

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA TRIBUTES

17 AUG 2025 Celebrating the
appearance day of our
beloved spiritual master

ŚRĪLA
PRABHUPĀDA
TRIBUTES

“ Every one of us, those who have come to this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, [are] expected to preach in the future and to become a spiritual master also in the future. But first of all you must spiritualize yourself; otherwise it is useless. ”

Śrīla Prabhupāda lecture, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.1.1
10th April 1969—New York, USA



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17 AUG
2025

OM VIṢṆUPĀDA
PARAMAHANSA
PARIVRĀJAKĀCĀRYA
AṢṬOTTARA-ŚATA

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD
A. C.
BHAKTIVEDANTA
SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

FOUNDER-ĀCĀRYA OF
THE INTERNATIONAL
SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA
CONSCIOUSNESS

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your servant,

Pradyumna Dāsa
Production Manager

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- Our main donor from the UK, who wishes to remain anonymous and offers this service in loving memory of H.H. Bhakti Caru Maharaja
- We also have an anonymous sponsor from Africa
- Bhaktivedanta Manor, London, UK
- ISKCON London, UK

The Tributes Team

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

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

TRIBUTES
BY
SANNYASI
DISCIPLES

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

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

Reciprocation

On 13 December 1973, at the Los Angeles temple, on Srila Bhaktisiddhānta's disappearance day, you ended your lecture by saying that you were "horrified" by dreaming several times that Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja was calling you to take *sannyāsa*. At that time, all of the devotees present in the temple room saw tears streaming from your eyes as your voice choked to gravel and you said, "You are helping me." Then there was a short pause. You were displaying some transcendental emotions as these tears of gratitude seemed to take over. The devotees there had never heard or seen anything quite like this – ever. Previously, you had exhibited intense anger when speaking with impersonalists sometimes masquerading as devotional individuals. However, these emotional displays of gratitude were witnessed only by a privileged few. Your moods seemed to alternate between kindness and friendliness to stern disagreement, depending on who you were speaking with – the age, gender, nationality, and philosophical conviction of the person before you.

One could say that time, place, and circumstance/audience were the determining factors of the mood you adopted on specific occasions.

In the book *The Nectar of Devotion* Kṛṣṇa talks about his indebtedness to Draupadī for calling out to him, "*He Govinda.*" This indirectly indicates that Kṛṣṇa is obliged to appreciate such surrender and points out of the psychological need for all people to feel valued. Śrīla Prabhupāda went so far as to indicate that ISKCON leaders should discuss their differences threadbare, until they would reach a deeper understanding. He told us that the movement's leaders should discuss the principle of *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva* (inconceivable simultaneous oneness and difference) each year in Māyāpur. Mutual appreciation was an essential keynote of

this instruction.

Without this reciprocation, life can be humdrum and outright depressing. Some have even left the frontline preaching of ISKCON or even ISKCON entirely because they were either undervalued or not valued at all.

A person who is mindful of his friend's beneficial actions is grateful. In the *Mahābhārata*, Kṛṣṇa says, "When I was away from Draupadī, she cried with the words, 'He Govinda!' This call for Me has put Me in her debt, and that indebtedness is gradually increasing in My heart."

Although you were often stern, uncompromising, and seemingly cruel and rigid, your kindness and indebtedness were always there – as is the nature of any true *sādhu*. So, you were in a sense the master of reciprocation.

Your servant,

Mukunda Goswami

Umapati Swami

Because Kṛṣṇa Says So

Nighttime. 9:00 PM. Looking at a picture of Śrīla Prabhupāda in England while I run my beads through my fingers and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Didn't Prabhupāda once say that when you chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa Mantra, Kṛṣṇa dances on your tongue?

But I'm feeling light headed. I call my disciple Pandu Das, and he comes to check my blood sugar.

"It's too low," he says. "Only 63 on the meter. Better eat some sugar, I'll get some for you."

"No need," I say. "I'll get it."

"You must be feeling weak," says Pandu. "I'll help you get to the bed." He holds out his hands, arms outstretched.

"No," I say. "I want to sit here."

I scratch my head. Only 63 on the meter? That's dangerously low for blood sugar, worse than too high. My body will shut down like a machine in low-power mode, starting with the brain. I might even forget where I am. It's happened before.

But I don't want to shut down. Today was Śrīla Prabhupāda's

Appearance Day. I want to chant some more. Some friends were here, but they've gone home. Pandu is busy now in the next room. I'm in my bedroom, just me and my beads and the picture of Prabhupāda.

Too bad Prabhupāda's Appearance Day only comes once a year. I wish it would come every day.

I saunter over to the closet and pull out a bag of orange-flavored candy. Just the right thing for low blood sugar. And sugar does taste like nectar when you truly need it.

Waiting for my brain to plug in again. Might as well spend a few minutes keeping busy. I suddenly remember my computer. Then I remember the time Prabhupāda told Hayagriva not to push the typewriter with his leg.

"It is a holy thing," Prabhupāda told him.

Who ever would have thought that a typewriter became a holy thing when it was used for serving Kṛṣṇa? Only someone like Prabhupāda could have that vision.

Then why not my computer? So I log on to the internet. That doesn't require any brain power. I see the usual horror stories about murders and disasters and politicians. But I don't want to read this. It's Prabhupāda's Appearance Day.

Then I see a question from an atheist: If God really walks and breathes, why doesn't he reveal himself? Then everyone would see him and bow to him and follow him. And because God doesn't, that proves there is no God. Right?

Wrong. But it's an interesting question. How to answer? O.K. I know. Prabhupāda told me.

My dear atheist, Yes, God reveals himself, but still, you can't see him because your eyes are covered. Even if God stands in front of you, you won't see him as he is. You need Prabhupāda.

I reach for Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. What's that verse again? Oh here it is— 7.25:

I am never manifest to the foolish and unintelligent. For them I am covered by My eternal creative potency, yogamāyā, and so the deluded world knows Me not, who am unborn and infallible.

Still not convinced? Neither was I till we studied chapter 6, verse 47:

And of all yogīs, the one with great faith who always abides in Me, thinks of Me within himself, and renders transcendental loving service to Me—he is the most intimately united with Me in yoga and is the highest of all. That is My opinion.

"You see?" said Prabhupāda. "It says in *Bhagavad-gītā* that the

devotee of Kṛṣṇa is the highest yogī.”

And then I understood that Prabhupāda was leading us on the right path.

Thank you, Prabhupāda. I never would have known that on my own.

Yes, my atheist friend, where will you find the X-ray vision to see through the curtain of *yogamāyā*? I’m only telling you what Kṛṣṇa says:

Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth.

[Bg. 4.34]

All right, but many people call themselves spiritual master. How can I know whose voice to point my ear to? whose feet to clasp and to press on my forehead?

Again, Kṛṣṇa gives us the answer, and right in the next verse. Just reach over and turn the page:

Having obtained real knowledge from a self-realized soul, you will never fall again into such illusion, for by this knowledge you will see that all living beings are but part of the Supreme, or, in other words, that they are Mine.

This verse is a compass needle pointing to Prabhupāda. Yes. The real spiritual master will show you that you belong to Kṛṣṇa. And this sure sounds like my Prabhupāda.

But, you ask, Why only Prabhupāda? Other masters in our line also teach about Kṛṣṇa.

Yes my friend, but only one master sailed across the ocean in his old age just to deliver me. And I’m sticking with that one.

From the next room comes the *ring-a-ling* of a handbell. Then the fragrance of sandalwood drifts through my doorway. Pandu is offering incense to Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā before putting them to bed.

What? Putting God to bed? Does that thought make you sit up and open your eyes, my dear atheist? You ask about seeing God, but have you ever thought of putting God to bed at night and waking him in the morning?

Did you even know you could? Only possible if you know that God is really Kṛṣṇa. And you need to hear from Prabhupāda for that.

You won't find this out on your own.

I had heard of Kṛṣṇa before I met Prabhupāda. I poured over book after book, pamphlet after pamphlet, even a translation of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Yes, Kṛṣṇa was right in front of me, but I needed Prabhupāda to give me the X-ray vision to see that Kṛṣṇa owns me, that he holds the other end of my leash.

And Prabhupāda is my trainer. He gives me the commands.

Uh oh. I'm feeling weak. I need more sugar. I grab my cane and start shuffling toward the closet, one careful step at a time. A half-second of distraction and my cane and I will go crashing onto the fake-wood linoleum. It wouldn't be the first time.

Somehow I make it to the closet and back to my chair. Yum yum. More orange nectar. But now let me put the atheist aside and ask a question of my own:

"If my brain is running low on fuel, how is it that I remember verses? How did I manage to analyze the atheist's question?"

I lean back. I rub my eyes. I scratch my dizzy head. I can answer everyone else's questions. Can I answer my own?

Wait. I do know the answer: It's because Prabhupāda is always with me. Blood sugar too low, too high? Heartbeat too fast, too slow? Never mind. Prabhupāda stays with me, his hand in his beadbag.

And if Prabhupāda stays with me, then so does Kṛṣṇa because it is Prabhupāda's eternal mercy that links Kṛṣṇa and me together. The problem is with me. I keep glancing over at *Māyā*, hoping to find the little thrill that she cannot give me.

But when I look straight ahead again, Prabhupāda is still there, now playing his harmonium and singing.

And I think of Second Avenue and my meetings with Prabhupāda over the years, the times he joked with me, the times he advised me, the times he scolded me—memories still as sweet as the lingering taste of the candy I just ate, still as comforting as the feel of my beads passing through my fingers.

Every year on this day, I ask Śrīla Prabhupāda for something. Today will be no exception. Prabhupāda appreciates handwritten letters, so I pick up a sheet of paper and a ball-point pen. First I scribble something on the back of my left hand to make sure the ink is flowing. Then I start to write:

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humblest obeisances. All glories to you.

It's me again, writing to beg from you.

May I ask you to give me steadiness? I owe you everything, and I want to be steadfastly loyal to you just as you are loyal to me though you owe me nothing.

In the same breath, I ask you to grant me the willpower to look the other way when Māyā smiles and beckons to me. Please give me the willpower to fix my gaze on the toes of your lotus feet without wavering, like a flame in a windless place.

Your most humble servant,

I sign the letter, fold it, and put it in an envelope. I reach for a stamp, then stop. Where will I send it to? There's no airmail service from here to Goloka. The local post office doesn't have any swans.

But somehow I feel sure Prabhupāda can read it.

I lean back, take a deep breath. I feel normal now. I'd better go to bed.

But first...

I take up my cane and hobble into the next room, up to the altar. It's closed now. The room is dark.

"Good night, my merciful Prabhupāda," I whisper. "Have a nice rest. I'll see you in the morning."

Then I slowly hobble back to my room.

From Prabhupāda's lowly servant,

Umapati Swami

Vyāsa-Pūjā 2025

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Initiation: 1966, September—New York, USA

Current location: New York, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. You are the dearest person in my life. You are the representative of Kṛṣṇa, and you have saved me from great calamity. Before I met you, I was a lost soul. But you came to me and pulled me out of the well of material suffering. You turned me into a respectable person. Before I met you, I had many sinful habits, like the four sinful activities—illicit sex, meat eating, intoxication and gambling. I was a lost cause. But the first night I attended your class in the storefront on Second Avenue, I tasted bliss, and I felt I had been saved. Chanting in *kīrtana* with you brought me ecstasy. I was able to give up all my sinful activities in one night, and from then on, I have always tried to be a faithful servitor to you. I became your servant. I became your disciple after one night. Just by meeting you and joining you in *kīrtana* and listening to your lecture (although I couldn't understand your accent so well), I became sworn to serve you always.

I have sworn my life to you. I beg you to please always protect me and never kick me away. I always want to be true and faithful to you.

Offering obeisances to you in your presence is a great thrill. One imbibes your holy spirit by being close to you and bowing down with full hands and feet. To be near you and bow down with hands and feet brings one the great pleasure of being a worshipper of the greatest spiritual master. You convey your full blessings to one who sincerely bows down to you and offers you love from the heart. For the devotees who truly surrender to you, you reciprocate with them and bless them, accepting their worship when offered in all sincerity. It is truly bliss to worship you and pledge to surrender to you with one's life.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I want to be a surrendered soul. Please forgive this fallen soul who only wants to take shelter at your lotus feet and to never commit any wrong acts again. You are my only savior, and I take shelter in you.

Begging to remain your surrendered disciple,

Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

Initiation: 1966, September—New York, USA

Current location: New York, USA

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

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

So many things here in New York remind us of Śrīla Prabhupāda: 26 Second Avenue, Tompkins Square Park, the Bowery, 72nd Street, Henry Street, and many other places where Śrīla Prabhupāda stayed, visited, or preached.

We’re reminded of the first devotees he made here. The first Hare Krishna recording. His early classes and *kīrtanas*. His cooking.

I’m reminded of how I first met him in 1968, when he returned to New York from India after I had joined the temple. How he was kind to me, a bewildered young boy who somehow came to the right place.

I’m reminded, inevitably, of how satisfied he was with our “skyscraper” temple on 55th Street - and how we lost it and wound up in a depressed area in Brooklyn. Now, by Krishna’s grace, that area has become a premium location for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And the temple is now strong and growing.

By way of a report: Under the leadership of Hamsarupa Prabhu as temple president, the temple is now full of enthusiastic devotees. It has become the headquarters for the daily New York *harināma* party, led by Rama Raya Prabhu. Under the distant but attentive guidance of Radhe Syama Prabhu from Pune, we have a strong program for young Indian students who reside in the temple and serve. And by the inspiration and initial direction of Kadamba Kanana Swami, we have steady programs for teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness here to Westerners - and those programs, from a modest start, are steadily growing. Also by the inspiration of Kadamba Kanana Swami, space one flight up that was wasted on storage rooms has been transformed into an airy space for programs, and ground-floor street-side space that was wasted on a massive shoe room is being transformed into a cafe, to be opened before this book is published.

And we have a whole building next door, waiting to be renovated and fully deployed. Its basement, once closed, now provides a big hall for honoring Krishna *prasādam*. The ground floor, damaged over the

years by water from a leaky roof, still goes unused, but with money - maybe something less than a million dollars - it can become an excellent venue for classes, public programs, private functions, and more. (The money is still to come, but we're confident that it will.)

There's more we want to do here to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But I'll leave that report for another time.

For some years I have been traveling about in various parts of the world. Since the core of my service has been writing and teaching, I arranged my schedule so that I've mostly been in warmer weather. But this year while in Māyāpur during Kārttika the thought came to me, "Why are you wasting your time following the weather? You should focus on New York and try to contribute something." Śrīla Prabhupāda, I think that thought came by your inspiration (or should I say your prodding?). These days, in my old age, I don't accomplish much. But devotees often say, "Oh, Mahārāja, just your *presence* is enlivening." So, all right: If my supposedly divine presence is of any use, let me invest it in New York.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you invested your energy here, in this city arguably the most important in America. So let us try to do something here to push forward your mission, the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Whatever those of us here may be able to accomplish will be only by your blessings. It is Your Divine Grace who are spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness here, and we are acting only as your assistants. When we follow your instructions and example, we are confident: By your desire and by the transcendental power of your instructions, wonderful things can happen.

One time while sitting on the roof of the 55th Street building you gestured in one direction and said we should have a temple there. Then you looked toward another direction—and a temple *there*. And then you said, "East side, west side, all around the town." Why not? Your desire is powerful, and by your desire the name and mission of Lord Gaurāṅga can spread here in every direction. Surely this will come to pass, and we pray to become servants of your desire.

Jayādvaita Swami

Initiation: 1968, March—New York, USA

My dear spiritual father,
Please accept my obeisances.

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given me many orders. While some of them have been completed, I am trying to carry out the remaining ones. This Vyāsa-pūjā homage is like my annual report to Your Divine Grace. Without your mercy, I cannot do anything. I am severely physically handicapped, but I am still trying to do the best I can with the help of many of my disciples and others.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had a profound desire to honor Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura by developing his birthplace in Birnagar into a significant center for spiritual education and pilgrimage. You also instructed me to do something for Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s birthplace. Your vision for this project included a display of his life history, his writings, an educational center, parks, gardens, guesthouses, and an *āśrama*. You visited his birthplace two or three times, and I accompanied you when you requested the brother of your spiritual master, Śrīla Lalitā Prasāda Ṭhākura, to grant permission for us to render this service. Unfortunately, he passed away without granting permission. Once you told him: “Here is an important place to be developed for Kṛṣṇa. You can’t do it, and then, when someone can do it, you won’t allow him. Isn’t that sinful?” You also told us that it was not an offense because you put it as a question.

Even after fifty-two years, the current Bhaktivinoda Goṣṭhī (managing committee of the Birnagar Dvādaśa Temple) is not giving permission. They say we can develop the place and perform *pūjā*, but they won’t give us anything in writing. So to move forward with your instruction, we thought we needed a center. For that reason, we acquired land that was owned by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s maternal grandfather, located just 300 meters from the current temple, to develop a magnificent temple broadcasting Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s life and other facilities, as envisioned by Your Divine Grace. The cornerstone was installed on April 13, 2025. Simultaneously,

our Birnagar committee will continue efforts to negotiate with the present management of the Birnagar Dvādaśa Temple to secure the right of worship of the existing birthplace temple.

ISKCON also acquired the birthplace of Advaita Ācārya, Gadādhara Paṇḍita, and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura in Bangladesh.

Your Divine Grace has predicted that there would be 50,000 devotees in Māyāpur, half of whom would be residents and the other half guests. We now have around 7,500 residents, so we still have a long way to go to satisfy your vision. There were not so many people coming to Māyāpur when you were here. At present, however, there are at least 30,000 visitors on regular days. On Gaur-Pūrṇimā day we had 231,000 visitors, and throughout the entire Gaura-Pūrṇimā festival (from the flag-raising ceremony to the flag-lowering ceremony), we had a total of 15 lakhs of visitors. So your prediction that Māyāpur would grow is now happening. We are assisted by the other codirectors – Hṛdaya Caitanya Dāsa, Vraja Vilāsa Dāsa, Subheksaṇa Dāsa, and Dayārāma Dāsa.

By your mercy, from the West Bengal government, which is now run by TMC and Śrīmatī Mamata Banerjee, we received a vote from the cabinet allowing us a land ceiling of 750 acres. It was your desire to have a bigger land ceiling, and you were trying for it. Now, through the hard work of Dayārāma Dāsa and Akṣaya Rāmacandra Dāsa, this has been done. The Temple of the Vedic Planetarium (TOVP) is nearing completion. We are planning to finish it by 2027. As per your instruction, I am overseeing the exhibitions of the TOVP, which at present is called “The Science Museum of the Vedic Planetarium.” We want to show that the *Vedas* are good science, but to ensure that our presentation is scientific and accepted by scientists, we are working with the Bhaktivedanta Institute. His Grace Ambarīṣa Prabhu and Her Grace Svāhā Devī have contributed significantly, and now Vraja Vilāsa Dāsa is going around the world, visiting different places to get donations to fulfill your desire.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda desired to install the lotus footprints of Lord Caitanya at the places the Lord visited. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda established eight or so, but he wanted to have 108. So, on your behalf, we are trying to install the lotus footprints of Lord Caitanya in the places He visited. So far, we have installed 59 *pāda-pīṭhas*, and we are in the process of reaching more than 108.

Last year, with the help of the late His Holiness Gopal Krishna

Goswami, His Holiness Giriraj Swami, His Holiness Radhanath Swami, and the assistance of ten other *sannyāsīs*, along with senior devotees, we installed lotus footprints in locations near Mumbai and in twenty-four places in Vraja where Lord Caitanya visited. This year, we installed twenty-four lotus footprints in different parts of South India, assisted by safari devotees. My disciple Balarāma Govinda Dāsa has made major contributions for the lotus footprints and the small temples where they will be installed. During the last Śāntipura festival, we installed the lotus footprints of Lord Caitanya, Nityānanda Prabhu, and Advaita Ācārya Prabhu at Śāntipura.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, under the Bhaktivedanta Swami Charity Trust, one of my disciples, Rāmanipati Dāsa, has been appointed as a new trustee. He is working on multiple projects for the repair/renovation of *śrīpāṭs* (holy places associated with great devotees) in various places around Gauḍa-maṇḍala-bhūmi. He has gotten many temples, congregations, and individuals to sponsor *śrīpāṭs*. Previously, we were working on your 10-lakh fixed deposit, and every year we got the interest. With that we have tried to develop many places, but were not very successful. Therefore, Rāmanipati Dāsa got sponsors for different *śrīpāṭs*, and since then, we have made great progress.

We successfully registered a trust called Sārasvata Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Association (SGVA). Most of the Gauḍīya Maṭhas have joined this institution, and we celebrate together the appearance day of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. We are also aiming to collectively honor their disappearance days. After we do our own celebration in the morning, we gather at one Maṭha or another to celebrate the particular event. In this way, we are trying to unify the disciples and followers of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, as per your wish.

I am encouraging devotees to read your books and take different śāstric courses, as you desired. You said, "I will never die. I will live forever in my books, and you can take advantage." People do not read your books, and you instructed that people who want second initiation should have *bhakti-śāstrī*. I have implemented this requirement so that everybody reads your books. I was honored to receive my *bhakti-śāstrī* degree personally from your hand, and I have since completed *bhakti-vaibhava* and *bhakti-vedānta*. I want to be a good example for all the devotees so they will study your books.

Now, I am taking my *bhakti-sārvabhauma*. Every night before going to bed, I read your books. I have completed the reading of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* many times, but every time I read, I get new realizations, and I feel very blissful.

Your Divine Grace gave me the instruction to distribute 10,000 big books and 100,000 small books every month. I am trying to fulfill this instruction of yours with the help of my disciples. I have set up a virtual book table, through which I distribute books all over the world. ISKCON Śrī Māyāpur presented me with an award as the top distributor. Additionally, the Māyāpur *Saṅkīrtana* Department and Māyāpur internal divisions received the top position in the world this year in book distribution.

Also, I am writing a few books, including my memories of Your Divine Grace, entitled *Better to be in Kṛṣṇa's Army*, which will be printed by the Indian BBT. Additionally, I completed the Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya book, which is like the Kṛṣṇa book and combines not only *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* but also *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala*, and eight other books by different associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The book is presented in chronological order, and the editors are now working on it. While in Māyāpur I regularly give classes on Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta* nearly every day.

His Grace Janmāṣṭamī Dāsa has started organizing Śrīla Prabhupāda Connect Day in Māyāpur to help devotees develop deep, loving relationships with Your Divine Grace and establish you in their hearts as their foundational *śikṣā-guru* through a series of lectures given by your disciples and senior devotees. The program is conducted in English and Bengali, with simultaneous translations in other languages, and is also broadcast live on Māyāpur TV, enabling devotees worldwide to attend.

In an April 6, 1975 lecture, given in Māyāpur, Your Divine Grace said: "We want to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Simply prepare yourself how to repeat Kṛṣṇa's instructions very nicely, without any malinterpretation. Then, in the future... Suppose you have got now ten thousand. We shall expand to a hundred thousand. That is required. Then a hundred thousand to a million, and a million to ten million. So there will be no scarcity of *ācārya*, and people will understand Kṛṣṇa consciousness very easily."

Now, about a hundred of your disciples and around fifty of your granddisciples have become *dīkṣā-gurus*. Clearly, your vision extends

far beyond this. At the moment, we are failing to fulfill your desire, as we are only having less than two hundred gurus. Devotees need to have a paradigm shift to align with your vision.

I am not able to travel as much as before, so when I cannot physically visit my zones, I connect online. And despite my health limitations, I attend almost all the meetings as part of my managerial responsibilities, including GBC meetings, GBC Executive Property Oversight Committee (GEPOC), Organizational Development Committee (OrgDev), Māyāpur Executive Board (MEB), Māyāpur Codirectors, Māyāpur Master Plan, Indian Bureau, ISKCON Bharat Advisory Council (IBAC), East India Divisional Council (EIDC), South India Divisional Council (SIDC), Science Museum of Vedic Planetarium Executive Committee (SMOVP), Latin American Regional Governing Body (LA RGB), Bhaktivedanta Swami Charity Trust (BSCT), Sārasvata Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Association (SGVA), Māyāpur Vṛndāvana Trust (MVT), Usha Rani Trust (Chatra Temple), World Hindu Federation (WHF), and my zone-related meetings.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I would like to inform you that the World Hindu Federation recognized my efforts to serve *sanātana-dharma* by offering me the Hindu Ratna Award on January 3, 2025, in New Delhi. I have also been conferred the opportunity to serve in the capacity of one of its vice presidents.

Despite my health challenges, I am trying to maintain my daily *sādhana*. In 2024, I chanted 9,127 rounds and read Your Divine Grace's books for a total of 115 hours and 25 minutes. Additionally, during festivals, I listen to classes delivered by your disciples and other devotees. I will continue to improve my *sādhana* this year.

Since your Vyāsa-pūjā last year and earlier, from March 2024, I have been continuing with dialysis three days a week. In the dialysis room I have a TV screen, so I attend some meetings while undergoing dialysis. I feel very grateful that I am still able to do some service, and I have requested my disciples to help me in carrying out your orders. Pañca-tattva, Rādhā-Mādhava Māyāpur Candra, Rādhā-Mādhava Aṣṭa-sakhīs, and Bhakta Prahlāda Nṛsimhadeva are in my constant remembrance. I am thinking how it would be nice if I could fulfill all your instructions.

I realize that you picked me up from the grasp of *māyā* and that I was not practicing any part of Vedic culture before you delivered me. Now I am trying to recognize how I am simply dependent on your mercy.

Your servant,
Jayapatāka Swami

Prahlādānanda Swami

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

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

Why is Śrīla Prabhupāda, the founder of ISKCON, our *ācārya*?

The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* states that Advaita Ācārya is an *ācārya* because he propagated the *saṅkīrtana* movement. The phrase used is *bhakti-śāsanāt* (Ādi 1.13), meaning that he is recognised as an *ācārya* because of his effectiveness in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Prahlāda Mahārāja states that one must accept an *ācārya* and follow his example and instructions in order to attain perfection (*Bhāgavatam* 7.5.32). Indeed, the *Mahābhārata* affirms that everyone must choose a leader and follow him (*mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ, Vana-parva* 313.117). If one follows a material leader who is influenced by the modes of material nature, one will reach that leader's destination. Conversely, by choosing a spiritual leader, one can attain the same spiritual goal. Śrīla Prabhupāda once said that if you want to find Nārada Muni, follow his footprints, because they will lead you to him.

Prahlāda Mahārāja also tells us that one of the qualities of an *ācārya* is that he is fully engaged in Lord Kṛṣṇa's transcendental loving service. The highest service, as Lord Kṛṣṇa affirms at the end of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, is spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness (*Gītā* 18.69–70). Lord Caitanya confirmed this by telling His followers:

Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they are given in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land. (*Madhya* 7.128)

According to Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has given practical hints that an *uttama-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava and an *ācārya* can be recognized by their ability to convert many fallen souls to

Vaiṣṇavism. (*Nectar of Instruction*, verse 5)

Because of the extraordinary way Śrīla Prabhupāda’s has established the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in this world, he should be accepted as an *uttama-adhikārī*, *mahā-bhāgavata* Vaiṣṇava, and a great *ācārya*. The movement he founded, ISKCON, is dedicated to pure devotional service and spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s unwavering adherence to the example and instructions of his *ācārya*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Ṭhākura, made him perfect, and by following Śrīla Prabhupāda’s example and instructions, we too can attain perfection in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Your servant,

Prahlādānanda Swami

Initiation: 1969, February—Buffalo, New York, USA

Current location: Ljubljana, Slovenia

Trivikrama Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Thank you for being aware of me and taking the trouble to guide me. You once wrote to me, “A Vaisnava is never alone, just like I was apparently alone for one year when I first came to your country, but I was never alone, as I was always feeling the presence of my Spiritual Master.”

In your last days in Vṛndāvana, you gave us three important instructions: (1) Keep the *ācārya* [meaning you] in the center; (2) Cooperate together for pushing on this movement; (3) Strictly follow [the regulative principles].

Seems simple enough, but this is Māyā’s kingdom. Please help me to withstand her onslaught. Without your help, I will not be able to remain Kṛṣṇa conscious. That is a fact! Please therefore continue to cast your loving glance in my direction so that in my old age, I don’t do something foolish.

*Aspiring to remain securely at your lotus feet,
Yours sincerely, with awe and reverence and a little love,*

Giriraj Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

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

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

I felt thrilled and honored. You had never before given me a direct instruction. In fact, we had hardly ever spoken, and now you were inviting me to stay with you so you could guide me in writing.

Over the years, you repeated your instruction for me to write. In a letter to me dated August 12, 1971, you wrote, “In the midst of your heavy duties, go on writing something glorifying the Lord and put our philosophy into words. Writing articles means to express oneself how he is understanding the whole philosophy. So this writing is necessary for everyone.”

In 1973 I sent you my *Vyāsa-pūjā* offering, and on August 23, from Bhaktivedanta Manor, you sent me an encouraging note: “I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter and the nice *Vyāsa-pūjā* offering

you sent. I have sent it to Satsvarupa Goswami for printing in the BTG. Writing is a very important part of our work, and Satsvarupa is always anxious to have new material from the devotees for expanding the BTG. You have a nice talent for writing, and practice makes perfect, so continue. It will be appreciated.”

In recent years I have edited *Life's Final Exam: Death and Dying from the Vedic Perspective* and written *Watering the Seed—With Teachings from His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda; Many Moons: Reflections on Departed Vaishnavas; I'll Build You a Temple: The Juhu Story; and Dancing White Elephants: Traveling with Śrīla Prabhupāda in India, August 1970–March 1972*. This year I submitted two articles to BTG, which have been accepted for publication, and I am in the last stages of completing my latest book, about meeting you and the devotees in Boston, April 1969–October 1970.

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

I am assisted in my work by a team of expert editors, headed by Kalachandji dasa, and I request you to kindly bless them too.

Thank you very much. Hare Krishna.

Your eternal, grateful servant,

Giriraj Swami

Initiation: 1969, July—Boston, USA

Current location: Carpinteria, California, USA

Hridayananda dasa Goswami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhūtale
śrīmatī bhaktivedānta swāmin iti nāmine*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

As you were leaving this world, you said, “Try to expand our mission. If you cannot expand it, at least maintain it”. Sadly, we were not able to do that, and today your Western mission is quite small compared to what it was under your direct leadership. Thus, it is the duty of your faithful followers to join together in a determined effort to expand your Western followers. You often emphasized that if leading Western countries accepted Krishna consciousness, the world would follow. This was your global strategy to establish Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement as the yuga-dharma for the whole world. I pray that Lord Krishna empower us to carry out your clearly stated desire for this planet. You gave your life to achieve this most noble goal, and we should give our lives in the same spirit. This will show that we actually understand the yuga-dharma, and the Founder-*Ācārya* of ISKCON.

Your servant,

Hridayananda dasa Goswami

Initiation: 1970, February—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Florida, USA

Danavir Goswami

Dearest spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On September 1, 1896 in Calcutta a child named Abhay Charan was born. An astrologer predicted:

When this child reaches the age of seventy,
he will cross the ocean,
become a great exponent of religion,
and open 108 temples.

From the time in 1922 when your Guru Mahārāja, His Divine

Grace Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahaṁsa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara Śata Śrī Śrīmān Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, requested you to spread Krishna Consciousness through the English language, you became completely convinced and never wasted a moment. You demonstrated that a gr̥hastha can also perform great service for the Saṅkīrtan movement.

In July 1935, when Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī visited the Bombay branch of the Gauḍīya Math, some of the leading disciples recommended Abhay Caranaravinda dasa to become the president of the Bombay branch. Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī cryptically replied: “He will do. When the time comes, he will do everything himself. You don’t have to recommend him.” As a perfect disciple, you executed all of your spiritual master’s orders and beyond.

On this most auspicious day marking the anniversary of your divine appearance on earth, I humbly pray that a tiny particle of your unlimited causeless mercy drown me eternally in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Krishna, under your blissful direction.

Your unworthy servant,

Danavir Goswami

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

Śacīnandana Swami

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*

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you.

As the years go by, we can’t help but marvel at your unwavering quality of always taking shelter at Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet, which makes you absolutely fearless. “Kṛṣṇa never gives up anyone who takes shelter and serves Him. All others die in vain,” writes Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura.

Taking shelter is based on the firm conviction that only Kṛṣṇa and

no one else — not the doctors, not modern inventions in medicine, not wealth, nor connections — only Kṛṣṇa is capable of offering full protection and maintenance. When, in June 1967, a stroke brought you down, you gave an endearing example of what it means to take shelter. You requested three things from your disciples that would help you:

1. Bring me a painting of Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva
2. Chant the Nṛsiṃhadeva prayers and the mahā-mantra for my protection
3. Additionally, you asked your servant to recite the prayers of Queen Kuntī to you where Śrīmatī Kuntī Devī urgently and famously requested that all the calamities she had to face would happen again because Kṛṣṇa would unflinchingly come during those severe tests to her side. And in this sheltering presence, even the greatest obstacles and misfortunes would miraculously evaporate like dewdrops upon the arrival of the morning sun. These are Queen Kuntī’s words:

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

I wish that all those calamities would happen again and again so that we could see You again and again, for seeing You means that we will no longer see repeated births and deaths. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.8.25)

A few years later, after another health crisis, you expressed your gratitude to Brahmānanda for praying for you, saying, “Whatever the material condition may be, we should just cling to Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet.” (Māyāpur, October 7, 1974)

You have consistently exemplified throughout your life the importance of taking shelter at Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet, which serve as a protective umbrella against the unavoidable showers of difficulties that come to everyone in this world. Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet are not only protecting but they simultaneously rain down nectar—healing, nourishing, life-giving nectar.

Throughout your life, your supreme shelter never left you, and thus, you were never alone. “What is this alone?” you once wrote to a disciple, “A Vaiṣṇava is never alone. When I first came to the United States, I was seemingly alone for one year. But I

never felt alone. I always felt the presence of my Guru Mahārāja... Actually, you should know this: you are never alone.” (Letter to Trivikrama, December 1974)

Once in Vṛndāvana, I was driven by a friend through a narrow, winding lane. Suddenly, he slammed the breaks: three children were playing with marbles in the midst of the road – fearless. My driver laughed and exclaimed, “Children! They are fearless because they know the parents are nearby, watching.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when I think of you, I see a sheltered devotee whose protective guardian is always close by and keeps an eye on His dependent servant.

On your divine appearance day, I request you for your blessings. I can see that the great wave of life will bring many unexpected changes into this world. Let me learn from you to be fearless by always seeking the shelter of your lotus feet. Thus, I can be sure that the Lord will watch over me. And what can go wrong when your eyes and the eyes of the Lord are upon me?

Let me end by saying that I am forever grateful to have been accepted by you and that you have blessed me with three types of faith that I consider my real shelter: 1. the taste for your service, 2. the profound sādhana you have introduced, and 3. the hopeful life you have given me, with the prospect of one day attaining the Divine Couple, please Them, and establish a loving relationship with Them.

Thank you a million times and more for being compassionate and patient with your slow disciple.

Your humble servant,

Śacīnandana Swami

Initiation: 1971, February—Hamburg, Germany

Current location: Germany

Kavicandra Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā
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.

*śrī-caitanya-mano-'bhīṣṭam sthāpitam yena bhū-tale
svayam rūpaḥ kadā mahyam dadāti sva-padāntikam*

When will Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda,
who has established within this material world
the mission to fulfill the desire of Lord Caitanya,
give me shelter under his lotus feet?

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

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

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

Every year I have a hard time getting started on the Vyāsa-pūjā
offering. I just realized that I was always shy to approach Śrīla
Prabhupāda, although I can talk about him at any time. This may
be because when I was first living with devotees, we were always
told not to disturb Śrīla Prabhupāda so that he could concentrate on
his translating. I happily accepted that and carried on “serving in
separation.”

When Śrīla Prabhupāda gave me beads and my name, he said,
“Kavindra was a great devotee for Lord Nityānanda.” So I thought
that I should try to always do *saṅkīrtana*. The more time passes I am
realizing that I have no qualifications, so am a good example of the
unlimited mercy of Lord Nityānanda, coming through by the most
unlimited causeless mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja expressed my situation eloquently.

jagāi mādhai haite muṇi se pāpiṣṭha

purīṣera kīṭa haite muñi se laghiṣṭha

“I am more sinful than Jagāi and Mādhāi and even lower than the worms in the stool.”

*mora nāma śune yei tāra puṇya kṣaya
mora nāma laya yei tāra pāpa haya*

“Anyone who hears my name loses the results of his pious activities. Anyone who utters my name becomes sinful.”

*emana nirghṛṇa more kebā kṛpā kare
eka nityānanda vinu jagat bhitare*

“Who in this world but Nityānanda could show His mercy to such an abominable person as me?”

*preme matta nityānanda kṛpā-avatāra
uttama, adhama, kichu nā kare vicāra*

“Because He is intoxicated by ecstatic love and is an incarnation of mercy, He does not distinguish between the good and the bad.”

*ye āge paḍaye, tāre karaye nistāra
ataeva nistārīlā mo-hena durācāra*

“He delivers all those who fall down before Him. Therefore He has delivered such a sinful and fallen person as me.”

*mo-pāpiṣṭhe ānilena śrī-vṛndāvāna
mo-hena adhame dilā śrī-rūpa-caraṇa*

“Although I am sinful and I am the most fallen, He has conferred upon me the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 5.205–210)

At one point I thought I was a devotee, sometimes even thinking I was a “good” devotee. Then I thought that I was *trying* to be a devotee. Now I wonder if I am even trying to be a devotee.

There is one statement in chapter 18 of *The Nectar of Devotion* that I most often remember. It seems that Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote it just for me:

In this connection, one prayer by Rūpa Gosvāmī is sufficient to exemplify this hopefulness. He says, “I have no love for Kṛṣṇa, nor for the causes of developing love of Kṛṣṇa – namely hearing and chanting. And the process of bhakti-yoga, by which one is always thinking of Kṛṣṇa

and fixing His lotus feet in the heart, is also lacking in me. As far as philosophical knowledge or pious works are concerned, I don't see any opportunity for me to execute such activities. But above all, I am not even born of a nice family. Therefore I must simply pray to You, Gopījana-vallabha [Kṛṣṇa, maintainer and beloved of the *gopīs*]. I simply wish and hope that some way or other I may be able to approach Your lotus feet, and this hope is giving me pain, because I think myself quite incompetent to approach that transcendental goal of life" The purport is that under this heading of *āśā-bandha*, one should continue to hope against hope that some way or other he will be able to approach the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord."

Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us so much that I cannot select just one thing to be thankful for. We can never repay what he has given, but fortunately he will accept our efforts to serve. Śrīla Prabhupāda taught us everything from every angle in many different ways.

He gave everything in his books. He wrote so many letters answering so many diverse questions while explaining so many details of how to follow what he wrote in his books. He made sure that all his lectures were recorded. He conversed with so many different people – religious leaders, politicians, scholars, and every other type of person. He could discuss anything with anyone and bring it around to *kṛṣṇa-kathā* and bhakti.

It was astounding that he lived a very public life, exhibiting exactly how to live the life that he described in all his writings and lectures. Kapila Muni describes Śrīla Prabhupāda perfectly:

*titikṣavaḥ kāruṇikāḥ
suhṛdaḥ sarva-dehinām
ajāta-śatravaḥ śāntāḥ
sādharmaḥ 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."

Now we have so many movies and books from devotees who lived closely with Śrīla Prabhupāda that show clearly how he exemplified all these qualities. I pray that all those aspiring for Kṛṣṇa consciousness will study all of these. I just finished reading the latest book by His Holiness Giriraj Swami, who had so much

close association with and guidance from His Divine Grace. The title is *Dancing White Elephants: Traveling with Śrīla Prabhupāda in India, August 1970–March 1972*. This book gives a very intimate view of how His Divine Grace personally trained his disciples in all aspects of preaching and management.

So this is Vyāsa-pūjā, honoring Śrīla Vyāsadeva, who gave us all the scriptures. He divided and wrote the *Vedas* and so many corollary scriptures, such as the *Purāṇas*, *Itihāsas*, and the *Mahābhārata*, the “fifth *Veda*.” He then perfected it all by writing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as the empowered representative of Śrīla Vyāsadeva, translated and explained the essence of the *Mahābhārata*, in the form of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. Then he did the same for *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, thereby giving us the essence of the *Vedas*. He made all this available and comprehensible for all. While doing all this monumental service, he also established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, where lost souls could congregate and learn to practice bhakti-yoga, *saṅkīrtana*, the congregational chanting of the holy names, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*:

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

The prime benediction for humanity at large.

Praying to always be in the association of devotees of Śrīla Prabhupāda and ISKCON.

Kavicandra Swami

Smita Krishna Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Today we celebrate your appearance. *Bhagavad-gītā* manifested Himself for me at that time -1971 - when I first met your disciples in Hamburg Germany. As Arjuna confirmed, *Bhagavad-gītā* dispelled his illusion and convinced him to be firm and prepared to act according to Krishna’s direction. Thanks to *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, I was delivered from illusion. Thank you.

When I previously at age 17 years had read a 1910 Swedish translation of *Bhagavad-gītā*, I felt I had intelligently worshiped the

Lord by reading that conversation with Arjuna. Your *Bhagavad-gītā* As It Is gave me a much deeper understanding. Thank you

There is now a wave of illusion upon me coming from a Parkinson disorder, I am sorry to say. I am not sure how I can serve you. Please have compassion upon me. Hare Krishna

Your servant,

Smita Krishna Swami

Initiation: 1971, August—Hamburg, Germany
Current location: ISKCON Almviks Gard, Sweden
Contact: skswami@spray.se

Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I had the good fortune to be accepted as your disciple in the year 1971, in London. At that time, we were at Bury Place, and the initiation was conducted in front of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Londonīśvara. That is now over fifty years ago, and there have been many changes in the London center and the standards of worship. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the same Supreme Personality of Godhead, and you are the same founder-*ācārya* of the Society. The goal of our lives has also not changed: we would all like to develop love of God, *kṛṣṇa-prema*, and there should be sweet *kīrtanas* and tasty *prasādam*. These basic elements of Kṛṣṇa consciousness are still the goal and mission of the devotees.

I am still a long way from achieving these things, but my desire is still there. In fact, my desire has intensified over the years of service, and I want to continue my efforts in the hope that one day in the coming crores of my births in this material world I may somehow achieve a semblance of love for Kṛṣṇa and a complete desire to please the Lord and His devotees.

I thank you again and again for coming into my life and bringing some meaning and purpose to my existence.

*With profuse obeisances at your lotus feet,
I remain the most insignificant beggar,*
Tridaᅇᅇi Swami Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasiᅇha

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotuslike feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, who saved the whole world by spreading *sanātana-dharma* and the holy name, Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, all over the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Your Divine Grace appeared on this planet to fulfill the prophecy of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu that His name will be chanted in every town and village on this earth planet. You are empowered (a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*) by the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and you showed by example worldwide how to make the lowest among the lowest creatures remember Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's name and chant in ecstasy. So Your Divine Grace established the *yuga-dharma*. You are the embodiment of Lord Caitanya's teachings.

I, your insignificant servant, beg on this day of your appearance that you please bless me with a drop of your mercy so that I become a strict follower of your nectarlike teachings and become instrumental in your mission to save humanity and the entire world from the effects of Kali-yuga.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my everything. Please give me the shade of your lotus feet.

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi
dhyāyan stuvamṣ tasya yaśas tri-sandhyam
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

“By the mercy of the spiritual master, one receives the benediction of Kṛṣṇa. Without the grace of the spiritual master, one cannot make

advancement. Therefore I should continually remember and praise the spiritual master [you, Śrīla Prabhupāda]. At least three times a day, I should offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master," Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please give me the strength to bear all troubles and fulfill your order. All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda. All glories to Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi. All glories to Śrī Śrī Gaura Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Your insignificant servant,

Nava Yogendra Swami

Romapāda Swami

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

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

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

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande paramānanda-mādhavam*

My dear and most respected spiritual master and eternal father,

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

You are Kṛṣṇa's ambassador directly from Goloka Vṛndāvana, carrying to the world an unceasing stream of reminders of our forgotten relationship with Kṛṣṇa. This is not mere hyperbole, by your own admission.

His Divine Grace told my friend Tamal Krishna Goswami: "In Goloka, Kṛṣṇa told me, 'You go down there and preach.' I replied to the Lord, 'It's such a nasty place. I don't want to go. Please let me stay here.' But Kṛṣṇa persisted and said, 'Don't worry about anything. I will make every arrangement for your comfort. In

the meantime, write your books, and when you have finished, then you can return.” Śrīla Prabhupāda concluded, “Then I said, ‘All right.’” (*Nava-vraja-mahimā*, Śivarāma Mahārāja, volume 7, chapter 32)

Who can estimate the great fortune of being your disciple and eternal servant!

Honoring you in this mood, I want to share but a few inspirations which continue to propel me forward in the senior years of my devotional life – a life singularly and exclusively dedicated to you and your mission.

I take much inspiration from your own expression that you had the in-person association with your Guru Mahārāja on only a handful of occasions, yet you never left his association and have never felt separation from him.

To Śatadhanya, in Tokyo, 1972: “So far personal association with the Guru is concerned, I was only with my Guru Maharaja four or five times, but I have never left his association, not even for a moment. Because I am following his instructions, I have never felt any separation. There are some of my Godbrothers here in India who had constant personal association with Guru Maharaja, but who are neglecting his orders. This is just like the bug who is sitting on the lap of the king. He may be very puffed up by his position, but all he can succeed in doing is biting the king. Personal association is not so important as association through service.”

There are many of us who, due to providential arrangements, can also attest to the modest number of opportunities we had to be in your personal association. Much of my junior years of brahmacārī life were physically distant from Your Divine Grace, yet I remain to this day vibrantly inspired and connected to you, representing Your Divine Grace and your sublime instructions.

I fall at your feet with the earnest prayer for your mercy to always refine and amplify my aspiration to become a qualified instrument in your ongoing mission.

I take as your blessing that, as the years pass, the vitality of my dedication to your mission and to living by your teachings does not waver or fade in the least.

One of those teachings and examples set by you was your

emphasis on college preaching, for which I was personally on the receiving end!

For example, in December 1972 you wrote Śukadeva Prabhu in Seattle: “My request to you is that you enter into the universities and colleges wherever possible and preach there with a view to recruiting some first-class devotees for helping me manage and push on this movement all over the world...That will be the best contribution. Now spread this idea also to the other leaders. Appeal yourself to the high class of men, not the mass. Mass, too, we do not eliminate anyone, but if best men are there to run on things, mass will follow later.” You even requested your secretary Śyāmasundara Prabhu to handwrite a note at the bottom of this letter: “Kindly xerox and distribute copies of this letter to all temple presidents, GBC, and sannyasis.”

For decades, dedication to this part of your mission has occupied a major role in my life, as has the encouragement of distribution of your all-important, life-changing BBT books and your Bhaktivedanta purports.

Both delight and reassurance arise again and again when, over time, all the essential elements as well as the subtle refinements found in your BBT purports trace directly to the writings of the Six Gosvāmīs and other predecessor *ācāryas*. At the same time, your inimitable style of communication makes access to even the most subtle points of philosophy so easy to understand and digest!

Resting upon these and many more inspirations in my relationship with you as your faithful disciple, for whatever days or weeks or years remaining in this lifetime, please grant me the strength to remain always aspiring to become your ever-more useful and effective servant.

For that matter, I beg to remain your eternal servant!

Romapāda Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

In your second *praṇām mantra* we are informed that your mission is to preach the pure message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to the world which is infected with impersonalism and voidism. Of course, the direct meaning of the *mantra* indicates the Western world. However, because the whole world is infected with Western values, I can understand that your *praṇām mantra* implicitly refers to the entire world.

You have taught that the philosophies of impersonalism and voidism are not only incorrect, and deviations from the true understanding of the absolute truth, they also constitute offenses against the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Krishna, being insurmountable stumbling blocks on the path of self-realization.

You have enabled us to understand and avoid the subtle manifestations of impersonalism and voidism which often masquerade as *Bhakti*. The *sahajiyā* tendency is a very insidious form of impersonalism. You have dealt very strongly with the tendency of neophyte devotees to consider themselves more advanced than they actually are, and their consequent attempt to perform aspects of *Bhakti* that they did not have the right to perform.

Prabhupāda: "First of all, *anartha-nivṛtti*. You are accustomed to so many bad habits. First of all try to rectify it, then talk of *svarūpa*. Where is your *svarūpa*? Simply wasting time. A man is diseased, he's thinking, "When I shall be cured I shall eat, go to this hotel, I shall eat like this." First of all cure, then talk of eating this and that. *Svarūpa*... When you are cured, that is *svarūpa*. So long you are not cured, what is the use of talking *svarūpa*? First business is cure yourself. *Anartha-nivṛtti*. That is *anartha-nivṛtti*." [Prabhupāda Garden Conversation June 23, 1976, New Vrindaban]

"In this connection, we should be careful about the so-called

siddha-praṇālī. The *siddha-praṇālī* process is followed by a class of men who are not very authorized and who have manufactured their own way of devotional service. They imagine that they have become associates of the Lord simply by thinking of themselves like that. This external behavior is not at all according to the regulative principles. The so-called *siddha-praṇālī* process is followed by the *prākṛta-sahajiyā*, a pseudo sect of so-called Vaiṣṇavas. In the opinion of Rūpa Gosvāmī, such activities are simply disturbances to the standard way of devotional service.” [NOD Chapter 16]

Prabhupāda: “Yes. One has to come to that highest stage. It is not forbidden. That may be ideal, but not for the neophytes. You must... One who does not know A-B-C-D, what he will know about M.A. degrees? That they do not know. They think that they have already passed M.A. degree. That is their fault.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: There’s another statement, I saw them, where it says..., it’s a quote, that you can treat Kṛṣṇa as your lover and Kṛṣṇa will reciprocate.

Hari-śauri: And they underlined the two words “you can” treat Kṛṣṇa as your lover. Like that. In this way they’re taking your quotes out of context.

Rāmeśvara: This is one of their main..., the main ideas in their philosophy is that the living entity can desire to have any relationship he wants with Kṛṣṇa.

Prabhupāda: That’s all right, he can desire. I already explained: first deserve, then desire.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa and Rāmeśvara: Deserve then desire, oh.

Prabhupāda: You are rascal, how you can desire? You have no qualification, you desire to high-court judge. What is this nonsense?

Rāmeśvara: But then they have an answer.

Prabhupāda: What is that answer?

Rāmeśvara: That “Let me just try it anyway,
to keep my mind thinking...”

Prabhupāda: How you can try it? First of all, be qualified,
a big lawyer. Then you become high-court judge.
Where is that qualification? You are after illicit sex and
bīḍī and you want to be associated with the *gopīs*.

Rāmeśvara: They say that “In ISKCON, we do not...”

Prabhupāda: Let them say all nonsense. They
are disqualified. *Sahajiyā bābājīs*, that’s all.”

You are following in the footsteps of your spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur who would not brook any nonsense deviation. In a similar vein he wrote: “If one still has unwanted material impediments (*anarthas*) present in their performance of devotional service (*sādhana*), then rasa can never truly awaken. When the holy name of the Lord is chanted from the platform of pure ecstatic emotions (*bhāva*), then the cheating mood born of pretentious devotional mellows can never be present.”

I pray to always remember your words written on the appearance anniversary of your spiritual master: “Personally I have no hope of any direct service for the coming crores of births of the sojourn of my life, but I am confident that some day or other I shall be delivered from this mire of delusion in which I am at present so deeply sunk. Therefore let me with all earnestness pray at the lotus feet of my divine master to allow me to suffer the lot for which I am destined due to my past misdoings, but to let me have this power of recollections: that I am nothing but a tiny servant of the Almighty Absolute Godhead, realized through the unflinching mercy of my divine master. Let me therefore bow down at his lotus feet with all humility at my command.”

Before obtaining your shelter, I had no conception of the difference between personalism, impersonalism and voidism, and the inherent danger of not being able to discriminate between them. Your teachings have enabled me to avoid the spiritual suicide of accepting anything else other than pure personalism. I fully trust that if I always remain in your service, and associate with your servitors, I will be protected from this danger.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for sheltering me and

always protecting me.

Your eternal servant,

Bir Krishna das Goswami

Initiation: 1972, January—Dallas, Texas, USA

Current location: Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Contact: birkrishnagoswami@gmail.com

Ganapati Swami

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

If there was an integral formula behind the success of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s campaign, it certainly consisted of the chanting of the Holy Names, the dissemination of spiritual knowledge and the distribution of *Kṛṣṇa prasāda*.

Most devotees will attest that reading Prabhupāda’s books played a pivotal role in their initially embracing Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, and that it remains central in their ability to hold firm to the process. And who will argue about *prasāda*? “You go on simply eating, that’s all. And all of my devotees, they have come to me simply by eating *prasādam*.” (*Līlāmṛta*) My personal conviction, however, is that the transcendental sound vibration emanating from Śrīla Prabhupāda’s lotus lips was (and still should be) the overriding inspiration behind his Movement. Ralph W. Emerson visualized an institution as “the lengthened shadow of one man”; in a similar way, ISKCON could be seen as the expansive manifestation of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s pretenseless *kṛṣṇa-prema-viraha kīrtana*—his pining to once again “wander about the cowherd pastures and fields. Running and frolicking in the many forests of Vraja, I will roll on the ground in spiritual ecstasy.” (Jaladuta Diary). His *kīrtana* “raised God from the dead” for the brain-dead of Kali-yuga and revealed Kṛṣṇa’s presence as *śuddha-nāma* (“*bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ!*”). No one chants like Śrīla Prabhupāda! He affirmed his secret in his purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.4.20.25:

“Although when a pure devotee speaks the articulation of his

voice may resemble the sound of this material sky, the voice is spiritually very powerful because it touches the particles of saffron dust on the lotus feet of the Lord. As soon as a sleeping living entity hears the powerful voice emanating from the mouth of a pure devotee, he immediately remembers his eternal relationship with the Lord, although up until that moment he had forgotten everything.”

Such sound is not of this mundane realm (*golokera prema-dhana, hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana*), and when it remains readily available to all via recordings, only a fool will not take advantage of it on a regular basis!

I’ll close with two more quotations from Śrīla Prabhupāda, the first from a purport on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the second from a lecture:

“It is understood from this verse that by agitation of the element of egoism in ignorance, the first thing produced was sound, which is the subtle form of ether. It is stated also in the *Vedānta-sūtra* that sound is the origin of all objects of material possession and that by sound one can also dissolve this material existence. *Anāvṛtīḥ śabdāt* means “liberation by sound.” The entire material manifestation began from sound, and sound can also end material entanglement, if it has a particular potency. The particular sound capable of doing this is the transcendental vibration Hare Kṛṣṇa. Our entanglement in material affairs has begun from material sound. Now we must purify that sound in spiritual understanding. There is sound in the spiritual world also. If we approach that sound, then our spiritual life begins, and the other requirements for spiritual advancement can be supplied. We have to understand very clearly that sound is the beginning of the creation of all material objects for our sense gratification. Similarly, if sound is purified, our spiritual necessities also are produced from sound.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.26.32)

“Now, the whole material world is produced from sound. That is scientific fact. Scientists are researching the importance of sound, physical science. Sound, light, and transmission of sound and light. There are so many things, electronics. So this sound vibration, this is material sound. They have got so much wonderful power. And just try to understand what is the power of the spiritual sound. Real sound is coming from the spiritual world. It is simply just like gramophone. The sound is coming originally from the person; the gramophone is reproducing. That is not the original source of the sound. Similarly, whatever sound is there in this material world, the original sound is produced by God. Just like in your Bible it is said, “Let there be creation.” It is, simply it was sound and there was

creation. So spiritual sound is so powerful. And we are trying to catch you directly from that sound vibration, Hare Kṛṣṇa, and I am sure it is acting. Simply, *śabdād anāvṛttiḥ.*" (1/10/68)

Seeking the blessings of all those who have
been blessed by His Divine Grace,

Your dāsānudāsa,

Ganapati Swami

Initiation: 1972, April—Los Angeles, California, USA

Contact: gtskcp@aol.com

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, I offer my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

Sixty years ago, when you stepped onto the shores of America at Boston Harbor, you carried with you nothing but your unshakable faith in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy name and the divine order of your spiritual master to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the English-speaking world. But before addressing the world, you first turned inward—to prayer. You poured out your heart to Kṛṣṇa in the Bengali poem *Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma*, which stands as a revelation of your surrender, your vision, and your boundless compassion for the fallen souls of this age.

Over the past five decades, I have often returned to this prayer—reading it, meditating on it, and sharing its message in lectures and seminars. Now, on its sixtieth anniversary, I have tried to explore its meaning more deeply through a book, poetic adaptations in English, German, and Spanish, and a musical setting. This extraordinary prayer stands as a shining example of how to take shelter of the Lord in trying circumstances, offering guidance and inspiration to all who seek to share *bhāgavata-dharma*. On this sacred day of your appearance in this world, I offer a few reflections that have gradually unfolded over the years.

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, You are so kind upon this useless soul, but I do not know why You have brought me here. Now You can do whatever You like with me.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the very first verse you reveal the heart of your entire mission: absolute surrender to Kṛṣṇa and complete dependence on His will. After a harrowing sea voyage you had finally arrived at your destination, but you did not turn outward in excitement, but inward in prayer. “Why have You brought me here?”, you asked Kṛṣṇa—not as a complaint, but as the honest cry of a servant stepping into the unknown. Seeing the stark contrast between Vṛndāvana and Boston, between Kṛṣṇa’s abode and Kali’s domain, you wondered how you could possibly fulfill your mission. Yet in that moment of uncertainty, you didn’t retreat—you offered yourself unconditionally: “Now You can do whatever You like with me.” That line, simple and profound, sets the tone for the entire poem—a prayer born of dependence, humility, and faith. It is your heart speaking directly to Kṛṣṇa, and through it, our hearts begin to awaken too.

**But I can guess that You have got some
business here, otherwise why should You
call me here to such a terrible place?**

You saw Kṛṣṇa’s hand in everything—even in an unfamiliar city, full of superficial glamour. Boston’s skyline and polished lifestyle were not signs of progress to you, but evidence of degradation and entanglement in illusion. Still, you weren’t discouraged. You knew Kṛṣṇa had a purpose. Your prayer reminds us that a devotee trusts the Lord’s plan. You weren’t impressed by the American dream—or nightmare—you were moved by the Lord’s mission.

**Most of the population here is covered by the
material modes of ignorance and passion. Absorbed
in material life, they think themselves very happy
and satisfied, and therefore they have no taste for
the transcendental message of Vāsudeva. I do not
know how they will be able to understand it.**

In this verse, your clear vision shines. Where others saw prosperity, you saw bondage: people lost in passion and ignorance. You acknowledged the challenge of reaching them, yet your faith in Kṛṣṇa’s mercy surpassed every obstacle. You made no compromises. You trusted that purity would draw out sincerity—and it did. Your words found fertile ground in unexpected hearts. What once seemed impossible became reality through your unwavering devotional

determination.

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

This line fills me with hope. When I doubt my own capacity, I remember your unshakable faith—not in yourself, but in Kṛṣṇa’s limitless power. Yogeśvara, the master of all mystic power, can make the impossible possible. You knew Kṛṣṇa could empower even the unqualified. You came alone, yet confident that transcendental sound would accomplish everything. And it did. America didn’t know it, but a challenger of illusion had arrived—carrying within his heart the divine empowerment to change the world.

Therefore, I am simply praying for Your mercy so that I can be able to convince them about Your message.

Through this verse, your deep humility shines. Though certain of Kṛṣṇa’s power, you again wondered how those immersed in unrestrained sense pleasure could grasp the mellows of devotional service. You would not preach mere doctrine—you would offer taste: *rasa*. You knew that awakening hearts required mercy, not just knowledge. You prayed for that mercy—and soon, the rain of that mercy would begin to fall.

All living entities have become under control of the illusory energy by Your will, and therefore, if You like, by Your will they can also be released from the clutches of illusion.

You affirmed that even bound souls can draw Kṛṣṇa’s response through sincere desire. When the soul turns to Him, He sends His devotee. You came as His instrument, bearing the key of devotion to unlock our bondage. This verse teaches us to release frustration and trust in time and mercy. You helped me see that even the hardest hearts can yield to grace.

If You so desire, I wish that You may deliver them, and only by Your such desire all of them will be able to understand Your message.

In this verse, you lay everything at Kṛṣṇa’s feet. You knew that the outcome of your efforts rested entirely on the Lord’s will. Still, you prayed—not for yourself, but for us. Your prayer was surrender in its purest form. Like Prahlāda, you wanted nothing but the well-being

of others. And because your desire was pure, Kṛṣṇa fulfilled it. You showed that understanding is born not of intellect but devotion. And so, the Lord chose you to spread His message to the world.

The words of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are Your incarnation, and if they receive it in submissive aural reception, repeatedly, then they will be able to understand Your message.

You taught that Kṛṣṇa remains in this world as sound—through His name and the *Bhāgavatam*. You opened temples not for ritual, but to give people the chance to hear about Kṛṣṇa. You trusted that sincere hearing alone would bring inner transformation. And because you lived what you spoke, your voice carried that divine vibration. You made the *Bhāgavatam* come to life. In you, Kṛṣṇa's sound took form.

On *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.17–21:

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramātmā [Supersoul] in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted.

By regular attendance in classes on the *Bhāgavatam* and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact.

As soon as irrevocable loving service is established in the heart, the effects of nature's modes of passion and ignorance, such as lust, desire and hankering, disappear from the heart.

Then the devotee is established in goodness, and he becomes completely happy. Thus established in the mode of unalloyed goodness, the man

whose mind has been enlivened by contact with devotional service to the Lord gains positive scientific knowledge of the Personality of Godhead in the stage of liberation from all material association.

Thus the knot in the heart is pierced, and all misgivings are cut to pieces. The chain of fruitive actions is terminated when one sees the Self as master.

O Prabhupāda, by quoting these verses you guide us into the sacred heart of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, where the transformative power of hearing *kṛṣṇa-kathā* is revealed. You often quoted these five foundational verses from the Second Chapter of the First Canto, for they trace the entire path of spiritual awakening. You taught that everything begins with a sincere and eager desire to hear—*śṛṇvatām*—and when Kṛṣṇa, as the Paramātmā, sees that desire, He begins to cleanse the heart from all unwanted things. You reminded us that this is not a mechanical process; it requires eagerness, sincerity, and the shelter of a bona fide spiritual master. Through regular hearing and a humble service attitude, the knots of ignorance and passion are cut, and loving service arises—firm and unshakable. O Prabhupāda, you gave us both the message and the method: sit, hear, chant, and serve. You made the *Bhāgavatam* a living reality, and through your voice, Kṛṣṇa entered our hearts. You gave us hope that real happiness and liberation are within reach.

“This is the process of becoming liberated from the influence of the modes of ignorance and passion, and thus they can become freed from all inauspicious things accumulated in the heart.”

It was your firm conviction that transcendental sound was sufficient to purify the heart. You had no doubt that simply by hearing Kṛṣṇa’s name, form, qualities, and pastimes, even the most burdened heart could be relieved and enlivened. Passion and ignorance—so dominant in the modern world—would recede when touched by that divine vibration.

You taught us that the desire to enjoy matter is not merely a distraction—it is *abhadra* (inauspicious), the root of our misfortune. Only by uprooting this unwanted desire could we be free.

But how to make people hear? That was your burden, your prayer, your mission. You gave your life to plant that sacred sound

in our hearts. And by your mercy, we began to listen.

“But because I am very unfortunate, unqualified, and the most fallen, therefore I am seeking Your benediction so that I may be able to convince them about this (Kṛṣṇa consciousness).”

In this verse, your profound humility finds its most touching expression. Despite your vast scholarship and firm faith, you saw yourself as unqualified, fallen, and powerless to convince your audience without Kṛṣṇa’s help. Yet, like Arjuna, you stood ready to become the Lord’s instrument. And because your humility was sincere and deep, Kṛṣṇa responded with full empowerment. He made your words potent. He made your mission victorious. You showed us that the Lord helps the humble, uplifts the lowly, and fulfills the desires of those who want nothing for themselves. May we cultivate that same conviction and become instruments in your mission.

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

What an expression of unconditional surrender! It is the Lord who brought you to this foreign land, and He alone will decide what becomes of your efforts. This is the essence of devotional service: to try our best while leaving the results in Kṛṣṇa’s hands.

You embodied this perfectly, seeing yourself only as an instrument in the Lord’s will. Just as He sent you to New York, so you inspired others to follow your example, crossing oceans and borders to share the holy name. You gave us the courage to try, even when we felt unqualified or alone, reminding us that success is not ours to produce, but Kṛṣṇa’s to grant.

May I always remember that my only task is to serve, and let Kṛṣṇa decide the outcome.

“You are the Lord of the whole creation, so if You like You can make my power of speaking as suitable as they can understand.”

When I struggle to share Kṛṣṇa consciousness—through personal example, words, or music—I think of this prayer. You never relied on your own eloquence, yet Kṛṣṇa empowered your words to awaken devotion in thousands. That gives me hope. I have so little to offer,

but if I depend on the Lord like you did, my voice too can become a channel for His mercy. Your prayer has helped me overcome fear and self-doubt, and encouraged me to speak, trusting that Kṛṣṇa can make the message understood.

“By Your causeless mercy only my words may become transcendently pure, and I am sure when such transcendental message is penetrated in their hearts certainly they will feel englanded, and thus become liberated from all unhappy conditions of life.”

This verse reminds me of how your words have entered my heart and lifted me out of darkness. You speak from a place of purity, and that purity is transformative. Your voice—recorded, written, and living in your followers—has brought me joy, clarity, and connection to Kṛṣṇa. I’ve experienced firsthand what you describe here: the heart flooded with transcendental sound, the deep relief from inner sorrow. You have shown us that true liberation begins in the heart.

“I am just like a puppet in Your hands, and You have brought me here, now You can make me dance as You like.”

This may be one of the most beautiful expression of surrender ever written. You became the Lord’s puppet—without resistance, without fear. And your dance brought light to the world. I want to follow your example, and so I pray to also become a puppet—responsive, willing, and free from false ego.

“I have no devotion, nor I have any knowledge, but still I have been designated as Bhaktivedanta, now if You like You can just fulfill the real purport of Bhaktivedanta.”

These final words echo with your extraordinary humility. Though you were the greatest teacher of *bhakti* and the embodiment of *vedānta*, you claimed nothing. You entrusted even the meaning of your name to Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your Boston Harbor poem is not just an entry in your diary, a record of your arrival—it is a sacred invocation of surrender, a living prayer that continues to shape our lives. Each verse speaks to the heart, reminding us what it means to serve, to depend on mercy, and to live by Kṛṣṇa’s desire.

As we mark sixty years since you set foot in America, I

prostrate myself before you in gratitude for your sacrifices, your love, and your unwavering faith. Your words have not only entered my ears—they have entered my heart. And by your mercy, may I continue to walk the path you have so clearly shown.

Your eternal servant,

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Initiation: 1972, July—Paris, France

Current location: New Vraja Mandala, Spain

Janānanda Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

My obeisances again and again at your lotus feet.

This is the fiftieth anniversary year of your setting foot in New Mayapura, France on August 11, 1975. In December this year we also have the fiftieth anniversary of the installation of Gaura-Nitāi at New Mayapura – on the *tirobhāva* of your own Guru Mahārāja.

One of your instructions was to “at least maintain what I have given you.” After so many years I feel sad that we are a long way short of that, or of fulfilling your vision for New Mayapura.

Still, dedicated efforts are being made by the devotees at New Mayapura – trying to fix the buildings as per your desire and construct new ones using as much local material as they can. They are also, albeit somewhat reduced, maintaining the worship of the Deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda Mādhava, Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, and Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma (installed by you in 1976). Over the past few years, the goshala has been resurrected – we now have two young sets of bullocks learning to plough and work. Milk is provided, at least for Their Lordships’ offerings, and the

excess goes to the devotees. Slowly, efforts to produce more food from the land are underway. A restaurant was opened a few years back in the nearby city, and this year one young Vaiṣṇavī, who joined at New Mayapura just a few years back, has started a weekly preaching program there. It is already attracting dozens of youngsters. Hundreds of young volunteers from all over the world stay annually at New Mayapura.

Festivals have been revitalized, attracting devotees and guests from all over Europe, including many from the local area. The young managers are heart-and-soul dedicated to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and will do whatever you want. I pray that you guide them and protect them.

Young French devotees are now working alongside the elders on completing the translations and commentaries of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* into French. After all these years, it has never been finished. The book distribution has been slowly growing over the past eight years, with young and old devotees working together.

A year or so back, after much effort, the movement in France was finally accepted as a religious nonprofit, tax-exempt association. Efforts are underway to again establish a school for the devotee children and also to provide facilities to serve the elderly devotees in their final journeys or when in dire need.

On another front, in Paris there is daily *harināma* and book distribution going on in the city center. Undermanned we are, but again, the dedicated young devotees there are doing all they can to please you. We pray that as soon as possible your beloved Rādhā-Parisīśvara can be housed in a wonderful facility suitable for Their worship and pleasing to you. Many Indians are also coming to the temple, and programs are underway to guide them to your lotus feet.

I hope this little report brings a glimmer of happiness to you in this far distant place.

