about the BBT devotees smitten with the notion they could develop conjugal love for Kṛṣṇa just by imbibing the *gopī-bhāva* described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. You were quick to condemn this notion. Before studying the *gopīs'* lives, you said, one must be completely free from material desires. Otherwise there is every chance of becoming a *sahajiyā*, a cheap imitator. Which was what was happening. The stage was set for a showdown.

The next morning, as I was walking across Watseka to the temple for breakfast, I saw a BBT friend of mine—an occasional visitor to the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* study group—walking around the corner of the

temple toward the side-door leading to your quarters. Then I saw many *sannyāsīs* and GBCs walking the same way. Unknown to me, you had just called for all the visiting leaders, along with the leaders of the study group, to come to your rooms immediately. Again from Hari Sauri's diary:

"Prabhupāda had just sat down in the middle room for breakfast when Pradyumna came in, obviously quite disturbed. Prabhupāda allowed him to come up to his small table, already set out with his silver *ṭhālī* of cut fruits, puffed rice and fried cashews. Pradyumna began to complain about the study group [the BBT manager] mentioned yesterday. He told Prabhupāda one devotee was reported to have said that the Gītā was too bodily conscious and 'external' and that he became inspired only by reading about Kṛṣṇa's confidential, internal dealings, especially those of the *gopīs* in the Śrī *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

"Śrīla Prabhupāda was so disturbed by this news that the piece of fruit he held in his hand never made it into his mouth. Abandoning breakfast, he went back into his *darśana* room and called for all GBC men and *sannyāsīs*, as well as for several members of the study group. He demanded to know who was involved."

Hari Sauri's account of the ensuing showdown corroborated what my BBT friend told me later that morning. Still shaken from the experience, he said you were like a lion attacking the delusions of foolish disciples. "Why are you jumping like monkeys?" you demanded. When they tried to justify their *gopī* focus by saying Lord Caitanya recommended it, your fury only increased: "You want to scrutinizingly study Caitanya Mahāprabhu's instructions, but why just the parts about the *gopīs*? Why don't you scrutinizingly study where Caitanya Mahāprabhu says *guru more mūrkhā dekhi' karila śāsana*, that His guru found Him to be a fool and told Him he was not fit for anything but chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa? Why don't you scrutinize that part? First become a fool like Caitanya Mahāprabhu before jumping over like monkey!"

When they still tried to justify themselves, saying they were only studying your books, you then compared your books to a drugstore. Although a drugstore has all kinds of drugs, one needs

a doctor's prescription specific for one's disease. Similarly, although everything is in your books—from the beginning stages of devotional service up to the highest *rasas*—one must study appropriate to one's qualification. So, "first *Kurukṣetra-līlā* then *rāsa-līlā*, first deserve then desire." When I heard that, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I was glad I never returned to that study group, which had minimized the value of your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*.

* * *

Early the following morning a golden sun rose over Santa Monica's cliff-top gardens. Scores of us accompanied you as you walked briskly through the well-kept park, sometimes chanting, sometimes stopping to answer questions as the Pacific's breakers rumbled below.

It was difficult to hear your answers, so rather than struggle to come close, I began to reflect more on yesterday's showdown. So strong you were, uprooting a *sahajiyā* weed swiftly and decisively from the heart of your BBT. I recalled another experience of your spiritual power when I joined in the summer of 1970. In the run-up to the first large Janmashtami/Vyāsa-pūjā festival at New Vrindavana, I saw four rookie *sannyāsīs* preaching that you were God, causing havoc among the devotees. You were in Tokyo, on your way to India. You had just formed the GBC, whose members didn't believe the *sannyāsīs* but weren't sure what to do, so they called you. Your answer was swift and strong: Expel them! And later: "They have said I am God. Therefore, if I am God, they can also become God. This is impersonalism."

To protect Lord Caitanya's mission, you had acted decisively to uproot a Māyāvāda weed, and now you had acted decisively to uproot a *sahajiyā* weed. Invaluable lessons. I felt grateful to have witnessed both, and as we continued walking, I witnessed yet another side of your mercy.

At the far end of the park, a well-dressed elderly lady sat on a bench, enjoying the morning sun. As we approached her—a veritable squadron of saffron and white—I wondered if she was becoming nervous. Then I noticed you chose the walkway that would run right by her bench. As you led us closer, she looked somewhat astonished, then just at the point of passing, you looked directly at her, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and said charmingly, "Good morning!" To which she

responded with a gracious smile: "Oh, isn't that nice!"

Your thunder, your rose...they are all your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda. So many other things happened in Los Angeles that June—the last time I saw you—but I will have to save them for next year's tribute.

All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Your servant,
Sureśvara Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are directly the mercy manifestation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

As Your Divine Grace has clearly explained, a disciple must always feel himself to be a fool in the presence of his spiritual master. Śrīla Prabhupāda, may I always feel myself to be a fool, and may I always feel myself to be in the presence of Your Divine Grace, my eternal master and guide. Fool though I am, I beg to come before you and, briefly and honestly, to speak my heart. Hare Kṛṣṇa!

As the years pass, I see myself becoming more and more diminished in various ways. I also see that, by the transcendental arrangement, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are increasingly with me, pervading my life. This is the greatest blessing, and it often comes by way of the wonderful, selfless services being performed by your surrendered followers.

I encounter Your Divine Grace in biographical films and videos, in books by numerous authors, and in works of transcendental art. I hear your words in your recorded lectures and talks and in the lectures and videos from your sincere followers. You are manifest in transcendental book distribution, opulent Deity worship, and in Rathayātrās and other festivals. Your Divine Grace is in devotional seminars, in *sādhu-sangas*, in Varnashrama Dharma communities and cow protection.

I am undeserving, yet I am daily being blessed. From worldwide preaching via the internet, down to the support and inspiration I receive from my wife, and certainly in the purifying association of my godbrothers and of so many prabhus throughout your ISKCON—in all these ways, I find my life filled with the mercy and transcendental presence of Your Divine Grace. I can only conclude that, not only is Your Divine Grace still with me, but in many ways, you are *increasingly* present, more and more.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept these words as my simple, humble attempt to glorify you on your divine appearance day.

Your servant,

Maṇḍaleśvara Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you, our beloved spiritual master.

We are at war Śrīla Prabhupāda. Kali-yuga is progressing and the so-called civilized current day society is finding new inventive ways to take advantage and utilize for personal aggrandizement our precious Earth and the divine cow. You saw this coming and told us in your books how and when our world would change. We knew we were not living on a planet like Kṛṣṇaloka but even though you warned us we could not and cannot imagine the increasing ways that have been and will be developed to manipulate Mother Cow, Father Bull, and the Earth.

Please bestow us strength to fight the war against the forerunners of Kali-yuga. Please bestow intelligence to choose our battles. Please bestow compassion for the suffering of the cow and bull. Let that compassion be the leader, the reason, the purpose of the fight. Please bestow the wisdom to recognize allies in the war even though they may not have familiar faces.

Our oldest cow passed away at the beginning of this year, 2018. She had come to us as a baby and was with us for 20 years which made her 100 years old in human years. Deterioration through aging did not take over her life until her last month. Her name was Gauravāṇī, and she was blessed to live such a healthy, happy life far away from the slaughterhouse.

In your books, you wrote about compassionate cow protection and why it is crucial to the development of peace and happiness on Earth. We were fortunate to become your disciples, and therefore we were exposed to this knowledge. We took this knowledge seriously and have cared for and protected 35 cows to their natural passing and are presently protecting 24 cows who will also receive lifetime protection.

Gauravāṇī was one of the 35 cows we had the privilege to love

and protect. Yes, we were fortunate to experience love for a cow. Twenty years of caring and protecting Gauravāṇī made a deep impression on our souls and hearts. She was a member of the family, and when she could no longer stand up, we knew it would not be much longer before her passing on to greener pastures. Two and half weeks later she left us.

It is not possible to compare Gauravāṇī's life to the life of cows not fortunate to be recipients of lifetime cow protection. It is like comparing heaven to hell. In a different time on Earth, Gauravāṇī's life would be typical of all cows or even less happy than most cows. Even when you were here on Earth with us, most cows were treated better than the majority of cows are treated today. Kali-yuga has advanced and continues to progress.

Gauravāṇī was a unique cow in many ways. She was the herd matriarch. When Gauravāṇī entered the herd to acquire water, the nutritional buckets or salt block, the cows would part to clear her path. When she loudly mooed to let the herd know they should follow her to a new hay bale they would all follow. She had the wisdom and the experience that comes with living a long life, and the other cows recognized her qualities with respect.

When we found Gauravāṇī down in the pasture and tried to move her to a more comfortable place with the hope that possibly she would be able to walk, the ISCOWP herd gathered around us. They started sniffing Gauravāṇī and us and then began licking Gauravāṇī. They stayed close to us as we moved Gauravāṇī to a more comfortable location. Within the following two and half weeks, she was never alone. There was always at least one cow sitting with her.

Most cows on Earth die far from the herd, away from friends and family and loving caregivers. What did they do to deserve that? They produce milk, and their flesh is tasty to humans who are ignorant. A lonely death along with other tortures are their reward. There are no Gauravāṇīs in the commercial dairy industry. The cows do not live much longer after their milk supply dwindles. The slaughterhouse is their destination.

You wanted us to protect cows like Gauravāṇī. You had a vision, a plan. You envisioned every temple to have a restaurant and farm. The farm supplies the restaurant and the temple with vegetables and cruelty-free milk from lifetime protected cows. The restaurant sells *prasāda* prepared from the farm's cruelty-free products. The temple offers foodstuffs to the Deities from a pure source pleasing to you

and Lord Kṛṣṇa. An economically self-sustaining plan that is still applicable today.

The war rages. Do not let us become complacent in our illusion of comfort while Mother Cow and Father Bull live in hell. Give us the strength to fight the war, to help materialize your plan and give the divine cow shelter and peace. Let us recognize allies who have compassion for the cows and let us have the intelligence to engage them in protecting cows. Let them hear your plan, and most importantly let them understand cow protection so they may join us in helping the cows as Kali-yuga progresses with plans to increase their exploitation.

Your descriptions of Lord Kṛṣṇa and his cows roaming the pasturing grounds and woods of Vṛndāvana fill our hearts and minds. The happy faces of the cows and calves as they look upon their cowherd boy, Kṛṣṇa, their milk flowing abundantly due to their extreme bliss. Such a different world from what we now experience, but a world that we can remember to inspire us to fight the cruelties of Kali-yuga upon the cows.

It is our honor to assist you to achieve your plans; we pray to be worthy.

Thank you.

Your servants at ISCOWP,

International Society for Cow Protection, Inc.

Sankarshan Dāsa Adhikārī

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you kindly saved me from the darkness of delusion. I was being completely carried away by my material senses, but you so kindly liberated me from the hell I was in by teaching me how to revive my factual original identity as the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. Along with your most amazing association, you also gave me the most wonderful association of hundreds and thousands of sincere souls who have dedicated their lives completely to you. What a wonderful, inspiring example they have been for me!

Now I am begging you—my most beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda—that

you please engage me for all of eternity in any way that you like. You have ordered us to deliver the world by making it Kṛṣṇa conscious, so if it pleases you, I am willing to accept the world deliverance mission as my duty and stay here within this material world birth after birth until your world deliverance mission becomes fully accomplished. I leave it totally up to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, what my service will be, but within my heart your order, “Deliver the world,” is vibrating very strongly.

And thank you for writing me personal letters to help me become Kṛṣṇa conscious.

Your servant,

Sankarshan dāsa Adhikārī

Srikanta Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer you my heartfelt obeisances at your lotus feet. It is at your feet that I beg to always remain, aspiring to your service.

You, as the manifestation of Lord Caitanya’s mercy, brought the life-saving message of the *Bhāgavatam* and the blissful sacrifice of the Age – Harināma saṅkīrtana – to all who would receive it. For some most important years of my life, I had the undeserved good fortune of assisting you in that mission, at your Book Trust. Later though, I became diverted, my service minimized. But now, with more hearing and chanting, and by your grace, the remembrance of my solemn duty to you is returning. You are so kind to this fallen soul to have not kicked me away; I must repay that kindness by again assisting you, albeit in a miniscule way, in your mission to bring Kṛṣṇa to the world. My needs and desires in this world are boundless; nevertheless, all I ask is that I can grow in your service. Thank you, thank you, a million times over, for all you have given this fallen soul.

Your aspiring servant,

Srikanta Dāsa

Yadubara Das & Viśākhā Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you!

Our heartfelt gratitude to you for allowing us to participate in creating “*Hare Krishna! the Mantra, the Movement, and the Swami who started it all*” — your feature film. By Kṛṣṇa’s grace, audiences throughout the world are appreciating your life story, qualities, behavior, and teachings. Thank you for entering their lives and touching their hearts.

Although we offer you our words, intelligence, and life, we feel that these are insignificant reciprocation for what you have offered us. So, following in the footsteps of Bali Mahārāja who, bereft of everything, “was nonetheless fixed in his determination” to continue to serve the Lord, similarly we pray that we may be also fixed in your service now and forever more.

Your servants,

Yadubara Dāsa and Viśākhā Dāsī

Advaita Acharya Das and Archya Devī Dāsī

Disperse our Misconceptions

Dear merciful compassionate Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Any misconceptions on our spiritual journey you kindly remove with your vast library of authoritative information.

Your divine association is all auspicious as you are constantly in contact with the all auspicious Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Unfortunate fallen souls are enlightened in your company.

As the light of the sun removes all traces of darkness, you remove the darkness of ignorance from our hearts.

Then can we return to our eternal relationship with the reservoir of all pleasure, the Divine Couple Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa

Please immerse us in your ever well wishes

Your unworthy disciples,

Advaita Acharya Das and Archya Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my most humble and respectful obeisances unto you, because you are most dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, having taken shelter of His lotus feet.

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

By studying your teachings, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I get a glimmer of what inconceivable or unlimited means. I cannot understand; that is, I cannot fit within my present experience or capacity to conceive, how it is that every time I consciously read your words, there is something new! It may be a different angle, or facet, of what I saw before; or a new realization all together; or an unseen aspect of yourself – your presence, your compassion, your broad vision, or your oceanic love and aspiration.

Your being the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead starts to become clearer to me. I see no other explanation for the literally endless, fathomless, and unlimited understanding and realization I can derive from your words, than that you are transparently “channeling” Kṛṣṇa. You declared that you did not write these books, Kṛṣṇa did! You are the pure and perfect transcendental transparent via medium.

In spite of my tendency to be complacent, my doubts are disappearing. My faith, trust, and conviction are deepening.

On the one hand, I am more and more aware of my tendency to be comfortable and enjoy independently. Even though I know that it is best for me to be always enthusiastic, dynamically advancing in surrender and service, in expanding your preaching mission, I’m easily attracted to, and eager to enjoy the respect, the appreciation, the adoration, of those who think or say I am an advanced or senior devotee. I clearly see my attachment to that profit, adoration, and distinction – what you warn us so emphatically about: the dangerously fatal attachment to women and money!

On the other hand, as I struggle to adjust my life to hear, chant, and discuss your *vāṇī*, increasingly, I am better equipped to face these temptations. I am more aware, more able to discriminate, and I am stronger. I have no doubt that this is because I am endeavoring

to please you; to follow your guidance, which is to always hear and chant, and discuss “thread-bare”, with like-minded devotees.

Because my natural conditioned tendency is to denigrate myself, to demean and minimize myself, I struggle with the idea of being spiritually proud, confident, and assertive. I can resolve this when I see how you are supremely humble and meek – even self-effacing – AND, simultaneously, confident, powerful and uncompromising in your preaching. There are many other examples: Mahārāja Prithu, Prahāda Mahārāja, and Lord Chaitanya Himself, to name a few.

When I understand and give up my attachment to being the controller, the knower, the enjoyer, and to being respected as an authority, I become peaceful, satisfied, and free to more powerfully represent you effectively.

You have emphasized the necessity of becoming detached, humble and meek, declaring that without that change of heart, I cannot be successful.

“I have noted that you describe yourself as being just a ‘lump of ignorance.’ Actually the devotee should always think like that. That the devotee should feel himself so lowly is the teaching of Lord Caitanya. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu also represented Himself as a very foolish disciple even though He proved Himself as the greatest scholar and was actually Kṛṣṇa Himself. So one who feels humble and meek has the door for the Kingdom of God opened for him or her.” — Śrīla Prabhupāda letter, December 9, 1968

So Prahāda Mahārāja is Vaiṣṇava. Vaiṣṇava qualification is,

*tṛṇād api sunīcena
taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena
kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

CC Adi 17.31

“Vaiṣṇava is always humble—meek and humble. That is Vaiṣṇava. Vaiṣṇava is powerful, but still he is very meek and humble...” — Lecture on SB 7.9.8 — Māyāpur, February 28, 1977

“The symptoms of a devotee are meekness and humility. Although spiritually very advanced, he

will always remain meek and humble, as Kaviraja Gosvāmī and all the other Vaishnavas have taught us by personal example.” — SB 3.29.18, purport

“Although a Vaishnava is the most exalted person, he is prideless and gives all respect to everyone, knowing everyone to be the resting place of Krishna.” — CC Antya 20.25

“By offering His obeisances to the Māyāvādī sannyāsīs, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu very clearly exhibited His humbleness to everyone. Vaiṣṇavas must not be disrespectful to anyone, to say nothing of a sannyāsī. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu teaches, amāninā māna-dena: one should always be respectful to others but should not demand respect for himself.” — CC Adi. 7.59

“Wherever there is a relationship of love of Godhead, its natural symptom is that the devotee does not think himself a devotee. Instead, he always thinks that he has not even a drop of love for Kṛṣṇa.”

“Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura comments that persons who are actually very poor because they possess not even a drop of love of Godhead or pure devotional service falsely advertise themselves as great devotees, although they cannot at any time relish the transcendental bliss of devotional service. A class of so-called devotees known as prākṛta-sahajiyās sometimes display devotional symptoms to exhibit their good fortune. They are pretending, however, because these devotional features are only external...” — CC Antya 20.28 & purport

“...If a person does not become meek and humble, all his studies of the Vedas and Purāṇas and his vast knowledge of the śāstras are simply outward dress, like the costume of a theatrical artist dancing on the stage.” — Kṛṣṇa Book 78

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am deeply inspired when I think of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s statement. “‘ami ta’ vaiṣṇava ...’ If I think I am a Vaiṣṇava then I shall look

forward to receiving respect from others. If the desires for fame and reputation pollute my heart, then I shall certainly descend into hell.” — *Kalyana-kalpataru*: 3.2.8

I have taken this as a motto, a guiding light. It’s a powerful, personal meditation that helps me to transform my mentality, to transform my self-centered, independent mood, into that attitude that is pleasing to you and Kṛṣṇa.

Please continue to be my ever-well wisher, and bless with me with ever-deepening gratitude to you, and with the determination to expand your desire and mission purely and effectively, in a mood of love, humility and detachment.

Thank you for everything, and especially for the inspiring, exemplary association of your sold-out servants, H.G. Dhira Govinda prabhu, H.G. Mother Malini, H.H. Janananda Mahārāja and H.H. Mahā Vishnu Swami.

Your struggling, but sold-out, aspiring disciple,

Ātmānanda Dāsa

Anuttama Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

It is said the test of a man’s greatness is to measure the long-term impact of his life and teachings—to see if his legacy continues to inspire and guide others after his passing from the world.

It has been more than forty years since you physically left this world, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and fifty-plus years since you established ISKCON. But as time passes, your memory is not fading. Instead, time itself is revealing your place in history. Your impact has been momentous, and it continues to grow year by year.

In addition to establishing the ISKCON movement, writing your books, opening temples and rural communities, and traveling around the globe to teach and preach, you inspired a core of

dedicated followers. Today those followers, and your own *vāṇī*, are inspiring others, and the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is having an impact on the global stage.

As my offering to you this year, I highlight a few of the many astounding things that continue to evolve because of your desire and vision. Specifically, how your legacy is expanding through the work of your dedicated followers. We can measure your greatness, in part, by the achievements of those who follow you.

Below are a few examples of the millions of Vaiṣṇavas who are carrying the Seven Purposes of your ISKCON Mission forward, proving that the life, teachings, and legacy of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda continue to bring positive changes in the world.

ISKCON's First Purpose: To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.

Inspired and guided by you, Śaunaka Ṛṣi Dāsa established the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies (OCHS) twenty years ago in Oxford, England, one of the modern bastions of learning. Śaunaka Ṛṣi and his supporters have created an acclaimed academic center. OCHS has produced dozens of highly educated men and women, doctorates and professors, who teach in universities, publish scholarly books, and conduct in-depth research into the Vaiṣṇava tradition and other Vedic traditions. Inspired by your vision, OCHS is robustly “propagating spiritual knowledge to society at large” at the highest intellectual levels.

Purpose #2: To propagate a consciousness of Kṛṣṇa, as it is revealed in the Bhagavad-gita and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

Through 6,000 annual festivals, 3,600 weekly home study groups, and Sunday Feasts and other programs at 650 ISKCON temples worldwide, your followers are systematically propagating “a consciousness of Kṛṣṇa” on a global scale. In India alone, 1.2 million schoolchildren are fed healthy, sanctified vegetarian *prasādam* lunches six days a week through ISKCON Food Relief programs, thus ensuring those children a healthier life, a better education, and a lifelong appreciation for the kindness of ISKCON and its founder-ācārya. These are just a few examples of how your desire to spread

awareness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s glories continues to inspire Kṛṣṇa conscious activism throughout the world.

Purpose #3: To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Kṛṣṇa, the prime entity, and thus to develop the idea within the members, and humanity at large, that each soul is part and parcel of the quality of Godhead (Kṛṣṇa).

Many devotees have been inspired by this aspect of your mission. One example is the Grihastha Vision Team, led by your disciple Kṛṣṇanandīnī Dāsī and her husband Tariq. The dedicated couples of the GVT strengthen devotee families by teaching seminars, training mentors, counseling couples, and sharing wisdom via their book, *Heart and Soul Connection*. By promoting understanding, honesty, respect, and loving relationships among family members, these disciples and granddisciples of yours have brought thousands of devotees closer “together with each other and nearer to Kṛṣṇa, the prime entity.”

Purpose #4: To teach and encourage the saṅkīrtana movement, congregational chanting of the holy name of God, as revealed in the teachings of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, there is a *kīrtana* revolution exploding among the younger generations of your followers. Many thousands of these young men and women have developed a deep love for chanting Kṛṣṇa’s names. They organize 24-hour *kīrtanas*. They stay up late at temples and congregate at homes to chant together. They record music. They perform at yoga studios and at colleges and parks. They love the Lord’s names, and they love you for giving them the gift of the Holy Name. And, that love is reverberating around the world as millions more, influenced by your pure desire and the enthusiasm of these young Vaiṣṇavas, are awakening their attraction to *kīrtana*.

Purpose #5: To erect for the members and for society at large a holy place of transcendental pastimes, dedicated to the Personality of Kṛṣṇa.

Your beloved disciple Ambarīṣa Dāsa (Alfred Ford) and his staff of professional devotees are erecting a stunning Temple of the Vedic Planetarium in Māyāpur. Year by year, brick by brick, the entire ISKCON society is contributing to build this beautiful and holy place. This year, as the golden *cakras* were raised above our

heads and onto the temple domes, it was clear from the smiles and laughter of thousands of Vaiṣṇavas present that, as you envisioned, a world-class holy place “of transcendental pastimes, dedicated to the Personality of Kṛṣṇa” is rising on the banks of the sacred Ganges.

Purpose #6: To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler, more natural way of life.

While the world cries out for an end to environmental degradation, but struggles to rein in the greed and lust that cause it, your granddisciple Gaurāṅga Dāsa and a troupe of dedicated supporters are showing the world how to live simply at the Govardhan Eco Village (GEV) in Maharashtra. The United Nations World Tourism Organization gave the community an award for Innovation in Non-Governmental Organizations for its sustainable practices. Inspired by your teachings, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the GEV empowers local farmers, draws appreciation from famed environmentalists, and is having a global impact in teaching a “simpler, more natural way of life.”

Purpose #7: With a view towards achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, magazines, books, and other writings.

Under the leadership of Vaiśeṣika Dāsa, Vijaya Dāsa, and many others, your book distribution is gaining ever-new life. In our earliest days book distribution was successful but also costly; our enthusiasm was sometimes overzealous and damaged the reputation of ISKCON.

Today, however, devotees are taught the importance of book distribution balanced with the priority of making friends. The prime objective: “To leave everyone with a good impression.” The result? In North America alone over the last five years book distribution has tripled. And in 2016 and 2017, the North American BBT sold a total of more than \$4 million worth of books. Internationally, in addition to selling millions of your books, new languages are added almost every year. Under your continued guidance, Śrīla Prabhupāda, “periodicals, magazines, books and other writings” are being published and distributed as never before.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as scholar and historian Dr. Thomas J. Hopkins stated during the 50th Anniversary of ISKCON event at Harvard University’s Center for the Study of World Religions, you were a “one man channel for an entire culture and religious tradition.” He added that there “is no clear parallel” to your achievements in the

history of world religions. And he said, “ISKCON has done at least as well as Christianity and Islam in its first fifty years.”

Forty years after your departure, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your followers are increasingly inspired by your example, your mission, and your love for Lord Kṛṣṇa. Historians and scholars of religion, too, are noting more and more of your achievements.

While most people are forgotten within forty years of their passing, your name, your legacy, your mission, and your love are only beginning to bear fruit. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are a great man, a noble man, a world-changing man, and a transcendental man. You are our life. Our soul. Our guide. Our guru. Our founder-ācārya. We pledge our lives to helping the world understand you; and through you, themselves and the eternally youthful, unlimitedly beautiful Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Your disciple and eternal servant,

Anuttama Dāsa

Sarvamaṅgala Devī Dasi

Most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we speak of your glory and the word trips off our tongue easily. Though we can barely conceive of your glorious personality, it is one of the sparks of Kṛṣṇa’s splendor which we had the good fortune somehow to catch a wondrous glimpse of when you manifested before our very eyes.

How fortunate are these eyes to have had your darśana and yet, you also taught us most importantly that hearing is seeing. Due to your tireless efforts, anyone who has the desire for true spiritual life can associate with you through reading your divine writings. In this way, we perceive the spiritual master and the Lord with spiritualised eyes. Just as Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that he gives him divine eyes with which to see the Universal Form, so you have shone the torchlight of knowledge in this dark world enabling us to see. I am like a newborn animal whose eyes are still misted over, yet still I can get a sense of spiritual substance by your mercy and I have faith that by following your instructions, one day that salve of love will

anoint my weary eyes.

Because I am not sufficiently steady, my awareness is still unclear but by your miracle, you heal the spiritually blind. As your teaching is heard and imbibed, the world is seen differently. Despite my having committed so many sins for innumerable births, including this lifetime, your mercy permitted me to see the form of the Lord even whilst in this gross body, living in the material realm. Every Vyāsa-pūjā, one of the foremost feelings in my heart is gratitude to you for installing the Deities so we might, in this lifetime, see and develop a service relationship with the Supreme Lord.

Because of you we learned the Supersoul is present within our hearts; thus we can perceive Kṛṣṇa's mercy when He reciprocates with our devotional aspirations and prayers. We cannot give anything up of our own accord – we are helpless – but if we desire to go forward on this path of *bhakti* and if we pray as sincerely as we can, then we experience the reality of spiritual relationship. Śrīla Hari dās Ṭhākura says to Lord Chaitanya that it's known that the Lord always hears the prayers of His devotees and that He reciprocates but no-one knows which door He will come through. In so many surprising moments, Kṛṣṇa guides and astonishes us with situations which illuminate and cleanse our consciousness, enabling us to serve.

One such moment occurred whilst chanting this morning; I looked at the small photograph of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Londonīśvara on my wall and felt the separation from them. How can a neophyte devotee experience a tiny particle of this sentiment? One time, in Scotland I wrote you a note. I laughed with embarrassment afterwards when I re-read it – it was so immature. It was handed back to me with your handwriting on the back saying, "Thank you very much for your kind sentiments. May Kṛṣṇa give you all blessings." You accepted the affection of a neophyte devotee and blessed me. Thank you for keeping me somewhere at your lotus feet, somehow engaged in service. Only because of you we had the privilege to serve Their most exquisite Lordships, see Their beauty, feel Their blessings even from the other side of the world. This is real. What you have given us is a real experience of reciprocation with yourself and Kṛṣṇa. You have described the science. You have educated us as to what is cheap *sahajiyā* behavior and what is the natural flow of attachment developing in devotional service. Devotional service awakens our devotion, naturally. Though it may be only a seedling, it has been

planted in our hearts by you alone. Nothing in the three worlds can compare with even a neophyte tiny taste of this relationship. Nobody else gave me the seed of *bhakti* and you alone are my master, birth after birth. "From him ecstatic *prema* emanates; by him, ignorance is destroyed."

You have shown us, in *Bhagavad-gītā*, that Kṛṣṇa says it is He who takes away the desire for material enjoyment and the *anarthas* from the heart in any way He sees fit. Kṛṣṇa kindly purifies and relieves us due to His supreme mystic omnipotence. We may be in the darkness of ignorance but Kṛṣṇa can certainly still see us in the dark! Not a blade of grass moves without Him and He is directing the wanderings of all living beings. Your purports have explained how to live according to these truths. At least three times a day, we must remember you as the personality who exemplifies servitorship to the Supreme Lord. You have given us the personal perspective – the most elusive and confidential knowledge. Indeed, you have given all that there is to be known. There is nothing more to search – everything is revealed in the descending of mercy, following the perfect master. Nobody can ever replace or compare with you in this world. In fact, as we sing every day, your fame is spread all over the three worlds. How magnificent is your personality, Srīla Prabhupāda. How especially dear you must be to Kṛṣṇa to come down to this material sphere and spread His holy name far and wide, to every continent. You are the beloved of so many souls. You have awarded all your followers, of every caste and creed, the precious mandate to take Kṛṣṇa consciousness to every town and village. May we bring it into many living rooms!

Kṛṣṇa says in 18th chapter, after he has revealed everything to Arjuna – now you can do as you like. That personal choice is always there. All I can do is to try to fix up more in the process you have given us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and in those moments when I am blessed with some taste, to preach with the conviction that comes only by your grace. Somehow, we have been blessed this year to live in a yatra where there is much opportunity to meet favourable seekers of the truth. For this I am so grateful along with appreciation of the enthusiastic association we have gained. Now again, as every year, we must re-commit to more intensive endeavours to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

By witnessing the pure emissary of the Lord, we were fired up out of numbness to become members of ISKCON. I beg you to

excuse my immaturity in spiritual life and my countless failures to be a *pakka* student. I realise there is nothing but your mercy to enable me to become a useful servant. There is nothing so sublime as passing on your teachings to another soul or serving the devotees who have dedicated their lives to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In this way, I aspire to gain your smile.

Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is the goal of life. My desire on this day is to become a sincere chanter of the holy name and to become a humble vessel in what is left of this lifetime to share the teachings you gave to me. There is a saying that a blind man leading other blind men means they will all end up in the ditch. So how foolish to neglect the vision you have given us! You have described *bhakti yoga* as simple for the simple but difficult for the crooked. Simply chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and everything will come! On this day, I commit once more to do the best I can to keep the true vision within sight, to hear your voice in so many ways, to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa with that prayer in my heart of hearts to become an instrument in your ISKCON, Śrī Gaura Nitāi's Saṅkīrtana Mission.

*Your daughter and eternal servant,
Sarvamaṅgala Devī Dāsī*

Nṛsimhānanda Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

You were 75 years old when I joined in Spring of 1971. In a little over five years, you had established an international society spanning the continents. You had taken your disciples to India where your countrymen were astounded to see the Westerners in *dhoti*, adorned with *tilak*, playing *mṛdaṅgas* while chanting the holy names. Already, the Hare Krishna mantra was made world famous by its association with the Beatles. The *Kṛṣṇa Book* had been published,

artists were busy painting transcendental pastimes of Kṛṣṇa under your direction, farms had been established. In 1972, at your Vyāsa-pūjā in New Vṛndāvana, you gave a lecture on the importance of one who sits on the Vyāsāsana. You were asked, "If the purpose of life is to become Kṛṣṇa conscious, then why is māyā so strong?" You immediately replied, "Because your purpose is not strong." Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an incarnation of strong intention – bold, decisive, fearless. Please bless me with that same single-mindedness – to serve the guru in his mission and be exemplary in behavior with deeds and words.

You extend the mercy of Lord Caitanya all over the world. In Nellore, India, on a morning walk, Bhavabhuti prabhu mentioned that the local Gauḍīya Math in Madras had said that if Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West, why did He not go there Himself? You suddenly stopped walking, put down your cane, and said, "Because Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to give me the credit." The credit will be yours for the next ten thousand years. No one else can claim any because without your mercy, we would all be drown in the ocean of material life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had the knack of knowing just how to engage everyone in devotional service. Becoming a devotee was not a cookie cutter process; you treated everyone as an individual. In 1972, London, George Harrison popped in unexpectedly to visit. You immediately invited him into your quarters and had an extended conversation. George had cut his beard and hair, and you tussled it affectionately as you embraced him to your chest. George asked if he should shave his head and move into the temple. You said, "No! You have a great gift for the world in your music. Just continue your music and Kṛṣṇa will be greatly pleased. He will bless you." Then you said, "I will give you ideas for some songs." You got out Bhaktivinode's song book and recited translations of a number of songs. Not long after this time, George released the famous, *My Sweet Lord* featuring the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra. Who knows who will be empowered to extend the mercy of the holy names in every town and village. Only you have the transcendental vision to fan the sparks of *bhakti* and set fire to the materialist's plans to keep everyone enslaved by māyā.

You engaged Yadubara Dāsa and Viśākhā Devī Dāsī with the same personal touch. They were photographers in India and you encouraged them to dovetail their propensities for Kṛṣṇa. This

past year, Yadubara prabhu finished and distributed the glorious film about you. It has been playing in cinema theaters throughout the world to packed audiences. Just as you had said, “They (the materialists) are now feeling the weight of this movement. Formerly they thought these people come and go, but now they see we are staying. Now we have set fire. It will go on, it cannot be stopped. You can bring big, big fire brigades but the fire will act. The brainwash books are already there. Even if they stop externally, internally it will go on. Our first class campaign is book distribution. Go house-to-house. The real fighting is now. Kṛṣṇa will give you all protection. So, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and fight. One movie expert has opined there are so many ideas in our movement. Try to get our ideas into movies.” — letter to TKG Oct 30, 1976.

So as one fire can light many, your engagement of Yadubara and Viśākhā inspired myself, Janardradhi, and now others to dovetail our interests and talents in making Kṛṣṇa conscious movies.

Janardradhi and I continue to focus on getting Kṛṣṇa conscious feature films into the theaters. After five years of endeavor, we finally got some financial support. We hired writers and the scripts are in progress. The first ISKCON leader has gotten behind our work – your beloved Giriraja Swami. Though we have little to show in our five years of work in contrast to yours, we are still very grateful for this opportunity to try to be of service to you in spreading Lord Caitanya’s message all over the world. Please continue to shower your mercy on all the conditioned souls. Your instructions are forever in our hearts. We just pray to be able to serve you.

Your aspiring disciple,

Nṛsimhānanda Dāsa

Director, ISKCON Television, Inc.
Director, Uplifting Cinema Pvt. Ltd.

Ramanya Dāsa

*jaya om viṣṇu-pāda paramahāṁsa parivrājakācārya aṣṭottara-śata śrī
śrīmad a.c. bhaktivedānta svāmī mahārāja prabhupāda—kī jaya*

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, our divine eternal Guru Mahārāja,

Thank you for allowing me to try to glorify you on this most important day – your most holy Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā, a great celebration for your ISKCON movement and the whole world.

All over the world, the Vaiṣṇavas are celebrating in great ecstasy on this very amazing event. Every year it is very difficult for me to try to compose an offering because there are no mundane words to aptly glorify you on your holy Vyas-pūjā day. But today, with a few words I will try a different, simple way.

This year I had a great experience. I was nearing death, about to leave my material body. The only thing I was thinking and praying for was to please you and for some more time to perform more devotional service to your lotus feet. I was praying over and over, and at the same time, remembering your divine instructions.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for being so merciful to me and to the entire world. Under the shelter of your lotus feet I feel completely protected. And by performing devotional services under your guidance I feel devotion and enthusiasm.

You have given so many instructions to all of your disciples, but one of the most important instructions which I remember all the time is: “Your love for me will be shown by how much you cooperate to keep this institution together after I am gone.” — Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta

At the very beginning of our spiritual lives, His Divine Grace gave us ‘bhakti shakti’, and empowered every single with this. All the devotees feel it. We’re performing so many different activities in devotional service; amazing things that we would normally never perform.

In the glorifications in the *Viraha Astaka* (1958) – your poem to

your guru mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura – it almost seems as if history is repeating itself now.

“The ocean of mercy was previously held back by a dam, but Lord Nityānanda personally cut a channel in it and thereby released the outpouring flood of pure ecstatic love of God.” — from Locana’s Dāsa’s song *Nitāi Guṇa mani*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are more merciful because you’ve given us Lord Nityānanda and Lord Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. Thank you very much for your unlimited mercy, potency and blessings. I pray to your most beautiful lotus feet to please give us the intelligence, determination and guidance to keep following your eternal instructions and keep pushing your saṅkīrtana movement.

Thank you dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, our divine eternal spiritual father.

Your insignificant servant at the dust of your lotus feet,

Ramanya Dāsa

Vaiṣṇavānanda Dāsa

Prabhupāda the Perfect Messenger

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

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

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Observing Vedic tradition, once a year on the auspicious event of your Vyāsa-pūjā, your disciples make a sincere attempt to present a written or oral offering for your glorification. I humbly implore you to forgive my meager attempt to praise you on this most honorable occasion.

How can I begin to adequately describe your unparalleled and inimitable position? You are a true celebrity Śrīla Prabhupāda! Of all the popular people in the world, including presidents, prime ministers, monarchs, dignitaries, philosophers, and among famous

individuals, you and you alone are the most recorded personality, the most photographed, the most prolific, and voluminous author, and the world’s most travelled missionary! You received numerous accolades and praiseworthy endorsements from renowned and royal academicians, and yet, in spite of all this laudable recognition, your most illustrious virtue is your genuine humility, completely devoid of distinction, profit and adoration.

Upon meeting you and seeing your radiant face, all your disciples exhibited great excitement, and exhilaration. We paved the path you walked upon with flower petals; we sprinkled sweet and fragrant rose water to purify the atmosphere for you; we smeared fresh sandalwood pulp upon your forehead to freshen you; we provided luxurious limousines to transport you in first-class fashion; we prepared sumptuous *prasāda* for your supreme delight; and we dedicated our formative youth and vitality to distribute your books. However, none of this overwhelming adulation by your jubilant disciples ever affected your humility. You are fully cognizant that your exalted and distinguished role is simply the blessing bestowed by the Supreme Lord upon you, His pure and unalloyed devotee.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the *senapati*, the Commander-in-Chief of Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* army, undauntedly engaged in hand-to-hand combat with *māyā* to deliver love of God. You mandated all of your disciples and sincere followers to enthusiastically distribute this sublime spiritual knowledge to the world. You described that if we follow your instructions and that of the previous ācāryas, anyone can obtain the perfection of life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Thus, we should emulate your example to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness and receive your blessings. By following and obeying your instructions, the path back home back to Godhead is assured. It is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* 18.68:

*ya idaṁ paramaṁ guhyaṁ
mad-bhakteṣv abhidhāsyati
bhaktiṁ mayi parāṁ kṛtvā
mām evaiśyaty asaṁśayaḥ*

“For one who explains the supreme secret to the devotees, devotional service is guaranteed, and at the end he will come back to Me.”

Therefore, it is the duty of all your disciples, granddisciples, and

sincere followers to protect your legacy, found in the purity of your writings. And that purity is contained in your illustrative purports, which you referred to as your “divine ecstasies”. Those purports, you disclosed to us, were dictated to you by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. Kṛṣṇa personally issued you a transcendental license to deliver His pure and unadulterated message. You are the *jagad-guru*, the present ācārya of the universe, and only you have been empowered with this lofty and prodigious mission. No one else, regardless of their material erudition can accomplish the monumental task of interpreting the Lord’s message.

Today, on this wonderful day of your divine appearance, Vyāsa-pūjā, we are provided with the opportunity to unite and renew our resolution to safeguard the integrity of your teachings. These teachings will be the salvation of posterity during the next ten-thousand years. Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!*

Your unqualified disciple,

Vaiṣṇavānanda Dāsa

Ali Krishna Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

A few days ago, during the early morning hours, my mind found peace in thoughts related to Your Divine Grace. While meditating, I saw you wearing an exquisite garland of radiant beauty. As I looked closer, I noticed that it was made with special flowers whose petals were your effulgent qualities and the scent made of particles of gratitude...the deep gratitude that all your disciples and grand-disciples manifest for your divine personality.

No doubt “we are carried away to the realm of gratitude” when we realize how much you have given us in the few years (too few) in which you were present among us. You invested so much of your time and energy to raise us to the platform of human consciousness and keep us spiritually alive. You came in the middle of our problematic society, leaving the transcendental peace of your dearest Vṛndāvana, and did not give up on us, even after seeing our hopeless conditions. Therefore we thank you from the core of our hearts for having stayed with us year after year after year to

instruct, guide, help and encourage each one of us in our way back home, back to Godhead.

You have stolen our hearts and minds, and we are very happy to be your property. For you are our hero who has filled our empty lives with an incredible wealth of knowledge and realizations...the diamond that gave value and beauty to our poor ugly existence. You have been for us the dearest father, the beloved well-wisher, the loving advisor, the master who answers all questions and dispels all doubts, the absolute example, the perfect judge and the constant shelter.

I have no words to express how much we appreciate the innumerable moments you spent with us. You made us feel at ease with your entertaining stories, your oceanic smiles, your encouraging words, and your steady example which inspired us to continue our devotional duties with increased attention and concentration.

With your humble and yet gigantic personality, you won the respect of prestigious scholars and the affection of small children. With integrity and full dedication you carried on the order of your beloved spiritual master. With audacity you went against the impossible (a word that did not exist in your vocabulary). With your mystic power you transformed the ordinary in extraordinary and performed miracles (each one of us is your miracle). And with great modesty you gave all the merit of your success to the mercy of your *guru-mahārāja*.. Who will not appreciate the long list of your qualities (too long to mention) which now reflect brightly in your disciples and grand-disciples, ready to start a golden era in the middle of Kali-yuga?

Our gratitude goes to your steady leadership, to the captain who steers the ship in the right direction and takes everyone across the ocean of nescience. We marvel at your fortitude and perseverance in front of the many heavy challenging events you had to confront, and we pray to have a bit of your courage and strength whenever we are put in front of difficulties in life.

With ever-fresh admiration we approach your books. The ecstatic poetry of those pages fill us with joy, transform our consciousness, and bring us to another level, another world, far from the pettiness of day-to-day life and into a higher and broader scope of existence. You left a legacy of priceless knowledge that carries us step by step to the highest form of pure bliss. But most surprisingly, you made available, through the Bhaktivedānta Book Trust, this body

of knowledge to each and every one, no matter in which part of the world one lives or which language one speaks.

In our hearts we feel deep gratitude for having been introduced to the chanting of the holy name which alone can save us from the worst of fears. You sang melodious devotional songs and *mantras* for us, and made us dance in ecstasy. "Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and be happy" was your motto, "and if you chant with devotion and pray with your heart, the Divine Couple will dance on your tongue!" Your enthusiasm in spreading the holy name was so overwhelming that you were able to turn the dream of the previous ācāryas into reality: to gather people from every nation and make them chant the *mahā-mantra* together.

Will we ever be able to thank you enough for opening the doors of the storehouse of love of Godhead and distributing that love liberally to every corner of the world? You first made us aware of our original nature. We were so long asleep under layers of misunderstandings, but you explained very clearly the difference between reality and illusion, spirit and matter, remembrance and forgetfulness. Then you introduced us to the glories of the pastimes of Rādhā-Krishna, the pinnacle of spirituality, in a language suitable for our comprehension. You even allowed us to worship Their blissful Forms on the altar and brought us with you to see Vṛndāvana, Govardhana, Māyāpur, Jagannath Puri, and so many other holy places completely unknown to us.

Our gratitude knows no boundaries when we recall your herculean effort to create an international society of devotees (ISKCON) where we could sustain each other on the spiritual path, a vast family where we could interact in an exchange of experiences and realisations, in a spirit of cooperation, mutual understanding, tolerance and maturity...qualities you inspired in all of us with your personal example. You also made us well aware of our vulnerability if we isolate ourselves, or if we fall prey of fanaticism, factionalism and various kinds of deviations. You were therefore forgiving with our weaknesses but absolutely uncompromising with philosophical drifts.

We will never get tired of thanking you for feeding our minds and souls with firm faith in *guru, śāstra and sādhu*, giving us pillars in spiritual understanding, and for feeding our body and soul with copious and delicious *prasāda* cooked with your very hands. In this way you taught us to control the mind and senses – the tongue in

particular – and set for us a balanced lifestyle without demanding rigid austerities. Like an expert gardener, you have nourished our small devotional seeds with the rain of your mercy and the sun of transcendental knowledge, making them grow and flourish. Without your constant care we would have entangle ourselves in the inextricable networks of impersonalism, Buddhism, māyāvāḍism, sahajiyāism, become victims of fake gurus and pseudo-spiritualists. Or we could have become blind followers of ridiculous materialistic scientific theories, or supporters of the various so-called humanitarian movements. We will never thank you enough for opening our eyes with the torchlight of knowledge and save us from these innumerable traps of *māyā*.

We again renew our gratitude a thousand times for all the literatures you have compiled, all the letters you have written, all the words you have said, all the thoughts and time you have dedicated us, all the instructions, corrections, appreciations, solace, protection, refuge, cure and attention you gave us. We thank you, for all the exhausting journeys you have endured with heavy consequences for your health, for all the gifts, the successes and achievements, and for everything else I did not mention and without which our lives would not be the same.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for having left behind you a better world.

Your aspiring servant,

Ali Krishna Devī Dāsī

Gauragopāla Dāsa

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 Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanya deva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

*Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, Prabhu Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita,
Gadadhara, Śrīras adi gaura bhakta vrinda.*

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

All glories to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, my eternal spiritual master and eternal guide.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for coming and lifting me out of this mundane material bodily identity all those years ago.

It is so important to remember if one thinks they can play with māyā in the material creation, then they are deceiving themselves. The fact is, if one plays with māyā (material energy) by trying to squeeze out so-called pleasure from one's material bodily vessel, one is trapped in and exploiting others, then one is heading to a horrible existence of repeated birth and death in the material world. Spiritual beings (*jīva tattvas*) who have foolishly chosen to enter the material world, will always find "an incompatible situation" while in the material world. This is because the material creation is NOT the natural environment and home of the living entity. The real home of all living entities is Vaikuṅṭha and Goloka Vṛndāvana (The Kingdom of God) that is beyond the temporary decaying impermanent material creation.

The mahā-mantra must go to every city, town and village of the entire world. Mahā means "great" and mantra means "sacred chant for deliverance." Of all mantras in the Vedas, one is called the mahā-mantra, or great mantra:

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rama, Hare Rama
Rama Rama, Hare Hare*

*harināma harināma harināma eva kevalam
kalau nastyeva nastyeva nastyeva gatiḥ anyatha*

'In this Age of Kali there is no other means, no other means, no other means for self-realization than chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name of Lord Hari.'

Spiritual life is like learning to walk. No matter how many times you fall down, you must always get up again and again and keep trying until you succeed. Actually, for many of us this may take many births but best to finish all this material selfish activity in this life

under the "very rare" guidance of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu who only comes "once" in a 24 hour day of Brahma or every eight billion 640 million human years.

When chanted, the mahā-mantra is a petition to God: "O Kṛṣṇa, O energy of Kṛṣṇa, please engage me in Your service." In Kali yuga under the heading of Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement, the central point is *saṅkīrtana*. Mass *saṅkīrtana* is chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra and is for EVERYONE, especially the most fallen.

When I joined, we chanted eight hours a day, six days a week. These days, the same thing can happen with devotee shifts that keep it going all day. This is what will save the world and guide everyone back home back to Godhead. Even the demigods Prabhupāda has said are lined up waiting to take birth here in Lord Caitanya's Saṅkīrtana Movement now that the Movement has spread far and wide all over the globe. They come here as soon as they feel safe and protected in the association devotees.

*All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda Your fallen disciple,
Gauragopāla Dāsa*

Janmanalaya Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances! Once you wrote to one of your disciples: "This life of material existence is just like hard wood, and if we can carve Kṛṣṇa out of it, that is the success in our life." This sentence must resonate in everyone who tries to give meaning to life and to locate oneself in the world. "This life of material existence is just like hard wood". Yes. And we try to adjust to it, we try to make it to our home. It's the dark and dense forest of the *gunas*. We need guidance, otherwise we get lost there. For lifetimes we tried so eagerly to dive down into the heart of existence, into our own heart to find meaning; but we grew further and further away from our real identity. Whichever direction we chose, we got lost – *tamas*, *rajas* or *sattva*. And then your voice "if we can carve Kṛṣṇa out of it, that is the success in our life." This is the voice we all are longing for to hear. It's the compassionate and guiding voice of the supersoul. It makes me giving up my urge 'to reign in hell', to impose my own ideas on reality. I know that by myself I

cannot discover reality. Even if the binoculars or microscopes are of the finest quality, I always will look through them with my limited eyes. It's a desperate situation. I want to see but am blind. On my side there is this desperation, and on your side there is compassion and urgency. My faith is insignificant, but your faith in me so great. My steps in my spiritual life towards Kṛṣṇa are slow and short; but you guide them in the right direction. I want my heart and existence be under your influence, then I can "carve Kṛṣṇa out of this hard wood", moving from finite to infinite perspective, moving from the *guṇas* of this world to the *nirguṇa* world – Kṛṣṇa's world.

I know I'm not qualified and I resist the current of your mercy because of my shortcomings. Still, I take shelter under your lotus feet and want to help you in your mission with the little I have.

Your son,

Janmanalaya Dāsa

Sevānanda Dāsa

The Shaktyavesha Pure Devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Ideal in Character

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

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

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

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

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

I was born in the darkest ignorance, and my spiritual master opened

my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*cakhu-dān dilo jei, janme janme prabhu sei
divya-jñān hṛde prokāṣito*

It was, and is still you who opens my darkened eyes and fills my heart with transcendental knowledge. You are my Lord birth after birth.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, being the external manifestation of the Supersoul, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, The Supreme Personality of Godhead, you are my source of all mercy and knowledge, never not being fixed at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Always being in intimate, confidential communication with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, there is nothing knowable that cannot be known by you.

Therefore, *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!

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, as a sakyavesha pure devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, you are of ideal character. You are the world *ācārya* of unequaled glories and accomplishments in recorded world history. Indeed, you are the *Founder-Ācārya* of The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and as such, it was you who introduced all the knowledge of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Chaitanya, personally built the house in which all may take shelter, and it is you who sets the standards for all members and followers of your ISKCON. We All need to hear and study from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in His *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, 3.21,

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas
tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇam kurute
lokas tad anuvartate*

Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* teaches that *ācārya* means one who teaches Vedic knowledge by practical example, and all the world must follow in your footsteps...*Ācāryavān puruṣo veda.*

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the 'person' *Bhagavat*, and it was you who brought and taught, and still do, teach the 'book' *Bhagavat*.

*tad-vijñānārtham sa gurum eva abhigacchet, samit-
pāṇih śrotriyam brahma-niṣṭham*

The real guru is one whose words and deeds are in strict accordance with Vedic literature, and who is refreshed by such a bath in the ocean of Vedic knowledge. Therefore, the real guru is self-evident and self-manifest by his Godly qualities and knowledge, by his cleanliness of spirit, intelligence, mind, words, and actions.

Just like you demonstrated, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as salt is indispensable – both for taste and health – so an inner core of spiritual strength, purity and Godly qualities are essential, though it is hard to isolate and is only noticed when it is absent.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an ocean of mercy and all Godly qualities,

*prāptasya kalyāṇa-guṇārnavasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.

Those who are concerned with training leaders, or even teaching common Vaiṣṇava etiquette – Maryada – need look no further, and nowhere else than in your own personal life examples, teachings and standards. All Vaiṣṇavas know that to attain perfect learning, following in the footsteps is the perfect process. All good teachers, leaders, parents and intelligent adults know that carefully studying the biographical history, teachings and standards of great personalities, and practical role-play are natural and excellent learning methods. Setting a perfect personal example for others is the most important part of good leadership, while studying the same is the most important part of the life of a disciple, or a student. We all need to hear and study from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, both ours and all of ISKCON's World Ācārya.

In you dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have a veritable ocean of Godly qualities, all at a par-excellent standard. Literally, the best of the best role model. To give detailed memories and *līlās* demonstrating your qualities, one would need a warehouse full of volumes.

However, We can access your standards and qualities of the following:

You were filled with compassion reminding one of Vasudev Datta, who was Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja.

You were over-flowingly adorned with unfailing care and concern for us.

You were bathed and bathing as mercy incarnate, and thereby purchased the heart of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

You were opulently ornamented with inconceivable intelligence.

You were majestically decorated with astounding leadership skills.

You were perfectly endowed with implacable fearlessness.

You were beautifully bestowed with perfect memory.

You were copiously bejeweled with unflinching gratitude.

You were endearingly empowered with unequalled sensitivity.

You were a clear, sweet wellspring of matchless conscientiousness.

You were an unshakable Mt. Meru of tolerance in training us, in tolerating our mistakes, in hardships, poverty, and even 'night-starvations', because when you went on *madhukari*, you asked for scraps of paper to write *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* purports on, rather than beg for food.

You were a veritable fountain of continual forgiveness.

You were a depthless ocean of unlimited humility, bringing to mind, Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who was Lord Śrī Brahma himself.

You were tirelessly, mercifully teaching us proper Vaiṣṇava etiquette at every turn.

You demonstrated flawless, peerless brilliance in all things.

You manifested unflagging, completely selfless determination.

You emanated immaculate skill in utility with all endeavors.

You broke all records in your unshakable fidelity to duty.

You defeated and redefined the meaning of Mahātma with your broadmindedness.

You were a bottomless well with your sweet sympathy for all, and perfect non-envy.

You were perfectly charitable as the perfect listener to one and all.

You exercised managerial genius with historically great, and impossible accomplishments, and all without even drawing attention to yourself.

Your leadership qualities and Vaiṣṇava etiquette were ideal in every action.

You were always perfectly candid, open, and honest with us.

You never practiced duplicity, politics, secrecy, rather only direct dealings and love with devotees.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

By Your Divine Grace this list can go on and on and on ad infinitum. This is your mercy – this is your Matchless Gift. A great devotee leader should be decorated with all these Godly ornaments, and the heavenly fragrance emanating from his Krishnized body will be naturally carried on sweet, gentle breezes for miles. This is our Curriculum Vitae, so also it is the matchless, perfect solution to any reported good leadership skills shortage, and any perceived Vaiṣṇava etiquette vacuum.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, Gurudeva! By a drop of your mercy make this servant of yours more humble than a blade of grass. Give me strength to bear all trials and troubles, and free me from all desires for personal honor. When I examine myself, I find nothing of value. Your mercy is therefore essential to me. If you are not merciful, I will constantly weep, and I will not maintain my life any longer.

Begging to remain your eternal servant in the dust of your lotus feet,

Sevānanda Dāsa

Madan Mohan Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

One Indian astrologer declared, on seeing your picture: “This is a man who can build a house in which the entire world can live in peace.”

I have now come to understand, that your ‘house’ is the servants’ quarters, for the spiritual world, and we can live there only when we agree to follow your house rules. As parents would say “as long as you are under my roof, you live by my rules.” By living in ISKCON we can really get to understand you – your desires, mission and your charming but bold gentleness. Everyone knows you only really get to know someone if you live with them. Your instructions are non-different from your heart. Such is the nature of the pure soul, fully representing Kṛṣṇa, though the *paramparā*. As Yudhisthira answered Yamaraja in the *Mahābhārata*, **The heart of the pure devotee** is the place to find real religious principles. That is your training for us – our *sādhana* – that will make our lives successful and bring us to the perfection of life, *prema bhakti*.

You taught us by everything you did, even in the smallest of

things such as drinking water. We never saw anyone else do that... it was so charming and endearing. But all the while, organizing and managing a world-wide society, at an age when everyone else is slowing down. The example you showed by your behavior and preaching – doing what has never been done before – you gave the world the meaning of ācārya. Leaving us all in awe, and exposing the envious imitators.

Now, as years go by, your instructions are starting to mature us. As our commitments are deepening we see that result in how ISKCON is becoming more organized to push on the mission of Lord Caitanya with renewed enthusiasm. We are directly experiencing this and feeling it in our innermost self. This connection is the sublime and mysterious nature of the yoga you presented to us...the simple method of chanting the holy names, Hare Kṛṣṇa, without offences.

Every day, we say the prayer: “I offer my respectful obeisances unto all the Vaiṣṇava devotees of the Lord. They can fulfill the desires of everyone, just like desire trees, and they are full of compassion for the fallen souls.”

When we say this meditating on you, we can understand what compassion is. As it states in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.7.44: “It is said that great personalities almost always accept voluntary suffering because of the suffering of people in general. This is considered the highest method of worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is present in everyone’s heart.”

Or in 5.18.9: “May there be good fortune throughout the universe, and may all envious persons be pacified. May all living entities become calm by practicing bhakti-yoga, for by accepting devotional service they will think of each other’s welfare. Therefore let us all engage in the service of the supreme transcendence, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and always remain absorbed in thought of Him.”

In fact, every verse about great devotees allude to your character. Even understanding one of Kṛṣṇa’s four special qualities that (3) He is surrounded by loving devotees; now is within our living experience.

Thank you Kṛṣṇa for letting Śrīla Prabhupāda come. For Śrīla Prabhupāda is giving us his Rādhā’s Kṛṣṇa. “You know that we worship Rādhā’s Kṛṣṇa. We should always understand that Kṛṣṇa is sold to the loving service of Rādhā, therefore Kṛṣṇa cannot be alone. And the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, they want to see Kṛṣṇa as Rādhā’s property.” — Letter to Jayananda, Montreal, 17 August, 1968.

And lastly, as others throughout the ages have shown, let us repeat

some words of our previous ācārya, this time Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura:
“Kṛṣṇa appears in the form that His dear devotee desires to see.
He gives His devotees the power to sell Him to others.”

In his *Śaraṇāgati* (*Bhajana-lālasā*, song 7), Ṭhākura
Bhaktivinoda has described:

*kṛṣṇa se tomāra, kṛṣṇa dite pāro
tomāra śakati āche
āmi to' kāṅgāla 'kṛṣṇa' 'kṛṣṇa' boli
dhāi tava pāche pāche*

“O venerable vaiṣṇava, Kṛṣṇa is yours. You have
the power to give Him to me. I am simply running
behind you shouting, “Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!”

Who can give Kṛṣṇa? Only one who has gotten Kṛṣṇa. Otherwise,
who can give if he has not gotten? Can he give? No. dāse kṛṣṇe
karibāre — Only such a premī-bhakta can give Kṛṣṇa. No one else.

*Your aspiring servant,
Madan Mohan Dāsa*

Hare Kṛṣṇa!

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Kindly accept my obeisances at your merciful lotus feet.

This year marks the 46th year of my initiation; More this year
more than ever, I am coming face-to-face with the reality of not being
the body. As you know, earlier this year, I was diagnosed with a
rare, aggressive cancer. You have prepared us for the ultimate test
and so I prayed to just surrender, surrender, surrender, and by your
grace I was able to connect on a deeper level to you, Kṛṣṇa, and
other devotees. I am just in awe of the support I have received in this
healing journey. I know this is all by your divine grace and my heart
is brimming with gratitude.

And so I am again offering my heart, my body (what is left of it),
and my mind in your service. Your compassionate energy is traveling
all over the globe giving hope and peace in spite of all the crazy,
confusing things that are happening. I have so much to thank you
for – your transcendental gifts, your books, your disciples, temples,
your glorious example – so much, so much. Thank you for letting me
realize that “everything worketh together for the good of those who
serve the Lord.”

My heart hankers to be a part of establishing a beloved
sustainable community, centering around care for cows, care for
children, care for elders, care for Mother Earth and care for all of
Kṛṣṇa’s servants, utilizing the many instructions you have given
us and dedicated as an offering at your feet. Would you kindly
empower us in this endeavor?

Dearest Gurudeva, please bless me to cooperate with sincere
servants of Kṛṣṇa everywhere so we can increasingly be instruments
of your inspiring mission in this world.

