Homages

Other Sources
Dear Śrila Prabhupāda,

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

This year’s Vyāsa-pūjā celebration is another chance for us to appreciate what Your Divine Grace has bequeathed to us and to lay bare with all humility how we are trying to connect with other souls on planet earth through the academic outreach preaching program. This report is for January to April 2008.

In January 2008 we participated in Harvard Business School’s working knowledge seminar, themed “Does Experience Trump Judgment?” In my presentation I pointed out that the young sannyāsī Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was able to defeat the experienced and highly respected Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī in philosophical debate, and thus true transcendental judgment trumps any amount of materialistic experience.

In April of this year we participated in a conference on human rights at Bethany College, in West Virginia. Our paper, entitled “The Presidency and Requital Epistemology: A Vedantic Approach” was well received by many of the scholars in attendance. In fact, the president of the sponsoring institution was particularly friendly and invited me to make several more presentations, one at a conference in June of this year in Alaska, and another at a conference slated for January 2009 in Kolkata.

We pray that Your Divine Grace bless us with proper humility and empowerment to be able to plant the seeds of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in these academic fora.

Your servants at the Academic Outreach Preaching Program.

(written by Vāsudeva Dāsa)

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My beloved grand-spiritual-master,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your transcendental mission!

It is difficult to put into words the feelings of gratitude that pervade this aspiring servant. After I had spent lifetimes looking for a way to connect to the Absolute Truth, Your Divine Grace took pity on me and provided the means for achieving spiritual freedom. Through your invaluable commentated translations of the Vedic scriptures, you reached deep into my mind and forcibly pulled me out of my deep adherence to Māyāvāda philosophy. You then sent a series of your disciples to inundate me with your love and vision for a Kṛṣṇa conscious world.

Determined to make some contribution to your mission, I created the Ātmā Yoga program. This has been a concerted effort to stand up to the alarmingly fast-growing trend in impersonalistic yoga, and to have something Kṛṣṇa conscious to offer those who are determined to engage in a physical yoga practice.

By your mercy and the mercy of your dear disciple Bhakti Tīrtha Swami, devotees have been enlivened by this program. We have seen intelligent, educated individuals take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness, even become twice initiated. We have seen many professional people become friends and supporters of ISKCON, even offering their time, property, money, and experience to grow Kṛṣṇa conscious programs.

The motivation to develop Ātmā Yoga came from two sentences in your Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam:

The expert devotees also can discover novel ways and means to convert the nondevotees in
terms of particular time and circumstance. Devotional service is a dynamic activity, and the expert devotees can find out competent means to inject it into the dull brains of the materialistic population. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.5.17, purport]

Eight years later this instruction still resonates in my mind. I pray that I and all the Ātmā Yogis around the world may continue endeavoring to serve you and that by your mercy we might somehow please you and the devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

*Your grateful servants in the Ātmā Yoga programs around the world.*

(written by Ātmānanda Dāsa)

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**Austin Nāma-haṭṭa**

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet thousands of times, again and again, from all sides.

On this most auspicious and blessed anniversary of your holy appearance in this material world, I, one of your granddisciples, want to glorify Your Divine Grace and express my gratitude. But since I am a most unworthy and unqualified servant of your blessed and worthy servants, without your mercy I cannot even begin to attempt to glorify you. You once wrote to your disciple, “Your task ahead is very huge, but it will be quite simple and easy if you simply do as I am doing.” That “simply doing as I am doing” is the most difficult of the tasks for an unworthy servant of your worthy servants. It can only happen by your mercy.

With strong, unflinching faith in your spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa, you carried the instruction of your Guru Mahārāja to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the English-speaking Western world. But why stop there? You also spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the people of the entire planet by tirelessly traveling and simultaneously translating, printing, and distributing the Vedic literature. This you did to benefit the fallen jīvas.