From my side I wish to offer you my obeisances in a practical way. I pray you kindly accept them. From your 1961 Vyāsa-pūjā offering, *Vaiśiṣṭyāṣṭakam*:

But simply a festival of flowers and fruits
does not constitute worship:

The one who serves the message of the
guru really worships him.

The service of the message is the real meaning of the *Vedas*.

Neophyte that I am, I am still attached to do what I want to do and have still not surrendered to your essential message of surrendering to Kṛṣṇa's will. You are so mercifully accepting the efforts of egotistic followers like myself. I pray that my heart will somehow transform and truly follow your path.

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, You are so kind upon this useless soul, but I do not know why You have brought me here. Now You can do whatever You like with me.

O Lord, I am just like a puppet in Your hands. So, if You have brought me here to dance, then make me dance, make me dance, O Lord, make me dance as You like. (*Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma*)

Somehow you have placed me in France to serve your mission. I pray that I can live by your words and dedicate this good-for-nothing body and mind in your service, to dedicate this lifetime and future ones, if need be, to fulfilling your desires. It seems this is the real way to offer obeisances (the dictionary definition of *obeisance* being the "act of obeying" or something you do that expresses that).

The disciple should not consider whether he is going back home, back to Godhead; his first business should be to execute the order of his spiritual master. Thus, a disciple should always meditate on the order of the spiritual master, and that is perfectional meditation. Not only should he meditate upon that order, but he should find out the means by which he can perfectly worship and execute it. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.24.15, purport)

I can only say I am trying to execute your will in at least some small way or other. Please give me the strength that I do not desist, no matter what the challenge, and become the instrument of your will.

So, I thank you very much for inviting me in your temple, and I am very much pleased there are so many young boys and girls, they are chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. That is a new thing in the history, in a city like Paris, younger generation will chant Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. We are making history. That's a fact. So do it sincerely. In all circumstances, trials,

do not give up. (Arrival address, August 8, 1973, Paris)

If you desire, I am willing to come back again and again. Your example of sacrifice sustains me, maintains me, and remains with me always. Reflecting on the years when you walked the streets of Delhi and New York alone distributing Kṛṣṇa conscious literature gives me the strength to soldier on.

I often have my own meditation, strange at it seems, to be in Paris – in the heart of the city, Chatelet Les Halles, the “Gates to Hell” (*chatelet* means “the fortified gateway,” *les halles*, “the hell” – my play on words). I think of being there chanting, dancing, distributing books till I drop at your lotus feet with my last breath.

“Either you put me in the hell or heaven or this or that, [it] is all the same.” Because he is always with Kṛṣṇa, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa is always with him. So, where is the cause of being afraid that “This place is not good; this place is very good”? No. Wherever Kṛṣṇa is there is very good. That’s all. (Initiation lecture, August 27, 1969, Hamburg)

It doesn’t matter where it is. Even if we... We can go to the factory. Anywhere. We can go to the hell even. (Room conversation with John Papworth and Schumacher, August 4, 1973, London)

You have given the simple formula of transforming these hellish places into Vaikuṅṭha. Chant, dance, and distribute books and *prasādam*. The street becomes our temple, and all the conditioned souls there are coming to worship the Lord, even without their knowledge, particularly when they take the mercy in the form of your books. You have truly given us this gift of seeing Kṛṣṇa in everything and everywhere through this *saṅkīrtana-yajña*. We just have to do it. You have given us the most joyful austerity. This “austerity” is the means of transforming our intent from “what I like” to “what you like” – what Kṛṣṇa wants, the essence of our mission. The austerity is not the activity but the attitude in which we act. You again and again encouraged us to always chant – but to also hear the sound when we chant, to put Kṛṣṇa in the center. Such a sublime process.

In Kṛṣṇa consciousness, our recreation is dancing and chanting, and when we get tired, we take *prasāda*. Is dancing difficult? Is chanting difficult?

(*The Path of Perfection, "Yoga as Action"*)

Simply our prayer should be, My dear Krishna, please remind me to always chant Your Holy Name, please do not put me into forgetfulness. You are sitting within me as Supersoul, so you can put me into forgetfulness or into remembering You. So please do not put me into forgetfulness. Please always remind me to chant, even You send me into the hell, it doesn't matter, just so long as I can always chant Hare Krishna.
(Letter to Devānanda Dāsa, November 23, 1968)

I have no other hope than this – that you please always remind me to chant, and as long as this body works, to dance. I have no qualification for anything, but out of your causeless mercy you have given me and everyone else this divine lifeline of *sañkīrtana*.

May I dedicate this lifetime to serving you wherever you put me, to sacrificing everything at my disposal. To hell with personal desires for satisfying my temporal so-called needs. The only thing of value in my life is the privilege to surrender to your will. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for this greatest gift of allowing me to associate, if only from a distance, with the topmost *līlā* of *harināma-sañkīrtana*. This is my only *sādhana*, and you are my only hope.

May you cast your glance on France and make us dance. I pray you please shower your glance of mercy on us all that we can continue on the path of becoming your unalloyed servants – fulfilling your desires to preach the *sañkīrtana* movement without the self-aggrandizing false ego that drives me on.

Your lowly, begging, servant,

Janānanda Goswami

Krishna Kshetra Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I take this occasion of again celebrating your blessed appearance in our midst as an opportunity to offer prostrated, heartfelt obeisance to your lotus-like feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, of your countless wonderful qualities, one stands out for me in my present reflection on your glories,

namely, that you always put forward a grand vision of Krishna consciousness for the whole world, a vision full of hope. You always radiated confidence that this vision would become a reality. In this spirit, you anticipated a historiography that would acknowledge the realization of your vision when you wrote in a letter to Jayasri (November 13, 1969):

Our movement is the greatest gift to the human race. They may not immediately appreciate it, but time will come and history will give evidence that this movement saved the human society from being fallen into barbarianism.

Thus, you anticipated a radical change in civilizational direction, from a steady decline into “barbarianism” to an elevation toward widespread engagement in devotional service. In a *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* purport (*Madhya-līlā* 25.121) you further envisioned that “[e]veryone has an equal right to execute devotional service. That is the platform of oneness and the basis for a classless society.” In referring to “equal rights” in relation to devotional service as the “platform of oneness” that becomes “the basis for a classless society,” you hinted at the practical enactment of how the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is “meant for bringing about a revolution in the impious life of a misdirected civilization” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Preface). By hearing, reading, reflecting on, and sharing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, our minds and hearts can be incrementally transformed. This transformation is inclusive: Recognizing all human beings as having “equal right” means that everyone should have the opportunity to hear the message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This was always your firm conviction.

Reflecting on the notion of “revolution” as the expected result of engagement with the *Bhāgavatam*, I like to think of reading and sharing it as a *subversive* act. In a quiet, non-confrontational manner, everyone has the right to participate in the slow and steady erosion of materialistic consumerism, replacing it with humble acts of devotion that nourish the soul, honoring all living beings as sparks of divinity.

In a further reflection on your anticipation of “history giving evidence” that this Krishna consciousness movement is to be credited with turning the tide toward a favorably directed—rather than a misdirected—civilization, I was inspired this last February to give a presentation in the ISKCON Leaders’ Saṅga in Māyāpur, titled “‘History Will Give Evidence’: Writing Our History to Prepare

ISKCON's Future." After raising questions about the nature, process of gathering, archiving, accessing, and presenting of historical "evidence," and pointing out some efforts already being done in this direction, I and my co-presenter Lokarāma Prabhu urged devotees to develop oral history projects that would document the experiences of individual devotees and groups of devotees.

I concluded the short presentation by noting three benefits of gathering and writing our history. First, it can help foster a sense of mission continuity for Vaiṣṇava communities over multiple generations. Second, it can inspire present and future generations of devotees to enthusiastically preserve and spread the Krishna consciousness movement. And third, it can positively direct our future, enabling your prediction to come true, namely, that "history will give evidence that this movement saved the human society from being fallen into barbarianism." Responses to our presentation were very positive.

With your kind blessings, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as your follower and humble student, I will continue to be a small instrument to encourage everyone to pursue and persist in the subversive act of hearing, reading, and sharing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and to encourage your followers to record the history of how this "revolution in the impious life of a misdirected civilization" is becoming a reality.

Always your servant,

Krishna Kshetra Swami

Initiation: 1972, July—Paris, France

Current location: Poland

Lokanath Swami

My dearest and beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this auspicious and momentous occasion of your 129th Vyāsa-pūjā, as I bow before your exalted presence, I am filled with profound gratitude, awe, and reverence for the immeasurable mercy you have bestowed upon this world. You, the divine *senāpati-bhakta* of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, descended into this material world to fulfill His divine mission, to awaken the souls of the world to their eternal,

loving relationship with Śrī Śrī Radha-Kṛṣṇa. As I reflect upon the countless blessings of this past year, I am filled with immense joy and eagerness to share with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the inspiring progress that we have achieved in your mission, especially in India.

The 2024 December book marathon was historic – both in India and worldwide. Especially in India, it has reached a new global benchmark and can be considered an unparalleled achievement in the history of ISKCON. Together, we, your devoted followers of ISKCON in India, distributed a staggering 6,676,509 books, setting a new global standard in sharing the transcendental knowledge you so mercifully gave us. Śrīla Prabhupāda, from the very inception of ISKCON, book distribution has been at the core of your mission. This monumental accomplishment is a direct offering of love and devotion to you. The credit and inspiration for this year’s book distribution goes largely to His Holiness Gopal Krishna Goswami Mahārāja, a lifetime trustee of the international BBT. Mahārāja was a steadfast pillar of support and guidance, and a tireless distributor of your books. It is a fulfillment of your instruction, “The success of your preaching will be substantiated by how many books are sold. If we just depend on temple collections, that will not be very satisfactory. We should make our program so strong that book-selling alone will maintain our economic situation.” (Letter to Rameśvara, Los Angeles, December 9, 1974)

I vividly recall the December 10, 2018 disciple retreat at Sri Krishna Goshala, in Durban, South Africa. There, amidst a gathering of dedicated devotees, we brainstormed new ways to enhance our collective chanting and increase the reach of the holy name in different ways. It was in that moment that the idea of a virtual conference platform for global chanting emerged, which ultimately led to the creation of the “Zoom Temple.” What began as a simple idea with ten devotees blossomed into a revolutionary initiative, quickly uniting more than two thousand devotees daily from around the world. Six years later, in July 2024, the World Book of Records, London, officially recognized our “Zoom Temple” for its unprecedented contribution to spiritual outreach. The “Zoom Temple” now connects over two thousand login locations globally, reaching more than five thousand devotees, and inspiring one of the most innovative and far-reaching initiatives in online spiritual engagement: chanting together and concluding with a *japa* talk.

When you were with us, ISKCON had under ten temples in India,

and your vision of a thriving Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in the land of Bharata (India) was still unfolding. Today, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that vision has been realized in the most magnificent manner. ISKCON India has expanded to over three hundred ISKCON centers, including outposts, extension centers, preaching centers, and full-fledged temples. The growth is staggering.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I remember a striking conversation we had back in 1973 at Mr. Mahadevia's home. You asked me how many visitors attended our evening *ārati* and *kīrtana* at Hare Kṛṣṇa Land in Juhu. I humbly answered, "Fifty to sixty visitors, Prabhupāda." You exclaimed with great satisfaction, "Oh, so many!" Śrīla Prabhupāda, I knew how concerned you were when you observed that the Indian population was slow to embrace Kṛṣṇa consciousness in those early years. At one point you said to me, "We need more men like you." And now full-time *brahmacārīs* are filling ISKCON ashrams, and countless congregational devotees are daily visiting temples in India. The participation of the youth and congregational members has surpassed all expectations. Thousands of young men and women are embracing Kṛṣṇa consciousness with fervor, dedicating themselves to chanting, studying your books, distributing literature, serving in temples, and joining *padayātrā*, especially the one-day *padayātrās*. ISKCON's youth groups, Bhakti Vriksha programs, and *nāma-haṭṭa* initiatives are flourishing, with millions participating in congregational activities all over India. I feel a deep sense of reassurance that the Lord is fulfilling your wish and sending sincere souls who are eager to serve in your mission. This exponential growth is proof to the causeless mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the power of your divine mission: *param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam*. India has awoken, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has taken deep root in its homeland, and the wave of devotion continues to rise, unstoppable and ever-expanding. Good will continues to grow, and our relationship with the government has reached new heights – evident from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's participation in the recent inauguration of the Navi Mumbai temple.

As I reflect on the most recently concluded Māyāpur festival, a moment of great significance comes to mind. During the flag-hoisting ceremony, I was reminded of your words in New York when, as you were passing by the United Nations, you asked, "If the United Nations truly stands for unity, why are there so many separate flags?" But in Māyāpur, the transcendental headquarters

of your movement, we witnessed true unity. Devotees from over fifty nations stood together under one spiritual flag, united not by artificial borders but by the shared mission of love and devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your words resonate so powerfully: “We are creating the real United Nations on the basis of spiritual understanding.” In Māyāpur, that vision is being realized. We raise the flag of Lord Caitanya’s mercy, the flag of His *saṅkīrtana* movement. That flag, soaring high, has become the symbol of your vision. Devotees from fifty nations celebrated the festival together, chanted and danced together in ecstatic joy, walked side by side on the Navadvīpa *maṅḍala parikrama*. We honored *prasādam* together, sharing love, laughter, and spiritual camaraderie like a true united family. In the spirit of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (One world, One family), we stood together as servants of the Lord, bound by the eternal bonds of bhakti.

This year, on April 6, we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple. It is not just a milestone, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but also a testament to the unbeatable strength and endurance of your divine mission. In the sacred land of Vṛndāvana, you inaugurated a magnificent temple. For half a century this temple has been a lighthouse of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This temple is your heart. On that auspicious day of Rāma-navamī, you personally offered the very first *ārati* to Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, inaugurating Their glorious temple. The temple was overflowing with devotees. I found myself standing right at the altar’s edge, witnessing this historic moment, meditating on Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma and Your Divine Grace. I distinctly remember the divine smile on your face as you offered *ārati*. It was an expression of pure devotion, fulfillment, and boundless joy. That moment remains etched in my memory forever. It is this memory that reminds me of December 6, 1975, in the very same Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma courtyard, that you awarded Śrīdhara Swami, Pṛthu-putra Swami and myself *sannyāsa*, instructing us to become traveling preachers. This year is also my fiftieth *sannyāsa* anniversary. You emphasized the importance of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness far and wide, reminding us of the *paramparā* tradition of great traveling preachers: “A *sannyāsī*’s duty is to travel and preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He should never remain stagnant, but must move from place to place, distributing the mercy of Lord Caitanya.”

Little did I know that this instruction would lead me to many years of traveling by bullock cart *padayātrā*, bringing Lord Caitanya’s

movement to every town and village. One year after receiving *sannyāsa*, in the autumn of 1976, again in Vṛndāvana, you inaugurated our first *padayātrā* bullock cart traveling party, which would cover the pioneer route from Vṛndāvana to Māyāpur. You instructed: “The basic principle is this: induce them to chant and take prasada. You’ll be successful ... Yes, go village to village. It is a very noble attempt.” You further instructed me in a letter dated December 23, 1976: “Prasada distribution and chanting and book distribution is sufficient for your program.”

Last year on Rādhāṣṭamī, in Jagannātha Purī, we joyfully celebrated forty glorious years of the All-India Padayātrā – the mother of all *padayātrās*, which commenced in 1984. Traversing the length and breadth of India nearly six times, it has brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness to countless villages, towns, and cities. The All-India Padayātrā, and *padayātrās* in one hundred countries, including the one-day *padayātrās* and so many other occasional walking festivals – put together we have covered an astonishing 300,000+ kilometers – the equivalent of circling the earth close to eight times.

You said, “Kumbha Mela is the largest spiritual gathering in the world, and we must be there to preach Krishna consciousness. This is the duty of ISKCON devotees, to bring the message of Lord Caitanya to the seekers who come searching for spiritual truth.” ISKCON has a steady presence at every Kumbha Mela, distributing *prasādam*, books, and the holy names. Initially, we were not recognized. We had no official place and no standing. Despite these challenges, your disciples endured the harsh conditions to distribute your books and spread the holy names among the millions of pilgrims attending this momentous gathering. However, everything has changed. Your ISKCON has been formally recognized and honored with a prestigious position within the Kumbha Mela setup. ISKCON has now been officially acknowledged as a legitimate and respected spiritual organization within the vast network of traditional *akhaḍas* and religious groups. Śrīla Prabhupāda, on February 10, 2025, during the Maha Kumbha Mela in Prayagraj, the Akhila Bharatiya Akhara Parishad bestowed the prestigious Vishwa Guru title on Your Divine Grace, marking the first and only time this recognition has been bestowed upon anyone in history (*India Currents*, February 18, 2025). ISKCON is now inseparable from the great spiritual traditions of India. They are embracing ISKCON and honoring your legacy. This is the ultimate victory, a truly glorious moment Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Close to ISKCON Pandharpur we have established a Prabhupāda Ghata on the banks of the Chandrabhaga River. It has become a major attraction, drawing hundreds of thousands of pilgrims. It stands as a spiritual landmark in Pandharpur Dhāma, glorifying Your Divine Grace.

The new Bhūvaikuṅṭha temple project is progressing steadily, guided by your vision, instruction, and desire.

In your letter to me, dated July 30, 1977, you wrote: “The whole of India, and specifically your Maharashtra, are enthused with Krishna. Now you have to revive their Krishna consciousness. This is Tukaram’s country, but now they are becoming bad politicians. So revive them by the process of the sankirtana movement. I am very glad that you are preaching village to village and will cover all of Maharashtra. You should train one farmer from your native village so that he can actually become an ISKCON representative there. I am especially pleased to see how you are pushing forward the book distribution ... Now you are also doing this all over India. Organize very solidly and thus increase the number of books distributed, the number of devotees made, and develop centers of Krishna consciousness everywhere.”

Inspired by this instruction, we continue to revive Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the process of devotional service. The Bhūvaikuṅṭha project, conceived under this vision, is making remarkable progress. With construction advancing steadily, it stands as a significant step in fulfilling this mission, providing a sacred space where people can awaken their devotion.

Alongside all this progress, there is also one observation of concern. As I reflect on the eternal glory of your ISKCON and your instructions about unity, we must remain vigilant against internal discord (infighting, groupism, politicking). I remember a particularly distressing incident from the early days at Hare Kṛṣṇa Land, when a devotee in a moment of intense agitation pursued the temple president with a tree branch, determined to strike him. The scene was deeply unsettling, and I found myself overwhelmed with sorrow as I sat before your *vyāsāsana*. With tears in my eyes I was mentally appealing to you. Where have you brought me? Is this the Vaikuṅṭha world? This was the last thing I was expecting to happen in your spiritual movement. So, now I lovingly appeal that differences be amicably resolved to keep your institution together. We must remember your instructions more than ever and

address disputes with humility and love, remembering your call for unity in diversity. You wrote to Kīrtanānanda on October 18, 1973: “The materialist without being able to adjust the varieties and the disagreements makes everything zero. They cannot come into agreement with varieties, but if we keep Kṛṣṇa in the center, then there will be agreement in varieties. This is called unity in diversity.”

My godbrothers and godsisters are leaving us behind to join Your Divine Grace and Gaurāṅga. It is your gain and our loss. I miss them all deeply. I especially wish to remember Gopal Krishna Goswami Mahārāja, your “right-hand man,” who recently departed. His departure weighs on my mind. I was fortunate to be with him during his final moments. His dedication to you and his guidance were a constant source of inspiration and support for me. This year would also have marked fifty years of us serving shoulder to shoulder in your mission. Now I once again turn to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and to the memory of His Holiness Gopal Krishna Goswami Mahārāja, seeking your divine strength and blessings. May I continue my service to you with the same resolute dedication that he so tirelessly exemplified throughout his life.

Whatever I have done and continue to do is simply a manifestation of your will. I again offer everything – my body, mind, and soul – at your divine lotus feet on this most sacred day of your appearance. May I continue to serve you with sincerity and dedication. May I carry forward your mission with the same relentless spirit of perseverance and devotion that you instilled in us all. The legacy you bestowed upon us is not just for today but for countless generations to come.

You are my eternal master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and I will always remain your eternal servant.

Your insignificant servant,

Lokanath Swami

Radhanath Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I bow my head in the sacred dust of your lotus feet.

Today, on the holy day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I pray that I may please you by faithfully following your holy teachings and serving your divine mission. You have mercifully given all of your followers

the opportunity to receive your intimate blessings by assisting you in your service to your beloved Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, and the exalted *ācāryas*.

Recently, I heard a recorded lecture that you had given. It deeply affected my heart. You said, “When a devotee is so advanced that he cannot live without Kṛṣṇa for a moment – then he can see Kṛṣṇa everywhere.”

In these simple words you have shared a principle that is at the heart of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s teachings. Lord Caitanya prayed, *sūnyāyitam jagat sarvaṁ govinda-virahaṇa me*: “In separation from Govinda the entire universe appears to be a dreary void.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you taught us that a sincere devotee strives to be absorbed in pleasing Kṛṣṇa in both pleasant and challenging conditions. To be so deeply humble that we realize our complete dependence on Kṛṣṇa’s mercy at every moment. The true value of whatever we do or say is according to how Śrī guru and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are pleased with the sincerity of our devotional service. In this way, according to the quality of one’s surrender, Kṛṣṇa gives us the vision to see Him and serve Him everywhere and in the hearts of all beings.

Lord Caitanya taught that even the most fallen souls can realize this highest spiritual perfection by sincerely chanting Lord Hari’s holy names and living with Vaiṣṇava character. Through the *saṅkīrtana* movement He freely distributed the sweetest revelation of love of Godhead as is exhibited by the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana. While residing in the Gambhīra, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu revealed the treasure of His heart – expressing Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī’s feelings of loving separation from Kṛṣṇa. By His example He taught how to cultivate union with Kṛṣṇa through feelings of loving separation from Him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, serving Lord Caitanya’s infinite love is the treasure of your heart. You so mercifully shared this treasure with all of us. In 1965, you departed from your sacred home in Vṛndāvana to beg all people of the world to accept this supreme treasure – *kṛṣṇa-prema-dhana* – unconditional love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Alone, in your old age, you ventured into strange lands with no money or any material security. Yet you prayed only to be an instrument of Kṛṣṇa’s compassion to bring eternal joy to people in every town and village of the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, with profound urgency you pleaded with

all of us to very carefully follow the teachings and culture of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and to spread it according to our capacity. Without authentic *sanātana-dharma*, all noble efforts to do good are destined to collapse. *Prema-bhakti* – pure devotional service – is the *jaiiva dharma*, the eternal nature of the soul. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your total absorption in pure bhakti and your compassion for all beings reveals this highest dharma.

In your books, lectures, and interactions, we hear the urgency in your voice as you plead with us to be “serious and sincere” in our spiritual practice.

Your urgent plea is forever relevant, especially in the times in which we are living. The present condition of the world is stricken by brutal wars, devastating earthquakes, and miserable diseases, horrific fires, droughts and floods, heat waves and hurricanes. The tragedy of untimely death. Nations are severely divided with hatred and distrust over ideological, political, social, and economic issues. Terrorism, stockpiles of nuclear bombs, and man-induced climate change have plagued the world with instability and robbed people’s confidence to safely raise their families. Racism, oppression, cruelty, and slaughter are unleashed due to the ignorance of bodily designations. Arrogance, vengeance, greed, and exploitation as well as immoral vices, are rampantly being accepted as coveted characteristics of greatness – even in the name of religion.

Yet even in pleasurable times, when there is an abundance of goodness, kindness, security, comfort, and prosperity, we tend to forget the very purpose of life in a world where suffering is imminent: to reconnect with our true self as loving servants of the Lord. The only sustainable solution is genuine spirituality.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have entrusted to us this knowledge and the timeless mercy of the *ācāryas*. You have invested your sincere followers with a responsibility to rise above our differences and to infuse the society with the culture of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is above sectarian beliefs and is inclusive with all earnest seekers of God’s love.

Yet the path of bhakti, as taught by Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda, leads us into the sweetest, most ecstatic pastimes of the Lord, where the all-powerful Absolute Truth, the origin of all existence and the reservoir of all love, reciprocates with His devotees’ devotion by becoming their intimate friend, child, or lover.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this is your gift.

We pray for your mercy that we not be depressed, distracted, or

indifferent to the heartbreaks of the world. We pray to be ever grateful for the transcendental gift you have entrusted to us. You taught us that where there is great need, there is a great opportunity to serve.

I beg forgiveness for my shortcomings in serving you. I am fallen, unworthy, and unqualified, yet you continue to extend your mercy. The most precious gift in my life is knowing that you have saved me and that you have given me and all of your followers the full mercy of Lord Caitanya. I pray to ever be absorbed in expressing my gratitude to you by faithfully serving your loving servants.

Your servant,

Radhanath Swami

Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami

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*

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your divine lotus feet. Hare Kṛṣṇa!

In 1966, my father somehow found his way to you at 26 Second Avenue. He wasn't knowingly searching for Kṛṣṇa, but rather had a personal agenda related to his son, who had "lost it" (gone crazy) due to a neurosis compounded by the effects of LSD. On that occasion, you expressed your underlying and profound compassion in a simple acknowledgment: "There is something wrong with that boy." You then immediately reassured your visitor: "But we can fix him up!" (This confident statement calls to mind the title of Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami's third volume of his *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta: Only He Could Lead Them.*)

So, let's count how many years have passed up to the present? All right, 2025 minus 1966 equals 59 years since those wild beatnik/hippie days in downtown NYC! (From the bodily perspective, I was twenty years old and am now seventy-eight.)

Five years later, in 1971, by the intercession of the devotees, you

permitted me one more personal darshan. This took place in another sacred enclave, namely the second ISKCON temple, in Boston, Massachusetts, at 38 North Beacon Street. The bottom line of that exchange, or the take-away from it, was your concluding words: “I only ask one thing of you – simply try to understand Kṛṣṇa!”

Another five years later, in April 1976, I was formally initiated to become your disciple. Up to the present I have been chanting at least the minimum sixteen rounds daily and have not broken any of the four regulative principles. But it was only until 2013 that I felt steady and strong enough to accept the order of *sannyāsa*.

Of course, my humble story repeats in thousands of ways, with many variations, for each one of your fortunate disciples. After your departure, so many others would yet become initiated by your disciples, and thus your ISKCON movement continues to spread throughout the world. This was foreseen by the previous *ācāryas*, notably Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, while I still mentally struggle with the challenges of the awful impressions from my youth and, now, with the inevitable miseries associated with old age, I am thankfully aware of my extraordinarily good fortune to have met you and to find myself in the process of surrendering unto your lotus feet – and thereby to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, also known as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this auspicious celebration of your divine appearance on this earth.

Your yet aspiring servant,

Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami
(based at New Raman Reti, Alachua, Florida, USA)

Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Goswami

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

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 Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyaadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

And You Will Utilize

O dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, O unlimited ocean of mercy, compassion, tolerance, forgiveness, kindness, humility, liberalness, strictness, courage, spiritual strength—and all the other auspicious qualities that comprise the character of a *nitya-siddha* associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Lord Nityānanda Prabhu—I fall at your feet and beg you to accept me as your eternal servant. The shelter of your lotus feet is everything to me. You are my life and soul. On this holiest of days, your Vyāsa-puja, please allow me to rededicate my life to serving you and your mission of making everyone happy by reading your books out loud to whomever I meet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in 1975, a reporter in San Francisco once asked you, “What will happen when you die?” Your response? “I will never die. I shall live forever in my books **and you will utilize.**” (750716PC.SF)

That you spoke these words is common knowledge. Also well-known is your declaration that anyone who wants to know you should read your books, for everything you had to say is in your transcendental literature. Indeed, your books are a veritable encyclopaedia of spiritual knowledge and understanding. You painstakingly composed your Bhaktivedanta Purports by combining your own transcendental realisations with the essence of our previous *ācāryas'* commentaries. By reading your books, then, we get to know not only you but also the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, Śrī Krishna, as well as His eternal consort and greatest devotee Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, along with Their personal expansions and incarnations—not to mention the expansions of Their eternal associates who come to this material world to assist Them in the mission of calling the fallen conditioned souls back to their eternal home in the spiritual world. All these transcendental personalities live in the pages of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and the other literatures you have translated and commented upon.

But something else is encapsulated in the final phrase of your answer to that reporter—“**And you will utilize.**”

You wanted everyone to use the knowledge contained in your books, Śrīla Prabhupāda, no matter what position they hold. To bring about peace in human society we all must apply the principles taught in the holy scriptures to purify and develop our character. And that process begins by each of us correcting ourselves by thinking, feeling, willing, and acting according to the spiritual standards set by the great exemplars—and then explaining and demonstrating that spiritual knowledge and culture to others.

To hear and explain them is more important than reading them. One can assimilate the knowledge of the revealed scriptures only by hearing and explaining. Hearing is called *śravaṇa*, and explaining is called *kīrtana*. The two processes of *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana* are of primary importance to progressive spiritual life. Only one who has properly grasped the transcendental knowledge from the right source by submissive hearing can properly explain the subject.” (SB 1.1.6, purport)

Thus, for your pleasure, Śrīla Prabhupāda, again I wish to emphasize the rarely quoted last phrase of your answer to that reporter’s question—“**and you will utilize.**”

You state in your purport to *Bhagavad-gītā* 2.72, “One can attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness or divine life at once, within a second—or one may not attain such a state of life even after millions of births. It is only a matter of understanding and accepting the fact.”

Your purports provide that understanding, Śrīla Prabhupāda. By hearing your books repeatedly over a long period of time—especially out loud—and by sincerely trying to understand them can we learn all the mysteries of the universe, what is true and what is false, and how to live in the truth.

As Kapiladeva instructs Devahūti, “One can get liberation by seriously discharging devotional service unto Me and thereby hearing for a long time about Me or from Me. By thus executing one’s prescribed duties, there will be no reaction, and one will be freed from the contamination of matter.” (SB 3.27.21)

Studying your books over a long period of time and applying that knowledge to our daily lives is the process to understand the fact. And the fact is that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth and

that pure devotional service to Him is the goal of life. You wanted us to preach this truth to uplift human society, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

To properly understand, however, one needs a purified heart. And so along with hearing your books you emphasized the inoffensive chanting of the holy name of the Lord, the *mahā-mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare, which according to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu cleanses the heart of unnecessary and unwanted things.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a transparent via medium to our previous *ācāryas*; therefore, it is hardly surprising that your approach to chanting the holy name is the same as that of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who wrote:

Your mind is wandering all over the universe when you chant.

Chant anyway!

Your mind is wandering to the past and future when you chant.

Chant anyway!

You are not able to concentrate on Krishna's names while you chant.

Chant anyway!

You have no taste for chanting.

Chant anyway!

You have lusty desires.

Chant anyway!

You are making offenses in chanting.

Chant anyway!

You are not praying to Krishna to help you chant better.

Chant anyway!

You often chant late at night.

Chant anyway!

So WHY? Why should you chant
despite all the above obstacles?

This is why:

There is no vow like chanting the holy name, no
knowledge superior to it, no meditation which comes
anywhere near it, and it gives the highest result.

No penance is equal to it, and nothing is as
potent or powerful as the holy name.

Chanting is the greatest act of piety
and the supreme refuge.

Even the words of the *Vedas* do not possess
sufficient power to describe its magnitude.

Chanting is the highest path to liberation,
peace and eternal life.

It's the pinnacle of devotion, the heart's joyous
proclivity and attraction and the best form
of remembrance of the Supreme Lord.

The holy name has appeared solely for the benefit of the
living entities as their Lord and master, their supreme
worshipful object and their spiritual guide and mentor.

Whoever continuously chants Lord Krishna's holy name,
even in his sleep can easily realise that the name is a direct
manifestation of Krishna Himself in spite of the influences
of Kali-yuga." (*Chant Anyway*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura)

Furthermore, the Supreme Lord is not obtained
by expert explanations, by vast intelligence, or

even by much hearing. He is obtained only by one whom He Himself chooses. To such a person, He manifests His own form (*Mundaka Upaniṣad* 3.2.3)

Ultimately, then, our spiritual success depends on our receiving the mercy of the Supreme Lord, especially in His form of Śrī Śrī Mahāprabhu, as that mercy flows through you dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda!

The mercy of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda flows naturally to the most fallen. And because I am most fallen my appeal is most legitimate and urgent.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī expressed this urgent need most eloquently to Lord Caitanya Himself:

All glories to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu,
the most merciful saviour of the fallen souls!
All glories to the Supreme Personality!

Sir, we belong to the lowest class of men, and our associates and employment are also of the lowest type. Therefore, we cannot introduce ourselves to You. We feel very much ashamed, standing here before You.

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!

Dear Lord, You have incarnated to deliver the fallen souls. You should consider that in this world there is none so fallen as us.

You have delivered the two brothers Jagāi and Mādhāi, but to deliver them You did not have to exert Yourself very much.

The brothers Jagāi and Mādhāi belonged to the *brāhmaṇa* caste, and their residence was in the holy place of Navadvīpa. They never served low-class persons, nor were they instruments to abominable activities.

Jagāi and Mādhāi had but one fault—they were

addicted to sinful activity. However, volumes of sinful activity can be burned to ashes simply by a dim reflection of the chanting of Your holy name.

Jagāi and Mādhāi uttered Your holy name by way of blaspheming You. Fortunately, that holy name became the cause of their deliverance.

We two are millions and millions of times inferior to Jagāi and Mādhāi. We are more degraded, fallen and Mādhāi than they.

No one within the three worlds is sufficiently powerful to deliver us. You are the only savior of the fallen souls; therefore, there is no one but You.

If You simply deliver us by Your transcendental strength, then certainly Your name will be known as Patita-pāvana, the savior of the fallen souls.

Let us speak one word that is very true. Plainly hear us, O merciful one. There is no other object of mercy within the three worlds but us.

We are the most fallen; therefore by showing us Your mercy, Your mercy is most successful. Let the power of Your mercy be exhibited throughout the entire universe! (Cc Madhya 1.188–202)

In this way, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have taken away all excuses by delivering the secrets of successful spiritual life through your teachings.

You freely gave such rare, precious gifts to the world! You explained that your books are your *kīrtana*, the *brhad-kīrtana*. Through that *brhad-kīrtana*—along with the *harināma* parties, the vow to chant daily a fixed number of rounds on *japa* beads, the *prasadam* you taught us to cook, offer to the Lord and distribute to the public—you instilled in us faith in the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the solution to all the world's problems.

And above all you taught us to chant the holy name “without stoppage.”

nāmāparādha-yuktānām

*nāmāny eva haranty agham
aviśrānti-prayuktāni
tāny evārtha-karāṇi ca*

The chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa is recommended for persons who commit offenses, because if they continue chanting, they will gradually chant offenselessly. Even if in the beginning one chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* with offenses, one will become free from such offenses by chanting again and again. (*Padma Purāṇa*)

Therefore, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare should be continued without stoppage. This will protect a devotee from all accidental falldowns. He will thus remain perpetually free from all material contaminations. (*Bg.* 9.31, purport)

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please allow me to assist you in giving these invaluable precious gifts to whomever I meet.

After all, your answer to that reporter so many years ago—“**and you will utilize**”— must mean that your books are for everyone. Please empower us, your sincere followers, to assist you in your profound mission to uplift the world in its darkest hour by the mass distribution of your transcendental books and the holy *mahā-mantra*.

Hare Kṛṣṇa!

Begging for any place in the dust of your lotus feet,

Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Goswami

Initiation: 1973, May—San Francisco, USA

Partha Sarathi Das Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

*choṭa baḍa bhakta-gaṇa, vandoṅ sabāra śrī-caraṇa,
sabe more karaha santoṣa*

“I worship herewith the lotus feet of all kinds of devotees, both advanced and neophyte. I request all of them to be satisfied with me.” (*Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Madhya Līlā 2.93*)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your dear first generation of *dīkṣā* disciples are gradually fading away, like a cloud covering the stars. You are like the brilliant pole star shining next to the moon of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and our *guru varga*. I believe these early followers were directly sent by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to assist you in establishing your personal preaching mission, The International Society for Krishna Consciousness. This mission is your personal contribution to our Gauḍīya *sampradāya*.

Everything is going on by the inconceivable *śakti* of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. That which was impossible has now become possible by the *aghaṭa-ghaṭana-patīyasī sakti*, of the Lord (*Caitanya Caritāmṛta Ādi Līlā Chapter 17 Text 304*). How else could we, your followers, continue to co-operate in this dark age of confusion, misinformation and mistrust. An important part of our *bhakti* includes the ability to co-operate with each other. In other words, it is a yoga of co-operation.

After Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur departed from this world, the preaching continued but some potency had been lost.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you write, “Amongst Vaiṣṇavas there may be some difference of opinion due to everyone’s personal identity, but despite all personal differences, the cult of Krishna consciousness must go on.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.28.31, purport*)

Fifty-years ago, on October 5th 1975 you placed your divine lotus feet on the land of South Africa. Arriving from Mauritius, you came with your secretary, Harikesa Prabhu, and our own GBC representative, Pusta Krishna Mahārāja. Apartheid South Africa immediately became blessed by your presence. This is confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.13.10*:

*bhavad-vidhā bhāgavatās
tīrtha-bhūtāḥ svayaṁ vibho
tīrthī-kurvanti tīrthāni
svāntaḥ-sthena gadābhṛtā*

“My lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified. Because you carry the Personality of Godhead within your heart, you turn all places into places of pilgrimage.”

This year, the South African *yātrā* is celebrating the 50th anniversary of your visit here. Your Divine Grace stayed in South Africa for nineteen days and was the esteemed guest at seven large hall programs in Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg. At that time we (about 10 disciples) had a rented house in Yeoville, which was a “Jewish suburb,” in Johannesburg. I was designated the pujari, the gardener, the handyman and the book distributor. A jack of all trades, but master of none. Though I saw myself as a fool, my godbrothers kindly tolerated me.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura said, “Why do I always forget that I am the most insignificant and meanest of all living beings.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu states in *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, Ādi 7.77, “My Guru Mahārāja said I am a fool, therefore, I should just chant Hare Krishna.”

Now, fifty years later even though I am a *sannyāsī* and *dīkṣā-guru*, I still feel foolish.

ISKCON South Africa now has twenty temples and preaching centers with over two thousand initiated grand disciples. The yatra hosts eleven Ratha-yātrās, has twenty-eight Food for Life branches and five Govinda’s restaurants. Most importantly, we are distributing fifty to sixty thousand of your transcendental books annually.

The obvious question is, how is this happening in the Age of Kali? The answer is, by your desire. You have invoked the *aghata-ghaṭana-patīyasī śakti*, which means that special *śakti* of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu that allows the impossible to become possible. Since your divine departure, we have not only maintained your mission, but increased it. Your beloved first generation of direct disciples are gradually fading, and our original South African congregational members from the 1970s and 1980s are also gradually leaving their bodies.

Many of your senior disciples have already “shuffled off their mortal coil.” (Hamlet, William Shakespeare). You referred to this old age when you visited Jagannath Puri with your disciples: “I came to Jagannath Puri after appearing for my BA exam. And because I was jubilant, I was jumping. When the waves came, I was jumping, but now I am walking with a stick.

The body changes but I remain the same.” (Śrīla Prabhupāda *Līlāmṛta* Volume 6, page 240)

Forty-eight years after Your Divine Grace’s departure we, as

an institution, are still co-operating. This spiritual co-operation is preparing us for birth in *prakaṭa* Goloka Vrindavana. The Lord's eternal pastimes are going on in some Brahmāṇḍa at this very moment. In Lord Krishna's *prakaṭa līlā* and *aprakaṭa līlā* all the residents of Vrindavana are serving each other in a mood of *anugatyā-bhāva*. I pray that someday I can also become one of those followers.

It is stated in Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi (Chapter 4 Verse 1), "Rādhā and Candrāvalī are the best among the leaders. Their groups contain ten million *gopīs* each. The scriptures say that the *rāsa* dance took place on the bank of the Yamunā River with one billion *gopīs*."

My dear spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are kindly giving your sincere followers entrance into this sublime *līlā*. I hope that one day in the future, walking behind Your Divine Grace and behind my godbrothers, godsisters and our *guru varga*, I can also be counted as one of those ten million.

I would like to offer my humble obeisances, *koṭī koṭī* times, to all the Vaiṣṇavas throughout the world, whether advanced or neophyte.

*I remain,
Your servant eternally,*

Partha Sarathi Das Goswami
Initiation: 1973, May—London, UK
Current location: Durban, South African

Candramauli Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

*mūkuṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā taṁ ahaṁ vande śrī-guruṁ dīna-taraṇam*

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

TRANSLATION

My dear King, although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age: Simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom.

The chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy name, the *mahā-mantra* is that bright light that dispels the all-pravading ignorance (darkness) in this Age of Kali. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have taken Kṛṣṇa's holy name throughout the globe.

- After five thousand years My *mantra-upāsaka* [worshiper of the holy name] will appear in this world and spread the chanting of My holy name everywhere." (Lord Kṛṣṇa to Gaṅgā Devī, *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa*, 4.129.50-51)
- "Even if the sinners reject religion or flee to foreign countries, I will send *mor senāpati-bhakta* [My military field commander] to go there and deliver them." (Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to Nārada Muni, *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala*, Sūtra Khaṇḍa, Song 12, texts 564-565)
- "A personality will soon appear in order to preach the teachings of Śrī Caitanya and move unrestrictedly over the whole world with His message." (Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, *Sajjana-toṣanī*, circa 1885)

Taking the teachings of Lord Caitanya and focusing on the essence of bringing the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, a spiritual revolution is continuing to engulf the lives of millions of living entities worldwide.

Regarding the holy name, for your followers you taught us your most important instruction.

Out of all my instructions to my disciples, my most important one is to every day chant sixteen rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* on beads.

We find innumerable *śāstric* statements on the supreme glories of the holy name,

*nāma-yajño mahāyajñaḥ kalau kalmaṣa-nāśanam
kṛṣṇa-caitanya-prītyarthe nāma-yajña-samarpaṇam*

“The sacrifice of the name is the highest *yajña*, which destroys the contamination of Kali-yuga. In order to please Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, I offer this sacrifice of the holy name.”

There is no vow like chanting the holy name, no knowledge superior to it, no meditation which comes anywhere near it, and it gives the highest result. No penance is equal to it, and nothing is as potent or powerful as the holy name. Chanting is the greatest act of piety and the supreme refuge. Even the words of the Vedas do not possess sufficient power to describe its magnitude. Chanting is the highest path to liberation, peace, and eternal life. It's the pinnacle of devotion, the heart's joyous proclivity and attraction and the best form of remembrance of the Supreme Lord. The holy name has appeared solely for the benefit of the living entities as their lord and master, their supreme worshipful object and their spiritual guide and mentor. Whoever continuously chants Lord Krishna's holy name, even in his sleep, can easily realize that the name is a direct manifestation of Krishna Himself, in spite of the influences of Kali-yuga.

‘There is no knowledge as pure as the name; there is no vow as powerful as the name. There is no meditation more effective than the name nor is there any fruit greater than that attained by the name. There is no greater renunciation than the name; there is no greater peace than the name. In this world there is no greater pious activity than taking the name, nor is there any quicker progress than in the name. The name is the highest liberation, the highest freedom, the highest destination, the highest peace, the point of no more searching. The name is the highest devotion, the name is the purest inclination of the jiva, the name is the highest love, and direct remembrance of the Lord. The name is the cause of all causes, the Supreme Lord, most worshipable, and is a form of guru to bring one to the Lord.-

(Spoken by Śrīla Haridasa Thakur from Śrīla

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Harinam Cintamani*)

*aho bata śva-paco 'to garīyān
yaj-jihvāgre vartate nāma tubhyam
tepus tapas te juhuvuḥ sasnur āryā
brahmānūcur nāma gr̥ṇanti ye te*

Oh, how glorious are they whose tongues are chanting Your holy name! Even if born in the families of dog-eaters, such persons are worshipable. Persons who chant the holy name of Your Lordship must have executed all kinds of austerities and fire sacrifices and achieved all the good manners of the Āryans. To be chanting the holy name of Your Lordship, they must have bathed at holy places of pilgrimage, studied the Vedas and fulfilled everything required. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.33.7)

In the *Kali-santarana Upanisad* Lord Brahma speaks:

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma,
Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare iti soḍaśakam nāmnān
kali-kalmaṣa-nāśanam parataropāyaḥ sarva-vedeṣu dṛśyate*

After searching through all the Vedic literature, one cannot find a method of religion more sublime for this age than the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have ignited a spiritual revolution of devotion to the Supreme Lord and these holy names of Rādhā Kṛṣṇa are driving that fire of devotion to all corners of the globe. And we are hearing that people everywhere are accepting this great chanting and becoming happy and are deriving freedom from material suffering.

*enechi auśadhi māyā nāśibāra lāgi' hari-nāma-
mahā-mantra lao tumi māgi'*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have brought that medicine (Kṛṣṇa's holy name) that is awakening all the sleeping living entities who are asleep in the lap of ignorance of who they are and what is the actual, real goal of life.

Falling at your lotus feet begging to develop the strong desire to chant more and more and to spread this mercy for the benefit of the

suffering living entities.

Your happy servant,

Candramauli Swami

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

Current location: Ljubljana, Slovenia

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It is only by your divine grace that I am still living in this same body and that I continue to live this amazing life of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Where would I be without you? I hate to think, but it would absolutely certainly be somewhere not nice at all, to say the least.

Mukunda Mahārāja tells us that one day, in a meeting with you, you became deeply absorbed in remembrance of your own spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and tears flowed down your cheeks. “My spiritual master,” you said, and your voice, he says, choked to gravel. “My spiritual master,” you said. “He was no ordinary spiritual master.” You paused again and then whispered falteringly, “He saved me.”

I have sometimes thought of this amazing transcendental happening and wondered what exactly you meant when you said “He saved me.” You were born in a family of devotees, and your father was a pure devotee. What was there to be saved from? But this is how you felt, and we respect that, and it is another deep expression of yours that we relish and appreciate.

On the other hand, someone like me was definitely saved. Sometimes people talk of a fate worse than death. They feel that death is the end and there’s nothing beyond it. Everything is just finished, and they feel this is the greatest disaster possible. But we know that there is a fate worse than death, and that is to go to the hellish planets and suffer untold miseries for all the terrible sinful activities we have performed. This was certainly the case in regards to me, and you literally saved me from it.

I remember sitting in front of the very large photo of you sitting

on a *vyāsāsana* in your lounge at the Bury Place temple in Central London. It was January 1973, and I had recently moved into the temple. I was gradually realizing more vividly how you had saved me from hellish existence. The realization overwhelmed me, and tears came from my eyes. I couldn't understand why you had done that for someone as degraded as me, and the feeling of having received causeless mercy swept me away to another realm.

But this is you. You are a savior, and all owe you an incalculable debt. You were no ordinary spiritual master, and you saved us from fates worse than death.

Now our time is running out. Have we done enough to reciprocate with you for the inestimable gifts you have given us? Is it possible to reciprocate sufficiently? Of course not, but let us try our best in these last few years we have to do something – as much as we can – to show you our gratitude.

My prayer on this most sacred day is that Lord Kṛṣṇa gives me more intelligence so I can appreciate you more and more and reciprocate more and more. Let that be my meditation and the foundation of my life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I thank you again and again for saving me. May your glories be spread throughout the three worlds. You deserve it.

Your humble and lowly servant,

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

Bhaktimarga Swami

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

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

YOU HAVE ME MOVING

You have me moving
Which is for improving
Qualities of magnitude
In character and servitude

It has been over half a century
Since you ignited my energy
Forward in direction
Behind teachers in succession

I'm asked about enthusiasm
Sparing absolutely no sarcasm
I tell them straight – learned from Dad
But major player – reverent Prabhupad

Where I live in the snow drifts
I've received many of your gifts
They've come to me over the years
In the form of my awesome peers

They shaped me, moulded me
Showed me how I should be
Sadly, not all are so active
While Krishna is still attractive

I miss them dearly as they pulled me in
Missing their company is a source of chagrin
It's painful, a separation feeling
It's natural in such family dealings

Some have perished, some have stayed
Some are on a climb, some are delayed
Men and women, definitely aged
Surely all will be home, fully engaged

I throw gratitude as prostrations
For the friends, my foundations
It is quite the special experience
You are moving me to transcendence

Your servant,

Bhaktimarga Swami

Initiation: 1973, September—Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Current location: Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my most respectful obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, a perfect instrument of your predecessors.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is well known in your ISKCON that you have fulfilled the preaching desires of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and his Gauḍīya *ācāryas*. For example, in offering you our respects we blissfully say:

*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.

You and you alone took the message of Caitanya Mahāprabhu all over the world. Others only tried to follow in your wake. Tried!

The full message of Lord Caitanya is clearly delineated in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. The foundation of that worldwide mission is distributing Kṛṣṇa's holy names and the teachings of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, both of which we, your followers, are fortunate to have received and framed our lives around. And just as every activity has a purpose, a *sādhya*, so too does the mission of Lord Caitanya.

In his meeting with Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya, Caitanya Mahāprabhu's first enquiry was to hear a verse from the revealed scriptures concerning the ultimate goal of life and the means to attain it. Śrī Rāmānanda replied that offering one's activities through the *varṇāśrama* institution would be the best means to please Kṛṣṇa—the former the means, the latter the goal.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu, however, rejected this answer, as he did subsequent answers, until Rāmānanda offered pure devotional service as the means to please Kṛṣṇa. Thereafter the Lord desired to hear about the stages of pure devotion, including the ascending stages of loving devotion—servitude, fraternity, parental love, and conjugality. These forms of *vraja-prema* enable devotees to enter Kṛṣṇa's eternal pastimes of love.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, your followers will readily confirm that our destination is Goloka Vṛndāvana. However, Rāmānanda Rāya says that such *vraja*-perfection can only be attained through spontaneous love. Regulative devotion is insufficient to that end. The *nāyam sukḥāpo bhagavān* verse—which Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura calls the *paribhāṣā-sūtra* of the Tenth Canto—is further evidence of this.¹ Thus, while your followers begin their *sādhana* in a regulated way, at a certain stage of maturity they too acquire greed for *vraja-bhakti* and so evolve in spontaneous devotion.

Throughout your books and teachings, you have further elaborated upon this very same goal and the very same forms of practice. If we return to the exchange with Rāmānanda, we find that both *sādhana* and *sādhya* are summarily revealed in the *nibhṛta-marun-mano* verse cited and explained by the Rāya:²

*nibhṛta-marun-mano-'kṣa-dṛḍha-yoga-yujo hṛdi yan
munaya upāsate tad arayo 'pi yayuḥ smaraṇāt
striya uragendra-bhoga-bhuja-daṇḍa-viṣakta-dhiyo
vayam api te samāḥ sama-dṛṣo 'ṅghri-saroja-sudhāḥ*

Great sages conquer the mind and senses by practising the mystic *yoga* system and controlling the breath. Thus engaging in mystic *yoga*, they see the Supersoul within their hearts and ultimately enter into impersonal Brahman. But even the enemies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead attain that position simply by thinking of the Supreme Lord. However, the damsels of Vraja, the *gopīs*, being attracted by the beauty of Kṛṣṇa, simply wanted to embrace Him and His arms, which are like serpents. Thus the *gopīs* ultimately tasted the nectar of the lotus feet of the Lord. Similarly, we Upaniṣads can also taste the nectar of His lotus feet by following in the footsteps of the *gopīs*.³

It may be asked why Rāmānanda Rāya cited an example relating to *mādhurya-rasa*. The answer is that Lord Caitanya asked about the ultimate goal of life, and that goal is found in conjugal love. In a purport, you confirm that conjugal love is the ultimate goal for most Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas:

There are different types of devotees—those in *śānta-rasa*,

1 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.9.21.

2 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.87.23.

3 Cited in Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līlā 8.224.

dāsya-rasa, sakhya-rasa, vātsalya-rasa, and mādihurya-rasa.

Although all the *rasas* are on the transcendental platform, *mādihurya-rasa* is the supreme transcendental mellow.

Consequently it is concluded that the worship of devotees engaged in the Lord’s service in *mādihurya-rasa* is the supreme spiritual activity. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and his followers mainly worship Lord Kṛṣṇa in *mādihurya-rasa*.⁴

Since a *sādhana* must correspond to its *sādhya*, Rāmānanda Rāya says that mature devotees should accept the mood of the *gopīs* in their service and think of the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The word *sama-dṛśaḥ* in the *nibhṛta-marun-mano* verse is the essence of this *sādhana*: to follow the mood of the *gopīs*. Similarly, the word *samāḥ* defines the *sādhya*: to attain a body like the *gopī(s)* whom one follows.

I should make clear that hearing and thinking about one’s role model *gopī(s)* is accompanied by standard practices such as chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Moreover, devotees should undertake such *sādhana* only when they are qualified with greed for *mādihurya-rasa*, and when they have the guidance and blessing of their spiritual master(s).

Rāmānanda Rāya concludes his dissertation, saying:

After thinking of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and their pastimes for a long time, and after getting completely free from material contamination, one is transferred to the spiritual world. There the devotee attains an opportunity to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa as one of the *gopīs*.⁵

In books detailing the path to *vraja-bhakti*, and more specifically to *mādihurya-rasa*, the Lord’s followers—notably *ācāryas* in Rūpa Gosvāmī’s line—have followed the *sādhana* taught in the *nibhṛta-marun-mano* verse.

An extensive study of the Śrutis’ prayer shows that scriptures explain the process of *rāgānuga-bhakti* as the exclusive means to attain the perfection of *gopī-bhāva*. Moreover, Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s acceptance of the verse and of Rāmānanda Rāya’s subsequent explanation is, of course, the ultimate validation of the topmost *sādhya* and the *sādhana* by which that goal is to be attained. After hearing from his newly found associate, the Lord embraced Rāmānanda Rāya and told him,

4 *Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līlā* 11.31, Purport.

5 *Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līlā* 8.229.

Now that I have actually seen your glories, what I heard about you is confirmed. As far as the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in a loving mood are concerned, you are the limit of knowledge.⁶

However, neither scriptures nor the conversation between the Lord and Rāmānanda detailed the exact goal and the means for future practising Vaiṣṇavas, for us. Thus, just as he had empowered Rāmānanda Rāya with the responsibility of elaborately illustrating the truths of mellows, *rasa-tattva*, Caitanya Mahāprabhu empowered his immediate followers to write books that would present his teachings in further depth.

In his *Jaiva-dharma*, Chapter 39, Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda has clearly described the specific duty assigned by Lord Caitanya to his principal followers. The following is a paraphrase of the Ṭhākura's words.

Svarūpa Damodara

The Lord's most intimate associate, his personal secretary, and his second body was Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī. To such a qualified devotee Caitanya Mahāprabhu entrusted the responsibility of teaching the process of worship endowed with transcendental mellows, *rasamayī upāsanā*. Svarūpa Dāmodara fulfilled the Lord's order by presenting his treatise in two parts—the internal path, *antaḥ-panthā*, and the external path, *bahiḥ-panthā*.

The exoteric path of *rāga-sādhana* was taught to Vakreśvara Paṇḍita, who in turn taught it to his disciple Gopāla Guru, and he to his disciple Dhyānacandra Gosvāmī. The latter wrote a book describing his disciplic succession's systematic step-by-step method of practice known as *Śrī Gaura-govindārcana-smaraṇa Paddhatih*. That book exists today and is followed by the students of Vakreśvara Paṇḍita's line.

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī

Svarūpa Dāmodara taught the internal or esoteric path to Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī. Caitanya Mahāprabhu entrusted the young Vaiṣṇava to the great Gosvāmī and requested him to,

“Accept Raghunātha Dāsa as your son or servant.”

Dāsa Gosvāmī thus became the personal assistant to Svarūpa Dāmodara. Indeed, the Lord gave him the name Svarūpera-Raghu, or the Raghu of Svarūpa Dāmodara, which is how the young

⁶ *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Madhya-līlā 8.239.

Gosvāmī became known in Jagannātha Purī.

When Raghunātha Dāsa enquired from the Lord about a *sannyāsa's* duties, Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied,

I have appointed Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī as your instructor. Learn from him what your duty is and how to discharge it. I do not know as much as he.

Following Caitanya Mahāprabhu's order, Dāsa Gosvāmī accompanied Svarūpa Dāmodara in rendering very confidential service described as *antaraṅga-sevā*, service performed in one's spiritual body. Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī's spiritual identity is Lalitā-devī, and Dāsa Gosvāmī's is Rati-mañjarī, Lalitā's assistant. Guided by Svarūpa Dāmodara, Raghunātha Dāsa began to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa within his mind according to the above-mentioned internal path. This meditation was recorded in Svarūpa Dāmodara's notes, his *kaḍaca*, and then expanded upon by Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī in his writings.

The following books of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī describe how to put into practice the principles of *bhakti* taught by Rūpa Gosvāmī. *Vilāpa-kusumāñjalī* describes the activities and moods that define the practice of spontaneous practitioners.

Vraja-vilāsa-stava outlines how, in their meditations, practitioners should maintain friendly relationships and dealings with *gopīs* and other Vraja-vāsīs.

Viśākhānandādi-stotram teaches *sādhakas* how to contemplate the variegated pastimes included within the eightfold pastimes.

Manaḥ-śikṣā guides devotees on how to absorb their minds in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. It should be the first book, along with *Sva-niyama-daśakam*, that an aspirant assimilates.

Sva-niyama-daśakam defines the moods required to maintain the resolute determination needed to follow the rules and regulations of spontaneous devotion.

It is significant that Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gives more emphasis to the role of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī and his books than to other *ācāryas* and their works. Needless to say, Raghunātha Dāsa and his teaching play a pivotal role in every *sādhaka's* spiritual life, but especially those on the path of spontaneous devotion. For this reason his books should be studied attentively by devotees who have diligently studied your own books, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Rūpa Gosvāmī

In his pastimes, Caitanya Mahāprabhu first entrusted the principles of *rasa* to Rāmānanda Rāya and requested him to elaborately illustrate the same. The Rāya disclosed these truths in his talks with the Lord on the banks of the Godāvarī. However, Lord Caitanya more fully accomplished this aspect of his mission through Rūpa Gosvāmī. In their talks at Prayāga, Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructed Śrī Rūpa for ten consecutive days. These teachings of the Lord are found in Rūpa Gosvāmī's books, especially in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* and *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*.

Subsequent *ācāryas* like Narottama Dāsa and Your Divine Grace have also emphasised the writings and teachings of Rūpa and Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmīs. For example,

*rūpa-raghunātha-pade hoibe ākuti
kabe hāma bujhabo se jugala-pīriti*

Only if I become attached to the instructions given by the Six Gosvāmīs, headed by Rūpa Gosvāmī and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, will it be possible for me to understand the conjugal love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.⁷

Similarly, Kavirāja Gosvāmī ends every chapter of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* with a request for the blessings of Rūpa and Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmīs—certainly a telling prayer.

Sanātana Gosvāmī

Caitanya Mahāprabhu continually instructed this seniormost of the six Gosvāmīs while they were residing in Vārāṇasī for two months. At the conclusion of their talks, Lord Caitanya gave Sanātana Gosvāmī the responsibility to elaborately illustrate the relationship between regulative and spontaneous devotion, and between the manifest, *prakaṣa*, and unmanifest, *aprakaṣa*, Gokula. The *ācārya* fulfilled the Lord's order by composing the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* and *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*.

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī is credited with collating the information for *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, which Sanātana Gosvāmī later reorganised and completed. The *ācārya* also wrote *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā* and *Saṁskāra-dīpikā*. These literary efforts fulfilled Caitanya Mahāprabhu's request

⁷ *Līlasāmāyī Prārthanā* 4.

to protect and preserve the purity of conjugal love while also maintaining the standards of regulated devotion.

Prabhodhānanda Sarasvatī

The uncle and spiritual master of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, Prabhodhānanda Sarasvatī was entrusted with the service of making known that the most elevated *sādhana* is cultivating spontaneous loving attachment for *vraja-rasa*. His best-known works are *Vṛndāvana-mahimāmṛta* and *Rādhā-rasa-śuddha-nidhi*.

Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa

Although not known to have written any books, Caitanya Mahāprabhu entrusted Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa to teach the glories of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* because of his attachment to reading it and his expertise in reciting it.

Jīva Gosvāmī

The most prolific and the youngest of the Six Gosvāmīs, Śrī Jīva was guided by Caitanya Mahāprabhu through His associates. Through Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya's disciple, Jīva Gosvāmī was entrusted with the responsibility of teaching the philosophical conclusions of Gauḍīyas. Then in Māyāpur, Nityānanda Prabhu, and in Vṛndāvana, Sanātana Gosvāmī, ordered Śrī Jīva to put in writing the philosophy of Lord Caitanya's disciplic succession. Jīva Gosvāmī thus described *sambandha*, *abhidheya*, and *prayojana* in his *Six Sandarbhas*.

Lord Nityānanda also instructed the young *sannyāsī* to study *Vedānta-sūtra* and learn how to defeat its impersonal commentaries. After taking Jīva on *parikramā* of Navadvīpa, Nitāi told his student,

*tomā-prati ājñā ei vārāṇasī giyā
vācaspati nikaṭete vedānta paḍiyā*

My order to you is this: go to Vārāṇasī and study Vedānta under Sārvabhauma's disciple, Madhusūdana Vācaspati.⁸

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭa

Known as the greatest scholar of his time, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya abandoned his monistic ways and became a firm follower of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The Lord then entrusted the Bhaṭṭācārya with the responsibility of teaching the philosophical truths, *tattva*, regarding

⁸ *Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya* 4.52.

the Absolute Reality. In addition to converting many scholars, Sārvabhauma wrote poems and prayers about Lord Caitanya, Nityānanda Prabhu, and Advaita Ācārya. Through his disciple Madhusūdana Vācaspati, Sārvabhauma conveyed the Lord's desires to Jīva Gosvāmī.

Nityānanda Prabhu and Advaita Ācārya

Caitanya Mahāprabhu entrusted his two confidential expansions, Nityānanda Prabhu and Advaita Prabhu, with the responsibility of preaching the glories of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Since both great souls lived in Bengal, that place was their assigned base for preaching. Taking the initiative, Lord Nityānanda also made known the truths about Lord Caitanya and the benefit of chanting his name.

Gauḍīya Mahāntas

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura concludes by revealing that the responsibility of the Gauḍīya *mahāntas* was to establish faith in and illuminate the truths of the *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* that Caitanya Mahāprabhu had initiated. Furthermore, Mahāprabhu entrusted some of the *mahāntas* with composing and propagating a new form of *kīrtana*.⁹ Thus ends Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's explanation.

According to verses such as *anarpita-carīm cirāt*, Caitanya Mahāprabhu descended from Goloka to offer the world the most confidential *sādhana* by which devotees can attain the perfection of *gopī-bhāva*.

He personally inspired people to chant Kṛṣṇa's names as the foundational practice that would lead them to this most confidential goal.

To Vaiṣṇava scholars like Vyeṅkaṭa-bhaṭṭa he explained the truths of *mādhurya-rasa*, and to his confidential associates named above he assigned corresponding missions.

In these ways the Lord ensured that the purpose of his descent would be fulfilled and that devotees for all time could know and perfect the conjugal mellow:

*anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalua
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasāṁ sva-bhakti-śriyam
hariḥ puraṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitah
sadaḥ hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanah*

⁹ The specific empowerment of the *ācāryas* is described in *Jaiva-dharma* 39.

May the Supreme Lord who is known as the son of Śrīmatī Śacīdevī be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the Age of Kali by his causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation has ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant mellow of devotional service, the mellow of conjugal love.¹⁰

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Caitanya Mahāprabhu empowered you to spread his mission throughout the world, a mission that you fulfilled through your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

As a pure devotee, you carried the duty assigned to all the above-mentioned saints. Through your books, Your Divine Grace revealed the literary duties Caitanya Mahāprabhu assigned to his associates, specifically to the Six Gosvāmīs. And through your worldwide preaching and *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, you fulfilled Lord Gaurāṅga's other desires, thus becoming the glorious representative of your predecessors.

The following anecdote is confirmation that you are the emissary of Lord Caitanya and his associates.

Once, Tamala Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī was taken for a hernia operation to a Bombay hospital, where Śrīla Prabhupāda later visited him. While under sedation Gosvāmī Mahārāja had a dream he recounted as follows:

Before the operation began, they gave me an anaesthetic and said, "Count from ten, down."

I got to about seven and that was it. I was meditating on Rādhā-Rasabihārī in the *ārati*, and then I had a very good dream. In my dream, Śrīla Prabhupāda had been called by the previous *ācāryas* to make a report on his preaching mission on this planet. The previous *ācāryas* asked Prabhupāda, "What is your report?"

Prabhupāda said that he had studied the people of this planet and had found that they had no capacity for any type of austerity. Nor were they very capable of studying, nor were they very pious. He said the only thing that they were able to do was, "Somehow take shelter at my feet."

After the operation, they wheeled me to my assigned room. Prabhupāda was sitting there. He said, "I came here as fast as I could. I wanted to stop the operation because I think you should have had this operation in America. But anyway, it is done now."

¹⁰ *Caitanya-caritamṛta* Ādi-līlā 1.4

He had come all the way from Juhu in a Jeep in the middle of the rush hour to try to stop the operation. I told Prabhupāda about the dream. Śrīla Prabhupāda listened very intently and said, “Actually, this is so.”¹¹

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you derived the phrase “Kṛṣṇa Consciousness” from the words *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ*, a verse by Rūpa Gosvāmī that describes the urgency to acquire greed as the basis for spontaneous devotion. This is a verse you would often quote.

In other words, when one speaks about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one speaks about that devotional practice which awakens greed for the service of the residents of Vṛndāvana, especially for the service of Rādhā’s maidservants. Your Divine Grace comments upon this verse, which was spoken by Rāmānanda Rāya to Caitanya Mahāprabhu:

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

Pure devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness cannot be had even by pious activity in hundreds and thousands of lives. It can be attained only by paying one price—that is, intense greed to obtain it. If it is available somewhere, one must purchase it without delay.¹²

PURPORT:

The previous two verses are included in the *Padyāvalī* (13, 14), an anthology compiled by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Verse 69 [the earlier verse] refers to devotional service in faith, and verse 70 [the above verse] refers to devotional service rendered out of intense greed. The first is devotional service rendered in accordance with the regulative principles, and the second refers to spontaneous loving service of the Lord without extraneous endeavour. Henceforward the basic principle underlying the talks between Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rāmānanda Rāya will be spontaneous loving service to the Lord. The regulative principles according to the injunctions of the

11 *Vānīpedia*, Prabhupāda Memories 11.

12 *Padyāvalī* 14.

śāstras are necessary insofar as one's original dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not spontaneously awakened. An example of spontaneous action is the flowing of rivers into the ocean. Nothing can stop this flow of water. Similarly, when one's dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness is awakened, it spontaneously flows to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa without impediment. Whatever will be spoken henceforth by Rāmānanda Rāya based on spontaneous love will be agreeable to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and the Lord will ask him more and more about this subject.¹³

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda! Perhaps like most of your followers, I was a fallen, destitute soul, blind to the meaning of life. You came into my world and charmed my soul with your sweet words, divine countenance, and the soothing shelter that is your lotus feet. Gradually my eyes open, and as they do, I see that within my grasp you have placed the perspective of perfection and the path to it. Please help me reach out and accept your gift, the gift of our *ācāryas*, the gift of Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!*

Your servant,

Śivarāma Swami

Initiation: 1973, September—Montreal, Canada

Current location: Budapest, Hungary

Bhakti Ananda Goswami

Dear Vaishnava family and friends,

In the 1960s I was an emancipated minor, living in the Cass Corridor in downtown Detroit, Michigan. After school, sometimes, I would walk to the Catholic Church downtown, which was always open. There I would sit, in the choir loft, deep in contemplation.

One day, downtown, hearing drums and karatālas, I followed the sound and encountered a Hare Krishna Sankirtan Party, joyously chanting and dancing. The next time that I saw them, I purchased a *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and took it home with me to Grosse Pointe Park, where my parents lived.

When I showed my Dad, Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It*

¹³ *Caitanya-caritamṛta* Madhya-līlā 8.71 and Purport.

Is, his reaction surprised me. He said that all of the great German physicists knew these Sanskrit literatures because 'that is where they got their ideas from'.

In the fall of 1973, my father bought one-way airplane tickets for my two children and I to fly to Dallas, Texas, to join the Gurukula project there. Years later, dad would take my son and daughter for japa walks by the pier in Imperial Beach, California.

My father was an artist, astronomer, philosopher, philanthropist, and an electro biophysicist. He was a founding member and the treasurer of the Bulletin of the Society of Mathematical Biology. He studied organismic sets, hierarchical systems, relational forces and connectivity under the Father of Mathematical Biology, Dr. Nicholas Rashevsky, of the University of Chicago.

Because I was reading the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, dad gave me his copy of Dr. Rashevsky's book on organismic set theory (which Dad was publishing). Years later, I gave that same book to HH Bhakti Swarup Damodara Goswami (BSDS), of the Bhaktivedanta Institute. At that time I was corresponding with BSDS, comparing Dr. Rashevsky's Organismic Sets and relational forces to the descriptions of the purusha's micro and macro cosmos in the Vaishnava Sanskrit Scriptures, as translated by Śrīla Prabhupāda.