Your daughter, begging for eternal connection with you,

Kṛṣṇānandīnī Devī Dāsī

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I miss you very much and wish you could have remained here with us longer. I am very sorry that I have been unable to follow your instructions very well. I have been intermittent in doing so, at best.

“Dear Lord, let us inform You that no one is more sinful than us, nor is there any offender like us. Even if we wanted to mention our sinful activities, we would immediately become ashamed. And what to speak of giving them up?”

— *Padma Purāṇa*, quoted in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, 1.2.154.

However, due to your mercy only, my realization of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth of all existence, has deepened over time. I thank you from my heart for accepting me as your disciple despite my complete lack of qualification and my offensive nature. I fervently pray that I will be blessed by you to continue to fight māyā and the material energy with spiritual strength, which, as you warned us, is an ongoing lifelong struggle. I am hoping against hope that I will be able to remember the precious Lord Kṛṣṇa at my time of death and see you again. Please help me, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I can never repay your causeless mercy on me.

I remember well the last time I saw you. You were leaving Vṛndāvana for Hyderabad and I ran from the nearby *asrama* where I was staying, hoping to see you before you left. I hurried through the side gate of Kṛṣṇa Balarama Mandir in the still-early morning darkness and I almost ran into you as you were just coming out of your house. When I realized it was you, I said “Jaya, Śrīla Prabhupāda”, and got down to pay my obeisances. You stood and waited for me to get up again. For those few moments in time, it was just you and I there in front of your house. You looked at me for what seemed like a long time. I felt that you were saying something to me with your eyes. I thought to myself, “what is he trying to say?” What came next into my mind were the words, “don’t forget me.” You are unforgettable, Śrīla Prabhupāda. My dearest wish is that I will see you again. All glories to you, Śrī Guru!

Your fallen servant,

Sharanagata Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Three score plus 10 has passed this life. A lifetime passed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a positive alternative to awaited life in the misguided cat and dog civilization.

Struggle for existence is always there in both material and spiritual pursuits but it is not the same. Material life brings anxiety and moroseness. Spiritual life brings just the opposite. What can be more wonderful? We sing everyday “*ebe jaśa ghuṣuk tribhuvana*”. Yadubara’s recent movie was a moving experience for one and all. Now people all over the world can appreciate your name and fame. Spreading Lord Caitanya’s mission to every town and village, may Kṛṣṇa consciousness flourish for the next 10,000 years. This is your credit. At an advanced age of 70 you left Vṛndāvana to show compassion to all humanity. May we continue to serve in your mission here in Vṛndāvana Krishna Balarama Mandir till our last breath. Let us all obtain life’s goal “*Kṛṣṇa prema*”.

Your humble servant,

Bhubaneswar Dāsa

Jai Radhe!

Vṛndāvana Dhām kī Jai!

Arjuna Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances on this most auspicious occasion.

“A true disciple knows his gurudeva to be someone who is extremely dear to Kṛṣṇa, who is sent by Kṛṣṇa, and who is the Servitor Lord, Sevaka-Bhagavān.”

“A sincere disciple has the same devotion for his gurudeva that he has for the Supreme Lord. And he worships and serves Him the same way. Those who do not serve their gurudeva this way fall from

their position as a disciple. No one can chant the holy name purely unless they see Gurudeva as non-different from Kṛṣṇa, as Kṛṣṇa's manifestation."

"I shall serve Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga with simplicity and sincerity under the guidance of Gurudeva. My gurudeva has the words of the Supreme Lord, and I will be obedient to that word in the proper way. I will not disrespect my gurudeva under the influence of anyone in this world."

"If I have to become proud, if I have to become a beast, if I have to go to hell by carrying out the order of Gurudeva, who is sent by Kṛṣṇa, then I want to sign a contract to go to hell for all eternity. I will not listen to anything anybody says, other than the order of my gurudeva."

"By the power that has come to me from the lotus feet of Gurudeva, I will throw out all other currents of consciousness of the world with a punch of my fist. With a throw of a particle of dust from the pollen of the lotus feet of my gurudeva, then millions of people of this world will be delivered. There is no scholarship nor any good concept in the 14 worlds that is heavier than a particle of dust from the lotus feet of my gurudeva." — Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī

May I aspire for and achieve this most sublime and perfect *bhava* by your mercy and heart full of grace, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

By your divine mercy my retracted consciousness has floated Godward with each passing day for many years now. What a wondrous love is this that flows from your lotus feet!

All the transcendental literatures you have blessed us with are your heart's full expression. These śāstras have widened my shriveled heart and brought great joy and abundant radiant light to millions of 'lost' souls who are now 'found' souls at your lotus feet!

It was an honor to have been engaged in a humble way distributing these great works in the early years of your ISKCON society. How blessed I was to be engaged on the front lines of the war with Māyā. But then due to carelessness, *Māyā* broke me down again and almost made me drown in Her ocean. But as I expressed last year, I'm up

on my feet, by your mercy and back to stay I pray. Got the eye of a tiger on the goal, but my body's growing old! Please guide my soul.

Reading and appreciating your books with deeper profound gratitude each day is an ecstasy! I have no abilities, no humility, just minute determination and my mind is weakened by draining my senses in a vain attempt to gratify them every moment. But through this all, I still pray that you kindly lift me upward.

Repaying you is absolutely impossible, Śrīla Prabhupāda, so I beseech thee for abundant mercy in order to carry on and please your lotus feet.

You have stated that "certainly my spiritual master watches me. There is no possibility of receiving perfect knowledge without approaching a self-realized spiritual master coming down in disciplic succession. The mental speculator – no matter how advanced he may be – cannot deliver the right knowledge."

So I thank you for bringing this perfect knowledge of divine master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and may your loving glance eternally watch over me.

With expressions of unreserved gratitude to your indefatigable spirit of devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa, I offer my useless self as an instrument in your divine hands! May the astonishing fertility of your devotional genius never be exhausted in engaging me in your service.

So if you like, kindly utilize this oaf of a wretched disciple forever in pleasing you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

A most unworthy and shamed aspiring disciple,

Arjuna Dāsa

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

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

Prabhupāda,
You came to the West.
You didn't know anyone,
Didn't have money.
Sitting in New York,
Gaura Pūrṇimā '66,
Thinking of godbrothers,
Their celebrations.
Thinking of Māyāpur.

Now look at Māyāpur!
Glorious general,
Head of your army,
Made revolution
In impious lives.

Now look at Māyāpur.
Weekly, on Saturdays,
Riding on elephants,
Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava
Go on procession,
Riding by torchlight,
Listening to Vedic hymns
Chanted robustly.

Even the turbans
Of your young followers,
Children of children,
Waving the *camara*,
Blowing the brass horn,
Chanting the holy name –
Even their turbans,
Which are flamboyant,
Shout out your glories:
Now look at Māyāpur!

From your *bhajan-kutir*,
Where chanting's perpetual,
Gaura-Nitāi exit,
Ride on a splendid float.
Saintly pūjāris,
Legendary, glorious,
Personally supervise
The Deities' walkabout.

Colourful *mandalas*,
Auspicious offerings,
Mark out the stations
On the Lord's property
Where He will stop,
Have some refreshment.
Dutiful elephants,
Doing great service,
Munch on an apple
While they are waiting.

Glorious Prabhupāda's
Māyāpur samadhi,
Built out of love and tears,
Rises in marble –
Elegant, bold and clear.
As we marched past it
That's when I got a glimpse
What it must be
To serve the Lord's senses
And thus be satisfied.

And could you hear me
When, back in England,
At our nama hatta
I told a lady,
Told her that monument
Built in your memory
Was built in respect
For the flowers
that touched you?

Glorious Prabhupāda,
I'm not going to say again
How I'm so worthless,
How I'm so fallen.
Nothing is going right.
I'm a *chapati*
Thrown in boiling water
Falling to pieces.

When will I love you?
Become your faithful slave?
Is there time left?
Left in this wretched life?

Your fallen, aspiring servant cries out to you.

Govardhana Devī Dāsī

My dear Guru Mahārāja Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your divine feet.

Somehow or another by your divine grace, I still remain profoundly inspired by the mission you have given us. I am still encouraged to come up to the standards you have established, though sadly I most often fall short. I am still awestruck, moved and motivated by your Herculean example. I am completely astounded by your accomplishments. And thus I remain determined to serve you despite my manifold shortcomings.

I was thinking how Your Divine Grace, despite my limitless disqualifications, has lodged within the core of my being inexorably. I started to take note of how this manifests in my life:

I steadfastly chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra which you have given us, daily. I honestly don't always get 16 rounds in, though I am praying to you for the strength to never slip. I endeavor to keep the mahā-mantra going as an incessant tape playing in my mind. I listen to your lectures, morning walks and rooms conversations daily without exception. I read either your books, or pastimes about you, daily. I am especially addicted to reading either your biographies or illuminating anecdotes before I go to sleep at night. I listen daily to your *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* or sometimes the *Caitanya Bhagavat*. I distribute your books regularly, weekly. Everyone I meet on *saṅkīrtana* by your grace, I entice to chant the holy names. This has gone on for years and and years. These last two items bring me such joy! When I'm working in various capacities on many projects I endeavor to keep the form of Their Lordships Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda, or the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa constantly in my mind. I also meditate upon your form and instructions especially in regards to your greater mission of reclaiming unfortunate conditioned souls.

In my endeavors, many of which seem beyond my capacity, I try to depend on Kṛṣṇa as you have taught in your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* via Lord Kṛṣṇa's personal instructions to Arjuna in the 18th chapter:

“In all your endeavors and for their results, just depend upon Me and work always under My direction. In such devotional service, be fully conscious of Me.”

This gives me great hope and impetus to carry on.

I am thinking a lot about how to spread this knowledge to

others as you have directed us. That keeps me inspired and pushing on despite so many impediments. When getting together with good friends, there is mood of how can we support each other so as to keep up our service in your mission. Or, how can we spread your mission in this way or that. My family life, though oft times seemingly complicated, revolves around my wonderful wife Rukmiṇī and I endeavoring in various projects which will bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness forward in the world.

As I reflect on all that I have stated above, I realize how you have profoundly infected and altered the very core of my being. I am nothing without you and your mission. You pervade every aspect of my life. And so thus, As you so poetically wrote: “I am just like a puppet in your hands, so if you brought me here to dance, then make me dance as you like”.

I wish to imbibe this mood fully so I can be utilized by you and the previous *ācāryas* to make a valuable contribution to the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, for the upliftment of the fallen conditioned souls of this troubled post modern highly connected yet disconnected nuclear age.

After all, this is our prime duty and your greatest ambition. I am deeply inspired by the following words from your *Adi Līlā* 3.98 purport:

“The function of the ācārya, however, is to change the activities of both first class and third class prisoners for their real benefit. This endeavor makes him a very dear devotee of the Lord, who says clearly in BG that no one in human society is dearer to Him than a devotee who constantly engages in His service by finding ways to preach the message of Godhead for the real benefit of the world.”

And then, to further drive the point home, this from a lecture you gave in 1974 in Vṛndāvana:

“So you have got the opportunity to serve Śrī Caitanya, to please Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, because He wanted the fallen souls to be delivered. Kṛṣṇa also wanted. *Yada yada hi glanir bhavati bharata dharmasya glanir bhavati bharata*. Kṛṣṇa comes....This is....God's business is going on like that. He's very anxious to reclaim all these rascals rotting in this material world. Kṛṣṇa is always anxious. He comes Himself, He comes as devotee,

He sends His bona fide servant, bona fide son.”

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

Wow. That is our life right there. Lifetimes really. No question of wondering what we’re meant for, what we’re supposed to do – it’s spelled out so clearly by you. We must simply jump on board, all hands on deck, and get in the game.

That brings to mind something wonderful our godbrother Garuda spoke last week. He said that you built a house that the whole world could live in – yes! He went on to say that now we must also ensure that that same house, that we devotees can all live in it together, peacefully with love and trust and encouragement.

Too often our default is to splinter rather than bond. To exclude rather than go the extra mile to be inclusive. To judge rather than take the time to understand another’s perspective. We sometimes wish to dominate rather than illuminate a situation. If we can take the time and energy to find ways and means to establish common bonds and shared visions with each other rather than a win/lose, right/wrong, black/white mind set, then we will be progressing towards the cherished goal of cooperating together to please you. Then, O greatest of all masters Śrīla Prabhupāda, we qualify ourselves to receive the mercy of Śrī Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda so that we can become truly empowered to spread this great saṅkīrtana mission at time when the world needs it so urgently.

I am begging at your feet with all sincerity, to please elevate me and us all to the platform of real unity in diversity for the benefit of your mission. Please keep me firmly fixed at your divine instructions and personal example, that they may eternally guide me on the path back home back to Godhead. And that hopefully on the way, we may bring a few or perhaps countless fortunate souls to the lotus feet of the divine couple, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

And one last prayer – that I may always remember you – and never forget you and your divine instructions, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I will close with this purport from SB 4.28.51, which I lifted from Nīraṅjana Swami’s offering:

“If a disciple is very serious to execute the mission of the spiritual master, he immediately associates with the Supreme Personality of Godhead by *vāṇī* or *vaṇī*. This is the only secret to success in seeing the Personality

of Godhead. Instead of being eager to see the Lord in some bush of Vṛndāvana while at the same time engaging in sense gratification, if one instead sticks to the principle of following the words of the spiritual master, he will see the Supreme Lord without difficulty.”

Unlimited gratitude and appreciation for you on this most blessed event,

Your insignificant aspiring servant,

Bādarāyaṇa Dāsa

My dear most beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Although I certainly don't deserve it...I must beg for your mercy....you are my only hope and shelter!

You are our *Senapati-Bhakta*... the all star general leading the charge against *māyā*!

As one of your most insignificant soldiers, I come before you today to humbly submit my offerings for this past year:

- Book Distribution for 2017: 549 *Perfection of Yoga*, 729 *Chant and Be Happy*, 2938 *Higher Taste* Cookbooks, 54 *Science of Self Realization*, 4241 *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, 202 *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Total: 8713 books
- Maintained regular communication with many of the people to whom I've distributed books
- Regularly contributed to New Talavan Food for Life Program
- Maintained and upgraded the Jai Nimāi-Nitāi Floating Temple and prepared her for the journey to Māyāpur
- Nimāi and Nitāi's Temple in Gour Nagar nearing completion
- Chanting 16 rounds, following four regulative principles, and reading your books

Although in our English language, I don't find adequate adjectives to describe you... still, I praise you as the most munificent, most merciful, the one who so pleases Kṛṣṇa!

We were all so happy to see the movie...*Hare Krishna! The Mantra, The Movement and the Swami who started it all* by Yadubara and Vishaka Prabhus. It wonderfully highlighted your amazing accomplishments in 12 short years. No one before or since can claim such extraordinary achievements!

So fortunate for all of us!

We are especially relishing your *Memories – Anecdotes of a Modern Day Saint* expertly compiled and recorded by our dear godbrother Siddhānta Prabhu. All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda! All glories to your devotees!

Thank you SO much for creating ISKCON, for here I've found

the best of friends, the best philosophy, the best service, the best food (prasāda), the most wonderful Deities! I shudder to think where I'd be had you not saved me from my most degraded and painful situation in this material world. Even now I still find that I am easily depressed, but this is quickly remedied by distributing your books.

I am forever indebted to you my most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda! And I continue to pray that I may somehow always serve you and please you. In this endeavor alone do I find real peace, satisfaction and happiness.

Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda! Jai Nimāi Nitāi!

Aspiring to be your disciple,

Mohanasini Devī Dāsī

Sarvāṇī Devī Dāsī

Most glorious Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

When I think of how I could ever express the appropriate words required to pay tribute to the great compassion, dedication, love, devotion, and mercy that you demonstrated in your service to help save the fallen souls of this world, I am left speechless. Your total surrender to your spiritual master's request to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the Western world, your prolific writings and printing of so many Kṛṣṇa conscious books, *Back to Godhead* magazines and other literatures, and your amazing intuitive insight as to how to preach so successfully in countries with lifestyles steeped in ignorance is truly astounding!

All of your extraordinary undertakings which have miraculously transformed and awakened so many souls, are super-human and reveal a transcendental divine spiritual potency that is rarely seen on this planet. You have demonstrated the most honest humility in that you take no praise for yourself, and declare that whatever success has been made is attributed to your spiritual master, His Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

I thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for fulfilling your mission of spreading Lord Chaitanya's holy saṅkīrtana movement with such grace and purity of purpose. Your selfless deeds have proven that your life has indeed served as a Pole star to attract and guide the

fallen souls of Kali-yuga to Lord Chaitanya's lotus feet.

Forever in humble gratitude, I pray for your blessings,

Your spiritual daughter,

Sarvāṅī Devī Dāsī

Kadamba Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you for accepting me as your disciple. It seems so long ago and I was so young. I have to confess, I didn't know what I was doing, but somehow you (and Lord Kṛṣṇa) put me in the situation to have that benediction for my life – to have you as my spiritual master. In truth, I didn't even know what a spiritual master was, or that I needed one.

If I have offered you any good service over my lifetime, please know I did it out of affection for you and trust in you. Somehow I trusted what you said was important to do – to worship Kṛṣṇa and let other people know about Him. Thank you for giving me something of value to hold on to in your teachings and your presence.

Devoid of your lessons, I can't imagine being able to have lived without going crazy in this world. It's not that I understand very much, but even the little glimpses of understanding and the moments of clarity I have had give me some sanity in this world of chaos.

The devotee community you created in the world is my refuge and you are my peace. Please don't let go of me; please don't give up on me. Being your disciple is the crown jewel of my life. I am not sure how I became so fortunate. Words cannot convey my gratitude and to say "thank you" is so inadequate. But I do say it. Thank you for being my savior, for being our savior, for being the world's savior.

Thank you, thank you, and thank you, again.

Forever grateful,

Kadamba Devī Dāsī

Citraka Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā please accept my heartfelt obeisances unto your lotus like feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

With humility and joy I offer unto you these words of appreciation and gratitude. They may be inadequate for properly glorifying you but are written sincerely from the heart, with the intent to please you. Please accept them.

In this life, your elevated person has bestowed upon me the highest benediction of *divya-jñāna*, divine knowledge. I remain therefore completely indebted to Your Grace.

I was a *bahir-mukha-jīva*, a rebellious soul and thereby entangled in the clutches of the external, material energy.

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

"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."

While loitering thus in the material existence, by Lord Kṛṣṇa's merciful arrangement, I heard the transcendental vibrations of the *saṅkīrtana* movement, first by your disciples, like George Harrison, and later those recorded in your books, and, arising from my comatose state of existence I was in, I gradually came to my senses. Your writings convinced me solidly that realizing Kṛṣṇa consciousness and to reawaken my love for the Lord was the supreme benefit to be achieved in human life.

When later, I had the untold fortune to meet you personally, I was able to stare at with my own eyes, the living example of a person with an actually fully developed transcendental consciousness while still embodied. With utmost amazement and astonishment I

relished studying the superb vaiṣṇava qualities emanating from your personality...completely attracted and inspired by them! Gravity, selflessness, attachment to Kṛṣṇa, conviction, and loving mercy were those which attracted me most and made me want to follow you. Thus, in 1973, I became your initiated disciple and a member of the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya sampradaya. Since then I have been swimming in an ocean of bliss (when not in māyā)! Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

You kindly interceded to the Lord for re-accepting me and He agreed to appear in my life with the form of His holy names, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and His *saṅkīrtana* movement, ready to deliver me along with all the other fortunate disciples and followers of yours.

Your vision of us was not about who we were before—degraded and ignorant sinners—or who we were after meeting you—neophyte and immature *bhaktas*—but who could become in the future, possibly pure devotees. And you treated us like this. Let us adopt that same vision.

Now, the knowledge you so patiently transmitted, the faith you instilled in our hearts and your effulgent example of how to put everything in practice are creating wonders in the life of millions! The chanting of the mahā-mantra is reigning supreme in my life and in hundreds and thousands of temples, houses and streets all over the globe every day! Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

You taught us to approach the spiritual master and other elevated devotees of the Lord with this appropriate expression and mood: “All glories to the spiritual master.”

As the disease consisted of trying to be the center of attention in order to get name, fame and glory for the temporary, antagonistic personality we identified with in this illusory phantasmagoria of māyā’s creation, the whole point of spiritual life is to cure it. And the antidote is to always attribute all credit to one’s own guru and, via the *paramparā*, to Kṛṣṇa.

This perfection was another of your great characteristics that could be clearly perceived in your personality. I admired it very much and I want to develop it also: never becoming proud for your accomplishments or taking any credit for yourself...instead always attributing everything to your own spiritual master and the Lord! Because how can we ever “impress” the Lord with any result, or knowledge, beauty, wealth, influence, when He is the origin of it all?

It is so attractive to observe how all your actions and words were

always directed to bring the attention of your audience towards the Lord. NOT to you! You have always endeavored to bring value, glory, attractivity and devotion to Him only, His realm, associates, pastimes and service.

You kept yourself transparent in that operation, never mixing it with the desire for any kind of personal recognition or gain. You constantly brought everything to the feet of your own spiritual master like an exemplary servant devoted to his master.

Please bless me that I can also become like this. It is known how much the Lord feels repulsion for any kind of pride and attachment to the results.

As you have taught, It is all ultimately depends on how much chanting of the holy name is going on, with which quality is this chanting done and heard, and similarly the hearing and chanting of the Kṛṣṇa-*kathā* found in your books. There are now so many ways your ISKCON movement has been equipped with and evolved to continue what you have started: propagate attraction and interest for Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the practice of the chanting of His holy name. Every day, in thousands of temples, the morning program you established is observed, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* classes are delivered, Harināmas and book distribution performed, and all the other secondary activities necessary to support and promote this hearing and chanting are duly maintained.

The precious gift you gave us, FAITH to guru, to the śāstras and the *sādhus* is being transmitted in a systematic way to render many other people’s lives fortunate like ours. And although there is so much opulence, praise, and influence present, all is still maintained as pure and performed in a way to make YOU proud, keep your movement pure and attractive, and bring all glories to you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have done an immense service to Lord Chaitanya’s movement. I am sincerely aspiring to be your servant, however insignificant. You are the Lord’s most confidential servant and if you so desire, by your mercy, the Lord will also accept me again in His service. You taught us perfect knowledge about the fallacy of material existence and I learned my lesson: which terrible mistake I made to displease the Lord by trying to live without serving Him; I am mortified for such a grave crime! Really and deeply repented!

But now, after breathing the great devotion for Kṛṣṇa emanated from your lotus-like personality, sympathetic chords were struck

within me and all desire for independence has died.

I am now simply begging for forgiveness and mercy. No more abuse of a single unit of time or energy for selfish endeavor, separate from the Lord's pleasure. And as you tried to keep us always engaged when you were with us, now similarly, strategic planning of how to be conscious of Him day and night is constantly done.

Thus, material existence may be in its last chapters for those fortunate souls who keep themselves always connected with you through your *vāṇī*. Living a meaningful life for the present and with a possible future of eternal immersion in a blissful relation with Kṛṣṇa! Who can ask for more?

JAYA ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA, THANK YOU! ALL GLORIES TO YOUR DIVINE GRACE!

Your mercy is all this aspiring servant of yours is made of,

Citraka Dāsa

Sarva-drik Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept millions of my *sastanga daṇḍavat pranams* at your lotus feet.

“Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, O son of Kunti, that state he will attain without fail.” — Bg. 8.6

As I reflect on this verse from *Bhagavad-gītā* I remember your mercy. Somehow, by some unseen favor, I made the best decision of my life and became your disciple. Because of that, now as the time factor reminds me of my ultimate future, I find myself thinking, not how to live, but how to die.

A successful death requires a successful life, a life full of activity in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As I look back over the years invested in that attempt I feel immense gratitude for all the sacred memories that have accumulated in my mind, having been engaged in your sacred service. It is my hope that I will remember these things at the time of death, and thus hope for future engagement in your service again.

I remember:

Chanting the holy name; sidewalk Harināma, japa, Temple

kīrtan, bhajana, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Narottama das Ṭhākur, Govinda Dāsa, Lochan Dāsa, and Jayadeva Goswami...

Your Vaikuṅṭha Temples; circumambulating, cleaning, guarding at night, collecting money to maintain, darśana, visiting...

Your Deities; offering arati, dressing, bathing, abhiseka, installation, cleaning brass, cooking, shopping, and picking flowers...

Tulasī Mahārāṇī; planting, picking manjaris, transplanting, watering, offering, singing...

Your wonderful books; selling, reading, gifting, mailing, memorizing, collecting, studying...

Festivals; Janmashtami, Gaura Pūrṇimā, Nrisingha Caturdāsī, Rama Navami, Rathayātrā, and Govardhana pūjā, fasting and feasting, worshipping, joy....

Your devotees; serving and associating, taking *prasāda*, charity, feeding, obeisances, traveling, taking shelter, and yes, even arguing...

Prasāda; *alu paratha, palak paneer, samosa, gulab jamun, halavah, pakora, puri, pushpanna, khir, burfi, śrīkhand, chutney, strawberry malpoa, lassi, and raita*, impossible to list it all...

Preaching; sidewalks, airports, temples, churches, synagogues, prisons, Bhakti Vriksha, radio and TV...

Pilgrimage; Rādhā Kuṇḍa, Śyāma Kuṇḍa, Govardhana, Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Vṛndāvana, Māyāpur, Puri, so many holy *tīrthas*...

I pray to remember all these impressions that live in my mind and exist there only by your mercy. Certainly I am not alone in my experience, as you have created practically the same thing in the hearts and minds of thousands of other fortunate souls too. Such is the scope of your service to Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and your guru mahārāja.

But most of all Śrīla Prabhupāda, I want to remember you, the little service I have been blessed to offer at your lotus feet, and your beautiful transcendental form, personal qualities, love, and your super-human activities. I want to remember all of that, and let my mind become entangled in the stems of your lotus feet. And when my last breath comes, I hope you will remember me and my struggle to please you. Kindly look upon me with compassion, Śrīla Prabhupāda, excuse my faults and offer me the opportunity to serve you once again.

Your servant, birth after birth,

Sarva-drik Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet, which have traversed the world bringing divine fortune to countless conditioned souls.

On this auspicious day of your appearance in this world we offer our worship, respect, gratitude and surrender unto you, who have wonderfully represented Śrīla Vyāsadeva by explaining the most important Vedic literatures so that those of us aspiring for spiritual perfection can understand and apply this knowledge in our life. "The conditioned soul cannot revive his Kṛṣṇa consciousness by his own effort. But out of causeless mercy, Lord Kṛṣṇa compiled the Vedic literature and its supplements, the Purāṇas." (CC Mad 20.122)

Not only did you present the teachings of Vyāsadeva, but you also brought his words to life by walking amongst us as the real person Bhagavata, full of spiritual knowledge and detachment from all that is material. Your attachment, emotion and love for guru and Kṛṣṇa were exhibited in your unmotivated and uninterrupted service to them. We could thus clearly see that real devotional service is not a part-time occupation. This, coupled with your extreme humility, attributing all success to your own spiritual master, attracted our hearts with a desire to become your disciple and to dedicate our life to serving and cultivating love for Kṛṣṇa.

By your example of being an exemplary disciple of your spiritual master, you taught us how to attract the divine grace and mercy of the Lord. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you showed us how to live as a devotee progressively becoming purified by becoming an ideal disciple of the spiritual master. "As long as it does not turn iron into gold by its touch, no one can recognize an unknown stone to be a touchstone." (CC Mad 6.279, Sarvabhauma Bhattācārya to Lord Caitanya) Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a touchstone! "To deliver people in regions throughout the universe who could not meet Him, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu personally entered the bodies of pure devotees. Thus He empowered living beings [His pure devotees] by manifesting in them so much of His own devotion that people in all other countries became devotees by seeing them." (CC Antya 2.13-14)

We have heard the wonderful and superhuman story of how Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga molded you into an exemplary modern-day Vṛndāvana goswami. By sheer sincerity to execute the order

of your spiritual master, you became a greatly renounced sannyāsī mendicant in the holy land of Vṛndāvana. One year before taking sannyasa, you composed your Bengali poem named *Vṛndāvanae Bhajana*. In Section One, Lonely Realizations, you write:

I am sitting alone in Vṛndāvana-dhama
In this mood I am getting many realizations.

I have my wife, sons, daughters, grandsons, everything,
But I have no money so they are a fruitless glory.

Kṛṣṇa has shown me the naked form of material nature,
By his strength it has all become tasteless to me today.

yasyāham anugṛhṇāmi hariṣye tad-dhanam śanaiḥ

"I gradually take away all the wealth of
those upon whom I am merciful."

How was I able to understand this mercy of the All-merciful?

You indeed understood and greatly appreciated how the Lord had taken away all material arrangements and affections from your life. Seemingly alone and separated from family, friends, godbrothers and even your guru's institution, you happily took shelter of Śrī Vṛndāvana as one of her residents. Now you were free to execute the order of your spiritual master, which became "your mission." Although "alone," you were actually connected with Kṛṣṇa by way of the order of guru, the guidance of predecessor ācāryas and the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

You wonderfully personified Śrī Kṛṣṇa's statement in *Bhagavad-gītā* 2.41 *vyavasāyātmikā buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana*, "Those who are on this path are resolute in purpose, and their aim is one." With the single aim of executing the order of your spiritual master, you began to write tirelessly in English so that the whole world could receive Kṛṣṇa's (Vyāsa's) message and the teachings of Lord Caitanya.

The transcendental fruits of your tear-filled prayers to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī and Śrī Rupa and Śrī Sanātana Goswamis for the mercy needed to execute this great mission manifested in the publishing of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, First Canto*, and a ticket to America. Now you were unstoppable: neither heart attacks, seasickness, poverty, lack of followers, or being alone in a foreign land were obstacles. Your determination unflinching, you transplanted Kṛṣṇa

conscious culture to every continent of the world.

Let us all meditate on your transcendental determination and pray for one drop of the same so that we can offer some service which pleases you, the disciplic succession and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Your grateful servant,

Pr̥thuśravā Dāsa

Rajendranandana Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my prostrated obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda!

It is a very dear engagement, if not my favorite activity, trying my best to glorify you and express my gratitude for your unlimited causeless mercy upon this insignificant disciple and countless others.

I remember in 1975 when you visited your Dallas *gurukula*, the 7th Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was not printed yet. You gave an evening *darśana* to all of us teachers, sharing Nārada muni's instructions for brahmācārīs in the Gurukula. The first verse of the 12th chapter stands out in my memory:

*śrī-nārada uvāca
brahmācārī guru-kule
vasan dānto guror hitam
ācaran dāsavan nīco
gurau sudṛḍha-sauhṛdah*

“Nārada Muni said: A student should practice completely controlling his senses. He should be submissive and have an attitude of firm friendship for the spiritual master. With a great vow, the *brahmācārī* should live at the *guru-kula*, only for the benefit of the guru”.