Śrīla Rupa Goswami said that everything, even so-called material things, can be used in Kṛṣṇa’s service. You demonstrated this by establishing the *bhāt-mrdanga* of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, which oversees the printing and distribution of your transcendental literatures. In this way you completely fulfilled the orders of your Guru Mahārāja.

Now, following in your footsteps, your sincere disciples are carrying out your instructions. Not only are they traveling all over the world, but they are also using modern electronic mass-communication media to spread your message to every nook and corner of the entire planet. In this way, they are helping you save fallen souls like me.

It is said in the Vedic scriptures that although Kṛṣṇa resides in His eternal abode in His original form, He also pervades everything in this material world. Similarly, although Your Divine Grace resides in the spiritual world, participating in the eternal pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, you are also here among us in the form of your teachings. Through the institution you established, your sincere disciples and granddisciples are now spreading your teachings throughout the world to the jīvas thirsty for Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

You instructed your disciples to make the Austin center a grand success, and even though we have a very small Nāma-haṭṭa here, we have been holding programs regularly for the last seventeen years. I feel blessed to be a member of ISKCON’s Austin Nāma-haṭṭa, though I am unworthy.
Though I was introduced to your teachings in 1974 and was fortunate to have a glimpse of Your Divine Grace in Hyderabad in 1976 on Janmāñöamé day, and although I have had the association of your followers for twenty-five years, it was not until I moved to Austin nine years ago that I have gotten continuous, rigorous training and close supervision. May your instructions, coming from your followers, penetrate my dull head and remove all my anarthas. Then I may gradually advance in bhakti without any regressions, though I know it may take many lifetimes for me to become perfect in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we aspire to serve you eternally,

Your servants at the Nāma-haööa program in Austin, Texas, USA.

(written by Vāmana Hari Dāsa)
Dearest Jagat-guru Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to you on this most auspicious day! Kindly accept my humble obeisances.

By giving me your darśana you allowed me to peek through a window of the spiritual world. Although it was a brief encounter, the lasting image of a real Vaikuṇṭha man softened my heart and captured my full attention. At those moments I got to see what life should be like. Those images cannot fade, because of their quality; everything else in this material world seems dull and uninteresting next to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Seeing your power-packed spiritual qualities, I learned more in those moments than in lifetimes. You took the time and precious energy to touch each of your thousands of children. Such dignity: the weight of the world was on you, but you did not show any strain. You taught us to work hard, to be sincere and transparent, and to carefully nurture our loving relationship with God and guru, for it is the only lasting one we have. Chant, dance, and be happy—Kṛṣṇa will do the rest.

So how is it that I have maintained this private tug of war? Why have I maintained foolish notions, such as that any of my endeavors could have an effect on results? Please kick these anarthas away with your beautiful lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Make me dance, make me dance to your tune of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. I am still your silly daughter, still not getting it quite right, yet holding on to the audacious desire that you will at last transform me into your transparent servant.

Your example, while you were personally here with us all, was flawless: Always engaging in Kṛṣṇa’s service but never claiming any reward; age did not slow you; material energy did not distract you; austerity was your friend.

After you left this world, you did not leave me. You were there each time I called; even though I am so undeserving, I have felt you with me every step of the way.

I cling to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. In this whirlwind of material existence, you are my stability. Service to you is the only thing of value in my life. My master, you are expert and most merciful. Please find some use for this groveling, weighed-down soul. You work miracles. Please lift this burden of material consciousness and animate me so that I may simply dance in your glorious service. Until that time, I will continue to rely on your causeless mercy, which is all that I am made of. And I will endeavor to share a drop of that mercy you so liberally showered on all of us.

I beg to remain your eternal servant and pray that you will benevolently soften my stonelike heart.

Your servants at the Bhaktivedanta Benevolent Association & Govinda’s Cafe, Sunshine Coast, Queensland, Australia.