As Bhakti Swarup Damodara Swami's interest in the field of relational forces deepened, he organized a conference on the Synthesis of Science and Religion, to be held in San Francisco, California. Bhakti Swarup Damodara Swami invited my father, myself and two of my father's old Society for Mathematical Biology friends, the famous physicists, Dr. Robert Rosen and Dr. George Kerreman to the BI Conference. Dad was unable to attend due to my Mother's illness. However, despite my own serious illness and disability, I did attend the BI conference, with the motherly help of my dear friend Linda Sabbath, who was a retired head of the Thomas Merton Center at Canada's McGill University.

Thomas Merton, the famous Catholic monk, read Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura's book at McGill University. Merton appreciated the Vaishnava Gita. Linda wanted to found a new Merton Center for Catholic and Vaishnava Studies, with me in Berkley. She was eager to meet Bhakti Swarup Damodara Swami, with me there. At the BI Conference, both Dr. Rosen and Dr. Kerreman, seeing my 'J.M. Richards Laboratory, Biophysics' ID tag, approached me. After the opening session, Dr. Rosen asked "Are you Ralph Sherman's son?"

When I said I was, Dr. Rosen replied “If it were not for your father, none of us would be here today.” I was stunned, but understood his meaning. My father had supported Dr Rashevsky, had published his most important book and his peer-reviewed journal, the *Bulletin of the Society of Mathematical Biology*, which was dedicated to research in the new fields of biophysics, neural networks, relational forces and set theory etc.

Through all of the decades that I studied Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books, lectures, and correspondence, I also worked as a Research Assistant to my Dad, in his J.M. Richards Biophysics and Medical Electronics Laboratory. We spent countless hours discussing the *shastric* Sciences together. Dad also read books by Śrīla Bhaktivinode Thakur and was deeply influenced by them. What I did not know was that when it was very dangerous, my Dad was smuggling Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *Gītā* into Communist Romania, to deliver it to a scientist that I was corresponding with. Later, that scientist escaped and claimed asylum in the USA, becoming an initiated Gauḍīya Vaishnava. In fact, dad did a lot of devotional service that he never spoke of, and which I only learned about years or decades later.

In the early morning of January 21st, 2025, as the planets were beginning to align in our solar system, my dear father, Ralph L. Sherman, graduated from his well-lived life, at the age of 102. I could not be with him, due to my severe disability, but my daughter was by his side as he departed from this life. The day before he passed-on, he asked her to call me. He was giving her a list of the most influential people in his amazing, long life. He wanted to tell me that he considered Śrīla Prabhupāda to be one of his ‘mentors’. This told me that he was remembering the etymology of the word ‘mentor’ from Homer’s Greek Odyssey. Mentor is cognate with the Sanskrit word *mantrin*, meaning an initiate’s mantra-giving spiritual master.

Dad’s voice was so faint, so soft, that I could barely hear him. Then to be sure that I heard him clearly, he loudly repeated “Prabhupāda”. Thus, “Prabhupāda” was the last word, after 102+ years, that my loving father ever spoke to me.

In loving memory of both my biological father, Ralph, and my spiritual father Śrīla, Prabhupāda.

Hare Krishna!

Bhakti Ananda Goswami

Initiation: 1973

Ramāi Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmin 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 sāravate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūmyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, according to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, even the briefest association with a pure devotee can bring one to the perfection of human life. You delivered many conditioned souls from illusion, sometimes just by your merciful glance. For the person receiving your benediction, such moments were experienced in a very personal, individual way; yet you were able to give your blessings even while tending to many persons at once.

Through your instructions, books, mission, and through other devotees, you constantly brought awareness of a disciple’s eternal relationship with guru and Kṛṣṇa. After your disappearance, your association was obtainable in the same way provided the follower was submissive. One time, when a devotee asked whether the spiritual master was in the heart of the disciple, you replied, “Yes, if you let me enter.”

A wonderful sweet exchange, Śrīla Prabhupāda. However, you had many wonderful qualities. When you planned the layout of the temple room in Māyāpur, you allowed your disciples to also take part.

“Where can we build a *vyāsāsana*?” one devotee asked. “Should we put it at the other end of the temple facing the Deities?” But another devotee objected, “Isn’t that too far for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda? Will you be able to see the Deities from such a distance?”

You replied strongly, “There is no question of separation of

distance between me and Kṛṣṇa.” So, the *vyāsāsana* was placed at the opposite end from Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, and you could see Them very nicely.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, there is one quote that I think is very important for your disciples:

“If you feel at all indebted to me, then you should preach vigorously like me. That is the proper way to repay me. Of course, no one can repay the debt to the spiritual master, but the spiritual master is very much pleased by such an attitude by the disciple.”

An example of this style of vigorous preaching was in Hawaii. You were discussing how you were able to defeat the nondevotees’ arguments. “I know the art, like karate,” you said, “of pushing on a person’s weak spot until he dies. I find their weak point and push until they die.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, even with animals you showed your great abilities. One time, when walking with devotees on a beach in California, a large Doberman pinscher approached, snarling and baring his teeth. You continued walking peacefully, but a devotee stopped and tensely faced the dog. This challenge only provoked the dog into more threatening and growling, until the devotee turned and ran to catch up to you. But as soon as he ran, the Doberman pinscher pursued him, barking and threatening to attack. Before the dog reached the devotees, however, you suddenly turned. You crouched with your feet somewhat apart, raised your cane high over your head, and gave a loud “Hut!” – and made a growling sound at the dog. At this display the dog turned and retreated quickly back to his home.

Who could do what you did, Śrīla Prabhupāda?

Your task achieved; your time well spent
You went forward with full content.
Teaching even though interest was faint
You were empowered, a mighty saint

At first, you weren’t accepted a holy sire
Resplendent like gold and a burning fire
But then when your noble words began
They thought you must be a sainted man

Speaking deep from scripture’s page
Such sweet speech from a holy sage

Many assembled and sat right down
Listening to a saint of pure renown

With humble palms together laid
An eager supplication you made
What type of life and suffering is this
When one can gain knowledge and bliss

Forsake, forsake your mortal lot
And gain a life that withers not
Receive unending youth and be
Immortal, my dear friends, with me.

A fickle thing is youth's brief span
And more than all in mortal man
In many ways you worked and strained
But none of these could be sustained

And now, I think, has come the time
To surrender to Kṛṣṇa in your prime.
Patience is needed and patience is fame
Especially when employed for eternal gain

Please go forward without any fear
Do something for the soul that is dear
Wonderful indeed, just, true and brave
Take heed of the counsel I gave

Beloved friends, never forget
Service to Kṛṣṇa, everyone's debt
All of you go forth the spiritual way
Work to be done and foundations to lay

Dear Prabhupāda, you earned success
And won high fame which God did bless
And thou hast gained the mead divine
That waits on virtue such as thine.

You rose like the sun's pure bright ray

Powerful that drives the darkness away
And thou did win a glorious name
Which none, O guru, but thou could claim.

And all the world was glad, whereon
Your glorious feats flowed and shone
For sin and stain were banished thence
By your sweet mercy influence

Dear master, let my prayer prevail
For I always want to hear your tale
As sun and moon adorn the sky
Your amazing qualities we glorify

Your fallen servant,

Ramāi Swami

Varṣāṇa Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

To properly glorify you poses a unique challenge, given our conditioned limitations. Yet, without this attempt, our inadequacy would simply remain. Though our understanding and praise may fall short, we trust in your boundless love to shine through our shortcomings.

This humble offering, therefore, awakens hope that our devotion will foster a deeper reliance on your guidance. Only through cultivating such *guru-bhakti* can we truly please Kṛṣṇa and thereby comprehend and share His divine grace.

*

Prior to meeting you, my arduous journey of empiric theology had reached an impasse due to a fundamental contradiction: the very act of seeking Truth through intellectual ascent is inherently flawed. Academically analyzing God's attributes mistakenly separates knowing from serving – a distinction that simply does not exist.

This misconception further suggests that we might understand

God without the essential component of serving His representative. As we overcome such impersonal paradigms and develop a relationship with Kṛṣṇa through *guru-sevā*, we catch a glimpse of the profound, intimate depths of the Lord's own mysterious heart.

Safeguarding the inner sanctum of His loving abode and the selfless purity of relationships found there, the Lord establishes servitude as the means and goal of spiritual perfection. He emphasizes devotion to Śrī Guru as the invocation for His personal grace and involvement in our lives. When Kṛṣṇa smiles upon us with pleasure, we become eligible to experience an inner sunrise.

My first introduction and interaction with you was through your books, which revealed to me the nature of spiritual relationships. Your analogy of seeking the sun with a candle – the inadequacy of empirical understanding – resonated profoundly. It mirrored my own life's journey, capturing the essence of my inner struggle: yearning for a vision of Kṛṣṇa, a luminary forever shining beyond the grasp of independent striving. The candle's feeble light, representing my own efforts, could never illuminate the sun. Kṛṣṇa's darshan is revealed only by His own radiant glance and grace.

Contrary to conventional knowledge, the sun's brilliance – Kṛṣṇa's light and love – is perceived not with open eyes, but through the inner ear, when it is attuned to the divine message transmitted by the unbroken lineage of *paramparā*. Enlightenment dawns upon us as the Lord's internal energy expands, illuminating our souls when our hearts are submissive and directed toward Him in service attitude.

Kṛṣṇa then awakens our sleeping spirits, inviting them into the radiant warmth of His love, heralding a dawning within the heart. Gazing beyond the limitations of our earthly understanding, we glimpse our utter dependence on Śrī Guru's grace. This dynamic is honored as Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā, so prominently portrayed during our first experience of the occasion in 1972, setting a precedent to follow for all time.

That year, here at New Vrindavan, the Janmāṣṭamī festival abounded with providential grace. Your personal invitation for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vṛndāvanacandra to accept Their new temple as a birthday gift, followed by your leading the celebration of Kṛṣṇa's appearance, surcharged the atmosphere, heightening the devotees' expectations for the following day. Nandotsava marked the perfect occasion for your appearance.

After the morning program concluded in the rustic valley

– where Their Lordships reigned in pastoral splendor – all eyes turned eastward, to the hilltop pavilion. There, final preparations for your celebration were well underway.

Campfire smoke and the fragrant haze of morning cooking drifted through the meadow below, while the first crimson blush of the new day revealed the pandal. Its silhouette emerged against the brightening sky.

All paths converged on the trail leading to the hilltop, creating a confluence of many individuals' journeys. Each was unique, yet all arrived in this exact place, at this precise moment, as if guided by a collective destiny. Before us was a most vibrant landscape of colorful arrangements and festively decorated cows. It was as though everything was conspiring to joyfully express eager anticipation of our big Lord Jagannātha's arrival. The visiting Rādhā-Dāmodara Feities, too, took Their places on the altar, eager to preside over the day's events.

Engulfed in the expanding ambiance, we felt the touch of your homeland's blessed groves, as if they too had descended to rejoice. As we ascended the hill, the pavilion emerged like a radiant portal, catalyzing a vibrant spiritual awakening. Bathed in the glow and gentle current, we felt a profound opening, a deeper attunement to absolute wisdom. It connected us to the fundamental Truth – in Kṛṣṇa consciousness we are held, protected, and loved by Kṛṣṇa's internal potency.

How perfect was this scene, falling most appropriately in the midst of your Bhāgavata Dharma Discourse lecture series – the first of its kind in the Western world? That clear August morning we experienced a hint of the inner meaning of Śrī Vyasa Puja as you both explained and personified the significance of the occasion.

*

The light, life, and love emanating from the *śāstra* became so vibrantly real, so palpably present, that everything felt utterly fresh, as if we were experiencing it for the very first time. Hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from the very embodiment of the *bhāgavata*, we found ourselves face to face with the outer manifestation of Paramātmā. We finally saw, seated before us in your mortal form, the eternal guide who had always accompanied us. It was you who had constantly watched over us, walked beside us, and held us fast, even when the shadows of past conditioning tempted us back into illusion.

A deeper unfolding began within us, a shift that was reflected through our surroundings. The assemblage of wonderful events, elements, setting, and devotees was most heartwarming. It was like a scene lifted from the pages of the *Kṛṣṇa* book, granting us privileged entry into the scripture's inner essence. You were the source of that potency. You channeled the full influence of Śrīla Vyāsadeva to illuminate new vistas of existence. In doing so, you became more intimately present to us than we were even to ourselves.

Kṛṣṇa's love, like a joyous current, began to cleanse and reshape us. Deep within, immortal impressions of His Divine Grace took hold. The elusive dynamics of God realization became self-evident in your association, a radiant testament to the truth that only through loving Kṛṣṇa can we truly know Him.

Remembering you, we find ourselves ever increasingly inspired by your teachings. Through them, we experience a genuine connection with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, forged in the resonant vibration of the *mahā-mantra*. This sacred hymn is the innermost heart of all inspired scripture.

With this *sambandha* – connection – we receive a lifeline to sustain us through long decades of seeming separation. It overcomes the misconception that in your departure from this earthly sphere we have lost ourselves yet again. The truth is you were never lost to us.

The paradoxical truth – that the deepest separation holds the highest communion within it – is reconciled in your teachings. You live in them forever alongside your devoted followers, who remain always with you. Therein your legacy endures and expands.

As we cling to this lifeline by assimilating your instructions, your presence prevails within the sacred, eternal realm of transcendental sound. Your enduring influence carries us into ever deeper intimacy with you.

Following your guidance, trusting implicitly in your words, our faith deepens. We know you as the founder-*ācārya* because your presentation of the eternal truth is comprehensible to all humankind, even when people speak, hear, and act under the influence of diverse conditionings. In your collective body of ISKCON, we have the ongoing privilege of displaying our love and loyalty by cooperating among ourselves.

*

Today, we fondly recall the golden opportunity to host you here at New Vrindavan, where your explanation of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā breathed

new life into our understanding of the book *Bhāgavatam*. Serving you then, a *mahā-bhāgavata* – the very personification of *śāstra* – allows us to relive that experience even today. Indeed, your mission affirms the truth expressed in that cherished benedictory verse: “This *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* is as brilliant as the sun, and it has arisen just after the departure of Lord Kṛṣṇa to His own abode, accompanied by religion, knowledge, etc. Persons who have lost their vision due to the dense darkness of ignorance in the Age of Kali shall get light from this *Purāṇa*.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.43)

That Vyāsa-pūjā, nestled within your Bhāgavata Dharma Discourses, became the very crux of our spiritual journey. The morning ceremony, though externally brief, ushered in a pivotal and extended epiphany in our spiritual lives. A revelation that blossoms anew each year with every approaching Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā.

Your words, a torch of knowledge, anointed by the salve of your love, reveal a glimpse of the world’s true source and goal. Listening to you, we discern a deeper harmony within the diverse melodies of devotion sung across cultures and epics by gurus, *sādhus*, and *śāstras* alike.

Exemplifying the ideal disciple, taking your guru’s teachings to heart, even at your first meeting, you are the perfect master. You are the culmination of all who came before, their contributions paving the way for your teachings and actions, your pastimes and precepts, to unveil the *summum bonum*. What a vibrant reality it is, a landscape of touchstones where all movement is dance and every word blends with the most sacred, enchanting song!

By descending from that supreme abode and coming before us, you planted a seed in the heart of my former empiric self. Sprouting, it grows into the understanding that our unconditional commitment to your perfect guidance offers the only means to realize scripture’s true import.

Now, at last, we understand the proper application of the ascending process. As our prayers rise up to you, Kṛṣṇa consciousness descends in response. This reciprocal exchange, the very quintessence of spiritual striving, is perfected in devotion to Śrī Guru and culminates on the blessed occasion of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā.

As the empowered representative of Lord Nityānanda, you expand the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and the love of Vṛndāvana to the farthest corners of the world, supplying the most munificent welfare service to all souls.

Today, as dawn breaks over that same eastern hill where we celebrated our first Vyāsa-pūjā, the stillness of night transitions into a chorus of birdsong, setting the scene for echoes of the *mahā-mantra* to perpetuate the spiritual life you breathed into this community.

In quiet reflection, I dwell upon your presence within the instructions you imparted to us here. This practice anchors my soul even during life's darkest storms. It ensures that your love shines forth in all we say and do, to the extent we surrender unconditionally to serving your mission.

I see the *ārati* lamp of *guru-pūjā* on this most blessed day with more significance than my empirical self could ever have conceived. Now, the gentle flicker of the flame has expanded into a metaphor, representing the warmth of devotion in our hearts, a humble gesture to offer you a welcoming reception.

For those of us striving to follow in your footsteps, the same imagery brightens our path, allowing us to see our shadows and shortcomings anew, in the light of awareness and compassion, kindled in the spiritual realm of *vāñī-sevā*.

Your eternal servant,

Varṣāṇa Swami

Devamrita Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupada,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

When Sanātana Gosvāmī met Caitanya Mahāprabhu at Vārāṇasī, they shared an exchange that deeply relates to what you've done for me (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 20.62–64):

My dear Sanātana, please hear from Me. Kṛṣṇa is very merciful, and He is the deliverer of all fallen souls.

My dear Sanātana, Kṛṣṇa has saved you from Mahāaurava, life's deepest hell. He is an ocean of mercy, and His activities are very grave.

In the purport you relate that Caitanya Mahāprabhu thanked Kṛṣṇa for His mercy upon Sanātana. How extraordinary – Kṛṣṇa, as Lord Caitanya, thanking Kṛṣṇa for His magnanimity in setting Sanātana

free.

Meditating on all I owe you I ponder: will my words, one day soon, ever convey the gratitude you deserve? You stopped my descent not only into “life’s deepest hell” but also into the lower species. My human form was surely lost. You masterfully salvaged this New York pseudo-enjoyer and Ivy League peacock from the global rubbish heap that poses as culture today.

Sanātana Gosvāmī’s remarkable response to Mahāprabhu I wholeheartedly embrace: “I do not know who Kṛṣṇa is. As far as I am concerned, I have been released from prison only by Your mercy.”

Because your boundless, steadfast compassion defied all odds, your apprentices and trainees can break free of the most severe penal servitude – no longer chained by lust, anger, greed, and envy – in the ultimate maximum-security prison that is the material nature.

Giving what far surpasses mere liberation, you grant the lowest the highest opportunity – to eagerly assist Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and thereby attain the rare service of the Divine Couple (*rādhā-kṛṣṇa prāṇa mora yugala-kīśora*).

The impossible can be accomplished, by your divine grace.

Your servant,

Devamrita Swami

Mahādyuti Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

Recently, your disciple Swarup Dāsa, posted on social media that he often asks himself how it’s possible to express and show his gratitude for what you have given him. He wrote that you’ve “taken me from the darkness of ignorance to the light of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, from suffering, misery, and hopelessness to a life of joy and happiness, from bondage to freedom.” His words struck a chord in my heart, as

he had eloquently expressed exactly what I was thinking.

Swarup Prabhu goes on to say that he found his answer in your purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4.22.47: ““A joker’s activities simply arouse laughter, and a person who tries to repay the spiritual master or teacher of the transcendental message of Kṛṣṇa becomes a laughingstock just like a joker because it is not possible to repay such a debt. The best friend and benefactor of all people is one who awakens humanity to its original Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

Indeed! You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are certainly that “best friend and benefactor” saving suffering humanity. Though humanity in general has not yet understood that, and despite various attempts of the demons to impede Lord Caitanya’s mission, your teachings continue to spread like wildfire, and huge numbers of sincere souls continue to join!

When you were physically with us here, you seemed to me, in your lectures and purports, to closely identify with Prahlāda Mahārāja, who famously said that he was concerned only “for the fools and rascals who are making elaborate plans for material happiness.” (*Bhāgavatam* 7.9.43) That seems to be also your only concern, and in fact, anyone who is not a devotee of Kṛṣṇa certainly is an unfortunate fool or rascal. You taught us, therefore, that our duty as Vaiṣṇavas is to try to make the unfortunate fortunate by bringing them closer to Kṛṣṇa. Without Kṛṣṇa, there’s no consciousness, as without the sun, there’s no shining.

Though we, your disciples and followers, are the “laughingstock” you mentioned who are trying to repay our colossal debt to you, nonetheless we try, “hope against hope,” to do something useful to direct the misled human beings off the highway to hell and onto the path back home, back to Godhead.

Our tremendous thanks to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us, unqualified though we are, this ecstatic opportunity to try to help you. All glories to you!

Your grateful servant and disciple,

Mahādyuti Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

As I continue to mature in life and Krishna Consciousness my understanding of the depths of the illusion of this material world increases. And thus, with every passing year, my appreciation of what you have done, not only for me personally, but for this entire world – nay, the entire material creation – grows immensely. As does my understanding of my inability to ever repay you for what you have given to us.

When we were young, and naïve about everything, you invited us to participate in your great mission to save mankind. *If* some of us had read some of your writing we may have had a vague idea of what you were doing, or where you were taking us. Many, attracted to the transcendental Hare Krishna Movement for other reasons didn't know, and perhaps didn't care, as association with your followers offered the most amazing experience available anywhere, even for those otherwise wild times. We simply stepped onto a Magic-carpet Ride that was taking the Galaxy by storm, and every day offered a new adventure.

As we continued to hear from you we began to understand that we were all conditioned souls, born yet again, in this latest of a limitless string of consecutive births and deaths, and covered by the Lord's alluring illusory energy, *Māyā*. Of course, because many of us were still getting stoned, when we became sober we had to agree that yes, we were in *Māyā*, and that we were only too happy to *continue* being in *Māyā*. Indeed, at the time, we loved it. But despite the challenges of our uncontrolled senses, thousands of us continued our efforts to reform ourselves, if only because that amazing *prasādam* wasn't available anywhere else, what to speak of those ecstatic *kīrtans* that went on for hours. The life of chanting, dancing and feasting, made us believe that we could indeed, achieve "escape velocity" by the end of this life. And so we have persisted.

Fast forward fifty years. The courses of KC 101 are far behind us, as we continue our education in the "Graduate School of Bhakti." Now we get a much better grasp of the plight of the countless conditioned souls of this world of darkness, and it is not just sobering, but downright terrifying.

The blissful *jīva* is inherently attracted to Krishna in the spiritual world. But what's the plight of that *jīva* in the material world? Not finding Krishna, its spiritual *rati* undergoes a perverse material transformation. Giving up the Lord as object of *rati*, the *jīva* takes material things as the object of *rati*, and develops an irresistible attraction to the temporary things of this world.

Rāga also becomes perverted in the material world, and instead of being completely and spontaneously absorbed in Krishna, perverted *raga* accepts material things as its objects: flowers, food, drink, intoxicants, clothing, shelter, or lover. Instead of *raga* for the Lord leading to the highest condition of existence, *raga* for material things leads us to degradation.

And perhaps most sadly, *prema*, the natural loving propensity of the soul, in the material world not finding Krishna as its object, is transformed to temporary, despicable material *rasas* with associated names, relationships, actions, and processes, resulting in the duality of happiness and grief.

All of the natural tendencies of the *jīva* are with it in the material world, but not finding Krishna as the object of love, directs those propensities to material objects. Instead of producing love and bliss, they produce happiness and sorrow. The bewildered *jīva* is at a complete and total loss as to why its natural efforts repeatedly result in frustration and sorrow, bringing only emptiness where it expected to find total fulfillment. Following his inclinations to possess and enjoy material objects he meets with repeated frustration, life after life after life.

Now, finally, the full, complete picture emerges. More than just "being in *Māyā*," all of the countless trillions of living beings living in this world of darkness are absolutely, unequivocally, impossibly and forever condemned to rotate in repeated birth and death and ignorance because the *jīva's* natural endowments direct them *away* from Krishna *to* the material energy. Away from the permanent to the impermanent. Away from the spiritual reality to the material masquerade. And each and every *jīva* is hopelessly condemned to fall for the ruse, again and again and countless times, again.

Until. Until that one wonderful day they have the unimaginable, and fantastic good fortune of coming into contact with a devotee of the Lord, who, feeling compassion for them, informs them that there is a reality beyond this one that is wonderful and perfect, thus offering them a ticket to freedom, and truth, and light, and infinite

love and bliss that they always knew existed and desired, and were searching hopelessly for, finally hopeless no longer.

And that most kind, most generous, most compassionate, most wonderful soul – the mercy incarnation for the entire creation is none other than you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! You are the one, who, with unlimited mercy and compassion, and understanding the plight of the conditioned souls, struggled to write and print your books to bring Krishna Consciousness to every corner of the world, to all of its people, and in all of its languages. You are that one who, with great compassion, trained and encouraged your young, and in many ways unqualified students to open temples as oases in the desert of the material world. You are the one who strove against all odds to establish the mission of Lord Chaitanya to bestow pure love of God to countless souls for the next 10,000 years. Without the mercy of the pure devotees this material creation is condemned, but by your mercy it is being salvaged for countless lost, hopeless, and helpless souls.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, a million thank you's are insufficient to convey my gratitude and repay the debt I have to you, but I offer my efforts to extend your grace to others as a token of the gratitude in my heart.

Your eternal servant,

Dhanesvara Das Goswami

Initiation: 1974, April—Gainesville, Florida, USA

Current location: Whangarei, New Zealand

Contact: dhanesvara@gmail.com

Nirañjana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

The time for your Vyāsa-pūjā is quickly approaching, and we eagerly await this sacred day when a disciple is given a unique opportunity to offer homage to his spiritual master on the day of his appearance.

It's a time to express gratitude to you and to take inventory of my heart based on the ever-fresh realizations I should have experienced

while serving your instructions in deep separation from your physical presence.

I must sadly admit, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that I have not had any new realizations this year. Instead, I have been consumed by the pain of separation, not only from you but also from your service. This year I have nothing to offer you except my paltry attempts to restore my health.

I could say I offer you my heart, but I should provide you with a clean heart, not a heart still contaminated with unwanted desires. It's been over fifty years since you offered me your service and the holy name, replete with all the cleansing potency required to obtain a clean heart. My heart should be a clean altar for you to sit on by this time. Regrettably, it is not.

The simple fact is that I have nothing to offer except a strong desire to please you someday. To say that I am grateful for this desire would be inadequate. It's what keeps me alive. It gives me hope and a purpose for living.

On this most auspicious day of your divine appearance, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I beg you to please find in me the sincerity to say that I am,

Your servant eternally,

Nirañjana Swami

Bhakti Raghava Swami

You Are the One

O dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda

You are the one

Giving me hope, giving me strength

Setting me free, making me happy

O dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda

You are the one

Opening my heart, abating my fear

Showing me light, making me fight

O dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda

You are the one

Gentle and kind, serene and grave
Eager to serve, giver of *prema*

O dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda
You are the one
Humble and meek, fearless and pure
Giving your life, so all can live

O dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda
You are the one
Words of wisdom, forever to hear
Beacon of hope. my true savior

O dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda
You are the one
Servant of the servant,
My master and eternal guide

O dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda
You are the one
Savior of the most fallen
My ever well-wisher

O dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda
You are the one
Fleeting of time, weak in bhakti
Wanting to weep, at your lotus feet

O dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda
You are the one
Your Divine Grace, my only love
Seeking your shelter, your beloved Raghav

Dhanurdhara Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you!

I marvel at your genius. I had written an article about that for my weekly blog. Please accept this offering at your lotus feet on this glorious day.

Your servant,

Dhanurdhara Swami

Initiation: 1974, November—Dallas, Texas, USA

Current location: New Jersey, USA

The Genius of Śrīla Prabhupāda and the Principle of Intrapreneurship.

In my last article *Build Devotees, Not Temples* I opined that institutions like ISKCON need to spend more resources supporting and empowering its people, especially those that are creators and doers, to successfully carry its mission into the future. I shared this article with a friend who was a business consultant. He was intrigued by the article and shared with me something from his own experience in the business world that he thought was relevant to the topic at hand. He described the concept of intrapreneurship. In this post, I will briefly share his experience and show how it inspired me to even further realize Śrīla Prabhupāda's genius.

My friend worked for Adobe as a consultant. They had basically one product, Photoshop, and the engineers who had developed the company had improved it as far as it could go. The CEO became concerned. He saw that this one-product company was gradually losing the culture of initiative that initially spurred its success. He knew the history of several successful companies developed by self-motivated and creative people who gradually ceded their authority to technicians and managers only to see the company become stagnant and fail. He became concerned.

He thought of Kodak, for example, who were pioneers in the technology of photography. It went from an established major company to bankruptcy. Led by bureaucrats resistant to internal change, they lost their inability to keep up with smaller, more nimble competitors that could innovate quickly and respond to changing market trends.

The CEO realized he needed to do something. He decided to apply the principle of Intrapreneurship.

Intrapreneurship refers to a system within an organization that enables creative and innovative people to take the initiative to develop pioneering products and services. And to encourage such creativity and risk-taking, the company not only empowers the

employees to innovate but ensures the “intrapreneurs” that they will not be held accountable for any failures or losses as a result of their experiment. It’s called intrapreneurship because it gives the same creative freedom to people within a corporation or organization that independent entrepreneurs have.

It has been seen that companies who find ways to allow the self-motivated to leverage their creativity and ingenuity are more likely to survive and grow, especially in the rapidly changing modern world. One of many such examples of success include Google’s “20% time program” which allowed their employees to allot a fifth of their worktime to freely engage in intrapreneurship. The result: gmail.

When listening to my friend’s experience of intrapreneurship I thought of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s genius in setting up ISKCON along similar principles by encouraging a system of management that would empower independently thoughtful and creative devotees. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s understanding of the principle of intrapreneurship is outlined in his famous letter to Karandhara dasa.[i] Below is a relevant excerpt:

Regarding your points about taxation, corporate status, etc., I have heard from Jayatirtha you want to make big plan for centralisation of management, taxes, monies, corporate status, bookkeeping, credit, like that. I do not at all approve of such plan. Do not centralise anything. Each temple must remain independent and self-sufficient. That was my plan from the very beginning, why you are thinking otherwise? Once before you wanted to do something centralising with your GBC meeting, and if I did not interfere the whole thing would have been killed. Do not think in this way of big corporation, big credits, centralisation--these are all nonsense proposals. Only thing I wanted was that books printing and distribution should be centralised, therefore I appointed you and Bali Mardan to do it. Otherwise, management, everything, should be done locally by local men. Accounts must be kept, things must be in order and lawfully done, but that should be each temple’s concern, not yours. Krishna Consciousness Movement is for training men to be independently thoughtful and competent in all types of departments of knowledge and action, not for making bureaucracy. Once there is bureaucracy the whole thing will be spoiled. There must be always individual

striving and work and responsibility, competitive spirit, not that one shall dominate and distribute benefits to the others and they do nothing but beg from you and you provide.

Genius? At least, it's quite remarkable that more than fifty years ago at the beginning of his fledgling movement he so clearly understood these principles of empowerment and tried to set up his movement on principles of intrapreneurship that only became prominent in modern corporate leadership over thirty years later. Let us all honor in our own capacity the genius of Śrīla Prabhupāda and the principle of intrapreneurship.

[i] [https://vanisource.org/wiki/721222 - Letter to Karandhara written from Bombay?hl=thoughtful%7Cindependently](https://vanisource.org/wiki/721222_-_Letter_to_Karandhara_written_from_Bombay?hl=thoughtful%7Cindependently)

Hanumātpreṣaka Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to your good self, who are so kindly delivering the whole world from darkness by your unlimited kindness and austerity.

Though you have accepted us as your disciple, we are full of substantial disqualifications. Yet we humbly hope to offer a few words of gratitude on the anniversary of your appearance in this material world.

Very prominent is that at 77 years old, our body is quite naturally failing. We are losing sight, hearing, mobility, memory, etc., but we remember again and again hearing you say that old age is a good friend to a devotee. It seems very, very true.

Old age is pushing us off the gross platform of life onto the intellectual, *buddhi*, platform and making the purely spiritual platform more and more visible, accessible for practical reform.

We feel that we have been a rather insincere disciple, but have been making some effort for a long time. The result is amazing. We feel like your comment that even a dog can take part in this movement and dance in ecstasy is being proven to us. Some more advanced aspects of devotional service seem to be opening up to us (or else we are becoming seriously senile). We feel that we can say that your process, by your mercy, really works.

There is so much more to say, but we have the chance to communicate with you daily during *maṅgala-ārati*, *saṅkīrtana*,

japa, etc., so we will end here and listen to the comments by other members of the chorus.

Thank you.

Maybe next time we meet, Your Divine Grace and all members of ISKCON will be in Navadvīpa with Nimāi.

Hanumātpreṣaka Swami

Bhakti Vikāsa Swami

Most dear, revered Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Fifty years ago on Janmāṣṭamī you formally accepted me as your disciple. I have made many mistakes in my life, but taking shelter at your lotus feet was one thing I did right for sure. Everything else I did before that was all a mistake, one after another. Even after formally coming to your shelter, I continue to make mistakes, moment after moment, by not fully applying myself to your instructions.

But you already know of my weaknesses and struggles, and you like to hear good news, so I hope you will be pleased to know that in the last year I published *The Mood and Mission of Śrīla Prabhupāda*, which I hope will be a significant contribution to your mission, now and into the future. I also partook in the installation of splendidly beautiful Śrī Gaura Rādhā-Vallabha in your temple in Bhopal, run by my disciples, in a ceremony expertly conducted by members of the ISKCON Deity Worship Ministry. I also completed, in 670 lectures, a series of talks on *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma*. Even though my recorded lectures are deliberately nonpopulistic and aim to transparently convey the message you gave “as it is,” they are reaching an ever-increasing audience of mostly serious listeners.

I can be sure that the farm projects and book distribution I oversee are pleasing to you, because you repeatedly stressed the importance of these programs.

Construction of a magnificent stone temple in Salem, Tamil Nadu, is nearing completion, and we envision opening it next year,

if Kṛṣṇa permits. Already a community of around one hundred families live close by.

My disciples are heading three *saṅkīrtana padayātrās*: in Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, and a tribal area of Maharashtra.

I pray these endeavors may bring you some satisfaction.

On behalf of the devotees who are working hard to push these programs, I offer you these efforts, in a mood of grateful service, as contributions within the worldwide propagation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness that you inaugurated.

The previous year has seen more ups and downs in my life and in projects I oversee in your service; some progress amid inevitable struggles and challenges, all on the background of my perennial anxiety about the ongoing state of your movement.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your personal presence, your followers were united and animated by your prediction that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement would save the world in its darkest hour. The world has become unimaginably darker since then, but your books, instructions, movement, and vision can still save it.

In my Vyāsa-pūjā offering to you last year, I quoted:

Book distribution and farms: these are our solid programs. They can change the whole world. The whole foundation of animal civilization can be destroyed.¹

If these farms become successful then the whole world will be enveloped by Kṛṣṇa consciousness.²

I then stated: “If we, your followers, take these words to heart (*guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete kariyā aikya, āra nā kariha mane āśā*), the world will change, people will experience the benefits of your wisdom, and automatically, rightfully, the whole world will glorify you.”

Your books and instructions are still there, but your movement is not very united, and its members have largely forgotten your vision for saving the world. Book distribution is going on, but I am distraught, considering how much more we as a movement could have done had we not jettisoned your instructions regarding farms and *varṇāśrama-dharma*. We could have been a major world force in alternative living, with thousands, if not millions, on your farms. At least we could have saved so many good souls who came to Kṛṣṇa consciousness but then left or severely slackened their practices

because we have no arrangement for them to live a decent family life.

But it can still be done. I am simply praying that *The Mood and Mission of Śrīla Prabhupāda* can be instrumental in waking up your followers to the legacy you bequeathed them and their responsibility to fulfill it. That would be the most important service I have offered you so far.

May my words and actions ever be faithful and pleasing to you.

*Aspiring to eternally remain,
Your servant,*

Bhakti Vikāsa Swami

Guru Prasad Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your holy lotus feet. All glories to you, who are an ocean of mercy and performed unfathomable and unimaginable quantities of service.

Recently, I have received a large area of responsibility. For me, it is overwhelming, but for you it would be like picking up a blade of grass. Your ability to do whatever necessary to please Kṛṣṇa and His devotees is my only source of inspiration in performing this service. In this present circumstance, I'd begun to realize to some degree, how much you did for us, and how much you were willing to sacrifice to establish your transcendental movement. Yet your compassionate nature encompasses our contributions, and you would simply say, "Thank you very much."

You always walked at very fast gait
Yet by compassion for us you wait
So much service has come my way
But merely a drop for you, like play

I feel like a dwarf trying to reach the moon. Your moonlike demeanor makes those apparently impossible goals attainable. It is simply by your empowerment that I can achieve anything in the realm of devotional service, which is beyond the scope of my material consciousness: *kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*. By your grace the means to accomplish the seemingly intangible objectives

laid down by you and the previous *ācāryas* have been delivered: *kali-kālera dharma –kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana*. You have spoon-fed us with the holy name, although we resist, driven by our conditioning and attachments. They melt away by the tireless and inexhaustible gift that you delivered without any personal expectation; only to please your Guru Mahārāja and Lord Caitanya.

No, it is my duty to accept that incomparable endowment without hesitation and apply it to every aspect of my life, service, thoughts, and words. That can only be gained by adherence to your divine instructions and example. Please infuse that determination in my heart, and thereby allowing me to serve you in the best way possible.

Your undeserving but totally dependent servant,

Guru Prasad Swami

Candrasekhara Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

For many years I tried to chant “Hare Krishna.” I knew that it was the main pillar of our purification. I had heard many classes on improving the quality of chanting. I have even given many classes on the importance of chanting and why perfection of chanting is so important. However, from the very day of my joining the temple in Berkeley and later being initiated, the process of chanting with attention seemed beyond my grasp.

There is always so much service to do. A true Krishna Conscious day is at least 36 hours. Everything has to fit in there somewhere. There are Devotees monitoring our progress and our accomplishments. “Did you make it to *Maṅgala Arotik*?” “Are all the dishes washed?” “I didn’t see you in *Bhāgavatam* class.” “What was your book score?” “How much Lakṣmī did you bring in?” So on and on it goes. “We need volunteers to cut up in the kitchen.”

We know that to follow the rules that you, Prabhupāda, laid

down is not easy, and there seems to be something upward of 10,000 of them. After a while we learn which ones we are measured by, at least by our authorities. Rarely do they ask, “How is your chanting?” Yes, once every year or six, some leader may ask about our chanting, but all we have to do is mumble off an, “OK” or “Pretty good” and that will be that. Luckily, there is no evidence. Heh, heh. No one can check your chanting. We are safe there. So much rot underneath the floorboards.

The strange thing is that chanting is said to be an indicator of our spiritual health and to count for 90% of our progress. That idea is always there, and that idea kept bumping around in the back of my mind like a loose pop can in the back of a traveling van.

It is possible to just read *Bhāgavatam* and think, one day I will magically develop an attraction. Or we can joke about how attraction will come in one million births, and actually, that is pretty soon, when compared to eternity.

I always seemed to be, “trying to get through my rounds.” Just trying to get through them. For me, success was completing my allotted 16. The mind NEVER stays still, NEVER.

When I was a young Devotee, I told myself that, later, when I get some Devotional Service under my belt, when I become advanced, I will surely by that time be able to chant better. Someday it will improve. Someday never comes, as the song goes. When you get into your 60’s or worse yet into your 70’s, you start thinking, “When is this magic moment going to happen?” And then it dawns on you: Unless you make some change in your life, unless you make it happen, it ain’t gonna happen.

It is an interesting thing that the process of bringing the consciousness to focus on Krishna, in His Holy Name, can be so taxing, so laborious. Why should that be? Will it always be that way? Here, I am speaking for myself, I have no way of knowing what is going on in other Devotee’s minds and hearts. Sometimes it feels as if my head will break open with one more mantra. This is proof positive that I don’t love Krishna—not even a little bit. Yet, I am engaged in Devotional Service and have “to some percentage” been engaging in that service for 40+ years. There must be some kind of attraction there.

If I increase the quality of chanting, no one is going to know, no one is going to ask—except maybe *Ādi Puruṣa* and *Mithuna*. Well, there are two on my team. Well, then how in the blue blazes can *Japa*

be upgraded? How can I really chant with more focus?

Here is what I did. Your mileage may vary.

First, I prayed to the Deities that They would help me to chant better. I tried many small strategies that were recommended by other Devotees. I found that some of these strategies didn't work, at least for me. I believe that perfecting *Japa* is a personal path. What works for one, might not work for others. Personally, I never sit down while chanting; it never works for me; I am off to dreamland in moments. My body is too MOI (Mode of Ignorance). Heck, I have even struggled to stop nodding while walking at a good clip, what to speak of being a "Lotus Podder."

I try to find very, very boring places to chant, so that I won't be distracted. Turning down the lights helps me. I took to waking up early to chant which seems to give me the spacious feeling that I won't be invaded by some imperative in the next second.

I tried to work at getting a GOOD START. If the first few rounds are good, it sets the stage for the entire 16. I have disabled all notifications on my cell phone. I heard a class by Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu about how Prabhupāda once said that you should just try to hear yourself sincerely chanting, "Hare Krishna." Somehow that simple statement meant something to me. It spoke to me.

Chanting is like riding an ocean wave. It is easy to fall off and, as surfers say, "Eat the bottom." Another statement that speaks to me is, "Imagine you are talking to Krishna." Krishna is personally present on your tongue. I am speaking to Him, asking Him to hear my mantras.

I came across the interesting realization that one of the reasons that my mind was so active and preoccupied during *Japa* is because I am planning some type of "service" and I hope then that that "service" will make me outstanding in the society of Devotees. Like the Supersoul, my False Ego is also my constant companion.

It is fair to say that my *Japa* is way, way better than it used to be. See, see, you can make your *Japa* better by just wanting, praying and working at it. 40 wasted years, well, can't do anything about that now.

In case you are wondering, no tears come to my eyes, or any of that really Haridāsa Ṭhākura type stuff, but hey, my *Japa* is way, way better than it was. That means a lot to me. Maybe, even, one day I will become a real Devotee or something. I will love Krishna even more than pizza. Imagine!!

TRIBUTES
BY
INITIATED
DISCIPLES

Your servant,

Candrasedkhara Swami

Initiation: 1976, November—California, USA

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

My most revered spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most fallen obeisances. All glories to you, who kindly demonstrated unflinching faith in the words and order of your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda. Subsequently, you also desired from your disciples to demonstrate to your granddisciples, and thus the flow of pure devotional service to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa will continue without hesitation and confusion.

Spiritual success can include material success, but material success cannot be counted as spiritual success. Yet if the subject matter comes from your explicitly expressed desire, that can be inspiring to a dull *sādhaka* like myself. I believe it will be pure devotional service I can be rendering. What to speak of when my godbrothers are encouraging and blessing me to such an endeavor in Thailand, I feel that many times your divine hands are sheltering me and showering your mercy. I have vowed for your pleasure to remain enthusiastic, determined, and to inspire your granddisciples and acquaintances to fulfill your desires in Thailand.

There is a significant surge in preaching activities. *Harināma* and book distribution in recent years after the COVID epidemic, and I am happy to say that a significant breakthrough has come in Indian preaching. It is your mercy on crows like me that I am engaged in preaching to the “locally domiciled crows.”

Please bestow your merciful blessings upon this insignificant disciple of Your Divine Grace that I can meditate only on your desires yet to be fulfilled at New Vrindaban as well after the completion of this present project and offering at your lotus feet.

*Your insignificant servant who is but a speck
of dust clinging to your lotus feet,*

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

Shyamasundara Das

Prabhupāda, you always said that you don't want millions of stars; you want one moon. "The light from one moon outshines millions of stars." Well, you'll be happy to know you've created hundreds of thousands of moons out there in the world today.

Your disciples and their disciples have expanded your pure teachings into every nook and cranny of contemporary geography and affairs. What strikes me is the purity they have maintained. It's like you're still present, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in an amplified way, everywhere I go on this planet earth.

When I meet Radhanath Swami or Malati or Indradyumna Swami or Bhakti-vijnana Maharaj or Yadubara or Visakha devi, Giriraj, Gopal Krishna, Gaurāṅga in Mumbai, or Jai Nitai and Radha Mohan in London—the list is endless—so many moons! When I meet these great souls I know beyond question that your pure legacy is intact and exploding forth.

I observe hundreds of your devotees at ISKCON leadership meetings in Māyāpur from my little bookstall—most of whom I've never met or can't remember their names (three generations on now, the simple names are all taken, and some are three or even four names long)—and I'm filled with hope. It's only a matter of time. I won't live to see it happen, but already the flowers of Krishna consciousness delight the planet, and someday hence your abundant fruits must certainly save the world.

Shyamasundara Dasa

Initiation: 1967, January—San Francisco, USA

Govinda Dāsi

My Dear Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances from this fallen soul of Kali Yuga. Just like you told us so many times—this Kali Yuga will intensify, and within 50 years, you will see, how this western civilization will be destroyed. It has to be destroyed, you said, in order that the Golden Age can come to fruition. So clearly I recall you explain the coming Golden Age, that tiny sliver in Kali Yuga when God consciousness will dominate demoniac consciousness, and when devotees will populate the earth.

On one occasion, I asked, “So, Śrīla Prabhupāda, how will it work? Will everyone become devotees in this coming Golden Age?”

You then held your hands out like two sides of a scale, palms upward, and said, “In this next 10,000 years many devotees will be there, and the demons will be less.” As you said this, your “devotee hand” moved slowly upward and your “demon hand” moved slowly downward. Then you said, after 10,000 years it will reverse, and there will be less devotees and the demons will increase.” Saying this, you moved your “demon hand” upward like a scale, and your “devotee hand” downward. Slowly, very slowly.

“It will increase,” You added. “That is also stated, that for ten thousand years, the Krishna consciousness movement will increase. Yes. Within ten thousand years, if they become Krishna conscious, then life is successful. After ten thousand years, the gloomy picture of Kali will come. Still, there is time. Ten thousand years is not a short period. We have passed five thousand years, so we still have ten thousand. We have got fifteen thousand years in total. The duration of Kali Yuga is 432,000 years.”

But we wondered how all this will take place, how it will be possible. Then in 1973, you said, “Very soon, civilization will collapse all over the world, it will collapse, either you bring this ism or that ism.....”

Then in 2020, almost fifty years later, we saw the beginning of the collapse. There was “mass poisoning and mass deception.” Now, five years later, we are at the point of combustion with military forces and wars flanking all sides of the planet. You told us this would happen. You warned us, and you told us what to do, how to prepare.

“Get farms, get self-sufficient, create *varnashram* communities,” to protect the devotees from harm. “Grow food, keep cows for milk, and learn to live independently from western civilization.” And most importantly, you told us, keep the *Harināma saṅkīrtans* going on all the streets and public places of the world!

This Hare Krishna *Mahāmantra* is the only weapon to defend against the demons of this Kali Yuga. Public *saṅkīrtan* melts down the sinfulness of the culture—but it must reach the masses. It must be held not only in temples and homes, but in public places. While you were here, my dear Master, we did *Harināma Saṅkīrtan* at every public gathering, every war protest, every rock concert, anywhere and everywhere, and we were on the streets of every major city for 6 to 8 hours daily—except Sunday when we had your “Love Feast.”

The public *saṅkīrtans*, you told us, will influence the direction of the world so the rakshasa takeover will be less cruel and less powerful, and the devotees will suffer less.

But the demons are very clever. They are threatened by the power of the Holy Names. They also know they are weakened by the power of praises to God, *Harināma Saṅkīrtan*, so in 2020, they deceived the whole world to keep temples and churches closed, and to keep the chanting of the Holy Names from entering the ethers. In Belgium, it was even forbidden to sing in the shower!

My dear Master, so many have forgotten your words of wisdom, your “*vāk-siddhi*” predictions. Even our leaders are deceived and floundering in ignorance, thus kowtowing to the demands of the demons. And worst of all, *Harināma Saṅkīrtan* has been crippled by the clever designs of demoniac rakshasa governments.

Now the next phase of Kali Yuga has begun, the mass destruction by war. Europe will soon be engulfed in wars and mass destruction, and the primary cradle of western civilization, England, may soon resemble post-war Germany.

My dear Master, I weep for the devotees of the future. You also said that you felt sad that some of your disciples would live to see all this. But now, we who are still here, I ask, what is our role in this? What are we to do? How do we protect your fledgling Hare Krishna movement, and your beautiful young generations of devotees? You often said “the demigods are lining up to take birth in this Hare Krishna movement” and indeed it even appears as if you are calling them in—higher beings who will take to heart your valuable teachings and spread them all over the world—these beautiful denizens of Vaishnava worlds who are now the second, third and even fourth generations of devotees.

What do we do now, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the midst of all this chaos, this bickering and widespread deception. How do we help them, how do we protect them?

Your reply to me, “They must hear. They must hear from me—my *kīrtans*, my *bhajans*, and my classes. Just as I told you so many years ago, when we first met, ‘you simply come to my classes and all problems will be solved,’ so also this is true for them.”

Then, directed by you, I read the fourth canto of your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, chapters 20-25, and better understood your instructions. I then understood *why* they must hear from *you*, directly, so that the “saffron dust from the lotus feet of the Lord” enters their minds and

hearts, and gives them pure realization of your teachings. They must hear *your kīrtans, your bhajans, and your lectures.*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4-20-25, Purport:

My dear Lord, You are glorified by the selected verses uttered by great personalities. Such glorification of Your lotus feet is just like saffron particles. When the transcendental vibration from the mouths of great devotees carries the aroma of the saffron dust of Your lotus feet, the forgetful living entity gradually remembers his eternal relationship with You. Devotees thus gradually come to the right conclusion about the value of life. My dear Lord, I therefore do not need any other benediction but the opportunity to hear from the mouth of Your pure devotee.

A pure devotee always engages in the service of the Lord, taking shelter of His lotus feet, and therefore he has a direct connection with the saffron mercy-particles that are strewn over the lotus feet of the Lord. Although when a pure devotee speaks, the articulation of his voice may resemble the sound of this material sky, the voice is spiritually very powerful because it touches the particles of saffron dust on the lotus feet of the Lord. As soon as a sleeping living entity hears the powerful voice emanating from the mouth of a pure devotee, he immediately remembers his eternal relationship with the Lord, although up until that moment he had forgotten everything.

Then I better understood what you were saying to me. And I came to understand they must also hear *about* you, about your kindness and your mercy, your sweetness and your sharpness, your pastimes and your *līlās* in this material world. And this will save them from the chaos and confusion and the deceptions.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for granting me this guidance and this wisdom. Thank you for everything—everything past, present and also future. You are the savior of the world in this Kali Yuga, Lord Chaitanya's *Senāpati Bhakta*, His Commander-in-Chief of His *Harināma Saṅkīrtan* army.

Please help me to share your love with all the beautiful devotees you have called to assist you. Please grant me the ability to touch their hearts with your love, and to heal their confusion with your

divine presence.

With loving gratitude,
your Govinda Dāsī, fallen yet full of love for you.
Initiation: 1967, February—San Francisco, USA

Mālatī Devī Dāsī

*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*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śvāmi-śrī-bhaktivedānta-prabhupādāya te namaḥ*

*guroājñāṁ śīrasi-dhṛtvā śaktyāveṣa-sva-rūpiṇe
hare-kṛṣṇeti mantreṇa pāścātya-prācyā-tāriṇe*

*viśvācārya-pravaryāya divya-kāruṇya-mūrtaye
śrī-bhāgavata-mādhurya-gītā-jñāna-pradāyine*

*gaura-śrī-rūpa-siddhānta-sarasvatī-niṣevīṇe
rādhā-kṛṣṇa-padāmbhoja-bhṛṅgāya gurave namaḥ*

“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) *avatāra* 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 *Bhāgavad-gītā* all over the world. He is constantly engaged in exclusive devotional service to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. I offer my humble obeisances unto Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is like a bumblebee always tasting the nectar of the lotus feet

of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Govinda.” (Written by Śrīla Govinda Mahārāja upon request, and edited by Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja)

At the present moment, your intimate disciples have gathered in Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of your victorious offering to the sacred lineage of the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya-*sampradāya*, ISKCON’s Śrī Śrī Krishna-Balaram Mandir, notably featuring the teachings of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu; His personal associates such as Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmi, who was His intimate private secretary; His deputed band of front line preachers, the Six Gosvāmīs; and Rāmānanda Rāya and other illustrious *ācāryas*. The heartfelt descriptions coming from your own frontline generals, men and women, indicate that the time is ripe for a continuation of Lord Caitanya’s *ādi* pastimes via your adroit vision and ardent adherence to the orders of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. Who will write that epitome, from among ISKCON’s second generation, while there is still connectivity with some of your original stalwarts? The *Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*, even with its faults and inaccuracies, delivers the essence of your transcendental pastimes as you transform from a “Calcutta boy” into a world-recognized and famed *ācārya*, but there remains an incredible storehouse of pastimes to be revealed, pastimes that will expand further, expand on your glories as a śaktyāveṣa-avatāra.

The Krishna-Balaram Mandira rose against all odds at the time, being constructed and built by foreigners in a remote part of Vṛndāvana, Raman Reti, outside the general Vṛndāvana village itself, while giving leeway for the completion of Hare Kṛṣṇa Land in Juhu, another remotely placed village outside of Bombay, on the seaside. The undeniable crest jewel of your crowning achievements, Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, rising as your indisputable world headquarters, being the most remote, the most off the grid, is the most fantastic part of your vision to spread the cult of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s *saṅkīrtana* movement worldwide. It is the place where a glimpse of the Lord’s prophecies would be seen in action during the first international Gaura-Purṇimā festival in 1972, where fair- and dark-skinned foreigners alike danced and chanted *haribol! haribol!* through the streets of Navadvīpa with youthful abandon.

Only you were not surprised by this occurrence due to your complete faith in the instruction of your guru and full faith in the Lord Himself. You knew, without a doubt, that this would occur, and you brought us along, introducing us to an amazing world outside

of time that we would have never imagined existed. By your grace, we were given glances into the spiritual world, enough to captivate us and keep us on track as your dancing white elephants, (as we were often called).

I am no longer much of a dancer, but I beg you to allow me to remain engaged in your service during this closing chapter of my life. You told us that Vaiṣṇavs do not “retire,” and you were that vivid example. You gave us that “real life, as Caitanya has wrought,” filled with a value that can never be bought. You “purchased” our empty hearts with your genuine love, and while we knew that we can never repay your selfless gift, our lives are still molded by our attempts to do so. I have no other purpose for breathing.

May I ever remain your *dāsī*,

Mālatī Devī Dāsī

Dayānanda Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Recently, I translated some *Bhāgavatam* chapters about *varṇāśrama-dharma*. In the *Uddhava-gītā*, I came upon the oft-quoted verse, *ācāryam māṁ vijānīyān*, “One should know the *ācārya* as Myself.”

In a lecture, you stated that Viśvanātha Cakravartī has confirmed this in his verse, *sākṣād dharitvena samasta-śāstraiḥ*, “Guru is as good as God by the verdict of the *śāstra*.”

You go on to say, “never be disobedient, envious, or consider him ordinary.”

I have never been envious of you, and I have always considered you extraordinary. However, I did not always follow the injunction *na avamanyeta*, “do not be disrespectful or disobedient.”

I would like to offer you excuses; however, when I look at your true followers, and there are many of them, I am amazed at how well they are serving you. I am poor in comparison, and I have no excuse.

I am not qualified to be your disciple. Perhaps in my next life, I will have the good fortune to take shelter of one of your followers and again learn of your greatness and become a better servant.

That is my aspiration. I want to follow your followers, serve your servants.

You sacrificed me in the fire of *saṅkīrtana*. To establish Mahāprabhu's movement around the world, you asked me to put aside youth, family, money, and even safety. That sometimes involved emotional turmoil.

In an *agnihotra-yajña*, the offerings are burnt. As an offering, I sometimes felt the heat of the *saṅkīrtana-yajña*. And I am deeply grateful for that.

Now, as I am old and nearing death, I am less inclined to sacrifice my safety, security, and attachments.

I want to learn from Queen Kuntī who prays, "I wish that those calamities would happen again and again so that we could see You again and again."

Please, once again Śrīla Prabhupāda, cast me into the fire of *saṅkīrtana*. Please allow it to burn up my body and mind. This mind has grown attached to comfort and is averse to any abuse or suffering.

Let me be faced with calamities like Prahlāda, the Pāṇḍavas, and all the great devotees of ISKCON who endure inconvenience on your behalf.

āmi to' kāṅgāla, 'kṛṣṇa' 'kṛṣṇa' boli' dhāi tava pāche pāche,

"I am your wretched servant, chanting, 'Krishna,' and running after you."

Your servant, who takes pleasure in your mercy,

Dayānanda dāsa

Initiation: 1967, March—San Francisco, USA

Balai Devi Dasi

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

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

om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā

caḡsur unmilitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my most humble obeisances at your divine, transcendental lotus feet.

By your mercy, you accepted me as your disciple and servant, and I pray to remain at your lotus feet eternally. Out of your causeless mercy, you plucked me out of a hellish condition of life and revealed the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, and taught by example how to serve Him. You showed us how to live in the spiritual world, even while continuing with our present lives. You revealed how to see Krishna in everything around us and how to engage in devotional service. Thank you again and again for your books, where you are everlastingly present in your instructions.

One special quality that I love about you is how you were able to wear so many garlands at one time. Those garlands were heavy, but you wore them as though they were as light as feathers.

Your special qualification:

The special qualification of the pure devotee is that he is always thinking of Krishna without considering the time or place. There should be no impediments. He should be able to carry out his service anywhere and at any time. Some say that the devotee should remain in holy places like Vṛndāvana or some holy town where the Lord lived, but a pure devotee can live anywhere and create the atmosphere of Vṛndāvana by his devotional service. It was Śrī Advaita who told Lord Caitanya, 'Wherever You are, O Lord-there is Vṛndāvana.' (*Bhagavad-gītā* 8.14 purport)

You strictly maintained the paramparā:

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam should be received in disciplic succession without any breakage. When a ripened fruit comes from the upper part of the tree onto the ground by the process of being handed down from a higher branch to a lower branch by persons in the tree, the fruit does not break. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, when received in the paramparā system, or disciplic succession, will likewise remain unbroken. It is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that the disciplic succession, or paramparā, is the way of receiving transcendental knowledge. Such knowledge must come down through the disciplic succession, through authorized persons who know the real purpose of the sastra. (*Nectar of Devotion*, Chapter 12)

Always desiring to serve you more sincerely,

Balai dasi

Initiation: 1967, December—New York, USA

Kanchanbala Devi Dasi

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I bow down in the dust of your transcendental lotus feet again and again with so much gratitude as I can't comprehend your mercy along with your unwavering tolerance.

How I know I am your insignificant disciple, yet, I feel so indebted to your unlimited kindness. Whatever spark you have seen and do now, it is your causeless mercy I can ever do anything.

Always resonating from within my heart and mind, remembering I wrote a six page letter to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I mentioned I was offering acorns, bark, moss, and cattails thinking they were beautiful for Lord Jagannātha on my altar, living at home. You wrote back such an encouraging, kind, uplifting letter: "My sincere blessings are for you for your nice prosecution of Krishna Consciousness. Whatever you are doing at the present moment is approved by me and I think of account of your becoming a sincere soul, Krishna is dictating from within and you are doing things so nicely. There are two gurus—one is internal and the other external. The internal Guru is Krishna Himself seated in everyone's heart, and the external Guru is the Spiritual Master. So a sincere devotee is helped both externally and internally. To the sincere devotee the internal Guru Krishna dictates, but the thing has to be confirmed by the external Guru then it is alright. I am very glad that you don't go out, and keep indoors engaging yourself in Krishna Consciousness activities." My beloved Spiritual Master, mercifully engaging me in devotional service, guiding me in Krishna Consciousness.

Regularly, I have been hearing 'Śrīla Prabhupāda Lilamrita' by Satsvarupa Mahārāja and 'Miracle on 26 2nd Ave.' by Mukunda Mahārāja readings by Her Grace Daivishakti, which is so nectarean and absorbing, assimilating all the more Śrīla Prabhupāda's perseverance and such patience.

In the beginning, His Divine Grace was using the same shower as the boys, yet not only that, they had one towel Śrīla Prabhupāda had to share with them, to the first initiation ceremony of the new

disciples. It wasn't until during it, the new initiates learned about following the 4 regulative principles and chanting 16 rounds a day on their newly strung *japa* beads. Along with the simple, austere, yet sacred setting, the whole atmosphere was spiritually surcharged with Śrīla Prabhupāda's genuineness and expert guidance. Such is Śrīla Prabhupāda's amazing magnitude of acceptance of his new fledgling disciples and onward, throughout the years.

It was all along so incomprehensible to fathom Śrīla Prabhupāda's unwavering desire of pleasing his beloved Spiritual Master, as he was completely focused to push on this Krishna Consciousness Movement all over the world. On numerous occasions, I had heard Śrīla Prabhupāda would be so pleased to see not just Indian, American, European devotees, but also, Russian, Chinese, African devotees being made everywhere else in the whole world. In the beginning, when a few devotees went to Africa, they mostly concentrated on the Indians residing there, and when Śrīla Prabhupāda heard, he said, "You are in Africa, you should preach to the Africans". And still, to this day, the inconceivable potency of Śrīla Prabhupāda's legacy is going on. It is such sincere joy to see those souls who are taken by Śrīla Prabhupāda's authenticity and purity.

A while back, I heard a beautiful pastime as told by Indrayumna Mahārāja. I listened once, and then again. It was about an Admiral in the French Navy, an older gentleman. This is a synopsis of a pastime which is so astounding as it is about how Śrīla Prabhupāda deeply touched a person's life amongst so many souls.

The Admiral happened to discover Indrayumna Mahārāja's *Bhagavad-gītā* class in session, and he joined in to hear.

At the end, the Admiral raised his hand and said, "This is what I have been looking for." All of a sudden, Indrayumna Mahārāja received a call to come back, Śrīla Prabhupāda is arriving in two days to Paris, as they were quite a distance away. The Admiral caught wind of it, and asked, "Young man, what is a Spiritual Master?" Mahārāja said, "Come with me and see." The Admiral was so inspired and moved, spontaneously grasping an opportunity to meet Śrīla Prabhupāda.

When they arrived in Paris, Śrīla Prabhupāda heard about the Admiral and sent for him to come. The Admiral came in uniform decorated with stripes and medals, sitting with His Divine Grace. Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke with him for two hours, preaching to him very strongly, "You are not your body, you are not an Admiral,"

The Admiral was hearing with rapt attention. Towards the end of the meeting, the Admiral addressed Śrīla Prabhupāda, “My dear Spiritual Master, what chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* should I focus on?” Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “Every day for the rest of your life you read the Ninth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. That is my instruction to you.” On that occasion, Śrīla Prabhupāda didn’t mention the 4 regulative principles and chanting 16 rounds.

When the meeting came to a close, the Admiral asked Indrayumna Mahārāja, “What should I do now?”, and Mahārāja said, “Bow down,” which he very readily did.

Then, eight years later, while Indrayumna Mahārāja was doing *saṅkīrtan*, he met the Admiral again at a Military Parade in Paris. The Admiral caught sight of Indrayumna Mahārāja and said, “You are the one who brought me to my Spiritual Master. I read the Ninth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* every day.” He then asked, “How is my Spiritual Master doing?” It was when Śrīla Prabhupāda had already departed a few years ago. In a devastated state, Mahārāja said, “I am so sorry to say His Divine Grace has left this world. He has gone back to Godhead.” Immediately, the Admiral burst into tears. All along, to the end, His Divine Grace gave the final lesson to everyone, was the art of leaving this world remembering Kṛṣṇa. How Śrīla Prabhupāda had made such a heartfelt impression in one meeting with the Admiral and then he taking shelter of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s guidance. It was just so moving to hear.

How unbelievably fortunate are we, me, anyone, everyone who has any sublime contact with you through your *vapu* and *vāṇī* association. To say the least, this material world and the struggle for existence is surely no easy ride, but instead, grasping onto the most precious treasure of your divine lotus feet. It is the only solace, you being the most confidential, pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa and your unlimited compassion upon us all.

Begging always to remain your loving servant and disciple,

Kanchanbala Dasi

Initiation: 1967, December—New York, USA
Current location: San Diego, California, USA

Vamanadev Das

My dear most beloved spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

From the first contact I made with one of your disciples, I was told of the importance, rather the necessity, to approach a bona fide spiritual master to receive transcendental knowledge. I was impressed by your disciples' sincerity and clarity, and therefore felt compelled to go deeper into the concepts.

Those early days were marked by only your first three books, the first canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, a few mimeographed Back to Godhead magazines, and an album entitled "Kṛṣṇa Consciousness." I played that album constantly and started reading your books. Very soon, I knew that I wanted to be your disciple. Now, some near sixty years later, I hold on tightly to your lotus feet and your inspiring words of instruction. I strive to be worthy of being called your disciple and to live a life that embodies the teachings of your divine grace.

I have come to appreciate the depth of your causeless mercy on me, as well as on the fallen souls of this world. I understand how truly blessed and fortunate it has been to have had the chance to serve your mission.

Without the grace of the spiritual master, one cannot make any advancement. Therefore, I should always remember my spiritual master

Eternally your servant,

Vamanadev Das

Initiation: 1968, March—New York, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: vamanadev108@gmail.com

Rukmini Devi Dasi

My Dear Eternal Father and Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my most respectful obeisances to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

You are very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, having taken shelter of His lotus feet.

My respectful obeisances are unto you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, O

servant of Sarasvatī Goswami. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

This holy *Vyāsa-Pūjā* celebration marks the fifty-seventh year since you gave me initiation in Montreal, Canada in the summer of 1968.

I came there with the illustrious six devotees (plus one baby in tow) from San Francisco, who were on their way to open a temple for your pleasure in London. They were stopping in Montreal to receive your blessings for this new adventure and sacred offering to you.

As we entered your small rented apartment on West Prince Arthur St, I saw you sitting, looking as brilliant as a sun, surrounded by light. I'd never seen anyone so effulgent in my life.

Yamuna Devi said, "Swamiji, this is Wendy. She is only sixteen years old, and she wants to become your disciple."

You tenderly replied, "But...where are your parents?"

Such concern and compassion! Such kindness! You seemed to be feeling the suffering of my far distant mother and father...

On the day of my initiation, you further opened my heart. You said, "You are a beautiful girl." And seeing within my heart, innumerable lifetimes of tar and grime, of pride, ignorance and illusion, you told me, "Now become more beautiful, within also."

There are others who came to your shelter at such young ages. Many had already broken the principles of *sāttvik* life. Still, you accepted us. Still now, I am trying to give up all anarthas, and come to the place of authentic service to you. Please bless me with an aching contrition, remembering all the ways I have turned away from you, and Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, both in this life and in innumerable previous lives.

We, your disciples, do not know, and the world at large does not know how the course of human history averted catastrophe by your appearance in this world, and by your setting foot on American soil, and then the rest of the world.

You did not want to come to New York empty-handed, so you waited until you had printed the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to bring those three volumes with you. In your extreme poverty at that time, do we even consider what a miracle it was that you were able to print those first three volumes? You had no resources, no assistance, and paper was scarce and restricted by the government.

Finally, with those three volumes in hand, you asked the *Vṛndāvan sādhus* to bless those books, because now they were

going to New York. Some of those *sādhus* were opposed to you leaving Vṛndāvan, going overseas, and breaking the prohibition that sannyasis should not cross the ocean. Of course, most *sādhus* would fall down if they crossed the ocean, so for ordinary sadhus, such rules are a good thing! Most *sādhus* of India, could never imagine, or begin to touch your level of saintly empowerment by the Lord! Or your compassion, humility or determination!

As you had requested them, you then passed the three sacred volumes around the circle, and each one of those *sādhus* gave their blessings, as they touched the books with their blessing hands. When the books came back to your lap, you asked the sadhus to now bless *you*, as someone had to carry them! You tricked them to give their blessings, as so many times in the future, you would trick us to receive your blessings as well!

You are the Person *Bhāgavata* who so kindly introduced us to the Book *Bhāgavata*, and the many Person *Bhāgavatas* who so kindly appear in the pages of the Book *Bhāgavata*.

Does anyone ever consider that you could have saved yourself much hardship, starvation, homelessness and agony if you had just shipped those books by themselves in trunks on the Jaladuta? But no! There was no audience, no readership, no understanding of the treasure of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* - without you coming personally to create such things.

When I think of the first verses and chapters of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and the questions by the sages, I can only think of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, with the deepest gratitude.

The first verse defines the Absolute Truth, the second verse defines how *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* kicks out all cheating religion.

And the third verse describes the rare and fortunate "*bhāvukas*", like you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who are the only ones who can truly relish *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. You have given us, the most unqualified people, the rarest essence of spiritual understanding of the Absolute Truth and how to approach Him.

As the most extraordinary and merciful Person *Bhāgavata*, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have created our good fortune - to be given access to this circle of sages, so we too can begin to relish *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

And the six questions by the sages of Naimiṣāraṇya:

What is the absolute and ultimate good for the people in general?

What is the essence of all the scriptures?

Why did Lord Kṛṣṇa appear as the son of Devakī and Vasudeva?

What about the *Puruṣa* avatars?

And the *Līlā-Avatārs*?

And now that Lord Kṛṣṇa has departed for His own abode, where have the religious principles gone for shelter?

By appearing in our midst as the Person *Bhāgavata* and gifting us with this beautiful *Bhāgavatam*, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have answered all these questions! Even questions we didn't know we had!

You have given us access to the most rarely achieved *ahaituki bhakti*, and, in this way, you answered the first two questions by the sages. To practice causeless *ahaituki bhakti* under your shelter is both the ultimate good for all people, as well as the essence of all scriptures!