This verse is applicable to all sincere disciples and followers of Your Divine Grace. To receive the priceless gift of pure *bhakti* to the lotus feet of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, we have to embody these qualities in our life.

We have to control our senses and mind completely. Of course, this is possible only by following your instructions on how to serve you, the Vaiṣṇavas and Kṛṣṇa.

We have to always remain submissive before you, knowing that

without your shelter and guidance we simply would be two-legged animals. We should always remain a fool before you and completely accept anything and everything you tell us, understanding you to be the external representative of the Lord in our heart. You know Kṛṣṇa. You captured Kṛṣṇa with your loving service and can give the same to us when you are pleased by our surrender and service to your divine instructions.

Developing a deep friendship with you is only possible when we have given our lives to you unreservedly. To the degree we hold back, wanting some selfish desire fulfilled, you reciprocate, only giving the same degree of yourself and your mercy to us. You write in one purport “Service is the most congenial form of intimacy.”

I want to live my life as your instrument in serving and pleasing your guru mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda and Lord Caitanya, playing a part in sharing the holy names of the Lord and the transcendental knowledge of the science of devotional service. I have such a long way to progress to measure up to such an aspiration, but the taste and the extent of mercy you have given me thus far only encourages me onward.

On my own I have neither the strength, intelligence or determination to fully surrender to you and perform realized pure devotional service. However, with your ceaseless flow of mercy, the impossible becomes a reality very quickly, if not comparatively easy.

I was nothing of value before you came into my life, when I picked up your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* in 1972. If I were to stray away out of sheer stupidity, I again would become miserable and useless to myself and all others.

Your shelter and guidance which I am receiving through your books, your exemplary life of devotional service, your followers, the holy dhama of Śrī Māyāpur, and my attempts to please you by trying my best to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa purely and to share this transcendental nectar of devotional service with others, is becoming my sole purpose for living. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I daily renew my prayer to you: “Please accept me as your servant to use me as you like for the pleasure of your guru mahārāja and the Lord.” I beg this of you and yearn to transform into the disciple you will be pleased with and proud of.

With as much heartfelt sincerity and humility as I can manifest.

Your insignificant and unworthy disciple,

Rajendranandana Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Today I was browsing through the “Prabhupāda Meditations” calendar, the calendar that has a daily quote from you, and found the following phrase you uttered in Bhubaneswar: “Whatever Kṛṣṇa said, that is good and everything else bad. *Bās*. Our confusion is finished.”

There is no confusion in my heart. When I read your books, preach, or associate with devotees, everything is crystal clear.

How is this possible?

In Delhi you said, “Any devotee who has developed genuine love for Kṛṣṇa can also explain the truth about Kṛṣṇa because Kṛṣṇa helps such sincere devotee seated in the heart.”

But honestly (no question of humility here), in my heart love for Kṛṣṇa is conspicuous by its absence, and you know that well.

Then how is that I am convinced, determined, and feel spiritually nourished?

There are two answers to this question:

- a) Your causeless mercy, inspiration, and support.
- b) The wonderful association of your servants.

The first one comes mostly in the form of your books. I read them and find them perfect. Within your words I find the key to properly discriminate and place every statement in its right context and hierarchical relevance, from absolute *siddhānta* to Bengali proverbs, avoiding sweeping juxtapositions thereof.

I don’t criticize or oppose the request for hermeneutics, exegesis, or the like; some feel the need for it, either for their own understanding or for preaching purposes.

But as far as I am concerned, I feel that while I am reading or describing your purports you are enlightening and guiding me. Therefore, as long as I try to sincerely serve you there will be no room for confusion in my heart and the truth of Kṛṣṇa will always shine forth.

Truly practicing your impeccable instructions, particularly on hearing and chanting the Holy Name, then makes everything complete.

The second answer is the immense gift in the form of the protection and shelter that your loving servants provide.

With the passage of time I realize more and more how dependent I am on those who have devoted their lives to you, and how attached I am to them as well. They are heroes, special souls whose hearts have become your residence. They remind me of you; some manifest certain traits of yours, some others, and they all are my loving family.

The GBC members especially are engrossed in service to you, and their anxiety in trying to maintain and expand your movement is sometimes heartrending.

Same goes for your servants at the BBT, whose only goal in life is to keep your *bṛhat-mṛdaṅga* heart beating strongly.

And glory to all my godbrothers and godsisters who genuinely maintain your legacy, as well as to all others who sincerely serve you.

In conclusion, on the sacred occasion of your appearance, my humble request to you is that since this aging body will soon manifest its expiring date, please don’t let confusion ever overcome me, so that while avoiding committing offenses I may one day be readmitted into your eternal shelter.

Your worthless servant,

Madhusevita Dāsa

Rambhoru Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

You often said that the essence of all Vedic literature was to be humble. As I reflect on your personal example, I realize that you and all bona fide ācāryas descending in the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya lineage modeled the true meaning of humility; to passionately engage in efforts to relieve the suffering of all living beings: humans, animals, insects, plants, Mother Earth and the whole creation. Your efforts were not just another “rescue mission” that self-righteously disempowered the recipients of your care and eternally obliged them to your charity with no possibility of their giving back. Rather,

you empowered and liberated those who came to you – wounded and scarred from their materialistic ventures – and invested in them your vision and courage to shoulder the responsibility of carrying on your work.

For this reason, you wrote books that clearly and accurately repeated the instructions you heard from your spiritual master urging us to learn and repeat them for the benefit of others. Declaring Lord Caitanya’s mission to be the only antidote for humanity’s suffering, you commissioned each of us to take up this rescue mission and become teachers of this sweet message of unconditional love.

You knew that were people to have genuine love for Kṛṣṇa – the source of all living beings residing at their core – they would naturally aspire to love and serve all others. No need for any other separate program for deliverance. “The world is starving for want of Kṛṣṇa consciousness”, you said. “If you water the root of the tree, all leaves will be nourished”.

On this Vyāsa-pūjā day, please accept me as a servant in your mission of unconditional love and please bless me with the courage to carry out your instructions,

Rambhoru Devī Dāsī

Avyaya Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
All glories to your lotus feet.

What a year this has been! It seems like only weeks ago since my last Vyāsa-pūjā offering.

I have had the opportunity to read this wonderful book: *Our Śrīla Prabhupāda, A friend to All* compiled by Mulaprakṛti Devī Dāsī, I was overwhelmed with awe.

I could imagine you on your squeaky bicycle, distributing your *Back to Godhead*. Standing at a door gate as a poor sannyāsī begging for a few rupees...always keeping in mind the sacred mission that was given to you by your guru mahārāja. Hardly sleeping, always in the anguish of being able to cross the ocean and come to the West to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Getting up in the middle of the night when living at Rādhā Damodara Temple, sweeping the courtyard under the stars, weeping for Śrīla Rupa Gosvāmī’s mercy.

Very advanced souls, your dear godbrothers, pure devotees, would shy away from helping you physically in the West...not wanting to leave the holy *dhama*. But you were living proof that a sādhu IS a holy place par excellence. You simply had to sit in a square and chant the holy name, and the Lord was there in His original form, along with all His transcendental qualities and paraphernalia, along with all of His divine manifestations, Mahā Sankarsana, Lord Chaitanya, all of the internal *cit* potency. You didn’t put on a big ‘Indian Guru Show’ like so many did in those hippy days. You simply invited a few kids to your little apartment and cooked for them. Teaching simple elementary things like cleanliness.

Who can understand your unfathomable mercy in distributing the mahā-mantra? The task was immense! The message unheard of! No, the original Godhead is not an impersonal ocean of transcendental bliss in which we merge. God is a young, dark cowherd boy with a peacock feather on His head, playing the flute for His girlfriends. And He is present in His name. You simply have to chant: *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*.

By some inconceivable grace and mercy you have accepted me, totally unqualified, as your disciple along with my godbrothers and godsisters in little more than a decade.

We are but a few left now...who can understand how fortunate we are?

Only by your mercy can I humbly chant my rounds every morning without fail. This sums up all of my spiritual life, but the link is there. Saying ‘thank you’ seems so inappropriate, so futile. But what else can I say? Over and over again: Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your eternal servant,

Avyaya Dāsa

Yādavendra das Vanacārī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to the ever transcendental to time, places and circumstances, Śrīla Prabhupāda *vāṅī!*

Your Kṛṣṇa conscious program is summarized in letter to

Karandhar dated July 27th 1975:

“So, everything is already there but it is now mixed up, we want to bring the whole world into order by giving the right directions to all classes of men. Right direction means, to deliver the instructions of Kṛṣṇa, and because Kṛṣṇa is perfect, if you present this knowledge anywhere it will automatically defeat all the existing concocted hodge-podge ideas congesting the feeble brains of so-called scientist, philosophers or anyone.”

It is all right to remain a little on the side, as you write in a letter to the late Madhudvisa Prabhu, dated November 7th 1975:

“My point is that even if somebody does not go in one line with the rest of the godbrothers, he can remain separately, but it does not mean that he may disobey the principles that I have laid down. So long as one follows the principles, he continues to be my disciple.”

I remember once reading despondently in your books that Kṛṣṇa’s service is unlimited. How can I serve the Unlimited? How can I provide unlimited service to the Unlimited. It is impossible! Then a few sentences further you so kindly and so perfectly consoled me by providing the healing mantra for my anxiety:

“Kṛṣṇa supplies unlimited intelligence to serve Him!” Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for your thoughtfulness and perfection.

Through sound vibration and to our very great benefit, we can associate with you 24/7 365, if we choose to do so. Prabhupādavāṇī.org is the place to dwell. As I listen to your classes, even the very same classes over again, I find that your every word and sentence is correct and in some cases short-circuits / revolutionizes stereotyped thinking. Your problem-solving program is a case in point. “And the whole world is problem for ordinary persons, but to us it is not problem. Because we see everything Kṛṣṇa’s. If there is problem, it is Kṛṣṇa’s problem. Why my problem? Kṛṣṇa can know how to solve problem. So we have no problem practically. Kṛṣṇa’s problem. Kṛṣṇa will see to it. Just like Arjuna was, I mean to say, encouraged that nimitta-mātram bhava savyasācin [Bg. 11.33]

“You don’t worry about your victory. I have already arranged.” So we should have such faith and conviction and let us try. Let us do very sincerely and seriously. Then everything Kṛṣṇa will do. I haven’t got to do anything.” 690524SB.NV. This passage should however not be construed as an invitation for being irresponsible.

The other “electrocuting” passage is about the electric fan. Is the electric fan enjoyment or suffering?:

“Artha means things which we require, positive. And *anartha* means things which we do not require but unnecessarily imposed upon us. So that is suffering. We are thinking that we are enjoying this electric fan, but actually we are suffering; therefore the electric fan is required. So why this electric fan is required? Because the body is *anartha*; it has created the situation. The same electric fan will be a trouble, a misery, in winter season. The same body, the same electric fan---sometimes it is pleasing, and sometimes it is not pleasing.” 750423SB.Vrn

Neither do you contradict yourself or say “maybe” or “perhaps”. Your message is steady, consistent, firm and definitive. You do not say here that Nanda Mahārāja had 10 million cows and then that he had 10 cows. You say throughout your message that Nanda Mahārāja had nine lacks of cows as in 680614LET.Hayagriva, 741001SB.MAY and other passages.

Your every observation is precise, scientific, and full of logic and reason. Sometimes my taste for hearing your words surpasses my taste for *japa*. One may ask the question: ‘Is there any difference at all between practicing *japa* and hearing Kṛṣṇa *katha* from Guru, and more specifically from Guru A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda?’ There may not be any. But, by carefully hearing your words, one cannot avoid the practice of *japa* because you give the soundest reasons why *japa* must be executed. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

As a symptomatic preaching event, I would like to narrate the following for your pleasure. I was seeking some online advice from Apple. After a 59 minute long exchange with a male representative located ‘in the pointy end of Kentucky in the USA’, my problem was solved nicely. Gratitude to Apple Corporation!

In *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, you offer a preaching technique that one must ask everyone one meets to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

“In order to become an empowered preacher, one must be favored by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu or His devotee, the spiritual master. One must also request everyone to chant the mahā-mantra. In this way, such a person can convert others to Vaiṣṇavism, showing them how to become pure devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” — *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, Madhya, 7.101, purport.

Towards the end of our exchange, I gravitated towards that aim and

asked him to utter Hare Kṛṣṇa. Then, all of a sudden this person emailed me the full Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra with full diacritical marks. This somewhat extraordinary field experience came as a surprise and proves his familiarity with the mahā-mantra. The conclusion will have to be that the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra is spreading far and wide.

“When my guru mahārāja was present even big, big scholars were afraid to talk with his beginning students. My guru mahārāja was called “Living Encyclopedia”. He could talk with anyone on any subject. He was so learned—so we should be like that as far as possible. No compromise—Ramakrishna, avatars, yogis, everyone was enemy to Guru Mahārāja—he never compromised. Some godbrothers complained that this preaching was chopping technique and it would not be successful. But we have seen that those who criticized, they fell down. For my part I have taken up the policy of my guru mahārāja—no compromise. All these so called scholars, scientists, philosophers who do not accept Kṛṣṇa are nothing more than rascals, fools lowest of mankind etc..”750727LET.Karandhara

True to your vow to follow your own guru mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Mahārāja in his “no compromise and chopping techniques”, we find that in the Vedabase the word “rascal” is found 10,350 times, 5068 times in singular number and 5282 times in plural number. You also use the word “rascaldom” 860 times. The word “rascaldom” however is not to be found in English dictionary. That means the English dictionary needs to change to accommodate your language. I have not analyzed your other classes in respect of the use of “rascal”. But it recently struck me that in 741015SB.May alone the word rascal is found 19 times, 11 times singular number and 8 times plural number.

And finally you state: “Nobody should be proud of his knowledge. Everyone is a rascal. Everyone.”

Then you finish on a very positive and optimistic note. In typical *jagad* or world guru fashion you proclaim unifyingly: “Therefore I say that the Christian, they’re also Vaiṣṇava; the Muslim, they’re also Vaiṣṇava, very, lower stage, because they’re offering prayer. *Yad-vandanam*. They offer prayer: “O God, give us our daily bread.”

They do not know very much, but the beginning is there. Beginning is there, because they have approached... *Catur-vidhā bhajanti mām sukṛtino ‘rjuna*. That going to the church or going to the mosque, that is also pious activities. *one day they’ll come out pure Vaiṣṇava. One day.* But that beginning is good.”

The analytical honesty and accuracy, the intelligence and non-sectarian broadness of this declaration gave me much happiness. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You are a super-strong preacher. How else would you have otherwise founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in New York City, just after a long and troublesome sea voyage from Kolkata and a lifetime of preparation?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, before you, I am simply a fool. Therefore my best policy is to constantly hear, promote and appropriately quote your own words. You have said all there needs to be said and more. This has been abundantly proven. Your words are the building blocks of ISKCON.

Even though I am weak and full of shortcomings, my only ambition is to carefully use my last everything in your service and the service of Kṛṣṇa and join your “other ISKCON” in the spiritual sky.

“Why you only want to be in the spiritual sky with Siddhasvarupa? Why not all? If Siddhasvarupa can go, why not everyone? Siddhasvarupa will go, you will go, Syamasundara will go, all others will go. We will have another ISKCON there. Of course, Mr. Nair must stay.” 721214Let.TustaKrishna.

If at all possible, I may drag along some other souls as well. Despite all ups and downs, I have faith and know that my final offering will be to your liking and consequently will qualify for your approval and blessings. These are ecstatic considerations and may produce a tear or two. Thank you very much Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your insignificant student and servant,

Yādavendra das Vanacārī
Brisbane, Australia
www.krishnaculture.org

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On February 19 & 20, 1966, you recorded the Introduction to *Bhagavad-gītā* in Room 307 at 100 West 72 Street in New York City. On February 19 & 20, 2018, I wrote this offering — fifty-two years later.

The 1966 dates fell on a Saturday and a Sunday, with freezing temperatures in NYC and the moon starting a new phase. Among almost eight million people there, you alone were perfect and knew Krishna. Very few were interested in perfecting their human life.

You mentioned a curious “American lady, Mrs. Charlotte Le Blanc,” who “asked me to recommend an English edition of *Bhagavad-gītā*.”

No edition in English that you’d seen in India or America was authoritative, because “the commentator expressed his own opinions without touching the spirit of *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is,” you said — we need to accept the book as it is directed by Krishna.

Thus you quote the first three verses of Chapter Four first — to establish that Krishna originally taught Vivasvan this everlasting yoga system. Vivasvan, the presiding deity of the sun, told his son Manu, the first progenitor of humankind, and then Manu told his son Ikṣvaku, an ancient king of eastern India.

Arjuna qualified to hear about and understand the same ancient yoga system, because he offered Krishna his love and friendship — *bhakto ‘si me sakha ceti*, Krishna says.

You expound: “*Bhagavad-gītā* is best understood by a person who has qualities similar to Arjuna’s. That is to say he must be a devotee in a direct relationship with the Lord.” This is the *Bhagavad-gītā*’s ultimate secret: *rahasyam hy etad uttamam* (4.3).

In February, 1966, I was fifteen. By Krishna’s grace, I eventually became your student.

That July you moved to 26 Second Avenue. That summer, my family moved from a village, where they’d lived from the time I was in the womb, to a town of ten thousand, ten miles away, where our house stood beside the wide Mississippi River.

In September, 1966, I transferred to a boarding school, a Benedictine-run college-preparatory school, forty miles away in central Minnesota’s countryside. A few sons of my parents’ friends were already enrolled.

By early 1967, you, along with Mukunḍa, his wife, and their

four friends, opened a San Francisco temple. I joined ISKCON in that city in 1974.

First I attended the University of Minnesota, in Minneapolis — one of forty thousand students. In the Student Union, I met a disciple of yours. She wore a nose ring, *tilaka*, and a sari — mystifying in appearance to me. She invited me to eat a piece of cake and donate. She handed me a card.

Months later, on a snowy street outside Dayton’s department store in Minneapolis, another female disciple sold me Śrī Īsopaniṣad. Vishnu graced the cover, and Your Divine Grace, the back cover — eyes closed, holding *kartalas*, singing Krishna’s glories.

I began feeling grateful that the Lord was providing novel spiritual direction to young people like me and other receptive Westerners by your single-minded efforts.

We were also mindful then of war & peace and race, when you began preaching internationally. On those February days you spoke the Introduction, it was reported that Senator Robert Kennedy became the first senator to break with President Johnson in proposing that the Viet Cong be allowed “a share of power and responsibility” in peace talks with the USA. The news archive also noted that Emmet Ashford became the first African-American Major League Baseball umpire, hired after fifteen years of umpiring in the minor leagues.

In 1970–71, I took a popular course on racism at the university. Mischa Penn, a Jew, traced racism to Plato’s writings. Penn gave me a high grade and said that he liked my paper.

Pleasing this prof just approximated pleasing a sādhu or guru. I knew little yet about satisfying a guru to please Krishna.

My protests against the Vietnam War led me to discern that the Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, and other elites were making America’s foreign policy. Their militarism repelled me. It was an ongoing reason I stayed in Europe’s ISKCON temples rather than America’s for twenty-five years, after going there, in 1993, to edit *The Nectar of Book Distribution*.

One day, in the Student Union, a devotee at a book table had just listened to a couple of my problems. The problems of being a youth, a student, a hippy, an American, or whatever, can be solved in Krishna consciousness by following its regulatory principles, he responded. Human life is meant for understanding the Absolute Truth — a higher aim than an animal’s life of eating, sleeping, mating, and defending.

I graduated and then met other devotees one Sunday in the summer of 1972. At their center in Heidelberg, Germany, I chanted in a *kīrtana* for the first time. I also grasped their philosophy, explained by Sivananda, in the first class I heard about Krishna consciousness.

Back in America, I studied Śrī Īsopaniṣad.

Autumn of 1973: I met other devotees in Minneapolis, attended their classes, and performed devotional service with them. This group included the editors of *Back to Godhead* magazine: Satsvarupa Dāsa Goswami and Jayadvaita. I began chanting the *mahā-mantra* like them.

The new *Back to Godhead* magazine cover was a painting of mother Yasoda binding her naughty Krishna by the belly to a mortar. Jayadvaita told me the pastime.

I liked the diet of *krishna-prasāda*, and I soon began offering my meals to Krishna.

I joined ISKCON in San Francisco on Friday, January 11, 1974. On Saturday (invited by Kritakarma, the temple commander) I rode to Los Angeles with two men from the congregation. We went there to see you.

On Sunday, we saw you greet the Deities. Your class was not recorded, but I recall that you spoke about becoming free from the lower modes of nature in order to serve Krishna, and you told us how Krishna says that devotees “come to Me.”

During a *kīrtana* after class, I stood right beside your *vyāsāsana*, and we exchanged glances.

In July, 1974, at San Francisco’s Rathayātrā, you spoke and danced onstage, wearing a white sweater and red garland; Viśākhā took a famous picture of you dancing.

During two years (1975–76), I visited hundreds of North American colleges with the Library Party.

By April, 1977, I lived at the thirteen-story temple on West 55 St. in Manhattan. I got to edit the weekly “Sāṅkīrtana Newsletter” and photocopy and mail it. One of your secretaries said that it was the first envelope you opened whenever your mail arrived.

I wrote about you in a newsletter for parents, which I compiled along with Polly Perlmutter, a devotee’s mother, from Hartford, Connecticut (her son was in India). Mr. and Mrs. Perlmutter had met you and admired you, so she had something important to tell parents. She also corresponded with parents — twice with my mother.

We mailed out the Parents’ Newsletter in July.

On July 19, 1977, in Vrindavan, your secretary informed you about it, as you together went through the day’s mail.

Tamala Krishna Goswami (TKG): “The International Society for Krishna Consciousness Parents’ Newsletter — ISKCON New York.” Put out by Sravanananda’s mother.

“ ‘Ratha-yatra ’77 Is Coming’ — it tells all the parents that they should come to Ratha-yatra.”

[Professor Harvey Cox would meet the parents and also speak at the festival.]

TKG: “Then there’s an article: ‘The Roots of the American Krishna Movement.’

Prabhupāda: “Who has written?”

TKG: “By a *brahmacārī* named Tattvavit Dāsa Brahmācārī. Because you said — just like they have an American Christian movement — now we should be known as the American Krishnas. So he wrote, ‘The American Krishna Movement.’ Then the public likes it: ‘Oh, it’s American.’ ”

Prabhupāda: “ ‘American’ is nice.”

TKG: “It begins: ‘The Society’s founder is A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda. He left India at an advanced age aboard the merchant ship *Jaladuta*, with only the equivalent of seven dollars and trunks containing scriptures he had translated into English. The ship’s captain became Śrīla Prabhupāda’s friend and purchased the first books distributed in the USA.

“ ‘Śrīla Prabhupāda had been instructed by Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, his spiritual preceptor, to broadcast Krishna consciousness in the English language. That request was made in 1922. In the years that followed, Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote an English commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* and started an English magazine in 1944, which he wrote, printed, and distributed himself.

“ He arrived in America in September, 1965, and by July of 1966 he incorporated ISKCON. Historically, this corporation is part of the spiritual tradition whose followers preserve the pure teachings of the scriptures such as the Vedas, Upanisads, and Purāṇas. The tradition . . .’

TKG: “He goes on and on. Should I read on?”

Prabhupāda: “Hmm!”

TKG: “ The tradition began long, long ago. The message of the scriptures was recorded by Śrīla Vyāsadeva in order to benefit people living in the present age. This historic event is even mentioned in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.’ ”

The taping stopped there.

Your servant,

Tattvavit Dāsa

Phalini Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my fallen obeisances at your infinitely merciful lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, to your unswerving dedication to the instructions and mission of your beloved guru mahārāja and to your sincere followers who continue to carry on your sacred mission.

*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*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are so kind. You are an ocean of kindness. By your mercy, you agreed to come to this place of birth, disease, old age and death. Now I have hope, a way out of this miserable place. Although I am worthless, devoid of any good qualities, you nonetheless causelessly bestowed your unfathomable mercy upon this useless nonsense by picking her up from the gutter. I was

helpless then, and I am still helpless now. I am helpless without your guidance and intercession. My goal is to simply hang on for dear life to your lotus feet and to your merciful instructions.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am begging to be able to continue to keep the vows I have made to you at initiation, begging to be allowed to continue chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa, at least 16 rounds daily, begging to be allowed to remain in the association of your sincere followers so that I may have a particle of a chance to chant Kṛṣṇa’s holy names at the time of death in the association of His loving servants.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this holy occasion of Your Divine Grace’s merciful appearance in this miserable world, may I offer you a little song I wrote to Lord Kṛṣṇa a few years ago? Kindly accept this small offering. I hope it pleases you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Prayer to Krishna

Thanks for never giving up on me
You’ve been in my heart for an eternity
Guiding, correcting so patiently
You never gave up on me
Though I’ve treated You impersonally
You’ve always loved me unconditionally
I’ve tried to enjoy living separately
But You never gave up on me
For aeons of time I’ve turned my back on You
Trying to claim what belonged to You
Life after life pretending I was You
But You never gave up on me, O Krishna!
You saw I was tired of struggling alone
You sent Your devotee to bring me back home
Though his mercy’s so great, my heart is still like stone
But please don’t give up on me
Thanks for leading me to Prabhupāda
The external manifestation of God
From atheism and *māyāvada*
He graciously rescued me
Thanks for descending as Your holy name
To give us a chance to taste *kṛṣṇa-prema*
Unfortunately, I still don’t have a taste
But please don’t give up on me, O Krishna!

Thanks for giving me the chance to chant
 The *mahā-mantra*, although I can't
 Seem to control my rascal mind just yet
 But please don't give up on me, O Krishna!
 Forgetting You, the most valuable jewel,
 Here I am in this place that's meant for passing stool
 By broken pieces of colored glass I'm still fooled
 But please don't give up, no please don't give up
 Oh please don't give up on me
 Hare Krishna Hare Krishna
 Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
 Hare Rama Hare Rama
 Rama Rama Hare Hare

*Your insignificant, puffed-up servant who has absolutely nothing to be
 puffed up about,*

Phalini Devī Dāsī

Jagadvira Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances

Bhaktisiddhānta Nineteen Twenty-Two
 Broadcast this knowledge he requested you

So you crossed the Atlantic Ocean
 Your heart full of mercy and devotion

Kali-yuga is a degraded Age
 Sinful activities are all the rage

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam with purports too
 Written in English – translated by you

To spread the message of Mahāprabhu
 You taught by your example what to do

In the morning you would go for a walk
 About Lord Kṛṣṇa you would often talk

Life comes from matter – you didn't agree
 You opened our eyes – now we can see

Thank you Prabhupāda – we only pray
 We hope we can meet you again someday

Your humble servant,

Jagadvira Dāsa
 Okinawa Japan

Mṛtyuhara Dāsa and Arthia Devī Dāsī

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Standing before you each year, it is not an easy thing for me to find the right words to describe and to glorify your advent in this material world.

How can it be that, that amongst billions and billions of fallen souls, you accepted me as your disciple?

The disciples must help the spiritual master to spread the message of *Bhagavad-gītā* all over the world, and my help is insignificant.

You said that without *tapasya*, spiritual life cannot be completed, and I am still enjoying my *grihastha* life in my beautiful house.

My *grihastha* life is taking a little longer than I was expecting, so I decided that it was essential to leave the hell of family life and try to follow a drop of your example and preach the glories of the *mahā-mantra* in some part of Italy.

With a member of my family just over a year ago we started a little preaching program in South Italy, in the city of Naples. At the beginning only four of five people attended, but now there are

sometimes 30-40! It is a complete program with very nice *prasāda*. In Naples the people like to chant and they appreciate good *prasāda*. At this moment we have around ten devotees chanting their rounds regularly....this is my offering to you for this Vyāsa-pūjā day.

I was tired of offering only words, so I hope that every year I will offer something new to you. My only hope is that, knowing your patience and tolerance, you will keep me at your lotus feet for another year. In this way I will have the strength to continue my preaching plan.

I am confident that by following your example, everything will be successful. After many years of engagement in business for the maintenance of my family members, I was afraid of going deeper again in the preaching business. My first problem was “from where I start now?” So, I thought to just start and make the others chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra.

I have to tell to you, that I was a little bewildered to hear some of my godbrothers say that time has changed and people are not like before. Some said that we are no longer in the seventies so we have to approach the people in a different way, and find new ways to spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement...as if the way you gave us is in need of some update!

This made me think that I am not so intelligent, so how I will find ‘new’ ways to preach? Surely, to do this I need superior intelligence. But Śrīla Prabhupāda, you know my intelligence is limited...I am not a scholar and I am not an academic. So, I remembered my *brahmacārī* life, and how simple it was, yet so powerful. So many new devotees were coming at that time so I wondered how I can do this again if I don’t change my way of preaching.

My stupidity actually helped and saved me. I am not a big *pandit* or a big academic, so, I started to preach in the same way that I was doing many years ago. And actually, it was a big surprise to find that the old system still works! The system that you personally inaugurated in New York in the sixties!

Through your presence this beautiful preaching program is going on all over the world. Even now, we can enjoy the results of devotional service, giving others the essence of the *saṅkīrtana* movement that started from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and by Your Grace, never stopped.

You are so powerful, You represent Śrī Kṛṣṇa in this material world. You know who Śrī Kṛṣṇa is because you are a pure devotee of

the Lord and you are His intimate associate. So how can one think or act in a different way to you?

My life will be successful only if I will be able to stay at your lotus feet. These immense lotus feet that are the refuge for all the people in this material world.

Your small insignificant disciples,

Mrtyuhara Dāsa and Arthia Devī Dāsī

Lalitā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your divine lotus feet. For a period of time I have been contemplating the importance of intent, especially in regards to my bhoga offerings to the Lord. In 1974 when I joined the temple, our lives were surrendered to your desires and every action we performed, any foodstuff we ate, anything we gave away was all under your divine direction to please Lord Kṛṣṇa. And so...we were flooded daily with your mercy and the Lord’s *prasāda*! Many of us felt rightly situated, happy to serve and certainly not so easily affected by *māyā*.