(written by Viśāliṇī Devī Dāsī)
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

\[\text{nāma oṁ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preśthāya bhū-tale} \\
\text{sūrīma bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine} \]

\[\text{nāmas te sārasvate deve gaura-vānī-pracāriñe} \\
\text{nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādī-pāścātya-deśa-tārine} \]

Divine grace. This is the best expression to describe the special significance of you and your personality. Mankind has so many well-wishers, but somehow or other no one can make the lives of the materialistic people in this world simple, happy, and spiritually pure. These days we very rarely see great personalities who can show by their selfless efforts the way toward spiritual perfection and devotional service to God. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a very special soul, the personification of Kṛṣṇa’s mercy upon us, for your taught us Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And you did not present it in some abstract, mystical way but by practical down-to-earth examples that any sincere person can understand and follow.

Some people say that love is the only important thing in this world and that it can cure every sort of problem. But what is this love? Do we really know what it is? Can we love anyone else but ourselves? Once you said that love means to give someone what he needs. So our task is to understand what we and others really need. Of course, it’s not so easy! How could someone clearly see his own interest without knowing himself? But you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, showed us how to know ourselves:

Perfection of human life is attained when one can understand that he is not the product of matter but is in fact spirit. And as soon as one understands that he has nothing to do with matter, he at once ceases his material hankerings and becomes enlivened as a spiritual being. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.20, purport]

[One] must realize his relationship and the relationship of all other living entities with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.29.25, purport]

[The] position of self-realization, or understanding of one’s real relationship with the Supreme Lord, makes one completely satisfied, and the three modes of material nature, which are the cause of all disturbances, cannot affect him. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.27.25]

A person in full consciousness of Me, knowing Me to be the ultimate beneficiary of all sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Lord of all planets and demigods, and the benefactor and well-wisher of all living entities, attains peace from the pangs of material miseries. [Bhagavad-gītā 5.29]

By your mercy we have been able to start a state-accredited college in Hungary that transmits the teachings in your purports to Bhagavad-gītā, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, and other books. This is your victory, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda! Mundane authorities and ordinary people both acknowledge that your teachings are valuable, glorious, and special. And those people who come here and listen to you after millions of births of illusion recognize the great value of your teachings. They learn that the only way they can be fully satisfied (suprasiddati) is by following these teachings.

\[\text{sa vai purīsāṁ paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhokṣaje} \\
\text{ahaituky apratihatā yayātāṁ suprasīdati} \]
"The supreme occupation for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendent Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self." (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.6)

This is your secret, Śrīla Prabhupāda! You give us what we need: spiritual master, spiritual knowledge, devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, and the holy name. What else do we need? Nothing. These things can really change our hearts and our lives. Your desire to save others is our desire now, and we intend to do our best to liquidate our debt to you with love, till the last moment of our lives.

Your servants at Bhaktivedanta College, Budapest, Hungary.

(written by Gaura Kṛṣṇa Dāsa)
7. As an indicator of the College’s lively yet sober cultural atmosphere, following the success of its first music CD, College students have this year brought out a new music CD with beautiful chanting of verses from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

We feel confident that your desire for “boiling the milk” by increasing the devotional qualifications of dedicated members of your ISKCON is being facilitated in important ways by Bhaktivedanta College. We pray for your blessings that we never become overconfident but rather always remain your humble servants in the execution of the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the world and to strike deep roots in cultures of the world, aided by intelligent, well-educated Vaiṣṇavas.

Your humble servants at Bhaktivedanta College, Radhadesh, Septon-Durbuy, Belgium.

(written by Kṛṣṇa Kṣetra Dāsa and Yadunandana Dāsa)

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Bhaktivedanta Gurukula and International School

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you!

yāñhāra kṛpāte mlecchera haya kṛṣṇa-bhakti ke kahite pāre tāṅra vaiṣṇavatā-śakti?

“He is such a great personality that by His mercy He can convert even the meat-eaters to the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa. Who, therefore, can estimate the power of His Vaiṣṇavism?” (Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya 7.20)

The world is a troubled place, surely
Your purports speak to the same disease,
Your solution is still the best,
Way ahead of all the rest.