And, regarding the next three questions - could we have ever had faith in such a thing as a *Puruṣa Avatār*, a *Līlā Avatār* or even Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself without you appearing in our midst?

And answering the last of the six questions...

By you personally brilliantly appearing in this dark Age of Kali to give us *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the religious principles have taken shelter of you as the Person *Bhāgavata*, and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as the Book *Bhāgavata*.

On this Vyāsa-pūjā day, I worship you as the greatest representative of Śrīla Vedavyās. At night, while we slept, you rendered your own emotional ecstasies into your own Bhaktivedanta purports to your English translations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

On your sacred order, these volumes of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with your English translations and purports have now been distributed all over the world and translated into almost every language of the world.

On this Vyāsa-pūjā day, I pray to place a garland of fully blown gardenias, and lotuses of loving devotional service around your neck. And I pray to place delicious fully ripened fruits of *nāma-ruci* at your lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for transforming my useless life, and the wasted lives of so many others, into vibrant lives of service to your sacred mission. Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept me as your servant, life after life.

*Your eternal daughter, servant,
and ever-grateful recipient of your mercy,*

Rukmini devi dasi

Ranadhir Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Thank you for taking me as a devotee. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your grateful servant,
Ranadhir das

Initiation: 1968, January—New Vrindavana, West Virginia, USA

Current location: California, USA

Contact: r.nieburgs@gmail.com

Bhavananda Das

*ārāadhanānām sarveṣāṁ
viṣṇor ārāadhanam param
tasmāt parataram devi
tadīyānām samarcanam*

“Of all types of worship, the worship of Lord Vishnu is topmost, and higher yet is the worship of His devotee, the Vaishnava.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

This verse gives us yet another aspect of your unlimited mercy. That you came to this miserable world at the request of your Lord Śrī Krishna and allowed yourself to willingly move among and associate with the conditioned, suffering souls of this planet, all of whom were suffering from a deep-seated aversion to Krishna.

In 1975, you told Upendra and me that you did not want to come here. “It is a horrible place”, you said, but still, on the request of your Lord, you came and patiently lived and travelled and preached among the non-believers. For some unfathomable reason, I was among those who were attracted to serve you. There was no flash of lightning or electric jolt, but simply an automatic and primeval desire to be with you and serve you. That was how it was then, and how it is for me at present.

In 1973, in Māyāpur, I had this urge to place my head on your lotus feet. For once, my brash personality was the cause of something wonderful. I walked into your quarters and you were standing at the

doorway on the southern side of your darshan room. I went over to you and placed my head on your feet and said, “Prabhupāda, may I have service at your lotus feet forever?”

For a few moments, you were silent, and then you said, “Yes” in that deep transcendental voice.

And there you have it. No matter what, through all the deeds and misfortunes of this world, I renew my prayer to remain fixed at your lotus feet and to assist you in whatever capacity in your mission to fulfil the request that Lord Krishna made to you.

Your eternally thankful disciple,

Bhavananda das

Initiation: 1969, April—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Sydney, Australia

Karanodakasayi Visnu Das

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

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

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ puṅguṁ laṅgayate girim
yat-ṅṅpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī-guruṁ dīna-tāraṇam*

My respectful obeisances are due to you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my Lord and master, in the dust of your divine lotus feet time and time again.

Following my Godbrother Langaganesa Prabhu’s mode of offering, I would like to very humbly offer you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, my report of activities over the past year, for your pleasure and the pleasure of all the devotees.

Following my 10 week course in stand-up comedy in February to April 2024, by your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I was able to do a Comedy Performance at the Comedy Store in Leicester Square to an audience of 150 and everyone really enjoyed it. I was thinking if only I could make Kṛṣṇa laugh following in the footsteps of Madhumaṅgala that would be something. But then I realised my greatest joy would be to make you laugh, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Later on in October 2024, they invited me to do two more performances

in Estonia to audiences of 150 each again – it was preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness through comedy and people loved it.

In 1973 at Bhaktivedanta Manor you ordered me “to continue your education and become Kṛṣṇa conscious”. This I take to be my abiding instruction from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and I would like to carry that out lifetime after lifetime.

In about the last two months, by your grace, I have completed the following eight courses:

4. A 10 week course in Smartphone and Tablet training at my local community centre to make full use of my smartphone.
5. A 12 week course on The Artist’s Way by Julia Cameron – A Spiritual Path To Higher Creativity in which she recommends reading the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.
6. A 4 month course in Self Expression and Leadership with Landmark Worldwide to develop plans for a Community Project of building a Varṇāśrama College-Temple-Farm for Śrī Śrī Rādhā Londonīśvara in Regent’s Park, together with
7. Attending a 9 day Open House Architectural Festival in London visiting many buildings there and speaking to architects, builders, property developers and planning consultants to see how we can build “a gorgeous Indian-style temple” for Their Lordships as you so desired for London.
8. A 2 week course in Understanding Hoarding at the CNWL Mental Health Trust Recovery College to de-clutter 40 years of items accumulated in my flat.
9. Followed by a 2 week course in Train the Trainer.
10. Then a 3 week course in a Music Studio Discovery Programme to produce and release 6 music tracks on Songs of the Vaiṣṇava Acaryas.
11. Finally, a 6 week course in Telling My Story of how my Kṛṣṇa consciousness has developed over time.

By your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, my brother and I managed to complete reading your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in January this year and I have started chanting a minimum of 25 rounds per day and reading 40 pages of your *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* every day. Practically everyday, I am experiencing the ecstasy of listening to your disciples giving their realizations in some shape or form, and it is clear, for example, that all your ISKCON gurus are Ritviks, acting as your

representative and as such they are able to initiate more and more devotees into the chanting of the Holy Name of the Lord and thus spread Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana* movement all over the world.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is encouraging our devotees by joining with us in glorifying your unique position in the world, in chanting the Holy Name of the Lord, reading your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and establishing temples everywhere, as is Tulsi Gabbard in the United States and other leaders around the world.

In 1973 you asked your disciple Abhirama Dasa to establish, not Disney World, but "Vaikuṅṭha World" everywhere and in 1976 at the greatest Rathayātrā of all time in New York City, three great carts for Lord Jagannātha, Baladeva, Subhadrā built by Jayananda Prabhu and organised by Tosan Krsna Prabhu under the auspices of Donald Trump, you said if we continue doing festivals like these the whole world will become Vaikuṅṭha. Later I wrote my book, "Our Vaikuṅṭha Planet: How To Eliminate Anxiety For 8 Billion People" based on that lecture.

So, whilst the material world is collapsing all around us, your devotees are busy creating Vaikuṅṭha everywhere. This, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is your legacy and the time is coming very soon when all the world's leaders will salute you for your endeavour.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your menial servant,

Karanodakasayi Visnu Dasa Adhikari

Initiated: December 17th 1969, London, Bury Place

Contact: mohan.gupta108@yahoo.co.uk

Svarupa Das

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the guiding light of my life. If not for you I'd be lost in the wilderness of ignorance. Therefore I recite each day in my mind and aloud:

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance,

with the torchlight of knowledge.

I am your eternal unworthy servant,

Svarupa Dasa

Initiation: 1969, December—Boston, USA

Current location: Oceanside, California

Bhakta Das

Dear Beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. As your disciple who joined the grand spiritual journey under your guidance in 1969, I am eternally grateful for the transcendental wisdom and love you have bestowed upon us. Your tireless efforts to spread the teachings of Lord Krishna across the globe have illuminated countless hearts, guiding them toward the path of Bhakti Yoga. Your divine presence has been a beacon of hope and spiritual strength, inspiring a generation of seekers to embrace the richness of Vedic knowledge. Your books, a treasure trove of spiritual insight, continue transforming lives and instilling a profound sense of purpose and devotion. Through your grace, we have learned the true essence of selfless service and the joy of chanting the holy names. As I reflect on the years spent in your service, my heart swells with appreciation for the journey you have charted for us, leading to the ultimate destination of love for Godhead. I pray that I may always remain a faithful servant in your mission, honoring your legacy and sharing the light of Krishna Consciousness with all souls.

Your servant,

Bhakta dasa

Initiation: 1970, March—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Bangkok, Thailand

Contact: bhakta@saintly.com

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I wish I were a better and more capable disciple. If so, I could serve you in the way an exalted spiritual master like yourself deserves to be served. I have always wished I were more qualified as a person and as a devotee so that I could do more for you.

If I were more intelligent, I would be able to convince the most intelligent people that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the real panacea for the world's ills. Plus, I would be able to make intelligent plans for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, plans that would take Kṛṣṇa consciousness to new levels.

I wish I were more spiritually advanced. If so, I could be a perfect example to others. Thus, I could inspire even those who are not doing well in Kṛṣṇa consciousness or who have become alienated from bhakti or ISKCON. If I were more advanced, I could attract people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the same way you did, just by your presence.

I wish I had a more subtle brain. If so, I could better understand the nuances and implications of our philosophy and how it can be perfectly understood and applied in every situation. I would also always be able to identify if ever we are going off and exactly how to get back on track.

I wish I were more insightful. If so, I would be able to envision exactly how you would want Kṛṣṇa consciousness spread according to the changing times and culture of the ever-changing world. I could discern exactly how to do this without having to water down our teachings, while at the same time not alienating people.

I wish I were more cultured. If so, I would be able to impress Kṛṣṇa consciousness upon the most aristocratic people on the planet.

I wish I were a better leader and manager. If so, I could help solve many of ISKCON's problems, devise strategies to prevent future problems, and ensure a brighter future for ISKCON. I would also be able to improve and/or develop many of the projects that are dear to your heart.

I wish I could perfectly follow all your instructions, just as you perfectly followed your Guru Mahārāja's orders. If so, I could serve you infinitely more than I have.

Actually, Śrīla Prabhupāda, there are so many things I have always wished I were, solely because I wanted to serve you better. I always felt that you deserved better than what I could give you, and that you didn't deserve such an incompetent disciple as myself. You are the best, and you deserve the best. Unfortunately, I failed in so many ways. And I also gave you problems.

But, for better or for worse, I am what Kṛṣṇa sent you, and I know you accept and love me as I am. Although I can't offer you all that I would like to because I am lacking in many ways, what I can offer you is the best of what I am. Take me as I am, and I promise to give you the best of what I have to offer, whatever that is.

I always pray I can do more for you because you are such an inspiration to me, and you want so badly to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness to every nook and corner of this planet; indeed, to every nook and corner of the universe. Therefore, I pray that you empower me so that I can be for you what I always wanted to be, an empowered servant who can perform wonderful activities in your service that far exceed my limited abilities.

Your servant,

Mahatma das

Initiation: 1970, March—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: mahat@aol.com

Locanananda Das

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance, with the torch-light of knowledge.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to your Divine Grace, savior of the world, emissary of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This wretched soul offers,

thousands of times, his respectful obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

It was fifty-five years ago, in Paris, France that I first encountered your followers. There were two young men with shaved heads standing in front of a famous outdoor cafe in the student quarter. I had the impression that a spotlight was illuminating their presence. They blew a conchshell, creating a tumultuous sound which alerted the gendarmes to evaluate the scene. As the devotees walked away, I followed behind at a short distance, trying to hear their conversation. They spoke French with an accent I was unfamiliar with.

I caught up with them and asked, "What are you doing here?" to which they replied, "We sing and we dance. Come and see us". They gave me a flimsy piece of paper with an invitation to their meeting at the American Center. That was the turning point in my life. I had come to France to study medicine, but all high-level educational institutions were closed due to a student/faculty strike. That was Krishna's arrangement which allowed me to become more involved in the movement you started to bring Krishna consciousness to the people of the world.

I had no specific qualification to engage in any particular service, but I found my place doing *Harinām Saṅkīrtana* on the streets of Paris. I was the tambourine man, and it was my role to watch for approaching police vehicles and warn the leader to stop chanting until they had passed. We were using my tiny apartment as a base of operations, until the member of the newly formed GBC who was in charge of our zone told us to arrange to raise money to buy plane tickets and then come to India. We were to join him and engage in *Saṅkīrtana* throughout the sub-continent and then on to the Middle East.

There were about seven or eight male devotees living in the tiny *ashrama* and we all had friends and relatives who helped us with plane fare. The devotees left Paris one by one until only three of us remained. Suddenly, we received a telegram from Your Divine Grace saying you would be coming to England and would like to come to France, as well, to see our new temple. Your telegram informed us there was a new temple building, and now we had to find it. The search began and Harivilas prabhu, posing as a representative of the Beatles, was able to secure what was designed as a one-family home that your Divine Grace would visit a year later. By the time of your visit, there were thirty-five devotees living in that building. The growth of the Yātrā was phenomenal, and by the time we moved to

our next location near Avenue Foch in Paris, it had grown to forty-four, including children.

Whatever success we had was not dependent on our qualifications except that we were simply chanting Hare Krishna and distributing the gift you had brought to the Western world with full faith that you were, in fact, Krishna's empowered emissary, a pure unalloyed associate of the Divine Couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Krishna.

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

This verse explains that whatever our shortcomings may be (and they are many), blessed with the benediction of the spiritual master, a lame man can cross over a mountain, and one who has no power of speech could become a great orator. In other words, we were loitering in the street like crows and you picked us up and turned us into swans. It was your miracle, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that we were delivered, saved from the depths of human degradation and transformed into effulgent devotees of the Lord.

Now, many of your disciples are approaching the final curtain on a lifetime of service. But, there is no fear because our destination is already known, and that is Back Home, Back to Godhead. By your grace, we will rejoin our unalloyed pure devotee spiritual master who will place our hand in Krishna's hand and unmotivated, uninterrupted devotional service will go forward in that place where time is conspicuous by its absence, where no material laws are acting, and where there is no need of sunlight, moonlight or even electricity. It is the eternal abode, where Krishna is the constant companion.

Your instruction, Śrīla Prabhupāda, was that we finish up our business here in this very lifetime. You said we would recognize you in the spiritual world. You said that if we had not reached spiritual perfection by the time this body would drop, that Lord Caitanya would cover for us and carry us back home by His sweet will. It was you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who created our good fortune. Meanwhile, we are cognizant of our fallen nature and still struggle with anarthas and weaknesses of the mind and body. We pray that Krishna will strengthen us and give us direction to resist the call of Māyā in those moments of weakness.

The Krishna consciousness movement is destined for success. You wrote to me that it is being foretold that if our movement continues to grow at the same rate as when you were present, then

Krishna consciousness would soon become the world religion. Your words have power, and that means the day will come when the high court judge will be wearing tilaka when sitting on the bench, the slaughterhouses will close, and the foolish scientists and academicians who deny the existence of a personal God who is the source of all worlds, material and spiritual, will be totally discredited and will perish like a riven cloud.

Your Divine Grace will live forever in your teachings, and those who follow you and abide with full faith in your causeless mercy will never be deprived of your association. For this reason, we continue to pursue the very same objectives that you delineated. In this way, we will not be separated, we will never feel alone, nor will we be deterred in remembering and glorifying you at every moment.

Your humble servant,

Locanananda dasa

Initiation: 1970, August—Paris, France

Current location: Brooklyn, New York, USA

Contact: lfelda@aol.com

Sarvamangala Devi Dasi

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to your merciful presence in our lives.

You alone have given us a chance to escape the miseries of the material world. You miraculously saved so many souls from a sordid existence. We had no idea how to escape these miseries, nor did we realise how deep was our degradation. I read that George Harrison was subtly referring to you when he wrote the song, “Here Comes the Sun.” You were, and are the illuminating Sun in this world’s misdirected civilisation.

I very much regret my ignorance and slowness in advancing in Krishna Consciousness. Only little by little have I grasped the greatness of your mercy. I am feeling grateful to simply glimmer images of you in my mind’s eye and to grasp some understanding of what you have given in your books and lectures. The image that occurs most frequently is of you standing on the construction site of the Juhu temple. I perceive your effulgent body and your golden

saffron cloth and somehow I am ecstatically touched again by your presence. (*“From him ecstatic prema emanates!”*) Thank you for the times I saw and heard you. You are always present to maintain and encourage us. Being in Juhu was the light of my life and where I was blessed to be engaged in preaching. Thank you for bestowing this jewel to us.

On contemplating the blessed day of your divine appearance, it is only natural for us to consider our resolve to improve our commitment and gratitude. My heart’s deepest desire is to rise to a standard that is more worthy of your mercy. I am slow and weak and wish to become a more effective instrument in your spreading of Krishna Consciousness. *“The only hope, Your Divine Grace.”* I long for this heart to be more pure and strong to enable me to follow you more closely and authentically. I love a recent quotation I read where you advised us to educate our false ego and I understand that it’s a question of purifying my own desire. Your books are the ultimate education and on entering old age, I am desiring to drink more deeply of the nectar you have made available. There is a saying that you can lead a horse to water but you can’t make him drink. I am so foolish and dependent that I am praying for more incentive to drink the nectar of your books and of the Holy Name. It is up to me and yet still I beg for mercy. I hope that this isn’t offensive to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that after receiving so much from you, I am still begging for help and hoping against hope that I can go forward with increased determination.

Today is a day of gratitude for your mercy, to encourage our surrender, to become more loyal to your command. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for engaging me, just another monkey in the army, striving to reach the vantage point of human life which you have so kindly offered. Krishna gave you to us, to the world and you have given us Krishna Consciousness along with the edict to share it with everyone we meet. I am praying to never be bereft of your unfathomable kindness and brilliant enlightening guidance.

Your eternal servant,

Sarvamangala dasi

Initiation: 1971, March—London, UK

Current location: Watford, Herts, UK

Contact: insideoutetc.sarva@gmail.com

O scion of Bharata, O conqueror of the foe, all living entities are born into delusion, bewildered by dualities arisen from desire and hate. (Bg. 7.27)

Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life and whose sinful actions are completely eradicated are freed from the dualities of delusion, and they engage themselves in My service with determination. (Bg. 7.28)

Everyone, therefore, is born into ignorance and delusion unable to distinguish reality and see things “as it is” (*yathā tataḥ*). And despite material qualifications, even the Nobel Prize in Physics, one cannot see or understand the Universe, or even himself. Only by chanting ‘Hare Krishna’ and engaging in devotional service one gradually becomes purified and can see things as they are!

This is the transcendental gift given to us by Śrīla Prabhupāda, termed by Bhaktivinoda Thakur as *Vastava Vastu*, the “really real thing” (The Supreme Personality of Godhead)!

This knowledge is the king of education, the most secret of all secrets. It is the purest knowledge, and because it gives direct perception of the self by realization, it is the perfection of religion. It is everlasting, and it is joyfully performed. (Bg. 9.2)

Such perceivable and tangible ‘realization’ in Krishna consciousness is the only working process of purification to bring about a ‘higher taste’ to enable us to factually give-up the conditioned infatuation with sense gratification and the material body—undoubtedly the most difficult of all attachments!

One has to come to the understanding and perception that the verses of the *Bhagavad-gītā* are not just academic or theoretical, but actual and absolute descriptions and visions of things as they are!

I’ll close with two examples written below, each including a very concise explanation:

If you become conscious of Me, you will pass over all the obstacles of conditioned life by My grace. If, however, you do not work in such consciousness but act through false ego, not hearing Me, you will be lost. (Bg. 18.58)

Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the source of everything and everyone and is moreover the Supreme Controller of all things and living beings. We are presently conditioned and blinded by unfathomable ignorance and desire, lost in the material world of birth and death. If we become 'conscious' of Him, in the real sense of the term, then even 'now' we can factually observe *His hand everywhere*, and we can obtain true relief from all obstacles of conditioned life and live with Him eternally in bliss.

Yet in this body there is another, a transcendental enjoyer, who is the Lord, the supreme proprietor, who exists as the overseer and permitter, and who is known as the Supersoul. (Bg. 13.23)

Indeed, that same Supreme Lord, acting as the 'overseer and permitter', is *personally present* along with the individual soul within each of our material bodies.

What more needs be said—If we can, albeit gradually, achieve purification, one can actually become 'conscious' of Him, who is the cause of all causes and Supreme Controller of all that be, and who resides along with us in our hearts as the Supersoul. What further than is there to obtain? *This is called REALIZATION!*

Your Servant,

Satadhanya Dasa

Current location: Sridham Māyāpur

Initiation: 1971, March—New Vrindavana, West Virginia, USA

Vishnu Das

*śrī-guru-caraṇe more bhakti koro dāna
je caraṇa-bale pāi tattwera sandhāna*

O Vaiṣṇavas, please give me the gift of devotion to my spiritual master's feet.

By the power of his feet, I will find the truth.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble obeisances

O Gurudeva, you've revealed to me my true home

Within this dark world I've no need to roam

Your teachings are a river, flowing endlessly bright

Guiding my soul through the shadows of night

You've opened my eyes to the beauty of grace
In my thoughts and deeds, I feel your embrace

You've allowed me to take on this artist's role
But you've become the painter of my soul

Your compassion knows no bounds or end
A torch light of hope, you constantly send
In our moments of doubt, your light breaks through
In the caves of our hearts where we can find you

From the day I found you it became my call
To learn your teachings, so I wouldn't fall
You've silenced the chaos, bestowed on us peace
Because of your kindness, our love will increase

Echoes of your voice resonate in my heart
With each quoted *śloka*, I feel a new start
You've lifted my spirit, dispelled all my fears,
With a love that transcends all ages and years

No foes can deter the path that you've set
Your blessings direct us, we'll never forget
Your mission was a tapestry woven so fine
through Śrī Chaitanya's mercy and paramparā line

Through the ancient sages, profound and wise
You've revealed the truth that never dies
In the tangled web of this earthly plight
Your guidance shines brightly, a relentless light

In your teachings, all Vedic truths unfold
Every verse in your books is a treasure I hold
Your purports, a beacon, illumines the way
Turning night into day, and ending dismay

You've removed the veil of this temporal guise
Revealing the essence, where the eternal lies
With each page I turn, my heart becomes free

Freed by your wisdom, I can finally see

O guide of my heart, forever I'll strive
To honor your teachings which are always alive
In your divine radiance, I'll continually bask,
For you have the answers to the questions I ask

When fear looms large and illusions take hold
Your words are the fire, freeing us from the cold

You've driven away the demons of deception
With knowledge as armor, you've given protection

In the dance of existence, through pleasure and pain
Your love for Krishna has broken the chain
You saw we were imprisoned, slaves of our strife
Then you freed us, and revealed the goal of life

You appeared as the tsunami of the Bhakti sea
My beloved Gurudeva, you'll always be
And chanting Krishna-nama I pledge to uphold
This sacred vow is worth more than gold

We must cherish your words, like the stars in the night
They guide our devotion, as our souls take flight
With your divine knowledge, we stand ever tall
In gratitude, to your Divine Grace, I surrender my all.

Vishnu Dasa

Initiation: 1971, April—Los Angeles, California, USA
Contact: krishnaland@gmail.com

Narayani Devi Dasi

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 Krishna, and always remain absorbed in thought of Him. (SB 5.18.9)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please protect all your followers from envious persons who would take them away from your lotus feet. Faithfulness to your teachings is our great treasure. We have to learn something from the dog. The dog also is a teacher: how to become faithful to the master. That teaching we can have even from the dog. He is very satisfied. Whatever food you give, he'll not protest; still, he'll remain faithful. There are so many good qualifications of a dog. So therefore Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, *tumi ta' ṭhākura, tomāra kukkura, baliyā jānaha* more: "Kindly accept me as your dog. I shall serve you faithfully."

Why? Krishna se tomāra Krishna dite pāra: "Because Krishna is yours, you can deliver Krishna." Very nice song. "Krishna is yours. By your devotional service, you have made Krishna your property; so you can deliver Krishna to me. Therefore I want to follow you as faithfully as a dog." (*Brahma-Saṁhitā* 5.55, New York, 1971)

Prahlāda Mahārāja is devotee. He can ask Krishna the power, "Give me such power that along with me I shall take all of them." And that is Vaiṣṇava. He can do so. *Tumi ta ṭhākura, tomāra kukkura, baliyā jānaha* more. Therefore we have to become a dog to Vaiṣṇava. Chāḍīyā vaiṣṇava sevā, nistāra pāyeche kebā. Without serving Vaiṣṇava, nobody can be delivered, because he is so merciful, he can demand to Krishna, "Please, on my sake please excuse him. I'll take him with me." So Krishna grants him, "All right, you take them." (Śrīla Prabhupāda lecture, SB 7.9.43, Calcutta, 1976)

Nanda devi dasi came to Vrindavan to leave her body but it took 20 years for her to leave. Because of her disease, she could not chant properly, finish her rounds or go to the temple. Just before she left her body, she had a vision. She was walking on the path back to Godhead and Śrīla Prabhupāda was walking next to her. On both sides of the path were people criticizing her, saying things like, she didn't chant her rounds properly, she is a woman so she can't go back to Godhead, she didn't go to the temple regularly... But then Śrīla Prabhupāda turned to the people and said, "It's ok. She is with me." Then the people on both sides of the path started praising her.

So even though we may not be qualified, we are with Śrīla Prabhupāda. We are following him, serving him. Therefore we

can all go back to Godhead. So we must always stay with Śrīla Prabhupāda and he will take us with him back to Krishna, back to Goloka Vrindavan.

Your servant,

Narayani dasi

Initiation: 1971, June—Florida, USA

Mahasini Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you for your bravery in sailing to America. Thank you for your single-minded dedication to your mission. Thank you for your patience with us. Thank you for your vision in creating ISKCON and in leaving behind your instructions in your books. You have saved countless lives; you have saved generations.

The world has scant idea of who you are and what you've done, but those of us blessed enough to take even one drop of your mercy are forever and ever grateful.

All glories to your appearance on the Earth.

Unable to express my boundless gratitude, I remain

Your daughter,

Mahasini Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1971, June—New Dwarka, Los Angeles, USA

Current location: Roswell, Georgia, USA

Contact: bakaalm@gmail.com

Suresvara Das

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Near the end of the first chapter of *The Nectar of Devotion*, you comment on Nārada appreciating Yudhiṣṭhira who was in turn appreciating Prahlāda. "A devotee always appreciates the activities of other devotees...and that is one symptom of a pure devotee."

Those words came to mind when a Russian friend called me in Māyāpur one day during this year's Gaura Pūrṇimā festival. "Suresvara Prabhu, have you heard of the "Gift Prabhupāda Project?" I hadn't. "A team of Russian devotees is giving all Prabhupāda disciples a special gift. May I come to your room and give you one?" Intrigued, I said yes but asked him to wait till the evening.

At precisely 7pm, I heard a knock and opened the door to find Madana-mohana Prabhu from Moscow slightly smiling and holding a small box. "Please come in, Prabhu. What's in the box?" Before Madana could answer, I noticed an inscription on the box's outer sleeve:

Suresvara Dasa
with gratitude
for your service to
Śrīla Prabhupāda

Below the inscription was the image of a tree with golden leaves artfully suspended above the name of the box's sponsor: ISKCON Kolkata. I let the box slip through the sleeve into my palm and beheld a larger image of the tree, with a flap inviting me to further open the box. Hmm. *What are you leading me to, Śrīla Prabhupāda?* First, an excerpt from one of your letters:

So far as I am concerned, in relationships with my disciples who are so kindly cooperating with me in the matter of my rendering service to my Spiritual Master, for them I am always ready to come back from Goloka Vrindaban, if they are not delivered along with me.

Then your endearing sign-off followed by your majestically contiguous signature:

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

The letter panel opened out into four photo panels, two on each side of a canopy above and a white-and-gold asana below. The photos were iconic images of Your Divine Grace - two in your rooms at the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple in Vrindaban and two of you preaching in New York City parks in 1966. What I finally beheld on the asana took my breath away.

There you were, Śrīla Prabhupāda, appearing as a two-inch-plus brass *mūrti*, sitting straight and cross-legged, chanting *japa* with your beadbag by your right knee, the folds of your robes draped generously over your divine form, your expression that singular

blend of gravity and compassion inviting us to deepen our loving service to you.

Madana-mohana gestured behind your *mūrti* to a miniature backdrop with more golden leaves atop real tree bark next to another inscription:

BIRTHPLACE OF HIS DIVINE GRACE
A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

“That bark,” Madana-mohana explained, “is from the jackfruit tree under which Śrīla Prabhupāda was born.” I was speechless so he continued: “Coins collected on book distribution from the 25 countries Prabhupāda visited were also added to the alloy of the *mūrti*.”

Such attention to detail!

Madana-mohana went on to explain that the Russian *yātrā* is so grateful to our generation for helping Your Divine Grace spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness around the world that its team is determined to find and gift your *mūrti* to all of your direct disciples still living.

Such amazing gratitude! What makes the Russian yātrā so special? Recalling their history, a light went on. It was you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who went to Russia in June 1971, risking everything “behind enemy lines” in Moscow, the capital of atheistic Communism. It was you who went “in like a needle,” who met Anatoly Pinyayev under the nose of the KGB and taught him everything you could about Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the few days you had, planting a seed that Anatoly would later—as Ananta-santi dasa, your only Russian disciple—secretly spread the length and breadth of the former Soviet Union, sacrificing his life to lay the foundation for today’s massive Russian *yātrā*.

Finally able to speak, I turned to Madana-mohana: “Is it fair to say that without Ananta-santi’s sacrifice back then, there would be no Madana-mohana dasa today?”

“Absolutely,” affirmed Madana. “Nor would there be so many thousands of Russian *dāsas* and *dāsīs*. For us Ananta-santi is one of the best examples of how your generation sacrificed everything to help Śrīla Prabhupāda spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world.”

I thought of that passage in *The Nectar of Devotion* again, Śrīla Prabhupāda, how devotees appreciate the activities of other devotees. How we need that attitude more than ever in these divisive times, how beautifully you expressed your gratitude to us in that

letter excerpt on the gift box, and how the Russian devotees were showing us a wonderful way to spread that attitude throughout your Society. Today, as I behold their gift to me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your blessed *mūrti*, I press my palms in gratitude and pray to follow their footsteps back home to your lotus feet.

Your aspiring servant,

Suresvara dasa

Initiation: 1971, July—Detroit, Michigan, USA

Current location: Tucson, Arizona, USA

Contact: suresvara@gmail.com

Somadas Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

As I sit here, thinking about what to write for my offering to you, I feel your separation.

I think of your wonderful and sublime instruction to chant Krishna and be happy. I also think of the time in 1973 when you got sick in India. And you asked all of your disciples to pray to Lord Nrshinga Deva for your health and protection. And when you were asked, how should we pray, you said we should pray to Kṛṣṇa, if You so desire, please heal my spiritual master. I heard later when some of your disciples asked you if it was ok to pray to Lord Nrshinga Deva for your protection. You said we should pray to him for the protection of the spiritual master, for the protection of Iskcon, and the protection of all the devotees in Iskcon. And as you're still with us, I still pray every day for your protection, and the protection of Iskcon and for the protection of all the devotees in Iskcon. I also add specific prayers for the protection of myself and my wife and our family. Also, I pray that all living entities become members of Iskcon so they get that protection. And I wish that all living entities develop pure love for Krishna and chant 16 rounds without offense and follow the four principles. Kṛṣṇa if You so desire.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am very grateful for the life you have given me. Thank you very much.

Your servant,

Somadas das

Initiation: 1971, July—Boston, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Vishnugada Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept my humble obeisances at your feet.

You are the holy *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* personified. As such your activities, in addition to your verbal teachings, provide a priceless subject matter for study as practical applications of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā* in modern context. Many devotees in Philadelphia, including me, have been appreciating your uncommon activities weekly for the past 20 years by congregationally reading and discussing them from books like *Śrīla Prabhupāda Lilamrita*. We consistently find your example heartwarming and enlightening. It unfailingly inspires us on the progressive path Back to Godhead. As you have said; example is better than precept.

During one reading of the *Lilamrita*, we came across an exchange between you and a professor during your visit to Philadelphia in 1975 to attend the first large Ratha Yātrā festival on the East coast. The professor entered your *darshan* with some of his students. When he was introduced as a professor of religion you requested he tell you his understanding of religion. He responded saying “no” and that it would be better for you to tell him your understanding. At that, you turned to Svarupa Damodara Prabhu, sitting nearby, and said: “What do you make of this, a religion professor who can’t explain religion?” Svarupa Damodara said: “I think this is a cheater Śrīla Prabhupāda.” At that there erupted a heated exchange between the two of you and the professor left.

A devotee attending the reading became disturbed and confused hearing the pastime. He asked me: “What kind of Vedic hospitality is this, inviting someone to your place and then insulting him? Aren’t we supposed to treat even enemies with respect when they come as our guests?” I responded that it was a good question and I didn’t have a good answer. However, I suggested there was likely more to the story than what was included in the *Lilamrita*. I encouraged him to call Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu, who was present during the incident, since he might be able to give a more complete description

of what went on. The call was made.

Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu admitted he was the one who invited the professor. The professor's name was actually Dr. Yadav, indicating he was a descendant of the Yadu dynasty, the family of Lord Krishna. Ravindra added that the next morning when he accompanied you on your morning walk, he apologized for inviting a professor who was not very respectful. You just chuckled, saying it was your business to chastise rascals.

Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu then mentioned that some time later he met the same professor in Philadelphia. The professor eagerly inquired about you. When Ravindra updated him, professor Yadav spontaneously exclaimed: "Your guru saved me!" and proceeded to explain that despite being born in an exalted family he had become involved in all kinds of degraded activities. But upon meeting you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your strong words shook him out of his illusion and were instrumental in bringing him back to an appreciation of the *Bhāgavat dharma* of his roots. He then profusely thanked Ravindra Svarupa for inviting him for your *darshan*.

We had a golden opportunity to learn from this encounter. It demonstrated to us that you are always fully transcendental and acting for a person's ultimate benefit, even when we may not understand how. Although you are usually a cordial, charming, and attentive host, when the opportunity arose to elevate someone in Krishna Consciousness, that purpose was paramount. It was even more important than adhering to the rules of etiquette. The incident reminded us of your commentary when Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya asked Lord Caitanya why Śrīpād Īśvara Purī kept Govinda, a person from a *śūdra* background, as a disciple. You noted: "An authorized spiritual master is as good as Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If Hari is free to act as He likes, the empowered spiritual master is also free. As Hari is not subject to the criticism of mundane rules and regulations, the spiritual master is also not subjected." (CC *Madhya* 10.136) Like Nārada Muni cursing the sons of Kuvera to extract them from their intoxicated lifestyle facilitating their meeting with Lord Dāmodara, your strong words brought the professor to his right consciousness.

Trying to understand this incident also enhanced our faith by showing us that even in those rare instances where it may appear on the surface that your activities are questionable, when the full picture is revealed and understood, it is apparent you have always

been acting on the transcendental plane, above the material modes of nature. You are the pure emissary of Lord Caitanya. Lord Krishna instructs in *Bhagavad-gītā* that He descends in every millennium to deliver the *sādhus* and annihilate the miscreants. He delivers devotees by displaying His wonderful pastimes. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for doing exactly the same.

Your aspiring servant,

Vishnugada dasa

Initiation: 1971, July—New York, USA

Current location: Philadelphia, USA

Contact: Vajra8@aol.com

Sankarshan Das Adhikari

My Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

As a hippy singer/songwriter, I was on a mission to deliver the world from chaos. For this purpose, I wrote hundreds of songs and sang them in many different venues. But, because I was totally in a state of chaos myself, lost in material sense gratification, there was no question of my being able to do anything at all to deliver the world from chaos. After two years I finally realized my lost state. In an attempt to free myself from chaos, I was inspired by Lord Jesus, who prayed to be able to serve God's will instead of his own will. Thus, I prayed to God to guide me how I could become His perfect servant. Krishna heard and answered my sincere prayer by sending your representative, His Holiness Vishnujana Swami, to Austin to open an ISKCON center. That most glorious sannyasi expertly guided me how to practice the sublime science of Krishna consciousness. Even though I was chanting 16 rounds, following the four regulative principles, and living in the Austin temple I still wanted to keep a little independence by not getting initiated. But then one transformational morning when I heard a recording of the London devotees singing the Gurvaṣṭakam prayers, the love in their voices gave me for the first time in my life a taste of what real love actually is. My heart melted in transcendental bliss and my eyes flowed with tears. I immediately resolved then and there that I must get initiated as soon as possible. Then on 12 August 1971, the most

glorious day in the millions and millions of lifetimes I have spent suffering in this material existence, in a letter from London you most kindly accepted me as your initiated disciple. You gave me the name “Sankarshan Das.” (I was very delighted to read in the Mahābhārata where Krishna calls Balarāma “Sankarshan.”)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave us the mission to deliver the world from chaos. So now I have re-embraced my old desire to deliver the world from chaos. This mission will not be accomplished by our acting independently. It will be achieved by our following carefully in your footsteps, acting your agents, as your instruments for making the whole world Krishna conscious as soon as possible.

Thank you for your unfathomable loving kindness upon me, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please bless me that I can take birth after birth after birth until this entire material world becomes Krishna conscious.

Your most fallen servant of the servants of your servants,

Sankarshan Das Adhikari

Initiation: 1971, August—Texas, USA

Current location: ISKCON Austin, Texas, USA

Contact: sd@worldleader.com

Sudevi Devi Dasi

My Dear Prabhupāda,

I am very fortunate to have been in Buffalo, NY and met the devotee in 1968. Thank you for accepting me as your disciple. As you know my heart, I am indebted to you and will always serve you eternally. Thank you Prabhupāda.

Your insignificant servant,

Sudevi devi dasi

Initiation: 1972—Buffalo, New York, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, with each year that passes it becomes more and more obvious how dependent we are on your mercy, your teachings, and your example.

Thank you for continuing to guide us and nurture us. Thank you for teaching us via thousands of pages of instructions in your books. Thank you for appearing in your *mūrti* form in temples worldwide, where you continue to accept our obeisances and prayers. Thank you for guiding us via hundreds of recorded lectures, in which you at once plead, coach, embrace, and call out to each of us to come closer to you and to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thank you for instructing us to call out the Lord's name with feeling, to surrender to the Supreme Beloved, to give up our foolish attempts at capturing happiness through our senses, and to stop blindly following our rebellious materialistic minds.

You are so kind to be ever present for us, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Year after year after year. You are our constant friend, guru, and example amidst the ocean of material distress.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as this Age of Quarrel gains momentum, we see that all over the world polarization and hatred between peoples and tribes and nations is increasing. We are trying to realize and share your message, the message of our *ācāryas*, that the world belongs to Kṛṣṇa (*tīśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ*) and that peace will only come through living cooperatively as children of God. But it is hard. People are so overcome by bitterness and spite.

By your grace only, Śrīla Prabhupāda, can we have the opportunity to overcome that darkness. By your grace only, Śrīla Prabhupāda, can we become beacons of light – as a society of Vaiṣṇavas, as individual devotees, as citizens, mothers, fathers, neighbors, employers, employees, and as friends and colleagues.

But sadly, the world around us impels us to hurt ourselves and others. The world impels us to cheat. The world impels us to be full of hate and anger and jealously and envy. It is practically demanding that we do so. It is tempting us to do so. It is prodding us to do so. But you have given us the secret to rising beyond all that, the Lord's holy name:

*Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma
Rama Rāma Hare Hare*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, there are so many religious and spiritual people in this world who do not practice what they preach. It is so common that young people have given up on elders and institutions. They hanker for authenticity. They find instead hypocrisy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were and are the perfect manifestation of authenticity. This is one of your greatest qualities – one that attracted thousands and today attracts millions to take shelter of you. If we want to be counted as among your followers, if we want to preach and teach and serve you and follow you, we too need to become authentic. Not shallow, and not proud; but to become humble Vaiṣṇavas, trying our utmost to respect all others, to be kind to all others, and to be servants of all others.

This year, as part of the ISKCON Leadership seminar, “Being Guru in ISKCON,” the GBC Guru Services Committee members felt obliged to add to the course (which is mandatory for devotees taking up the service of initiating guru) several hours of instruction about “spiritual abuse.”

Why did we do that? How can a spiritual organization have abuse? And why would ISKCON need to teach about it, warn about it, and guard against it? Some may argue that our needing to do so proves that ISKCON has deviated from your path of purity.

But in reality the opposite is true. The fact that we “take on” spiritual abuse openly, that we discuss it, teach about it, and try to minimize it – if not eliminate it – is proof how your pure example continues to motivate us.

This is the dilemma that faces a sincere soul on the path of bhakti. We are by nature pure and eternal servants of God. Endeavoring again to serve Him, we take on greater and greater responsibilities to share His message. But every day, every moment, and at every turn we remain vulnerable to forgetfulness and to trying again to exploit others and the world around us.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is because of your purity, and the maturing of our faith in that purity, that we can teach about spiritual abuse – how to avoid it and how to overcome it, and, how we must be always on guard so that our controlling and exploitative tendencies may not overwhelm us, even as we try our best to love and serve the Lord.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you give us the strength to resist these tendencies and the honesty to pray for protection against such tendencies. You have taught us that the soul is originally pure; that the soul is meant to love God; and that each one of your followers must enthusiastically carry that message forward. But we must ever be on guard and never forget that each of us is very small. And *māyā*, illusion, is very strong.

Armed with that knowledge and with the awareness of our need for protection at every moment, we pray that all devotees, starting with ourselves and including even the topmost leaders, may be empowered with a deep understanding of our own limitations. We must have the courage to say to ourselves and to others, “Yes, I can be a messenger on behalf of Śrīla Prabhupāda and Lord Kṛṣṇa. But yes, I can also deviate and harm others if I’m not careful. I must be trained. I must be held accountable. I must hear every day from our founder-*ācārya*, from my gurus, my elders, and my peers to help me remember that I am but a humble servant.”

Most importantly, I, we, must remember that we are completely dependent upon the mercy of the Lord and our founder-*ācārya*. It is your example, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your teaching, your grace and your authenticity that keeps us safe.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for being present in our lives, in your books, in your lectures, in your *mūrtis*, and in your society, and for reminding us again and again to never mistreat others or misuse our power, our knowledge, our influence, or our status. We are always but insignificant servants of you and Lord Kṛṣṇa. Please keep us eternally in your shelter of your lotus feet.

Your servant,

Anuttama Dāsa

Jitamitra Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you for your great missionary spirit that created such a revolutionary, spiritual movement. You worked tirelessly during the last years of your life to spread Kṛṣṇa Consciousness around the world. Your pure motives and selfless efforts and your compassion

for the suffering of others produced nothing less than a miracle.

When I sometimes feel a bit disheartened for not having had a more personal relationship with you, I find shelter in the Śrīla Prabhupāda Śikṣāmṛta, the personal letters you wrote to your disciples. It is so nice to be able to read personal letters from you on almost any topic - humility, preaching in the west, *grihastha ashram*, *sannyāsa*, Vaishnava etiquette, education, book distribution, Deity worship, college preaching, etc. etc. etc.

Just last week I was reading letters of gratitude when disciples would send you packages in the mail. Himavati often sent outfits for your personal Deities, and you would thank her and comment on how well or not the outfits fit. Trai devi and Bhavatarini sent their drawings of Kṛṣṇa. Govinda Dāsī sent you an overcoat-cloak and Kadamba dasi sent you a ring. Parvati dasi tried numerous times to send milk sweets through the mail, but they would always go bad on the way to you. You would always acknowledge receiving their gifts with such kindness and gratitude, like a grandfather accepting a gift from his small grandchild. You took the time to appreciate their gifts and the love they were sent with. In doing so you further cemented your relationship with each disciple.

All your letters to disciples were compiled into a three-volume set of books, each of those books thousands of pages long. *That was a lot of letters for you to write!* By the time I had joined in 1971, the local authorities were instructing us to never take up your valuable time by writing letters to you. When I see how devotees wrote to you all the way up to 1976, I feel some regret for never having written or sent you a gift. I was always one to obey the rules and the rule was, *“Under no circumstance should we ever write to Śrīla Prabhupāda.”* If there was ever a rule to be disobeyed that would have been the one. Perhaps I might have sent you some jewelry for your Deities or a knitted scarf or hat to keep you warm. Maybe I would have asked how to overcome the shyness inhibiting my ability to do book distribution. I might have written to ask a question regarding some philosophical point or just to express my gratitude for the new spiritual life you had bestowed upon me. I was young, and my letters would have been silly and immature and my gifts of little use to you, but the letter in response would have been a most treasured possession. A small token of our relationship being personalized and a more solid connection of love between us. I cannot turn back the clock to receive a personal letter from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but

I can thank you every day for having the great compassion to accept and trust me to be your disciple despite not knowing me personally. I will continue to try to personalize my relationship with you by always taking guidance through your instructions and by keeping my initiation vows as my most treasured possession that cemented our relationship in love and trust.

Your loving spiritual daughter and disciple,

Jitamitra devi dasi

Initiation: 1972, January—New York, USA

Current location: Gainesville, Florida, USA

Contact: jitadasi@yahoo.com

Rūpa Vilāsa Dās

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances at your feet. I have been inspired by the following words uttered by your spiritual master on November 22, 1930, on the occasion of the Vyāsa-pūjā of his spiritual master His Divine Grace Gaura Kīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. This profound message is about the only non-defective method for learning the truth: by hearing and serving a self-realized soul. He concludes this portion of his powerful talk by stating: “Perfection will be attained by those who are hearing from authorized sources (*śrauta-panthī*).” What follows is such perfect and realized advice that I wish to offer his words back to you as you have so kindly offered such advice to all of us again and again. I know that you will relish these words and understand their profundity much more deeply than I ever could. I hope they will afford you some happiness and joy.

“We should hear, indeed, but what are the topics worth hearing? We hear a great deal in schools and colleges, but what is the condition of those who speak about subjects which need to be heard? Have they themselves become cured? *Bhrama*, *pramāda*, *karaṇāpāṭava*, *vipralipsā*—these are the inherent human defects: mistakes, illusions, cheating and defective perception. How will these teachers judge whether they themselves have those defects—by analyzing it themselves or by discussing it with others? How can we possibly hear truthful, infallible words without attaining the shelter of those who are completely free from these defects? We can approach such

persons—who always perform devotional service to the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead—only by faithfully following their example and serving them. There is no other way.

*jñāne prayāsam udapāsya namanta eva
jīvanti san-mukharitām bhavadīya-vārtām
sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vāñ-manobhir
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām*

My dear Lord, those devotees who have thrown away the impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth and have therefore abandoned discussing empiric philosophical truths should hear from self-realized devotees about Your holy name, form, pastimes and qualities. They should completely follow the principles of devotional service and remain free from illicit sex, gambling, intoxication and animal slaughter. Surrendering themselves fully with body, words and mind, they can live in any *āśrama* or social status. Indeed, You are conquered by such persons, although You are always unconquerable. (SB 10.14.3, as translated in *Cc. Madhya* 8.68 by Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.)

Our individual endeavor of gathering knowledge on the path of argumentation is wrought with danger. As long as we confidently hope to attain knowledge in this way, our knowledge can never be complete—all we can get is corrupted, incorrect, or sometimes incomplete knowledge. As we go on collecting these little bits of incomplete knowledge, our life will run out. Instead, we should choose the path of offering obeisances (*namantaḥ*) or in other words, using our ears. There will be auspiciousness for those who lend their ears to hearing from the lips of the *sādhus*, the pure devotees (*san-mukharitām*). Topics about You (*bhavadīya-vārtā*)—one who discusses topics related to Lord Kṛṣṇa or topics related to His devotees is a *sādhu*. All other discussions simply disappear into thin air. What is the result of such speaking even for hundreds and hundreds of years?

hriyamāṇaḥ kāla-nadyā kvacit tarati kaścana

[Although one is being carried away by the waves of the river of time, one may eventually reach the shore. (SB 10.38.5, quoted in Cc. Madhya 22.44)]

Time is passing and reducing our lifespan. What kind of perfection will we attain in the meantime? Perfection will be attained by those who are hearing from authorized sources (*śrauta-panthī*). Every thesis has its counter thesis. Argumentation is never conclusive, but the path of hearing from bona fide sources is eternally established as authoritative. Perfection is attainable by those who employ all their senses to glorify Lord Hari through *kīrtana*, 24 hours a day."

Please grant me the mercy and give me the strength to follow this perfect advice. I remain,

Your lowly servant,

Rūpa Vilāsa dāsa

Initiation: 1972, June—Dallas, Texas, USA

Current location: UK

Contact: rupavi1008@yahoo.com

Bhavatarini Devi Dasi

To my beloved spiritual master A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda, on the occasion of his appearance day celebration 2025.

This is a revision of a song I wrote for your 100th anniversary titled "100 years" in 1996, changing it to 1896, the year you were born. Please accept this insignificant offering. You are my life and soul. Thank you for accepting me.

>1896<

1896 1896 That holy year, you appeared
1896 1896 On that blessed day you first appeared
You came to set the whole world free
By Lord Gaurāṅga's causeless mercy
And it's coming down in a line from your spiritual master
You came to set the whole world free

By Nityānanda's causeless mercy
And your message of service to God is the answer
You are a transcendental gardener
Planting seeds in barren ground
Watered by your instructions
Blooms into the Holy Sound
Being sung in every village and every town

*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare*

You came to set the whole world free by order of the pure devotee
You came to set the whole free
And it's coming down in a line from our spiritual masters
You came to set the whole world free by order of the pure devotees
You came to set the whole world free
And your message of service to God wards off disaster

*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare*

1896 1896 1896

Your very fallen but fortunate daughter,

Bhavatarini Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1972, June—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Vrindavan, India

Contact: bhavatarinidd@yahoo.com

Gokulananda Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I can only repeatedly thank you for saving me from my own delusions and futile attachments. I can barely imagine what miseries I would have undergone had I not met your sincere followers in Vancouver back in the summer of 1971. Somehow, by your causeless mercy, I quickly joined your ISKCON *San̄kīrtan* Forces, by which I started to catch a glimpse of your awesome spiritual opulence.

Although your pure devotion and deep conviction are the sustaining force for your rare empowerment, you repeatedly stated that your only merit was to always have unconditional faith in your

glorious teacher, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. And such perfect *guru-niṣṭha* was the true source of all your miraculous achievements.

So we pray that, by your ever-present mercy, we can also gain a minute fraction of your limitless faith in guru and Krishna. Please allow me to realize more and more my utter dependence on abundantly hearing your empowered utterances preserved in your sublime books and *vāṅmī*, which are forever sustaining so many of your faithful followers.

Your grateful servant,

Gokulananda Dasa

Initiation: 1972, June—Portland, USA

Current location: ISKCON Montreal

Janakaraja Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

You are my eternal guide, eternal master and eternal father.

Again, your Vyāsa-pūjā celebrations remind us of your divinity.

This morning, I was listening to your devotees remembering you. This particular devotee was relating how you had said that Lord Nṛsimhadeva relieves all the anxiety of His devotees and they experience transcendental ecstasy in His association. You had commented how the holy name was non-different.

This is the bestower of faith: the purifying and ecstatic effect of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa on the consciousness.

Like water to a parched throat, the holy name soothes, purifies, and bestows bliss and love.

Thus Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have conquered me with your Lord's holy name. Every time I chant my faith is restored, my conviction that you have given the greatest gift that can heal the desert-like hearts of us conditioned souls.

So, again this year I come with only words, but words that try to express my eternal gratitude to you, the great soul who agreed to adopt this useless son.

Your humble servant,

Janakaraja Dasa
Initiation: 1972, June—Bury Place, London, UK
Current location: Dunedin, New Zealand
Contact: janaka153@gmail.com

Vaisnavananda Das

“DO NOT SLEEP!”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, today on this most auspicious day of your appearance, Vyāsa-pūjā, we honor the opportunity to praise you and voice our appreciation for receiving your unfathomable mercy and blessings.

We have recently visited Vṛndāvan, India after a lengthy absence of 47 years of attending the grand opening Jubilee of the Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Mandir in 1975. Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is your most glorious and unparalleled achievement, establishing the Kṛṣṇa Balarāma temple and the whole of ISKCON as a legitimate branch of Lord Caitanya’s movement, the Hare Krishna Movement in India, nay, the whole world!

We celebrated the 50th anniversary opening of the Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Mandir, in a festive, extraordinary, splendorous manner. The performance of an opulent Puṣpa Abhiṣek, showering Their Lordships with an abundance of beautiful aromatic flowers, and executing the traditional abhiṣek with fine condiments of honey, yogurt, milk, rose water etc., coupled with the participation of many of your disciples from abroad on the altar; all arranged by a host of devotees and your dedicated disciple and servant, Srutikirti Das prabhu and dynamic temple president, Pancha Gauda Das prabhu. On this auspicious occasion they simply gave your disciples the “Royal Treatment” with a warm hospitable, affectionate, welcome!

The disciples who had attended the grand opening 50 years ago in 1975, were asked to relate their experience of the visit particularly to share any anecdote concerning you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Hence I relate the following:

In March of 1975 in Vṛndāvan at the Kṛṣṇa Balaram mandir the temple was still under construction preparing for the grand inauguration and installation of Their Lordships, Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma. I remember that there was no fancy marble floor on the

courtyard where the rare Tamal tree is located, and there was only dark dirt at the time. Sudas Das, Carudesna prabhu, Gokularanjana prabhu, Haricarana prabhu and other devotees from the Atlanta temple (which you had visited recently and kindly named New Panihati Dhama) were present. We were standing outside in front of the temple's main gate chanting *japa*. Haricarana prabhu was the temple treasurer and a very nice amicable devotee. However, he was easily prone to fall asleep during the morning functions, namely *japa* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class because he stayed up late most nights counting the large amount of Laxmi collected at the Atlanta Airport by the *Saṅkīrtan* devotees. So this particular morning he decided to lie down and take a nap on the dirt floor in the courtyard of the temple covering his entire body with his chadar to keep warm since early mornings in Vṛndāvan can be very cool and chilly.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was returning from his daily morning walk with his entourage of devotees, *Sannyāsīs*, GBC members, elite book distributors, temple presidents, etc., on his way to the temple to give morning *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class. Śrīla Prabhupāda is a *Tattva Darśī*, a seer of the absolute truth, and certainly he can see everything within and without the purview of his senses as well as his immediate surroundings. So, to his left he happened to notice a covered body on the bare ground approximately twenty feet or so away. Prabhupāda suddenly stopped and turned sauntering toward us. And as we see Prabhupāda approaching we immediately offer full *koṭi daṇḍavats* for the exception of Haricarana prabhu who is sleeping on the ground under the chadar completely oblivious to the situation. Śrīla Prabhupāda walks up to him and pokes him with his cane repeatedly, Haricana is startled and defiantly casts off his chadar intent to see who had dared to disturb him. To his amazement there before him stood none other than His Divine Grace, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, his spiritual master! Haricarana's mood instantly shifted from that of indignation to utter reverence and humility. He immediately offered prostrated obeisances as Śrīla Prabhupāda admonished him with a most appropriate instruction stating:

“Do not sleep!”

This brief instructive anecdote illustrates how Śrīla Prabhupāda was very much concerned and always willing to spare his invaluable time to instruct his disciples at every available opportunity. In this

order to not sleep we can reasonably assume that Śrīla Prabhupāda wants to indicate to his disciple to not remain in material slumber, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and not lose the opportunity of this human life to go back home back to Godhead. Human life is very precious and the living entity must traverse through innumerable species of life to obtain it:

*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 bonafide 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.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, circled the globe over 14 times and answered every letter he received in order to guide his disciples and ensure that they firmly remain on the path of devotional service. In July, 1975 at an arrival address in San Francisco, he said that just as Kṛṣṇa is in anxiety regarding the welfare of His devotee, so the spiritual master is in anxiety regarding the state of his disciples. Prabhupāda told us that if we sincerely maintain our practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness but fail to return back home back to Godhead in this lifetime, that he will take as many births as needed to come back for us, but that we should not abuse that privilege and become serious in our *sādhana bhakti*.

His Divine Grace, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, is a resident of Goloka Vṛndāban who walked amongst us and taught by perfect example how to lead an ideal life in the service of God.

Certainly posterity or the many future generations of devotees to come in the next ten thousand years should relish and fully appreciate every minute detail about our Lord and Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

A fallen disciple,

Vaisnavananda Dasa

Initiation: 1972, July—Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Messenger of Beauty

Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.239): “My dear friend, if you are indeed attached to your worldly friends, do not look at the smiling face of Lord Govinda as He stands on the bank of the Yamunā at Keśī-ghāṭa. Casting sidelong glances, He places His flute to His lips, which seem like newly blossomed twigs. His transcendental body, bending in three places, appears very bright in the moonlight.”

With His incomparable beauty Kṛṣṇa conquers the hearts of all living entities. His beauty is the most outstanding among the six magnificent qualities that characterize Him, and His pure devotee, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is the messenger of such beauty.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have beautified our dull, dry lives by adorning them with a great variety of precious gems, whose value we cannot even imagine.

First, you gave us yourself, a unique personality, full of countless exceptional qualities. You gave us the vision of your beautiful, timeless face, a face both old and young at the same time. You gifted us with your oceanic smile and your seriousness, your humor, and your gravity.

Among your innumerable qualities stands out, unchallenged, your power, which you received directly from Kṛṣṇa, Himself the Almighty. This power enabled you, thanks to your total surrender to your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, to perform real wonders.

Let us not forget that from a humble little shop, “The Matchless Gift,” located on a small street in New York City, you came to conceive some of the greatest temples in India – the Vedic Planetarium temple in Māyāpur, the Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple in Vrindavan, the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī temple in Mumbai, and more – and in many large cities around the world there are now magnificent temples, where the gorgeous Deities of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Gaura-Nitāi, and Jagannātha-Subhadra-Baladeva are served with exquisite devotion.

By chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa for four hours each day, you filled Tompkins Square Park in New York with the sound of the *mahā-mantra*, and from there you reached every corner of the planet and revolutionized the consciousness of millions. By your sublime

chanting of the names of Rādhā- Kṛṣṇa, you permeated the lives of us all, illuminating them with the conclusive understanding that the Divine Couple is the Absolute Truth.

You have given us the precious jewel of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. In other words, you have given us Kṛṣṇa as He was in the past, as He is now, and as He will always be. You have explained every word meticulously, so that everything is very clear to us.

Then, by accepting the onerous task of translating and commentating other sacred texts, such as the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, which you worked on at night, you gave us the sound incarnation of the great *avatāras* who descended to Earth, connecting us to the most recent and most magnanimous of all, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

You shared with us the immense wisdom of the *paramparā*, starting from the magnificent Six Gosvāmīs and on up to the incredible personalities, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and his son Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who taught us to erase the ugliness of atheism, impersonalism, sahajiyism, and superficial religiosity, which leads nowhere.

You showed us how to recognize the false beauty of *māyā* and replace it with the real beauty of Kṛṣṇa, how to free the mind from illusory thoughts and desires and replace them with spiritual ones, how to laugh and cry for the soul and not the body, and how to remember Transcendence even in our dreams.

Another beautiful gift you gave us is our names. You gave each of us new names to call one another so that we could remember our true origin and the bond that unites us.

You enhanced our talents. Everyone is talented, and you told us, “Whatever you can do, do it for Kṛṣṇa.” In this way you enriched our lives. If we had not employed our talents in the service of Kṛṣṇa we would have employed them in the service of unworthy masters and remained mediocre individuals, as we were before we met you.

You made us look beautiful even if we weren’t. You made the girls look very elegant by dressing them in colorful saris, and you made the boys shine, with clean-shaven heads and faces, and dressed in clean, bright clothes.

You promoted the Vedic arts like dance and drama, gave us the musical Sanskrit language with its transcendental poems and melodies, showed us Vedic architecture, and many other artistic aspects of life.

You made us understand that one must water the tree at the root; if we want to serve humanity, we must serve the Supreme Person.

By giving us *prasāda*, delicious food offered to Kṛṣṇa, which sustains us without violence, you taught us to respect animals, to love cows in particular, and to feel responsible for preserving our planet and taking care of it.

Until the very end, leaving your worn-out body, you taught us by your personal example how not to fear death, focusing instead on the service of Kṛṣṇa and giving up false attachments.

You were an example of great power because even when you were physically incapacitated, not only were you very alert, but you were still productive. You continued giving gifts that would last throughout time. That is power!

You went beyond the boundless to leave us a priceless legacy. Isn't that the true meaning of a friend and well-wisher? Is there anyone else who could have given us such an incredibly array of beautiful things? Are there any words to express gratitude for such an ocean of beauty?

This and so much more is ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA!

Now it is up to us to maintain all this beauty and try to expand it.

Our most humble and respectful obeisances, dear teacher, father, friend, and benefactor.

Your servant,

Ali Krishna Devī Dāsī

Initiation: 1972, July—Paris, France

Current location: Villaggio Hare Krishna, Bergamo, Italy

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Atmananda Das

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

All glories are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Sarasvatī Gosvami. You are so kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanya-deva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism!

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble and respectful prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet, again and again.

Your service to your spiritual master, the Pancha-tattva and Their *Saṅkīrtan* movement is unparalleled, unique, and beyond miraculous ... unalloyed! It has changed – and continues to change – the world!

I cannot possibly fully express my gratitude and indebtedness to you!

How is it that I, such a foolish deviant and selfish entity can be so fortunate as to have more than a little appreciation for you? Or to have the opportunity to glorify you on *this most blessed day*, when you appeared in this temporary, dark, and miserable realm of illusion.

It is only because you are HIS DIVINE GRACE!

You are so dear to Krishna that He loves giving us perfect reasons to celebrate and glorify you, His dearest servant and friend, because He relishes service to and glorification of you more than to Himself! "... The father likes to see the son become more famous than himself. The Lord declares very emphatically that worship of His devotee is more valuable than the worship of the Lord Himself." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.9.25, purport)

Therefore, not only is a devotee of the Lord more powerful than the Lord, but also worship of the devotee is considered more effective than direct worship of the Lord (*mad-bhakta-pūjābhādhikā* (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.19.2)) (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.4.10, purport)

"Even though we may not have the fortune to contact the Supreme Lord personally, the Lord's representative is as good as the Lord Himself because *such a representative does not say anything unless it is spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.*" (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.24.48, Purport)

His grace Dhira Govinda dasa has authored a small book called Śrīla Prabhupāda IS Śāstra "Perspectives on the Infallibility of Śrīla Prabhupāda".

In the present tumult, confusion, and argument about so many theories, ideas, opinions and hypotheses about your position, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I find this presentation complete, sastric and authoritative, as well as satisfying and encouraging.

I had become confused and doubtful, and weakened in my resolve to act on my conviction that *you are giving us everything*

perfectly and completely. However, whatever my level of realisation and purification, or present enthusiasm, that fact never changes.

I pray to you to please continue to help me remain clear, convinced and enthusiastically assertive in myself and with others about that fact... the irrevocable, unalterable fact!

Thank you again Śrīla Prabhupāda!!

And now a new challenge? "A wave of saḥajiyāism."

In a meeting with Śrīla Purī Mahārāja - one of your greatly appreciative and supportive Godbrothers - HH BG Narasiṅha Mahārāja, was astounded when Śrīla Purī Mahārāja said, "There is a wave of saḥajiyāism coming to the Western world and you must preach against this misconception."

Further discussions with Śrīla Purī Mahārāja revealed what he meant when he exclaimed, 'a wave of saḥajiyāism is coming.' Not only will the Caste gosvāmīs, Gaurnāgarīs, Āula, Bāula, siddha-dehas, Siddha-praṇālīs, Sakhī-bhekīs, Daraveśas, Sāni, Smārtas, Ativāḍī, Cūḍādhārī, saḥajiyā and many other deviant schools of imitation come to spread their degrading speculations in the West, he said, but members of your own community, persons from within our own sampradāya, are coming to demonstrate saḥajiyāism. They are doing this in the name of rāgānuga-bhakti.

I'm mentioning this, Śrīla Prabhupāda, because I'm seeing this manifest right in front of me, along with what appears to be minimisation of you - your purity, uniqueness, and position!!

... but you have been explaining this to us and warning us about it all along.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.7.53, you glorify the absolute and transcendental nature of this Spotless Purana, and you talk about these saḥajiyas, the imitators, as you do in many other places as well.

Translation

The Lord's activities in association with His different energies should be described, appreciated, and heard in accordance with the teachings of the Supreme Lord. If this is done regularly with devotion and respect, one is sure to get out of the illusory energy of the Lord.

Purport

The science of learning a subject matter seriously is

different from the sentiments of fanatics. Fanatics or fools may consider the Lord's activities in relation with the external energy to be useless for them, *and they may falsely claim to be higher participants in the internal energy of the Lord, but factually the Lord's activities in relation with the external energy and the internal energy are equally good.* On the other hand, those who are not completely free from the clutches of the Lord's external energy should devoutly hear regularly about the activities of the Lord in relation with the external energy. *They should not foolishly jump up to the activities of the internal energy, falsely attracted by the Lord's internal potential activities like His rāsa-līlā. The cheap reciters of the Bhāgavatam are very much enthusiastic about the Lord's internal potential activities, and the pseudodevotees, absorbed in material sense enjoyment, falsely jump to the stage of liberated souls and thus fall down deeply into the clutches of external energy.*

Although this is a serious concern and challenge to the purity of our Hare Krishna movement, I see how you deal with even the most serious of obstacles, attacks, and challenges.

You act as if the best defence is a good offense. You have such a deep, unshakeable conviction and faith in your spiritual master and Krishna, that you confidently, assertively and vigorously push forward – leading and encouraging us to do the same - without much, if any, consideration of the circumstances!

Time and time again you show us what it means to be unstoppable! One who is empowered by Krishna can preach!

So, I am taking this as another call and impetus for me to streamline and increase my efforts to spread your glories and the *Saṅkīrtan* mission!

I pray to you Śrīla Prabhupāda to please, please help me to grow more deeply fixed in the conviction that if I become fully surrendered to your guidance – your words, your mood, and your mission - that you and Krishna will benedict me with more than everything I need to be fully satisfied myself and to attract others to your service.

Finally, another concern - about my ageing body. As many of our God-siblings have already left their bodies, and the rest of us are fast approaching that time ourselves, I was reminded recently of at least three instructions you give us in this regard.

In the purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.30.14, you clearly

stress this point:

In the Vedic way of life, one has to give up family life when he is strong enough. It is advised that before getting too weak and being baffled in material activities, and before becoming diseased, one should give up family life and engage oneself completely in the service of the Lord for the remaining days of his life. It is enjoined, therefore, in the Vedic scriptures, that as soon as one passes fifty years of age, he must give up family life [...].

And again, in the purport to the following verse, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.30.15, you repeat this instruction:

Before meeting death, one is sure to become a diseased invalid, and when he is neglected by his family members, his life becomes less than a dog's because he is put into so many miserable conditions. Vedic literatures enjoin, therefore, that before the arrival of such miserable conditions, one should leave home and die without the knowledge of his family members.

And, in yet another purport - to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.29.54 – you again emphasize the same point:

“Prahāda Mahārāja recommends that while one's senses are there and one is strong enough, he should abandon the *grihastha-ashrama* and take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord, going to the forest of Vrindavan.”

So, I am praying to you Śrīla Prabhupāda and to the Pancha-tattva to help me find the best solution for being fully ready for leaving this body.

By your Divine Grace, I have again the opportunity to deal with a great challenge, in this case, the greatest challenge.

In every aspect of my life, I feel gratefully blessed by your purity, love, compassion and perfect example. Let me become a via medium for others to experience the same, by giving up my excuses.

By your benediction, it is absolutely, undeniably possible.

Aspiring to be your sold-out servant, disciple, and representative,

Atmananda dasa

Initiation: 1972, July—London, UK

Gauragopala Das

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

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-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 deva and delivering the western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda you came to this world in 1896 to help the fallen *jīva*-souls return home, back to Godhead, this is your 129th Vyāsa-pūjā in 2025.

Again, thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for bringing Lord Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *Saṅkīrtan* Movement to the Western world 65 years ago (1965) and sowing the devotional seeds for a future Golden Age of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you have taught us so nicely about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that our original position is to be always Kṛṣṇa's eternal servant.

Even though my personal struggle has been difficult over the years and at times hopeless, you have always been there to guide me with your instructions and chastisement, to remind me to always remember Kṛṣṇa, and never forget Him, no matter what difficulties or failures there are.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you have taught us that free will always exists

for the individual *jīva*-souls, even though it may seem a paradox due to each individual *jīva*-soul being an expansion of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa being the Supreme controller and knower of all things.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you constantly told us that we must never forget Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and cause of all causes, and that not even a blade of grass can move without first being sanctioned by Him.

Therefore, many have also asked, how can the individual *jīva*-souls have the choice to live a separate existence from Kṛṣṇa, when Kṛṣṇa knows everything and is the foundation of all that there is?

So everyone can know that independence (free will) means one can use it properly or one can misuse it, that is independence, that is the meaning of free will. If you make it one way only so you cannot fall down, that is not independence (free will), that is force. (Śrīla Prabhupāda, Māyāpur, June 20, 1973)

These independent actions and thoughts the individual *jīva*-souls have, allows them to voluntarily express themselves in their service to Kṛṣṇa in their own unique way.

This is difficult for some scholars to understand because everything is dependent on Kṛṣṇa, meaning nothing can act independently from Him however, it is obvious the individual *jīva*-souls CAN paradoxically act independently from Kṛṣṇa if they choose to do so but still, everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa including this free will the individual *jīva*-souls have.

The fact is, everything there is, is part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa's energy however, there are different categories of His living energies, known as "anti-matter" or individual life who take up 75% of the Spiritual Sky, and the temporary material mundane energy (matter) that takes up 25% of the Spiritual Sky.