Fast forward to present when so many of us work. That simplicity and purity of life you taught us, especially your repeated requests to use our tongue to only glorify the Lord and his devotees and to only eat Kṛṣṇa *prasāda* has in many case been sorely compromised. I am now fully convinced to become sinless and to regain my innate Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I must once again take this instruction to heart and execute it with intense desire to please you and Kṛṣṇa! I am begging for your help and blessings to stay fixed in this resolution through the remainder of this journey so I may assist you in your mission with greater enthusiasm and spiritual strength!

Your grateful disciple,

Lalitā Devī Dāsī

Acharyadeva

The foolish soul wishing to become God leaves his home
 Forgetting his real home and Father
 Wandering from life form to life form
 Incurious, he does not bother

To inquire how to end this suffering
 Acharyadeva can pierce the gloom
 Revealing the soul's eternal position
 As sunlight lights up the darkest room

Acharyadeva, how much in debt I am to you
 Is not a measurement I can make
 Sleeping soundly in this material night
 The sound of your voice shook me awake

“Dear child,” you said “the time is now
 Now that you have this human life
 Here is the meaning of Lord Kṛṣṇa's words
 Drink and end your never ending strife”

What better well-wisher Acharyadeva
 Could such a rascal have lucked upon?
 How long would I have wandered this universe
 In darkness never encountering dawn?

By Māyeśa Dāsa

Prabhupāda's Vṛndāvana Samadhi

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*

You left India at an age when most people retire, and came to bring what we have forgotten. It was certainly an enormous challenge to bring us up to the level of human being, and then consign us to the inexorable road of the nectar of devotion. Because of economics and culture, this would seem to be an impossible dream. Nevertheless, your dreams just got bigger and bigger, 'til you accomplished the goal. “Even if I make one pure devotee, my mission will have been successful.” At the time of those beginnings, there was a famous American preacher who was famous for a speech than began with, “I have a dream.” Your dreams completed more than he could even imagine. Your dreams were not dreams. Your connection with your spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa reached far beyond. How can we even dream reaching an inch of that?

You said, “My only qualification is that I have not changed anything—neither added nor subtracted”. We have tried very hard to avoid changing things. I don't know how closely we followed. It's just so tempting to justify this and that by, “Well it's for Kṛṣṇa; so it must be good.” By the creation of our association in the temples you have arranged for us to be pulled back on track. Often getting pulled back on track. Am I willing to be pulled back?

But your association is the strongest pull. We have therefore, the mercy of Lord Caitanya and His associates in every size and variety: your 'ISKCON Sandwich' of mangala arati, tulasī pūjā, 16 rounds of japa, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam classes, Bhāgavad-gītā classes, evening arati, gurupūjā, and an amazing diversity of services in-between; real welfare work. And there are VIHE intensive study groups and offshoots which have caught on everywhere to produce Bhakti Sastris, Bhakti Vaibhavas, Bhaktivedantas—not as fast as you had proposed, but finally took momentum. There is book distribution,

dramas, light shows, Sunday Love Feasts, Deity worship, grand festivals which we can take to the streets, harināma, gurukulas, farm communities, preaching centers of all kinds, temples, Kartika parikramas, life membership. There is no end to the opportunities to purify others and be purified by the process you gave us.

Most of all, for us in Vṛndāvana, there is your home and your sacred resting place, your Samadhi, where you have made yourself so exclusively accessible. How can we thank you enough for this association? It's impossible. But, each and every one of us pray that we "die trying". You have given us the goal of life. We found the connection, and we did not even know we were not connected.

Your presence is undeniable here, even if we can't recognize the availability wherever your books are read and distributed, and we offer out meager service as diligently as we are capable.

I pray that I take full advantage of what you have given us, and die trying.

Your servant on behalf of your Samadhi sevaites,

Pārvatī Devī Dāsī

Tamohara dāsa

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

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

From Darkness to Light

Drifting through time, millennia passed,
Each birth brought pain, each worse than the last.
None gave relief, but headlong we hurled,
Illusion of hope in this dark world.

Opportunity came in human life—
Again squandered with desire and strife.
Hopes for freedom explored through each sense—
Jīva was covered, our path now dense.

Somewhere within, an ember still burned.
Hope almost gone, to Kṛṣṇa we turned.
Through wonder, knowledge, desire, or pain,
Your mercy descends, like cleansing rain.

With a scrap of desire, we have been told,
The Lord responds a thousandfold.
Led toward the Guru from deep in the heart—
Our spiritual life was soon to start.

An Indian swami was sent our way,
The one known as Abhay Charan De.
Devotion so deep, strength like a rod,
Keeper of truth—our Prabhupāda.

Summoned by guru, sent by the Lord,
He answered the call—he cut our cord.
He lit the path and cleared the way,
Turned pain to joy, and night to day.

Faith of iron, his words touched our heart,
 Illusion's storm clouds began to part.
 Chanting, dancing, rising before dawn,
 Past bad habits miraculously gone.

How could one sādhu transform us all?
 Hippie to happy, hearing the call.
 Hearts were transformed, the change was sure,
 Graced by the words of a soul so pure.

We awakened love for the boy of blue
 In our heart of hearts, not really new.
 Our faith took hold, practice became strong.
 Prabhupāda lived truth, and we came along.

His path to freedom restored our hope.
 Enlightenment ours—just hold the rope.
 From one who has known, we also know God—
 Our soul's redemption from Prabhupāda.

My heart was confused, my path was unclear,
 No enlightenment likely to appear.
 But love for Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme God,
 Was given freely by Prabhupāda.

Hardened hearts cannot repay love,
 But try we must, through grace from above.
 Kṛṣṇa empowers, clears the taint,
 To follow the footsteps of His great saint.

Your most unworthy servant,
 Tamohara dāsa

*vande 'hariṁ śrī-guroḥ śrī yuta-pada-kamalaṁ śrī-gurūn vaiṣṇavāṁś ca
 śrī-rūpaṁ sāgrajātaṁ saha-gaṇa-raghunāthānvitāṁ taṁ sa-jīvaṁ
 sādvaītaṁ sāvadhūtaṁ parijana-sahitaṁ kṛṣṇa-caitanya-devaṁ
 śrī-rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pādān saha-gaṇa-lalitā-śrī-viśākhānvitāṁś ca*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my initiating spiritual master and all other preceptors on the path of devotional service. I offer my respectful obeisances to all the Vaiṣṇavas and the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana: Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, his older brother Sanātana Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and Jīva Gosvāmī. I offer my respectful obeisances to Śrī Advaita Ācārya, Śrī Nityānanda prabhu, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu and all His devotees. I offer my respectful obeisances to the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and all his gopis, headed by Lalitā and Viśākhā”.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, an ocean of infinite mercy without cause.

Since his divine person appeared in this material world to carry out his transcendental pastimes as a direct envoy and empowered of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, everything changed in our environment. In those days of the 60's, teenagers and young people were a bunch of straying sheep who had no idea where we could, should, or wanted to direct our life, our destiny. But he did know it:

“Because since I was traveling aboard the Jaladuta Ship, I had full vision of what would happen to all the young people who lived on the Western side of the planet.”

His divine person came with the precise and perfect indications, received directly from Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and his guru mahārāja, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja. And then, only covered with his great faith and conviction, sat alone in a park and began to chant the holy name:

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
 Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Since this holy congregational song is the energy of the Supreme

Lord, immediately, young people, and people of all ages, began to sing and dance in unison. From that moment on, the lives of thousands of people began to change, to the point that they could no longer live without this divine intonation during the day and night.

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) was born that way and he created it for the benefit of all living beings, spiritual souls that roam on this planet called Earth, for the next 10,000 years.

In the present time, the world is completely flooded, in the four cardinal points of this sublime and sacred movement of *saṅkīrtana*, instituted by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. And thanks to the mercy of His holy person, thanks to Śrīla Prabhupāda who made this great miracle possible. Thank you, thank you very much for so many and infinite blessings.

Those who were completely immersed in matters of the material world, with a life completely devoid of God, could turn our eyes to heaven. In our hearts was born the sincere desire to serve in the most humble and sincere way possible. A desire perhaps after many lives, to definitively come to live in the Kingdom of God, in the blessed land of Vṛndāvana, beside Prabhupāda, of all the great ācāryas, and of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and all His eternal consorts, and Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

In today's world, many pseudo-gurus have appeared, but we see that they have only taken advantage of all the knowledge, education, culture and ancestral customs that he brought to us and gave us hands-full. All those who have arrived in the West, they do not have a hard time attracting people, because everyone already knows Oriental culture, specifically, Vedic science. The real work of preaching and Vedic education was given to us by His Divine Grace, and now we are here, all his disciples, in the twilight of our existence on this plane and thanking him day-after-day, for such an enormous gift.

The new generations of devotees continue with the same enthusiasm and dedication. They perform various forms of devotional service to please his exalted person, and do so with true love, sincerity, dedication, humility and great faith and hope that this world can change, and in each corner of the planet the singing of the holy name is heard.

I am certain that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī are

fully satisfied with his immaculate service and absolute surrender. Thousands of times I prostrate myself before his divine lotus feet. Every day and night, I plead his infinite mercy for this soul so sinful and ignorant, who only knows to bow down before him and aspire to perform some service.

Always surrendered to the dust of his divine lotus feet and pleading for infinite blessings for all eternity, since my only desire is to try to serve him birth after birth.

All glories to the most magnificent of all ācāryas, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!!!*

Your aspiring servant forever,

Mahā Punya Devī Dāsī
Celaya, Guanajuato, Mexico

Jaya Gouranga Dāsa

My divine dearest eternal father.

My lord, my master, my beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my most humble and prostrated obeisances at your beautiful, divine lotus feet, trillions and trillions of times, and forever and ever.

How can someone so fallen and insignificant as myself attempt to write something in glorification of the savior of the entire universe, the most confidential servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa, my loving Gurudeva. Frankly, there are not enough words to describe your supreme qualities, your glories, your divine self. You are above any and all eulogies of praise and glorification.

Indeed, we, your most fortunate sons and daughters cannot even begin to understand the greatness of the mercy we received from the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, when He so kindly sent you to us fallen, miserable and wretched conditioned souls.

We have no idea of how great you really are my lord, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You came to us so gracefully, so lovingly, so merciful and so powerful in your words and deeds in your determination to serve the order of your own Śrīla Prabhupāda, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, to save us all and to take us back to Kṛṣṇa.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you, thank you, thank you, infinitely thank you. Your gifts to us can never be repaid. All we

can do is at least make a sincere and serious attempt to follow your orders and your instructions and try to serve your divine mission.

Please forgive my countless offenses at your divine lotus feet, all my defects and bad qualities. Please forgive me divine father.

You gave me personally so much divine mercy, and you extended that mercy to all my biological family members. There is no way I can ever pay you back all you have given me. All I can say is that I am yours completely, you own me totally, to do as you please with me.

Please allow me to remain a speck of dust at the sole of your beautiful, soft and fragrant divine lotus feet forever, and if you can please engage me in your divine service then my life will be perfect and sublime.

All glories, all glories to you O divine master, divine lord, divine personality of servitorship, my most beautiful and glorious divine father, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Signed by the most unworthy, of your sons,

Jaya Gouranga Dāsa

Nartaka Gopāla Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I had the good fortune to live at your temple, Hare Krishna Land, Juhu, Bombay for five years from 1990 to 1995. It was, and still is one of the most beautiful temples in the world, with hundreds of devotees performing amazingly vibrant preaching. Your school there, Bhaktivedānta Swami Mission School, was a very large three storey building, where I taught for one year. They have since outgrown that building, as there are more than 1100 students now, so they moved the school outside Hare Krishna Land to a larger building.

Another *seva* I did there was to manage and write for a magazine published for the Life Members of Bombay, at that time numbering about seven thousand; and now over 25,000. In 1993 I was interviewing Śrīmatī Sumati Morarjee for an article so I made an appointment to meet with her at her house. The first time I met her we spoke in her garden and I took photos of her. Her garden still has the beautiful palm trees swaying in the balmy breeze, right on

the edge of Juhu beach. On another occasion, she invited me into her home, and another time she gave me a tour of the house. It reminded me of the National Museum of India, with wide corridors at all the sides, filled with ancient Indian statues and artifacts.

She also had around two hundred Saligram silas that she worshipped, along with a Brahmana priest who came daily. She told me that she put the silas to rest every night, covering each with Their own cloth. She also regularly spoke to her silas, telling Them of events and situations that were occurring in her daily life.

As well as being in charge of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company, Mataji was also the Vice-President of the Śrīnathji Mandir in Nathdwara, Rajasthan. I was surprised and asked her how often she went there. She said she went by private plane every weekend or so.

Most ISKCON devotees affectionately remember her as the one who gave Śrīla Prabhupāda free passage on his first journey to America, thus enabling him to start the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement there. But Mrs Morarjee actually first met Śrīla Prabhupāda in the late 1950's at Kurukshetra, before he entered the sannyasa order of life. She told me:

"I was attending a religious festival at Kurukshetra when I first met him. I still remember, he was in white dhoti, white kurta. This was before he was printing books, so I told him, 'Why don't you print something?' He had my address so he came to Bombay to see me about printing the *Bhagawat*. One evening I was about to go home from my office. It was 6:30 pm and I saw someone with my secretary Chowkshi. I asked, 'Who is with you? It's too late, but put on the light.' I saw that it was Swamiji so I told him to come the following day. Then I thought it over and said, 'No, I will give you just now.' He was so happy; he told me, 'Mataji, now I will be able to finish my work.' I, in turn, requested him, 'When you print the book, show me.' He appeared to be very tired so I gave him some money for the train and food and he left.

"After some time he returned and told me, 'Mataji, you are mother, you have helped to print the first part of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Now please help me further.' So we got the second part printed. By then the monsoon came. He had no place to stay so I sent him to Colony [Scindia Colony in Andheri East, Bombay, where the workers in her business lived]. It was a good building, and he stayed below the staircase. We had partitions put up and I gave him vessels for cooking, a coal-burning stove, a bed, table and chair. He stayed for a

long time, till he went to America.

“Then he was coming home every evening for some time to read to me. He would come between five and six in the evening and stay for one to two hours. Sometimes I sent a car for him and sometimes he came on his own. He was like a personal friend coming home and playing with the children, like a member of the family. He used to call me ‘Little Mother’. I used to tease him about all the botheration he went through trying to get to America. ‘You are so old, why are you bothering about all this and creating trouble for yourself?’ He would laugh, ‘No, Little Mother, you are assisting, so I can do it.’

“Years later I saw him many times in England. In London he would specially keep all the prasādam on a silver thali and tell me: ‘You take home and share with the children.’ The next day I would return the thali laden with fruits.

“In Juhu when the devotees went to chant on harināma they would come into my courtyard and sing for some time, then they would proceed to the beach but Guru Mahārāja would stay and sit in my garden for a while.

“Towards the end, when he was ill, he sent word that I should come to Vṛndāvana, but I could not go at that time. When he passed away, I was so sad and I still miss him, especially at sundown, because at that time he would come to my house. He used to give lots of *ashirwad* [blessings] to me. In my house many great saints and politicians have stayed, including Gandhi and Tagore. There are so many sādhus, but Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mission was very exalted.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I could see that by your association, Śrīmati Sumati Morarjee developed the utmost respect, admiration and affection for you. 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 Gopāla Devī Dāsī
ISKCON Miami/ISKCON Alachua, Florida

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you for guiding me on this path back to Godhead. My most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

The special way you communicated to me after my second initiation at the newly purchased Fisher Mansion Devasadhan Mandir, home of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kunjabihari is forever etched in my memory.

We were alone in the garden. While I was fanning, you were chanting the *mahā-mantra*. Suddenly you went into trance, and wave after wave of ecstatic bliss (*prema*) started flowing through me... each wave increasing in pleasure, like nothing I’d ever felt before. A truly amazing experience as a young student on board the transcendental ship of our ISKCON.

My dear eternal Captain, you were communicating to me that this is the goal of life – “Love of Godhead.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for giving me a little taste what you were experiencing, and kindly still guiding me out of this ocean of darkness. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains in the *Śrī Harināma Cintamani* that the pure devotee is a reservoir of devotional qualities which naturally emanates from him. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda continues; “By associating with Vaiṣṇavas, saintliness (*sādhuta*) will manifest in our hearts and sinfulness will be complete removed.”

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura presents in the *Śrī Guru-vandana* prayer; *prema-bhakti jāhā hoite, avidyā visnāsa jāte*

“From him ecstatic prema emanates; by him ignorance is destroyed.”

In your dedication of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* at the lotus feet of your spiritual master, you write; “he lives forever by his divine instructions and the follower lives with him.”

Your instructions to distribute your books is always in my mind and I am still doing this over 40 years later. Imbibed from you, *Kṛṣṇa prema* always in my heart.

Your most fallen but devoted servant and book distributor,

Rathayātrā Dāsa
ISKCON Vrindavana

My most lovely Guru Mahārāja Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

How amazing the reality of everything is, materially and spiritually. I always loved that you said everything is Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is everything. And when we can see everything on this highest level, then we can see that in reality everything is spiritual. Nothing is really material because Kṛṣṇa cannot be something material. This knowledge is wonderful and amazing. Only you could give us knowledge like this.

In your purport of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.42 you write:

“In the advanced stage of devotional service, the devotee does not see anything separate between his own interests and those of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Both interests become one, for the devotee does not act for a separate interest. Whatever he does, he does in the interest of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. At that time he sees everything in the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the Supreme Personality of Godhead in everything. Having attained this stage of understanding, he sees no distinction between the spiritual and material worlds. In perfect vision, the material world becomes the spiritual world due to its being the external energy of the Supreme Lord. For the perfect devotee, the energy and the energetic are non-different. Thus the so-called material world becomes spiritual (sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma). Everything is intended for the service of the Supreme Lord, and the expert devotee can utilize any so-called material thing for the Lord’s service. One cannot serve the Lord without being situated on the spiritual platform; thus if a so-called material thing is dovetailed in the service of the Lord, it is no longer to be considered material. This is how the pure devotee, in his perfect vision, sees from all angles.”

How wonderful you could give us this perfect knowledge! Who else but you could tell us so clearly.

In your knowing that Kṛṣṇa is everything, and always seeing Kṛṣṇa directly, this is what you wanted to do. This is a quote from *Memories: Anecdotes of a Modern Day Saint* - Volume 1 by Siddhānta Dāsa, wherein a pastime is related by Bhagavat Dāsa:

“One morning he was talking with us about the future of the ISKCON movement. He said that he wanted to buy

all the land in Māyāpur and establish a self-sufficient community. Once that was established, he would then declare independence from India, secede from the country and make his own country, the Country of Māyāpur. Then his temples around the world would become embassies for the Country of Māyāpur and the temple presidents would be ambassadors. We would print our own money, called Chaitanyas. There would be one Chaitanya, five Chaitanyas, and ten Chaitanyas.

For our export, we would make devotional items and sell them all over the world. Prabhupāda had a vision of his own country, his own embassies, his own ambassadors, his own monetary system, his own economic system, and his own export production.

Sometimes we don’t realize how big Prabhupāda was actually thinking, how grand he wanted this mission to be. When I remember this discussion I think, ‘Whew! We’re so far away from where he wanted to take this movement. How much harder we need to work.’”

Wow, if only your devotees could actually accomplish this vision for you. Let us keep it in our hearts with the knowledge that Kṛṣṇa can do anything. After all, He is God. And you are His *nitya-siddha shakty-avesa avatar* ambassador. Especially empowered, you can do anything. We may think you are not present with us in such a way to do such a thing, but you are still with us and always will be. Just as each of us has our own Kṛṣṇa in our heart, so each of us has our own you...our own Śrīla Prabhupāda in our heart. You told us that your guru mahārāja is always with you. So this proves that you are always with us, protecting and guiding us, along with Kṛṣṇa. We just have to develop our faith more and more, and keep this vision in our hearts and in our minds...that you are always with each one of us.

I know that you are always with me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, otherwise I would not still be here with my little Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Somehow or other I keep hanging in and struggling along. It is by your mercy only.

You are glorious beyond words and comprehension. How absolutely special you are.

Thank you millions and billions of times from the core of my heart for giving me Kṛṣṇa consciousness and all the greatest gifts in existence that it contains.

I pray that someday I will become a true disciple.

Yours for all eternity,

Lelihana Devī Dāsī

Medhavi Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have changed the landscape of this material world by your wonderful preaching activities. Whereas before you came, almost 99.99% of the population was “meritoriously” rushing toward hell and future lower species, now many persons are coming into contact with you through your wonderful books and are changing their direction ‘back to Godhead’.

Not only did you bring pure understanding of *Bhagavad-gītā* *As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*, *Nectar of Devotion* – veritable encyclopedias of transcendental knowledge, but you also established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness to train everyone in the standards of spiritual living.

In 1973, in Mumbai, H.H. Giriraja Swami relates that Mrs Līlāvati Munshi of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, being astonished with your success, inquired “How did you do it.” She kept asking “How did you get them to shave their heads? How did you get them to wear *dhotis* and *kurtas* and *tilak*? How did you get the girls to wear *saris*?” You explained that although there were many editions of *Bhagavad-gītā*, it had not been presented “as it is” and that there had not been any programs to train students to follow its principles.

Although there were so many branches of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan both within and outside of India – and although they were

disseminating books, there was no program for training young men and women to become followers of Vedic culture. Books were required, and training was also required. And he had given both.”

By definition “train” means to bring (person, animal, etc.) to desired state or standard by instruction and practice. You left countless instructions for the application of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to any situation, to any person in any culture.

The forces of Kali-yuga are more and more swallowing every aspect of a human being’s existence and consciousness through marketing, the media, and internet. How even social media – initially thought to be a tool for ease of communication – is now being revealed as a web of exploitation and control.

These last years have seen, in many parts, your sincere disciples and followers return to focusing on your primary desire of distributing your books. And, as you repeatedly instructed, that you have written these books for us, we must also study these books, imbibe their wisdom and teach it to others.

As we study the knowledge you have given, our faith becomes deepened and our conviction grows, our determination to see that your desire for Kṛṣṇa consciousness to flood the world becomes stronger.

In a famous letter you once surprisingly mentioned that “we have enough devotees,” and that now “we should boil the milk.” That rather than increasing the population of temples by numerical strength, we should concentrate on elevating the quality of devotion – from *śraddha*, to *sādhu sanga* to *bhajana kriya* to *anartha-nivṛtī* to *nistha* to *ruci* to attachment and ultimately *bhava* and *prema*.

Of course, at this time, the vast majority of ISKCON members are in the congregation and not living within a temple. Still, every devotee should have a strong urge to deepen his or her consciousness and the association and encouragement to do so.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this auspicious day, I beg for your mercy to utilize the remaining time left for this body to help strengthen your movement by more deeply training myself and helping to train those coming to your lotus feet in the standards and *sadhana* that you established for becoming genuine saintly persons and real devotees of the Lord.

Still your aspiring servant,

Medhavi Dāsa

My dear most Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my worthless obeisances at your beautiful lotus feet. All glories to you my divine Spiritual Master.

On August 13th 1965, in the port of Calcutta, what may have appeared to any onlooker as possibly an unusual sight, an old saffron-clad man boarding a cargo ship, was actually a titanic event of unimaginable importance. An event so monumental it would change the very course of history. You, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, taking the mantle of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī and all the previous ācāryas leading back to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, walked the gang plank onto the Jaladuta, thus beginning the adventure of a lifetime – not just for you – but all who chose to follow you. By taking those few steps, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you changed the future of the planet single-handedly. This has made me contemplate the position you will hold in history.

If we look at famous personalities in this planet's past it is my opinion that you have far surpassed their deeds. Take Alexander the Great for example; he took over 50,000 well-armed soldiers when he went off to conquer the world. You came alone armed only with love and knowledge.

After Alexander's death his kingdom was lost but your ISKCON kingdom has only increased since your physical demise. Despite your physical absence there are more temples, restaurants and farms than when you walked amongst us. This, to me, is a clear indication of your superior position to the great Alexander.

Other personalities have also emerged in history's timeline as conquerors. One, Hitler, became very famous by twisting Vedic knowledge in an attempt to bring about an Aryan civilisation based on bodily consciousness. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, taught us the temporary nature of the body and our true identity as a spirit soul.

Hitler's attempts were a total disaster leading to sixty million deaths worldwide and a destroyed Europe. You on the other hand have actually converted lost souls to the true knowledge of the Vedas. Also many wonderful temples have been built leaving a lasting legacy. Hitler sent explosive bombs and you sent bombs of love. Who is historically more important?

In even more recent history Neil Armstrong, who supposedly stepped onto the moon, said, "That's one small step for [a] man, one

giant leap for mankind". But you Śrīla Prabhupāda took one small step onto the Jaladuta and opened the doors to the spiritual world. How can you compare? Nothing has come of the supposed moon landing, but you have built a road straight to the spiritual world. And, are we not the lucky ones, we who have clambered onto that road, attached as if by the magnetism of your mercy?

There have been many revolutionaries over the course of history. Many forgotten in graves long lost. In recent years one of the most popular was Che Guevara. The year before you boarded the Jaladuta, he gave a speech at the U.N which was greatly received. This, however, did not stop him being mercilessly killed by the natives of the very country he thought he was saving. What was the result of his great sacrifice? Still the people suffer. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, gave no speech at the U.N. (yet) but your message has spread all over the world and created a bigger revolution because yours is a spiritual revolution which actually gives people real life-changing opportunities that are within their grasp and their control.

Your place in history will be unique. You will be the one that stands alone as starting a spiritual revolution. A revolution that can change the destiny of the whole planet. A revolution that instead of killing people saves their very souls. Śrīla Prabhupāda YOU are the greatest revolutionary.

Now more than 50 years have passed since you took the ultimate sacrifice and left Vṛndāvana to establish the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. It always amazes me how you were only physically with us for 12 years, less really as it took us time to find you or you to find us, whichever way around it is. Now it is 40 years since you physically left us. But then what is physical absence? I always think that you Śrīla Prabhupāda can be as close as we allow you to be. Everything continues on by, amongst many other things, your altruism; another sign of your magnitude.

I always have the same prayer to you; please let me remain in the shelter of your lotus feet and continue serving you. For I can see that outside of the shade of your lotus feet, a scary place looms. All glories to you, my divine master.

Your servant and daughter,

Mokshalaksmi Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Self.

Once again, it's time to express my deepest gratitude for all you have given us. No-one paid you to come to the US to try and help us. Just out of love for your beloved Kṛṣṇa and His divine servants. There are no words to express how much we owe you. Not only did you make a perilous trip on an old ship, but you then continued to shower upon us the most important knowledge to free us from our predicament. All the letters, sometimes very long, all the purports, sometimes with very deep philosophy of several pages. all the lectures and conversations, not to speak of the example of total surrender even at the painful hour of passing. You are indeed the *jagad-guru*. Who can possibly compare to you amongst great saints and philosophers. Maybe some of the direct line from Mahāprabhu Himself, but no-one from anywhere else.

I am very unqualified to be your disciple. It is only by Kṛṣṇa and your mercy that I somehow manage to make some show of devotion.

The path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the topmost path, but there are many challenges. The only hope is to somehow preach your message. Without that, I am sure I would be totally lost, so, even though I am very hard-hearted, by somehow following this one instruction, my life has been very fortunate.

I am begging Lord Kṛṣṇa, and you, His empowered representative, that I always have the determination and desire to be compassionate to the many unlucky souls of this age. By your mercy, let them be attracted to the Supreme Attractive, and let me become a worthy representative of Your Divine Grace. I am sure this will finally, after many births, bring me back to your divine association.

There are many things I know you wanted to see established to ensure that ISKCON became a relevant force in society. Please give me the intelligence to help see that happen. All of your disciples know that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is really the only hope for society to become sane again. It is such a wonderful and all encompassing culture, I am sure that it will become very popular, because so many people are very open and interested. My only desire is to see the world flooded with this culture, and to recognize you as the best possible person to turn to for all the answers to life's perplexities.

Thank you again, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I don't just owe you my life, I owe you my deepest love and appreciation.

Your very insignificant disciple,

Ādikartā Dāsa

Sandamini Devī Dāsī

Rhymes of Love

Whatever we do, we do it for you
Taking on challenges and seeing them through
Preaching your purports, knowing they're true
Standing strong, humble Tucson crew.

From early rising, chanting Kṛṣṇa's names
Energizing hearts' sacred flames
Hearing you chant, hearing you speak
We try memorizing, the slokas complete.

Absorbed in *japa*, hearts mobilizing
Give full attention (postpone organizing!)
Corralling the mind (stop criticizing!)
Simply hear Kṛṣṇa's names, you're emphasizing.

People love Govinda's, *prasādam* appetizing
Ambience of love, it's so tantalizing
We chant & preach, your books crystallizing
Melodious kīrtan, holy names mesmerizing.

No one's impressed by false moralizing
Or preying politicians who try galvānizing
Pseudo well-wishers they're only patronizing
Living your teachings – the best advertising!

Your instructions are truth, no compromising
Your books and your wisdom, worth analyzing
Inspired by your words, would it be so surprising
If the cheated world staged a spiritual uprising?

Getting on in years, now I'm realizing
The next generation may be more enterprising
Let them do well, but keep on advising
Roots grown much deeper, *sanga* stabilizing.

We've given our lives, you've given the glue
That binds us together, only *bhakti* is true
'Pleasing and healthy like morning dew'
Loving Lord Kṛṣṇa like the sky o' so blue.

Sandamini Devī Dāsī
ISKCON of Arizona, Tucson

Sukhavaha Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, master and friend,
I bow my head that e'er wants to defend.

I open my heart to hear from you,
Wanting to receive your mercy undue.

When you came to us you brought us relief
From the suffocating effects of constraining beliefs.

You showed us the depths of a whole new reality,
Beyond the bounds of material duality.

You shattered our boxes; what we thought was real.
And the layers of dirt you began to peel.

You gave us a peek of our true inner being.
A taste of nectar in Kṛṣṇa seeing.

You opened our ears to the holy name.
You calmed our fears, our minds seemed tame.

You untangled our illusions, Māyā's binding rope.
You opened our horizons, giving visions of hope.

You made life simple, we blissfully served.

A glimpse of transcendence very much undeserved.

Then you left . . .
We felt bereft. . . .

What you had freely given, I took for granted.
I thought I was "saved" because I had chanted.

I wanted pure devotion to extricate my soul;
Getting there quickly was my immediate goal.

Jumping through hoops as fast as I could
I thought this was what a good devotee should.

You warned us that Māyā needed healthy respect.
Her powerful subtleties, so important to detect.

Within spiritual activities, Māyā took me by surprise
Hard work and "detachment": Pride's clever disguise.

Vain exterior show of Kṛṣṇa conscious purity
Was simply a smoke screen hiding my insecurity.