Evening time at Kṛṣṇa-Balarām Mandir.
The kīrtana begins and the people come.
They begin dance, O how they dance and clap.
They can’t resist.
It can’t be missed.

Watching them,
I recall your chanting
In Tompkins Square Park
Back in the 60s, when you began
Teaching the Vaiṣṇava way.

It’s the same mantra,
It’s the same beginning
For these souls
In 2008.

Their journey begun.

How gloriously you sat there alone,
Chanting with intensity.
Only you knew the power of the holy name,
Only you carried that power,
Only you gave it.

How gloriously you sat there alone,
No Deities, no support. No one knew
Or cared about you.
You had that faith,
You had that order,
You had that complete surrender and dependence on Kṛṣṇa—
How glorious!

To sit there
With no introduction,
To sing into the hearts of lost and lonely souls.

Now we are comfortable
In our big movement, with acceptance,
Invitations, plenty to eat, plenty of support to defend your good name,
And to chant the holy name.

But do we remember?
Lest we become comfortable in our complacency,
With our ‘luxury’ troubles and superficial introspection.

Would anyone go and sit
In an unknown world?
Could we be as brave as you?
Can we become carriers of the holy name?

Not after fame but trying to heal the
Shame
Of lost lives and recognition of our level of consciousness
When the light of Kṛṣṇa consciousness comes on.

Forget the seven wonders of the world—
Empty buildings signifying nothing but wasted time.
You are the wonder of wonders
Of all the seven wonders and more,
Changing lives daily
In every town and village in the world.
Saving us from untold miseries in this endless swirling ocean of birth and death.

We bow down at your lotus feet
And pray to serve your glorious and wonderful mission
Of education in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The staff and students at the Bhaktivedanta Guru-kula and International School, Vṛndāvana, India.

Ānanda Vṛndāvanesvāri Devī Dāsī

Bhaktivedanta Institute
(Berkeley and Mumbai)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you!

By your mercy, our scientific research aimed at presenting the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness has been progressing on a daily basis. By your divine arrangement, we have been able to publish a paper in the prestigious international journal Philosophy of Science (December 2007 issue). The editors of Philosophy of Science accept only 10% of submitted articles. The journal is displayed in all the libraries at big universities and institutes around the world, and it is read by several thousand researchers and graduate students.

By your inspiration and mercy we have also been able to introduce a brand new concept, called quantum haecceity, in another new paper. This concept was presented by Rasarāja Prabhu at a recent conference, and the organizer, a well-known physicist, later wrote to say the presentation was “mind-blowing.” This concept expands some of the scientific ideas in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.26.34 and translates them into a language that scientists can understand.

On another front, we have been continuing the M.S./Ph.D. program in consciousness studies, which is offered in collaboration with the Birla Institute of Technology and Science (Pilani, India). As in the past,
This year we received many applications, and we selected five of the best, including two outstanding students from France and the USA. None of these MS students have had prior contact with ISKCON. If more resources were made available to your B.I., we could easily take twenty more students. We really hope we can add at least five post-doctoral fellows in the coming year. This will help us expand the faculty and research in a big way. Research, as you repeatedly emphasized, is most basic and essential for the development of your B.I.

We also prepared a multimedia presentation for the GBC members this year, entitled “On Proving the Existence of God on a Scientific Basis.” This is a humble effort in the direction indicated by Your Divine Grace: “Advanced people are eager to understand the Absolute Truth through the medium of science, and therefore a great scientist should endeavor to prove the existence of the Lord on a scientific basis” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.5.22).

An upcoming issue of The Times of India, with literally millions of readers, will carry a small item based on this presentation.