Individual life (anti-matter) is everywhere as individual spiritual persons in the spiritual world where mundane material energy (matter) cannot exist.

Only in the mundane material world does "matter" exist and covers the fallen individual life force (anti-matter known as individual *jīva*-souls) with a temporary material bodily vessel that is always in need of maintenance due to decline and decay.

Kṛṣṇa allows the individual *jīva*-souls in the spiritual world to have their free will because He wants to see their unique independent

expressions of reciprocal love with Him from the individual *jīva*-soul's point of view while making their personal offerings to Kṛṣṇa.

In other words, Kṛṣṇa always wants a mutual cooperative contributing complementary relationship of voluntary loving exchanges with His dear devotees.

Kṛṣṇa is never like a controlling puppet master with His intimate devotees, where the puppet master manipulates and controls everything his puppets do and thinks which only denies individual self expression and personal contributions.

Such a mindless existence without the free will, or having the unique ability of self expression that allows voluntary personal offerings to Kṛṣṇa, is dangerous impersonalism therefore love or service only exists in a two-way exchange of positive devotional Kṛṣṇa conscious emotions.

Kṛṣṇa's devotees always express themselves as separate individuals from Kṛṣṇa, even though, as said above, paradoxically Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and cause of all causes and knows everything because the individual *jīva*-souls are His expansions too.

God is also an individual person as you are individual person, I am individual person, but the difference between God and you and me is this, that you know your business, I know my business, but God knows everyone's business. That is the difference. (Śrīla Prabhupāda Lecture, Sydney, Australia, April 3, 1972)

In this way, Kṛṣṇa allows the eternal individual *jīva*-souls (devotees) in the spiritual world to continually re-invent themselves with their own voluntary unique contributions, this allows diversity, meaning an unlimited range of variegatedness in one's personal service to Kṛṣṇa that is forever expanding their progressive independent contributions, infinitely expanding their voluntary participation, personal contributions and inspiration in an unlimited variety of unique ways serving Kṛṣṇa in His never ending expanding blissful pastimes (*līlās*):

Love is reciprocal, voluntary, good exchange of feeling, then there is love... It never achieved by force, no, Kṛṣṇa does not want to become a lover like that - 'You love me, otherwise I shall kill you!' (Śrīla Prabhupāda Conversation, Washington D.C., July 8, 1976)

In the spiritual world service is always voluntary, some devotees desire to serve Kṛṣṇa as flower; they become flower voluntary, and can change from flower to unlimited forms in the spiritual world including human form if the devotee desires, that is spiritual life, it is always voluntary with no restrictions. If a devotee wants to serve Kṛṣṇa as cow, he serves Kṛṣṇa as cow, as calf, as flower, as plant, as water, as ground, field, or as father, as mother, as friend, as beloved, anything. It is inconceivable, yet a fact. (Śrīla Prabhupāda lecture, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.1.1-4, Melbourne, Australia. May 20, 1975)

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving us all this wonderful knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Your fallen yet inspired servant,

Gauragopala dasa

Initiation: 1972, July 10 —Sydney, Australia

Current location: Australia

Contact: gauragopala@hotmail.com

Janmanalaya Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You called Your magazine “Back to Godhead”. We are all trying to make our way through life with the hope of arriving at a place that can be called home. When I saw a picture of Your Grace for the first time and read the invocation mantra of the Isopanisad, I felt that I came in contact with a higher knowledge, where the mind doesn’t have anymore access to: “*Śraddhā*”. This higher knowledge somehow or other resonated in my stonelike heart and opened a plane beyond abstract thinking, a plane of consciousness: VRINDĀVANA, home, back home. Here at Your lotus feet I feel at home, following You on the morning walks, sitting and listening to Your lectures, being challenged and comforted by You - yes, I feel at home here under Your fatherly shelter. Here my life takes its proper dimension. Behind common

place events, behind ordinary days and places I can glimpse the hand of Krishna. The concept that the soul evolves and grows, this concept You smashed completely. No, the soul twists, repeats and reprises, the soul is homesick, yearning for its milieu. That is flowing towards home, not an evolution towards perfection. Please, keep me under Your shelter! Your servant,

Janmanalaya Das

Initiation: 1972, July—Paris, France

Current location: Sweden

Radhasyam Dasa

Prabhupāda Petals Jasmine Bud Leis Ten Moments In Time

Prabhupāda, petals
Jasmine bud leis, please accept
A heart, like flowers

Running in April
To meet you in airports
For one beaming smile

After the Māgha month
O, Light of the Bhāgavata...
Gaura's Full Moon
Bongo drumming, June
Genie in Tompkins Square Park
Bearing Matchless Gifts

Harmonium songs
Tears welling up in your eyes
"Gaura Pahoont;

Under Greenwood Trees
Midnight *Krishna Book* Readings
In New Vrindavan

Paramahaṁsa
Sojourning around the world
Out of compassion

Aspiring dream
Just to follow you, serving
Rādhā-Śyām in Vraj

Do not forget one
So fallen and renegade
Dear Prabhupāda!

Autumn... window shuts.
May one cry come from within:
JAI PRABHUPĀDA KĪ JAI!!

Initiation: 1972, July—New York, USA

Sākshi Gopāl Dāsa

RESIDENT OF GOLOKA

Our master! Śrīla Prabhupāda!
You are resident of Goloka!
Our *praṇāms* at your lotus feet
With prayers we may invoke
The ocean of your mercy flow
To keep us each engaged
And protected from the darkness
Of this Kali-yuga age

*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*

Now begging for your blessings

As I offer you these words
As if a dwarf could touch the moon —
The notion is absurd
But by your kindness
Even fools and rascals such as I
May receive your sidelong mercy glance
By the grace of Gaura-Nitāi...

The realised Spiritual Master is
Uttama-adhikārī
Who sees Kṛṣṇa's hand in everything
And never one to tarry
Yet willingly steps down
To act as only *madhyamas* can —
As you gave your all to give the world
The words of Bhagavān

The realised Spiritual Master is
Uttama-adhikārī
Whose flood of endless mercy
Even neophytes may carry
Empowered by their eagerness
To serve your lotus feet
They spread your message far and wide
And never fear defeat

You write: 'the Spiritual Master
Best be resident of Goloka'—
Full realised in love of God
And never mediocre
You embody all the mercy
Of *guru paramparā*
And your presence, like the moon
Outshines a galaxy of stars

You've said that when the
Spiritual Master is resident of Goloka
Then *Kṛṣṇa prema* is his to give
— Reciprocally invoked —
Your glance of loving gratitude
Is key to Kṛṣṇa's grace

For to please you is to please the Lord
Within your heart's embrace

'The Spiritual Master' you assert
'Is resident of Goloka' —
Transparent via media
The transcendental broker
Who, despite our own shortcomings
In the currency of love
You accept our heartfelt service
On behalf of God above

The Spiritual Master, you have taught,
Is resident of Goloka
You speak with such authority
And bring to life the *śloka*s
That others know they're free to quote
And even memorise
But when hearing from your lotus mouth
The verses come alive

Ācārya brings the matchless gift
The *bhakti-latā-bij*
That can grow beyond the universe
To Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet
Via bhakti's nine-fold process
That, by your mercy we're engaged —
Breaking through the eightfold coverings
That have us bound and caged

The *vartma-pradarśaka-guru*
Regardless of their status
Kaniṣṭha, *bhakta*, neophyte
(Despite apparent hiatus)
As eager channels of your grace
—Some even unaligned—
Convey the blessings of *paramparā*
That you have redefined

The pure devotees you assess
By purity of motive

They're fully absorbed in selfless service
— Never self-promotive —
No matter what their service
And whatever stage they've reached
— *Kaniṣṭha, Madhyama, Uttama* —
They live as you have preached

The *ṛtvik* priest, as you have said
Conducts initiation
Invokes the mantras, sacred fire
As fits the situation
His role: to give the holy name
On behalf of the *Ācārya*
Whose absence from the *yajña*
Is no hinder-ance or barrier

The Spiritual Master, you have shown
Is servant of the servant
You took to heart your guru's word
With patience and observance
You bring to life and manifest
Your guru's pure desire
As you guide us each to Kṛṣṇa's feet
And quench *saṁsāra*'s fire

“Your ever well wisher” you signed off
In letters to disciples —
Your promise that you're always here
To guide each soul's revival
On *bhakti*'s path to love of God
As much as we surrender
To the shelter of your lotus feet
In service that we render

'Regular guru' you professed
Fulfills the role of teacher
Who'll walk and talk the holy path
As *sannyāsa*, monk or preacher
Who, duty bound, repeats your words
As heard and understood
To bless the individual

And serve the greater good

“*Ācārya*” is a rarer soul
Who’ll never change the teaching
But may take up ways and novel means
To pioneer the preaching
With methods that surprise the world
With zestful innovation —
And such gravity of purpose
That allows no deviation

Ācārya is forever speaking
On behalf of Kṛṣṇa
The highest good for all concerned
Is all he’ll ever wish ya
He’ll utilise facilities
That others fail to see
Yet acting on the Lord’s behalf
His path is karma free

You’ve shown that ‘Spiritual Master’
Is far more than just a title
He accepts responsibilities
That demonstrate the vital
Place—that *caitya-guru* plays—
Whose transcendental role
Is to guide the new disciple
As the voice of Supersoul

“*Ācārya*” will walk the talk
And practice what he preaches
Exemplary in every way
He lives by what he teaches
The transcendental pragmatist
Enthusing all who come
To take to heart the *yuga-dharma*
That Gaura-Nitāi begun

With *kali-chelas* on the prowl
Who’d catch the unaware
You warned us of the show bottles

Who come to sell their wares
Who dress and even talk the talk
Of holy mannerism
But whose deviation leads the way
To rupture and division

And yet you've said: 'If guru
Is a rascal number one—
If he doesn't change the message
Then his postal role is done'
Prime duty of the guru
Is not to alter, change, or trifle
With the message of *paramparā*
As passed on to disciple

Were your battlefield commissions
For the ashram of *sannyāsa*
But a yardstick of the urgency
You measured and surpassed?
You overlooked discrepancies
In those who tried their best
To help you execute your strategy
To save the dispossessed

There's some who claimed you bent the rules
To spread the *yuga-dharma*
Yet millions more you've lifted
From the wreck of Kali's drama
And countless souls around the world
Are touched by your compassion
As they chant Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy name
Untouched by fad or fashion

The *guru-shakti* potency
Resides in Baladeva
And now—by Nityānanda's grace—
You've kindly come to save
The host of helpless *jīva* souls
Caught up in Māyā's web
Of birth, old age, disease and death
Where love of God is dead

As *śaktyāveśa avatār*

You're rarest of the rare
You risked your health, your life and limb
Where others never dared
Surrendered to the task at hand
To implement the means
By which to save the fallen souls
By transcendental schemes

You plainly see our heart's intent
And read us like a book
Despite our wanton, foolish ways
You've never once forsook
The duty you have undertook
To save us each from harm
If we'll but help you propagate
Chaitanya's *yuga-dharma*

Four principles and sixteen rounds
— We've each of us agreed —
The minimum observance
If we are to proceed
To purify our heart of hearts
Avoiding ten offences
That can block our progress on the path
With rampant mind and senses

You give the lens through which to see
The hope to make a start
The best of all philosophies
The prayer to cleanse the heart
You give us books to lift the soul
The sanctuary of the *ashram*
The mercy of *paramparā*
The gift of *harināma*

Descriptions of the Lord's abode
The science of the soul
The loving service of the Lord
The process and the goal
Your assurance that you're always here

To guide us through the night
And come, at last, to Rādhā Kṛṣṇa's
Realm of pure delight

You teach us, by your pastimes
There's no limit to your love
No limit to your sacrifice
To serve the Lord above
Unlimited by time and space
Your mercy knows no bounds
As you fill the corners of the world
With transcendental sound

Although you left our mortal sight
In nineteen seventy seven
You still reveal yourself through dreams
That come as if from heaven
Where your glance or word is all it takes
To touch the gentle heart
And reassure us of this truth—
You never did depart

O Prabhupāda! O spiritual master
Guru and *Ācārya!*
Ever well wisher, teacher, guide
Gaurāṅga's Chief Commander
No words or title can encompass
All you've come to give
For you've built a House Of Touchstone
In which all the world can live

The floodgate of compassion
You alone have opened wide
The prayers of Vāsudeva Datta
Invoked and certified
By your transcendental pragmatism
—Key to your success—
You've engaged the world in *harināma*
North, South, East and West

Engaging all who come your way

You overlook our faults,
Instead you give us access
To the transcendental vaults
Of Gaura-Nitāi's agenda
Which your mercy pastimes bring
By enrolling us as servants
In Their Transcendental Spring...

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

Begging for your causeless mercy to be of service
to those who serve your divine mission under
the soothing shade of your lotus feet,

Your wayward disciple,

Sākshi Gopāl Dāsa

Initiation: 1972, August—London, UK

Gokularanjana Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace and the *paramparā* that You represent.

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,
Founder Acharya

We don't refer to you as Your Majesty, although we could, or Your Highness, Your Holiness, Your Excellency, etc. No, so why His Divine Grace? Whose Divine Grace is it? What IS this grace so divine? It is *sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam, īśvaraḥ paramaḥ Kṛṣṇaḥ, sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*. Śrīla Prabhupda, you are connected to the Cause of All Causes - Kṛṣṇa.

*sākṣād-dharitena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvayata eva sadbhīḥ
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

“The Spiritual Master is to be honored as much as the Supreme Lord Himself. He is the most confidential servitor of the Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and followed by all authorities. Therefore, I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Lotus Feet of such a Spiritual Master, who is a bonafide representative of Śrī Hari Kṛṣṇa”

In other words, you are to be worshipped as good as God, knowing full well that you are not God, but You are one with Him in purpose, in quality, and in love. You came to us to deliver His Divine Grace, to give us a chance to be delivered from the threefold miseries - *Ādhi-Daivika*, *Ādhi-Bhautika*, *Ādhy-Ātmika*. The fallen souls who are spinning around in the cycle of birth, death, old age and disease with no direction home. You carried this Divine Grace to the fallen souls like the Holy Ganges that descends from outside this universe, piercing through the coverings of the universe, descending down to us through time and space to cleanse us from our sins. Thus, the paramparā, this Holy River of transcendental sound vibration was delivered by Your Divine Grace without adulteration AS IT IS.

Your humble son and servitor,

Gokularanjana das

Initiation: 1972, September—New Vrindavana, West Virginia, USA

Current location: New Talavan, Mississippi

Yogindra Vandana Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om̐ visnu padaya kṛṣṇa presthaya bhutale
srimate bhaktivedanta svamin iti namine*

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

Thank you for the opportunity to again serve your lotus feet for another year. Although this year turned out traumatic for myself and family I am doing my best to remain faithful to your lotus feet. Fortunately they are very broad. As your devotees often quote, “you built a house for the entire world”. That is my good luck because I certainly need the space.

I am trying to start some new teaching programs. Surely your mercy is required; and my enthusiasm. I will be the first to admit I am running on low octane and many times don't feel up to the task of moving, creating and maintaining all over again. Maybe this will be the last service I struggle to accomplish. Will it even get off the ground remains to be seen, but at least I can feel that you are appreciative. That is my solace. Following in your footsteps. Oh, what a struggle you undertook to benefit poor conditioned souls like my insignificant self.

Therefore please show me some special mercy and tolerate my inadequacies. I will try beyond the shadow of a doubt to be true to your words, your teachings and your plans to rescue mankind. By your grace it's possible; but will I give up my comfort zone, control my mind and senses and do what is required to serve you and Lord Gaurāṅga? That is where my doubt lies as I lazy around getting little done while crying like a common fool and rascal overcome by the lower modes of nature.

Yet I won't give up hope. Dreaming that I will please you ultimately by helping other poor conditioned souls to see the light of Krishna consciousness. Please continue to encourage and chastise me so that someday I will be delighted to see you smiling at me that we succeed in our humble attempt to teach your golden message.

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

Your Servant,

Yogindra Vandana Dasanudasa
Initiation: 1972, October—New Orleans_USA
Current location: Mississippi, USA
Contact: NewTalavana@gmail.com

Krishna Kamala Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

*nama om̐ visnu padaya kṛṣṇa presthaya bhutale
srimate bhaktivedanta svamin iti namine*

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

I have no words to express your greatness and how much you have given to the material people of this world sleeping in *māyā*

You have woken us up by giving Krishna bhakti

No gift is comparable to this

Now my body is very old and helpless, I am struggling – please forgive me and please bless me to never forget Krishna

Your fallen daughter,

Krishna Kamala devi dasi

Initiated: London, 1971

Bhrgupati Dasa

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāminn̐ iti nāmine*

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

The Vedic reciters or the personified Vedas sing thus:

‘O unconquerable, You are the Supreme Personality.

No one is equal to You or greater than You. No one can be more glorious in His activities. All glories unto You! All glories unto You!... You are able to deliver all conditioned souls from the clutches of *māyā*. (*Kṛṣṇa* Book).

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, commenting upon this prayer of the Vedas personified you wrote: “All the *śrutis* or personified Vedas offered glories to the Lord again and again, singing, “Jaya! Jaya!” This indicates that the Lord is praised for His glories. Of all His glories

the most important is His causeless mercy upon the conditioned souls in reclaiming them from the clutches of *māyā*.”

I believe this also holds true for you. *sakṣāt*-directly; *hari-tvena*-with the quality of Hari; *samasta*-all; *śāstraiḥ*-by scriptures; *uktaḥ*-acknowledged; *tathā*-thus; *bhāvvyate*-is considered; *eva*-also; *sadbhiḥ*-by great saintly persons; You came and exhibited ‘the (most important) quality of Hari,’ His causeless mercy upon the conditioned souls.

Sometimes I reflect in a mood of regret how far from a perfect disciple I am, but manage to feel some solace in the thought ‘at least I’m still here trying.’ Upon further consideration however I’ve come to understand that’s only due to your causeless mercy. Thank you for keeping me on the roster. If you were to stop being causelessly merciful to me, I’d most certainly be a prime candidate for any one of a number of hellish conditions of life. I’m very grateful for what you’ve done and are continuing to do for me, and pray that I will be able to be a better disciple in the future.

Your very fallen and insignificant disciple,

Bhrgupati Dasa

Initiation: 1973, April—New York, USA

Current location: New Dwaraka, Los Angeles, California, USA

Kalakanṭha Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. As I attempt to glorify you, I pray to please you on your appearance day and every day.

Out of your kindness, you eased our material suffering and bestowed us with so many wonderful spiritual gifts.

You filled our ears with sweet *kīrtan* and *bhajans* and taught us to accompany them with robust *mṛdaṅgas*, rhythmic *kartals* and melodious harmoniums.

You filled our material eyes with the incredibly beautiful arca-vigraha forms of Lord Krishna and engaged us in Their service.

You fed us *samosās*, *kachoris*, rice, *dāl*, *subjis*, *chapattis*, *ladoos*, *kheer*, and simply wonderfals.

You invited us into the eternal and liberating pastimes of Lord Krishna.

As Krishna’s representative, you opened our minds to the reality

of Krishna through your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

You gave us so much more joy than we imagined possible. You gave us adventure, challenge and purpose. We don't know where we would be without your kindness.

Most of all, you gave us the holy name, which made everything else possible. All you asked is that we chant Hare Krishna and be happy.

The wisdom Lord Krishna has taught us,
a treasure that never shall end,
the ecstasy bhakti has brought us,
the service, prasādam and friends,

the many long roads we have travelled,
the many digressions we made,
a tapestry coming unraveled,
exposing an empty charade,

the pains and the pleasures of living,
the bodies we soon shall not need,
all fall to the side as we're giving
our hearts to the very next bead.

At any moment, that which I see as so important in
this world will become irrelevant. However, your
gift of the Holy Name will always stay with me. Śrīla
Prabhupāda, may I remain eternally connected to you
by chanting with attention and without offense.

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

Your servant,

Kalakaṅṭha das ACBSP
Initiation: 1973, May—Portland, USA

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances!

I would like to thank you for offering transcendence to this prodigal soul. You are the personification of amazing grace.

I bow to your lotus feet, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, a spiritual giant, whose compassion, wisdom, and unwavering dedication to your Śrī Guru have inspired and paved the way for a global movement transcending borders and seas.

With unrelenting passion, you shared the message of love and devotion, guiding countless souls on their spiritual journey, through life's joys and tribulations. Your translations of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, illuminated the path, making the ancient wisdom accessible to all, a testament to the transformative power of selfless love and service.

May your teachings continue to inspire and uplift, as we strive to follow in your footsteps, on the path of *bhakti*.

I offer my gratitude and respects for the profound impact you've had on my life. May your love, wisdom, and spiritual guidance forever be etched in our hearts, a constant source of inspiration and strength.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a spiritual luminary, who illuminated the world with the radiant light of Krishna consciousness.

Your divine presence, imbued with compassion, wisdom, and devotion, transformed countless lives.

You propagated the teachings of Lord Krishna, traversing the globe, and establishing the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). Your selfless efforts bore fruit, as the Hare Krishna movement flourished.

As an ocean of knowledge, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you shared your profound understanding of the *Vedas*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*. The commentaries and translations, infused with spiritual insight, continue to guide hundreds of thousands of seekers on their journey. Your humility and simplicity inspired devotion in the hearts of your followers.

Your willingness to embrace and guide all, regardless of background or circumstance, exemplified the universal love of Krishna.

Your legacy of love, compassion, and devotion continues to flourish. As a testament to your transformative power, your followers,

now spanning generations, remain committed to spreading the message of Krishna consciousness.

We offer our eternal gratitude to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for bestowing upon us the precious gift of Krishna consciousness. May your divine presence continue to guide and inspire us on our spiritual journey, please.

You wrote in a letter in 1969: “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.”

As a spiritual giant, you revolutionized the world with the timeless message of Krishna consciousness. Your unwavering dedication, compassion, and wisdom inspired a global movement.

With unrelenting passion, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you traversed the globe, sharing the teachings of Lord Krishna. You fearlessly confronted the materialistic tide, establishing the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in 1966.

Even with your profound wisdom and accomplishments, you remained a humble servant of Lord Krishna. Your simplicity, kindness, and compassion inspired devotion in our hearts.

Your legacy extends far beyond the physical presence. Your teachings, institutions, and followers continue to flourish, spreading the message of Krishna consciousness to every corner of the world.

We offer our heartfelt gratitude and reverence to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who selflessly shared the gift of Krishna consciousness with humanity.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a true ambassador of Krishna consciousness, spreading the message of love and devotion to Lord Krishna.

You are the Founder-*Acarya* of ISKCON, Śrīla Prabhupāda, establishing a global network of temples, farms, and communities, providing a spiritual home for millions.

You are a spiritual master par excellence, guiding your disciples on the path of Bhakti-yoga and helping us develop a deep connection with Lord Krishna.

You courageously defended the principles of *dharma*, challenging the materialistic and atheistic ideologies that threatened the spiritual well-being of humanity.

With your visionary leadership, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you inspired

a generation of spiritual seekers to adopt a lifestyle of simplicity, compassion, and devotion.

Your teachings, encapsulated in your books and lectures, continue to inspire and guide spiritual seekers around the world.

We offer our heartfelt gratitude and reverence to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who has given us the precious gift of Krishna consciousness.

This spiritual legacy is a testament to your unwavering dedication to spreading Krishna consciousness worldwide. You established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in 1966, which has grown into a global movement.

At the age of 69, Your Divine Grace traveled to the United States, braving the challenges of a new country and culture. You tirelessly preached the message of Krishna consciousness, inspiring countless individuals to adopt a spiritual lifestyle.

You translated and commented on numerous Vedic scriptures, including the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Your writings, infused with spiritual insight, continue to guide seekers on their journey.

Despite your profound wisdom and accomplishments, you remained a humble servant of Lord Krishna. This simplicity, kindness, and compassion inspired devotion in our hearts.

We offer you our heartfelt gratitude and reverence.

Your aspiring disciple,

Arjuna Das

Initiation: 1973, May—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Texas, USA

Govardhan Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

to your Divine Grace! The happy time has come around, when I have the opportunity to write down what you mean to me, what you have done and how wonderful you are. Like the maha-mantra, your glories grow sweeter the more they are sung. What a gift you have given the world!

Watching and hearing your disciples and others put into words their experiences with you is like a dream coming true. One becomes an eye-witness to the unfolding of Mahāprabhu's prediction. How can we ever thank you enough for single-handedly breaking open the storehouse of love of God and scattering its contents worldwide? Impossible to be grateful enough, but we can at least be faithful. In your own words, which you spoke in Trafalgar Square, looking up at Nelson's Column at Rathayātrā 1973: 'ISKCON, with all thy faults – I love thee.'

Your followers are, as expressed by your disciple Vegavati, 'as varied as the moods of nature'. I repeat the phrase here for your pleasure, and will quote from another disciple of yours, Vaiyasaki das. He got the opportunity to interview your old friend and godbrother from Allahabad, Mr O.B.L. Kapoor. Vaiyasaki unearthed a priceless gem from your grihastha life, as follows:

As a young businessman, you gave Mr Kapoor a tonic from your pharmacy, but he jokingly requested the tonic you must be taking – the tonic of *Krishna prema*! You cordially revealed the formula: '*trṇād api sunīcena*', and said, 'I will spread it the whole world over.' Thus, a friendly exchange between two godbrothers foreshadowed the actual miracle which you did indeed perform on the world three or four decades later.

As Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON, the trouble you took to clear the Juhu land became a showcase for your '*trṇād api sunīcena*' mood, and for how that mood was underpinned by *Krishna prema*. I'm thinking of how a certain Mr Ratnaparkhi would not give up his rights to a shack on the property, refusing to discuss the issue with the devotees and insisting on meeting Your Divine Grace. Not only that, he specified that you were to make an appointment to come and see him. Given your stature as a holy man – even if seen by 'ordinary' Indian standards - this seems highly untoward. Nonetheless, you complied, and at the meeting got Mr Ratnaparkhi to name his price. Whereupon, you did the needful, immediately agreeing to pay the inflated figure.

You even attended the shack the day this man's relatives moved

off the Juhu site, and a procession was arranged to escort them to their new home, accompanied by *kīrtan* and a framed picture of Your Divine Grace. Reading this story in Giriraj Swami's book, I was so very, very impressed with the lengths you were prepared to go to, to secure a home for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī.

While reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* recently with a friend, the image started coming to me of Your Divine Grace sitting at your desk in the middle of the night, working on the very same chapter that we were reading. As everybody knows, you dedicated your nights to the production of transcendently realised literature. You told us that your Bhaktivedanta purports were your 'emotional ecstasies'. I've always thought of that as referring particularly to the purports where you reflect on the Lord's pastimes. It strikes me now, though, that your constant urging, through your Bhaktivedanta purports, that we strive to leave this material world and return back to Godhead is just as much a part of your repeated ecstasy.

Often, when I see or pick up one of your books, it fills me with wonder that you were able to ignite a flame, inspire a revolution, form an army of young souls that would do anything for you. And they produced your books as an offering to you. How can I do justice to expressing what that meant to you? As lowly as I am, you have shot an arrow into my heart that I can't remove, don't want to remove. You have entered into my DNA.

You are Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's predicted emissary. May I never stop saying that! May I never go sufficiently insane to forget that for a moment! Your books make me dizzy. I sometimes hug them, especially the French ones, whose divine translators I personally knew.

You gave me all the pastimes I love. For example, Gadādhara Paṇḍit was in a fix because he could not stop Vallabha Bhaṭṭa from forcibly reading his commentary out loud to him – a commentary of which Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu did not approve. And the matter did create a distance, at least outwardly, between the Lord and the Paṇḍit. Later on, when Svarūpa Dāmodara Goswami took Gadādhara Paṇḍit to be reconciled with the Lord, he asked the Paṇḍit, 'Why did you not object to the Lord's behaviour in keeping you at a distance?'

Gadādhara Paṇḍit replied that it would not look well if he acted as if he and Chaitanya Mahāprabhu were equals, and that the Lord knew the Paṇḍit's faults and qualities, and would automatically be merciful to him. I love that.

And how, another time, when His view of Krishna was disturbed, Lord Chaitanya's mind became a *yogī* and left home. The yogi of Lord Chaitanya's mind wore the ring of Krishna's *rāsa līlā* in his ear, and his only words were, 'Alas, Krishna!' I wish for that meditation to ever remain in my mind.

And, going a little further, Lord Chaitanya declared elsewhere that if He again got to meet Krishna even for a moment's time, He would adorn that moment with flowers and jewels. Where else could I find such poetic accounts of eternal life? Not only have you given a window to the spiritual world, but also the door of your blessings by which we may one day enter there.

Beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, may I end with another story which touched me deeply? This time not from your books, but from Chintamani devi dasi's association with you.

You allowed Chintamani, a new devotee, to visit New Vrindaban for as long as you were there, although the leaders did not want any single women in the community. These were very early days, your *Teachings of Lord Chaitanya* having just come out. Chintamani looked for a secluded spot outdoors where she could read the book. She walked into the forest and it felt like Vaikuṅṭha. In the end, she couldn't find her way back and when night fell had to seek shelter with some neighbours.

Next day, approaching the New Vrindaban farm, Chintamani is met with a stern reprimand from a leader: 'Where have you been? Prabhupāda is so mad! He was so worried he had to stop his translation work.' Other leading men join in with: 'Yes, do you know Prabhupāda had to stop his translating because of you? And he said you can send a sixteen-year-old boy across the world but you can't send a woman across the street'. As the rebukes continue, Chintamani feels she has been told off by every member of the community.

By then, explains Chintamani, she was afraid of seeing you, and she went back to her service of washing the pots. You come over to her and say, 'So, Chintamani, you had this whole place topsy-turvy last night.' She said, 'I'm sorry, Śrīla Prabhupāda'. You broke into a big smile and said, 'That is all right'.

I have read and heard so very many recollections of your dealings with your disciples, and now, increasingly, the way you treated your female disciples with a particular love, protection and sensitivity is coming out. I feel I know you so very much better than before.

There is much questioning nowadays how your Movement can

spread amongst Western people. I pray that we take a leaf from your book, and study how very kindly and gently you treated the girls who came to take shelter of you. May many millions of fortunate Western girls find a haven of kind protection and service opportunity in your ISKCON Movement! That is my prayer on this auspicious day.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart, and I pray that I may also be made fortunate by achieving complete surrender to your lotus feet in this very lifetime.

Even since I started compiling ideas to present to you on this Vyāsa-pūjā day, so very many more have crowded my mind, fighting for a place. There is simply too much to say in praise and appreciation of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please accept such incomplete sentiments as I have been able to write today, as a symbolic representation of my endless gratitude to you.

Your aspiring servant,

Govardhan dasi

Initiation: 1973, May—Edinburgh, Scotland, UK

Current location: Norfolk, UK

Ramya Devi Dasi

My Generation

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My generation were pioneers
In your Krishna consciousness movement, giving up
our youthful years
For the highest cause and benefit

First to come, take initiation
Build and live in the temples
With all the problems and austerities,
everything was experimental

First to marry by fire sacrifice
We tried our best to serve you
First to bear our children
Try to keep them happy and pure

First to open the *Gurukulas*
And send our children for training
In pure Krishna consciousness
Now we know they were failing

First to watch the children grow
To hope they keep some faith
Through therapy, children of their own
To watch them find their place

First to face the insidious creep
Of old age, loss, disease
Many of us scattered or alone
Chanting to find our peace

Although we were first with all of this
In your ISKCON dear Spiritual Master
So much was learned from our mistakes
To benefit those coming after

Now so much is established,
secure Temples, courses, *Gurukulas*
Paraphernalia readily available
Books, internet, lectures, recordings

Pioneers we surely were
So much we learned, endured, got wrong
Prabhupāda your instructions with us still,
though the years march on and on

ISKCON life may be easier now
Established, settled, less austere
Yet Śrīla Prabhupāda I'll always miss
The sweetness of those early years

When all was focused on you alone
And the perfection of our lives
Was when the *kīrtan* roared aloud
“Śrīla Prabhupāda is here!”

*From your aspiring servant
(and not much of a pioneer)*

Ramya Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1973, July—Bhaktivedanta Manor, London, UK

Current location: Watford, Herts, UK

Contact: rosmurphy22@gmail.com

Badarayana Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You have given us the ultimate, the most unfathomable gift far beyond our finite human comprehension. What is this gift? Not only to permanently exit the dangers and horrors of material existence but the blessing of a VIP backstage pass to the most esoteric spiritually surcharged pastimes of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. To associate and serve face to face with the all attractive Lord and His eternal consort Śrī Rādhā with Their intimate associates. Love supreme and ecstasy eternal. *Sat Cit Ānanda*. It is beyond our limited imagination and scope. And yet it exists in the unfettered land of love and divine sweetness Goloka Vrndāvana. How infinitely fortunate we are! And simultaneously how unfortunate we are to not take full advantage of this most priceless gift of love and eternity. I am preaching to myself as a reminder to beg for your mercy continuously so that by your grace, as the topmost dear and intimate servitor associate of the Lord, you may allow someone so fallen as me entrance into this supreme grandeur.

Simultaneously you have given us a great mission to execute in this realm. The mission to save the world from darkness, confusion, despair and illusion. Everyone is suffering under the stringent influence of the merciless laws of material nature which are especially pernicious in this Kali Yuga. Thus you were consistent in your compassionate mood of urgency, “please spread this Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the benefit of all human society”.

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is the only hope to save the world from such devastation. It is the most scientific and authorized movement for the actual welfare of the whole human society. (SB 5.2.1)

Therefore there is a great need for the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world to save the world from degradation. (Cc Adi 7.128)

And another thing I'll request especially to the Americans, that America has got good potentiality to save the world, so you preach very nicely in your country. (Cc *Ādi Līlā* 1.11 lecture, 4 April, 1975)

Hrdayananda Maharaj recently told me he was speaking to a group of 20 + 2nd Gen'ers. He was disheartened to discover that they did not have an understanding that indeed your mission was to "save the world."

As your direct disciples we have this great burden of responsibility. Just as you carried the enormous suffering of the world on your shoulders fueled by the order of your beloved guru Maharaj Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta until your moment of passing from this world, so too must we.

There is the internal path of cultivation of bhakti and there is the external path of delivering the conditioned souls. You desired that we cultivate these two paths simultaneously with *tīvrena bhakti-yogena*, great force, intensity and dedication. You set the example as the acarya that we do so until our dying day. Your mood was imbued with love, compassion and urgency.

I have observed a phenomenon in recent years amongst an ever increasing segment of the population, of a hunger and thirst for truth. This is evidenced in the socio-political arena as the general populace has become weary from the well orchestrated chorus of lies and deception perpetrated by previously trusted sources such as the mainstream media and mainstream medicine.

Recently there has been a very revealing detailed uncovering of waste and fraud; millions of dollars from so called government aid associations sent to the hub of all mainstream outlets, Reuters, to promote "systemic social deception". That is exactly how it's listed in their expenditures. How incredibly telling!

In the 1960's/70's widespread dissatisfaction with government leaders and superficial social norms birthed the consciousness expansion of the hippie culture fueling the search for authenticity and truth leading us to your lotus feet. I similarly see such an opportunity in these times we live.

Paṇḍits have called this movement the great awakening. It is a

most opportune time to preach your message; to insert the Greatest Awakening, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the real goal of human life, into the midst of this great awakening phenomenon.

There is a growing awareness of the malefic influences at play within the world to degrade, dominate and subjugate humanity via an atheistic transhumanist tyranny where God and common sense are removed from all aspects of society replaced by artificial intelligence and elite human technology gods. In that future dystopian vision documented in many books and white papers, everything that opposes this narrative will be suppressed as hate speech. We see this clearly today where in Germany for example a lady who was raped by an Afghan migrant was sentenced to over a year in prison for speaking online against the migrant attacks on women whereas her assailant received only 3 months in jail. In the UK people are being sent to prison for silently praying across the street from an abortion clinic. This 1984 wrong think totalitarian scenario is happening all over the world at present. If we fast forward in this post modern modus operandi, the potential for your books to be banned in the future as hate speech is a clear and potentially present danger. It's a logical likely outcome given the woke censorship environment and thus a serious consideration for your disciples and grand disciples to contemplate. We must never let that happen. Your books are humanity's ultimate salvation for the next 10k years, as you unequivocally stated on more than one occasion.

Fortunately there is great pushback to this insanity. The great awakening brings together good souls from across the planet to rally for truth and transparency. It is fertile soil for planting the seeds of the Absolute Truth, which has been so deftly delivered in your Bhaktivandana reports.

Though some may disagree, evidence of this great awakening is seen in the overwhelming popular vote by the people in the US, whom you had great hope in to turn the tide against atheistic communism.

Your dear daughter and disciple Govinda Dāsi has recollected that you told your sannyasa disciple Siddhaswarup Maharaj, that in the future he should encourage one of his disciples to run for POTUS (president of US), to help change the course of history

How we can expect good government? You become Kṛṣṇa conscious, you elect your representative, Kṛṣṇa conscious, and the government will be all right. You'll be happy. (NOD lecture, January 4, 1973, Bombay)

We now see that prophecy being realized with Tulsi Gabbard, a serious Vaiṣṇavī, not only having run for POTUS, but now holding the highest position in US intelligence agencies. And Kashyapa Patel, as the head of the FBI, who in his first Congressional acceptance hearing declared for all the world to hear, “Jaya Śrī Kṛṣṇa”. Another powerful Vaiṣṇava. And there’s Usha Vance, the vegetarian Hindu/Vaiṣṇava wife of the current vice president JD Vance. How could it be that there are so many Vaiṣṇavas in top positions of US government, who themselves have had their own internal great awakening, if not by the mercy, will and plan of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself the Supreme Personality of this age?

The government should be Kṛṣṇa conscious, and it is government’s duty to see that everyone is Kṛṣṇa conscious or God conscious—you say ‘Kṛṣṇa’ or ‘God’ it doesn’t matter. If you think that ‘Let the people go to hell. It doesn’t matter. Bring taxes and let us enjoy, and you go to hell...’; It is very horrible condition. (Pandal speech Delhi, November 10, 1973)

I pray that your mercy shine upon these special souls, that your guidance impels them from within to lead with Kṛṣṇa as the centerpiece and to reveal truth in all its forms to distinguish reality from illusion so that the golden age of Kali can be set free from the asuric influences which hold it back. And that we may seize the opportunity to inject Kṛṣṇa consciousness into the minds and hearts of this great majority of people who earnestly seek truth. However they do not know what the ultimate truth is, the goal of life, the soothing satisfying shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet.

On a personal plea, I am earnestly seeking your help and guidance so that I may deeply enter into the temple of the holy name with all focus and humility and learn to cry for your mercy. I also deeply pray for the empowerment to follow in your footsteps by fearlessly and faithfully delivering your teachings to the suffering souls of this day and age with purity, potency and timely application.

We are living in a momentous, dangerous yet opportune time to deliver your message Śrīla Prabhupāda. We need your mercy and guidance now more than ever. Please hear our prayer!

Without your mercy I am simply lost, foolish and ineffective.

And thus I am begging to eternally remain your humble aspiring servant,

Badarayana das
Initiation: 1973, July—Denver, USA
Contact: revcon2@mac.com

Praghosa Das

Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your Divine Grace is inseparable from the Lord Himself, the Supreme Personality. The words you speak are transcendental, your eyes radiate a divine glow, and your graceful movements invoke a sense of transcendence. Being in your presence feels like liberation, as we are transported into the atmosphere of Vaikuṅṭha. What truly captivates me is that the moment I think of you, I enter a timeless space, free from the confines of material existence. Chanting the Holy Names in your remembrance assures me that I am in the company of Lord Krishna and His divine associates. You profoundly influence the course of my spiritual journey, serving as a catalyst at every step. If you are not present, there is no Krishna, and consequently, no life. I recognize that your role as the savior of this world is born from your immense mercy. Indeed, you undertake this mission to honor your spiritual master, empowered as you are with supreme devotion; you inspire sincere seekers to cultivate their attraction toward the Lord. But, in addition to your deep desire to please Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, you are filled with profound compassion, which has led you to dedicate your entire life to preparing for your visit among us. I am present now on earth and can fully appreciate your mercy, yet I am at a loss as to how I could possibly offer any tribute that would be worthy of your invaluable gift. Please be patient with me as I endeavor to follow in your footsteps and collect the dust that graces your lotus feet. This is my only wealth.

Your servant,

Praghosa Das

Initiation: 1973, September—Montreal, Canada

Current location: Montreal

Contact: pragosh@videotron.ca

Paratpara Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

You are glorified throughout the universe as the successful servant of your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvatī Goswami Mahārāja and you took his instructions as your life and soul.. The purity of your words and actions achieve astounding results - *purity is the force*. Your books continue to be the basis to fulfill your beloved Gurudev's instructions. *The principle of utility* is evident in the example of your daily teaching to your devoted disciples, everything can be connected with Kṛṣṇa.. And around the world, your God-children and grand God-children spread the joy of *kīrtan* and association and *prasādam* to demonstrate that *preaching is the essence* of your instruction.

I sit to take inventory of my life at age 75, Your Divine Grace is the basis of what I call me. My dearest treasures are your books; your patient teachings fill my kitchen and table with food, offered first; your lessons on how to behave with both devotees and non-devotees guide my association. Thanks to your grace, my kids chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and teach their kids the pastimes we heard from you. I sleep, I rise, I read and listen with your pure strong voice in my brain. Thank you from a stubborn daughter who is yet-to-surrender and serve you properly. Please don't let go of me. I hang on, reluctant to surrender, but hoping to stay connected somehow to this perfect branch of the tree of love that is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya. Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your servant,

Paratpara devi dasi

Initiation: 1973, September—Boston, USA

Current location: New Talavana Farm, Mississippi, USA

Contact: prithusrava@hotmail.com

Upendranath Dasa

Who so boldly and confidently said,

“Every Thing Is in My Books”

“My books will be the law-books for the next 10,000 years.”

He lives forever by his divine instructions. And his follower lives with Him.

In the *Bhāgavat-Mahātmyam* by Śrīla Vyāsadeva; Bhakti-devī said,

Rogues influenced by Kali-yuga broke my limbs and for a long time I remained in that condition and thus, along with my sons, I have become very weak and impotent. **Upon coming to Vrindāvana, I regained my youth and beauty, but my two sons, who are lying here, are still old and tired. I will leave this place and travel to foreign lands,...**

Vrindāvana is the eternal abode of Lord Krishna and thus *bhakti* naturally flourishes there. But, if one neglects hearing *Krishna-kathā*, then *jñāna* (knowledge), and *vairāgya* (renunciation), remain in a fainted state. They get covered by *māyā*. The statement, that is in bold, hints at Śrīla Prabhupāda's travel to the western world from Vrindāvana. It is interesting to note that the Sanskrit verb used in this sentence is in the passive voice (*gamya*). This signifies that she (*Bhakti*) will be carried by someone. Because Śrīla Vyāsa, who is an incarnation of the Lord, compiled the Puranas, it is possible for him to make such predictive statements.

When I was a university student, I studied mathematics and physics. This pursuit, I believed, would reveal to me all the answers to the mysteries of life. Thus, I believed in the equations and logics that lead to reason. So, I spend much of my young manhood in such pursuits. I then asked, "What truly is logic and who decides reason?"

My quest had taken me through the physical, the metaphysical, the delusional, and back. And I have made the most important discovery of my life.

I am only here today because of you. It is only in the mysterious equations of love; the love you showed you have for Krishna, the love you have for your own guru mahārāja, the love you have for your disciples, and the love you displayed for all of this world's humanity, that any logical reasons can be found.

You are the reason I am. You are all my reasons.

Your servant,

Upendranath Dasa

Initiation: 10, April, Chicago, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On your 129th appearance day, 48 years after your departure from our community, I offer you my humble obeisances.

I remember the autumn of 1977 when our *Saṅkīrtan* leader brought us the news from the Stockholm temple in a Chevy van that you had left this planet of mortality from the Krishna Balaram Mandir in Vrindāvan and gone back to the spiritual world. He told us that nothing would change in ISKCON and that we should definitely continue to distribute your books, because this was your favourite service - even after death. At that time - I had reached the age of 25 that year - we had no idea how ISKCON and our own lives would develop. We *Saṅkīrtan* devotees assumed that one day we would leave our bodies in the process of distributing one of your wonderful books to a conditioned soul.

Since your passing, ISKCON has been characterised by the memory of you. The extensive teachings you left behind in your books, letters and conversations have guided us over the decades in our endeavour to find the path back home to Krishna in the wanderings of our lives. Just as a wanderer must consult a map and compass when lost in the thicket, the memory of your example is always guiding us.

When you initiated me 52 years ago, I was determined to go back to Krishna in this life. Thanks to your caring guidance, this decision has not changed to this day. I am currently reading the verses in the eighth chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* in which Śrī Krishna explains that one who remembers his service to Krishna at the moment of death will certainly return to Him. The remembrance of service to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, marks my most impressive memories. I pray to you that I may never forget you.

Your insignificant servant,

Vaidyanath Das

Initiation: 1973, October—Hamburg, Germany

Kadamba Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Hare Kṛṣṇa - you gave us the *Mahāmantra* to deliver us from this material energy. You came at such hardship to yourself to please your spiritual master and fulfill his request that you give Kṛṣṇa to the Western World. Your dedication and love is so profound.

If I have any sincerity in my desire to serve you, please accept it. How did I become one of the fortunate souls allowed to be your disciple? It is a mystery.

Thank you for your gift that I can never repay. Let my understanding and love for Kṛṣṇa flourish under your guidance and protection.

Thank you, forever.

Your disciple,

Kadamba devi dasi

Initiation: 1973, October—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: California, USA

Contact: r.nieburgs@gmail.com

Nitya-tripta Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, dear master,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

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

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

In the *Lilāmrita* your divine grace is quoted “that only by the grace of the spiritual master we achieve the grace or mercy of Kṛṣṇa. This is the meaning of Vyāsa-pūjā. As far as possible we have tried to give you instruction, books. But remain always faithful to the spiritual master and try to understand Kṛṣṇa. Any other so-called understanding is simply a waste of time.”

When first reading your *Bhagavad-gītā* I kept on seeing similar statements. I had not visited a temple, the book was gifted by a friend.

This was similar to the I-Ching hexagram citing the need to find the Master, which I had been getting on a frequent basis. So what to do?

When I finally visited the LA temple, New Dwarka, chanted in kirtan and offered dandavats at the base of your *vyāsāsana* I finally felt I had found the true guide for this life. And finally by your grace I was able to start on the path of devotional service.

I am eternally grateful for your guidance through your books and devotees, giving the awakening knowledge and detachment to begin the journey back home, back to Godhead. By your grace the seed of Kṛṣṇa consciousness was planted. I continue to try and water that seed, removing the weeds of material attachment.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am but an imperfect beggar at your lotus feet, trying to serve your devotees by preserving your photos and photos of the early ISKCON explosion into this very needy world.

Your grateful servant,

Nitya-tripta devi dasi

Initiation: 1973, October—Argentina

Current location: USA

Raghava Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most fallen obeisances at your lotus feet. It is impossible to thank you enough to have let me perform some service to you. Thank you for giving me so many wonderful devotees to serve with over the years.

Hopefully I will become a serious student and become absorbed in my *japa* and study of your books. As I enter into my final years,

I pray to become less and less attracted to this material world. You have given us everything we need to know in your books and lectures. Praying I can absorb these teachings in my dull brain.

Your servant,

Raghava dasa

Initiation: 1973, December—Miami, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida

Contact: rrich108@aol.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

As time progresses your purports and instructions continue to amaze me.

There are two types of Bhāgavatas, namely the book Bhāgavata and the devotee Bhāgavata. Both the Bhāgavatas are competent remedies, and both of them or either of them can be good enough to eliminate the obstacles. A devotee Bhāgavata is as good as the book Bhāgavata because the devotee Bhāgavata leads his life in terms of the book Bhāgavata and the book Bhāgavata is full of information about the Personality of Godhead and His pure devotees, who are also Bhāgavatas. Bhāgavata book and person are identical. (*SB* 1.2.18, Purport)

I live in a devotee community, aptly named, Saranagati Village.

July 17th, 2024, a 100 foot wall of fire came over the ridge directly behind our home in the Saranagati community. The vibration was palpable. The world changed in a moment.

Our entire Saranagati Village immediately evacuated to a nearby city.

Days passed with no damage reports.

As we waited for news, our only option was contemplating your succinct explanation of Saranagati.

Śaraṇāgati, or surrender, means acceptance or firm belief that wherever the surrendered soul lives he is always protected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead; he is never alone or unprotected. (*SB* 4.8.16)

After 5 days, news began to trickle in.

Five homes plus additional cabins and outbuildings. Gone! Acres and acres of trees. Gone! Along with widespread power and water infrastructure damage.

The fire raged out of control for over three weeks with changing winds increasing the uncertainty. During that time, the massive fire kept expanding to over 69,000 acres.

Inconceivably our school, temple and most homes were completely saved despite the scope of devastation.

In a nearby city, where many of us were evacuated, a morning program was held where each day we read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verses in sequence. One morning a momentous verse and purport by Your Divine Grace came up. Its stunning words resounded in our hearts.

When a fire, for some unseen reason, leaps over one piece of wood and sets fire to the next, the reason is destiny. Similarly, when a living being accepts one kind of body and leaves aside another, there is no other reason than unseen destiny. (SB 10.1. 51)

Purport

When there is a fire in a village, the fire sometimes jumps over one house and burns another. Similarly, when there is a forest fire, the fire sometimes jumps over one tree and catches another. Why this happens, no one can say. One may set forth some imaginary reason why the nearest tree or house did not catch fire whereas a tree or house in a distant place did, but actually the reason is destiny.....The work of unseen destiny cannot be ascertained by practical experimental knowledge, and therefore one must be satisfied by reasoning that everything is done by supreme providence.”

Astonished, we read it again and again.

Someone questioned if the word destiny was a bit impersonal in this context.

I pulled up the definition of destiny.

This appeared:

1. Providence is the guardianship and care provided by a deity or god.
2. A manifestation of god’s foresightful care for his creatures.

Śrīla Prabhupāda your use of the English language in conveying the Vaishnava siddhānta in a most relevant, personal way, infused with bhakti, is profound. Profound is an understatement. Your words are a living manifestation of the Supreme Absolute Truth.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the embodiment of your books, and you are embodied within your books. Of this I have no doubt. You directly spoke to us on the import of *Śaraṇāgati* and were personally with us through the disaster.

Your words gave the devotees the solace and strength to endure the calamity.

O Lord, who resemble the shining sun, you are always ready to fulfill the desire of Your devotee, and therefore You are known as a desire tree [*vāñchā-kalpataru*]. When ācāryas completely take shelter under Your lotus feet in order to cross the fierce ocean of nescience, they leave behind on earth the method by which they cross, and because You are very merciful to Your other devotees, You accept this method to help them. (SB 10.2.31)

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given us the priceless method, the path of *Saranāgati*, well marked by your illuminating Bhaktivedanta purports.

Your eternally indebted servant,

Partha dasa

Initiation: 1973, December—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Saranagati, Ashcroft BC, Canada

Contact: gvtcanada@gmail.com

Citraka Das

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, divine sage, liberator of the soul and ambassador of Lord Shri Krishna Bhagavān, all glories upon You! Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you on this most auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā! I, your eternal servant Citraka dasa, humbly offer my heartfelt gratitude and glorification to Your Divine Grace.

On this most auspicious 129th anniversary of your appearance day, disciples, granddisciples, and followers from around the globe offer their heartfelt homage to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your presence, both physical and through your *vāñī* – your books, lectures, and letters – continues to illuminate the path of countless souls seeking solace and meaning in a world consumed by Māyā's illusions.

Your life is a testament to unwavering faith and determination, an extraordinary saga that began aboard the Jaladuta cargo ship fifty-nine years ago. You embarked on a solitary journey, armed with nothing but your guru's instructions, a typewriter, and a suitcase

filled with Vedic scriptures. Against all odds, you established a global spiritual movement, ISKCON, offering the timeless wisdom of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to a world yearning for spiritual nourishment

We recall your tireless efforts, circling the globe fourteen times in twelve years, spreading the message of Krishna consciousness across six continents. You ignited a spiritual revolution through the chanting of the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*, established magnificent temples, and inspired the distribution of millions of your books. You opened the floodgates of Krishna consciousness, fulfilling the prophecy of Lord Caitanya that the holy name would resonate in every town and village

Your legacy extends far beyond physical structures and institutions. You embodied the essence of devotee care, nurturing the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of your disciples. You were a master teacher, guiding us with patience and compassion, instilling in us the importance of chanting, devotional service, and studying the scriptures. Your books are our lifeline, providing direct access to your profound wisdom and allowing us to feel your presence even in your physical absence.

Your emphasis on book distribution continues to inspire us. We strive to share your message with renewed vigor, recognizing that distributing your books is a potent way to please you. We distribute them in bustling cities, serene countryside, universities, prisons, and even through ride-sharing services. Each book distributed is a testament to your dedication and a seed planted for future generations to discover the path of Bhakti.

We recognize the significance of prasādam distribution as an integral part of your mission. Inspired by your vision that no one should go hungry within ten miles of an ISKCON temple, we organize grand feasts, distribute meals to the needy, and offer food at festivals and events. Sharing prasādam is not merely an act of charity but an expression of love and compassion, a tangible manifestation of Krishna's mercy flowing through your movement.

We are inspired by your commitment to cow protection and simple living. We strive to establish sustainable communities based on the principles of *varnashrama dharma*, where cows are protected, land is cultivated with respect, and life revolves around the service of Krishna.

We are humbled by your unparalleled contribution to the world.

You revived ancient wisdom for a modern audience, bridging the gap between East and West. You are hailed as a social reformer, freeing countless individuals from the clutches of addiction and despair. You are recognized as a pioneer in teaching Vedic spiritual science, inspiring a new generation of scientists to explore the harmony between science and spirituality.

Yet, amidst these accomplishments, we remain acutely aware of our shortcomings. We are but fallen souls striving to follow your footsteps. We face internal challenges, grapple with the complexities of maintaining the integrity of your institution, and struggle with our own imperfections.

We pray for your mercy to overcome these obstacles, to remain united as a spiritual family, and to continue expanding your mission with sincerity and dedication. We seek your guidance to navigate the turbulent waters of Kali-yuga, to deepen our *sādhana*, and to develop a genuine taste for the holy name.

On this sacred Vyāsa-pūjā, we offer our humble gratitude for the incomparable gift of Krishna consciousness. You rescued us from the darkness of ignorance and opened the doors to a life filled with meaning and purpose. We pledge to honor your legacy by striving to live by your teachings and to share the transformative power of Bhakti with all who cross our path.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are eternally indebted to you. Your mercy is our greatest treasure, your teachings our guiding light, and your presence our constant inspiration. May we forever remain under the shelter of your lotus feet, serving your mission and glorifying your name, birth after birth.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for having accepted me as your disciple. Thank you for bringing me back to life! I was unconsciously dreaming some nonsense and you brought me to the beautiful reality again! You woke me up for good from the slumber I had fallen into, and now, with a loving heart and favorable mind, I am chanting this vibration, like I did back then while you were seated in your *vyāsāsana*.

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Hare
Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare!

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! All glories to the *Saṅkīrtan Yajña*! Thank you millions of times!

Your aspiring servant,

Uttama Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

“It is not possible to actually understand the debt of gratitude we owe you, but with each new supposed calamity, we have the opportunity to understand a little better that this material world is not our home.”

This was the opening line of one of your grand disciples’ offerings to you last year, as you may remember. She had just lost her home and all her family’s belongings in a dreadful forest fire that consumed much of our Vaiṣṇava community.

She went on to say, “With what you have given us, we can see Krishna’s blessings in devastation, we can accept our karma, we can feel wrapped up in Krishna’s lotus hands, see His expertise in fulfilling all our desires, and can accept that we are, beyond a shadow of a doubt, NOT IN CONTROL. There is such relief in accepting this and accepting our position of *dās anu dās anu dās*.”

Later that day, I asked a friend of hers, who was visiting from another city, if she and her husband still wanted to relocate to our community after seeing all the damage done by the recent forest fire. Much of our 1800-acre property looked ghostly, charred and depressing. She replied that if by living in Saranagati, I can get the spiritual advancement that my god sister just experienced after losing everything, I want to move here more than ever!

And there is more! The local government agencies employed some citizens to come to our community to offer both emotional support and helping hands. Before they came, they were given a 2-week training on how to deal with those whose lives and property have gone through devastating calamity. Often victims of calamities

can be very harsh and full of blame. The lady sent to help my friend reported that she was so moved by her gratitude and attitude, that it changed her life forever!

This is the power of your teachings, the association of your followers and the effects of chanting the Holy Name. Such gifts you have given us, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

This material world is no place for an honorable person, as you have stated. I long to become more absorbed in meditation on the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, in His holy dhama, and to follow in the footsteps of His eternal associates as described in our Vaiṣṇava literatures. I pray for your blessings, pray to offer seva to your followers, and pray to live my life in such a way that you will notice me and take me wherever you are, so that I may serve you life after life.

Your eternal servant,

Uttama devi dasi

Initiation: 1973, December—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: Saranagati, Ashcroft BC, Canada

Contact: uttamadasi@gmail.com

Virabāhu Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Prostrated at your lotus feet, paying my humble obeisances, I have come once again to beg for the mercy of Your Divine Grace and humbly request that you accept this new attempt to glorify you. I wish to express my deepest, heartfelt gratitude to you and, for your satisfaction, also to the disciples who, following your request and with great sacrifice, took Kṛṣṇa consciousness even to remote corners of the world.

On the occasion of this year's Vyāsa-pūjā, celebrating your divine appearance in this world – most appropriately termed “The Most Blessed Event” – and now also “The Most Wonderful Day of the

Year” – I recall the fortuitous way and glorious day you appeared in my life, making me supremely fortunate.

In so vividly and recurrently relating your first encounter with your own spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, you taught us by your own example how crucial and significant the meeting was, having come to you fortuitously, in its appearance.

It is a long story, how I met him. One of my friends, he dragged me. I was at that time Nationalist, and manager in a big chemical factory. My age was about twenty-four years. So one of my friends, he asked me that “There is a nice *sādhu*, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. He has come in Calcutta. So let us go and see.” So I was reluctant. I thought just like so, “There are so many *sādhus*. So I am not very much...” Because I had very bad experience; not very good. So I said, “Oh, these kind of *sādhus*, there are many.”

... So anyway, it was Kṛṣṇa’s grace. I would not go, but their point of view was that unless I certified that *sādhu*, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, he’ll not be accepted. Therefore he dragged me. So I went to see Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura on that day. On the first meeting, just we offer our obeisances. It is the practice. So immediately he began his talking that “You are all educated young men. Why don’t you take up Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s cult and preach all over the English-knowing public? Why don’t you take up this matter?” So I argued with him in so many... At that time I was Nationalist. So I told that “Who will accept our message? We are dependent nation. Nobody will care.” In this way, in my own way, in these younger days... But we belonged to the Vaiṣṇava family, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda, Rādhā-Govinda. That is our worshipable Deity. So I was very glad that “Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult, Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s..., this *sādhu* is trying to preach. It is very nice.”

So at that time we had some talks, and of course I was defeated by his argument, my argument. [laughter] And then, when we came out, we were offered *prasādam*, very nice treatment, the Gauḍīya Maṭha. And when

I came out on the street, this my friend asked me, “What is your opinion of this *sādhu*?” Then I said that “Here is the right person who has taken up Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s message, and now it will be distributed.” (Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta disappearance day lecture, Los Angeles, December 13, 1973)

Śrīla Prabhupada, this recount was made by you at the Los Angeles temple on December 13, 1973. Notably, this was just ten days before I, along with other devotees from the Caracas temple, had the privilege of meeting you in person for the first time and receiving our first initiation on December 25. It is a very moving lecture that underscored your emotions when remembering your Guru Maharaja.

So this is a memorable day. What he desired, I am trying little bit, and you are all helping me. So I have to thank you more. You are actually representative of my Guru Mahārāja [*starts to cry*]... because you are helping me in executing the order of my Guru Mahārāja. Thank you very much. (Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta disappearance day lecture, Los Angeles, December 13, 1973)

In the latter part of 1971, while studying at the University in Caracas, I found myself at a crossroads, questioning the path I was on in life. Like many university students, I began to feel disillusioned with the prospect of my future. Although I was pursuing a degree in chemical engineering for its potential financial stability, my real interest was philosophy.

Drawn intuitively to Eastern philosophy after reading popular books on the topic, I sought answers in the university library. It was there that I stumbled upon a vast collection of books by and about Gandhi, recently donated by the Indian Embassy to commemorate his birthday.

I was instantly fascinated by Gandhi’s philosophy and humble demeanor. His writings frequently referenced the *Bhagavad-gītā*, but somehow or other, I never got around to reading it; the title simply registered with me.

On March 5, 1972, while visiting a mutual friend, I met Ilan Chester (who was to become Havi Dāsa), a musician of my age who was popular among young people. He was there with other musicians for a musical session. After it concluded, we were

introduced. He then asked if I could give him a ride home. During the ride, Ilan shared his spiritual perspectives with me, as we would later say in ISKCON, “preaching” to me. Śrīla Prabhupāda, that is the day and the way you entered my life.

Ilan asked if I spoke English, and when I replied that I did, he invited me to form a group with some mutual friends to explore a book on Indian philosophy, specifically the *Bhagavad-gītā*. I was startled when he mentioned the *Gītā*, the book Gandhi had cited so often. I readily agreed to his proposal.

It so happened Ilan had recently returned from Israel, where he had been studying music at the university. He was staying there with a friend who also spoke Spanish. One day, a young Argentinean man, briefly passing through from India, was directed to them due to their common language and asked to stay with them. Ilan, who was very interested in spirituality and philosophy, was very attracted to the talks with him on these topics. In particular, the day before he left their visitor spoke about bhakti-yoga, which Ilan marked.

Coincidentally, shortly afterward, he stumbled upon a magazine article featuring an interview with your disciples, where they discussed bhakti-yoga. The disciples were Dinesh Candra Prabhu, his wife Krishna Devi, and their little daughter Vishnu Arti, who had gone to Israel at your loving request. You wrote to Krishna Devi:

My Dear Krishna Devi,

So far as opening a center in Israel, I have all approval. So make arrangements with the government and go there immediately. I have all blessings for this enterprise. Try and preach Krishna Consciousness in this part of the world. So you go there husband and wife with child and start a center. If you are successful in your effort, then I may stay with you a few days there before going to London.

... Your husband’s letter along with yours is very encouraging and I have answered it separately. I’m so glad to know that both of you are enhancing your Krishna Consciousness by mutual cooperation. May God bless you. You are all helping me by abiding the orders of my Spiritual Master, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami Maharaj and He’ll be pleased upon you who are His grand spiritual children. So this program

to open a branch in Israel has got all my approval. (Letter to Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī, Gorakhpur, February 16, 1971)

Fulfilling your instruction, as other exemplary *gr̥hastha* couples had done before, they had gone there and opened the center, and were conducting the program as you had indicated Dinesh Candra Prabhu should do.

My dear Dinesh Chandra,

Please accept my blessings and offer the same to your wife Krishna Devi, daughter Visnu Arati and Kulasekhara Prabhu. I am in due receipt of your very encouraging letter dated 30th June, 1971 and have noted the contents carefully. Your endeavor is very much appreciated. Thank you very much. You have my all good wishes. Success or no success, it doesn't matter; you have come to Israel with your family and that is my pleasure. All blessings upon you.

So for the time being, you can stay in your apartment, have discourses and hold kirtana and whoever voluntarily may join, no one can object. Whoever comes, give him nice prasadam. For the time being this can be done. There is no need of outside engagements if they are not possible to get. If you can, that's all right. But inside activities should go on. So live peacefully and whatever service you can render is all right. (Letter to Dinesh Candra Dāsa, Los Angeles, July 13, 1971)

Their address was listed there, and Ilan decided to visit them, attending those programs at their apartment for some time before returning to Venezuela. Through their association, he became an avowed devotee of Kṛṣṇa and collected from them all the books and Kṛṣṇa conscious materials they had available so he could preach in Caracas. After his return, I met him on March 5, 1972, as previously mentioned. We then formed a group with like-minded friends interested in the *Gītā* and Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We regularly gathered for *harināma* and private *Gītā* readings in local parks, universities, and a yoga studio. This continued until December 1972, when ISKCON devotees arrived to establish the country's first temple.

By January of 1973, Citśukhānanda Prabhu had become the

first temple president there, developing the Hare Kṛṣṇa community very nicely – so much so that soon, there were devotees ready for initiation. He began arranging for your visit to Caracas at that time.

Tomorrow I am going to Dallas because the weather here in Los Angeles is not good for my health. It is too cold and cloudy. So I am going to Dallas to get some sunshine. If the weather there is not suitable, I may come at once to Caracas. However, if the weather is good in Dallas I shall remain there until May 30 and then to New Vrindaban for the corner stone laying for our first temple there. Then I shall come to Caracas from Pittsburgh.

Please let me know in Dallas whether or not you can make arrangements for tickets for four to Caracas. (Letter to Citsukhānanda Dāsa, Los Angeles, May 18, 1973)

During the rest of that year, Your Divine Grace was not able to travel to Caracas, so by December it was decided that a group of devotees from Caracas would travel to Los Angeles to meet you and for seven of us to be initiated. Thus you gave us our new names: Viraha Dāsa, Vīrabāhu Dāsa, Havi Dāsa, Tamoha Dāsa, Pramāṇa Dāsa, Kartā Dāsī, Vara Dāsī. In the short lecture, you told us,

I am not asking individually about the four principles. I suppose you know this. But just I was explaining *sat* and *asat*. These two things are side by side. Just like there is darkness and there is light, you can see merging in the sunlight. You'll see, one side is light, and one side is dark. Similarly, *sat* and *asat*, they are existing side by side. If you don't remain this side, then you come to this side. So it is my choice. So this Hare Kṛṣṇa is the bright side, and the other things, material activities and sinful activities – meat-eating, intoxication, gambling, illicit sex – the dark side. So it is your choice. If you remain the bright side, then your progress is certain, and if you fall down again on the dark side, that is your misfortune. You should always remember that. (Initiation ceremony, Los Angeles, December 25, 1973)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this auspicious day of your divine appearance, I am reminded of your recollection here in Los Angeles in December of 1968, when you were reminiscing about your own encounter with your Guru Mahārāja and our encounter with Your

Divine Grace:

Fortunately ... by Kṛṣṇa's arrangement, we came in contact. I was born in a different family; my Guru Mahārāja was born in a different family. Who knew that I will come to his protection? Who knew that I would come in America? Who knew that you American boys will come to me? These are all Kṛṣṇa's arrangement. We cannot understand how things are taking place. (Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta disappearance day lecture, Los Angeles, December 9, 1968)

By one such arrangement of Kṛṣṇa's, we have come to you and you have most mercifully accepted us. Our prayer is that one day we may have the realization in our relationship with you of the following statement we borrow from your Concluding Words to the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

I think that His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda is always seeing my activities and guiding me within my heart by his words. As it is said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *tene brahma hṛdā ya ādi-kavaye*. Spiritual inspiration comes from within the heart, wherein the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in His Paramātmā feature, is always sitting with all His devotees and associates.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please keep me always in the shade of your lotus feet. May I always remain there as one of your innumerable and fortunate servants. Eternally grateful, may I go on incessantly chanting your glories in your service, all of which have made me forever fortunate.

Your lowly servant,

Virabāhu Dāsa

Draviḍa Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances in the all-purifying dust of your lotus feet, All glories to you!

On this most auspicious day of the year I would like to express my deep gratitude to you for one of your many invaluable gifts

that I'm afraid is somewhat underappreciated in modern-day ISKCON—the copious recordings you left us of your lectures, *bhajans*, conversations, and so on. The first thing I do every day when I get up to prepare for *maṅgala-ārati* is hit the button on the portable bluetooth speaker and instantly hear your voice resuming the *Gītā* or *Bhāgavatam* lecture from the previous day. I never fail to remember this immortal passage from your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.20.25:

A pure devotee always engages in the service of the Lord, taking shelter of His lotus feet, and therefore he has a direct connection with the saffron mercy-particles that are strewn over the lotus feet of the Lord. Although when a pure devotee speaks the articulation of his voice may resemble the sound of this material sky, the voice is spiritually very powerful because it touches the particles of saffron dust on the lotus feet of the Lord. As soon as a sleeping living entity hears the powerful voice emanating from the mouth of a pure devotee, he immediately remembers his eternal relationship with the Lord, although up until that moment he had forgotten everything.

For a conditioned soul, therefore, it is very important to hear from the mouth of a pure devotee, who is fully surrendered to the lotus feet of the Lord without any material desire, speculative knowledge, or contamination of the modes of material nature.

Factually the active principle of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is your speaking and singing of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Whether it's your recorded lectures or *bhajans*, your dictation of your books, your interviews with numerous journalists and others, your conversations with priests, professors, and people in general, your morning walks with your disciples, and countless other occasions, you never failed to leave an indelible spiritual impression on your listeners. After all, isn't that confirmed in the śāstra?

*tulayāma lavenāpi
na svargaṁ nāpunar-bhavam
bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya
martyānām kim utāśiṣaḥ*

A moment's association with a devotee of the Lord is so valuable that it cannot be compared

even with the attainment of the heavenly planets
or liberation from matter, and what to speak of
such worldly benedictions as material prosperity,
which are for those who are meant for death.