I am eternally grateful for you've shown the way.
Please give me the patience on this path to stay.

Keep shattering my illusions, my daydreams surreal.
My subtle pretenses, please continue to reveal.

A priceless jewel, your grace profound
External proving has never found.

The internal practice: love's devotional art,
Is the longest journey from the head to the heart.

My dearest father, eternal loving master
You've shown me how slower can sometimes be faster.

A grateful servant of your servants,

Sukhavaha Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to your international mission to bring the mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to all the people suffering in this material world.

This is called a ‘Tribute’; formally “an act, statement, or gift that is intended to show gratitude, respect, or admiration.” One can barely scratch the surface.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for giving us the holy name of Hare Kṛṣṇa. Without this simple method of contacting the Supreme Personality, how could we survive in this dangerous place? It keeps us safe and focused, and there are no hard and fast rules. This simple method is the underpinning of the sublime spiritual life you have taught us.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for saving us from ignorance. Your books are the shining beacon for all the bewildered and misdirected people of Kali-yuga. Before reading your books, I was completely lost. Your boundless mercy has saved me and countless others from madness and nihilism.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for saving me from banality. It is the 50th reunion of my high school graduating class. I keep getting invitations to join classmates for a golf weekend. After 68 years on this planet, this is the best they can come up with as a way to spend their years leading up to inevitable death?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for giving me a purpose. I was lost for so many years, not knowing the purpose of life. The result was self-destruction. Before reading your books and listening to your recorded classes, my ignorance kept me bound up in a downward spiral.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for saving me from boredom and lethargy. Kṛṣṇa consciousness as you have taught us is a dynamic ever-expanding experience, even beyond birth and death. It is constantly challenging us and is tailored to our individual abilities and spirit.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for the gift of good association. Because of ISKCON, we can go anywhere in the world and find devotees for association, without which we would surely fall.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for introducing us to *prasāda*. The world is full of nasty things to eat which totally pollute the

consciousness and keeps the *jīvas* in the cycle of birth and death. By honoring *prasāda*, the entire atmosphere becomes purified, and we become qualified to hear the message of *Bhāgavatam*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for revealing all the Vaiṣṇava festivals which help keep our focus on Śrī Kṛṣṇa throughout the whole year. Mundane celebrations seem so stale compared to the holidays of the transcendental world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for showing us how to beautifully worship the *archa vigraha* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Mahāprabhu. The Deity worship in ISKCON is second to none and is famous around the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for circling the planet non-stop for 12 years to bring your unconditional mercy to all the people of the Earth. You have given everything and all in all to benefit us. There is no way we can ever repay you but to remain stringently loyal to the program and organization you have freely given with love

Your servant, life after life,

Ambarīṣa Dāsa

Rāga Bhūmi Devī Dāsī

With purity and devotion everything is possible

Everything is possible in Kṛṣṇa consciousness when we have the great desire to serve intensely the spiritual master by following his instructions, for Kṛṣṇa is watching us and facilitating the fulfillment of our spiritual desires. Enthusiasm in being dependent on Kṛṣṇa is the indispensable complement for devotion to grow and to establish. Kṛṣṇa knows everything. He knows our deepest desires and nourishes our heart with *prema-bhakti*, directly and indirectly. As Prabhupāda says in a letter to Pusta Kṛṣṇa Dāsa: “Kṛṣṇa is not mechanic, he is always personal, very sweet and loving”. In that way I continue to pray incessantly: “My dear Kṛṣṇa, please allow me to always remember You and never forget You”.

Since I returned to Brazil, I assumed the natural responsibility of organizing Śrīla Prabhupāda’s festivals, referring to his “Appearance and Disappearance”. Most of my spiritual life flourished in the United States, assisting Śrīla Prabhupāda in the Bhaktivedānta Book Trustee Press.

During these great festivals, a sense of peace always enveloped my whole being. Such feelings are very difficult to express in words. We all know how difficult it is to define common love, what to say, then, about genuine love and the wonderful spiritual atmosphere when I was near Śrīla Prabhupāda's *mūrti*.

However, during the Appearance day of Śrīla Prabhupāda, in 2017, this feeling took on a very different form from past celebrations. They were like waves of happiness that enveloped my whole being clearly as a source of a great motivation. I still remember every devotee entering in the temple, imbued with love and gratitude to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

In fact, this entire atmosphere, graciously, involved the temple. All those great souls were coming to glorify and humbly offer sincere service to Śrīla Prabhupāda. However, I could understand that devotional mood only the next day when I woke up. What I was feeling was noticeable and familiar, especially to the Prabhupāda disciples who had the opportunity to be in his holy presence, serving him personally and directly. In fact, that mood was the same I had experienced on several occasions, at his *Vyāsāsana*, while he was giving classes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, our spiritual master, friend and father has brought us out of darkness, and given us the responsibility to develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness by embracing his instructions and move on, confident.

I recently watched Śrīla Prabhupāda's film, produced by Yadubara prabhu and Viśākhā mataji. This documentary and its exposition around the world are uniting the devotees in a single tuning, at the right time...an alliance of love and affection, multiplying our love for Prabhupāda. In this great moment we all move in one direction, love and trust are being redeemed and re-established among all of us, devotees of Kṛṣṇa. Those who chose to serve Prabhupāda's mission should keep this missionary spirit cultivated and carried forward by us, faithfully and lovingly, to fulfill the mission given to him by His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami, as a relevant factor in our lives, forever. Prabhupāda is our example of surrender to Kṛṣṇa that we must follow.

A fallen soul,

Rāga Bhūmi Devī Dāsī
ISKCON – Rio de Janeiro - Brazil

Samapriya Devī Dāsī

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

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

Ballad of a Saṅkīrtana Devotee

Brihat mṛdaṅga drumming with a sacred mighty force
meant to keep your mission on its elevated course.
Not graced to travel with you as your servants or your cooks,
We dedicated our lives to passing out your books.

This life is very precious, nothing more that can one give,
than ease the suffering of lost souls and show them how to live.
Clad with faith as armor, we wield the sword of truth
enlisted in your army we sacrificed our youth.

One becomes compassionate by being kind to all,
lifting every jīva from his downward tragic fall.
The saṅkīrtana mentality gives everyone a chance,
awakening a love supreme that lifts all hearts to dance.

Taking up this service one must be strong and brave,
to see the soul in everyone, not choose who he will save.
But leave our egos far away from the holy site,
where these books of truth emerge some will run in fright.

A sacrifice for your desire is our only claim,
we thrive upon your sacred text and chant the holy name.
Not graced to travel with you as your servants or your cooks
We dedicated our lives to passing out your books.

They were written for all souls and we are all the same,
these books ignite within the heart a transcendental flame.
Enlightened words of ecstasy exist on every page,
what could be more valuable in this fallen age?

In silent hours of the night absorbed in meditation,
writing down the Lord's decrees of secret revelation.
As He spoke to Pandavas a battle though it took,
the essence of the Vedas is captured in your book.

The guru's always present but we must play our part,
he comes to teach us love of God begins within the heart.
An intimate connection awakening that place,
by hearing with sincerity awards internal grace.

Kṛṣṇa knows the selflessness that one accepts to serve,
and rewards accordingly— we get what we deserve.
But in proportion to one's love the Lord is ever ready,
to give Himself to His dear friend whose
service has been steady.

And of those gentle souls engaged in serving all these years,
not many of us know their names, and fewer know their tears.
They did not travel with you as servants or your cooks,
their love for you is nurtured by the wealth within your books.

Dayānidhi Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,
My eternal father, I bow down at the dust of your divine lotus
feet with my deepest attention and appreciation!

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are in my heart more and more and are becoming the main
concern of my feelings of life! Your activities, your instructions are
becoming my life and soul more and more. In May 1974 you visited
Rome Italy, and I had the opportunity to meet you, serve you, and
hear from you. At that time I was a young boy less than 20-years-old
and I was very much attracted to you, but I could not understand
your words and mission properly. Now after 44 years, I'm studying
again and again the same instructions that you give to us in Rome.

You said: "live locally and become self-sufficient. Depend on the land
and the cows." This is what we are trying now in Śrī Prabhupāda
Dhama in Genova. You called this a "solid program". You wanted to
save us and others too.

We never saw any other strong desire to preach Kṛṣṇa
consciousness from anyone else, as was manifested by you! Many
big and important personalities, even big, big spiritual personalities
had come and gone, but nobody preached with a similar power,
with similar results as you did! This is a very clear indication of your
unique and very special spiritual position!

Nowadays the style of life is becoming so complicated that to
live a simple lifestyle – as you wanted – is very difficult! The entire
world is going towards hellish life and to be a normal devotee of Śrī
Kṛṣṇa, to work the land and take care of cows looks very strange and
not economically attractive. It is such a difficult situation.

We beg and pray at your lotus feet that you please give us
your blessings for our preaching program of establishing Kṛṣṇa
consciousness in Liguria, Genova by distributing your books,
distributing *prasāda*, the holy food and holy name of Kṛṣṇa, and
manage a land project.

Please let me remain always a fool at the divine dust of
your lotus feet,

Your useless servant,

Dayānidhi Dāsa

Śrī Padāmbuja Dāsa

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

I offer my respectful obeisances to my spiritual master, His Divine
Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda, who opened my eyes, blinded by the
darkness of ignorance, with the torch of knowledge.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Prostrated at your lotus feet I apologize for my offenses and for
having harmed the image of the institution with my inappropriate
behavior 20 years ago. I also pray that you bless all the people who
trusted me for being your disciple, and for having introduced them

to Kṛṣṇa consciousness in your name.

I am very fallen, and therefore I beg you to intercede for me before Lord Kṛṣṇa even though I do not deserve it.

I am infinitely grateful for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which, despite being disloyal to you and other people, is flourishing more and more in my heart by your mercy.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving me the opportunity to serve you for so many years, and for keeping me excited about your classes and personal example even today.

Thank you for the clarity of the criteria that you transmit to me when I am listening to your classes and reading your books.

Thank you for the inspiring memories I have of living with you in Vṛndāvana in 1976, which counteract the painful situations in which I live now and allow me not to forget you and Kṛṣṇa.

Thank you for allowing me to be your instrument for others to be convinced of the great privilege which is to become Kṛṣṇa conscious.

Total thanks for your undeserved kindness, for making me understand the excellence of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and for making it grow vigorously within me, despite all the setbacks I had to face since they isolated me from my service.

Thank you very much!

Your unworthy servant,

Śrī Padāmbuja Dāsa

Narakāntaka Dāsa

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

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

Most beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda

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

You are such a great pure devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa that your love for the Lord knows no boundaries.

In fact, so intense is your love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa that it can penetrate

the thick darkness of this obscure material existence and dispel the spell of māyā's magic, chasing away the ignorance the conditioned souls are groping over since time immemorial.

You are so transcendently powerful that you have been able to bring the eternally vibrant life from the spiritual world into manifesting all wonderful activities, even here in death's realm.

You are eternally our life and soul. You are our Lord and master and as such fully entitled to dispose of us according to your sweet will.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa eternally expands His own unlimited consciousness, resting place of the infinite varieties characterizing all that exists. Everything exists for His pleasure.

The liberated, purely devoted spiritual soul, fully endowed with such awareness, is said to be in 'Kṛṣṇa consciousness' and all of his actions unfold as a manifestation of such consciousness or activities in pure, transcendental, loving devotional service; just aiming to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

The conditioned soul, under the influence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's illusory energy – *māyā* – is deprived of such transcendental awareness and therefore devoid of 'Kṛṣṇa consciousness'.

As a consequence, the living entity's actions are not for the pleasure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Under the forceful push of Māyā, those actions are actually performed only to try to please his own material senses.

Most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, being such an exalted pure devotee, constantly absorbed in the ocean of love of Kṛṣṇa, you cannot forget the Lord even for a moment.

Completely saturated by Śrī Kṛṣṇa's personal presence, you are expanding your own wonderful unalloyed Kṛṣṇa consciousness as the resting place of the entire magnificent Hare Krishna world – your International Society For Krishna Consciousness.

Any one of your pure devotees – as a sincere faithful disciple – fully endowed with such awareness is said to be situated in 'Prabhupāda consciousness'. All of his activities are just a manifestation of such consciousness or purely 'service in loving devotional mood', aimed at pleasing you, Śrīla Prabhupāda (We surely would not be on the wrong side by saying that, for us, thinking we were in Kṛṣṇa consciousness without being fully immersed in 'Śrīla Prabhupāda consciousness' would merely be a grand illusion).

If, for any reason, we fall under Māyā's spell, we become deprived of such awareness and as a result, devoid of real Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

We end up in behaving whimsically and our activities will no more be for Your Divine Grace's pleasure, but just for the satisfaction of our gross and subtle material senses.

It's a lunatic absurdity to think that we can satisfy Śrī Kṛṣṇa without pleasing the spiritual master.

You have explained to us that Śrī Kṛṣṇa does not accept direct service from someone who is not a pure devotee from the topmost platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The intimate direct servants of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are particular devotees in the category of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's internal energy...typifying a specific service's mood to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, everywhere in your transcendental books you reveal and clarify that serving the pure devotee is even better than serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In fact, a devotee does not serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa directly but His most dear servant. And this pleases the Lord to the highest degree.

By sincerely and purely serving such an particular intimate associate of the Lord, that same kind of love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa gradually reaches the stage of perfection in the heart of the servant.

And you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are unequivocally such an exalted pure devotee. A sublime and perfect personality of unfathomable profoundness. An emblem of devotional service to Their Lordships Śrī-Śrī Gaura-Nitāi. You are the most merciful, magnanimous, marvelous, unparalleled loving manifestation as the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead.

Eternally we want to remain at your divine lotus feet and serve Your Divine Grace without interruption.

Please Śrīla Prabhupāda, keep showering your mercy on us.

If we can develop for Your Divine Grace even just a drop of the transcendental love that you have for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, so to serve Your Divine Grace with the same love and devotion and do anything that we do only to please you, then the aim of our life will be fulfilled.

All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Because We Know This Pleases You

We get up beforehand because we know this pleases you.

We offer our respects because we know this pleases you.

We take our morning bath because we know this pleases you.

We wear devotee's robes because we know this pleases you.

We are marking our forehead because
we know this pleases you.

We go and greet the Lord because we know this pleases you.

We sing and dance and clap because we know this pleases you.

We grow Tulasī plant because we know this pleases you.

We whisper Gayatri because we know this pleases you.

We use flowers with scent because we know this pleases you.

We chant all japa rounds because we know this pleases you.

We offer *guru-pūjā* because we know this pleases you.

We play "*Govindam*" because we know this pleases you.

We only read your books because we know this pleases you.

We do not sleep in class because we know this pleases you.

We cook the way you like because we know this pleases you.

We only take '*prasāda*' because we know this pleases you.

We follow all the rules because we know this pleases you.

We call out Kṛṣṇa's name because we know this pleases you.

We worship Gaura-Nitāi because we know this pleases you.

We have cut all our ties because we know this pleases you.

We've given up 'our ways' because we know this pleases you.

We gladly bend our will because we know this pleases you.

We tolerate ordeals because we know this pleases you.

We live with devotees because we know this pleases you.

We stay and won't go away because we know this pleases you.

We only hear your words because we know this pleases you.

We preach about the Lord because we know this pleases you.

We do not compromise because we know this pleases you.

We do not change your style because we know this pleases you.

We speak the way you speak because we know this pleases you.

We fight against – "we are God!" –

because we know this pleases you.

We rebuke – "no you are dog!" – because
we know this pleases you.

We challenge so-called science because
we know this pleases you.

We use common sense because we know this pleases you

We do all our fasts because we know this pleases you.

We're building temples just because we know this pleases you.

We agree to cooperate because we know this pleases you.

We cease quarrels and fights because we know this pleases you.
We lead a simple life because we know this pleases you.
We serve without a wage because we know this pleases you.
We do not go sightseeing because we know this pleases you.
We go to Māyāpur because we know this pleases you.
We are longing for Vṛndāvana because
we know this pleases you.
We engage in saṅkīrtana because we know this pleases you.
We like just what you like because we know this pleases you.
We won't do what you don't because we know this pleases you.
We print this *Tributes* book because we know this pleases you.

**We know, you are still here, but
nonetheless we are missing you.**

Most merciful Śrī-Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, the forceful, destructive and insurmountable time factor is fully under Your Lordships' control. Please grant us the boon to never forget our magnificent spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda, and to always remember his wonderful pastimes and instructions so that we will never be confused on how to please His Divine Grace.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, we only long to see our love for you increasing more and more without reserve. Please allow us to continue serving your divine lotus feet, life after life; the sole meaningful way to exist.

Your pleasure is our bliss.

Narakāntaka Dāsa (formerly Tridaṇḍi dāsa)
RKC Italy

Bhutiha Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Although I never met you in person, I remember how in 1973 was always searching for a guru. A friend of mine from London gave me a copy of *Back to Godhead*.

On the cover, there was a picture of Kṛṣṇa and I was immediately fascinated. And in a picture of the back of the magazine, there was a picture of you with raised arms surrounded by many devotees. Every one had an expression of great joy.

Seeing Your look in your eyes, I had the feeling that you were surely bringing the truth about the mystery of life, and about everything of our existence in this world, and teaching us all how to go back to Godhead, to Kṛṣṇa.

Thank you millions of times Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your little servant,

Bhutiha Dāsa

Laṅgagaṇeśa Dāsa

*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 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.

The 'change-of-pace' this year has certainly been invigorating, to say the least! I am so pleased to have been guided in the decision to move to New Talavana after my mother's passing a year ago.

Many 'wishes' have been fulfilled sequentially – like clockwork,

and friendships formed throughout the community.

I first arrived here in mid-May, 2017 and was given facility to remain in the Temple Guest Trailer for two months while I located and purchased an RV suitable for my 'Basecamp'. Very quickly, on May 12th, I found a used RV camper that was perfect – just needed a little renovation which the dealership started immediately.

While waiting on that to be completed, I leased an RV-site in the Pear Orchard mobile-home residential area here at the farm, and began clearing the overgrowth around the site, connecting utilities, and purchased the anchoring materials to secure the RV when it was delivered. And, a few days later, during the first week of June, it was delivered. I levelled it, anchored it, and hooked-up the utilities – then I continued the clean-up and burning of the onsite overgrowth debris.

The following month – July – I purchased a storage shed for the remainder of my belongings and necessary yard equipment. Then I drove to Dallas and collected part of my remaining property from two of my siblings; the rest of it remained at my other brother's garage.

Being properly situated in my own place I set-about networking with the devotees to see who was interested in helping me to apply Permaculture Design principles to your instructions for self-sufficient community development. Many community members were lacking any understanding of the concept of "Permaculture", what to speak of Permaculture *Design*! Gradually, I have been introducing the various aspects of the system and its principles – with some success, I might add. So, we began formulating mutual objectives, and considering the options for attaining the goals. We also had some discussion of a 'Community Constitution' as a means of coordinating your request that we "cooperate together" to achieve the self-sustainable model that you envisioned for us.

By the third week of July I had gotten an introduction to the local County Appraiser to obtain an electronic plat-map of the property so that I could do my online study and designing work.

In August, with the permission of the Community Management Team (CMT), several of our community members formed a new group for inspiring and coordinating progressive change; and entitled it the New Talavana Frontier Club! So, our 'Frontier Club' is specifically designed to explore, research and study the nature of *practical* engagement of the yet unharnessed potential which borders our immediate community center. In this way, we can develop a

long-term PLAN for including every square-foot of space on the 1,200+ acres, in self-sufficient community development design; then, engagement in the installation of each element of the "PLAN" in a cohesive and functional application of Permaculture-principled integration! Gradually we will identify who are the "pioneers" and who are the "settlers" ...

By the beginning of September there was so much interest in Permaculture Design that I was cajoled into presenting the full 72-hour 'Geoff Lawton PDC' (Permaculture Design Course) – we started the course on Sept. 2nd.

Later in Sept., Mādhava Priya Devī Dāsī, who would later become one of my course graduates, began writing a short story that she named *A Tale of Two Doors in New Talavana* which depicts a devotee named Prabhu Dāsa – as a representation of our community members – having an opportunity to remain lax in 'Door-1' about applying your *strong* suggestion that we prepare ourselves for inevitable social upheaval; or, by choosing 'Door-2', preparing very advantageously with Permaculture Design and progressive development.

The first weekend of October found us celebrating our Annual Cow Festival which I was able to attend for the first time. I was very surprised at the varieties of crafts that were shared – it was very nicely presented!

In November our 'Frontier Club' gained the approval of the CMT to develop a community "Vision & Mission Statement" that directly correlates to the 'vision' for this community that you shared with us during your visit in 1975! We began meeting on Wednesdays to accomplish this.

We also concluded the 72-hour PDC in mid-Nov.; and I gave the students six weeks to produce their Design-Exercise to demonstrate their proper understanding of Permaculture Design principles.

In the first week of this year (Jan. 8th, 2018) Mādhava Priya Devī Dāsī and her husband Kṛṣṇasraya Prabhu were the first two graduates of Harmony Permaculture, and were presented with Permaculture Design Certificates, allowing them to practice as designers and consultants. The presentation was conducted before Their Lordships: Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Rādhākanta, Śrī-Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, and you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Later that month Mādhava Priya completed and published her awesome short story: *A Tale of 2 Doors in New Talavana* – to everyone's enthusiastic delight! She is truly a unique story-teller!

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances on to your lotus feet again and again.

Today is a very auspicious day, your *Vyāsa-pūjā* day. A personality like you came on this planet to deliver the fallen souls.

To glorify your glories are out of my capacity, but I will try to say a few words.

You have done magic on earth. Single-handedly working day and night, you pushed your ISKCON movement, created so many temples, books and disciples all over the world.

You are a real disciple. You followed the instructions of your guru, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja that you should go to the Western world and preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in English speaking countries. You did it, even though you had to undergo so much hardship and difficulties.

Not only in the Western world, you preached all over the planet. You travelled around the globe 14 times at an advanced age. Even a young person or normal person cannot easily do this. But you are extraordinary. We sing for you *pashchatya-desha-tarine*. But you are beyond that. You are *whole-globe-tarine*.

You are a real pure devotee, very close to Kṛṣṇa. Because of your purity, ISKCON manifested and the Movement is flourishing.

You are a real guru. You are very compassionate to all souls. You accepted people as your disciples without any discrimination, caste or creed. You opened the door for everyone to escape the miserable material world and go back, back to Godhead, to our real home, the permanent home by chanting harināma.

I am very fortunate to have you as my guru. You cleared my confusion, opened my eyes to the real truth that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and to the real meaning of life. I had no knowledge of that. This understanding came from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

By the end of January, Bhakta Jesse, an English grammar specialist, completed his two-month evaluation of my permaculture document describing a systematic application of self-reliant community development; which could now be incorporated as 'content', into my new website: www.HarmonyPermaculture.org by Astika Prabhu (my website developer).

Then, on February 18th, the New Talavana Vision & Mission Statement was officially declared 'FINAL' and ratified by the full Community Management Team (CMT). And, in March Mādhava Priya and Kṛṣṇasraya Prabhus had found an appropriately presentable 'Display Case' to mount it in the Temple Room next to your "Seven Purposes of ISKCON".

From late July when I got the plat maps, to mid-March, I had been also working on the proposal of a 'Demonstration-Site Design' plan to present to the CMT for consideration as a small representation of what is possible for the entire 1,200-acre property. The Demonstration-site is being suggested for an area of land that is immediately adjacent to the Community Center, and thus, closely available to visiting guests as an additional option for 'Agri-Tourism' tours.

I made my presentation to them on April 1st and was pleased with their enthusiasm and encouragement to allow me to proceed with the installation of the plan. However, at their meeting on April 8th, they concluded that the primary location was selected for another purpose, and the 'Pear Orchard' would be a better location for the demonstration-site. That's good, because it will be close to my home (and storage shed) where I keep my tools of the trade.

Soon I will be starting my **REAL Boots-on-the-Ground** work!

As I have mentioned to everyone here: My remaining 20 +/- years will be dedicated to developing your vision for us to become a completely self-reliant and fruitful community that produces its own food, shelter, clothing, medicines, ceramics, and all other necessary hand crafts.

Because of this first year being so accommodating, it seems very promising that abundantly sustainable agrarian living can be accomplished in my lifetime!

Your enthusiastically engaged, and most grateful disciple,

Laṅgaṇeśa Dāsa

Moreover, I am very fortunate to have lots of your personal association. Years have gone by but your association and sweet memories are still fresh.

That is the only reason that we are still in ISKCON – trying to serve you and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa in whichever way.

Minakshi and Indresh remember your association and pastimes. That is why they are attached to you and trying to serve you and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa also. Their children are also serving.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please keep showering your mercy upon us and bless us so we keep serving you and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa more and more, regardless of any circumstance.

Thank you for everything you have done for us. Please always keep us at your lotus feet.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your worthless servant,

Ashalata Devī Dāśī

Śubhavlāsa Dāsa

*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 dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet again and again. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your glories and qualities are immeasurable. What you have done for us is unimaginable!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are so bold and empowered! What you have done is incredible!

You have brought the light to our lives by bringing this movement to the West. You introduced Lord Chaitanya's mission all across the globe!

There is so much to express how thankful I am for your causeless and unlimited mercy.

You took your guru mahārāja's instructions to heart. You were so

hardworking, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You translated late at night and got very little rest. Every moment was precious. You were so diligent in order to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness far and wide.

You are thorough with everything you do. No matter who gave you a letter, you would reply to every one of them and sign, "your ever well-wisher". And you truly are the well-wisher of the whole of mankind.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are so kind and loving. When Indresh fell asleep on your lap, you called him your grandson. Your love was genuine. You are always concerned about everyone's well-being and always thinking of your devotees.

Wherever I go, your ISKCON is flourishing all over the world! Because of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, there are devotees everywhere distributing and reading your books, chanting the holy name, performing opulent Deity service and glorifying the Lord.

My life would have been useless without your causeless mercy. My family and I cannot forget your personal association. Thank you for your love and compassion.

Your mercy is beyond description. Thank you for keeping us in your service and the service of ISKCON. Thank you for everything you have done and continue to do.

Please, please, please keep me at your lotus feet and service always, and let your mission of ISKCON become my life and soul.

Your insignificant servant,

Śubhavlāsa Dāsa

Haridāsa Ṭhākura Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus like feet.

Well, here we are again, another year has passed and we find ourselves searching for suitable words to glorify you on your *Vyāsa-pūjā* day.

I was recently just thinking about my godbrothers and sisters who are departing from our visual presence for their final destination. These things are not to be speculated on but all the same I do wonder as to what goes on outside of our worldly vision. Anyway, I only wish to serve you in whatever way pleases you most and that's that.

I don't desire for anything else.

A short story:

The other night I was asleep in bed when external noises woke me. I got up to investigate and what I heard was quite horrifying and at the same time instructive. Some young men were outside (I couldn't see but I could hear) and one of them kept repeating "I want to kill myself". He said this in such a manner that I understood he was experiencing something extremely terrible. My heart really felt for him but what could I do? They were such pitying cries, so full of anguish and torment and I prayed to Kṛṣṇa to help him. Eventually they went away but I couldn't stop thinking about what I had heard and how this related to the reality of this material world.

What have we got ourselves into? How on earth did we believe that we could find happiness here? Obviously, spiritual personalities cannot always get it right, at least as far as being Lord over all that we survey is concerned.

So we are here in this hellish material world and somehow or other we received your books. These books illuminated our lives and to varying degrees brought about our Kṛṣṇa conscious perspective that gave us compassion and empathy for all living entities who suffer here life after life.

Your servant,

Haridāsa Ṭhākura Dāsa

Arjuna Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

In your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, Chapter 12, verses 13 to 19, Lord Kṛṣṇa explains how we can become is very dear to Him – by being equipoised in happiness and distress, fear and anxiety; by being free from all pains, neither rejoicing nor grieving and neither lamenting nor desiring, and by remaining equipoised in honor and dishonor as well as heat and cold. With old age taking its inexorable toll, I find that by your mercy the hard knots in the heart that keep us identifying with being this body are being loosened. With the divine knowledge that you are bestowing on us through your

transcendental instructions we are learning tangible detachment, for which we daily offer our heartfelt thanks.

In your *Nectar of Devotion*, Chapter 1, it is pertinent that one of the first subheadings is 'Relief from Material Distress.' Therein we learn that our distresses are due to our own sinful activities, committed in this life and also in our past lives. You write, "There is a chain of sinful activities and their concomitant distresses, and the conditioned soul is suffering life after life due to these sins. He is suffering in the present life the results of sinful activities from his past life, and he is meanwhile creating further sufferings for his future life. Mature sinful activities are exhibited if one is suffering from some chronic disease, if one is suffering from some legal implication, if one is born in a low and degraded family or if one is uneducated or very ugly. There are many results of past sinful activities for which we are suffering at the present moment, and we may be suffering in the future due to our present sinful activities. But all of these reactions to sinful deeds can immediately be stopped if we take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness."

Again, for teaching us Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we daily offer our heartfelt thanks.

After the evidences that you quote Rūpa Gosvāmī giving to attest to this fact, you explain a more important point: that it also removes the sinful desire-seeds from the heart. You write, "This sinful desire-seed can be removed only by achieving Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And this can be accomplished very easily by chanting the mahā-mantra, or Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, as recommended by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In other words, unless one adopts the path of devotional service, he cannot be one-hundred-percent clean from all the reactions of sinful activities."

For giving us the mahā-mantra, we daily offer our heartfelt thanks.

In your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 2.1.20, you translate, "One's mind is always agitated by the passionate mode of material nature and bewildered by the ignorant mode of nature. But one can rectify such conceptions by the relation of Viṣṇu and thus become pacified by cleansing the dirty things created by them." And in the purport of verse 22, you wonderfully explain, "The dirty things in the heart of a conditioned soul are the root cause of all troubles for him. A conditioned soul is surrounded by the manifold miseries of material existence, but on account of his gross ignorance he is unable to remove the troubles due to dirty things in the heart, accumulated during the

long prison life in the material world. He is actually meant to serve the will of the Supreme Lord, but on account of the dirty things in the heart, he likes to serve his concocted desires. These desires, instead of giving him any peace of mind, create new problems and thus bind him to the cycle of repeated birth and death. These dirty things of fruitive work and empiric philosophy can be removed only by association with the Supreme Lord. The Lord, being omnipotent, can offer His association by His inconceivable potencies.”

For giving us the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, we daily offer our heartfelt thanks.