Deity worship is unique to Hinduism. Scientifically inclined people are apt to regard the very notion of the Deity as imagination. They may argue that the Deity is our concept of what is in reality only a stone. Can the Deity be shown to be real in the scientific, objective sense? This is essentially the task of showing scientifically a connection between our concepts and physical reality, a problem that Western scientists and philosophers have unsuccessfully grappled with since the time of Plato. Albert Einstein wrote, for example: “The fact that by means of operations with concepts the world can be put in order leaves us in awe, but it is [a fact] which we shall never understand.”

The problem is that Newtonian science, also called classical physics, has a very limited conception of objects. Classical physics states that two objects—one made of wood, the other of metal, say—can never be regarded as physically the same. Yet in commonsense thinking we might regard the two as being the same object, say a table. Classical physics would regard a table as having no underlying special physical reality. Yet, for all of us, a table is a real physical object, distinct from being a wooden or metal object.

Clearly, being a table has nothing to do with the nature of classical matter comprising an object. If so, being a Deity should also have nothing to do with the object being a stone from the classical viewpoint. Proving that the Deity exists, then, is connected to the possibility of relating concepts to the physical world in a nonclassical manner.

Here it is relevant to note that a macroscopic object already known to quantum physicists as a “blackbody” has properties (called the energy/frequency spectrum) that are independent of the classical matter of which it is made. However, the quantum mechanical (i.e., nonclassical) conception of a macroscopic object is not yet fully understood by quantum physicists, even after nearly a century. At the Bhaktivedanta Institute in Mumbai and Berkeley, scientists are making progress in developing a conception of the macroscopic world in terms of the Vedic concepts of five elements as information that goes beyond classical matter. In such a worldview, it is possible to scientifically understand that what appears as our mental concepts of classical material objects, namely tables and Deity, are in fact realities at different levels beyond matter as presently known to scientists. Therefore, scientifically speaking, it is more reasonable to admit the reality of the Deity than to insist that it is just a stone.

We are planning to revise and expand this multimedia presentation for a more general audience.

In the past few months we have revisited campus programs. Rasarāja Prabhu presented over a dozen lectures in Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Chennai, and Kanchipuram. Titles included “The Vedas and Modern Science” as well as “Quantum Physics and Reality.” Here are some comments from the students and faculty who attended:

A very wonderful talk was given by Rasarāja Dāsa, a very clear and wonderfully structured talk. These types of talks develop a nice platform of research in the Vedas and modern science. [faculty, sastras]

Very nice, your speech on the Vedas and modern science. Wonderful. I can’t believe this, unbelievable. Most important — this speech — for any study or person in any walk of life. [student, M.A. in Sanskrit and the Vedas]

In the present day this type of explanation is required for people so that they are satisfied and
have more faith in God. [faculty member, computer science]

Very good lecturer. The professor explained the relation connecting science and religion in a clear manner, particularly the physics concept. The multimedia presentation is very good. [faculty]

The vice chancellor of one of these universities raised the possibility of Rasarāja Prabhu occupying a chair for Vedic studies at his university.

We pray for your mercy. Kindly remove all obstacles to our service to Your Divine Grace.

Your servants at the Bhaktivedanta Institute, Mumbai and Berkeley

(written by Granthārāja Dāsa)

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**Book Distribution Ministry**

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

From 1970 until you departed from this world, you spent a good portion of your time traveling around India planting seeds of devotion all over the country. Temples were coming up in many places, but book distribution was not happening the way you wanted it to. The life membership department was distributing some books, but not that many. However, you predicted that in the future book distribution would be a great success in India.

Now that prediction has come true. Last year, 76% of the six million books distributed by your followers were distributed in India. Even though the degrading influence of Western materialistic culture is moving in very quickly in India, you have clearly inspired a reawakening of spiritual interest there.

This is great news for India. But that only 24% of all books were distributed outside India doesn’t say much for the rest of the world. The challenge is now to greatly increase book distribution in other countries. Without your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, it won’t be possible, so we’re praying for your kind shower of compassion upon the members of your ISKCON society so that more and more of us will understand the importance of distributing your books and take up the challenge.