How fortunate we all are to have available to us literally millions
of moments of association with the foremost devotee of the Lord
in the form of your books, your devotees, your temples, and... your
recorded lectures, conversations, dictations (especially Kṛṣṇa book!),
kirtans, and *bhajans*.

Thank you, thank you for all these priceless gifts, Śrīla
Prabhupāda. I will relish hearing your saffron-mercy-particle-
infused words till my final breath.

Your monumentally grateful disciple,

Draviḍa dāsa

Initiation: 1974, January—New York, USA

Śrīla Prabhupādāṣṭaka

Inspired by a Sanskrit poem by Śrīmān Kuśakratha dāsa, published
in Śrīla Prabhupāda's 1980 Vyāsa-pūjā book.

- 1) The transcendental lamp of Navadvīp, Gaurāṅgadev,
He took with great endeavor 'round the world the souls to save
Who long had dwelt in darkness, never chanting Kṛṣṇa's name—
To Śrīla Prabhupāda I bow, his glories I proclaim.
- 2) The sacred treasure left by Vyās and other learned saints
He rendered into English free of speculation's taints,
And thus he mercifully fulfilled Śrī Sarasvatī's aim—
To Śrīla Prabhupāda I bow, his glories I proclaim.
- 3) The brilliant sun of Lord Govinda's form is shining bright
Throughout this world because of his sharp logic's awesome might.
That sun makes all the Māyāvādī glowworms hide in shame—
To Śrīla Prabhupāda I bow, his glories I proclaim.

- 4) The pristine Ganges of the *Bhāgavat* flows everywhere
 Because of his great effort. In that stream, the sages' prayers
 Are gems, and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are swans sporting unrestrained—
 To Śrīla Prabhupāda I bow, his glories I proclaim.
- 5) Ensuring that his mission's victory would be complete,
 He planted Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's charming lotus feet
 In temples by the dozen and in countless hearts unchained—
 To Śrīla Prabhupāda I bow, his glories I proclaim.
- 6) The fierce and formidable army led by wicked Kali
 Is being slain by arrow showers, volley upon volley.
 Those arrows are his all-auspicious books of spotless fame—
 To Śrīla Prabhupāda I bow, his glories I proclaim.
- 7) The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's a desire tree, whose fruits
 Are all the splendid ways Lord Gaura's army wins recruits.
 To plant that tree upon the earth, from Kṛṣṇa's realm he came—
 To Śrīla Prabhupāda I bow, his glories I proclaim.
- 8) An ocean of compassion, he has taken shelter of
 Śrī Nanda's Son with all his being in everlasting love.
 He lives on by his words, whose followers with him remain—
 To Śrīla Prabhupāda I bow, his glories I proclaim.
- 9) I pray that those who read this hymn, which shines the brilliant
 light
 Of Śrīla Prabhupāda's renown in Kali-yuga's night,
 Will all maintain firm faith in his instructions so that they
 May one day join him in Golok, and there with Kṛṣṇa stay.

Madhusevita Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your feet, all glories to your divine appearance day.

In those days, when feelings of intense separation from you prevail over the ordinary semi-conscious routine life, I recall how elevated souls are present in both Kṛṣṇa Līlā and Gaura Līlā.

How wonderful must be to see you serving your eternal Spiritual Master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, relish the association of Śrīla Gaura Kīśora dās Bābājī, pleasing the heart of immensely dear Śrīla Bhaktivinode and being blessed by Jagannātha dās Bābājī.

Śrīla Viśvanātha and Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa must be smiling sweetly at you, while the six Goswamis are engaged in churning the ocean of *rasa* permeating the hearts of all; the emotions of Śrīla Rūpa your eternal inspiration.

Your infinite compassion must have melted the heart of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and forced Her to bring at your feet the loving disciples that have given you their heart during your *prakaṭa līlā* on this earth.

My feelings of separation are for them as well, those surrendered souls that gave their youth to your mission and loved you beyond boundaries; may all of them canvass for the hopeless cause of Madhusevita das, whose only desire, in the old age of this “plastic body”, is to rejoin your family, the loving family of ISKCON back home back to Godhead.

*Grasping your feet, I remain,
Your useless seroant,*

Madhusevita das
Initiation: 1974, March—Māyāpur, India

Aristaha Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

How can I express my gratitude to you who has given me a wonderful spiritual life in Krishna consciousness? It is not that I am very Krishna conscious, it is only a gift from you, a gesture of deep compassion emanating from a pure heart filled with love of Krishna toward a fallen soul who has fallen into the ocean of birth and death. I am very weak and practically helpless, useless; therefore I need your constant attention and guidance.

Please, never leave me, although there may be so many reasons for you to do that.

One Godbrother once said that you feel pure love for everyone, not only your disciples. I think that is the reason while I am still here, occupying an insignificant place in your heart and in your movement.

If there is one thing I would like to pray for, in all humility, it is a stronger faith in Krishna, how He is controlling everything out of love, and that He is the sincerest friend and well-wisher of all His parts and parcels.

I am so grateful that you have connected me with our guru *paramparā*, all these great *acharyas* from the past, who are present in their books, examples, and instructions. You also live and love with us eternally in your books and instructions.

I find great pleasure and happiness in the association of devotees, during *kīrtan* and lectures, if they are sincere and detached from sense gratification. I also like to worship the Deities, my own and the temple Deities, it is also a beautiful gift from you. For us whose mind is restless and contaminated it is a great blessing to worship the Lord in His Deity form. Please bless me that I can increase my chanting, somehow or other. Please bless me so I can also read and study your books more and more. Somehow or other I have been able to serve you since 1974. There have been many ups and downs, still, the unseen power, compassion of the Lord and of you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, has kept me in the association of devotees.

Maybe it is less important which Vaiṣṇava organisation one belongs to, as long as one remains humble and nonjudgmental and respects other Vaiṣṇavas. Transcendental competition is there also in the spiritual world. ISKCON are for those who are non-envious, dedicated to you, in other words, they are *Prabhupādānugas*. One could say that ISKCON is the tastiest fruit on Lord Caitanya's tree, only the most sincere and dedicated servants are allowed to eat it. I cannot say I belong to that category, but I am trying. At least I should be grateful. ISKCON is the manifestation of your love for us and all the other parts and parcels of Lord Krishna.

You are certainly sent by the Supreme Lord Himself to save the fallen souls of this world, and who can be more fallen than me, therefore I have preference. Please forgive me. Please engage me in your service. If I can become an insignificant speck of dust under your lotus feet, that would be the perfection of my life,

Your humble servant,

Aristaha das

Initiation: 1974, April—Stockholm, Sweden

Current location: ISKCON Almvik, Sweden

Contact: ekstrand108@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

In every human lifetime, there has to be someone who comes along one day when we are yet very young and breaks over our head the pot of treacle that forces us into contact with the bizarre reality that all of us in this world will die. At first this shocks and confounds us, but then the treacle trickles slowly down and covers us to the tips of our toes, and sinks into our skin to live with us and haunt us with a sadness so elusive we may hardly notice it where it lies in ghostly form just below the surface of every one of our undertakings for the rest of our lives—until we move on to another womb and forget again.

For me in this lifetime, my someone was my father John. When I was three years old, sitting in the back seat of the car he was driving, I commented on a rabbit we'd just passed, lying on the side of the road, dead. And that was when the pot broke. "All of us will die," he said—just like that.

"What?!" I questioned in alarmed confusion. "You mean YOU will die? And MUMMY will die? And... and I will die?"

"Mm," was his quiet and flatly unelaborated indication to the affirmative—though I did note from the side a wisp of cognizance that flitted across his face, mingling with the determination of the atheist, that betrayed an awareness he did have that this was the bitter pill in life that every child one day must be administered.

I had been left holding the ball, and I sat there with the miles of tarmacked road speeding away underneath us in silent seriousness, mulling for the rest of the journey over the ins and outs of the supremely consequential revelation I'd just had, which I returned to often, and up unto this day.

The weird and troubling circumstance of our existence in the world of birth and death, where relationships are ALWAYS broken, if through no other cause than the factor of death itself, is explained by the primeval father Lord Krishna in *Bhagavad-gītā*, revealed by Your Divine Grace. Only when Lord Krishna brought me to your lotus feet, dear spiritual master, did I get the answers I so badly wanted, and for this I am eternally in your debt.

And I know you would also want me to be grateful to John, my precious father in this life, for acting as the kind of *guru* who teaches by illustrating the teachings of the eternal *guru*—even while keeping

the door to spiritual inquiry firmly shut. The lesson about death that he opened for me sixty-three years ago, he completed in outstanding fashion this year, by leaving his body in my presence. In the plush, pearl-grey quiet of a nice nursing home in Hucknall, he showed me in the most meaningful way possible that no amount of material comfort or effort can keep us in the material body. Indeed, as he said, all of us will die.

Once a father, always a father—that’s how I’d like to see it. Who knows how many jivas I pass by on the street might once have been my father? It gives me another reason to be respectful always to all. So to this father, and every father I have ever had in all my lifetimes in this world, I offer my humble gratitude and obeisances, and pray to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for their welfare. By your divine grace, please may John soon be blessed with association that will support him in opening the scary door of spiritual inquiry. At last, may he be blessed to become *jijñāsu*.

Once your disciple, always your disciple.

Your daughter,

Krsnavesa dasi

Initiation: 1974, April—Hamburg, Germany

Current location: Nottingham, UK

Contact: rose.sharanya@outlook.com

Nirantara Dasa

My intention in composing this Śrīla Prabhupāda Mahātmyam is that it may inspire the reader to understand how significantly important it is to READ “the Bhaktivedanta purports” as one of the topmost priorities for all devotees—neophyte, middle class and advanced.

I decided to dedicate my life to A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda initially because of his words. “Transcendental Teachings of Prahlada Mahārāja” was the awakening of my spiritual life in the summer of 1972.

No one has to even try to convince me how I was born in the darkness of ignorance. I still see it in myself even on the verge of my 75th birthday! But after reading 6 chapters of *Krishna Book*, one fateful evening in late January-February 1973, I came to understand that although my dream of becoming a famous musical personality

was ever burning, and even though I was getting nowhere fast, somehow I could glimpse a better life for me as Prabhupāda was presenting so nicely in that special book.

I have read Krishna Book—all 90 chapters—several times since then. However, the tone and message of Prabhupāda’s words never lose their potency. In fact, not only in Krishna Book, but in all of Prabhupāda’s writings “I hear him speaking” while I am reading. You could call it mysterious or mystical, but that is how I experience his words.

2024 was a tumultuous time for the entire world. The year culminated with an alarming warning... “buckle up, now it is really going to get rough!”. I have heard that not only myself, but many others had a similar “new year’s resolution.” Just to cope with so many evil portents that are increasing day by day, I have no recourse but to take shelter of Prabhupāda’s *vāñī*/words because where else will I find “shelter from the storm?” The Bhaktivedanta Purports of *Bhagavad-gītā* pulled me out of “my nightmare.”

Śrī Isopanishad is such a composition that it acts like a companion or precursor to the *Gītā*. These two books (especially the purports) give me a concise understanding of transcendental philosophy.

Prabhupāda’s methodology, the way he writes his purports, demonstrates his genius as a teacher. As for myself, before finding Prabhupāda, I never really liked to read anything or anyone. I always got frustrated because all other writers could not give me straight-forward and concise answers to any serious questions. I would tire of their stupid ideas and solutions presented in their well honed essays and novels. Again “I would hear their voice” and it never resonated with me. And although music became my “guru” and I would “ride the music”, it was as if drops of water were being nursed on my parched lips but in the meantime I was dying from my thirst for “THE TRUTH”.

Prabhupāda is the topmost professor of transcendental science in the way that he repeats his fundamental philosophy throughout his writings. In the Gita, in Śrī Isopanishad, the major conclusion is that one absolutely needs a spiritual master in order to render devotional service to Krishna, which is the ultimate goal of life.

What Prabhupāda has done simply by executing the order of his *guru*, and what Prabhupāda has accomplished by sitting down underneath a tree in the “village” of the lower east side of New York City, is monumental. Nothing compares to the pioneering of

ISKCON by Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Throughout the first 22 years of my life, I always felt out of place. Friends would come and go, but I could not find my “home”. When I turned 19, my father kicked me out of his house because I could no longer accept his demands or authority. When I found the devotees, I realized that here were the people I was meant to socialize and emulate in my life. Joining the temple in Brooklyn, however, was not a “rose garden” scene. It was hard for me to surrender and accept a disciplined life-style. The lesson I learned from associating with devotees is that humility is the greatest asset one can imbibe. Humility is the solution to all problems of life one has to solve in one’s sojourn.

I have met so many wonderful devotees from around the world and I have picked up so many jewels of knowledge along the way. ISKCON provides access to a transcendental portal. The only regret I have is that my own ignorance, stupidity, stubbornness and lack of self-awareness has prevented me from advancing to higher realms of consciousness. Just as the words of the *Avantī Brāhmaṇa* as described in the 11th canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* indicate my predicament: “if someone bites his tongue with his own teeth, at whom can he become angry in his suffering?”

One of my daily practices in *sādhana* is that I must hear “the sound” of Prabhupāda’s voice. His recordings are there, and especially the *bhajans* and *kīrtans* provide such an immediate and attractive access to his transcendental sound vibration.

My present situation is nicely described in a song I wrote back in 1980-81 with my best friend/companion/confidante/adviser/wife, Varuni devi dasi:

“Once I was young, now I am old
my sinful reactions have come to take their toll
there’s nowhere to run, no place to hide
Someday Soon, I’m gonna have to die”

I have no regrets, I really can’t complain
I’ve lived and I’ve loved through the pleasure and the pain
there’s nothing you can do, no need to cry
Someday Soon I’m gonna have to die

It may be tomorrow, might just be today
so don’t be a fool, please heed what I say

surrender to Krishna and don't live a lie
Someday Soon you're gonna have to die

Prabhupāda taught us very practically everything we need to know how to go back home back to Godhead. But he does warn us in his *Gītā* purports:

One may sincerely accept the path of self-realization, but the process of cultivation of knowledge and the practice of the eight-fold yoga-system are generally very difficult for this age. Therefore, despite constant endeavor one may fail, for many reasons. First of all, one may not be sufficiently serious about following the process. To pursue the transcendental path is more or less to declare war on the illusory-energy. Consequently, whenever a person tries to escape the clutches of the illusory-energy, she tries to defeat the practitioner by various allurements. A conditioned soul is already allured by the modes of material energy, and there is every chance of being allured again, even while performing transcendental disciplines. This is called *yogāc calita-mānasaḥ*: deviation from the transcendental path.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of Prabhupāda for me is the mere fact that he traveled on a steamship from India to Boston and finally landed in New York. That proves to me how he is empowered by Krishna, how he is surrendered to his own spiritual master, and how much love Prabhupāda has for everyone. Prabhupāda is the most unforgettable personality for me.

When Prahlada Mahārāja pacified the angry Nrisimhadeva with prayers, he showed us the ideal spiritual attitude by this statement:

My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, because of my association with material desires, one after another, I was gradually falling into a blind well full of snakes, following the general populace. But Your servant Narada Muni kindly accepted me as his disciple and instructed me how to achieve this transcendental position. Therefore, my first duty is to serve him. How could I leave his service?

And Nārada Muni is represented by Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Om Tat Sat

Nirantara dasa, ACBSP 1974
Initiation: 1974, April—New York, USA

Rasaliladevi Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet. Today, on the most auspicious day of your appearance, we are remembering you with great reverence and humility, as we honor your life's achievements. We are remembering how you worked tirelessly in order to give the conditioned souls of this world an opportunity to achieve self realization and enlightenment in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We are remembering your countless personal sacrifices. We are remembering your struggles, in sickness and health, to carry out the orders of your Guru Mahārāja and how you made it seem almost effortless!

Now that we are older, I am understanding and realizing more fully the extent of your efforts and the intensity of your desire to fulfill those orders. With each passing year, I am better able to understand and appreciate you and your amazing accomplishments. Now that most of us, your disciples, are well past the age when you left India (for the first time,) and came here to America to begin your mission, we are getting the full taste of the challenges of older age. "I have come here in this old age neither for sightseeing nor for any personal interest. It is for the interest of the entire humanity that I am trying to implement the science of Krishna which will actually make them happy. So it is the duty of every devotee of Lord Krishna to help me by all means." (Śrīla Prabhupāda Letter, March 18, 1966)

Your perseverance and your unflinching faith in the instructions of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvami Mahārāja and Lord Kṛṣṇa, serve as our shining example of pure devotion and fierce determination. Even as you struggled alone, in the early days here in America, you fought on. You knew, in your heart, that somehow, victory was coming! May I also have such faith, determination and spiritual energy to carry on in the absence of your physical presence.

I will be forever in your debt and could never thank you

enough. It is practically impossible to ever repay you for all that you have given me personally, and for all the kindness and benedictions that you have bestowed upon this material world. By my daily practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and efforts to share your teachings here, I aspire to please you and the entire *guru paramparā*. We pray for your mercy and your continued blessings on our collective endeavors so that we may be able to help you "...by all means." in order to serve the mission of Lord Chaitanya here, in Athens, Ohio.

All glories to His Divine Grace, Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda!

Your daughter and aspiring servant,

Rasaliladevi devi dasi

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

Current location: Athens, Ohio, USA

Contact: rosemaryrader@gmail.com

Balabhadra Bhattacarya Das

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances as I mentally bow to your lotus feet.

I have a simple and heartfelt desire to express to you, my dear eternal master, and that is for you to please bless me so that I can continue and expand my regular Harinam service throughout the greater Atlanta area. I currently go out at least once a week in downtown Atlanta, but I desire to increase that to two or three times a week and to take the Harinam into other areas like Fulton, Dekalb, and Forsythe counties. We also distribute your books on Harinam, only your books.

I realize that sharing the Holy Names and distributing your books are the most effective ways to affect the lives of this world's misdirected civilization. People are becoming increasingly desperate for truth and direction, and you have given us the tools to provide this. Hearing the Holy Names and reading your books will improve their lives, especially spiritually.

I often say to devotees and congregational members, "Downtown Atlanta is my temple and base of operations, and the people on the

streets there are my congregation.” If they are my congregation, I must introduce them to you through your books, explain the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and train them in adopting the basic principles of Bhakti Yoga.

I am very excited to reach out to more people and to take a personal interest in their systematic spiritual development. For this reason, I am falling at your feet and begging for your mercy so that I can offer this service to you.

I’m confident that following your example of how this movement started, i.e., going out to the public, holding daily *kīrtans*, and sharing Kṛṣṇa’s conscious philosophy with the public, will produce consistent and measurable results that will please you.

I therefore pray at your lotus feet, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, that by reading your books, studying your letters, and listening to your lectures daily, I will become more focused and empowered to carry out your mission and the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, which is to uplift the people in general.

Your eternal servant,

Balabhadra Bhattacharya dasa
InInitiation: 1974, July—Chicago, USA
Current location: Georgia, USA
Contact: btillman108@yahoo.com

Langaganesa Das

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

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

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

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

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi
dhyāyan stuvamś tasya yaśas tri-sandhyam
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

By satisfaction of the spiritual master, the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes satisfied. And by not satisfying the spiritual master, there is no chance of being promoted to the plane of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I should, therefore, meditate and pray for his mercy three times a day, and offer my respectful obeisances unto him; my spiritual master.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My prostrated *danḍavat* obeisances are offered in the dust at your feet with the memories of your example for living in this material atmosphere, as well as exiting its unrelenting grip on our perceptions! Teaching by this example you have prepared us for our own journey back to Home, back to Godhead; while encouraging us, along with Paramātmā, to share these inspirations with our daily associates - thus, pleasing Śrī Kṛṣṇa!

As with my previous homages to Your Divine Grace, I have compiled my 'progress report' this year with due consideration for my recent diagnosis of Prostate Cancer in May, of 2024, and a projected expectation of 5 remaining years in my current body! This has increased my urgency to complete the 11-volume book which I mentioned in my previous report.

The newer-model RV that I upgraded to in my previous report has proven to be an unparalleled refuge for my necessary solitude to focus on the completion of my book series and mission to facilitate your desire that a systematic and symbiotic methodology for expanding the "Vṛndāvana-like villages" concept be established, or at least be documented - in your behalf! Thus, my writing of an 11-volume book titled "Permaculture Ecovillages" has been progressing, but much more slowly than I anticipated!

As the 'learning-curve' for the first volume developed, it took until September to actually publish on Amazon Books! The cost overrides forced me to take out commercial loans that I continue to slowly paydown as sales gradually increase organically from initial advertising via emails and 'word-of-mouth' sharing of readers.

When someone purchases something online, they will generally consider the "Reviews" of previous purchasers of the product they are considering - therefore, it is said that "Reviews" sell products, not

advertising! This concept subsequently was cause for my campaign of sharing *reminders* to all of my initial contacts every 2 weeks to keep it 'fresh' in their minds.

My outreach list includes 2,500+/- devotee emails, 5,000+/- Permaculture & intentional communities globally, 4,000+ Facebook "friends", and 25+ Facebook groups totaling another 105,000+/- members. So, I attempted to share the book with as many people as I potentially could!

Once sales have achieved between 15-50 "Reviews", as identified by Amazon Books data, there is a recommendation to invest in minimal advertising to accelerate sales much more equitably. At that point publishing volume 2 becomes financed from ongoing profits from volume 1, and increases the cycle of sales of both to quickly advance the remaining volumes.

Due to all of these factors, my original intent to publish by your birthday was not accomplished until September 1st, 10 days prior to Śrīmate Rādhārāṇī's! I received my "Author's copies" of my hardcover book just 2 days before Her birthday celebration and offered them to YOU for Her birthday present; along with this note:

Śrīmate Rādhārāṇī's Homage - 2024

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to you as my ONLY link to Śrīmate Rādhārāṇī!

Today, on this auspicious anniversary of Her wonderful appearance for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pleasure, I beg you, His Divine Grace, to present Her with this first volume of the 11-volume series "Permaculture Ecovillages" as the first installment of my mission to reduce your lamentation that you had not personally established the "other 50%" of your mission - "to establish the *Vaṛṇāśrama* System"!

You stated that to do so you would "go to our ISKCON farms, sit down with us and teach us how to live off the Land"!

My book series "Permaculture Ecovillages" is particularly focused toward this purpose in your

behalf, and in pursuit of your purport to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.10.6 verse with which you conclude:

“There is full cooperation between man and God and man and nature, and this conscious cooperation between man and God and man and nature, as exemplified by King Yudhiṣṭhira, can bring about happiness, peace, and prosperity in the world. The attitude of exploiting one another, the custom of the day, will only bring misery.”

Thus, I humbly offer this to you for Śrīmate Rādhārāṇī’s pleasure in alleviating your sweet “lamentation”!

Your servant in the groves of New Tālavana Dhāma,

Langaganesa dasa (September 11, 2024)

OM-TAT-SAT

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During this past year I also established a “corporate” entity to take my publications beyond my lifespan, to facilitate future generations of devotees as well as non-devotees with inspiration to adopt this “simple-living, high-thinking” model for easier integrated management by ISKCON leadership (through the “*Varṇāśrama* System”).

My company, “Harmony Permaculture Network, LLC”, holds the legal copyright to the first 3 volumes, and will have full control of all future publications. I intend to remit my company to the “Vedic Community Foundation” for management after my demise, for the financial support of our ISKCON farm development projects that coordinate self-sufficiency as expressed in my 11-volume series!

At this point, I pray that the ensuing progress of the Prostate Cancer (which has metastasized in the 6th rib on my right side) has been or is being deferred long enough by my current treatments and medications for me to complete my intended mission as described above!

Praying for your continued mercy and guidance, I remain as your stepping stone in my conviction and mission!  
Hare Kṛṣṇa!

*Your struggling servant in the groves of New Tālavana Dhāma,*

Langaganesa dasa

OM TAT SAT

Initiation: 1974, July—Miami, Florida, USA

Current location: Carriere, Mississippi – USA

Contact: langaganesa@aol.com

## MadhavaDasa Das

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Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I wish that you were always my dearest, as for any years you were when I was a young man. Unfortunately, for many years now, my mind has not been fixed upon your lotus feet, which exist not only as your *Vapu* but primarily as your *Vāñī*, your books, and your instructions. I had precious little of your *Vapu* association. You had informed us that your *Vāñī* instructions were the best kind of association with you, and I endeavored to follow them as closely as I could for many years.

After the sadness of your disappearance, I tried my best to remain attached to your *Vāñī*, which often came to me through my senior Godbrothers. But for too long, those instructions seemed to me to be coming increasingly from their minds, which were bewildered by their ambitions. We were all bewildered in your absence in one way or another.

I remember that once during those days, which, thank the goodness of your boundless mercy, are behind us now, I sat down in the *Brahmachari Ashram*, lit a stick of incense with a match, and began to read *The Nectar of Devotion*, which I thought I had opened randomly. Then I chanced upon, although not actually by chance, the *Klīm Krishnaya Gāyatrī Mantra* you gave to your second initiated *Brāhmaṇas* and suddenly fell into a trance. Your presence and voice suddenly were manifest to me. You said, "I am giving you this *mantra*." But I responded that there was not even the ritual or sacrificial fire burning, which I felt must be present. Then you told me, "That is why I had you use fire to light the incense." But at that time, you gave me no instructions on how and when to chant this *mantra*. For many years, I chanted it at random in my mind.

The temple president had told us that if we dreamed about you, that actually was you. However, I discussed this with no one,

fearing they would say I was simply a nonsense devotee and might even banish me from the temple. I may have been paranoid, but unfortunately, there was reason to be back then as we all struggled to follow you and understand what you wanted us to do from then on. Fortunately, those days are behind us because you have always remained with us as your *Vāṇī* through your books, letters, and the memoirs of those who had very much of your *Vapu* association. In truth, your *Vapu* may be understood to remain still. I remember once when I was sleeping on the roof of the ISKCON Miami temple in Miami Beach, I dreamt that as I was entering the temple room, your murti was giving the lecture, and you said, "This fool is thinking that there is some difference between myself and my *mūrti*."

I fondly remember when you came to ISKCON Los Angeles to supervise the publishing of the large backlog of the books you had so painstakingly written for us. Your presence alone in Los Angeles had created in me a profound shadow attachment for chanting Hare Krishna and serving you. Day after day, I was experiencing indescribable ecstasy after chanting even a few rounds of japa of the Hare Krishna *Mahāmantra* that you so mercifully were distributing all around the world. I did not want to do anything else for the rest of eternity. Not only had your shadow attachment done this to me, but you were also very much aware of my experience, for as the bonafide spiritual master, you can see into the heart of all of your disciples as you had told us.

On one of those days, as you sat serenely on your *Vyāsāsana*, you told us while looking directly at me, "So one day you may feel no desire to chant Hare Krishna and no desire to do any service." This statement shocked me greatly because I wanted to do nothing else at that time. And then you continued, "Then you can pray to Mother Rādhā Rāṇī, 'My dear Rādhā Rāṇī, I am feeling no desire to chant my japa and no desire to do any service. But please bless me that I may chant just one more round of *japa* and do some little service.' If you can get a taste for that," you said, "you will never fall down." This made perfect sense to me. You continued and said something incredibly amazing to me still.

"Actually, that is the highest taste."

Dearest Shрила Prabhupāda, I know that, in your great humility, you can always experience that taste. Please bless me that I may someday also develop that taste and that I will never forget to take shelter of your lotus feet, your books, the association of ISKCON

devotees, and so much more that you have given to everyone.

*I beg always to remain,  
Your indentured and humble servant,*

MadhavaDasa Das

Initiation: 1974, July—Miami, Florida, USA

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## Mahaman Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your Divine lotus feet.

At the recently held Kumbha-Melā in Prayāg in January and February, one prominent organisation emphatically proclaimed Your Divine self as VISHVA-GURU, spiritual master of the entire world. The same organisation appreciated and acknowledged all your many contributions; in particular, your brilliant, beautiful, comprehensive, easy to understand and authentic commentary on *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you yourself attributed your unprecedented success to 2 reasons:

1. *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and
2. Your total surrender to your Guru Mahārāj, Śrīpād Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur.

Indeed, Śrīla Prabhupāda, You Are most worthy of being the Vishwaguru and do not require any certification by anyone, as this would be like offering a candle to the sun. But it is encouraging to see our movement being widely accepted.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, every sentence, every word that you ever spoke is important, nectar and full of meaning. Yet, I feel one sentence which is like *Sanjeevani* life-giving tonic to my heart.

This sentence is in the context of a conversation with a reporter in America:

**Reporter:** what will happen when you die?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** I will never die. I will always live in my books and they will utilise.

Indeed, the book publications and distribution have changed and continue to change the demography and destiny of this world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, If I could only understand and appreciate even a tiny drop of your glories and magnanimity, I would consider my life successful, and I pray fervently to Lord Shri Krishna to give me the intelligence to understand your glories. This is the only benediction I would ever seek from dear Almighty Lord Shri Krishna.

Both individually and as society, we will never be able to repay the debt that we owe to you.

You are Vishwaguru because Krishna Bhakti is planted in the hearts of all through your books, *Darshan*, *Prasād*, et cetera, et cetera.

Although I know that my spiritual master is a servitor of Śrī Caitanya, I know Him also as a plenary manifestation of the Lord. (Cc Adi 1.44)

On this occasion of your Divine Vyāsa-pūjā, we appreciate your mercy and pray to have the strength to go on in Krishna consciousness life after life,

Thank you for saving me, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*Your humble servant,*

Mahaman Das

Initiation: 1974, July—London, UK

Current location: Madhya Pradesh, India

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## Krishnarupa Devi Dasi

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Offering tearful obeisances at your divine feet  
Praying for grace that you again I will meet

The blistering fire and cruelty of the material world  
Continues to shroud me in a fearful whirl

Without your succour, where would I be?  
Bereft of your love, I would be  
drowning in a tumultuous sea!

Your power, your strength, and being Mahāprabhu's  
*senāpati bhakta*  
The benedicta, the blessed, in this astonishing trifacta

More than fifty years have passed and I love you no less  
I'm praying to keep loving you through all the tests

And although I am a forlorn without seeing you,  
Your Divine Grace  
Keep me with you, and at your feet my heart to place

*Your servant,*

Krishnarupa devi dasi

Initiation: 1974, August—Vrindavan, India

Current location: New Govardhana, Australia

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## Aja Das

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

On this most auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I humbly bow at your lotus feet in deep gratitude. There is nothing in this world comparable to yourself.

I am now the age which you were when you left Vṛndāvana and traveled across the ocean, on the order of your Spiritual Master to spread the Holy Names to every town and village of the world, but starting in the dark streets of New York city. Now, at that age, I can barely function, let alone travel to other countries to spread Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Names. You were certainly empowered by the entire *Paramparā* to perform this miracle.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your books are the most divine scriptures! Your every word radiates the ultimate truth. I read your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, over and over, and every time I find new revelations and transcendental insights. The depth and beauty of these transcendental words bring me to tears.

Although totally unqualified, you accepted me and so many

others as your direct disciples, giving us the Holy Names and the entire Sanatana Dharma to try to share with the whole world. Śrīla Prabhupāda, how can we ever repay our debt to you?

On this holy day, we beg for your continued guidance. Please bless us so that we may become worthy instruments in your mission. Let our hearts remain forever surrendered at your Lotus Feet, and give us the strength to purely follow your divine instructions.

*Your servant,*

Aja Das

Initiation: 1974, September—Seattle, USA

Current location: Portland, Oregon, USA

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## Ksetrajna Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace who so kindly traveled the world to reclaim lost conditioned souls from the clutches of *māyā* by broadcasting the glory of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Who would have thought that such a simple, humble act would have such a deep, profound reaction in the minds of the citizens of Western countries. But who could understand the depth of your devotion to the Supreme Lord?

One by one as they approached you out of curiosity or to inquire or to speak, they were won over to the path of devotion to Krishna.

Thank you for allowing me to be amongst your miracles.

*Begging to remain your humble servant,*

Ksetrajna dasa

Initiation: 1974, October—Los Angeles, California, USA

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

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

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

My Dear Most Worshipable Spiritual Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
Please accept my most humble obeisances at your divine  
lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

It is with great gratitude and humility I offer this tribute on the auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā. Nearly five decades have passed since I had the inconceivable fortune of receiving your shelter and guidance. In November 1974, in Germany, you mercifully accepted me as your disciple, and since 1976, I have been serving your mission in Śrī Laṅkā. Throughout these years, your words, instructions, and personal example have been my guiding light, sustaining me through every challenge and inspiring me to persevere in devotional service.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you brought the eternal teachings of Lord Krishna to every corner of the world with unparalleled determination and compassion. In Śrī Laṅkā, despite many difficulties, your movement continues to grow, and I feel honored to play a small role in establishing the temple in Colombo—a long-cherished dream that is finally coming to fruition. Whatever little service I have been able to render is only by your causeless mercy, and I pray for the strength and purity to continue serving your mission until my last breath.

Your Divine Grace, please bless me so that I may always remain faithful to your instructions, free from distractions and deviations. May I always seek to please you and never become proud of my efforts, knowing that all results are simply your mercy. I pray that I may continue to assist in spreading Krishna consciousness in Śrī Laṅkā and beyond, following in your footsteps with sincerity and humility.

*Your eternally indebted servant,*

Mahakarta Das  
Initiation: 1974, November—Germany  
Current location: Sri Lanka, India  
Contact: mahakartadas@gmail.com

## Phalini Devi Dasi

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your fearless lotus feet.

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

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

All glories to Your Divine Grace, to your unfathomable service to your beloved spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and to our entire *Guru-Paramparā*. All glories to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa who spoke the phenomenal *Bhagavad-gītā* to His beloved cousin, friend and disciple Śrī Arjuna, and to Your Divine Grace who finally brought the *Bhagavad-gītā AS IT IS* to this dry world full of speculative editions of *Bhagavad-gītā* which help no one to become a pure devotee of the Lord. In contrast, your translation of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* has helped countless souls reconnect with the Lord of all created beings, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in loving devotional service. By your mercy, so many souls have now returned to their eternal service in the spiritual sky at the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

That accomplishment is to Your Divine Grace's unlimited credit.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, every time I read *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, I am blessed with newer and newer insights into the delightful details of your purports. Recently I read *Bhagavad-gītā* 5.7 and relished your purport, reading it over and over again. I especially love the purport to Bg 5.7 because it reminds me of Your Divine Grace. You write, "One who is on the path of liberation by Kṛṣṇa consciousness is very dear to every living being, and every living being is dear to him." Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were always Kṛṣṇa conscious. You are *nitya-siddha*, an eternally liberated devotee of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Everyone is dear to you, because you see everyone as an eternal servant of

Kṛṣṇa, and you are dear to everyone, because you perfectly fit the description you give in the purport of one whose every action is for the service and pleasure of Kṛṣṇa: “Because one who works in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is servant to all, he is very dear to everyone.

As I read your purport to 5.7, my mind wandered back to New Dvārakā and the experiences I had there with Your Divine Grace. I recalled greeting you as you stepped off airplanes, throwing flower petals on your head from the temple balcony as you walked from your car into the temple, sitting at the foot of your *vyāsāsana* as you spoke from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, waiting expectantly as you came out for your morning walks, observing your majestic mannerisms as you entered the temple. When you would come to Los Angeles, as soon as I would see you, I would immediately feel intense devotional ecstasy. I couldn’t control my enthusiasm. I would start jumping and dancing, calling out “Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!” at the top of my voice, then fall flat on the floor offering my heart and my dandavats at your lotus feet.

As I read your purport to Bg 5.7, I realized that the reason why I felt so ecstatic upon seeing Your Divine Grace was because I was dear to you. We were all dear to you. Because we were dear to you, we felt your love permeating every atom of our bodies, gross and subtle. We beheld that love in your eyes. We felt that love in our hearts, and because of your love for us, you became dear to us. In fact, even upon so-called ‘non-devotees’ you had a similar impact. I remember hearing a story about how one of my godbrothers, upon witnessing the positive responses of passers-by as you greeted people on your morning walk, marvelled, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, everyone loves you!” and Your Divine Grace replied, “Yes, because I love everyone.”

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for loving me. Thank you for loving all my god-siblings. Thank you for loving all living entities. And thank you for your ever-fresh literary masterpiece, *Bhagavad-gīta As It Is*.

*Your grateful, eternal servant and loving daughter,*

Phalini devi dasi

Initiation: 1974, November—New Dwarka, Los Angeles, USA

Current location: Prabhupāda Village, North Carolina, USA

Contact: phalini@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at Your Most Glorious Lotus Feet. By your divine presence on this planet, the destiny of unlimited souls was miraculously altered and redirected towards Krishna Consciousness. Being transcendently situated and embellished with a reservoir of Godly qualities, you had such intense absorption and love for Lord Krishna and for your beloved Spiritual Master that you were able to accomplish what no one else was able to do before your appearance. Lord Krishna wanted that you be praised and revered for never hesitating to offer your compassion to each and every person who, by some incredible mercy, gathered to witness and hear the pure sound of your chanting of the Hare Krishna *Mahā Mantra* and the science of transcendental knowledge. This incarnation of the Holy Names of the Lord is Krishna Himself and His sound representation is so powerful and purifying that it revives the dormant love residing in all our hearts. You so expertly pulled us out of ignorance and engaged us in serving you in your loving service to the Lord. This process may be gradual but it absolutely transforms anyone who gets such rare association and is able to render some service to such a pure devotee as you!

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, at the moment he met your Divine Grace in 1922, requested you to spread Krishna Consciousness in the West. You took his request to heart and from that moment plotted out a course to execute his order. When you eventually arrived in America, you observed the unfortunate lives of the westerners and with your unflinching faith and pure devotion to the Lord and your Spiritual Master, you blessed us all with your association and guidance. With your brilliant approach and utmost patience, you proceeded to introduce Krishna Consciousness in such dynamic and engaging ways. You were our father and you treated us with great care. You were never deterred from executing the mission of disseminating transcendental knowledge. Despite what seemed like unending tribulations and obstacles, you endured so much for us. You remained steadfast in your desire to please Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga and to liberate us from being imprisoned in this material realm.

Absolutely no one can deny that by your pure, unmotivated and loving association, so many Westerners wholeheartedly took

up the life of Vaiṣṇavism and became Krishna Conscious! Now 50 years later it is by your mercy Śrīla Prabhupāda that I continue to be a part of this great movement. I still need to hold steady in my determination to purify my heart by practicing pure devotional service, but Śrīla Prabhupāda, you did not leave any of us alone. To me, the greatest gift we received from you is a society in which so many of your disciples embraced Krishna Consciousness fully. Now that half a century has passed, anyone can observe the fact that many of my beloved Godbrothers and Godsisisters actually dedicated their entire lives in Krishna Consciousness!

In the association of these very dear devotees of the Lord, you can with great certainty and without doubt, understand that these souls are returning back home at the end of this life. In fact, many are already completely situated in transcendental consciousness while still on this planet. How else could they have such potency and be so prolific in spreading Krishna Consciousness? They are empowered by your mercy.

Most uplifting to me, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, is how your disciples' disciples have such purity and potency in the world. You told us that those who come later will be more advanced. This is an observable fact. You left us a wealth of transcendental knowledge through your books and you clearly requested and demonstrated through your legacy of pure devotional service why everyone should distribute these transcendental books and benedict all the fallen souls of Kali Yuga. By preaching the Glories of the Lord and the Glories of you who are the Founder Ācārya, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda, by distribution of all of the transcendental literatures which are available in so many languages, there will be no lack of pure devotees of the Lord forthcoming.

I pray you bless me to sincerely endeavor to chant the Holy Names with more and more care and love. By your causeless mercy, please help me to face my anarthas with honesty and conviction that through service to your mission and to the family of Vaiṣṇavas all over this world, that I will undoubtedly progress towards the goal of pure Krishna Consciousness. Hoping to develop true humility and love for you,

*Your daughter,*

Lalita devi dasi

Initiation: 1974, October—Montreal, Canada

## Jagadvira Das

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Your movement continues to grow every day  
Please continue to guide us - we chant and pray

You did not come on a plane, bus or scooter  
You arrived in Boston on the Jaladuta

Our lives would have been wasted had you not come  
Now every day is bright - like the shining sun

The Bhaktivedanta purports - you did write  
Your books are the basis - you worked hard at night

To the feast on Sundays - many people came  
Happy dancing and chanting the holy name

The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust - BBT  
Gives us great understanding and ecstasy

Reading your books daily helps us understand  
And takes our consciousness to another land

Thank you for coming here to tell us the truth  
We were very confused and lost in our youth

*Your servant*

Jagadvira dasa

Initiation: 1974, November—Sydney, Australia

Current location: Okinawa, Japan

Contact: [jv27648@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jv27648@yahoo.co.uk)

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

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

I offer my obeisances, humble and deep,  
To His Divine Grace, whose vows we keep.  
A.C. Bhaktivedānta, dear to Kṛṣṇa's grace,  
Sheltered at His lotus feet, in a most sacred place.

Our respectful obeisances, to you we give,  
O spiritual master, by whose mercy we live.  
Servant of Sarasvatī, in devotion's bright flame,  
Preaching Lord Caitanya's transcendent name.

You deliver the West from voidism's snare,  
Impersonalism's grip, you break with care.  
With your guidance and light, the world is blessed,  
In your lotus footsteps, our soul finds its rest.

On this sacred day, so bright and pure,  
Śrīla Prabhupāda, to you, our hearts endure,  
In gratitude, we stand, so humble, so small,  
For the countless gifts, you've given us all.

Your blessings, too vast to ever recount,  
Flow through our lives in an endless amount,  
Each day we strive, in thoughts, words, and deeds,  
To offer our thanks, to plant those seeds.

But today, on the day of your divine birth,  
We honor your presence, your walk on this Earth,  
With hearts overflowing, we celebrate your name,  
In devotion and love, we rise to proclaim.

You've shown us the path, so clear, so true,  
Śrīla Prabhupāda, we owe it all to you,  
In this world, your light will forever shine,

Our eternal guide, so gracious, so divine.

What is the disciple's heart truly grateful for?  
The gifts of the *guru*, unending and more,  
But one shines brightest, more precious than gold—  
The gift of pure knowledge, untainted and bold.

What worth are virtues, however bright,  
If the teachings are shadowed, not pure in sight?  
The true master, the faithful guide,  
Stands as Śrī Vyāsadeva's voice, far and wide.

Vyāsa-pūjā's essence is found in this praise—  
To honor the one who walks in Vyāsadeva's ways.  
For the unadulterated truth, we give our respect,  
A gift from our master, so pure and direct.

Our own Śrīla Prabhupāda, in word and deed,  
Follows Vyāsadeva's path, planting each seed.  
With scriptures vast, like stars in the sky,  
Made simple for souls in the Kali-yuga's cry.

With boundless compassion, he reached every shore,  
Welcoming all to Vaikuṅṭha's door.  
Regardless of background, caste, or creed,  
He called every heart to the spiritual need.

Yet never swayed from the truth's clear stand,  
Even among the elite of the land.  
Like Vyāsadeva, he built a family vast,  
Disciples of disciples, a lineage to last.

Four generations strong, and still more to come,  
In Śrīla Prabhupāda's family, we are united as one.  
For this unbroken chain of transcendental grace,  
We offer our gratitude, our hearts embrace.

To the spiritual master, our eternal guide,  
Who channels Vyāsadeva's wisdom far and wide,  
We offer our thanks, our obeisances pure,  
For the path of truth that shall always endure.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda  
Please accept my humble plea,  
In the dust of your lotus feet, I bow to thee,  
On this day of your blessed birth,  
May your glories spread across the earth.

Each day we witness, hearts reborn,  
Fallen souls, from night to morn,  
Chanting Kṛṣṇa's holy names,  
In ecstasy, they fan the flames.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your work so grand,  
Spreads love for Kṛṣṇa across the land,  
Unprecedented in this world's lore,  
Your grace and power we adore.

Not just a *guru*, pure and true,  
But *śaktyāveśa avatāra*, one of so few,  
The spearhead of a divine plan,  
You guide us all, each woman and man.

In every town, in every place,  
Where hearts beat on this earthly space,  
Lord Caitanya spoke with grace so grand,  
"My holy name shall fill this land."

"For those who stray, or seek to flee,  
I'll send My soldier, bold and free,  
My *senāpati bhakta*, strong and true,  
To bring My grace, My light, anew."

And Kṛṣṇa spoke with divine might,  
"In 5,000 years, in dark of night,  
My *mantra-upāsaka* will be born,  
To spread My name, the sacred morn."

Now it's clear for all to see,  
Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is thee,  
You are the one, the prophesied,  
The chosen soul, so glorified.

With holy names, you crossed the seas,  
Fulfilled the words with boundless ease,  
Bringing light to every shore,  
In you, these prophecies restore.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, we proclaim,  
You are the bearer of the flame,  
The harbinger of Kṛṣṇa's will,  
Fulfilling what the scriptures thrill.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam's* wisdom flows,  
The value of a moment shows,  
With you, the highest grace we find,  
More precious than wealth of any kind.

Fortunate are we to serve your feet,  
In your mission, our lives complete,  
Your presence lingers, far and wide,  
In words, in deeds, and by your side.

In every book, in every line,  
Your spirit lives, your truth divine,  
In countless languages, your words do fly,  
Transforming hearts, lifting them high.

Each book a time bomb, ticking slow,  
Ready to let love of Kṛṣṇa flow,  
What might the future hold in store?  
A world awakened, forevermore.

A Christian preacher with your *Bhāgavatam* in hand,  
Shows how your grace has touched this land,  
Soon such sights will be the norm,  
As your influence takes the World by storm.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* speaks so clear,  
The highest blessing we hold dear,  
Is in the presence of devotees pure,  
A grace that ever shall endure.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I cannot tell,  
How deep my debt, how far I fell,  
Yet in your mercy, I've been raised,  
To serve your feet, to sing your praise.

Though weak in body, mind unclear,  
I beg you, Prabhupāda so dear,  
Forgive my flaws, my efforts small,  
And accept my offerings, one and all.

You saved my life, turned it around,  
From hippie lost to joy profound,  
In the dust of your feet, I humbly pray,  
Let me serve you, all of every day.

Keep me sheltered, close to you,  
In the service of those who are true,  
With gratitude, I plead and say,  
Your servant forever, come what may.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your knowing heart,  
You felt time slipping, soon to depart,  
So in devotion, pure and deep,  
You sacrificed your precious sleep.

Who among us can forgo rest?  
Perhaps a day, at very best,  
But you, with love and fervent grace,  
Went months without a pause, no trace.

No weariness upon your brow,  
In service true, you took your vow,  
Like the Six Gosvamis, bold and bright,  
You conquered sleep, worked through each night.

Oceans vast of qualities pure,  
In you, such virtues do endure,  
*A paramahansa*, wise and kind,  
With you, no fault or flaw we find.

By sacrifice, you paved the way,  
For us to read, to learn, to pray,  
Your Bhaktivedanta, words divine,  
In every heart, your truths entwine.

You came, you said, to make us blessed,  
By your mercy, we are caressed,  
Our fortune grows, beyond all count,  
Our debt to you, a lofty mount.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, humble I stand,  
Incapable of praise so grand,  
Fallen, foolish, weak of mind,  
Yet in your mercy, grace I find.

Forgive my flaws, my efforts small,  
In the dust of your feet, to you I call,  
Chastise me harshly, if need there be,

But please don't, dear master, give up on me.  
With pleading heart, I humbly pray,  
In your service, let me forever stay,  
In company of those so dear,

Your disciples, ever near.  
Forgive my offenses, countless, deep,  
In your mercy, let me weep,  
But keep me close, I beg, I cry,

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, please, don't pass me by.  
O Lord and master,  
Throwing myself endlessly in the dust of your lotus feet,  
With straw in teeth and tearful eyes, I  
most humbly beg to remain,

*Your servant,*

Taraka dasa

Initiation: 1974, December—New York, USA

Śrīla Prabhupāda,

“Thank you” are words that are terribly small  
To be said to the one to whom we owe all.  
Without the understanding you’ve given to me,  
I’d be a ship lost in an infinite sea.

To know the real truth is a treasure that’s rare:  
That God is two Persons – you made us aware.  
That we’re not this body, but a living soul,  
And that service to Them is our real goal.

The sweetness of God is yours to bestow:  
Like Mahāprabhu, you give the high to the low.  
This understanding is what keeps us afloat.  
In this material ocean, you captain our boat.

As we stumble and fall, in the midst of this maze,  
Your words ring so true “be surprised at who stays!”  
And still, amid grace, we fume, and we fuss.  
Our prayer is that you will be patient with us.

Help us give no heed to this world’s crazy schemes -  
Ignoring party spirit, and material dreams.  
Together we can be a force for the good,  
And worship together, as you’ve taught we should.

Help us stay together, so that we can see  
That despite any difference, we’re God’s family.  
You asked us to work together to show  
The love that we have, that was yours to bestow.

So bless us, our father, so we can go forth -  
Give your love to others and show you our worth.  
With spiritual eyes, and spiritual view,  
We’ll finally be able to really please you.

*Forever in your debt, Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
Your aspiring servants,*

Trilokanatha and Mahojjala  
Initiation: 1975, January—New Remuna, Toronto, Canada  
Contact: triloka108@gmail.com

## Paratpara Devi Dasi

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisance.

You are glorified throughout the universe as the successful servant of your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Maharaj and you took his instructions as your life and soul. The purity of your words and actions achieve astounding results -. *purity is the force*. Your books continue to be the basis to fulfill your beloved Gurudev's instructions. *The principle of utility* is evident in the example of your daily teaching to your devoted disciples, everything can be connected with Kṛṣṇa.. And around the world, your God children and grand God children spread the joy of *kīrtan* and association and *prasādam* to demonstrate that *preaching is the essence* of your instruction.

I sit to take inventory of my life at age 75, Your Divine Grace is the basis of what I call me. My dearest treasures are your books; your patient teachings fill my kitchen and table with food, offered first; your lessons on how to behave with both devotees and non-devotees guide my association. Thanks to your grace, my kids chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and teach their kids the pastimes we heard from you. I sleep, I rise, I read and listen with your pure strong voice in my brain. Thank you from a stubborn daughter who is yet-to-surrender and serve you properly.

Please don't let go of me. I hang on, reluctant to surrender, but hoping to stay connected somehow to this perfect branch of the tree of love that is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya.

*Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda.*

Paratpara devi dasi

Initiation: 1975, January—Vancouver, Canada

Current location: Vancouver, Canada

Contact: gailbaxter108@gmail.com

## Mahabhagavata Devi Dasi

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My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
Please accept my most humble obeisances.

At your feet I lay my head.  
Your presence makes me small.

You've given me so many things,  
I cannot speak them all.

The only thing I have to offer  
Is what you've given me.

I miss the way it was  
Knowing you were here.

The time is near for me to leave  
I know not where I'm bound.

Yet fearlessly I tread the path.  
The lost has now been found.

*Your servant,*

Mahabhagavata dasi

Initiation: 1975, February—Seattle, Washington

## Mrtjuhara Das

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble and respectful obeisances at Your lotus feet. I am very happy to write my Vyāsa-pūjā offering again this year.

This is the most auspicious occasion to express my profound gratitude to Your Divine Grace.

Vyāsa-pūjā is the day of Your appearance in this material world. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.1.3-4) we can find:

*avatīrya yador vanīśe  
bhagavān bhūta-bhāvanaḥ  
kṛtavān yāni viśvātmā  
tāni no vada vistarāt*

The Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Krishna, the cause of the cosmic manifestation, appeared in the dynasty of Yadu. Please tell me elaborately about His glorious activities and character, from the beginning to the end of His life.

*nivṛtta-tarśair upagīyamānād  
bhavausadhāc chrotra-mano-'bhirāmāt  
ka uttamaśloka-guṇānuvādāt  
pumān virajyeta vinā paśughnāt*

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

The two verses above describe how important the glorification of the Lord's appearance day is. Similarly, the following emphasize how much honor should be offered to the spiritual master as the most intimate servitor of Śrī Krishna:

*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair  
uktas tathā bhāvayata eva sadbhīḥ  
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya  
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

The spiritual master is to be honored as much as the

Supreme Lord, because he is the most confidential servitor of the Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and followed by all authorities. Therefore, I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is a bona fide representative of Śrī Hari [Kṛṣṇa].

On this particularly auspicious day, we glorify Your Divine Grace even more than what has been done for the Lord, since you are the Lord's most confidential servitor. These are the sentiments of your disciples.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you told Tamal Krishna Goswami the exact time of your birth: "I was born in the evening at 4:00 p.m." on the first of September 1896 in Calcutta, India.

Your horoscope, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, based on the given time, was very accurate. You mentioned on several occasions what was foretold in your horoscope: that at the age of 70, you would go across the sea and establish 108 temples of Krishna. So, it is not simply a matter of astrological hindsight; this chart was used by learned *Panḍits* at the time of your birth to predict your greatness and future accomplishments.

The appearance days of great *Ācāryas*, just like the appearance days of Lord Krishna's incarnations, are marked by such perfect positions of the planets. When Lord Krishna appears, demigods and other great personalities offer Him prayers of glorification.

I am an unfit disciple of yours, and for me, as every year, it is very difficult to offer proper glorification to such an exalted personality as Your Divine Grace. I don't have many genuine and sincere words to glorify you in the way every disciple does. My knowledge of you is very limited; how could I properly glorify such a great personality that I don't really know?

Luckily, even on this special day, you didn't ask us to write big poems, but simply to follow your directions: just to chant a minimum of 16 rounds of *japa mālā* every day, to follow the four regulative principles, and to place ourselves at your disposal to spread everywhere the message of the Lord, Śrī-Śrī Gaura Nitāi, in this age of *Kali*.

Following these instructions was very simple when I was young. To follow those instructions you gave me was very easy to accomplish at that time. Now, at this old age, doing so has become quite difficult. Since this is the most important part of the glorification that a

disciple must offer to his spiritual master, now, as always, I need even more of your mercy. More and more.

At this age and with this diseased body, I hope to always follow your instructions and never give up. As far as I'm concerned, this is the most important glorification and offering to Your Divine Grace on this day of your appearance.

*Your respectful servant,*

Mrtyuhara das

Initiation: 1975, February—Rome, Italy

Current location: Italy

## Nartaka Gopala Devi Dasi

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

This year, 2025, there was a Mahā Kumbha Melā at Prayāg, Allahabad, at Trivenī, the confluence of the three holy rivers, the Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Saraswati. This brought to my mind some of the things you have told us about your attending Kumbha Melās there. You ran your Prayāg Pharmacy and lived there with your family from 1923 to 1936. You told us: “In 1925 I went to the Melā. I remember, I was touching the water and it was so pinching (cold) that it was cutting your body. But as soon as you actually get a dip: one, two, three, then you immediately come out and it is alright.”

You also mentioned the 1928 Melā, when you were carrying your young child. “I was in the midst of the crowd. It was so big that I was afraid that if there was any rush, this child may be finished. But, by the grace of Krishna, nothing happened.”

In 2018 the government of India changed the name of Allahabad back to its original puranic name of Prayāgrāj, which means the best of the five *saṅgams*, or confluences of rivers in India. This is the historic place where Lord Caitanya taught Śrīla Rūpa Goswami the science of devotional service. While you were living here for the thirteen years from 1923 to 1936 your Guru Mahārāja gave you first and second initiation on the same day, when he also added ‘Aravinda’, lotus, to your name making it Abhay Charanaravinda. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur opened the Rūpa Gauḍīya Math and you donated

for the Deities, installed Them and worshipped Them as a gr̥hastha. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your eldest son was born around 1922 and you named him Prayāgrāj. And there is still a railroad bridge at the Melā under which your father had been cremated in 1930 on the island of Gaṅgādvīpa at Trivenī.

In 1971 there was an Ardha Kumbha Melā at Allahabad and it was the first one that you brought some disciples to experience. Our godbrother Acyutananda told you what he saw that morning, “All the Shaivites got to bathe first, there were thousands of them running naked to the confluence and the big gurus were riding elephants.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, you said to him, “You could not get an elephant for me?... No, I would put Rādhā-Krishna there.” That year the ISKCON camp had the only Rādhā Krishna Deities at the whole Melā, and thousands would line up to see Them. These eighteen-inch Deities were later installed as Rādhā Mādhava at Śrīdhām Māyāpur.

At this same 1971 Kumbha Melā you told our godbrother Nanda Kumar das and others, “You should be very respectful toward everyone you meet here. There are *sādhus* here who are hundreds of years old and you can’t tell who they are.” And to Kaushalya devi dasi and others there you said, “You must be very careful because there are very powerful yogis here. You must be very respectful, very careful.” You explained that many sadhus there had powerful *siddhis*, like the power to mystically move between places. There is a vortex at the sangam of the three rivers where yogis dive and re-emerge in different places. “I have personally seen that they take bath in the Gaṅgā and come up in the seven sacred rivers. They go down in the Gaṅgā and come up in the Godāvārī. Then they go down and come up in the Krishna River, and go down, like that.”

For the Kumbha Melā in January 1977 you wanted to go by train with a group of your disciples from Bombay to Allahabad, a twenty four hour journey. The problem was that the trains were all jammed full, no tickets available, and the doctor had said you cannot fly. As mentioned in the Prabhupāda Līlāmṛta and also by our godbrother Badrinarayan das in the Memories book, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had a friend in Bombay, Mr. Gupta, who was the chief engineer of the Central Railway. He added a first-class and second-class car to a train just for you, freshly painted with garlands hanging. He also arranged a car & driver and a cow for the compound so that you could have fresh milk at the Kumbha Melā.

It was very cold at the Melā and you got sick, so you decided

after several days to go to Calcutta, but once again there were no trains available. Amazingly, at the local railway office the devotees ran into Mr. Gupta again. He phoned Bombay and got a first-class coach added to a train leaving Bombay for Allahabad. You were very pleased, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and you had your secretary type a letter thanking Mr. Gupta, who was caring for you “just like a father looking after a son.” You invited Mr. Gupta and his family to attend the upcoming Gaura-pūrṇimā festival in Māyāpur.

At the end of 1977 you left your manifest pastimes Śrīla Prabhupāda, although you are always with your sincere followers, and never leave us. The following year, 1978, our godbrother Arjuna das from Mauritius went to the Māgh Melā in Allahabad with a group of gurukula boys. There they met Devraha Baba, a greatly respected *sādhu* said to be several hundred years old. He rarely left his dwelling, but when he saw the ISKCON devotees he came down and spoke in Sanskrit for ten minutes glorifying you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as a *saktyavesha avatāra*. Arjuna said he was so old his eyebrows hung down like small dreadlocks and he called some of his disciples who were all well over one hundred years old. It was very significant how this esteemed saint of India glorified you. He passed away a year or so later.

Very dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your association, so many people developed the utmost respect, dedication and love for you. Thank you for somehow allowing me to call myself.

Your servant,

*Nartaka Gopala dasi*

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## Rathayatra Das and Vaidhi Bhakti Devi Dasi

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My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to Your Divine lotus feet, which are the shelter for the three worlds.

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

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

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

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

Time is moving on for us all. Gradually, all of us are becoming old. We have also lost a number of brothers and sisters as time has passed.

Saturday 6th April 2025, we celebrated the Golden Jubilee of Śrī Śrī Krishna Balaram Mandir in Vrindāvan. It was very inspiring to participate in the fabulous festivities organised to celebrate the occasion. Many of your disciples came from around the world and I was happy to meet some of them whom I never met before.

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 it means to be a resident of the spiritual world, and how such a soul thinks, feels, and acts. As time goes on I'm slowly able to understand this more and more.

*bhakti-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 Krishna. In all the revealed scriptures this is loudly declared again and again.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, with the advances in technology, you are more available to us than ever before.

I'm able to be with you 24/7, starting my day chanting my rounds with you, full morning program with you, unlimited, ever fresh recordings to listen throughout the day and night, reading/distributing your original books, unchanged books and classes more available online than ever before.

In the meantime, I worship your instructions, and deity form, and remain loyal to your personal preaching mission. May I never stray from your Lotus feet. Although I am a shallow man with little realisation, I have full faith in you. By your causeless mercy I have

changed and I am convinced that service to you can change anyone.

*mūkaṁ karoti vācāraṁ  
paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim  
yat-krpā tam ahaṁ vande  
śrī gurum 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.

Please bless me to remain at the service of Your Lotus Feet for ever.

*Your insignificant servants,*

Rathayatra Dasa

Vaidhi Bhakti Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1975, February—Chicago, USA

Current location: Karuna Farm, Kodaikana, Bangalore, South India

Contact: rathayatradasa@gmail.com

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## Vijeta Das and Arya Devi Dasi

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### ONLY YOU ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA

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

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

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

In your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.18.12), you listed the 26 qualities of a devotee in the following manner:

Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, the author of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, says that all good qualities become manifest in the body of a Vaiṣṇava and that only by the presence of these good qualities can one distinguish a Vaiṣṇava from a

non-Vaiṣṇava. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja lists the twenty-six good qualities of a Vaiṣṇava: (1) He is very kind to everyone. (2) He does not make anyone his enemy. (3) He is truthful (4) He is equal to everyone. (5) No one can find any fault in him. (6) He is magnanimous. (7) He is mild. (8) He is always clean. (9) He is without possessions. (10) He works for everyone's benefit. (11) He is very peaceful. (12) He is always surrendered to Kṛṣṇa. (13) He has no material desires. (14) He is very meek. (15) He is steady. (16) He controls his senses. (17) He does not eat more than required. (18) He is not influenced by the Lord's illusory energy. (19) He offers respect to everyone. (20) He does not desire any respect for himself. (21) He is very grave. (22) He is merciful. (23) He is friendly. (24) He is poetic. (25) He is expert. (26) He is silent.

Who '*is very kind to everyone*'? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda! You collected us off the Juhu beach and let us take shelter of your lotus feet.

Who '*does not make anyone his enemy*'? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda! The world is now full of enemies more than ever. But you never made any enemies, with your Godbrothers, Politicians, Reporters, Bogus *Yogīs*, even Māyāvādīs. Everyone loves you Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have no enemies.

Who '*is always truthful*'? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda! Many things you revealed in your books and many of them seemed 'impossible', even 'not even true'! However we have seen time and time again that absolutely EVERYTHING you tell us is absolutely TRUE! They never went to the moon because they are not allowed there in material bodies. The entire world is run by a few demonic families, elections are a farce, the banks will steal your paper currency, only keep gold and silver as real money, a great Third World War will come between America and Russia, whatever weapons they have, they will eventually use them, and we are NOW at that precipice. Proving once again that you are always truthful.

Who is '*Equal to everyone*'? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda! In your small garden at your Śrī Śrī Rukmini Dvarakadish Temple in Los Angeles a very ugly slimy slug was creeping along on his mucus trail, inching closer to your *āsana* and Govinda Dāsī exclaimed....Ohhhhh!. You looked at the lowly creature and said "*Oh what an unfortunate living entity. Govinda, sit down near this slug and keep chanting Hare*

*Kṛṣṇa to it. He may not have ears, but the soul within it can hear!"*

Who is it that *'No one can find any fault in him'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda! Your entire life was filled with many daring and wondrous activities and they always worked out because you ONLY followed the dictates of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and your beloved Spiritual Master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati Thakur Mahārāja.

Who *'Is magnanimous'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. You give Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa to any one and everyone. Through your books, lectures, bhajans, room conversations, morning walks, even just through your transcendental glance.

Who *'Is mild'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. One time when Arjuna and I had the great fortune to carry you in a very small palanquin made to just fit around the sharp corner going up the stairs to your rooms in Bombay. As we struggled to keep level and not tilting as the palanquin scraped along the walls going upward, you mildly began telling us about how your mother used to travel around Calcutta in a small palanquin.

Who *'Is always clean'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. With your daily abundance of bucket baths with simple lota, and your daily massages in the sun, you epitomized what It is to be clean by showing us by example.

Who *'Is without possessions'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. From the time you landed in America with only a few rupees and some books, up to the time you successfully opened over 100 beautiful Temples, Publishing Trusts, Farms and Gurukulas you never considered them for a moment to be 'your possessions'. You taught us by example that everything is the property of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. ".....sarva loka maheśvaram"

Who *'works for everyone's benefit'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Constantly circling the globe, preaching to tens of thousands in Pandals in India, or preaching to a lone person on the street or on a morning walk. Building temples for all peoples to attend and hear about Kṛṣṇa, but most importantly publishing your books in all the major languages in the world so that everyone has access to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda.

Who *'is very peaceful'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. In every corner of the world, wherever you go, whoever you meet, day or night, rain or shine you always emanate the most peaceful countenance.

Who *'is always surrendered to Krishna'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. From your appearance in the home of a great Kṛṣṇa

devotee to your last breath at your Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Temple in your home in Vrindāvana, you never did ANYTHING without the direction of your Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Who *'has no material desires'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. In this planet of unlimited material desires that are dragging everyone into a hellish life, you are the ONLY one we have ever seen that was not captivated by these desires.

Who *'is very meek'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. You would always accept the most humble and insignificant gift from anyone as if it were a great treasure.

Who *'is steady'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Even after a 10 or 12 hour overseas flight to one of your temples you would still NEVER suffer from 'jet lag'. You would just go on with your daily routine as if the grueling flight didn't even happen.

Who *'controls his senses'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Speaking from my 75 years of observations in my own life and that of everyone else, I have never seen anyone control all their senses except for you my dear Guru Dev Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Who *'does not eat more than required'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Once again I do not see this quality in very many people. And the ones that do try, would surely never be able to resist the massive *Mahā Prasādam* plates from your deities the way that you do, only just tasting a little sample of selected preparations and then distributing the plate to others.

Who *'is not influenced by the Lord's material energy'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. This is very simple: NO ONE! Even Lord Brahmā and Lord Shiva cannot resist.

Who *'offers respects to everyone'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Even when you meet with great Christian Leaders, *Yogīs*, and even *Māyāvādīs* who cannot hold a candle to your glowing radiance, you still offer them respect.

Who *'does not desire any respect for himself'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Even though you are the chosen and empowered one to head up the Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya-Sampradāya, you always give all the credit to YOUR Spiritual Master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati Mahārāja Prabhupāda.

Who *'is very grave'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. At the unfortunate time of your premature departure from our earthly vision, you gravely warned us *"don't think this will not happen to you"*.

Who *'is merciful'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Real mercy is

not building hospitals or schools, or giving in charity, or financing mundane endeavours, or speaking and writing *grāmya-kathā*. The only real mercy is giving Lord Krishna to anyone and everyone, as you have done.

Who *'is friendly'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. One fun example was in your *darshan* room in Bombay full of guests and devotees. There were two 'tik tiks' (those little gecko reptiles) scampering on the ceiling above your head. The devotee fanning you tried to shoo them away in case they fell on you. You looked up and then told the devotee to never mind. But moments later they continued their frolicking and sure enough they lost their footing and fell. They landed on your lap and right leg, then quickly scampered down your leg and over your right foot onto the floor and back up the wall. There was dead silence in the room!

Nobody knew what to say. With a smile on your face, you graciously commented;

"Charming couple". We all broke out in peals of laughter.

You are the most friendly because you reveal to everyone who our dear most friend is: Your Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa '*..suhṛdam sarva-bhūtānām*'

Who *'is poetic'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. The poetry you composed for your Bhaktsiddhānta Saraswati always pleases your disciples when we read your heartfelt and surrendered mood so eloquently composed for the glorification of YOUR Spiritual Master.

Who *'is expert'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. There is no question about your expert preaching, but everything else you do is also most expert. Your dressing, your walk, your cooking, your singing, your mrdanga playing, your harmonium playing, your command of the English language and Sanskrit, your compassion, your love for your Guru, your love for your Lord Krishna. You are the MOST EXPERT expert.

Who *'is silent'*? Only you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Some may say that... '*Ohhhh, Mauna Baba is the most silent, he hasn't spoken for dozens of years*'. You revealed that is a good thing, because if we don't have anything to say about the glories of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, and our Gauḍīya-Sampradāya, then better to not speak at all. So YOU Śrīla Prabhupāda are the MOST silent because you always chant Kṛṣṇa's Holy Name.

Praying at your lotus feet to someday continue in your service.

Vijeta dasa and Arya Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1975, April—Vrindavan, India

## Medhavi Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

*nama om̐ visnu padaya kṛṣṇa presthaya bhutale  
srimate bhaktivedanta svamin iti namine*

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

I recently had the opportunity to visit the twelve forests of Vrindāvan, as part of celebrations, for the 50th anniversary of the opening of your Krishna Balaram Mandir.

Whenever we entered a temple, we chanted your *praṇām-mantras* before the presiding deities, knowing that our only justification to be in Their presence was to have been blessed to be your disciples.

Being your followers was our only qualification to visit the holy places of Lord Krishna's past times.

Importantly, it is your *praṇāms* which are the most important of all *mantras* for us.

*"Yasya deve parā bhaktir - yathā deve tathā gurau - tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ - prakāśante mahātmanah!"*

In the third of the *gāyatrī mantras*, the translation reads "let us try to understand my spiritual master, who is always in blissful Krishna consciousness..."

We may labor under the illusion that we "know you", but that is not actually possible.

You have unlimited transcendental qualities and abilities, which you engage fully in the Lord's service, with which you accomplished inconceivable results.

It has been 50 years since my initiation in Vrindāvan, but how can that counter all of the contamination and offenses of thousands of births of ignorance?