Again in your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 2.1.5, you translate, “One who desires to be free from all miseries must hear about, glorify and also remember the Personality of Godhead, who is the Supersoul, the controller and the savior from all miseries.” And in your enlightening purport, you kindly explain, “The Lord is the Supersoul (Paramātmā) present in the hearts of all living beings, and thus by the above hearing and glorifying process, the Lord invites the association of all in His creation. This process of hearing about and glorifying the Lord is applicable for everyone, whoever he may be, and it will lead one to the ultimate success in everything in which one may be engaged by providence.” For so mercifully giving us the ever-loving Lord’s nectarean association, we daily offer our heartfelt thanks.

In one of your most powerful purports of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 7.15.45, you instruct, “one must first please the spiritual master, and then one automatically pleases Kṛṣṇa and gets the strength with which to cross the ocean of nescience. If one seriously desires to return home, back to Godhead, one must therefore become strong enough by pleasing the spiritual master, for thus one gets the weapon with which to conquer the enemy, and one also gets the grace of Kṛṣṇa. Simply getting the weapon of jñāna is insufficient. One must sharpen the weapon by serving the spiritual master and adhering to his instructions. Then the candidate will get the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.... One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna. This is the highest perfection of life, and the human body is meant for this purpose” For teaching us what the highest perfection of life is, we daily offer our heartfelt thanks.

Again, in the same purport, “The word *tattvataḥ*, meaning ‘in reality,’ is very important. Tato mān tattvato jñātvā. Unless one understands Kṛṣṇa in truth by the mercy of the spiritual master, one is not free to give up his material body. As it is said, āruhya kṛcchreṇa paraṁ padaṁ tataḥ patanty adho ‘nāḍṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ: if one neglects to serve the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, one cannot become free from the material clutches simply by knowledge. Even if one attains the stage of *brahma-padam*, merging in Brahman, without *bhakti* he is prone to fall down. One must be very careful in regard to the danger of falling down again into material bondage. The only insurance is to come to the stage of *bhakti*, from which one is sure not to fall. Then one is free from the activities of the material world. In summary, as stated by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, one must get in touch with a bona fide spiritual master coming in the paramparā of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, for by his mercy and instructions one is able to get strength from Kṛṣṇa. Thus one engages in devotional service and attains the ultimate goal of life, the lotus feet of Viṣṇu. For your ever well-wishing mercy, we most humbly daily offer our heartfelt thanks.

Finally, again in the same purport, you instruct, “Significant in this verse are the words jñānāsim acyuta-balaḥ. Jñānāsim, the sword of knowledge, is given by Kṛṣṇa, and when one serves the guru and Kṛṣṇa in order to hold the sword of Kṛṣṇa’s instructions, Balarāma gives one strength. Balarāma is Nityānanda. Vrajendra-nandana yei, śacī-suta haila sei, balarāma ha-ila nitāi. This bala – Balarāma – comes with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and both of Them are so merciful that in this Age of Kali one may very easily take shelter of Their lotus feet. They come especially to deliver the fallen souls of this age. Pāpī tāpī yata chila, hari-nāme uddhārila. Their weapon is saṅkīrtana, hari-nāma. Thus one should accept the sword of knowledge from Kṛṣṇa and be strong with the mercy of Balarāma. We are therefore worshiping Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma in Vṛndāvana. In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.2.4) it is said: *nāyam ātmā bala-hīnena labhyo, na ca pramādāt tapaso vāpy aliṅgāt, etair upāyair yatate yas tu vidvāns, tasyaiṣa ātmā viśate brahma-dhāma* – One cannot attain the goal of life without the mercy of Balarāma. Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura therefore says, *nitāiyera karuṇā habe, vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa pābe*: when one receives the mercy of Balarāma, Nityānanda, one can attain the lotus feet of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa very easily. *Se sambandha nāhi yāra, br̥thā janma gela tāra, vidyā-kule hi karibe tāra*. If one has no connection

with Nitāi, Balarāma, then even though one is a very learned scholar or jñānī or has taken birth in a very respectable family, these assets will not help him. We must therefore conquer the enemies of Kṛṣṇa consciousness with the strength received from Balarāma.” For constantly engaging us in the service of Their Lordships, Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi and Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa Balarāma, here on your ISKCON Vedic Farm in Mauritius, we daily offer our prostrated obeisances and heartfelt thanks.

Eternally indebted, I beg to remain, your servant,

Arjuna Dāsa

Jitendriya Dāsa

Querido Śrīla Prabhupāda te ruego que aceptes mis humildes reverencias a tus pies de loto, que podíamos haber hecho nosotros tus siervos sin tu grandísima misericordia para conocer y avanzar en el camino espiritual que nos enseñaste y sigues enseñando para la glorificación y servicio devocional al Señor Krishna la Suprema Personalidad de Dios que con su bondad infinita nos permite a nosotros almas condicionadas del mundo material a través de tu presencia cantar sus santos nombres. Que maravilla que tu a tan avanzada edad vinieses al mundo occidental tan solo con una pequeña semilla de devoción y plantaras en este occidente, surgiendo de ello un maravilloso árbol transcendental que es la Sociedad Internacional para la Conciencia de Krishna, en el cual muchos hemos buscado refugio para alcanzar la vuelta al Supremo. Querido maestro espiritual te pido humildemente y con mucho cariño me permitas seguir cantando los santos nombres y servirte eternamente, gracias amado Gurudev.

Todas las Glorias a Śrīla Prabhupāda mi querido y eterno maestro espiritual.

Hare Krishna.

Jitendriya Dāsa

Gaura Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances. All glories to your lotus feet which have turned hundreds of places into holy places of pilgrimage.

Your disciple, Dinanatha Prabhu said that he asked you if he could go to Rishikesh where he could live as a renounced brahmacārī. You told him “Don’t do that. I wasted 12 years sitting in Vṛndāvana. Just tell people about Kṛṣṇa, wherever you go.”

From your rooms at Śrīla Jīva Goswami’s Rādhā Damodara Temple, which you said was the spiritual hub of the universe, you had the ecstatic darśana of the Lord every day, but you can see Kṛṣṇa everywhere, within everything. So, you travelled the world 14 times in just 12 years to maintain what Kṛṣṇa had given you in the form of 5000 disciples and hundreds of temples. You left to do the greatest feat in the world, which was to give Lord Kṛṣṇa to millions. Through book distribution, this continues to go on, and through efforts to educate devotees, so many souls are now preparing to enter into Kṛṣṇa’s *bhauma līlā*. This is unprecedented in the world. No saint in history has ever accomplished what you have done and to the magnitude to which you have done it.

Your vigorous preaching of Kṛṣṇa consciousness has created millions of devotees that are scattered all over the world. You gave us the writing on the wall over 40 years ago about the collapse of Kali-yuga uncivilization. You taught us how to organize ourselves to preserve what Kṛṣṇa consciousness we have developed, and to go on advancing.

“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. We do not condemn modern civilization but we don't like to get it at the cost of God consciousness, that is suicide." — Letter to Rupanuga, 18 December, 1974

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have said these cities will not last much longer because they are not based upon the local production of local food. You said after the next major war, people will be coming by the millions to our farms.

1. How are we to create these farms where we will live and receive others? How will they be governed?

2. If people will be coming by the millions, how will we accommodate those who have other spiritual masters from other *sangas* if they are not currently welcome in ISKCON today?

3. Do you want us to pool our resources to acquire land to fulfill your desire to establish sustainable rural, Kṛṣṇa conscious communities, or are we supposed to continue to emphasise book distribution at the cost of establishing such communities so that we remain scattered all over the world in little towns or big cities? Does one exclude the other, as we have experienced?

4. How can we find unity in diversity, and all live in a community together, and not allow our diversity to prohibit our unity?

Please reveal these answers to me and those are are genuinely concerned to create sustainable devotional Kṛṣṇa conscious communities. A sustainable community also includes the elder members and their years of combined, direct training they received from you. It does not appear to me that they are valued very much as many were sidelined. The majority of your direct disciples are no longer directly engaged in serving your ISKCON institution for a variety of reasons, so they have had to find their own ways in which to serve your mission and always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him.

Please send and inspire more of your loving servants that will bring about the unity of the Vaiṣṇava community, that remains so divided today. I am told that devotees in Hawaii gather regularly and they are a multi-sanga-guru community where they mutually respect one another and perform devotional service together in a harmonious way. Isn't this what you wanted, everywhere?

Despite my many shortcomings, please allow me to be your eternal servant, birth after birth, and continue to give me your guidance to inspire inclusiveness and serve your followers. Please help me to become a real Gaura dāsa in this lifetime, and spread Lord Caitanya's Mission as you desire me to.

Your servant,

Gaura Dāsa

Subuddhi Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

All glories to you and your mission. I pay my obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet.

You saved my life. Many cries happened in my life but you saved me and I was able to continue to serve you.

It is love, mercy and care that hold us together, otherwise we would not be able to sail through difficult times. The secret of success is your causeless mercy and your instructions that guide us during troubled times.

When I joined your moment in 1972 I saw the dedication of your devotees. You once you called them 'white elephants' which melted my heart. I had found what I was looking for. I experienced taste and joy in the association of these dedicated surrendered souls. Their love for you touched my heart and glued me to your mission.

Prabhupāda, you came alone at the age of 69, completely penniless, but fully equipped with the timeless wisdom of Vedic

knowledge from the East and landed in Boston in 1965. What you saw was a desert landscape, full of lost and searching souls. Here, you injected this transcendental sound vibration issuing from your lotus mouth, the Hare-Krishna mahā-mantra...the condensed form of all the timeless truth and wisdom of the Vedas. This is how you revolutionized the planet.

Though physically you are not here, but the presence of your name and glory spiritually surcharges the atmosphere, like a loving knitted family.

Your mercy is limitless like a ocean. When I had your first *darśana*, I was overwhelmed and I broke down in tears. You waved your hand on me saying. "Keep serving". The blissful blessing keeps me going and I sense you have business for me that you pulled me out from where I was.

I must confess Prabhupāda that in every event in my life, I have always come to you for your shelter...divine shelter.

With the passing of time, the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is growing more and more. Thank You Śrīla Prabhupāda for your unconditional kindness and for making my life worth living.

Your humble Servant,
Subuddhi Devī Dāsī

Akhiladhara Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances on this glorious occasion of your 122nd appearance day.

Your mercy is all I'm made of. My first conscious encounter with you was on June 1, 1975 through your sold-out devotees at the Amsterdam temple at the Sunday feast.

While walking to a low-priced youth hostel for young travelers, I stopped before a Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa poster displayed in the window of a building just before the hostel. It was the Amsterdam temple! The same picture of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa that was on the cover of your *Kṛṣṇa Book* was in the window of the temple. I recognized the picture from your paperback *Kṛṣṇa Book*, along with your first edition of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* which I had seen in the apartment of a friend in Oslo, Norway. My friend had picked me up on the highway as I was

walking to the Arctic Circle from England. That was my **first direct** contact with you.

I never made it to that hostel. Because of you in the form of those two books, I was inspired to chant *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare* on the streets of Amsterdam, praying for the Lord's guidance. While standing outside the Amsterdam temple, a devotee invited me in. I never left.

Chanting in the temple room completely mesmerized me, along with the character and devotion of the temple devotees. The large temple room was completely packed with the enthusiastic chanting and dancing of your young children getting a taste of the spiritual world with you as their guide. Your presence pervaded the whole ISKCON world, as it continues to today. By the time *prasāda* was served, I was literally swept off my feet. I was afraid to stand up. I savored every preparation of a 15 course feast. I needed time to digest it. While I sat alone with my backpack, a *mataji* came in the room and asked me why I was sitting alone.

"The feast was great. I ate too much and now I need time to digest it."

She sympathetically replied, "If you are not feeling too good, maybe you can stay here for the night. Why don't you go talk with the president?"

I thought this would be a great opportunity for me to experiment with a very attractive experience. The temple president, Locananada Dāsa, saw that I was serious about spiritual life and not just looking for a free place to sleep. So I stayed the night, and I never left. And I never will.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your mercy is all I'm made of.
Hare Krishna!!!

Your eternal disciple and son,
Akhiladhara Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

I have the good fortune of still distributing your books. I am seeing that your book distribution has become a great success and is changing people's lives. When we try to distribute your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* at our book table, several things become apparent. The first thing is that most people have your *Bhagavad-gītā*. We are distributing to mostly Indian people but it is still astounding how many have your *Gītā*. Sometimes it's actually difficult to give them away because so many people have it. And many people are reading it as well. People will tell us what chapter they are on, and many times, how it has changed their lives. Even small children sometimes come up to our table and offer *pranams* with folded hands to a picture or statue of Kṛṣṇa that we have on our table. And sometimes they will recite a verse from the *Gītā*. All age levels are benefiting from your books. If we try to give persons who have your *Gītā* a different book, many times they tell us that they have all of your books. The other thing that we notice is that people just walk up to our table and want to purchase the *Gītā*. We don't have to convince them to buy it. They want to get it on their own. Many times they say they have been looking for it. Thus your efforts in writing your books has borne great fruit. People are relishing the transcendental knowledge you have mercifully given them. By distributing your books I can see how your movement is progressing and gradually changing the world. You went through tremendous hardships and difficulties to write your books and establish this movement; but it has become very successful and people are benefiting from your unlimited compassion. Your mercy and compassion are just like the ocean. The ocean has unlimited amounts of water. Similarly your mercy and compassion are unlimited. You are still giving your mercy via your books and your movement.

Personally, distributing your books is the most purifying activity. As soon as I start distributing, *māyā*'s clouds go far away. It puts one in a world of miraculously enlivening spiritual energy. The people you meet and the exchanges you have with them are completely ecstatic. You can feel how you are being used as an instrument of the Lord's mercy and participating in his transcendental *līlā*. You enable us to become dear to the Lord by performing this activity. Thus you

have given us the means to purify ourselves and the whole world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless me with firm faith in you and the Holy Names. In that way I will be able to understand the glories of the holy name and have the compassion to deliver it to others. Please allow me to be an instrument of your compassion by giving Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others.

Your aspiring servant,

Cakri Dāsa
Dallas, Texas

Drumila Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories unto you.

Even though I am currently not the ideal disciple. (If one at all), I can say that I would have been inestimably worse off in my life, had I not met you and your genuine devotees. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am indebted to you for that. You have literally saved, and are saving my life. Without you, all would be darkness and lamentation. You truly love us, and I would one day like to return that love, although it would seem I am incapable of that in my present deplorable condition. But you have given us the perfect blueprint, and I am hopeful that one day, or one lifetime, that I may fully take up the great task to become a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, as was and is always your earnest desire for us fledgling disciples. Thank you for being interested in this wretched soul, and please pray for me to your dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, that I might one day succeed, at pleasing you, and thus make spiritual progress.

Please never reject or leave me Śrīla Prabhupāda, as I have often done to you, for if you did, I would not find a position in any sphere, and I could only weep.

Thank you for showing me unlimited mercy thus far Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your aspiring servant,

Drumila Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your feet.

This is another opportunity for me to thank you and glorify Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda for bestowing your causeless mercy to this wretched fallen soul you have named Jaya Mādhava Dāsa.

As the years pass by, my gratitude and love for you has grown and I say this sincerely, from my heart, to you on this your Appearance Day 2018. The first temple you opened in New York was appropriately named Matchless Gifts. I'm in wonder at the 'matchless gift' of Kṛṣṇa consciousness you have given me...this gift has been the only good thing in my entire life.

Like a father who raises his young children to adulthood, you raised us (me) with the help of your disciples – my beloved godbrothers and godsisters – who trained me up in the ways of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. They represent you, and I am grateful for you giving me them and countless other wonderful devotees in your International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Anything auspicious in my life has come about only because of you Śrīla Prabhupāda, and a billion thanks do not even come close to my gratitude for receiving Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Now in our later years, many of us, your disciples contemplate how in any way we can serve your mission and help the devotees spread Kṛṣṇa *bhakti*, the holy names, and your books to every town and village. To help re-open your temple *ashrams* to give shelter to the suffering and give them an option to join your Movement. To help every man, woman and child, regardless of race, creed, age, nationality or financial status...all the fallen souls.

Since your departure we have faced many trials, tribulations and mistakes. And even today we struggle to preach on your behalf in the way you wanted Krishna consciousness preached – strongly and without compromise.

The world you came to has changed dramatically and the people of Kali-yuga are sinking into the darkness of ignorance in a highly technical society. God has been replaced by computers and mobile phones and gadgets. Please give me and your followers the intelligence of how to overcome this powerful dark form of *māyā* and reach out to all the fallen souls with Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

As I remain in Russia – and I hope to remain here by your

mercy and protection – so that in any way possible I can serve your generation of new followers and bring them to your lotus feet to follow your instructions how to preach in Russia, bringing them happiness in devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

You have warned us to prepare for the coming war and to be self-sufficient and not depend on materialistic society. I hope you will bless all of your followers, especially the Russian devotees to take this Varnasrama project seriously and to empower the devotees to establish it for Russia, America and the entire world. I ask you for your continuing blessings for all the sincere Russian devotees who are so dedicated with love for you and practice and preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness sincerely. Once again, I bow to your lotus feet for extending your mercy to all people.

Many years in the future, mankind will recognise you as who you are...the pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa who came to earth on a mission to help spread love of God and save the fallen souls from the ever eternal cycles of birth, death, disease and old age. Thank you again Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your mercy upon me and bless me to be your bona fide disciple and representative.

All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servant,

Jaya Mādhava Dāsa

Vaibhava dāsa Adhikārī

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We are servants of the servants of your matchless gift: ISKCON, which is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's gift through you. Because of this it is our duty to cooperate by helping your personified message to remain alive as it is. You taught us to utilize every good occasion which Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests for us to give freely this knowledge you received from the Supreme Lord through the Paramparā, always conscious that every part and parcel of time is important. Through your example, I can try to understand what my mission requires, what I must do, according what you know, it is to be fulfilled in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. So I must hear from your teachings by reading from your books, in this way associating myself with you. From such association I will be inspired, due to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mercy, to have perception of what at any

time Śrī Kṛṣṇa wants from me.

I must be witness in every activity of how you wanted things to be done or conceived. Having been your disciple, I must hand down the truth. I know that you were always vigilant by staying attentive, always making sure that what Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta required becomes accomplished. It is the responsibility in the succession of masters and disciples. We can understand that Kali-yuga is inclined to do so that we forget our realizations, therefore it remains important always to study your books and to associate with the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In this way following you in your association with the *paramparā* and with your spiritual master in the spiritual world.

Your humble servant of the servant,

Vaibhava dāsa Adhikārī

Jaygurudeva Dāsa

Śrīla Prabhupāda

Was a critic of capitalism

And any other « ism »

That makes him unique

In a world where « isms »

Are seen at every street corner

Prabhupāda is in the world of the Absolute

Beyond all « isms »

With Kṛṣṇa in every thought

Kṛṣṇa in every word

Kṛṣṇa in every deed

Prabhupāda came on time

Prabhupāda was ahead of his time

Prabhupāda is beyond time

In the service of Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Jaygurudeva Dāsa

Yogīndra Dāsa

“My Lord Kṛṣṇa, I pray that the swan of my mind may immediately sink down to the stems of the lotus feet of Your Lordship and be locked in their network; otherwise at the time of my final breath, when my throat is choked up with cough, how will it be possible to think of You?” *Mukunḍa-mala-stotra*, King Kulaksekharā—SB 2.4.21 purport

The devotees of the Lord do not “even want to be transferred to any spiritual planet” (BG, 8-16, purport). They only want the association of the Lord, wherever the Lord wishes them to reside. Śrīla Prabhupāda exhibited this when he left Vṛndāvana in 1965 to fulfill the prediction of Lord Caitanya—that His name would be heard in every town and village on this planet. Śrīla Prabhupāda remained a *dhamvasi*, a resident of Vṛndāvana wherever he went. Following his example, his followers maintain outposts and simultaneously reside in Vṛndāvana.

After much training, we Prabhupāda disciples from the elder days bear the responsibility to exhibit a good example. After hearing the report of Jayananda prabhu’s passing on May 11 1977, Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “I am very proud to have such a disciple. He has died gloriously. His death is wonderful and we should all follow his example” (*TKG’s Diary: Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Final Days*). The danger is that “There is no fool like an old fool”, as the saying goes.

There was a question, very nice question, by Akbar Vasar, the Muhammadan emperor, Mogul emperor of India, Akbar Vasar. He was in the fifteenth century, five hundred years ago. So he kept very intelligent ministers. They would reply. Whatever inquiries are made by the emperor, the particular minister will inform, “This is this, sir.” So he inquired one minister. His name was... I forget now. So “How long the lusty desires continue, sex desire?” So he replied, “Up to the point of death.” So the emperor said, “No, no, how it can be?” “No, he has got the desire, but he cannot use it. His instruments become dull or useless. Therefore... But the desire is there.” And, “I don’t believe. I cannot...I am not satisfied with this answer.” “All right, sir, I will satisfy you.”

So one day, all of a sudden the minister came to Akbar Vasar, “Sir, you will have to come with me immediately, and take your young daughter with you.” So Akbar Vasar could understand there is some meaning, so immediately he prepared and took his young daughter with him. So he asked, “Where you are going?” “You will come to know.” So he entered a house where an old man was on the death bed, a very old man. So the minister requested the emperor that “While entering the room, you kindly try to see the face of the lying man who is going to die.” So Akbar was very intelligent. So he was seeing the face. So he marked it that the man was looking towards the young girl, not to the emperor. So he said, “Yes, I have got your answer.” (SB lecture on 1.16.7, LA, January 4, 1974)

Simultaneous with this aim of a glorious death, Śrīla Prabhupāda had unlimited ambitions for this lifetime: “... I can utilize my time completely to produce further books. I can give you Vedas, Upanisads, Puranas, Mahabharata, Ramayana – so many. There are so many devotional works in our line by the Goswamis” (SPL 38, *No One Listens to a Poor Man*). Śrīla Prabhupāda quoted Īsopaniṣad mantra 2 that “One may aspire to live for hundreds of years if he continuously goes on working in that way [the *isavasyam* conception], for that sort of work will not bind him to the law of karma. There is no alternative to this way for man.”

Newsweek magazine described Śrīla Prabhupāda as an amazing “late-bloomer”:

A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda’s spiritual journey began early in life, but it wasn’t until he went to New York from India in 1965 that the Hare Krishna phenomenon went global. Prabhupāda, 69 years old at the time and holding about \$7 to his name, made the trip alone from India to America on an ocean freighter. Soon after, he founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, the organization through which he recruited more followers to the denomination known as the Hare Krishna Movement. The movement was rooted in Hindu culture but embraced the idea of a single God. Prabhupāda began touring the world on lecture tours, circling the globe 14 times in 11 years.

In the photo, he speaks in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park in 1969. He eventually wrote more than 70 books before he died in 1977 at 81. Today the ISKC [sic] says it has more than 1 million followers worldwide. (Tracy, R. & Graham, D. November 26, 2010)

Śrīla Prabhupāda showed us how to cross the ocean of nescience of this material world as if it were the puddle in the hoofprint of a calf, fulfilling the dictum that devotees “... leave behind on earth the method by which they cross...” (SB 10.2.31).

May I always remember Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions and recite them without difficulty.

Your servant,
Yogīndra Dāsa

Jānakī Devī Dāsī

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto ‘pi*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Only by Your mercy can we know anything – about who we are and what is the purpose of our lives – and about our beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

You have kindly and mercifully delivered Śrī Kṛṣṇa to us...that wonderful bluish boy, who wanders on the banks of the Yamunā, playing His flute and enjoying loving pastimes with His eternal parts and parcels, the *nitya siddhas* who are ecstatically fully engaged in rendering loving reciprocal service with Govinda, the *Ādi Puruṣa*, source of all spiritual and material worlds and all that be.

Without Your Divine Grace we would not have an inkling about this eternal spiritual realm, where every word’s a song and every step’s a dance, where in our *sat cit ānanda* eternal *svarūpa*, in that place where time is conspicuous by its’ absence, we are fully absorbed in our eternal relationship with the source of all that be in loving exchange.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, with firm faith and conviction you ventured from the holy land of Vṛndāvana to the cold, hellish regions of New York. Fixed in your service to your beloved gurudeva, Śrīla

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, with unwavering faith and determination, you brought the message of Caitanya Mahāprabhu to the Western shores. In 12 short years you enthused, encouraged, managed and directed your fledgling movement, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Your vision was sublime and you could clearly foresee temples, farms, cities emerging, devotees all around the world, every town and village...“only time is separating us” you told us.

Although you are not here in your physical form, we can perceive that you are undoubtedly still with us in your books and instructions. Our duty is to study these books and teachings, entering into the sublime message and letting it penetrate our yearning hearts. Then sharing this knowledge and wisdom with whoever we meet or have connection with. *yāre dekha, tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-upadeśa* (CC *Madhya* 7.128). “Whomever you meet, simply talk with him about the instructions given by Kṛṣṇa or tell him of narrations about Kṛṣṇa.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray that with whatever years I have remaining in this body, that I may be empowered to share your message, be a useful instrument in your hands, be blessed to render some service that is pleasing to you. We are tiny, insignificant, fallen conditioned souls, but with your mercy shining down upon us, ANYTHING is possible.

*mūkaṁ karoti vācāraṁ
paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande
śrī-guruṁ dīna-tāraṇam*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the deliverer of the fallen souls. His mercy turns the dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains.”

Hare Kṛṣṇa! please kindly always keep us firmly fixed at your divine lotus feet, now and forevermore. Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jai!*

Your humble servant,

Jānakī Devī Dāsī
ISKCON Leicester

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

I live in gratitude each day of what you mean to me, and for all your divine guidance that I’m blessed with in this lifetime. Your Divine Grace, I can only say thank you and celebrate you as the guru who I only have to think of and know that he is there.

As the guru who lives in his books, as the guru who is non-different from his global form of ISKCON, who has preached for 50 years non-stop!

During the 50-year anniversary, all over this planet, there were so many amazing Rathayātrās and amazing offerings to celebrate that milestone of your glorious Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. We saw your devotees even going to the Antarctic, the seventh continent.

Kali-yuga is raging like I have never seen. Wars are being ignited all over the planet. There is so much suffering as the *karmic* rain is pouring down.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the only one who has given this fallen soul a purpose. Because of you I chant 16 rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra each day, and celebrate the association of Rādhā Kṛṣṇa and Balarama manifesting each time I chant. That is your greatest gift to all of us.

Each day I pray for the liberation of this material world and the cancellation of Kali-yuga...the mahāt-tattva is just a cloud, and you have taught us through your preaching that Lord Kṛṣṇa is *ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavo* the source of all material and spiritual worlds. Śrīla Prabhupāda, we celebrate your service to Lord Caitanya’s mission.

I’m so grateful and my humble prayer is that just as you have blessed me and opened my eyes, I pray for all the conditioned souls in the material world to receive your mercy.

Praying to always be in your service until this mission of divine love flowing from Gaura-Nitāi has been completed, and all the souls residing in this material world have gotten your mercy and go back to home back to godhead.

Your very grateful servant,

Punyatama Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this very auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I offer my grateful and humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

As the years pass by I find myself appreciating your glorious, divine attributes more and more. Whenever I read or hear about your pastimes that manifested in this world, I get stunned, wondering how it all happened. Those were the days when even making a telephone call was costly. There were no personal computers, iPads, mobile phones, or such personal gadgets. Neither was there email, WhatsApp or any such facilities that make reaching out to people or preaching to the world much easier. Writing this simple offering with the help of personal computer would take me about an hour. And you translated over fifty volumes of transcendental literatures, got them translated into many major languages of the world, had them published and distributed widely. You established over 50 centres around the world, initiated and guided over 5,000 devotees, wrote hundreds of letters every month, traveled around the world more than 12 times, gave numerous lectures and interviews with the press, public and to the scholars, all of these WITHIN 12 short years and WITHOUT modern gadgets and facilities. This is truly mind boggling to anyone who hears.

I wonder how you managed to build a worldwide movement without modern gadgets and only with a typewriter or a dictaphone. Of course we know that your mission to fulfill the order of your guru mahārāja was your very life and soul. You spared no efforts and pushed on against all odds, with exemplary faith and determination. Let me become inspired by your faith and determination, to serve your mission to the best of my capabilities. 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 dīyā koro
nija māne spṛhā-hīna*

“Gurudeva, give to this servant just one drop of mercy. I am lower than a blade of grass. Give

me all help. Give me strength. Let me be as you are, without desires or aspirations.”

Your worthless humble servant,

Guruprasad Dāsa

Pauruṣa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Only you came to the West and made possible the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness for those fortunate souls who received your mercy. Your coherence and unity with Kṛṣṇa’s desire was so keenly synchronised that you were not out of step for an instant. It was this level of devotion and purity that inspired me to follow you.

When I first began the practice of bhakti-yoga I took to the process with euphoric enthusiasm and motivated attention. Over time due to familiarity and boyish carelessness, like a bucking bull, internally I resisted as I snorted, bucked and kicked, allowing my lower nature to rebel at the system of purification by full surrender. I foolishly sanctioned short intervals of time for my own selfish desires to manifest, always holding back just a little from you, in most instances without even realising it, allowing ignorance and passion to sweep over me, and all the while perpetually regretting my failure to give all, at your feet.

However, despite my shortcomings, by your mercy, the powerful and unstoppable spark of divine love and devotion, had, a lifetime ago, ignited within my heart, empowering me to continue refining my Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the long run, while replacing the immovable selfishness that once consumed me.

I never once doubted that there was any better way to understand who I am, or what the purpose of life was. I watched selfish desires diminish and their hold over me weaken and fade, simultaneously paralleling clearly focussed attention on your instructions. This is testimony to your boundless potency, that from a few moments association such change can ensue.

At some forgotten time the bucking and kicking stopped. I began to taste the blissful nectar that loving devotional service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa freely showered upon me at every instant. The ocean of

unlimited bliss, there for everyone to dive into, to my amazement, had always been present right in front of me my entire life. Kṛṣṇa was not a distant object to attain when purified, but He was present within me and all around me at each and every moment. It was only the veil of attraction to material enjoyment that screened me from experiencing uninterrupted unlimited spiritual bliss. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, had given me the greatest gift, awareness that the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa had been with me at every moment waiting for me to prepare a place for Him, and revealing how to live in harmony with His desire.

Your greatest blessing upon me will always remain your instructions and opening my eyes and heart to the presence of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, whom to material eyes may appear nothing more than marble or brass, but to me Their Divine Lordships have filled every corner of my heart and mind. This has occurred by your kind causeless mercy.