Your servants at the Book Distribution Ministry.

(written by Vijaya Dāsa)
Centro Studi Bhaktivedanta

Dear Śrila Prabhupāda,

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

The Bhagavad-gītā teaches that scientific spiritual knowledge can be acquired by approaching a bona fide spiritual master, asking him questions, and serving him. While daily meditating on you, one of my primary feelings is gratitude, and the ensuing emotions firmly connect me to you. My gratitude flies to you because you have indicated and illuminated my path.

Who is the spiritual master? The sāstras answer: it is he who is always absorbed in the Absolute Truth and engaged in doing good for all creatures. Surrender to the spiritual master is the active principle of spiritual life. In many of your classes I’ve heard you say this. Surrender to the spiritual master means accepting his lifestyle; it means absorbing his teachings; it means surrendering ourselves to his life-project, becoming harmonious with his efforts. Only in this way can we be united to the paramparā and to God.

When I met you, I was looking not for a religious conversion but for light, knowledge, love. I did not know what they were, nor where they were. The meeting with you gave a clear direction to my life and gave me instruments in the quest for truth. I was looking for the meaning of existence, for God, and I met you. What a blessed meeting!

I was then at the height of my youthfulness, fame, and wealth, yet I felt an unexplainable void, a sense of existential inconsistency. I questioned my reasons for what I was doing and didn’t find them satisfactory. I found myself within a shadowy forest in moments of profound reflection, feeling a loss of sense and direction. Friendships and gratifying experiences no longer gave me satisfaction; they actually appeared to me as obstacles on my path toward an authentically constructive and evolutionary life.

In those years of stormy socio-cultural transformation, without pause I questioned my identity, the aim and the meaning of life. And consequently I wondered which noble ideal I could dedicate myself to. I felt I understood the biblical saying “Man shall not live by bread alone,” but I was still looking for what Dante called “the bread of angels,” authentic spiritual knowledge.

Śrila Prabhupāda, when I met you, you appeared to me as an authentic oracle, dispensing that holy bread. On that luminous summer morning in August 1976, you talked to me of the dreadful situation of humanity and the world; you described the degradation of human relations and the perennial state of conflict between man and nature; you told me it was urgent to become God conscious and love God. I listened to you, I took you seriously, and I followed your teachings. You asked me to study the Bhagavad-gītā, to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, to become a devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and I’ve done that. Eager to get to know you deeply, for ten years I’ve read exclusively your books, listened only to your classes, and dedicated my existence completely to you. As you asked me, I offered you my talents. Of my own initiative I have added my properties, my acquaintances, my economic means, my activities. And I am happy I have done that. Śrila Prabhupāda, I invested everything I had in you, and you have been the only object of my spiritual investment.

When I met you I surely needed someone to believe in, and among the many people I had met, your were unique. When I saw and listened to you for the first time, I immediately felt that it was a special occasion, that you were a special person, and that, by God’s grace, I was specially inclined to serve
you. So on that shining summer morning, in your āśrama, I felt the need and importance of surrendering myself to you.

Decades have passed since then, and as I think back to that day I feel it is the most fortunate day in my life. That day set in motion the process of my looking beyond appearances and searching for meanings more profound than the illusory scenery presented by the five senses. From you I have learned to look at people, at the world, at life through the eyes of the soul. By reading your books, listening to your lectures, and talking to your disciples I have understood which priorities to give my life. From you I have learned how to interact with people under the most varying circumstances. Thanks to you I have understood the importance of giving value to others and of connecting to God through service.

Perhaps I have not yet sufficiently learned the science of God, but I am pleased with my transformation, with the way I have walked. I feel that this satisfaction is not a product of the ego, but it is rather the profound contentment of the soul. It is to you I want to offer this pleasant disposition while thanking you for offering me your way of life, which became mine and made me deeply satisfied.