Śrīla Krishna Dās Bābājī Mahārāj mentioned that you were the greatest of all acaryas because of your complete faith in Krishna's holy names and your ability to spread them all over the world.

Here in Vrindāvan one can feel your presence very forcefully, therefore our responsibility to serve your mission is very perceptible.

Please allow me to continue some small service to your lotus feet.

*Your servant,*

Medhavi Dasa

Initiation: 1975, April—Vrindavan, India  
Current location: Cape Town, South Africa  
Contact: michael.vyas396@gmail.com

## Vimala Devi Dasi

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

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

Recently I have been meditating upon the virtue of tolerance and how to develop it further in my own life and spiritual practice. This led me to examine and appreciate how perfectly and completely Śrīla Prabhupāda exemplified tolerance in all circumstances and how he urged us to follow his example.

At the ripe old age of 69, Śrīla Prabhupāda left his beloved Vrindavan and boarded a cargo ship bound for America. I am now 70 and in so much awe of what he sacrificed on all levels... the physical, mental and even the spiritual, to spread his mission.

As early as 1968 he wrote to one disciple...

Physically and mentally we may be disturbed sometimes, but we have to stand erect on the spiritual platform. I may inform you in the connection that I am at the present moment physically unfit; I am having always a buzzing sound in my brain. I cannot sleep soundly at night, but still I am working because I try to be in my position of spiritual platform. (Śrīla Prabhupāda Letter, January 15, 1968)

On the epic voyage to New York, Śrīla Prabhupāda suffered two severe heart attacks. After arriving, he rented a small office, which he also lived in. He supported himself with great difficulty by selling his *Bhāgavatam* books to bookstores. Then, Śrīla Prabhupāda endured the winter of 1965-66, described as the coldest at that time in

over 40 years. He was without proper cooking facilities, eating only one meal daily and feeling what he described as “Night starvation.”

Just to top it off, one day he returned to his office cum bedroom to find it had been robbed and his only valuables—a typewriter and tape recorder were stolen. At the invitation of an acquaintance, Śrīla Prabhupāda then moved into a Bowery loft where, unfortunately, his roommate was a mentally unstable drug addict. This young man became crazed at one point and in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s own words, “showed some ferocious features”. So, with nothing but the clothes he was wearing, Prabhupāda had to run down four flights of stairs and into the street to get help.

Then, Śrīla Prabhupāda had to tolerate us, his own disciples. Much to many of his godbrothers disapproval, he accepted and trained unqualified disciples from amongst the sinful *mlecchas* and *yavanas* of the west. As the movement grew, Śrīla Prabhupāda hoped to be able to gradually retire from management and concentrate on writing his books. He expressed this many times. But we were not capable of cooperating amongst ourselves. We needed his constant guidance, so there was little chance of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s peaceful retirement plans.

In 1975 Śrīla Prabhupāda expressed in a letter from Bombay...

Fighting is going on everywhere. It is not a good sign. I know the fight spirit is there in you, within the Westerners, that even if you do not care to fight, someone will induce you to fight. Rather, you should make vigorous propaganda for making people understand the utility of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy. (Letter, 13 November 1975, Bombay)

And then there were the simple everyday examples where Śrīla Prabhupāda exhibited tolerance in his own dealings.

Rupa Vilasa Prabhu tells of an instance when they were flying from Kenya to South Africa and the victorious South African football team were on the flight. They were rowdy, loud, drinking heavily and smoking, even though it was in the ‘non-smoking’ area. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s secretary, Pusta Kṛṣṇa Swami, requested the stewardess to tell them to stop smoking. She did, but as soon as she was out of sight, they lit up again. This time, Pusta Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja became annoyed and was ready to handle the matter himself.

While listening to this pastime, I agreed with this decision of

Pusta Krishna Swami. Yes, why should Śrīla Prabhupāda have to put up with this!

But just as he was about to go and get heavy, Śrīla Prabhupāda looked up and asked, “Where you are going?” Pusta Krishna Swami replied, “Well, they are smoking, Śrīla Prabhupāda.” In a deep voice, Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “Sit down.” Then he looked him directly in the eye and said, “What is the difference between us and them if we cannot tolerate?”

Śrīla Prabhupāda showed us how to tolerate, just like a tree and be undisturbed in all circumstances.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* purport 6<sup>th</sup> Canto Śrīla Prabhupāda explains this ability to accept and tolerate even the most difficult circumstances, as the secret of success.

When a devotee is put into hellish conditions, he accepts them as Krishna’s mercy: *tat te ‘nukampām su-samīkṣamaṇaḥ*. He does not protest, ‘Oh, I am such a great devotee of Krishna. Why have I been put into this misery?’ Instead he thinks, ‘This is Krishna’s mercy.’ Such an attitude is possible for a devotee who engages in the service of Krishna’s representative. This is the secret of success.

So we all have to learn to tolerate. It is the essence of life itself. We will be tested time and time again, but we have the perfect instructions and examples from the perfect master, the pure devotee of Krishna, Śrīla Prabhupāda to guide us on this journey towards tolerance.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *Kī Jaya*

*Your unworthy daughter,*

Vimala devi dasi

Initiation: 1975, April—Melbourne, Australia

Current location: New Zealand

Amarendra Prabhu remembers how once Śrīla Prabhupāda was explaining the meaning of a *bhajan* they had just chanted and said, “This chanting and dancing in the association of devotees is very powerful. Even if the association becomes intolerable, you must tolerate. That’s how important it is. Tolerate the intolerable.” Amarendra Prabhu then related that this one statement stayed with him and got him through many trials and tribulations in his life.

## Tolerate the intolerable



Amarendra: On one occasion we were in Prabhupāda’s quarters chanting a *bhajan*. Afterwards, Prabhupāda gave a purport as to the meaning of the *bhajan* that served me well later on in life. He said And that is what got me through so many trials and tribulations over the years. Not so much the three-fold miseries of material nature, but the trials and tribulations of the politics in ISKCON. Being a lawyer for ISKCON things sometimes got hot and heavy. So Prabhupāda’s instruction to “*tolerate the intolerable*”, is what has gotten me through all these years. In retrospect, it reminds me of the story of Bali Mahārāj and everything that he had to go through when he had conquered the entire universe. When Lord Vāmanadev defeated him and he was arrested, Prabhupāda said, “*Any other person would have died had they gone through what Bali Mahārāj went through.*” He called these trials and tribulations an examination that Krishna puts us through and pushes us to the limit, but simultaneously gives us the strength to survive to make it through these ordeals.

**Reference:** *Memories Anecdotes of a Modern Day Saint - Volume 4*  
by Siddhānta Dasa

## Chaitanya Swarup Das

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Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Another year, a new opportunity to remember to deeply connect my gratitude and reverence to you His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. I wonder how your causeless mercy works to fulfill your promise to free your disciples, even the most fallen. You constantly enlighten me and so many souls sunk in the deep sleep of Māyā.

Thank you again Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your tireless dedication for sharing the eternal wisdom of the Vedas presented in your books decoded in a masterful way that even a fool can understand and to digest.

Thank you again for your unconditional love and setting the example humbly guiding us towards the path of pure love for Shree Shree Rādhā Krishna.

I do recognize that you are setting the example of selfless service.

Thank you again for your legacy. Your teachings reflected in your books have transformed countless hearts and have inspired me to search for a true meaning of life purpose that flourishes when we distribute it.

I repeat again and louder: It is an immense good luck and honor to be touched by your divine grace, I will always carry in my soul the blessing of your words and your divine presence. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for being our eternal teacher and refuge.

*At your Lotus feet*

Chaitanya Swarup Das

Initiation: 1975, April—Vrindavan, India

My Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances and respectful obeisances, unlimited times, at your lotus feet that never touch this material world.

You are a *śaktyāveśa avatāra* directly from Goloka Vrindāvan, especially empowered by Śrī Krishna the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because of your complete surrender and purity, you have the entire *Guru-Paramparā* with you, and thus your preaching is powerful, perfect and pure.

It is impossible to truly glorify you, as you are in the transcendental realm far above what any of us can conceive. It is fully known, however, that you are all-glorious with the first fifty qualities of Lord Śrī Krishna. And you have so many other qualities that are utterly superb.

George Harrison, the famous musician who was very dear to you, expressed how glorious you are in this one comment: “Śrīla Prabhupāda has already had an amazing effect on the world. There’s no way of measuring it. One day I just realized, “God, this man is amazing!”

If anyone needs further proof that you are a pure devotee — I do not however — just see all the books you have written with such detailed knowledge, that for an ordinary person would be impossible to know and write about.

In your time on this earth planet, you translated *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* consisting of eighteen chapters of 700 verses along with your extraordinary commentary - *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* consisting of twelve cantos of 335 chapters totalling 18,000 verses with your commentary — *Krishna* Book as Krishna the Supreme Personality of Godhead of ninety chapters — the wonderful *Nectar of Devotion* consisting of fifty one chapters — and *Chaitanya Charitamrita* consisting of 11,519 verses in sixty-two chapters within its nine volumes along with your amazing explanations of detailed knowledge!!! No ordinary person can expound upon so much Vedic knowledge with added details that would take years of research beyond the time it took you to write about in just twelve years. Wow!!!

What is more, you gave thousands of lectures further explaining all the transcendental knowledge in your books, so much more than I can possibly recount. No one else in this world could have

done all this. Śrīla Prabhupāda you are superbly amazing!!! Your accomplishments are utterly mind blowing. I like to remember your words that I call ‘encouragements’. This material world is not our real home. It is full of trials and tribulations, of much suffering. One thing I like to remember in your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class 1.7.12 on September 11, 1976 in Vrindāvan, India is the following:

“This material nature is nothing but a machine; it is not God. Those who are with a poor fund of knowledge, they are taking directly this material nature as working. No. Material nature has no power to act; it is dull.

The same example: the computer, it is a very nice machine, but it cannot act automatically unless an expert pushes the button. So, material nature cannot do anything - it is Kṛṣṇa’s direction.

So everywhere there is Kṛṣṇa’s direction. One who has got the eyes to see, for him, whatever he sees he remembers Kṛṣṇa.

One has to become an advanced devotee to understand how Kṛṣṇa’s direction is going on. They can understand. Don’t think that things are taking place automatically. No.

Therefore, even in the worst condition, a devotee does not see that this thing is happening without the direction of Kṛṣṇa. Even if he is in an adverse condition, he does not feel any pain, because he knows that this adverse condition is also under the direction of Kṛṣṇa. So- ‘I am fully surrendered to Kṛṣṇa, why I shall take this adverse condition as not mercy of Kṛṣṇa? It is also the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.’

So a devotee is not disturbed by adverse conditions. He takes that this is a gift of Kṛṣṇa. It is Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. ‘Although I am put into difficulty, it is Kṛṣṇa’s mercy.’

So anyone who takes it that way – *mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk* - his going back to home, back to Godhead is guaranteed.

Because he takes everything as Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

Just like Prahlāda Mahārāja. Prahlāda Mahārāja was so much chastised by his father. You know how he was put into difficulty in so many ways. But he was taking it as Kṛṣṇa's mercy. He did not take it otherwise. So in this way, everywhere there is Kṛṣṇa's hand."

Thank you for reminding me that everything is Krishna's mercy and His hand is in everything and that we should always remember Krishna in all circumstances. This helps me greatly to get through each day.

Here is something else. In a letter to a devotee dated May 28, 1968 you wrote:

Krishna and His representative are the same. Just like Krishna can be present simultaneously in millions of places. Similarly, the Spiritual Master also can be present wherever the disciple wants. A Spiritual Master is the principle, not the body. Just like a television can be seen in thousands of places by the principle of relay monitoring.

This is certainly something wonderful to meditate upon and feel in our heart, how you are with us eternally.

Thank you millions of times for everything you gave me, and for giving me back my real life.

Praying to be your true servant.

*Your insignificant disciple,*

Lelihana devi dasi

Initiation: 1975, April—Vrindavan, India

Current location: Karnataka, India

Contact: lelihana@gmx.com

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## Moksalaksmi Devi Dasi

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My Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your beautiful lotus like feet.

All glories to you my divine spiritual master.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have been thinking all year about what I can

say to you on this all auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā and have discovered that the English language falls short of the expressions we need to sufficiently say thank you. So there it is Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you. Thank you for all the incredible life experiences I have had because I chose to join and stay in your movement. It's been an incredible life spent trying to serve you in some way or another. I don't have the proverbial rose tinted glasses so I am not in denial of the challenges faced but I accept them as learning curves as well as insights into the true nature of this material world.

Having just returned to Vrindaban for the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Krishna Balaram Temple, once again the English language has left me without sufficient words to express how magnificent the celebration was. The festivities were jam packed with wondrous activities, a Jhulan Yātrā, a Pushpa Abhishek, a boat festival where the courtyard of the temple was filled with water, various processions and to top it off a Mahā Abhishek where I was seated right in front of your marvellous marble deity.

You would think that it would be impossible to surpass such extraordinary activities but the evenings were spent listening to memories of you. And how can that be improved upon? Just perfection.

Having experienced all of these festivities at the lotus feet of Krishna and Balaram I have now concluded that these must be some of the activities that take place in the spiritual world. Consequently I now know what I'll be doing if I ever make it back to Godhead. By your grace I really think that through this festival you gave us a picture of what the spiritual world must be like and how we will spend our time serving Krishna and his associates.

The experience has also left me awestruck at your achievements. It is said that you built a house where the whole world can live and, humorously, I can say that I have been in the middle of the push and shove squash as it seemed like the whole world tried to squeeze into Krishna Balaram Temple for *darshan*. You can either love it or hate it or both at the same time as you hate that you can no longer have those intimate quiet moments with the deities but you love the fact that your preaching, Śrīla Prabhupāda, has been an unparalleled success. You have single-handedly put Vrindaban well and truly back on the map. You have reminded the whole of India about Krishna and turned Vrindaban from a quiet forgotten village into a hub of countless souls seeking out the mercy of Krishna and

the incalculable benefits of Śrī Vrindaban Dhām. Again I am left in awe of you and your far reaching achievements.

As I travelled to Bombay and the lotus feet of Rādhā Rāsabihāri I fought back tears as I had their *darshan* contemplating on my wonderful life there fifty years ago when you came and went from Hare Krishna Land so generously. Your pastimes in Bombay have helped sustain me through the years particularly how you treated the poor kids from the neighbouring slums. You showed us through those children, as you fed them from your own hand and gave them darshan in your quarters, that Krishna Consciousness is for everyone regardless of their station in life. You were totally inclusive, way before it became a policy in western countries. Again I am in awe of your humility and compassion.

Now fifty years have passed, which is the majority of one's adult life, since those perfect days in Bombay. Fifty years since I watched you perform that first *arotic* to Krishna Balaram where your smile is forever imprinted in my memory. Fifty years since the rose petals flowed over the Temple floor as if the Demi-Gods were showering them from the heavenly planets as you offered that first *arotic* to Krishna Balaram. Fifty years is such a large part of one's life and simultaneously it goes in a flash and you are left wondering where the time went. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda have illustrated perfectly how to spend time and not waste a minute and all of us benefited from that.

I am not like you Śrīla Prabhupāda, who defied age and produced unmeasurable achievements in later life. I have slowed down significantly in my old age but always remember the incredible life I have had in my endeavours to serve you. Adventures I could not even dream of without you in my life. How lucky am I that I have spent the majority of my life trying to serve you and how rewarding life has been because you are in it. Therefore, my prayer is that I remain in your service for the remainder of my life however long that may be.

*Your Servant,*

Moksalaksmi Devi dasi

Initiation: 1975, April—Vrindavan, India

## Jivanausadhi Devi Dasi

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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*

I bow at your divine lotus feet with great awe and reverence.

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu said that chanting the Lord’s holy names increases the ocean of bliss, *ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam* and we have heard many times that we should “Chant and be happy.” Generally that is the case, but there was one time many years ago when I was alone, trying to chant attentive japa in our old temple room early one morning.

All of a sudden I was overcome by a very, very sad feeling. It was a very deep feeling of remorse for turning away from Kṛṣṇa. I don’t remember ever feeling that sad before in this lifetime. Then a wave of understanding came over me that it was by your mercy Śrīla Prabhupāda, your extreme kindness that all can be rectified. I could not fully comprehend the depth of your mercy or how unfathomably great your kindness is but I knew it is our only saving grace. I felt the truth of Śrīla Narottama Dasa Ṭhākura’s *Śrī-guru-vandanā*.

*yāhāra prasāde bhāi e bhava toriyā yāi  
kṛṣṇa-prāpti haya yāhā haite*

By his grace one can cross the ocean of material suffering and obtain the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.

Now it is up to us to be a recipient of your mercy by accepting and following your divine instructions.

*guru-mukha-padma-vākya, citrate koriyā aikya  
ār nā koriho mane āśā*

My only wish is to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from his lotus mouth.

It gives me great pleasure to see your glories becoming more recognized and appreciated throughout the world.

*ebe yaśa ghuṣuk tribhuvana*

Your fame is spread all over the three worlds.  
Praying to always remain in the shelter of your divine lotus feet.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Jivanausadhi devi dasi

Initiation: 1975, May—Seattle, USA

Current location: USA

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## Sandamini Devi Dasi

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Let me please you, show me the way  
Allow me to serve you, never going astray  
Will material qualities offer success  
Or does it depend on how we dress?

Physical strength, education or diligence  
Beauty, expertise or intelligence  
Some may feel this is the answer  
Or is it just a type of insidious cancer?

Purifying the heart is what we should seek  
Follow your orders, never become weak  
The example you set always on our mind  
Chanting our 16 rounds, never falling behind.

Allow me to never become unhinged  
Nor leave your shelter and end up fringed  
I aspire to always be your loving servant  
Mindful of your words, always observant.

You said, 'Let me preach till my last breath'  
Give all to Krishna, despite pending death  
Show us with your supreme ability

To transcend the body with total tranquility.

Most of your disciples are getting quite old

The future of the movement, how will it unfold?  
Absorbing your teachings to the greatest extent  
To ward off any duplicitous descent.

New devotees come from all walks of life  
See the mundane world with its hatred and strife  
Kṛṣṇa Consciousness is the true alternative  
Whether one is moderate, liberal or conservative.

Together we follow what you've taught  
Pursuing divine legacy that you have brought  
Go forward with faith and trust in the mission  
Abandon all selfishness and ambition.

I feel confident we will continue to expand  
To fulfill your vision the way you planned  
Take all souls we meet to the spiritual sky  
We should sacrifice everything, before we die.

Written by Sandamini devi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your servants at ISKCON Tucson are dedicated  
to your mission and continue to spread your  
teachings in this desert, where impious living  
entities reside. Please empower us to break through  
the encrusted hearts of the conditioned souls  
and give them a taste of the Spiritual World.

Always in your debt,

The residents of Tucson Dham.

Initiation: 1975, May—San Diego, USA  
Current location: Tucson, Arizona, USA  
Contact: sandamini108@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
I look up to you, not as a god, rather as a kind and loving Father.  
You wanted to give us everything in such a short time.  
This is a Father's love.

### **Looking up to you, we call you perfect.**

And we want to be perfect, like you.

### **What made you perfect?**

Was it that you were never disappointed?  
Was it that you never questioned or wondered about Krishna's plans?  
Was it that you never made a mistake or never apologized?  
Was it that everyone perfectly understood and accepted you?

### **What made you perfect?**

Was it that you never had to deal with problems?  
In your life, you **did** experience challenges:  
to support a family and to serve your *guru* as a householder.  
to tirelessly translate, type, edit, print and distribute Vedic writings.  
to travel to America and live with so much uncertainty.  
to transplant a culture on foreign soil and deal with young hippies.

### **What made you perfect?**

You wanted to spread Lord Chaitanya's love to every town and village.

This was much like Mother Yaśodā wanting to tie up Krishna.

**Impossible.**

As Mother Yaśodā had a strong desire to teach Krishna a lesson,  
You had a strong desire to teach us.

As Mother Yaśodā had a personal relationship with Krishna,  
You exhibited radical personalism: cooking for us and answering our letters.

As Mother Yaśodā endeavored all day to make the rope long enough,  
You persisted with determination, curious to see how to fulfill your

*guru's* request.

As Mother Yaśodā perspired, greatly humbled in her attempts,  
You showed grounded humility, understanding your smallness,  
Compelling you to deeply pray to Krishna.

### **What obliged Krishna to Mother Yaśodā?**

Krishna was bound by her unwavering love.  
Similarly, Krishna was moved by your heartfelt love.

### **What made you perfect?**

#### **Your unassuming love.**

You showered us with your unconditional, untiring love.  
You tolerated our many immature mistakes,  
While patiently continuing to encourage us.  
Your love touched our hearts, moving us out of ignorance.

### **Then you left. And we felt the absence of your love.**

You could not transfer **your love or realizations** born of your life  
circumstances to us neophytes.  
And so, dear Father, sometimes we have misunderstood,  
misconstrued and even misused your words.

We talk much about perfection.  
We want to be perfect, like you.  
So we labor.... endeavoring to rapidly “make” ourselves “perfect”  
Or..... at least to appear perfect.  
And we imagine that external “perfection” proves there is love.  
Yet, we often grapple with suppressing our emotions, our  
conditioning,  
Concealing our anarthas, even from ourselves.

You gave us a taste of pure love.  
Yet your love cannot be pasted on top of any of our unresolved  
issues:  
any resentment, any hate, any envy, any pride, any shame, any  
desires or any fear we hide inside.

Where will we find this love we hanker for?

**You told us Purity is the force.**

And you clearly demonstrated that purity manifests from the inside out,  
not the other way around.

You gave us Lord Chaitanya's *Śikṣaṣṭakam* prayers to remind us not to seek perfection in external benchmarks of wealth, status or followers. You showed us that cultivating pure love generally requires a lifetime of preparation.

Please, dear Father, open our hearts to receive **your love**, to develop love that seeks to connect, to understand, to encourage, to facilitate and to empower, **as you did**.

Teach us to use the moments of our life to practice loving those whom Krishna has put before us, including our innermost soul-self, so close, yet so often neglected.

Guide us to call out to Krishna for support, **as you did**, so that someday we may also love Krishna and serve from the depths of our heart.

Thank you, dear Father, again and again and again for your **unconditional love - your greatest perfection and gift**.

*Aspiring to love,*

Sukhavaha devi dasi

Initiation: 1975, May—New Vrindavana, West Virginia, USA

Current location: New Vrindavan, West Virginia, USA

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## Mahakala Das

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My dearmost Guru Mahārāja, please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

It has been a while since I last had your darshan in Los Angeles, but it feels like the effects of your transcendental presence still reverberate in my consciousness. This means a whole universe of hope, enthusiasm and reassurance for me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and I strongly believe my godbrothers and godsisters share the same

experience. Our *saṅga* is your association. Since it is from your divine lotus mouth that transcendental knowledge is imparted to our hearts, you are our eternal connection with our *bhāgavata-paramparā*. You live eternally in your transcendental murtis, in your Bhaktivedanta literature, and in all the Divine Manifestations of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu who came to this material world attracted by the sweetness of your pure *bhakti*! Please bless me that I may render some menial service to your lotus feet now and forever! Please allow me to listen to your *kirtanas* and your Bhaktivedanta purports so that I may realize what pure *bhakti* is. Please let me have your darshan in Vrindāvana-dhāma and Māyāpur-dhāma!

*Your fallen and wretched servant,*

Mahakala dasa

Initiation: 1975, June—Brazil

Contact: mahakala.dasa2@gmail.com

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## Ramananda Das

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A few years back I got the bright idea of going on a long hike to a remote isolated beach on the Big Island of Hawaii. Backpackers are warned to take plenty of water because the hike is approximately 6 hours. The route is through some forested areas but mostly barren fields of smooth black lava rock. There is no cut trail through such terrain. The only markers are piles of stacked lava rocks set at around 200-foot intervals, just within eyesight of each other. I set out early in the morning thinking I'd have enough time to get there and back without incident.

It was a killer of a trek. I had no idea it was so far, much more than I anticipated. As it turned out, I arrived at the beach around 2:00 in the afternoon. It was a small black sand beach, a bit disappointing. But since I went through so much trouble getting there, I spent a good 45 minutes swimming and resting. Then I set on my loooong return journey. I walked as fast as I could but unfortunately by 6:00 it was getting dark. I hastened my pace but to no avail. By 6:45 there was no sunlight left and my flashlight was useless in finding the markers. I was completely lost. Most people think of Hawaii as a hot, tropical climate, but at the elevation I had to climb to once the sun went down it was chilly. I was exhausted, cold and completely lost.

Luckily I had a cell phone with me. Although it was completely embarrassing because out of stupidity, I had put myself into this ridiculous situation, I swallowed my pride and called 911 for help. A park ranger was sent to find me. It took hours but finally the ranger called me on my phone trying to locate my position. He was miles away, but I could see the faint illumination of his headlights in the distance. From this he was able to estimate my approximately location and since we both had flashlights, he eventually found me, was able to lead me back to safety and I was able to walk out.

Similarly, I left the spiritual world. God only knows how long it had been. I started this journey looking for pleasure I thought was surely at the end of the road. It has been much harder and longer than I ever anticipated. It's been an arduous, brutal excursion across barren lifeless terrain, without guidance or clear direction. And even after arriving I found the promised reward quite disappointing. Lost in this darkness, without hope of finding a way out I finally swallowed my pride and in desperation called out for help. The Lord in the heart heard me and deputed his representative to pull me out of this vast darkness and bring me to safety. When I first saw that guide, it was only a distant glow on the horizon. But somehow or other we found each other, and he was able to take me by the hand and lead me out of the abyss. I will never forget for a moment the debt I owe to that ranger, my spiritual master, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. He found me cold, exhausted and hopeless. By his guidance he has led me out of the dense darkness of this material world.

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda

*I remain his grateful servant forever,*

Ramananda dasa

Initiation: 1975, July—Chicago, USA

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## Ambarisa Dasa

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my most fallen dandavats at your lotus feet. All glories to your undying compassion to the fallen *jīvas* of Kali-yuga. You are compassion personified and your unwavering kindness keeps us moving forward in a small effort to serve you somehow.

As old age takes its inevitable toll, I can do less and less. Thank you for sending Braja Vilas prabhu who has become my most trusted co-chairman in Māyāpur and the TOVP. He is the perfect dedicated assistant who is always there. My wife Svaha devi dasi is also an amazing source of support and inspiration. Her dedication to the design process is awesome!

The devotee donors from around the world are making this project manifest. You are the wind behind our sails, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please continue to bless our endeavor to please you. I am remembering the pastime in the early days of Māyāpur when you would look out on the road and wonder aloud, “why they are not coming?”

They are coming now Śrīla Prabhupāda, by the millions! All of your plans for Śrīdhām Māyāpur are unfolding according to your desires. Early in this year of 2025, the TOVP welcomed the opening of the Śrīla Prabhupāda Legacy Museum. Many of your most intimate followers contributed memorabilia from your time spent with us in the early days of ISKCON. Tours have been going on continuously since the opening. Now whoever visits Māyāpur will see the story of your deep love and commitment to the birthplace of Mahāprabhu.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, I can only pray for you to keep me at your lotus feet, birth after birth, no matter what is the service.

*Your fallen aspiring servant,*

Ambarisa das

Alachua, Florida, USA

Initiation: 1975, July—Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

## Samapriya Devi Dasi

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

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

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

We think that we have met Your Goodness by the will of providence, just so that we may accept you as captain of the ship for those who desire to cross

the difficult ocean of Kali, which deteriorates all the good qualities of a human being. (SB 1.1.22)

At the Festival of the Holy Name in Alachua when the *kīrtan* was at its height, The devotees floated in the ecstasy of *Harināma*, late into the blissful night.

We sat together in a grand tent, that swayed in the breeze of transcendental sound. When suddenly it became a magnificent ship, beyond this world, Vaikuṅṭha bound.

The Causal Sea opened before us, broad as unlimited space. Teachings of the sages mapped out the course, adherence to the *Vedas*, the strength of their force, Śrīla Prabhupāda at the helm our only recourse, protecting us all, with his infinite grace.

He is Vishwaguru, honored by all nations, giving the holy name to people of all stations. Who is more proficient to transform the depraved, into saintly devotees, generations you've saved!

When we chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, we are immediately linked up with Lord Caitanya's *Saṅkīrtan* Movement. This *Saṅkīrtan* Movement directs great barges out of the infinitely deep sea of repeated birth and death, to the other side of the unlimited Causal Ocean. Śrīla Prabhupāda, picking up souls all over the world, you have created a colossal fleet, performing a colossal feat!

There is an exodus throughout this creation souls are coming from all lands. Joining this brigade with one destination just see how Prabhupāda's mission expands.

So now, look behind us behold all around, this great fleet of devotees, all Vaikuṅṭha bound. Śrīla Prabhupāda's vessels are filling this sea, which separates illusion from reality.

No more distractions upon this sacred ship,  
Keep your eyes on the Lord, don't let them slip.  
With Prabhupāda's words as our life and soul,  
surely we will achieve life's ultimate goal.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the Commander and Chief of Lord Caitanya's divine Armada, and you are the captain of my ship, O resident of the spiritual world, I surrender unto you most worshipable Śrīla Prabhupāda. I surrender unto you my beloved master.

The lowest ranked peon in your fleet of devotees,

*Your dependent daughter,*

Samapriya devi dasi

Initiation: 1975, July—San Francisco, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida

Contact: samapriya.dasi@gmail.com

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## Karnapura Dasa

### Beacon of Bhakti

Upon the waves of time you came,  
A humble sage, a glowing flame.  
With holy books and heart so wide,  
You crossed the seas, with God as guide.

In Vrindāvana's dust your soul did dwell,  
But in the West, your mission fell.  
To spread the Name, the holy sound,  
And plant Lord Kṛṣṇa's love around.

A lion's voice in scholar's grace,  
You spoke of truth, of time and place.  
*Bhagavad-gītā* in your hand,  
You built a house so all may stand.

From temples bright to chanting street,  
You turned the world to Kṛṣṇa's feet.

With *tilak* drawn and saffron hue,  
You made the Vedic path feel new.

Your words are lights through darkest night,  
They stir the soul, they set things right.  
From *sañkīrtana* to sweet *japa*,  
We walk the path of *dharma's* star.

O Prabhupāda, master true,  
The world now sings because of you.  
Forever in your debt we stand—  
A servant's heart, a folded hand.

Karnapura Dasa  
Initiation: 1975, July—Chicago, USA  
Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA  
Contact: ragatmika@gmail.com

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## Mishra Bhagavan Dasa

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, Please accept my humble obeisances.

In September 2024 we went on a pilgrimage of sorts to the West. For Janmashtami we visited Goloka Dhām in Germany, your ISKCON farm project outside of Frankfurt. Hundreds of the Vaishnava devotees of the Lord that you had created out of conditioned souls, converged to Southern Germany for a big Hare Krishna festival. Many new devotees.

Then we visited New Badrinath in Denver, Colorado. You gave the Denver ISKCON center that name as Colorado is in the mountains. Again, there were many new devotees of Krishna.

Finally we went to Rādhā Kalachandji Dhāma Texas, where you established the first Gurukula school for children in the Krishna Conscious society. The school has steadily grown over the years. One of the Gurukula graduates has become a big boy and is now the Temple President of the community.

Everywhere we looked, your International Society for Krishna Consciousness is growing and your glories as the Founder-Acharya are becoming more and more enhanced.

*Your Servant,*

Mishra Bhagavan Dasa,  
Initiation: 1975, July—Chicago, USA  
Current location: Māyāpur Dhām, India

## Nandapatni Devi Dasi

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I offer my humble obeisances to my most merciful spiritual master A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, whose greatness throughout the world continues to grow with each rising and setting of the sun.

It is hard to comprehend that you were born at the end of the nineteenth century, and that I would come to see you in the twentieth century, and I remain still in this world as your unworthy disciple in the twenty-first century.

The great fortune of my meditation is thinking of you in your room at Rādhā Dāmodara Temple in Vṛndāvana, translating the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* into English, and taking your trips to Delhi to print your Back to Godhead magazine. From there my mind and heart always goes to the Jaladuta ship where you lay utterly in the arms of your beloved Kṛṣṇa on those rough seas and yet your inner vision and your longing was with the cowherd boys in the forests of Vṛndāvana. Your loyalty, affinity and total surrender was to the service of your beloved Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati Thakur as you embraced his desire that Kṛṣṇa consciousness be established in all the English speaking countries of the western world.

Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda, how beautiful your service, how beautiful your purity and your force. How compassionate and generous beyond measure your ability to gather in your disciples and to generate and manifest the dimensions of Mahāprabhu's movement and mission on this planet. How astounding your manifestation of the Deities of Gaura Nitāi, Balarāma Subhadra and Jagannātha, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa throughout the world. Your magnificent temples in Vṛndāvana, Māyāpur and Bombay remain the jewels in the crown to this day, whilst more and more beautiful temples are studded throughout countries and continents by virtue of that courageous trip you took across the seas to reach us.

And then there are your hidden secrets, your books with the foundations of *tattva* and *siddhānta* and your careful layering of the deepest internal meanings prompted by your referencing the great works of the six goswamis and great *ācāryas* in our line. Whether

it takes a lifetime or lifetimes Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am running after you, floundering or stumbling, but hanging on to the dust of your feet, fully aware of the mercy that has been given and continues to be given. I pray to remain at your feet, and at the feet of the holy Vaiṣṇavas and the holy *dhāms*. May I cling always to my *japamala* and to my holy *gāyatrī mantras*. And may I attempt to serve you and your mission for my life remaining.

*Your lowly servant,*

Nandapatni devi dasi

Initiation: 1975, July—Vancouver Temple, Vancouver, Canada

Current location: Vancouver, Canada»

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## Satyarāja Dāsa

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My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, *Sneha-vigraheṣu* — Please accept my most reverential and affectionate obeisances. I stand in line for an undeserved place at your lotus feet.

Despite the fact that today is among the most auspicious days of the year, I struggle with the 10 senses and the mind. These senses are like employees in the factory of life, and they receive instructions from Mr. Manas, the guy in charge. Unfortunately, I am even beleaguered by these 11 villains on your appearance day, for they engulf me with all their might, as always. Yet I also remember what you taught me: Krishna is Hṛṣīkeśa, the true Lord and controller of the senses, and if I take shelter of Him, all is good, all is fine, all is sane. I need not worry about my ever-vacillating mind.

Moreover, I contemplate these truths on Ekādaśī, the “11th day,” as we tend to call it. The number 11 thus engulfs my mind as never before.

In numerology, whether from Egypt, Babylon, Greece, or Japan—and even in India—this number, 11, stands as a king among numbers, surpassing most others. It is said to carry a special spiritual significance and embody a unique vibration, potent both literally and as a metaphor. The number, it is said, is like a cosmic door that opens one up to esoteric knowledge. Unlike most numbers, which can be reduced to a single digit, 11 always remains as it is, and thus it possesses a unique, unequalled status in the world of numbers. In Chaldean numerology, Number 1 corresponds to the Sun, and

when made into 11, is said to double the sun's energies, its potency reflected in the lives of those who are impacted by it.

On your appearance day, I remember how you have embodied this number throughout your adult life.

It all seems to begin in 1922, at the Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭha at Ultadanga, where you had the first *darśana* of your divine guru, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. You saw him, and, more importantly, he saw you. It was during this very first meeting that he gave you the inspiration to preach Krishna consciousness throughout the Western countries and the rest of the world for the benefit of all—your life's mission.

Then, 11 years later, you received *harināma* and *dīkṣā* from him—this was in 1933. Your initiated name was Śrī Abhaya-caraṇāravinda Dāsādhikārī, and soon, you would be called “Bhaktivedānta,” a title awarded to you for your devotion and scholarship.

By 1944—that is, after another 11 years—you established *Back to Godhead* magazine. Who, besides Your Divine Grace, could have suspected that this humble endeavor, started in India on simple newsprint, would soon show its face throughout the world, on glossy, full-color paper, comparable to the best magazines that the West had to offer—and even better, since the content was wholly spiritual. *Back to Godhead's* circulation, at one point, was doubling each year, particularly in the mid-1970s, peaking at nearly half a million per month, mainly distributed by your loving devotees to people on street corners. This same magazine continues to this day.

It was 11 years after founding BTG that you left your family, in 1955. You founded the League of Devotees in Jhansi and after that you relocated to Vrindavan, preparing for your mission West. Your renunciation of family allowed you the freedom to write and preach, and it prepared you for the formal *sannyāsa* order of life, which you adopted in 1959, further positioning you for your journey to America.

In 1966, when you officially founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), yet another 11 years had elapsed. But this was, in many ways, the beginning of your profound journey, in which you opened 108 temples, along with farm communities, restaurants, schools, a book publishing company—flooding the world with Krishna conscious literature—and so on. Initiating thousands of disciples, you indeed caused a renaissance of devotion that spread throughout the world. Your disciples now carry on that mission in your name.

Finally, 11 years after founding your mission, you left our world in 1977—but only to the naked eye. Clearly you are still with us, for you live in your instructions, and if you were not in some sense here, how could we write Vyāsa-pūjā offerings? These offerings themselves are one of the many ways that your presence can still be felt throughout the world. Indeed, there are numerous ways that your presence is felt, stemming from the relentless reverberations of all your many accomplishments. It is even evident in people today, almost half-a-century after your disappearance, who are still joining the movement in large numbers and studying your books as modern-day Śāstras.

It may seem arbitrary to think of your transcendental life in terms of 11-year intervals. But when looked at carefully, it is clearly more than mere coincidence, since it involves the most pivotal points of your service to *guru* and Krishna: Meeting your guru (1922); taking initiation (1933); founding *Back to Godhead* (1944); renouncing the comforts of home (1955); incorporating ISKCON (1966); and performing the pastime of leaving the world (1977)—the most significant events of your life, divided into periods of 11, show that your pastimes and accomplishments are always topmost, even according to astrological and numerological calculations.

But the greatest calculation, of course, lies in how your life pleases Krishna and helps all living beings on their journey back to Godhead. On that score, we need not wait for number 11. You are a full 108—and more.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Satyarāja Dāsa

Initiation: 1975, July—Chicago, USA

Current location: New York, USA

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## Svaksa Das and Prishnigarbha Devi Dasi

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Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave us the greatest gift - the Hare Krishna *Mahā Mantra* with the other great gift, *prasādam*.

Thank you so much also for my Svaksa name. And I, Prishnigarbha Dasi, wife of Svaksa Das came looking for an intelligent path of life.

Reading your books helped my intelligence find its home and chanting the Hare Krishna *Mahā Mantra* let my mind and lower self

throw away harmful habits and be a spirit soul. We both thank you for a high life with happiness and a way home.

*Your grateful servants,*

Svaksa Das and Prishnigarbha Dasi  
Initiation: 1975, July—San Francisco, USA

## Tirthakara Dasa

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*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 Krishna on this earth, having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

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

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

It is said in the *Rāmāyaṇa*:

*Binu Hari Kripa Milahi Nahin Santa....*

Without God’s grace, you cannot meet any saint.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we were not qualified to meet a saint or pure devotee but you created our good fortune by planting the seed of *bhakti* in our hearts. It’s incredible what you did coming to these degraded countries to fulfill the order of your spiritual master. I’m eternally grateful and indebted to your Divine Grace. Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!*

*Your trying disciple,  
Dasanudasa,*

Tirthakara Dasa  
Initiation: 1975, August—Paris, France

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*

Once again it is time to glorify your divine self and express my appreciation for your being my savior. You have said that you can be known through your books, and because we didn't meet in person, this is how I am coming to know you. I am feeling the pangs of old age acutely now, and even though I have been practicing sādhana for 50 years, it feels as if I have not made any substantial advancement.

Your books state that surrender can be done in a moment or it may take lifetimes, so I am being forced to be patient. Your Krishna book is the miracle that saved my soul and I have started to read it again after a long time spent reading your other books. I am also deeply indebted to the Library Party, which was headed up by your dear disciple and my godbrother Satsvarupa Maharaj, because it was that party that very likely placed that book in the Victoria, B.C. public library, where I found it and checked it out. The pictures captivated me, although initially I thought that these must be fables. I had nothing against fables since I had a book on Aesop's fables as a kid, which might actually be instructional moral tales based on the *Purāṇas*, and I was primed for the supernatural because I also had a stunning book on Old Testament prophets which featured some wondrous pictures such as the miraculous ascent to heaven by one of the prophets. But, back to Krishna book: even though I have stated this before, Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your very clever arrangement you interspersed *Bhāgavat siddhānta* within the story line, and that convinced my intelligence of the viability of the philosophy, so I began practicing it. I was initially amazed by the chapter entitled Krishna's Talks with Rukmīṇī. I found it very moving and there is no other devotee who can equal her in the quality of being self-effacing, which I admire. And no queen is more brave than Satyabhāmā, since Krishna took her with Him to fight with Bhaumāsura. Lest we forget: Bhaumāsura's fortress had a moat, electric fence, poison gas and barbed wire, all things that modern people claim they

invented. But I digress: here we are 50 years later and I will never be able to repay you for your magnificent, matchless gift of Krishna book. What can I do, as a lowly foot soldier, far removed from the bustle of temple life, to serve you? Although I can never truly repay you, I have taken as my solemn duty the continued distribution of your divine books to the Little Free Libraries in my locality. It is an exercise in giving up attachment, since I don't know what happens to the books after I place them, but this helps me to learn to become detached from the results.

I beg your mercy for my continued ability to stay involved in and focused on Krishna consciousness, regardless of how many births it may take me to fully surrender to Him. I like to say "Always remember... never forget Him."

Dandavat pranams.

*Your disciple and servant,*

Anandamaya das

Initiation: 1975, October—Vancouver, Canada

Current location: Soquel, CA 95073, USA

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## Sriniketan Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to your divine appearance day, the most blessed event for a disciple.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.17.27 Lord Krishna tells Uddhava "that one should know the *ācārya* as Myself and never disrespect him in anyway. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods."

In the purport of *Cc. Ādi Līlā* 1.46 the term of *ācārya* is defined as "one who knows the imports of all Vedic literatures explains the purpose of the Vedas, abides by their rules and regulations and teaches his disciples to act in the same way." (*Vāyu Purāṇa*)

As stated in *Bhāgavatam* verse quoted above, Krishna wants us to accept the *ācārya* as Himself. You further explain in purport to *Ādi* 1.46 that only out of his immense compassion does Krishna reveal Himself as the spiritual master. Then you further advise that it is worthwhile to take shelter of such a steady devotee who is called *āśraya vighraha*, or a manifestation of the Lord of whom one

must take shelter.

It is our extremely good fortune that we have been able to get in touch with you and thus embark on the path of Krishna consciousness. Lord Krishna is *karuṇā-sindhu*, a great ocean of compassion and mercy and he appeared in our life as Your Divine Grace, the founder and *ācārya* of ISKCON.

Although for a conditioned soul the path back to Godhead appears very difficult, by the mercy of a bonafide *ācārya* like yourself, the process becomes simple and blissful. In fact it is so completely satisfying that we don't even care so much about going back to Godhead, as long as we can stay in your service and association. Because when we are in your association - you who are always absorbed in transcendental activities to please Krishna - this is actually as good as being back to Godhead.

We have been given the chance to make our life successful. You urged us to complete it in this lifetime.

This is certainly possible by your mercy. Therefore we beg you to keep us engaged in always thinking of Krishna, serving Him and His wonderful devotees and worshiping Him without any personal motivations for name, fame and distinctions etc.

This is our prayer to you dear Śrīla Prabhupāda. *Rākho rāṅgā-caraṇera pāśa*. Please keep us in a corner of your lotus feet as your menial servant.

All Glories to Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*Your fallen servant,*

Sriniketan das

Initiation: 1975, October—Mauritius

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## Narakantaka Das

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

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

Most dear and beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my respectful and humble obeisances.

All glories to Your Divine Grace!

I revel in the dust of your lotus feet finding my heart's true delight.

You once recounted how a priest, acting on his own accord, approached you and said, 'Swamiji, I see a brightness in the faces of your students. How have you created this brightness?' (Room Conversation with Dr. Karan Singh, November 25, 1971, Delhi).

I know precisely why: because you dwell within our minds.

Indeed, you own our minds.

That is why your devotees now possess such 'bright faces.' It is your brightness that shines through!

Through the chanting of the Hare Krishna *Mahā-mantra*, you have bound our hearts to your divine self, enveloping us within your all-embracing Krishna Consciousness.

You reign supreme!

I cannot conceal my pride in having you as my Lord and Master.

Through your transcendental '*bhāgavata*' books, saturated with pure Krishna Consciousness, you have destroyed the lurking snares of false rascal guides and ideas. You have reversed my terrible and frightening descent into the darkest regions of material existence, rescuing me from the most ruinous disaster.

When I hear your transcendental words, the only words I desire to hear, then I know you are truly present. It is you speaking, not some mere imitation.

Your lotus feet are the sole shelter from all sorrows. By following your footsteps, we become free from Māyā's torturous slavery.

I may desire to serve you, but I must ask myself: Do I deserve it? Am I truly sincere, without ulterior motives, or am I merely pretending to be what I'm not?

The price to pay for serving you is sincerity and the willingness to draw closer to Your Divine Grace, submitting to your orders. Only then will your torch of enlightening knowledge dispel the darkness in which I'm sunk.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are truly divine and sublimely sweet; please eradicate my deep illusion.

Merely being near Your Divine Grace and hearing your words ends my endless confusion.

By regularly serving Your Divine Grace, and discarding any false conceptions of 'I and mine' as mere rubbish, I win the supreme prize: the realization that I am entirely your property, and that without Your Divine Grace, I am lost.

§ § §

### Most beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda

Your mercy and grace brighten my face, since you dwell in my mind.  
With Krishna's Name, the sweet refrain, your love my heart to bind.

I cannot hide that you're my pride; you are my Lord and Master.  
Cracking the crooks by your pure books, you saved me from disaster.

Your words profound, the only sound my ears desire to hear:  
And then I know; not vainest show; my Prabhupāda is here.

Your lotus feet, Māyā's defeat, sole shelter from all sorrow,  
They grant us all freedom from thrall, if their footprints we follow.

I long to serve; do I deserve? This question I should ask.  
Am I so real, with no conceal? Or do I wear a mask?

To be sincere, and draw more near, will be the price to pay.  
Your torch of light, with knowledge bright, will chase the dark away.

You're so divine, sweet and sublime; please smite my deep illusion.  
To be near you, just hearing you, ends my endless confusion.

To serve with pace, your Divine Grace; my all I count as dross,  
And win the prize: just to realize that without you I'm lost.

§ § §

Beloved Śrī-Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, nothing occurs without Your Supreme consent.

Please allow me to eternally remain inextricably absorbed in the remembrance of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please shelter me from Māyā's forceful power of forgetfulness.

Please, if that is also Your Lordships desire, let serving His Divine Grace's lotus feet be the only reason to my existence and my sole aspiration, life after life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my life and soul!

Hare Krishna.

*Your menial respectful servant,*

Narakantaka dasa  
Initiation: 1975, November—Rome, Italy  
Current location: Italy  
Contact: narakantakadasa@prabhupāda.org

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## Bhutiha Dasa

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*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*

If I can perceive the difference between maya and the transcendental dimension, I owe it to you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Many years have passed since your passing, and you are still the beacon that guides us towards the Absolute Truth: The Supreme Lord Śrī Krishna. You taught us the *yuga dharma*, *saṅkīrtana*, distribution of transcendental literature, chanting the *mahā-mantra* on the streets to give everyone the chance to hear and meet the holy name of Śrī Krishna. The greatest gift one could have in this existence and later.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*Your servant,*

Bhutiha Dasa

Initiation: 1975, December—Italy

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## Akhiladhara Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

On this anniversary of your divine appearance, I am very happy to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation for your coming to this material world from Goloka Vrindāvan to save me from this ocean of birth and death and take me back with you to Goloka Vrindāvan and eternal loving service of Rādhā Śyāmasundara and their eternal associates. Simultaneously you are performing this service for millions of other fallen living entities in all the countries

of the world engaging us in this most wonderful process of hearing and chanting of the Holy Name: “Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare” along with that of their form, qualities and pastimes together with their eternal loving devotees.

As far as I am concerned you are the best of the best. I could have only surrendered like I have to you, no one else. I went along with the devotees of the Amsterdam temple to see you at the Paris temple and New Māyāpur farm project in France in July of 1976. As you were leaving at the Paris airport you waited for your flight in the waiting lounge while the devotees sat at your lotus feet relishing every minute of association. I stood behind them so I could see you more clearly. As you grazed into my eyes with such love, compassion, understanding and acceptance, time stood still. No one but you could love me like that.

After fifty years of trying to please you, the Commander-in-Chief of the *saṅkīrtan* army of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, you have captured my heart for all time, forever. I remain at your lotus feet till my last breath and beyond.

*Your loving son & disciple,*

Akhiladhara Dasa

Initiation: 1975, December—Amsterdam, Netherlands

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## Ísvarīpati Dās

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Over the years, your guiding maxim—“Books are the basis, preaching is the essence, utility is the principle, and purity is the force”—has, to some degree, become ingrained in my consciousness. It is a beautiful and wise instruction, guiding my path as your disciple.

In 1975, shortly after joining in St. Louis, I was sent to parking lots with Back to Godhead magazines, incense, and later flowers.

Dressed in street clothes, we offered “a positive alternative to the drug culture,” distributing flowers, incense, and BTGs while collecting donations. A hundred dollars was considered a good day among us *bhaktas*.

I struggled terribly with this service. Often, I gave up, even napping under semitrailers to avoid the task. I felt like a failure, knowing deep down that “books are the basis.” Eventually, temple management reassigned me to the kitchen, which I loved, and later to the St. Louis farm near Dixon, Missouri. There, I learned to milk cows, drive tractors, and farm. The farm was makeshift—we hardly knew what we were doing—but it allowed me to be creative for Krishna.

Before long, Tamal Krishna Goswami and Dṛṣṭadyumna Mahārāja decided to merge our farm with Gītā-nāgarī. I recall Dṛṣṭadyumna approaching me about joining the Rādhā-Dāmodara traveling *saṅkīrtan* party instead. I insisted on going to Gītā-nāgarī, but guilt lingered in my heart, knowing that “books are the basis, preaching is the essence.”

Gītā-nāgarī was a wonderful adventure, and I cherished my service there. Yet, I often felt second-class for shying away from book distribution and public outreach. Decades have passed, and by your mercy, I have been purified by the words emanating from your lotus mouth. Now, I wear Vaiṣṇava tilak daily, using it as an opportunity to speak about Krishna, you, and Vaiṣṇavism to those I meet.

*yāre dekha, tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-upadeśa  
āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra' ei deśa*

Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Sri Krishna as they are given in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In this way, become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land.

By your grace, sharing Krishna’s teachings now comes naturally to me! I’ve purchased cases of *Rāja-vidyā*—the first book of yours I ever read—and Teachings of Lord Caitanya, distributing them to those who seem ready for Krishna consciousness. This transformation is cent percent your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda. By your divine grace, I’ve found the inclination to help fulfill Lord Caitanya’s instruction in my own small way. I pray to remain steadfast in your service, ever grateful for your boundless compassion that continues to guide and

inspire me.

Your humble servant,

Ísvarīpati dās

Initiation: 1976, January—St Louis, Missouri, USA

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## Aniha Das

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. Thank you for mercifully awakening me from dark ignorance as to my identity as servant of the servant of the servant, and for engaging me in the most glorious of occupations as your servant.

I am ever grateful for *brahmacārī* life in your temples, which gave us good grounding for whatever ups and downs followed in later life, even for a lethargic and puffed-up fool as myself. The program you set, of rising early for *mangal ārati*, the classes from *śāstra* and a full day of service, combined with your compassionate association, gave us immeasurable good fortune.

Many nowadays lament that your International Society has deviated in different ways from the standards you set and has not fulfilled the expectations of unending victories, as were commonplace during your manifest presence, just as we may also lament our own failures to meet the standards you expected of us, but just as by your mercy we can always remain hopeful for our own improvement in spiritual life, so we know that by your mercy a time will come when unending victories for Lord Caitanya's *Sankīrtan* movement will again become commonplace. I recently read this statement of yours, which gives such hope:

I am also old man. I may pass away at any moment.  
This movement should go on, you see, this movement  
started by Caitanya Mahāprabhu, then accelerated  
by Gosvāmīs, and then again Viśvanātha Cakravartī.  
And when... Just like whenever there is... *Yadā yadā hi  
dharmasya glānir bhavati*. When there is some slowness,

either Kṛṣṇa Himself or some representative comes to give it a push. So you should know it, that this movement should be pushed on. (Lecture on Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's Appearance Day, 02-07-69, Los Angeles)

We are also old men now, or approaching old age. Now there is some slowness, and this must in some way be the will of the Lord because not even a blade of grass moves without His will, and we can hope in future generations some representative of Kṛṣṇa will come to give it a push, but in the meanwhile the opportunity you have given us remains, to do our own bit in helping to push on this movement; may we all have the strength and determination to do so, until our dying day, following in your glorious footsteps!

*Your foolish servant,*

Anīha das

Initiation: 1976, February—France

Current location: Leicester, UK

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## Haridasa Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace on the occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration.

On September 23, 1966, you held the second *harināma* initiation in ISKCON. In the lecture that followed, you explained that out of gratitude to the spiritual master it is important for disciples to share with others the transcendental knowledge they have received. You were already teaching by example this principle of reciprocation between guru and disciple by coming to the West to preach Krishna consciousness under the order of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who had asked that, “You try to preach whatever you have learned from me to the English-knowing people in English.”

Seven years before, on September 17, 1959, after deep introspection, and being inspired by your spiritual master and your godbrothers, you accepted the *sannyāsa* order of life, with all its dignity and responsibility, and became Tridaṇḍi Goswami A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami. Though you had been preaching Krishna consciousness for years, on that day you publicly dedicated yourself

to preaching Krishna consciousness as your sole engagement. You had received a mission from Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī; now you were free to focus fully on that mission.

On that momentous day, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as you gazed into the sacrificial fire, did you see the flames of material existence burning up the lives of we lost souls in the material world? Burning up this lost soul? Did your eyes see the faces of those of us whose heads would soon bow down at your lotus feet and whose eyes would hope to receive your kind glances? Did your ears hear our cries along with the sacred Vedic mantras and the chanting of Hare Krishna *kīrtan*?

Somehow or other, by Krishna’s arrangement (as you said) we came to you. But that was possible only because you came searching for us. When I first arrived at Brooklyn’s Henry Street temple, a kind godbrother-to-be opened the temple’s door and greeted me with the words, “Welcome to the Rādhā-Krishna temple.” I entered your temple-ashram that day and began a new life, but unfortunately your neophyte Haridasa dasa, as you kindly later named me, remains suspended just on the threshold of your house of *bhakti*. Please draw him across this threshold all the way so he may do your bidding however and wherever you like.

*Your servant,*

Haridasa dasa

Initiation: 1976, March—Māyāpur, India

Current location: FV

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## Jagannathesvari Devi Dasi

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Every time I write a Vyāsa-pūjā offering to you, it means one more year as your disciple. Each passing year tightens the bond and brings me closer to you and further away from distant memories of previous lifetimes in the material world. Every year increases my amazement at my good fortune to be your disciple. What are the odds? How is it possible that I have become an initiated disciple of the Jagat Guru, the person chosen by Lord Chaitanya to spread Krishna consciousness all over the world? It is inconceivable to my tiny brain. Every year increases my wonder, awe, gratitude and love for you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I cannot even begin to repay you. All I can ask is that you please keep me engaged in your service, birth after birth, and allow me to assist you with your sacred mission to deliver the Western world from impersonalism and voidism.

*Your eternal servant,*

Jagannathesvari Devi Dasi.

Initiation: 1976, April—Vrindavan, India

Current location: UK

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### Atitaguna Devi Dasi

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

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

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your golden lotus feet.

It's unbelievable how much you have given to us.

We have no good qualities except one – we have faith in you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

In Kali-yuga there are not many good qualities. You gave us the only good qualities we have in this life.

You were empowered by the Supreme Lord to guide us in our spiritual life. You are a *Shaktyaveshā* servant of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu.

Whoever was connected with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could do miracles.

You are still here in our lives and you have so much influence over us. We live to serve you. Without you, we are useless, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You have such sincerity of purpose. It's the most important quality in a person. Your sincerity of purpose manifested in so many ways. You wanted nothing for yourself. you only wanted to serve your Guru Mahārāja.

Krishna reciprocated by giving you everything for preaching

Krishna consciousness wherever you went in this world.

You changed our desires from material, only for ourselves, to spiritual, for Krishna by the process of serving.

All we need is the sincerity of desire to serve you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, Please accept me.

*Your trying to be humble though worthless servant,*

Atitaguna Dasi

Initiation: 1976, April—Australia

Current location: Śrīdhām Māyāpur

Contact: atita108@gmail.com

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## Vaninatha Vasu Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you! I am so grateful to be able to offer a few words on the occasion of your divine appearance. Your appearance has offered light in an otherwise dark world. And somehow that light has reached someone like me. I am eternally indebted to you. Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are trying to serve this instruction of yours.

We have to introduce this *varṇāśrama-dharma*. It must be done perfectly, and it is possible, and people will be happy. (Room conversation, Māyāpura, February 14, 1977)

This is my first time writing an offering for the annual tribute book and I would like to use this occasion annually to report on the progress of re-establishing *varṇāśrama*. As you know, we have started a nonprofit organization, the Institute for Advanced Social Design. We are currently operating as SpeakingAboutVarnasrama.com, named after the book of the same title.

On the occasion of your disappearance day celebration in 2023, I presented you a list of projects that we aspired to offer as service in re-establishing *varṇāśrama*. Here is that list:

- Re-publish the out-of-print book “Speaking About *Varṇāśrama*” which contains many of your statements and instructions regarding re-establishing varnasrama
- Design and teach a certification course based on “Speaking About *Varṇāśrama*”

- Commission a book trailer for “Speaking About *Varṇāśrama*”
- Write and publish the book “Four Simple Steps to Re-establish *Varṇāśrama*”
- Design and launch the International School for *Kshatriya* Training

As of today, April 12th 2025, this is what we can report:

- The original “Speaking About *Varṇāśrama*” volume is republished and should never be unavailable again! Additionally, typographical errors and citations were improved in the course of republishing.
- The certification course for “Speaking About *Varṇāśrama*” has been designed and advertised. There are several of your followers who have pre-registered for the upcoming course!
- The award winning book trailer was completed, and titled “His Dream, Our Future”! We are now working to launch a series of short videos using “His Dream, Our Future” as a brand!
- The book “Four Simple Steps to Re-establish *Varṇāśrama*” is being written; the introduction and two chapters, out of five total chapters, are completed as rough drafts. It is hoped that this straightforward presentation will inspire many to start re-establishing *varṇāśrama* using its practical approach!
- And the International School for *Kshatriya* Training is ready to go! We are currently planning to launch it along with the book “Four Simple Steps to Re-establish *Varṇāśrama*”.

This was only possible by your guidance and mercy. We are simply trying to carry out the instructions that you gave us during the brief time that we had with you. I’m becoming more and more convinced of its importance by discussing your instructions with your followers.

Although I have little qualification for carrying out this instruction, I intend to continue despite my disqualifications, based on the mercy flowing from your lotus feet. Based on that mercy I have every hope to see *varṇāśrama* re-established in my lifetime as you envisioned. It simply requires a sustained, serious effort, and for that we beg your blessings and guidance.

I’m assured of those because I have experienced them as we’ve made our tiny efforts to please you. Every day, instead of meditating on sense gratification, I have the opportunity to think of how to execute your order. This has given me a newfound enthusiasm for

Krishna consciousness.

This is the secret of success. After being initiated and receiving the orders of the spiritual master, the disciple should unhesitatingly think about the instructions or orders of the spiritual master and should not allow himself to be disturbed by anything else. This is also the verdict of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, who, while explaining a verse of *Bhagavad-gītā* 2.41 (*vyavasāyātmikā buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana*), points out that the order of the spiritual master is the life substance of the disciple.

The disciple should not consider whether he is going back home, back to Godhead; his first business should be to execute the order of his spiritual master. Thus, a disciple should always meditate on the order of the spiritual master, and that is perfectional meditation. Not only should he meditate upon that order, but he should find out the means by which he can perfectly worship and execute it. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.24.15, Purport)

By meditating on your order to re-establish varnasrama, I get insights into your instructions and can therefore convey the same to others. I pray that I will never become deluded by maya and think that I have any independent qualification for this service. No, it is simply your mercy.

Give us strength, intelligence, and practical wisdom to carry out this most important work. Although we may stumble and make mistakes, our intention is to go from one effort to the next with no loss of enthusiasm.

That is the minimum quality of service that we want to offer to you today, and for the rest of our existence. Hoping to report continuous progress in this manner year after year. Falling at your feet,

*Your servant,*

Vaninatha Vasu dasa

Initiation: 1976, April—Gainesville, Florida, USA

Current location: Gainesville, Florida

Contact: Vaninatha@SpeakingAboutVarnasrama.com

## Gaura Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you. I am currently attending the 50th anniversary of your victorious accomplishment of installing the Krishna Balaram Temple deities in Śrī Vr̥ndāvana dhāma.

I came here to get association with your dear disciples before they all depart from this world, or before I have to leave my body. It is the most joyous occasion. Everyone is expressing their gratitude and love for you and the holy DHĀMA that you have given us.

There is a huge hole where the Gurukula building used to sit as construction preparations are going on 24 hours a day to build a new structure there. Deena Bandhu prabhu has been taking us to the sites of the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.

Your servants at the temple treat us with great kindness, everyday, looking after our every need. In a week I will have to return to preaching in Ontario, Canada, where I distribute your books, so that others may get blessed to also visit your miracles in Vr̥ndāvan and Māyāpur, one day.

There is no way to attempt to repay you except to preach consciousness vigorously, just as you have. Thank you very much for initiating me as your servant and disciple, and for blessing me with the association of the best souls on this planet. Please continue to engage me, in your mission to reconnect everyone with Lord Krishna, birth after birth.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Gaura das

Initiation: 1976, June—Detroit, Michigan, USA

Current location: Erin, Ontario, USA

Contact: gauradasa2@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I started going to the Henry Street temple in Brooklyn, New York, in 1973. Before I ever went to any temple, I was fortunate to get some of your books. Those included, *Perfection of Yoga*, *Beyond Birth and Death*, *Easy Journey To Other Planets*, and others. These small books convinced me to become a devotee and join your movement. I actually didn't even visit any temple for one year after I started reading your books. This is the power of your books. They make devotees just by reading them. Your books open the doors to the Spiritual world. They show us who we really are; eternal souls, full of complete bliss, and knowledge, and how to revive that awareness. We were all looking for something to make us happy, such as wealth, sense gratification, technology, and intoxication. But you taught us what real happiness is; Krishna Consciousness. And, a complete process to attain it.

You gave us the highest knowledge in your books. I especially appreciate that special book, *Krishna Book*. In that one book alone, you gave us all the transcendental pastimes of the Lord, thru your transcendental vision and realization. You even said that your books were written by Krishna directly. You wrote in that book:

Mahārāja Parīkṣit recommended from practical experience, that everyone try to hear about the transcendental pastimes of the Lord. This Krishna treatise is meant for that purpose, and the reader may take advantage in order to attain the ultimate goal of life. (*Salvation of Trinavarta*)

One can very easily associate with Krishna by remembering His transcendental pastimes. Everyone has a tendency to love someone. That Krishna should be the object of love is the central point of Krishna consciousness. By constantly chanting the Hare Krishna mantra, and remembering the transcendental pastimes of Krishna, one can be fully in Krishna consciousness, and thus make his life sublime and fruitful. (*The Gopīs' Feelings of Separation*)

Thus you showed us that God is a person, not impersonal. You also

revealed to us who that person is, Sri Krishna, a beautiful eternal youth full of all transcendental qualities and the reservoir of all pleasure. This was something completely beyond our knowledge.

You also revealed to us the Divine Incarnation of the Lord for this age, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. You carried His mercy, His teachings, and the Holy Names. Thus you are delivering all fallen souls in Kali Yuga.

You travelled all over the world to fulfill the mission of Lord Chaitanya; that the Holy Names would be broadcast in every town and village. You sent your disciples everywhere, and you ordered us to distribute your books everywhere. I was fortunate to be on the Rādhā Dāmodar Travelling Saṅkīrtan Party.

We travelled from town to town distributing your books and magazines; spreading your mercy in so many places. But there's still so many places that need your mercy. I'm praying that I can be a part of your mission to spread Krishna consciousness everywhere.

Please engage me in your mission to deliver all fallen souls.

*Begging to be your servant,*

Cakri Das

Initiation: 1976, June—Detriot, Michigan, USA

Current location: Dallas, Texas, USA

Contact: chakridas@yahoo.com

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## Drumila Dās

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Śrīla Prabhupāda, Please accept my humble obeisances. No one knows the myriad of endless offenses I have committed at your lotus feet. No one knows your fathomless mercy towards me, a fallen disciple. What you have tolerated towards me, no one of this world would ever have the limitless compassion you've shown towards me. Without going into detail, I'd like to submit for the record that you have seen me through the worst of times, when I at times had lost all hope, and was at my 'wits end'. Your love towards me, your nurturing, and your compassionate guidance has been otherworldly. There is no one in this world that can even come close to you. Such a display of love, kindness, and compassion I am here to say and witness can never be duplicated. I am eternally indebted to you, and always will be.

I pray to your lotus feet, that you please continue to guide me, and that you please, please, please, never give up on me. Because if you did, I would bereft, and my destination would be unknown. I am so grateful to you for always being there for me. There is no such 'love' in this world that compares, or even comes close, to the love you have shown for your disciples, and the whole world, and the selfless sacrifices you have made on our behalf. You are a modern day messiah who is saving humanity in its darkest hour. All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda, Kṛṣṇa's dear most intimate Servant!

*Your disciple,*

**Drumila Dāsa**

Initiation: 1976, June—Los Angeles, California, USA

Current location: New Orleans, Louisiana, USA

Contact: drumila@gmail.com

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## Brahmatirtha Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*Daṇḍavats.* All glories to Your Divine Grace.

In October 1977, I had the privilege of being one of your scientist disciples speaking in Vṛndāvana at the First International Conference on Life Comes from Life. You called us into your bedroom to give you our '*saṅkīrtana*' report on the arguments presented by the invited academic scientists and the counter-arguments presented by your scientists. Although you were not well enough to attend, this was keenly on your mind as you called for us each evening. Sadaputa Dasa, Svarupa Damodar Brahmachari, Jnana Dasa, Madhava Dasa, and I presented various arguments based on science and metaphysics that consciousness is non-material and cannot evolve from matter. Our opponents presented theories that life is the result of the complex mixing of chemicals. To any neutral outsider, your scientists came out on top – you trained us well.

Fast forward 48 years, I am now the Director of the Bhaktivedanta Institute for Higher Studies. The Bhaktivedanta Institute (BI) was formed in 1976 to build intellectual bridges and create joint research paths between the empirical knowledge of modern scholasticism and the metaphysical, cosmological, and cultural descriptions of India's Bhāgavata Vedānta tradition. You have blessed us with

many great devotee scholars, and new scholars come forward each week to help us.

In 1977, you wrote to Balavanta Dasa:

Now I want that we shall recruit more and more of our men amongst the intelligent class of men. Because they are a little educated or they have got some wealth or fame or ability, so they will be sometimes little puffed-up, but that is all right, they deserve it. Now we shall have to learn the art how to approach such higher-class men and attract them to apply themselves to this Krishna Consciousness process of self-realization. That requires much tact, and we shall have to expect to meet all challenges by sharp minds. But if we remain always absorbed in remembering Lord Caitanya, how He converted so many intelligent men, even sitting for three days and nights to hear them speak without Himself speaking anything, and if we remember how Kṛṣṇa was so much patient to explain everything to Arjuna, even Arjuna was speaking like a fool—in this way, being always tolerant of others and appreciating their points of view, it will be an easy matter for us to convince them gradually to join us.

In 1976, you wrote to Rupanuga Dasa:

“We require many PhDs for our Bhaktivedanta Institute for Higher Study.”

I am pleased to report that many PhD's have joined us as we:

- Design the content for the TOVP museum
- Conduct conferences on evolution, consciousness and cosmology
- Publish books on these subjects
- Present podcases
- Team with the many antiphysicalists around the world
- Work cooperatively with other devotee sangas on science and philosophy.

We pray that we can please you by keeping our consciousness elevated by following the principles of *bhakti-yoga* and presenting with credibility, scholarship, and patience the great science of Krishna Consciousness.

*On behalf of the BIHS,*

Pracarananda Dasa, Prishni Devi Dasi, Tamraparni Dasa

*Your servant,*

Brahmatirtha Dasa

Executive Director, BIHS

Initiation: 1976, July—New York, USA

Current location: Gainesville Florida

Contact: bobcohen@ivs.edu

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## Jaya Madhava Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

HARE KṚṢṂA.

This year I want to celebrate your appearance day by glorifying you from your Iskcon Temple in the Holy Dhām, Vrindaban Dhām India.

Finally after many long decades of hard work and tireless preaching, the success of devotees preaching to local Indians and their serious return to practicing real Krishna Consciousness is amazing for me to see...