In any culture, when a gift is given for whatever reason, out of love, kindness, or compassion, the receiver is indebted to the donor. Well-mannered etiquette dictates that the receiver is expected to somehow repay the benefactor in an appropriate way, either with kind words, a thoughtful deed, or even a gift in return out of gratitude for the benevolence shown. This obligation is easily fulfilled in conventional material transactions, but our connection is not ordinary, being eternal by nature. This triggers me to repeatedly reflect incredulously on the astonishing gift You compassionately bestowed upon me; and just how insignificant any attempt to repay you would be. You presented me with the process of Bhakti-yoga, the method to link with God Himself through the practice of devotional service. Even if I spent unlimited lifetimes presenting this gift to others it would pale into paltriness, never comparing to the causeless mercy you showered upon me.

You introduced me, to God Himself!

You have revealed the nature of God and His ever-pleasing wonderful pastimes in Gokula with His devotees. On one occasion Kṛṣṇa climbed inside a box of gifts meant for Rādhārāṇī simply so He could see Her privately. Lalitā accused Him of wanting to expunge the earth of chaste women, but Kṛṣṇa lied, saying He was only curious to see what was in the box, even though He had previously emptied the box out and hidden the contents so He could fit inside. On this

occasion He was cunning and skilful at getting whatever He wanted. At other times, Kṛṣṇa adopts qualities that common men would proclaim are not becoming of God; or Kṛṣṇa puzzlingly exhibits bewilderment at Rādhā's love for Himself. Sometimes pastimes are repeated day after day in an unlimited variety of ways, yet by Yogamāyā's potency the gopis' and gopas' awareness is entirely covered – believing each day's activities are fresh and new. How wonderfully captivating His pastimes are.

Another time Kṛṣṇa disguised Himself to cheat Kuṭilā (Rādhā's sister-in-law), who wanders the forests of Vraja trying to catch Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa together. To avoid capture, Kṛṣṇa disguised Himself as Abhimanyu (husband of Rādhārāṇī). This time Kṛṣṇa was the greatest cheater and trickster, yet in other pastimes He is the most faithful and dependable person. Who can fully understand His wonderful activities and their depths of love?

On a different occasion Kṛṣṇa disguised Himself as a young woman called Kalavali and acted as though He were upset with Rādhārāṇī. He did this to trick Jaṭilā (Rādhārāṇī's mother-in-law) into thinking that the girls had been fighting, causing Jaṭilā to push both girls together by their waists, so they would hug and make up. Then Jaṭilā insisted that they lay down together and encouraged their friendship. Kṛṣṇa became very happy by Jaṭilā's actions, whereas Rādhārāṇī and her gopi friends couldn't believe what was happening, becoming jubilant and ecstatic. To stop Jaṭilā from seeing their bliss and smiles they used their saris to cover their faces. Kṛṣṇa is so expert that He took on the disguise of a woman to be next to His beloved Rādhārāṇī, while Rādhārāṇī's own mother-in-law was encouraging the affair. Kṛṣṇa's sublime activities are filled with wonder, and yet, simply by remembering them, loving ecstatic emotions capture my wayward mind and fill me with bliss. Kṛṣṇa can be shrewd, cunning, playful or contemptible, but all give bliss and satisfaction in a variety of ways.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this sublime gift of yours has involved me in these intoxicating delightful pastimes completely captivating my heart. To repay you is impossible, I remain eternally indebted to you, falling at your lotus feet day after day, over and over, eternally grateful for the mercy you showed this poor destitute fellow. There's no limit to your love for Kṛṣṇa and your empathy for the fallen living entities. Your appearance in the material world is the greatest benediction that humanity and all living entities could receive. Therefore, I beg

forgiveness of you, and Kṛṣṇa, on this most auspicious day, for sins committed in the past that may have caused you to come back to the material world time and time again. Not for rejecting you whenever I turned my glance towards the material world desiring to enjoy a petty selfish whim separately from your desire, but mostly for my original sin of abandoning you, my beloved spiritual master. Imagine being in a loving relationship with someone and the beloved suddenly walks out not to be seen again; leaving their lover alone to suffer the loss, while the beloved tried to enjoy somewhere else. A person in this position would feel so much anguish being left alone. This is what I did to You and Kṛṣṇa life after life. You love me beyond my understanding, whole-heartedly, and yet, I simply walked out on you birth after birth, repeatedly. I merely closed my eyes to you. In spite of everything, out of immense love for me, you never closed off your heart and always desired my return.

For this reason I am driven to beg forgiveness for that origin of sins again and again. Feeling deep regret at my selfish behaviour, with an intensity that forces tears to flood my eyes, while feeling as though my heart will break, I humbly beg for your mercy, so that I will never again take birth with pride in my heart thinking I am the enjoyer. Instead I earnestly pray for your benevolence, so that I can remember birth after birth to cling to humility and remember my original position as your eternal servant.

Each day I embrace your instructions as my heart and soul, praying constantly that you will not forget me. I offer my *daṇḍavats* at your lotus feet, feeling disqualified to receive your compassion, but begging from the depths of my heart, beseeching that you never withhold your mercy from this foolish soul for I am completely dependent upon it without which, I am nothing. Please always utilise me as you see fit. I eternally pray for this mindset for it is the reality of harmonious living, sheltered in the cooling shade of your lotus feet.

Your aspiring loving servant,
Pauruṣa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Without you coming to the Western shores who would have given us the pure conclusions of the Vedic wisdom? You were uncompromising in presenting the message of Godhead as-it-is to one and all who were fortunate to cross your path. Faced with all kinds of obstacles you remained resolute in purpose to push on the desire of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta to deliver the message of Lord Caitanya to the English speaking countries. You came and made the reality of Kṛṣṇa unfold before us – your sheer presence invoked the presence of the Supreme Lord. You can do this because you carry Kṛṣṇa in your heart and wherever you went, Kṛṣṇa went too. Such mercy had never before been available on this side of the world but you dispensed it lavishly and freely on the conditioned souls enraptured by the glitter of so called industrial and technological advancement. Your call to “turn the one switch that will immediately brighten everything, everywhere” did not fall on deaf ears, and thousands flocked to you for gaining release from the dungeon of material existence and entering into a spiritual life of full freedom.

I too, Śrīla Prabhupāda, became attracted to your message and I have been endeavoring to follow your instructions, both during your manifest pastimes, and now, and it seems so long, in your physical absence. Today, on your appearance day I am keenly feeling your separation and wish that I can again assist you directly, in whatever small way it pleases you, in your service to the Divine Couple.

I beg to remain your eternal servant,
Aṅkotha Dāsa

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

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

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

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.

On my first encounter with the devotees, I told myself I wanted to be one of them. I remembered seeing young men dressed in orange robes, with shaven heads. I did not see any females, so I was wondering how would I become one. I asked if I could join and they told me yes. It was the beginning of my life as a devotee.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the sacrifice you made by leaving Vṛndāvana to come to the Western world at that age is unimaginable and miraculous. You taught us simple living and high thinking; how to show respect, to be humble and how to show love to all living entities. You created a society of different souls all over the world and built a home in which all of us could live. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave us everything what is necessary for this Age, so therefore we don't have to look for knowledge or instructions from anywhere or anyone.

I often hear some devotees saying that you did not have enough time on this earth to give us more and they are therefore following others from different *sampradāyas*. That is not recommended by you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I cannot imagine life without getting in contact with you through the devotees. I am very grateful to you for coming to the West to save me from becoming mad trying to satisfy my senses in this material world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have all the qualities of a bona fide spiritual master.

*Your most fallen disciple,
Tattva Darśinī Devī Dāsī*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīne
namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

I had been searching for God for some years as well as looking for a way to give my life true meaning. But my thoughts were still unclear and, amidst the many possible roads before me, I had not yet chosen a direction nor the way to experience my chosen path.

It was in India, August of 1976, that the most important event of my life took place: you gave me my first darśana. What enlightenment and inspiration! I came to you desiring divine benedictions and you promptly offered them, of the most precious kind.

From the very first word to the last one of that unforgettable conversation with you, I have been showered with blessings that have been a constant spiritual nourishment in my life until today.

Countless times, for inspiration or out of necessity and above all, during periods of major concern, I have returned to our first encounter. As you spoke to me of material reality and of the spiritual one, of man's and society's current states, of the suffering in which a far too great majority of people live, you urged me to recite the divine names, to become a Kṛṣṇa devotee study the *Bhagavad-gītā* and to speak about it to all the people I would encounter.

The sentiment that prevails in me is one of gratitude and my heart is brimming with it. I am grateful for all that I have and keep receiving from you in so many forms. Reading your books, exchanging with your devoted disciples and most of all, listening to your admirable lessons, I have received your teachings with my heart. I integrated them in such a way that they have become the deepest and most precious part of me, so much so that sometimes I feel as if I am observing the world through your eyes. I feel you speaking through my voice, posing actions through my body and carrying out essential decisions for the birth of every project in view of the dissemination of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

It is from the feeling of gratitude that my desire arises to offer

you, who are the source of my inspiration, the joy of my devotional service. It is thanks to Your Grace that I have had the chance to become your devotee and I feel that in virtue of my devotion to you, I am able to connect to Kṛṣṇa, as your servant. I was searching for an understanding of life after death and you showed me eschatology, demonstrating to me through the radiant example of your own life, the right practice in order to achieve this. I feel serenity and trust as I journey on the road that you indicated to me.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

I was searching for a science that would allow me to experience gratifying connections and you showed me the science of *bhakti*, demonstrating to me through the radiant example of your own life, the right practice in order to achieve this.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

I was searching for knowledge that would allow me to live in service of a noble cause, the kind that would ennoble my life, and you showed me the science of devotional service, demonstrating to me through the radiant example of your own life, the right practice in order to achieve this.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

I was searching for love but did not have the faintest idea of what it was, and you showed me the science of speaking with one's heart, of gazing upon each creature with affection and in friendship as with any other fellow being, demonstrating to me through the radiant example of your own life, the right practice in order to achieve every dream of this love.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Even if I still feel imperfect and needy, all the while realizing that rational thinking cannot grasp this seemingly paradoxical statement, thanks to you, I feel I have already found everything.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

With joy in my heart, I thank you for everything that you have offered me and I ask you to continue to correct me, to protect me and to always inspire me more so that I am able to disseminate your teachings through the example of my own practice of *bhakti*. Asking for your compassion and your blessings, with humility and devoted gratitude, please accept my respectful obeisances at your lotus feet

Your servant,

Matsya Avatar Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I have a beautiful photograph of you from a New York Rathayātrā festival. It is in our living room where I can see it when I chant my *japa*. In the picture, your arms are upraised, and you are smiling at a throng of people who are dancing and chanting the Lord's names. They are doing this only because you cared enough to invite them to.

The expression on your face is priceless. You are radiating a kind of deep, blissful satisfaction that is not coming from your personal gratification, but from the transcendental happiness you feel in seeing that someone else is becoming actually happy. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura once said that in material consciousness, one is happy to see others suffering and sad to see others are happy. What an embarrassing consciousness we have been a part of!

Only a saintly person truly has the opposite sentiment. It is not a cheap thing, it is the most unusual thing to witness someone who is genuinely and deeply longing to lift others up – to make them fortunate. And you are offering the highest good fortune...to reconnect with our dearest friend, Lord Kṛṣṇa.

The mission entrusted to you by your gurudeva was not an easy one. Every step of the way was like swimming against the strong current of material energy. But you embraced it for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa and therefore received all His blessings. That *tapasya* is bearing fruit in ever-increasing waves on this planet.

Please let us be enlivened as part of your blissful entourage by always remaining connected to you. Let me act in such a way that I will make you smile that smile.

*With all my gratitude,
Your daughter,*

Gopīmātā Devī Dāsī

Dikpal Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

All glories to Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda. I am missing your presence every second. You were like the sun. Without your presence, I feel always I am in darkness. Please help me to become one of the small insects for your movement. Please forgive me for my offenses.

I remain your fallen servant,

Dikpal Dāsa

Haridāsa Ṭhākura Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus-like feet.

Well, here we are again, another year has passed and we find ourselves searching for suitable words to glorify you on your Vyāsa-pūjā day.

I was recently just thinking about godbrothers and sisters who are departing our visual presence for their final destination. These things are not to be speculated on but all the same I do wonder as to what goes on outside of our worldly vision. Anyway, I only wish to serve you in whatever way pleases you most and that's that, I don't desire for anything else.

A short story:

The other night I was asleep in bed when external noises woke me. I got up to investigate and what I heard was quite horrifying and at the same time instructive. Some young men were outside (I couldn't see but I could hear) and one of them kept repeating 'I want to kill myself', he said this in such a manner that I understood he was experiencing something extremely terrible. My heart really felt for him but what could I do? They were such pitying cries, so full of anguish and torment, and I prayed to Kṛṣṇa to help him. Eventually they went away but I couldn't stop thinking about what I had heard and how this related to the reality of this material world.

What have we got ourselves into? How on earth did we believe

that we could find happiness here? Obviously, spiritual personalities (before we dropped) cannot always get it right, at least as far as being lord over all that we survey is concerned.

So we are here in this hellish material world and somehow or other we received your books. These books illuminated our lives and to varying degrees brought about our Kṛṣṇa conscious perspective that gave us compassion and empathy for all living entities who suffer here life after life.

Anyway, I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to go back to Godhead in this lifetime.

Jīvānanda Dāsa Vanacārī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances.

*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*

As usual, when I attempt to offer praises to your divine glories, I have difficulty knowing where to start. So, I think I will just start at the beginning – when I met you by reading your Bhagavad-gītā.

As I read your Bhagavad-gītā I began to realize that the translated verses were answering every question that had gone unanswered until then and that your purports were further delivering Kṛṣṇa's message in a compassionate and personal manner. I could sense your determination to share Kṛṣṇa's loving attempt to give perfect knowledge to His friend Arjuna by explaining it in such a way that we lowly, fallen, proud, egotistical, rebellious souls could begin to understand it. Thus the seed was planted by Your Divine Grace.

You continued to sow the seeds of spiritual understanding, page after page, and continued producing book after book for us to drink more and more your nectarean words. It was easy to realize that your only purpose was to save us and the world around us. Therefore, I feel a tremendous debt to you as well as the desire to make an attempt to reciprocate your loving compassion in whatever way I can. Knowing up front that I can never repay you for what you

have done for me, I want to devote my life to trying.

I have never witnessed, nor can I imagine, anyone struggling so hard with so much loving compassion and determination to save others as Your Divine Grace. You have set the standard for a saintly person. You have demonstrated how a disciple should serve his spiritual master. You have shown us what love of Godhead looks like. You have given us a taste of true compassion. You have set the example of steadfast determination to perform loving devotional service to Guru and Kṛṣṇa for the world to see and follow.

I beg you to allow me to be of some help to you in your service to guru and Kṛṣṇa. Please keep me engaged in assisting you in whatever manner you might choose. I pray to be of some service to you and your mission. Please empower me to speak your words and convey your mood to the fallen conditioned souls who otherwise have no chance of escaping this ocean of birth and death.

I seek to follow your example as you have demonstrated. I seek to follow in your footsteps. I seek to give to the world what you have given to us. I pray to always remember you and your mission and remain part of it.

Your unworthy servant,
Jīvananda Dāsa Vanacārī

Kośarūpā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer you my gratitude and service on your Vyāsa-pūjā day.

From a very young age I was sincerely praying to God to show me the way to Him. He sent you. Through the simple yet powerful processes you taught us: hearing from you, kīrtan, japa, book distribution, and eating lots of *prasāda*, you lifted us out of this quicksand that surely would have consumed us. Looking back I am amazed how little I understood, and yet, by your potency and desire to save us, how you have transformed us in so many ways, and how devotional service has acted on our hearts.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for rescuing me from the quicksand of material existence.

Most thoughtful people struggle to find their life purpose, often settling for some mediocre intellectualism or dedicating themselves to a cause in the mode of goodness. Or the mode of passion attracts them and they indulge in activities that compromise themselves and their families. Or they are swallowed by intoxication or depression and their life spirals down into severe suffering.

I can't really guess how my life would have played out, Śrīla Prabhupāda, if you hadn't come and rescued me. I see so many people who had noble intentions in the mode of goodness who became attracted by passion or swallowed by ignorance, despite their brilliant minds or religiosity. To break free from the modes of nature and *māyā's* matrix of illusion is not possible on our own.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for revealing my life purpose of pure devotional service, and continuing to give me strength to stay on the path.

This past year as I served alongside my husband in kīrtan festivals, japa retreats and university programs, I was fortunate to experience first-hand how your movement is spreading in many places around the world.

Also for a few years I've worked on a companion book to *The Peaceable Forest*. I'm so happy to finally offer you our new children's book, whose covert mission is to inspire readers to stop eating cows. You told us if the materialists would just stop eating the cow, the whole world will change. I've seen in my lifetime the influence of your books and movement, and I'm hopeful this children's book, website and school tour will make a significant impact too.

I pray this project is pleasing to you Śrīla Prabhupāda, and with your blessings and *shakti*, it has far reaching effects.

Your eternal servant,
Kośarūpā Devī Dāsī

Patita Pavana dāsa Adhikary

THE TORCHLIGHT OF DHARMA PERSONIFIED

Koṭi obeisances at your lotus feet, dear Guru Mahārāja Śrīla Prabhupāda. On the order of your guru mahārāja you have appeared in the world like the sun to change the history of the planet. You

have single-handedly repressed the evils of this Age of Kali through the chanting of the holy names of the Supreme Lord.

In the beginning of the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement you urged your disciples to write essays about ‘How I came to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.’ In this way you began the arduous process of training us up in broadly glorifying Lord Kṛṣṇa and the eternal spiritual master through the printed word. Like a great shark you have chased away the insignificant minnows of impersonalism. And we continue to learn from you how to preach in such a way that the dark, deluding shadows cast by the impersonalists are chased back to their foreboding caves through the brilliant torchlight of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For Your Divine Grace is nothing less than the light of the world—and you have mercifully passed that light on to your followers.

And now, lo and behold, your students have written more books *about* you and *about* your message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness—than the sum total of all the books written *by* all the clueless Māyāvādīs who tried to set up shop in the West during the period of your manifest presence. It is very true that the secret of glorifying Kṛṣṇa is found in the subservient glorification of His pure devotee. It is no wonder that you are the glorious subject of such a body of abiding Vaiṣṇava literature since even today’s ācāryas of the other *sampradāyas* agree that there has never been a spiritual leader so bold, so fearless, so determined, so tolerant, so wise and so intelligent as you in the history of the world. Truly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya has spoken His message through you directly.

Therefore it is not so amazing that the encyclopedic library of books about Your Divine Grace and your sacred teachings continues to grow. The following is but a partial list.

1. *The Hare Krishna Explosion* Hayagriva Dāsa
2. *Śrīla Prabhupāda Lilāmrita* (7 volumes) Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami
3. *ISKCON in the 1970’s* Satsvarupa dāsa Goswami
4. *A Transcendental Diary* (5 volumes) Hari Sauri Dāsa
5. *Memories* (4 volumes) interviews by Siddhānta Dāsa, edited by Vishakha Devī Dāsī
6. *Prabhupāda Stories* (in progress) Govinda Devī Dāsī
7. *By His Example* Gurudāsa
8. *Love Medicine Music* Gurudāsa
9. *Miracle on 2nd Avenue* Mukunda Goswami

10. *Chasing Rhinos with the Swami* Syamasundara Dāsa
11. *What is the Difficulty?* Srutakirti Dāsa
12. *Śrīla Prabhupāda Uvacha* Srutakirti Dāsa
13. *My Memories of Śrīla Prabhupāda* Bhakti Vikas Swami
14. *Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda* Bhakti Vikas Swami
15. *On Preaching Strongly in the Service of Śrīla Prabhupāda* Bhakti Vikas Swami
16. *My Revered Spiritual Master* Gour Govinda Swami
17. *Prabhupāda’s Krishna-Balarama Temple* Compiled by Daivishakti Devī Dāsī
18. *My Glorious Master* Bhurijana Dāsa
19. *Śrīla Prabhupāda is Coming* Mahāmāyā Devī Dāsī
20. *Our Śrīla Prabhupāda: A Friend to All* Mulaprakriti Devī Dāsī
21. *Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Miracle* Vaikuṅṭhanatha Dāsa
22. *The Great Transcendental Adventure* Kurma Dāsa
23. *Śrīla Prabhupāda in South Africa* Riddha Dāsa Adhikary
24. *Destination South Africa* Riddha Dāsa Adhikary
25. *Mission in Service of His Divine Grace* Riddha Dāsa Adhikary
26. *Śrīla Prabhupāda with His Disciples in Germany* Vedvyāsa Dāsa
27. *Blazing Sādhus* Achyutananda Dāsa
28. *TKG Memories* (3 volumes) Tamala Krishna Goswami
29. *Watering the Seed* Giriraja Swami
30. *Swamiji* Satyaraja Dāsa
31. *Mentor Sublime* Satyaraja Dāsa
32. *When the Sun Shines: The Dawn of Hare Krishna in Britain* Ranchor Prime
33. *Captured by Love* Tejjias Dāsa (in progress)
34. *Prabhupāda in Malaysia* Janananda Goswami
35. *Ācārya Sesa dāsa*
36. *Swami in a Strange Land: How Krishna Came to the West* Yogeshwara Dāsa
37. *My Days with Śrīla Prabhupāda* Umapati Swami
38. *His Divine Grace* Danavir Goswami
39. *The Story of Abhaya Charan De Sthita-dhi-muni* Dāsa
40. *Ocean of Mercy* Bhakti Charu Swami
41. *Śrīla Prabhupāda En Venuzuela* Jagat Chaksusa Dāsa
42. *Five Years and Eleven Months* Vishakha Devī Dāsī
43. *Without Fear: Glimpses of Śrīla Prabhupāda* Rupa Vilasa Dāsa
44. *Bombay is My Office* Interviews with disciples, Edited

- by Tattvavit Dāsa
45. *Vrindavana is My Home* Interviews with disciples, Edited by Tattvavit Dāsa
 46. *All of Us Should Hear Śrīla Prabhupāda* Mukuṇḍa Dāsa
 47. *Śrīla Prabhupāda's Challenge* Purnapragya Dāsa
 48. *In Praise of My Preceptor* Krishna Kshetra Dāsa
 49. *A Spiritual Journey* Prapūjaka Dāsa
 50. *Śrīla Prabhupāda Spiritual Fundamentals* Radhika Devī Dāsī
 51. *Prabhupāda at Rādhā-Damodara* Mahānidhi Swami
 52. *Prabhupāda Meditations* Anurādhā Devī Dāsī
 53. *Witness to a Temple: The Hare Krishna Movement in Auckland, New Zealand* Madri Devī Dāsī
 54. *Our Family Business* Vaisheshika dāsa Adhikary
 55. *A Bond of Love* Compiled by Māyāpriya Devī Dāsī
 56. *Journey to the Pacific Rim* Bali Mardana Dāsa
 57. *God is Not Dead* Pusta Krishna Dāsa

Beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, everything that this fallen servant has published is meant to be an offering unto you—because pleasing the spiritual master must be intertwined with every activity of the disciple. Kindly accept these offerings, too.

58. *Shri Pushpanjali* Patita Pavana Dāsa Adhikary
59. *Touring the Land of Krishna* Patita Pavana Dāsa Adhikary
60. *Shri Panchatantra* Patita Pavana Dāsa Adhikary
61. *Shri Chanakya Niti* Patita Pavana Dāsa Adhikary
62. *Motorcycle Yoga* Patita Pavana Dāsa Adhikary
63. *What Is Your Rashi?* Patita Pavana Dāsa Adhikary
64. *This is My Heart* Patita Pavana dāsa (e-book, compiler).

Kindly bless your struggling disciple that his poor head might be always crowned with the dust of your lotus feet. Begging to remain forever, I remain...

Your eternal servant,

Patita Pavana dāsa Adhikary

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

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

All devotees in ISKCON have been blessed by the directions of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura—fashioned by him into Bengali poetic verse—as to how we should receive the teachings of our society's founder-ācārya, Śrīla Prabhupāda. These specific instructions are so enshrined as to receive a special, hallowed attention. Each day in each temple, when all gather in the morning for Śrīla Prabhupāda's *guru-pūjā*, we together sing Śrīla Narottama's song.

In the song's second stanza we sing *guru-mukha-padma-vākya*. This phrase directs our attention to “the words that issue from the lotus mouth of Śrī Guru.” Then: *cittete koriyā aikya*. Here Narottama dāsa directs us to make these teachings one (*aikya*) with our *citta*, with our heart and mind. He then proceeds to sharpen this point: *Ār nā koriho mane āśā*, he says. “Do not allow any other aspiration to reside therein.”

In this way, we are enjoined to cultivate this purity of heart—this clearly defined, unambiguous, single-mindedness of thinking, feeling, and willing. Not only are we so enjoined, but we also commit ourselves to it each day.

So important is this purity for us that we are well advised to make an effort to grasp its forms and its functions. It is, indeed, a veritable state of being—for as this “purity of heart” develops, it opens the doors of our perception, and it pervades all our thinking, our feeling, and our willing.

Another name for it is *vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ*. We find this expression in *Bhagavad-gītā* 2.41. There it is used by Lord Kṛṣṇa to describe the essential characteristic of successful devotees. They possess intelligence (*buddhi*)—an innate sense of direction or guidance—that is not only accurate but also undeviating (*ekeha*) and resolute in nature (*vyavasāyātmikā*).

In his purport to this text, Śrīla Prabhupāda further elucidates *vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ* by quoting *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 22.62:

*'śraddhā'-śabde—viśvāsa kahe sudṛḍha niścaya
kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma kṛta haya*

The text can be rendered thus: “The word śraddhā denotes a very firm and confident conviction that just by executing *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* one will achieve the purposes of all other obligatory or desirable actions.” For this reason we can certainly be confident in following Narottama dāsa’s injunction *ār nā koriho mane āśā*. If we are simple, single-minded, and undeviating in following the directions of Śrīla Prabhupāda, all other worthwhile results will be attained.

The proof of this is found in Śrīla Prabhupāda himself. He tells that he was given the order, in both his first and his final communication with his spiritual master, to “push on this movement in the English language;” it meant “propagate Lord Caitanya’s movement outside of India.” During Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura’s lifetime his institution had invested huge resources of men, money, and time to send off preachers—equipped with a sophisticated, scholarly English-language book called *Sree Krishna-Chaitanya*—to England and Germany in the 1930s, with orders to build a temple in London. However, in the event, it did not accomplish much. And soon after Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura left his body, his powerful institution fragmented.

But our Śrīla Prabhupāda had also received the order, the *guru-vākya*, and he carried it out—virtually alone—without consideration of success or failure, and even of life or death. He, therefore, is all the proof we need. He took Lord Caitanya’s movement and established it on all continents, but he himself left orders, wanting it to go much, much further.

And so he left us with a mission that is breathtaking in its challenges, as was the mission his own spiritual master had given him.

The world needs desperately what we who have received this mission have to offer it—spiritually, intellectually, economically, ecologically, socially, politically. . . . In each and every one of these areas we need to demonstrate to the world that we have the answers it requires. The directions for all of these are in our care, given us by Śrīla Prabhupāda.

We have all seen what one person has done, and that person has openly shared all his secrets with us. He has held back nothing.

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura therefore sings:

*guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete kariyā aikya,
āra nā kariha mane āśā*

*Begging for the blessings of the Vaiṣṇavas to help me become a true servant
of Śrīla Prabhupāda,*

Ravindra Svarūpa dāsa

Vīṭhaleśvara Dāsa

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

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa on this earth, having taken shelter of that transcendental Lord. Our obeisances are unto you, o servant of Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, who kindly preach the message of Śrī Caitanya Deva, and who are delivering the western countries, “as well as the entire universe” which are full of impersonalism and voidism.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We know that this *pranam mantra* is Your Divine Grace’s own composition. I humbly submit that recently I added an extra line, “as well as the entire universe”. By no means do I dare think that I can improve over you. Then what is the reason? I was talking with a disciple of one of your disciples who expressed a twisted notion of Your Divine Grace. He said that India already had so many gurus and that’s why your guru mahārāja told you that you’re not needed here; that if you want to do something, then just go over there, meaning the West. It made me wonder just how far this kind of thinking extends. So for this reason *only* I add the words “as well as the entire universe”. Unfortunately, under the circumstances I felt the need to, even though the *praṇām mantra* is obviously perfect and complete, at least to reasonably un-bewildered devotees. So, though my adding can be seen as irregular practice, my motivation was to try and help curtail such thinking that may arise in your ISKCON society. So enough of that kind of thing.

The pangs of separation from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are acutely felt by all your disciples, in as much as you've captured our hearts forevermore. It is a kind of hopelessness that we never want to lose. Only in such a state as this do we have any real hope at all. This is love in separation which intensifies our strong connection with you. You live on unobstructed via your *vāṇī* and permeate our very being. And we wouldn't want it any other way... that's a fact! Who, but you, the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead, is empowered to affect so many, so profoundly and ongoing? Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! You are our savior, our everything! Even so, *māyā* gets the best of us, all too often. We desire that your ISKCON be pushed on according to your personal direction only. As the *Bhāgavatam* in the beginning "kicks out" all materially motivated religion, *kaitava dharma*, in the same way all speculation and concoction must be understood for what it actually is and likewise, kicked out strongly. As you sometimes said, "kick on face with boot!"

Devotee: Why is *Māyā* so strong if Kṛṣṇa wants us to come back to Him?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Why is your determination so weak?

There needs to be a constant reminder among us to be always pushing on with full strength. The weakling persona must go. By gathering enthusiasm from your writings and spoken words, without cessation, all is possible; otherwise not. So we really have to decide once and for all...no more flickering back and forth! You sometimes have referred to bhakti yoga as sannyasa yoga, meaning that everything is for Kṛṣṇa regardless of one's present *asrama* status. Body, mind, words, and our very self in complete dedication. Whatever our external situation, it doesn't matter. Only thing is to strive in the right direction, ideally uninterrupted. You are the one pulling these words and praises out of me. They are not pretentious on my part, but rather as real as real can get. All credit is yours alone.

Praying that one day, I can live up to what is expected of an ideal disciple of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.

Yours in devotional service everlastingly,

Viththalesvara Dāsa

P.S. As the Lord states, "Whatever they have, I will preserve. And whatever they lack, I will carry." It will take our *bhakti*, our sincerity.

You carry Kṛṣṇa's divine grace, and, therefore, it is most fitting and proper that you also be addressed as such, His Divine Grace!

Hare Kṛṣṇa!

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