Everyday the KṚṣṂa Balarāma temple is packed with devout Indians... Even at-Maṅgal artik !!!! and it's crowded at your Samādhi and Museum. This Year is the 50th Golden opening - Jubilee Celebrations. I'm here at your KṚṣṂa Balarāma Temple for the 6 day celebration and I want to express my great happiness to see how, despite the holy dhām has been commercialized all these years, the sand of Vrindaban Dhām gone, most of the forests gone, replaced by apartments and living quarters and businesses, schools, shops, massive traffic jams and noise - what to speak of noise, heavy crowds and commercialized. It's still the Holy Dham, just getting more covered over.....

I came to your wonderful KṚṣṂa BALARĀMA Temple for the first time, after you left the planet in Feb/March of 1978. At that time it was unspoiled by commercialism - it was open fields. What we see now in Vrindaban Dhām is completely changed and different then in 1973-74, 1975. Way back when you lived here and before the KṚṣṂa Balarāma Temple was built, then there were no massive shops, no massive houses, no traffic jams, excessive noise..crowds...buildings etc.....etc...etc... I came here for the 1st time in February of 1978.

Now having come back here for the 50th Anniversary Festival Celebrations...in 2025. Again, I'm greatly surprised at the turn around and the way the preaching here is expanding in a very favorable and unexpected way, all due to your desire and hard work and the many sacrifices by my beloved god-brothers and sisters who made this KRṢṢṢNA BALARĀMA TEMPLE happen and open - in April of 1975 on Ram Navami Day ! Today many thousands of Indians are visiting and supporting KRṢṢṢNA Balarāma Temple... besides that they are really becoming KRṢṢṢNA Bhakta's, after many decades of hard work, we are now seeing the seeds planted by you become a success In Vrindaban Dhām and New Delhi and in the rest of India !!!!

Śrīla Prabhupāda we are seeing in real time now how your mercy is unlimited. Because as KRṢṢṢNA'S representative, your mercy is reviving India's original KRṢṢṢNA Consciousness. This I'm seeing with my own eyes and ears - live.

Now we can see Lord KRṢṢṢNA'S plan unfold to revive the Golden Age of KRṢṢṢNA Consciousness in an ever increasingly dangerous and degraded Kali Yuga.

On the auspicious day of your appearance day in 2025—I put my head to your lotus feet And I once again thank you for your mercy to me, your fallen disciple. Bless me to inspire and properly represent you at all times in my preaching in the former Soviet Union, Russia. I also inform you as of November of 2024, I as an American citizen took full Russian Citizenship and I'm committed to preach in Russia, serve and preach to your wonderful Russian Grand disciples there for the rest of my life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda..I ask you to bless all these dedicated devotees in India, Russia, USA, Canada...EU etc. that they come back to your original intentions / instructions for ISKCON.....and your original books and the BBT, so that they may together bring your dreams of worldwide devotee International Society Of KRṢṢṢNA Consciousness grow even more following your standards and practices.

Thank You once again for accepting me, a fallen soul, as your disciple and reviving my lost KRṢṢṢNA Consciousness. My head is placed forever at your Divine Lotus Feet. !!!!

*Your servant,*

Jaya Madhava das  
USA ex-pat –Novosibirsk Siberia –Russia

## Vaikunthadeva Das

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My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my deepest obeisances at your lotus feet.

How could this 20-year-old boy have known what lay ahead, when your glance impregnated my heart? That the love you implanted would one day become my only solace in this world?

Your eyes, anointed by the tears of love, saw it all. My inauspicious past, my tortured future, all my *anarthas*, all my disqualifications to devotional service, all my future offenses to the Vaiśnavas and to you, all my suffering due to my foolish decisions, all my false-ego, false-pride, the hubris of my youth, all my lust, anger, and greed – you saw it all, and yet – you accepted me anyway!

In my youth I stood proud, like a tall ship in port, having yet made its maiden voyage, only to encounter over the course of its life, the rough seas, and the rocks on which it would eventually be tossed, only to be dashed to pieces. You saw it all and accepted me anyway!

In fact, at an age when most people would prefer to simply exist, rather than embark on a mission to change the world, you boarded a divinely empowered ship and set out on an unknown voyage across the sea, protected only by your love and faith in Krishna and your Guru-Mahārāja's instructions. You would suffer mightily on that voyage, yet you were determined to serve - and save - those you did not even know, while offering unlimited paternal love to all the souls who dedicated themselves to your mission. Although I withheld so much, you withheld nothing, your mercy growing exponentially in my heart, and in hearts all over the world for over 50 years! Where else in creation can such miracles occur? Yet with your faith, you saw it all!

After you left this world, your mission would become fractured by the ambition of some men who would have installed themselves on your asana, completely unaware that such an undertaking was impossible. Krishna, in the form of time, would eventually rectify the situation, and it would become safe once again for many fragile souls like me to approach your institution. Now, that institution thrives with newer generations of devotees who have arrived and

taken birth in it to continue your mission of spreading the Holy Names all over the world! In fact, when a gentleman approached you in the earliest days, shortly after your arrival in America, you told him that there were many books and temples, and that there was “simply a time that is separating them!” Once again, you saw it all!

These days, all of America is consumed with the political rhetoric of division and separation. The world is likewise consumed by hatred, discord, and military struggles that benefit only huge, demoniac corporations. And of course, this is all caused by total forgetfulness of the soul. Over fifty years ago, you spoke of the end of this American culture of unbridled materialism as well! But by your mercy, you also introduced us to *Sanātana Dharma*, the eternal duty of the soul. Indeed, the value of just *one* of your gifts to us is incalculable! Once again, you saw it all!

While on your departure bed, you remained *dhira*, even while your body, wracked with so much pain the doctors could not understand how you could even remain living, you stated categorically. “Don’t think this won’t happen to you.” Meanwhile, I carried on in my youthful days, completely oblivious to the dangers that lurked ahead. Now, with a body that has been battered on the rocks of the shore, and a mind with struggles to contain its thoughts for more than a few moments, all I have left *is* your mercy! And again, you saw it all!

Oh, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Please take pity on this useless soul! Please grant me the strength and fortitude to serve you in a way that pleases you! Due to ignorance, I cannot see any path forward apart from your mercy. But if you choose, you can “kick out all obstacles.” Today, I pray for that kick - of your lotus feet upon my head! For you always see it all!

*Your fallen son,*

Vaikunthadeva das

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Current location: Encinitas, California USA

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*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,

Some time ago I heard the song “Follow Me” by Paul Mc Cartney, the famous musician and former member of the Beatles. I was truly touched by the lyrics. As if Paul Mc Cartney, who was a very dear friend and colleague musician of George Harrison (undoubtedly your follower), had composed it for Your Divine Grace. The song reflects my feelings for Your Divine Grace so much that I offer it to you for this year’s Vyāsa-pūjā.

Please let me be your follower life after life.

## FOLLOW ME

*By Paul Mc Cartney*

(From the album “Chaos and Creation in the Back Yard”  
released in 2005 ©)

[Verse 1]

You lift up my spirits, you shine on my soul  
Whenever I’m empty, you make me feel whole  
I can rely on you to guide me through any situation  
You hold up a sign that reads, “Follow me”

[Verse 2]

You give me directions, you show me the way  
You give me a reason to face every day  
I can depend on you to send me to any destination  
You hold up a sign that reads, “Follow me”, “Follow me”

[Bridge]

Down the track of loneliness, down the path of love  
Through the woods of heartache to the end  
On the shores of sorrow where the waves of hope crash in

The perfect place for me to find a friend

[Verse 3]

You lead me to places that I've never been

Uncovering secrets that I've never seen

I can rely on you to guide me through any situation

You hold up a sign that reads, "Follow me", "Follow me"

*Your ever indebted servant in the Czech Republic,*

Jayagurudeva das

Initiation: 1976, August—New Māyāpur - France

Current location: Czechia

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## Gaura Kesava Das

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### **The Teacher Who Leads to God**

Beyond the reach of thought and sight,

The Lord abides in endless light.

Through ancient verse, His truth we hear,

But few can hold that wisdom dear.

The mute, the lost, the soul in pain,

May seek the Lord, but seek in vain.

Yet when a teacher takes our hand,

We find the strength to rise and stand.

The Lord permits our wayward will,

And watches karma's law fulfill.

But Acharyas strive, and strive again,

To rescue us from sin and stain.

He teaches truth, corrects with care,

And lifts us high through love and prayer.

He speaks where idols silent stay,

And leads us back to Dharma's way.

To serve the Lord may lead to grace,

But doubts still haunt that lofty place.  
Yet those who serve His saints, we're told,  
Shall reach the joy no mind can hold.

But shelter isn't just a name —  
It is a life, a sacred flame.  
Not for the lazy or the proud,  
But for the heart that's humbly bowed.

So let us walk that guided path,  
And fear no storm, and flee no wrath.  
For where the teacher gently leads,  
The soul is freed from worldly needs.

The Lord allows, the Teacher strives,  
And shapes our souls, and changes lives.  
And when we reach that final shore,  
The Teacher smiles — and says no more.

Based on Vilakṣaṇa Mokṣādhikāri Nirṇayam by Śrī Vedānta Deśika  
verses 57-59

Gaura Kesava Das

Initiation: Initiation: 1976, August—Sydney, Australia

Current location: 51 Haahaa St Makawao HI 96768 USA

Contact: jay.greg@gmail.com

## Atmatma Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances, all glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please accept this offering on the occasion of Your Divine appearance.

You came and gave us the Holy Names the cure for Kali's evil games. You docked at the harbours door and stepped upon the shore. The priceless gifts you brought full of transcendent thought. Whoknew what would happen next the missions so simple and complex.

And so it was the mission started lost souls in Kali Yuga reunited. Tompkins Square Park the gathering grew and in the center, their *Guru*. The mercy of the Holy Names rang out and for many there was no doubt.

More and more came to hear the pure sound from one so dear.  
Side to side jump up and down the *kīrtan* went round and round.  
You spoke words we never knew and so you became our *Guru*.  
Enlightenment from your books divine came just in time.

Now the mission has been spread and has awoken the living dead  
A billion books and more, we knock on every door.  
Chanting of the Holy Names, a sound so inviting.  
You came not seeking fame but to give the Holy Names.

Festivals and happy faces, singing and dancing.  
*Prasādam* the gift divine there's no need of wine  
So many lost souls are lost no more for the answers are sweet and  
pure.  
Your last visit "a little difficult" but came you did.

And now you left but are still here, for all of us you are very dear.  
I bow to you every day for the gifts you have given  
You are the Acharya of this age and we serve your mission.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda

*Your servant,*

Atmatma das

Initiation: 1976, September—London, UK  
Current location: Alresford, Winchester, UK  
Contact: atmatma@gmail.com

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## Janaki Devi Dasi

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Jaya Guru Dev!

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your  
lotus feet. Śrīla A C Bhaktivedanta Swami *kī jai*.

It is with the utmost gratitude that I take this opportunity to  
make an offering of praise and honour unto you, Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
on the occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā. You took the instruction of your  
own spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur, as  
your life and soul. From your first meeting, on the rooftop of the  
centre in Ultadanga Road, he gave you the instruction to preach

the message of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu to the English-speaking people of the world. You took that message to heart, nurtured it for many years, meditated on it and prepared for it and when the time was right, at the ripe old age of 69, you took the cargo ship to the USA, determined to fulfil your beloved Guru Maharaj’s instruction. You wrote a beautiful prayer, as you landed in Boston Harbour – Markine Bhagavat Dharma – where you reveal your deep humility, dependance on Lord Shri Krishna and deep compassion for suffering living entities.

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

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

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

You sign off this prayer as “the most unfortunate, insignificant beggar, A C Bhaktivedanta Swami, on board the ship Jaladuta, Commonwealth Pier, Boston, Massachusetts, USA dated 18<sup>th</sup> September 1965.

You came with nothing but your deep faith and conviction that to please and serve your spiritual master was the most important thing in your life. And we are so completely grateful that you did Śrīla Prabhupāda – for had you not come and brought the message of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu to the shores of America and from there sent your emissaries to all corners of the globe, where would we be? Totally lost in the turbulent ocean of the material world, being tossed around like hopeless, helpless pieces of flotsam.

Today I read a verse from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.25.8, a quote by Devahuti to her illustrious son, Kapila Dev. It struck me as being a very appropriate verse that I could relate to in my relationship with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda:

*tasya tvam tamaso’ndhasya  
duṣpārasyādya pāragam  
sac-cakṣur janmanām ante*

*labdham me tvad-anugrahāt*

Your Lordship is my only means of getting out of this darkest region of ignorance, because You are my transcendental eye, which, by Your mercy only, I have attained after many many births.

You took the time and trouble to explain to us that this material realm is merely a perverted reflection of the eternal spiritual realm, our real home, which is *Sat, Chit Ānanda* – eternal, full of knowledge and bliss, where we belong, in perpetual loving relationship and service with Shri Krishna and his eternal associates.

By following your instructions, by serving you, by pleasing you – this is our means to reach that “*parām gatim*” – supreme destination. To become free from the endless cycle of birth and death, away from this Kali Yuga – the degraded age of quarrel and hypocrisy. To find our place, once again, in our spiritual bodies, free from the dualities of material entanglement.

Now I find myself in the *Vānaprastha*, retired stage of life. An opportunity to become free from the shackles and responsibilities of household life. Time to dedicate myself more fully to taking your message more seriously. I pray that, with whatever life and strength I have left, that I may be blessed by you to render some service that is pleasing to you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Let me therefore also pray, as you did, that I may become a useful instrument in your hands, like a puppet in your hands – “make me dance, make me dance, make me dance as YOU like.”

Unqualified and inadequate as I am, still with so many anarthas, I am simply begging for your mercy that you continue to guide and protect me, and make me worthy to consider myself your disciple.

*Your fallen but ever hopeful spiritual daughter,*

Janaki devi dasi

ISKCON Leicester 2025

Initiation: 1976, September—London, UK

Current location: Leicester, UK

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**Yogindra Das**

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances on the occasion of your 2025 Vyāsa-pūjā.

May you be pleased with me.

Thank you for continuing to extend your kindness to the fortunate unfortunate. On Gaura Pūrṇimā, 1977 in Māyāpur, you accepted 200 first initiates and 100 brāhmaṇas although your physique was rapidly deteriorating at that time. You had already in 1972 become wary of the revolving doors of followers joining the movement and leaving; you considered “boiling the milk” so that the movement would not become “watered down” (letter to Hamsaduta - Los Angeles June 22, 1972, for example). You were not allured by the promise of many, new followers at the cost of abandoning the older ones; “... like Alexander the Great. He was conquering, but as soon as he went to conquer a new place, the last place was lost” (*Prabhupāda līlāmṛta*, Vol. 6, 52, “I have Done My Part”). Still, out of your compassion, you risked to “break the rule” set down by Rūpa Goswami in *Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhu* to not accept many disciples (NOD, Chap. 14, “Devotional Qualities”). “... for preaching work we have to accept many disciples ... even if we suffer” (*Perfect Questions, Perfect Answers*, chapter 6). There was no one else to save a wretch like me and so you selflessly took the consequences. Thank you. I am eternally obliged.

My obligation is to follow unfailingly my promise to chant the Hare Krishna *mahā mantra* to the best of my ability. “Of all the regulative principles, the spiritual master’s order to chant sixteen rounds is most essential” (CC, Mad. 22.113, purport). This is a purifying process, the “waxing moon that spreads the white lotus of good fortune for all living entities” (*Śikṣāṣṭaka* 1). Fortunate are those who have learned to chant the Holy Name with rapt attention. However, “[n]o one can give rapt attention who is not pure in mind” (SB 1.3.44, purport). I must confess that I remain victimized by an impure mind. For very soon 50 years, I have been harassed by this obnoxious bully at least 2 hours daily while trying to be true to my vow to chant 16 rounds of *japa*. For this persistent harassment, I have no one to blame but myself.

Only you’ll arrive at your own-made end  
with no one but yourself to be offended  
It’s you that decides.

(G. Harrison, 1970, “Run of the Mill”)

Lately, I have, however, learned that the mind needs to be given a simple task: “Listen to just one *mantra*” (Bhurijana, 2009, *Japa - Nine keys from the Śikṣāṣṭaka to improve your japa*, pg. 25). Although I attempt to do this at least 1,728 times daily, still I am so unfortunate that I cannot manage to hear even one single Holy Name with rapt attention. Nonetheless, I resolve today anew to practice my japa – “... to beat the mind with shoes a hundred times” (SB 5.6.4, purport) - tolerantly offering respect to all, not expecting any return. (One non-negotiable caveat; those who speak badly of you or the Lord are anathema, such company being worse than suicide.) I am convinced you have some devotional service for me some fortunate day when I am ripe for it and for that I am prepared to patiently persevere 50 - or even 1,728 – lifetimes if needed, provided I can go on trying to hear the sound vibration of Krishna’s Holy Name. Never mind I have no taste for the Name due to my lingering infatuation with wealth, popularity and beautiful women, I won’t budge from my *saṅkalpa* (intention) to practice my japa, as I promised you in August, 1976 in Stockholm.

Lastly, I pray that for the (short?) remainder of this lifetime, I may never forget to chant the Holy Name. My God-sister, Isa devi dasi, was exemplary. She was totally disoriented by a stroke at the end but she could not forget the Maha Mantra <<https://www.dandavats.com/?p=11444>>. Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, kindly intercede like Rāmānuja who was assured by Varadarāja that *mad-bhaktānāṁ janānāṁ ca nantim asmrītir iṣyate*; any sincere disciple, even if circumstantially incompetent to remember the Lord at death, will be remembered by the Lord <<https://gauḍīyahistory.iskcondesiretree.com/the-life-of-ramanujacarya/7/>>.

May I always remember your instructions and repeat them without difficulty.

*Your servant,*

Yogindra dasa

Initiation: 1976, September—Stockholm, Sweden

Current location: Sweden

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**Lilananda Dās**

## An Offering to My Eternal Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Today I had a realization that stirred my heart deeply. My wife told me about a young boy, just 20 years old, who attempted to take his own life. Upon hearing that, I felt a wave of sorrow and compassion-and at the same time, immense gratitude. It reminded me of how truly fortunate I was to have encountered your divine shelter at the age of 17.

I met you through your books-those priceless scriptures that carry your voice, your wisdom, your love. At that time, I could not fully grasp your greatness, but I sensed something rare and extraordinary: here was a completely honest man, free of pretense, overflowing with compassion and endowed with unparalleled spiritual clarity. You stood in the sacred line of empowered saints and *acharyas*, and yet you spoke with such simplicity and strength that even a confused youth like me could begin to understand life.

Gradually, through your instructions, my path became illuminated. You taught me what to eat and what to avoid, how to think and how to live. You taught me who to associate with, what to hear, what to read, and how to anchor my life in Krishna consciousness. In giving so many instructions, you didn't suppress my individuality - you awakened it. You didn't make me a blind follower - you trained me to think independently, using my intelligence in Krishna's service. You told us that this movement was meant to create independent thinkers, not blind sheep - and I took those words to heart.

And that's what I became. Through your guidance, life became clearer, lighter. My decisions felt more aligned with truth. I had the conviction that I was heading in the right direction - toward the lotus feet of Krishna - because I was following you.

Sadly, Śrīla Prabhupāda, most young people today don't have this kind of guidance. They are told they are free to do whatever they want. But that kind of "freedom" without direction can be a prison of illusion. And some mistakes made in that illusion can leave scars that last a lifetime - or even cost a life. That is why the shelter of a pure devotee is the most precious gift one can receive in this world.

Before I found your books, I had never met anyone who could truly answer life's most important questions:

- Who am I?
- Why are we here?

- Why must we grow old, suffer, and die?
- Why are these conditions imposed on us, even against our will?
- What happens after death?
- What happened before birth?
- What is the actual purpose of life?

No one - no parent, teacher, priest, clergyman, or friend - had the answers. Most meant well. Some were good. A few may have even been noble. But none of them had real spiritual knowledge. And then, by your causeless mercy, you entered my life-and everything changed.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I feel fulfilled. I feel happy. I feel protected. And I feel honored - eternally honored - to walk this path under your guidance. Whatever I have become, whatever good qualities I may have developed, and whatever clarity I now possess - I owe it all to you.

Please inspire me to share, in whatever way I can, the matchless gift you gave me - with sincerity, courage, and compassion. Let me be an instrument of your mercy, reaching those who are still searching in darkness, just as I once was.

Please cleanse my heart of all desires for personal prestige, recognition, fame, or honor. Let me find complete satisfaction simply in the thought that I am your eternal, humble servant - nothing more, nothing less.

I offer you my deepest gratitude, my thoughts, my actions, and my life. You saved me from the darkness of ignorance, and for that, I remain forever your servant.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Lilananda Dasa

Initiation: 1976, December—Brazil

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

## Nidra Devi Dasi

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace and your beloved Vyāsa-pūjā.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your glories are ever increasing. Devotees write about you, distribute your videos, speak about you; they associate with you in your books and murtis, and in so many ways serve your mission for your pleasure, and so doing, spread your glories worldwide. This is a never ending service, to glorify you, ambassador from Goloka Vrndavana; nothing there is limited; unlimited glories.

Seemingly far away from Goloka, on this earth planet, your glories are increasing and are taken into the hearts of millions. It all makes sense because you are eternally with us. There is no separation, yet simultaneously we feel longing in separation; it makes us hanker for you more. You have never left, but yet we want to again be with you. You are always in our hearts, yet we look forward to being with you again, wherever you are serving.

TOVP opening will increase glorification of the entire Paramparā; especially people will note your glories because of your recent pastimes with us.

All of this will increase the spread of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Begging your blessings that all of us can work cooperatively as the storehouse of love of Godhead opens more and more in this pioneering phase of the golden age within this *yuga*. More people in this universe will come to love you.

*Your aspiring servant of your servants' servants,*

Nidra devi dasi

Initiation: 1977, January—Denver, USA

Current location: Denver, Colorado, USA

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

It's a great privilege for me to offer my humble obeisances at your lotus feet on the very auspicious occasion of your divine appearance in this world. All glories to you and to all the devotees of different generations, serving you with love and dedication. They are a great source of inspiration for me.

As I try to convey my gratitude for the mercy you have shown me, I realize the inadequacy in my feelings and therefore the words don't pour out easily. In my heart I know, I'm also indebted to you, for all the mercy and the guidance you have given to the human society at large, for anyone and everyone, to return "Back Home, Back to Godhead."

Even to think that one can repay one's debt to the Guru or Spiritual Master in the authentic Śrī Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya Vaishnava spiritual lineage, is certainly a ridiculous attempt. However a disciple must convey his/her gratitude with words of glorification and appreciation to Guru, the spiritual master, especially so on the Guru's Appearance anniversary.

While listening to the morning *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class recently, the devotee giving the talk mentioned a few of our predecessor *Acharyas* and the significance of their words in their writings or songs and often in both. Although I know a bit about these *Acharyas*, I must say that on hearing the words spoken by that devotee, I came to realize the significance of ISKCON as Your Gift to humanity in a much deeper sense.

During my early years of being in the association ISKCON devotees, I developed an interest in listening to the Songs of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda thakur, especially the *Aruṇodhaya Kīrtans*. However apart from the popular songs of some of the *Acharyas*, like Śrīla Lochan dās thakur, Śrīla Narottama dās, Śrīla Vrindāvan dās thakur, Śrīla Ragonātha dās Goswami and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda thakur, I haven't read or heard so many other songs that are readily available

to us on the web. Let me start reading or hearing them often for my own benefit. This instance reminded me of the significance of regular attendance in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you certainly know the inadequacies, faults, and even offenses in my daily devotional practices. Nonetheless please let me never minimize the importance of devotee association and any service I should do to Śrī Guru, Śrī Hari and Haridāśas. This is the only way for me to get over all the obstacles, armed with faith and my sincere efforts, to progress on the spiritual path you have shown us.

On this very auspicious day of your divine appearance, I simply beg for your special mercy on this fallen servant, to remain a humble servant of your servants.

*Gurudev! Kṛpā-bindu diyā, koro ei dāse, tṛṇāpekḥā ati hīna  
sakala sahane, bala diyā koro nija māne sṛḥā 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 aspiring servant,*

**Guruprasad das**

Initiation: 1977, January—Montreal, Canada

Current location: Ottawa, Canada

Contact: rajraoca@gmail.com

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## **Karunaksi Devi Dasi**

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In the ever-quickenning speed of being hurtled through the confusion and degradation of thought and principle in this Kali-yuga, I have depended upon the solidarity of he who brought me up from the muck of quicksand back in 1976—HDG Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Mahārāja Prabhupāda.

His visible character and devotionally-resolved service to his divine Śrī Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati Ṭhākura Prabhupāda—is eternally shining as the guiding light and surety of purpose for all in this time and any time, past or future.

His is a foundation of absolute trust in the Truth, Presence and Love of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda, the Supreme Personalities of Godhead, repositioned for our fortune in the Person of our eternally loving Saviours, Śrī Śrī Nityānanda-rāma and Gaurāṅga-candra Mahāprabhu.

He has shown by example and precept how the sincere chanting of the Divine—4th-Dimensional—transcendence of the Divine Names *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*—do save us from *saṁsāra*—and take us to the eternal bliss of service to our Lord.

Karunaksi Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1977, February—Seattle, USA

Current location: Gopinath Bhavan, Braja/Bay Area

Vaiṣṇava Sanga, USA

Contact: msdidimaa@yahoo.com

## Manoharini Devi Dasi

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

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

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

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

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You came to the West to instruct us for what seemed like such a short time. But it also felt like a very long time as you worked unwaveringly to bring us the most important forever knowledge.

The priceless knowledge that I will always be indebted and grateful for. Śruti that will free the shackles that are chains to this material world. The *mahā-mantra* that will cleanse this tainted heart.

So many temporary shiny baubles try to distract from the path

you have shown us that is eternal. I sometimes flounder like a fish out of water, but Your Grace constantly reminds me of the divine purpose of devotional service.

*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, Chapter Six, Text 47 Purport:

This stage of highest perfection in yoga can be attained only by bhakti-yoga, as is confirmed in all Vedic literature:

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

Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed.

You have revealed everything to us, Gurudeva. Please continue to help this useless soul follow your instructions and one day learn the meaning of the loving service of Sri Guru and Gaurāṅga.

*Your aspiring eternal servant,*

Manoharini devi dasi

Initiation: 1977, March--Chicago, USA

Current location: Ontario, Canada

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## Shyamasundara Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your divine grace.

In my early years of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness I didn't think much about how long it would take me to go back to Godhead because Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.40), "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." So I figured that if I could complete 1% of my spiritual journey in each life it would only take 100 human lives to reach perfection. Which at a rate of 100 years per life would be 10,000 years as a maximum. Or, to put in a more cosmic perspective 0.1 seconds of Lord Brahma (one second for Lord Brahmā = 100,000 human years). So while I was serious in my spiritual life I consoled myself because I didn't think it possible for

me to do it in one life.

But as the years progressed a change in my perspective took place. On the one hand I began to realize just how horrible and miserable material life was — either by direct experience or vicariously by witnessing the suffering and struggles of my jyotiṣa clients. Or, seeing the painful images of war in the Middle East, Ukraine and elsewhere. As well as calamitous natural disasters — earthquakes, wild-fires, and flooding. And witnessing the struggle for material existence of the wild animals around me trying to stay alive in a harsh climate (I give them *prasādam*). Kṛṣṇa was not joking when He described the material world as *duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam* “a temporary place full of miseries” (*Bhagavad-gītā* 8.15). Yet I was so crazy as to think I could enjoy in a place designed for suffering.

And, on the other hand I learned from you that I will only be happy in my original position in my real home with Kṛṣṇa and His devotees in Goloka Vrndāvana — Back to home, back to Godhead.

I also learned from you that taking birth in the heavenly planets or taking birth here again are equally bad. And worse still is impersonal liberation.

Now I do not want to take birth again. The thought of it is terrifying. Not just having to suffer material miseries but the possibility that I might fall into maya and forget Kṛṣṇa, how horrible that would be.

I shall try my best to follow your instruction to be serious in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness and go back to Godhead in this lifetime. I do not know how successful I will be because Māyā is very powerful. In the end it is up to Kṛṣṇa to decide how long it will take. But I will do my best and follow the instructions of Rūpa Goswami (NOI 3) to practice Bhakti yoga with full enthusiasm and patience while being confident that Kṛṣṇa will surely protect me and give me help for the successful execution of devotional service. But since you are a dear friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa if you bless me then He will surely accept me in this lifetime.

Śrīla Prabhupāda I cannot adequately express how thankful I am to you for everything that you have done. Your lifetime of dedication to your own gurudeva and fulfilling his order to preach the mission of Lord Caitanya in the West. Your publishing of so many transcendental books full of knowledge beyond space and time. And sending out your servants to the far corners of the world to spread this knowledge. Otherwise, how could I have received your books

in my obscure corner of the universe? My fate without coming in contact with you through your books would have been very dark and tragic. I am eternally grateful to you and I pray that in however many years I have remaining in this body I will be able to contribute something to help fulfill your desires. My greatest desire is that you become proud to have me as your disciple and that you smile when you think of me. Your happiness is all that matters to me. And I pray that if I have in any way offended you that you please forgive me and instead bestow your blessings on me. Your mercy is all that I am made from.

Before ending, I would like to make a small report of my activities in the last year. I was able to publish two essays dealing with the subject of Brahma-gāyatrī and the process of initiation in our *sampradāya* that will be part of a larger work related to Varnashrama Dharma. In the next year I also have some writing projects to complete leading to my first published book — more on that after it is done.

Tightly clinging to your lotus feet.

*Your eternal servant,*

Shyamasundara Dasa (Jyotisi)

Initiation: 1977, March—Māyāpur, India

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## Nrsimha Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Today, on the day of your appearance, I think intensely about how only by your great mercy this world changed in a global way, in imperceptible ways and in very visible forms. From things as small as the fact that people speak in their daily lives of yoga, reincarnation, karma, vegetarianism, mantras, to things as impactful and visible as your devotees doing hari nama, distributing prasādam, and erecting temples in every corner of the world.

Your movement has become a planetary reference, from Ulaanbaatar to the Forbidden City of the Chinese, from Moscow to London, from New York where it all began to the neighborhoods of Soweto, from Bogotá to Sydney.

The fact that it all began with a single person at 70 years old, after suffering two heart attacks and having been rejected by each

and every one of his associates and family members, is something inconceivable. Only your immense and unfathomable love for us, the fallen souls, as deep as the ocean, allowed an inhabitant of the spiritual world like you to descend to this plane and suffer with and for us in the way that you did, until the last breath of your lila in this world.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is on a day like today that the mantra:

*tad viddhi praṇipātena  
paripraśnena sevayā  
upadekṣyanti te jñānam  
jñāninas tattva-darśinah*

Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth. (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.34)

Becomes more valid and present in my life than ever before. I think of your desire to establish *varṇāśrama dharma* in today's society, and that will be my guide every day.

You are, and must continue to be, our guide and our north. I only ask for your mercy so that it continues to be so in my life every minute of the day.

*Your unworthy servant,*

Nrsimha Das,

Initiation: 1977, March—Caracas, Venezuela

Current location: Pamplona, Norte de Santander, Colombia

Contact: lafundacion108@gmail.com

## Ankoththa Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī states in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Adi-līlā* 1.44):

*yadyapi āmāra guru — caitanyera dāsa  
tathāpi jāniye āmi tāñhāra prakāśa*

Although I know that my spiritual master is a servitor of Śrī Caitanya, I know Him also as a plenary manifestation of the Lord.

In your purport to this verse, you say:

Every living entity is essentially a servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the spiritual master is also His servant. Still, the spiritual master is a direct manifestation of the Lord. With this conviction, a disciple can advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The spiritual master is non-different from Kṛṣṇa because he is a manifestation of Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, although the scriptures tell us, and on numerous occasions you also said, that it is the height of blasphemy to equate the *jīva* with the Supreme Lord, in the context of the bonafide world *Ācārya* this difference is qualified. Being directly empowered by the Lord to execute His mission the world *Ācārya* acts just like an ambassador coming from the spiritual world to the material world to show, in a very palpable and direct way the existence of the kingdom of God and the love the Lord bears for all the living beings in this world. These two functions cannot be done by a *jīva* unless, as you put it, “the spiritual master is a direct manifestation of the Lord” and as Kavirāja Gosvāmī puts it “a plenary manifestation of the Lord”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as that world *Ācārya* you make it very easy for us all to understand the statement of Kavirāja Gosvāmī because in coming in contact with you, we feel the direct presence of the Lord, and it appears as the spiritual world descends upon us as we bathe in your divine association. And the wonderful thing is that this is not something that only those of us who had your direct association are privy to, but is still available to all your generational disciples and sincere followers who take shelter of your transcendental books, recorded lectures, *bhajans* and videos because although you are no longer visible to our physical eyes, you have deposited all your intense love for Nitāi Gaurāṅga and Rādhā Govinda in these transcendental gifts.

It is said that the disciple cannot repay the debt to the spiritual

master since the help given is so unbelievably great and sublime, but if the disciple simply tries to execute the orders and instructions to the best of his or her abilities the spiritual master is pleased. And then, having become situated in steady spiritual life, to take on responsibility for pushing on the preaching mission takes the effort to repay the debt to the next level.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, today on your divine appearance day, I pray that I may not squander the remaining years of my life in superficial, meaningless activities meant for only pleasing the body and the mind. I wish to be of some service to you and your preaching mission, so I beg for the strength to stand up and vigorously broadcast your glories and the glories of pure devotional service which is the only panacea for suffering humanity at large.

*Your eternally grateful servant,*

Ankoththa Das

Initiation: 1977, March—London, UK

Current location: Kansas, USA

Contact: onkarankotthasandal@gmail.com

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## Damodara Dasa

### King of my Heart

What else can I offer you? This is all –  
My bittersweet longing to hear your call  
To come to the temple and your *Vyāsāsana* seat  
And bow down forever at your lotus feet.  
Even eternity is not long enough  
To give all you deserve of unconditional love,  
To follow your order to save all the souls  
Oh Bhaktivedānta king of my heart!  
You are my goal and you are where I start.

Initiation: 1977, March—Māyāpur, India

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
*Daṇḍavats* at your Feet.

I had a dream that was, to me, quite profound. Today is Vāmana's Appearance Day, the day after *ekādaśī* and the day before Nityānanda's Appearance Day. The dream I had happened last night as follows:

I was talking with a godbrother and encouraging him to take shelter of your lotus feet when I turned around and there you were. Somehow, we were then sitting around a table and it being *ekādaśī*, everyone was hungry. I noticed a plate next to you on your right which you picked up and passed to me. I was feeling very fortunate however I was also feeling that I didn't deserve so much *prasādam* but looking around I was amazed to see how everyone was being fed sumptuously. You then looked at me and started to ask me questions. You asked how I ended up at Bhaktivan and I tried to explain I started at the Manor with my brother then somehow was interested in starting a farm project, thinking that this was what you had wanted your disciples to do. By Kṛṣṇa's mercy I was given this opportunity in Kansas 25 years ago. Your questions were very direct and I was feeling more and more uncomfortable. You ended up asking me what my goal in all of this was. As you can imagine I was feeling very intimidated by you, not in a bad way as you were very humbling. I tried to answer knowing my half-hearted attempts were pathetic, but I felt since you are my *guru* I needed to be honest, which I think I was. Then you told me I had to correct an offence I had committed to a devotee. I was stunned not knowing what this offence might have been. I think I heard the devotees' name but I honestly could not remember having much association with him, and not knowing where he was or even if he was still alive, I was shaken. I know offences to devotees are a real impediment and, even as I write this, am wondering how I can fix this.

Then I awoke and wrote everything down thinking to use this in my Vyāsa-pūjā offering to you. I know I'm full of pride and am barely a

devotee so I am amazed you would come to me in a dream, what to speak of instruct me, but such is your causeless mercy.

What can I say to you Śrīla Prabhupāda except I am your eternal servant and but by your mercy I am nothing. Every night before I take rest, I recite the prayer by Prahlād Mahārāja you site in your prayer to the Lotus Feet of the Lord you wrote on board the Jaladuta:

*evam janam nipatitam prabhavāhi-kūpe  
kāmābhikāmam anu yaḥ prapatan prasaṅgāt  
kṛtvātmasāt surarṣiṇā bhagavan grhītaḥ  
so 'ham katham nu visrje tava bhṛtya-sevām*

My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, because of my association with material desires, one after another, I was gradually falling into a blind well full of snakes, following the general populace. But Your servant Nārada Muni kindly accepted me as his disciple and instructed me how to achieve this transcendental position. Therefore, my first duty is to serve him. How could I leave his service?

You are my Nārada Muni, however I am not Prahlād but perhaps in one life I can be picked up and placed at your lotus feet again and fulfill the mandate given at initiation to once more become Kṛṣṇa dās.

Praying at your lotus feet and always begging for mercy

*I remain your eternal loving servant,*

Indranuja Das

Initiation: 1977, March—London, UK

Current location: Bhaktivan, Kansas, USA

Contact: edmacmillan@yahoo.com

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## Jiva Pavana Das

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I offer my most respectful obeisance's thousands of millions of times at the lotus feet of my eternal divine spiritual master His Divine Grace AC Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda who on the order of his divine spiritual master His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati Prabhupāda Thakur came to the West to spread Krishna Consciousness. Although originally requested to spread Gauḍīya

Vaisnavism to the English speaking world, Śrīla Prabhupāda's books have been translated into at least 76 different languages and his mission has grown into over 800 centers worldwide. Your major temples display the highest standards of deity worship. Also thousands of people all over the world gather in their homes or small preaching programs to read and preach from your books and practice devotional service. Countless read from your books online and spread videos of your preaching. Even Gauḍīya institutions and preachers outside of ISKCON refer to the verses and Bhaktivendanta Purports of your Divine Grace when referring to the authority of śāstra.

What to speak of Gauḍīya lines, Śrīla Prabhupāda, even Hindu lines outside of our tradition (including MĀYĀVĀDĪS) recognised your contribution to the spread of Sanātan Dharma at the Mahā Kumbha Melā this year. By your influence the prediction that *Harinām Saṅkīrtan* will be performed in every town and village has come to fruition.

I'm so grateful that you took the time to deliver this insignificant soul from the suffering accrued from endless sinful activities performed during my countless births and deaths in this material world. Even now you guide me from within to try and give up my anarthas and to chant without offense. You are so kind you send me elevated and good Vaiṣṇava association. I feel blessed to be counted as one of your own as you are a true *Rūpānuṅga* and the most incredibly empowered preacher.

Please continue to bless me with the mercy and enthusiasm coming from Lord Nityānanda to serve Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Also bless me in my aspiration that one day I can assist you with all your associates in the spiritual world in your eternal service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna. I also pray I can assist you with your preaching work throughout the material universes birth after birth.

Furthermore, because all good fortune and devotion is destroyed by *aparādha* if I have ever offended any devotee at any time anywhere (especially you Śrīla Prabhupāda) I emphatically beg forgiveness.

I'm unworthy but beg nonetheless.

All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda! All glories to our entire illustrious Bhāgavata Guru Paramparā and all glories to all the devotees of the Lord, past, present and to come.

*Dāsānudāsa*

Jiva Pavana Dasa  
Initiation: 1977, March—RDTSKP  
Current location: UK  
Contact: jivapavana@gmail.com

## Mahendrani Devi Dasi

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Today I am reflecting on the incredible connection between you, your Spiritual Master and the pastimes of Lord Jagannāth.

Śrīla Bhaktivinode Thakur wanted Lord Caitanya’s teachings to spread to the western world. He prayed to Bimala Devi in the Jagannath Temple Complex so that someone from the Lord’s personal associates would come to assist him.

Such a ray of Viṣṇu was born in Jagannāth Purī in the form of the Thakur’s son and was named Bimala Prasād, later Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati Thakur. When Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta was six months old, the Rathayātrā procession stopped before Bhaktivinode Thakur’s house and remained for three days. When the baby was brought before Lord Jagannāth, a garland fell from the Lord and encircled the child, confirming Their Divine connection.

When you were a child Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had a strong attraction to Lord Jagannath and the Ratha Yātrā festival. You convinced your parents to help you celebrate a small Ratha Yātrā festival in your neighborhood. Although it has not been officially documented and verified, it has also been said that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta once witnessed your childhood Ratha Yātrā.

As a young man you met and became initiated by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati Thakur who instructed you to spread Kṛṣṇa Consciousness in the English language. Following his order, you came to the west to spread Lord Caitanya’s message. Therefore your *praṇām mantra* says “*Sāraswate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe.*” Ratha Yātrā Festivals were very dear to Lord Caitanya and an important part of His pastimes.

Here in America Lord Jagannāth came to you by the amazing synchronistic circumstances of Malati “finding” Him as a figurine in a store called Cost Plus Imports, along with Balarāma and Subhadrā. You arranged for the first Ratha Yātrā in San Francisco in July 1967. Then you arranged for another and another and another. Now all

over the world, There are Ratha Yātrās maintained and expanded by your disciples and grand disciples inspired and empowered by you. Here in Alachua, about seven such Ratha Yātrās are organized and performed in various parts of Florida. Because of your mercy so many conditioned souls are getting the merciful auspicious glance of Their Lordships.

Thank you again and again for the treasures that you have given us. Please bless all of us to advance steadily and happily towards Kṛṣṇa Prema, and be your instrument to help others do the same.

*Your servant,*

Mahendrani devi dasi

Initiation: 1977, March—Trinidad

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

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## Matsya Avatāra Dās

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Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances at Your lotus feet.

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

*namaste sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūnyaavādi-paścātya-deśa-tāriṇe.*

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

On this special day of Your Vyāsa-Pūjā 2025, I write to You with a heart full of gratitude for Your teachings and the divine light You brought into my life.

Before meeting You, eager yet lacking true spiritual direction, I was thirsty for truth, freedom, and love, but I did not know where to find pure water to quench that thirst.

It was You—through Your words, Your books, Your disciples, and Your deeds—who guided me to the clear source of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I still remember the first time I met Your Divine Grace and received Your merciful *darśana*: You encouraged me to chant the

*mahā-mantra*, to study the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, and to speak of it to everyone I met.

After that meeting, I purchased the McMillan edition of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and, as I read it, on every page I felt Your voice whispering to my consciousness.

Each verse expanded and illuminated the teachings You had conveyed to me, clearing my intellect like the morning sun dispels the mists of ignorance.

At that moment, I realized I had finally found the Guru my heart had been seeking for so long. Tears of joy ran down my face as I felt Your compassion embracing my soul.

I will never forget when, leaving Your *darśana*, I began chanting the mahā-mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, just as You had asked me: in that simple chanting, I found the shelter I had been searching for.

It felt as if the burdens of daily worries melted away instantly, and I experienced a pure joy I had never known before.

In that instant, I perceived Your sacred presence, I felt that You were guiding me along the path of bhakti.

Perhaps because I received the mercy of meeting You in person and receiving such personal teachings from You, I feel You near me every day through the priceless treasure You left behind.

Your voice echoes in the classes given in temples and becomes a whisper in the chanting of the *mahā-mantra*; Your compassionate gaze seems to rest upon me from photographs that portray Your face, at times grave, at times adorned with a gentle smile, but always full of compassion; Your teachings speak to me from every page of Your books and from Your precious recorded conversations.

Thus, although You left this world many years ago, Your spiritual presence is now even more alive and tangible, and continues to illuminate my path—as well as that of millions of others.

Your extraordinary life is for me a powerful example of service and dedication.

You faced countless hardships to bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness to every continent.

I think of Your courage when, nearly seventy years old, You crossed the ocean alone on a cargo ship, with hardly any means, armed only with unshakable faith in Your Guru and the Holy Name.

That seemingly impossible journey inspires me every time I face obstacles along my spiritual path: it reminds me that with faith and determination, by the mercy of Guru and Kṛṣṇa, I too can

overcome any storm.

Thanks to You, I do not walk a lonely path in the desert.

You founded ISKCON - International Society for Krishna Consciousness - a great international spiritual family, where I find support, friendship, and inspiration. Every temple You opened is an oasis of peace and divine joy in this chaotic and violent world, and is one of Your immense gifts of mercy to a suffering humanity.

I am moved to think how many lives You have saved from despair, offering everyone a safe refuge at the feet of Kṛṣṇa.

I also wish to express my deepest gratitude for the teachings I have received from You regarding the management of my own life, and that of my family, my students, and—over the past decades—my disciples.

In an age where deranged ideologies are sweeping across the world, denying the sacredness of life and abandoning the holy principles of religion, generating disorder, conflict, and violence, Your teachings have been for me a constant beacon—a spiritual compass capable of orienting every decision, great or small. You taught me to live in sobriety and truth, to cultivate relationships based on compassion and selfless love, and to care for those entrusted to me with firmness, while also offering them a coherent example of behavior and deep listening.

Every day, thanks to Your guidance, I am able to face the many perilous and complex challenges of this crucial historical passage with confidence and discernment, knowing that we are not alone, but supported by the power of Your transcendental vision and the protection of Kṛṣṇa.

Your countless divine virtues shine in Your life's work, and I wish to recall a few that particularly stand out:

**Mercy:** You welcome everyone without distinction, offering all the opportunity to be spiritually reborn and rediscover the path to God, forgiving our mistakes and always encouraging us.

**Wisdom:** Your words and writings illuminate the deepest truths with crystalline simplicity; Your understanding of the scriptures and Your ability to transmit them have dispelled ignorance from countless hearts.

**Determination:** You showed unwavering commitment

to the mission entrusted to You by Your spiritual master; neither age, illness, nor cultural or economic barriers could stop You from spreading Kṛṣṇa's message.

**Compassion:** Your heart shares the pain of those who suffer and rejoices at every small spiritual step of a soul; You sacrificed all comfort to alleviate others' suffering, teaching the path of Vaiṣṇava bhakti.

**Humility:** Though revered by hundreds of thousands as a messenger of God, You always presented Yourself as a humble servant of Your Guru and of Kṛṣṇa, attributing every success solely to Their divine mercy.

**Power to transform lives:** Your love and example awaken devotion even in the hardest hearts; countless people, myself included, have left destructive habits and found a higher purpose thanks to Your teachings.

**Purity:** The transparency of Your life, untouched by material contamination, reflects Your complete surrender to Kṛṣṇa; this purity is felt in Your presence, beyond time and space, instilling peace and trust in all who approach You.

They guide my steps and remind me of the ideal of divine love I aspire to.

In my small way, I try to cultivate at least a spark of Your radiant bhakti in my life, so I may serve You better in spreading Your teachings and, one day, become a disciple in whom You are pleased.

There are no words sufficient to express my gratitude for all You have done and continue to do for me and for the whole world.

Deep in my heart I know that without Your mercy I would still be lost in the darkness of *māyā*; instead, thanks to You, I have found the highest goal of life and the joy of devotional service to the Divine Couple, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

I promise that I will keep striving to apply Your teachings in my life and to share them with others, hoping to repay—at least in part—the immense debt of love I owe to You.

On this sacred day dedicated to You, I humbly offer this letter at Your lotus feet as a small sign of my love and devotion, praying to remain always under Your protection and Your radiant

spiritual guidance.

*Your grateful and devoted servant,*

Matsya Avatāra Dāsa

Initiation: 1977, May—Rome, Italy

Current location: Pisa, Italy

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## Gopimata Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you for your kindness and compassion. Thank you for your ability to see right through the tamasic layers that cover our pure soul. To us, these layers appear to be very complicated and important, but you see that they can be easily removed by the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I read in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* how Kāmsa ordered Lord Kṛṣṇa's uncle, the great devotee, Akrūra, to bring Kṛṣṇa and Balaram to Mathurā. Kāmsa's mischievous plan was to destroy our Heroes, but Akrūra was obliged to do his bidding in spite of this.

Śrī Akrūra said: O King, you have expertly devised a process to free yourself of misfortune. Still, one should be equal in success and failure, since it is certainly destiny that produces the results of one's work. An ordinary person is determined to act on his desires even when fate prevents their fulfillment. Therefore, he encounters both happiness and distress. Yet even though such is the case, I will execute your order. [SB 10.36.38-39]

Akrūra understood Kāmsa's mentality – how in our conditioned state, we are determined to constantly endeavor to avoid personal inconvenience and to manipulate in any way we can to bring temporary happiness. When our plan fails, we are so disturbed and surprised! Even knowing this, Akrūra appeared to be serving

Kaṁsa, while internally he wanted only to see Kṛṣṇa and to serve the Lord's ultimate purpose.

In a later pastime, the *Syamantaka* jewel was left in Akrūra's care after it had been stolen – he was again in a very messy situation that seemed to cause more inconvenience for the Lord. In each case Lord Kṛṣṇa understood the heart of his devotee and helped him through such an externally awkward situation.

Similarly, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you certainly know the desire of your devotees and are interested in the intention held in their heart of hearts.

Whenever your devotee tries sincerely to serve you, even though imperfectly, or in awkward circumstances, an auspicious result unfolds. Wherever you are, Kṛṣṇa is there offering us all protection and help.

May we always take this help and use any ability we may have to give this opportunity to others who are suffering in miserable material consciousness. May they become as fortunate as Akrūra and have the opportunity to serve the Lord in the way you have expertly shared with us.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Gopimata Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1977, July—London, UK

Current location: Baldwin, Kansas, USA

Contact: gopisandal108@gmail.com

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## Nanda Kumar Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the fragrant and divinely decorated dust of your lotus feet which is the shelter of the entire universe.

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

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

## The Golden Lake

As Śrī Rādhikā washed the haldi from her delicate hands that resembled lotus buds, the blue waters of the lake turned a golden yellow. As if in a trance of divine love, she continued to wash her hands as her sculpted fingers pressed one another. Fully immersed in thoughts of the blue lotus that filled her heart, she did not realize that her hands were free of the yellow dye.

Her *gopī* friend remarked “Oh Rādhā..it looks that you washed not only your hands but your heart as well. The waters of this lake are now golden and it is overflowing its banks due to your heart’s affection.”

## Your Divine Grace

Diving deep into this golden lake of divine love, its essence, compassion, was infused into your heart as you descended from Goloka.

Your Bhaktivedānta purports...purifying and transformative are the complexion of your *bhāva* and mood of love.

## My Prayer

It is only by surrender and grace that the intensity of my hearing progresses from casual to committed to transformative. I humbly beg for a drop of that golden nectar to fall upon my head.

*Your servant,*

Nanda Kumar das

Initiation: 1977, September—Durban, South Africa

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## Prahlada Bhakta dasa

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

I have recently been watching the early sections of the video, ‘Following Śrīla Prabhupāda’, wherein your disciples from that time provide a running commentary on the glories of ISKCON back then. I wonder what you would think of ISKCON 2025?

Be that as it may, there is little to be practically gained by me expressing my opinion; so instead let me concentrate on appreciating the gifts you have given me. And the greatest of which, is a conduit

to God. What greater benefit is there in this life than to know that Kṛṣṇa cares for me; and that I can build a relationship with Him by way of the process you have provided?

I do hope that what you gave us back then will in some way survive beyond my lifetime and beyond, so that if/when I come back it will still provide the means of achieving the ultimate goal of life.

Thank you.

*Your servant,*

Prahlada Bhakta Dasa

Initiation: 1977, September—Sydney, Australia

Current location: Ireland

Contact: murphypjb@gmail.com

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## Jivananda Das Vanacari

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I cannot find a way to express my deep gratitude to you for your compassionate mercy.

Webster uses the description of “compassion or forbearance shown especially to an offender” in its definition of “mercy”. Having left the loving association of Lord Kṛṣṇa to attempt to enjoy His resources separate from Him, I am truly an offender living in a world of offenders deserving punishment rather than mercy. Just as many outlaws fled to the Southwestern United States in the early days of the “Wild West” to escape the authority of the law, I and innumerable other living entities have fled to this material world to escape the authority of the Supreme law, the desires of Kṛṣṇa.

Although I am an offender and have no qualification whatsoever, still you showered your infinite mercy upon me and gave me a whole new way of life, a whole new spiritual perspective, and you issued me a spiritual pardon that changed my degraded destiny

along with the destinies of so many other of the souls around me. It was not your mission to track down the offenders and issue due punishment to them, rather, your mission remains to collect the offenders and offer them a chance to escape their continued self-inflicted eternal suffering and regain their lost loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa and return back to home. Thus, your mercy is like an amnesty or a “get out of jail free card” and is, therefore, the most valuable gift to possibly be bestowed upon anyone imprisoned in this material world.

Your mercy is something that continues to expand the more I try to give it away to others. So often as I travel from place-to-place people will ask me “please give me your mercy” and I swiftly reply, “my mercy is very little, but I am authorized to give you Śrīla Prabhupāda’s unlimited ocean of mercy”. It is the duty of the disciple to freely distribute his guru’s mercy to all living entities and thereby offer them an alternative to their destiny of suffering through endless repeated birth and death.

As soon as I met you through reading your *Bhagavad-gītā* I felt my life change. I immediately felt the urgency to share your *Gītā* wisdom with the souls around me and, as I did that, I witnessed their lives change as well as the lives of their associates, wives, children, and now their grandchildren. Sharing this opportunity to escape our darkened destinies with others was the first truly satisfying enjoyment that I remember ever experiencing. Giving to others what you had given to me became the greatest pleasure that I had ever known, and I became completely addicted to pleasing you by distributing your mercy to other offenders and it became the goal of my life.

And so now, as the clock keeps ticking and time is running out for this body, I am feeling an even deeper desire along with deeper challenges to track down more offenders and bestow upon them your mercy to save them from the certainty of eternal suffering. At this point in my life, although my body is slowing down and my physical and mental energy is less, I am deeply gladdened to see that so many of those with whom I have previously shared your mercy have also become addicted to sharing your mercy with the world and are now working tirelessly to spread your movement through the profuse distribution of your transcendental books, Kṛṣṇa *kīrtan*, Kṛṣṇa *kathā*, and Kṛṣṇa *Prasādam*. They have received a better, happier life and want to share their good fortune with others.

I beg you to please continue to empower me with the ability to touch the hearts of the offenders in this material world and to distribute to them your sweet mercy as long as I possibly can.

*Your unworthy servant,*

Jivananda dasa Vanacari

2 April, 2025

Initiation: 1977, September—Pennsylvania, USA

Current location: USA

Contact: jivananda.dasa@yahoo.com

## Kratu Dasa

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Hare Krishna, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I offer my deepest gratitude for your boundless, causeless mercy and compassion in spreading Krishna consciousness across the globe. Although I was born into a family rooted in the Gauḍīya Vaishnava tradition, I had moved to America for studies and began working there. However, after becoming involved in temple service alongside my devoted wife, Amrita Keli Devi Dasi, we had the great fortune of meeting you and receiving your blessings.

In our meeting, you encouraged me to become a preacher, saying that while there are many doctors and engineers in the world, true preachers are rare. Motivated by your instruction, I left my professional career and began preaching in earnest. I continue to serve to this day, relying on your divine mercy and strength.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, your compassion is unparalleled. You recognized the spiritual potential in every soul and, understanding the will of the Supreme Father, you freely distributed love of Godhead to all beings without discrimination. You were not confined by national boundaries but took Mahāprabhu's mission to every corner of the world. Even at an advanced age, you endured great hardships to teach and spread this divine philosophy, handing over the sacred mission so that all souls may return to Godhead.

Your vision inspired many, including myself, to join this spiritual army, dedicated to liberating conditioned souls. You introduced *Harināma saṅkīrtana* and Rathayātrā festivals worldwide, and like

Haridas Thakur explained, your loud *kīrtan* continues to uplift not just humans but all living beings.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you truly embodied the verse ‘*Amāninā Mānadena*’ — offering respect to all while expecting none for yourself. Despite the many challenges you faced while establishing ISKCON, you remained humble and respectful to everyone. Tirelessly, you translated the sacred texts—*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and *Caitanya Caritāmṛita*—making them accessible and understandable to people everywhere, conveying Lord Krishna’s intended message for the fallen souls of Kali-yuga.

The knowledge shared by our great saints—beyond the grasp of modern science—continues to amaze. You stand among those exalted souls, a genuine representative in the *paramparā*, chosen by the Lord Himself to deliver the most confidential spiritual truths. Your life is a living example of pure devotion, offering the simplest yet most profound path back to Godhead.

I consider it the highest honor and greatest fortune to be accepted as your disciple. I can never repay the debt of mercy you have shown. All I can offer is my sincere and humble effort to serve your instructions.

Each day, my thoughts remain absorbed in your teachings, your example, your *kīrtan*, your books, the ISKCON you founded, and the sacred *prasādam* you gave us. I humbly beg for one blessing only—that my body, speech, and mind remain forever engaged in serving Krishna consciousness at your lotus feet.

*Your eternally indebted servant,*

HG Kratu Das Adhikari

Initiation: 1977, September—Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Current location: Vrindavan, India

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## Dhira Das

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My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you on this transcendental occasion of your merciful appearance in this material world, to deliver all of us fallen, conditioned souls from our miserly misery to the blissful abode of Krishna Consciousness in Lord Caitanya’s *Harināma Saṅkīrtana!*

Thank you for coming to the West on the order of your spiritual master, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvami Prabhupāda, so dutifully carrying out his desire in *paramparā* at great personal sacrifice and tribulation in this hellish, materialistic country. The way you established Krishna Consciousness in this dark place demonstrates that you are always directly in tune with his order, as everything was divinely facilitated by the transcendental arrangement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. There was a Hare Krishna Explosion in America, which is still going on today all over the world. It must be pleasing for Your Divine Grace to know that incredible preaching programs and festivals are being organized all over the world and Krishna Consciousness continues to expand by your mercy.

It's truly wonderful to see so many devotees blossoming in their Krishna Consciousness now. This gives us much hope that your this movement will continue to spread to every town and village:

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

“In every town and village throughout the world,” said Lord Caitanya, “the chanting of My holy name will be heard.”

We have experienced this incredible transformation of human society spread more and more in this lifetime by the transcendental influence of your preaching, translations, book publication, distribution, establishment of Temples and centers (which are like oases for devotees to purify their consciousness with Deity worship, *Nāma-saṅkīrtana* and Krishna-*prasādam* distribution). Now future generations are already carrying your transcendental desire forward, with faith, conviction and love by your mercy, all over the world.

*yāre dekha, tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-upadeśa  
āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra' ei deśa*

**“Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they are given in the Bhagavad-gītā and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land.”**

There are so many reverses and upheavals in this material world, but your mercy and service is the one constant that keeps us sane and happy as we traverse this temporary lifetime. We love studying your

books and chanting Hare Krishna on a regular, daily basis. Please bless me that I may be able to continue improving the quality of my hearing and chanting, thus purifying my own consciousness and hopefully becoming a good example of the kind of devotee you want me to be. I beg to remain,

*Your very insignificant servant,*

Dhira dasa

Initiation: 1977, September—Washington, USA

Current location: Orange Park, Florida, USA

Contact: dnrealtor@gmail.com

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## Guru Carana Padma Devi Dasi

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I have been meditating on the word Shelter and understanding the meaning and the impact in my life of the shelter you have given.

When we have shelter we feel safe, secure and protected.

This world is full of danger....as you say danger at every step. This material world, in which there is fear and danger at every step (*padam padam yad vipadām*), is not meant for those who have taken shelter at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. Such persons are delivered from this fearful world. Every more frequently we hear that because of climate changes there is an increase in floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, violent storms, earthquakes, fires. Even our homes.... the places where we feel we can have shelter we may lose. So it seems that there is no guaranteed shelter in this material world.

We all seek shelter - a place that makes us feel protected, safe, secure, warm, dry. Śrīla Prabhupāda – your shelter is what we pray for - that is the spiritual shelter you have given us. A refuge from the many paradigms of the world we live in.

You Śrīla Prabhupāda have given us the utmost shelter from such a multitude of reasons to feel insecure in this world. You have given

- Shelter from from the storm of material life, trying to prosper materially whilst neglecting our spiritual selves - instead you have introduced us to Vedic and Vaishnava culture which nourishes mind, body and soul
- Shelter from a culture where socialisation means getting

together and “having a drink”, eat, drink and be merry!  
And instead you introduced us to singing, dancing,  
serving, studying and Vaishnava *saṅga*

- Shelter from a world that is intent on killing animals in the most brutal ways and consuming them in the name of “delicacies” and instead you introduced us to the most delicious animal friendly and blessed *prasādam*
- Shelter from a frenzied world of mental speculators, pseudo philosophers and atheists and instead introduced us to a clear, rational and sound philosophy of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*
- Shelter from relationships that have no depth or meaning and instead you introduced us to the loving exchanges between devotees of the Lord and how to share deep realisations and inspire and support each other
- Shelter from a world in which language can be foul and habits may be unclean, and introduced us to brahminical culture
- Shelter from a world unnecessarily complicated, exploitative and entangling and introduced us to a more simple way of life, depending on nature, cows and respecting mother earth

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, your shelter is all that we are seeking in this life. Please continue to protect us from all the negative influences around. Through your books, your lectures and the path that you have set us on we feel very much at peace and hope to develop fearlessness.

This year was the first visit to Māyāpur/Vrindāvan for over 15 years. How these yatras have grown in size and influence. Pilgrims from around the world come together to hear, chant, study, take refuge and shelter. This is all emanating from your vision - The Temple of the Vedic Planetarium nearing its completion is a phenomenal masterpiece that it majestically fills the skies of Śrī Māyāpur Dhām.

I vision you smiling upon us all and showering your mercy, love on us all and giving us the complete shelter that we are always seeking - we feel safe, secure and best situated at your lotus feet and engaged in your service.

*With immense gratitude,  
Your aspiring servant,*

## Krishnanamananda Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

All glories of Your Divine Grace, which you spread all over the world. You have crossed the ocean to fulfil the instructions of your spiritual master and fulfill the mission of Lord Chaitanya.

Your determination and dedication to the *guru* have created a miracle that we can observe now: you have fulfilled Lord Caitanya's wish by spreading the Krishna Consciousness Movement all over the world.

You have given Krishna consciousness to Westerners by giving them the highest goal of life, teaching them the standards of brahminical life and empowering them to perform spiritual feats: printing and distributing books, opening temples, and so on.

You have returned to Dhama with your Western followers to give a new impetus to the Movement of Lord Chaitanya here in Bhārata Varsha and inspire its inhabitants to follow *Sanātana Dharma!*

Now we are witnessing a miracle, as your disciples, faithful to your teachings, continue to spread your mercy widely throughout the world.

When I was a child, our family came to Māyāpur, driven by the war in Bangladesh. It was the very beginning of ISKCON's history in Māyāpur.

My father and mother have taken shelter at your lotus feet. And we were sent to the gurukula and raised in ISKCON. Of course, these were not easy times, sometimes it was very difficult, but we have always remained faithful and grateful to you for the priceless gift of Krishna consciousness. Our mother served in the kitchen, cooking *prasādam* for the devotees. My father sang kirtan in the temple. My brothers and I were at the *gurukul*, receiving the association of devotees and working for the community.

You have always been very kind to children. When you visited Māyāpur, you distributed sweets to the *Gurukuls* during the

*Guru-Pūjā*. And our teachers brought us to your lectures. You gave classes in English, I didn't understand anything then. But we have always listened to you with full attention. Some *gurukul* boys led by Bhavananda Maharaj with temple and *nāmahatṭa* devotees led by Guru Kripa Maharaj in 1977 went to Kumbhamelā, where we recited the *Gītārgān* by heart in front of you. You were very pleased with us and said: "Thank you very much!"

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you saved us! If it weren't for you, we would just be living a hopeless karmic life, committing sinful activities.

The Krishna Consciousness Movement you have established is growing year by year. And now it's not just about the West: now thousands and thousands of Indians are joining it. They visit Māyāpur and become devotees. This is what you wanted. The construction of the Vedic Planetarium Temple also undoubtedly brings you great joy.

You have established this society to enable everyone to develop spiritually and achieve the highest goal of life – love for God. You have given us your books, your instructions. You have given us everything we need to achieve this. You have given your whole life to Krishna, and you have asked us to do the same by spreading the mission of Lord Chaitanya.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I bow down at your lotus feet again and again. What can I offer to you? When I was young, I worked for ISKCON, I did pujari service, *saṅkīrtana*, and so on. Now, my offering to you is to be serious in my spiritual practice and help others to do so.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am forever in your debt!

*Your humble servant and disciple,*

Krishnanamananda Das

Initiation: 1977, September—Māyāpur, India

Current location: Māyāpur, Nadia, West Bengal, India

Contact: yasasvinisrs@mail.ru

## Deva Deva Dasa

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Jaya Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances.

Chanting and dancing were a staple in my Kṛṣṇa conscious upbringing in *Gurukula* in Dallas and Vṛndāvana.

Dancing wildly in the *kīrtans* was promoted as well as jumping super high.

There would be a *kīrtan* before Śrīla Prabhupāda's lecture, where he sat on his *Vyāsāsana* and would observe the gathering of people, and some would offer him respects and speak with him.

This took place in the courtyard of Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Mandir, near the *tamāl* tree. We would make two lines, one on either side of the *Vyāsāsana*, allowing a walkway for people to walk up to Śrīla Prabhupāda. Each line on the periphery had three to five of us *gurukula* children dancing with our arms raised.

Initiation: 1977, October—Vrindavan, India

Contact: dfour108@gmail.com

## Sarnga Thakur Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Praying at your lotus feet, I submit the following:

I feel like I am being attacked from all sides.

My mind is reeling, but unlike Gajendra, I have no lotus flower to offer,

only a deep but flickering desire to fully surrender.

Let me immerse myself in your books Śrīla Prabhupāda; then with strengthened intelligence, I can make better choices, and see things more clearly.

A devotee is not disturbed by the waves of fortune or calamity.

His foundation and security, his life and purpose are

absorbed in *guru* and Krishna.

I wish to be like that.

Let me accept the diminishing capabilities of this body, and see it as an opportunity

to please you, and serve the devotees in other ways.

Let me not neglect my efforts at maintaining whatever health I have.

With fortified and purified consciousness, I can see the lesson and purpose within every bit of struggle.

Humbled by life and your's and Krishna's ministrations, let me gratefully extract

the milk from the water of every situation.

Let me not depend on creature comforts as my mainstay or emotional support.

After all such fleeting pleasures are temporary, fallible indulgences - a last resort for which we pay a price.

I pray to recognize the difference between what pleases my mind and senses, and what pleases you, even in the little things I take for granted.

I pray for courage.

But I think all I need will come from the steady study of your books, and the prioritizing of my chanting of Krishna's Holy Names - especially giving *japa* the best times of the day.

So whatever habits linger, that derail this focus, may I see them as *anarthas*, and not the bewitching rewards of the day.

All glories to the spirit of improvement, hope, and surrender, that helps to create this inspiration.

All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda; along with Krishna, you are the source for all of it.

May I always serve alongside your devotees, and relish the sweetness that thrives there.

*Your eternal servant,*

Sarnga Thakur dasa

Initiation: 1977, October—Potomac, MD, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

Contact: thakur853@gmail.com

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## Krishna-kirtana Devi Dasi

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your Divine Grace, well-wisher of humanity!

Kindly allow me please to express my gratitude on this auspicious day for pulling me out of this materialistic world and holding my hand through the trials of remnants of past karma and consequences in this lifetime. By your mercy I have the opportunity to develop love of God while practicing *sādhana* and pure devotional service at your lotus feet. Please forgive my offenses and bless me so I can co-operate humbly and dedicate my last years following your instructions to develop *sanātana* or *daiivī* VAD in our rural community in the centre of France. I know that everything is possible by your grace and I'm happy to be part of your mission in the field of Education. Please kindly keep me in the shelter of your lotus feet.

*Your servant,*

Krishna-kirtana devi dasi

Initiation: 1977, November—France

Current location: New Māyāpura, France

Contact: v.verrier108@gmail.com

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## Mahapurana Das

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept our most respectful obeisances. All glories to you.

*aṁśo bhagavato 'smy ahaṁ  
sadā dāso 'smi sarvathā  
tat-kṛpāpekṣako nityaṁ  
tat-preṣṭha-sāt karomi svam*

We are tiny particles of the Supreme Lord, so we are always and eternally His servants. As we are always hoping for His mercy and kindness, we take shelter of His dear most servitor, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please allow us to assist you in your service to the Divine Couple!

*Your servant,*

Mahapurana dasa

Initiation: 1977, November—New Orleans, USA

Current location: USA

## Devaprastha Dasa

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*tad viddhi praṇipātena  
pariprasnena sevayā  
upadekṣyanti te jñānaṁ  
jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*

Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

With humility, I approach you, recognizing that only through your grace can I understand the truth. Only a true spiritual master like you can bestow the torch of knowledge, as you have seen Krishna.

I deeply thank you for always being present in my heart, guiding me despite the storms.

In the midst of the difficulties following your departure, I continue to struggle in this ship that sails through the tempests of life. Sometimes I wonder how I can improve my service, as you have taught that appreciation and collaboration are fundamental. The confusing forces of this world surround us, and I often feel the weight of my forced isolation.

However, I find refuge in you, dear Master. Thank you for allowing me to maintain my connection with you, despite the doubts. I know that at the end of this dark tunnel, there is a light emanating from your divine being. I am one of your disciples who

longs to be rescued from this ocean of birth and death. I recognize that many have faltered, but my devotion remains steadfast, seeking your salvation.

In this letter, I wish to highlight the storm of confusion we live in today, without going into details, but acknowledging the urgent need for clarity and guidance on this turbulent path.

I thank you for your love and for being the beacon in my life. I hope that, in eternity, your light will rescue me.

*With gratitude and devotion,*

Devaprastha Dasa

Initiation: 1977

Current location: New Vraja Mandala, Spain

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