I still have a lot to discover, to do, to evolve toward, but as the Bhagavad-gītā (9.2) says, this path of bhakti is walked in joy. And it is this joy I want to offer you. Certainly I should also thank you for the other gifts you have granted me: for the peace in my family; for the transformation your teachings have produced in me, in my parents, and in my acquaintances; for how I have been able to keep my balance among the turbulences of the world, in the ups and downs which incarnated life entails. I am sure I’ve been able to remain solidly faithful to your values only thanks to you, to your teachings, to your way of life, to your vision, to your firm condemnations of the innumerable ways of illusion.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were and still are my model of life, my stable and luminous point of reference; that is why I love you deeply and trust your teachings and your compassion to continue to help me fill my gaps.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please help me appreciate nature even when it appears cruel, as in the case of creatures that need to kill and eat other creatures to survive. I prefer nature in her aspect of goodness, where affection prevails and there is no need of violence to survive. This is certainly the world of my dreams. I hope it is the Vaikuṇṭha you and the masters who came before you talked so much about. I dream about living in that world of love, of sweet feelings, of harmonious and stimulating relationships, a world where everybody loves everybody and where all the exchanges are exchanges of love. You have taught us the path to that world, and with faith, hope, and joy I am following it. I have factually verified that the way you have traced is authentic: inside of me I feel that even survival in this world is impossible without cultivation of those transcendental values that express the supreme reality. Indeed, here it is possible to live progressively only insofar as the values of love are cultivated. Kṛṣṇa-bhakti is the only reality; all the rest is illusion.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Thank you for being there, for guiding and correcting me even in dreams; thank you for being my source of inspiration. My prayer is that you may forever enlighten me about what for me is still dark.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servants at Centro Studi Bhaktivedanta.

(written by Matsya Avatāra Dāsa)
Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

This past year I received the good fortune of being asked to assist Tamohara Prabhu in running the Central Office of Child Protection. While I have no good qualities, I am still trying my best.

Actually, I am ashamed that there even needs to be a Central Office of Child Protection in your glorious ISKCON organization. In a perfect world we would all be ideal parents, raising our children properly with love and compassion, teaching these little ones how to perfectly serve the Lord with their life and soul. The greater community of devotees would be based on love and trust, honest dealings, satisfyingly rich relationships, and deepening Kṛṣṇa conscious realizations. A mood of caring and commitment to the welfare of others would be the norm. We would all take care of one another and serve one another. We would serve not just in the ways we want to serve or how we think one should be served, but with the intent of pleasing the other because the service is directly guided by the Supreme Lord in the heart.

But unfortunately, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, since we are all coming from degraded lives, having no good sense and sawdust for brains, this child protection office is needed. The necessity of the Central Office of Child Protection became clear as more advanced, senior devotees recognized the need to try to heal the wounds inflicted upon the second generation. The further mission of the Office is to stop child abuse in any shape or form from occurring within your great ISKCON house, in which the whole world can live.

I remember hearing you say in May of 1975, in Honolulu’s New Navadwip temple, as we all sat before you during Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam class, that those who will come after us will be far more advanced than we are. Your eyes widened and your back straightened as you looked slowly around the room to see our reaction. Again you said, “Those who come after you will be far more advanced than you because they will understand the perfect example, without ever having seen it.”

Today, as I read this along with other statements of yours concerning caring for Vaiṣṇavas, I realized, dear gurudeva, that you were telling us the second generation of devotees, the third, the fourth, etc., were very advanced souls who needed loving, caring protection to prosper and grow to their fullest potential. You were telling us that service to them is one of the best services we can render, for it will ensure the sustainability of your ISKCON movement for the future.

I also realized how you have so carefully placed in our unqualified hands your legacy for the future of ISKCON, which is your body. I reflected on how you spent so many years of your life planning, organizing, petitioning the Lord, and preparing for coming to the West to begin your movement. So many years you spent cultivating the soil! Then you spent so many more years planting the seeds all around the planet. Protecting the young creepers in their growth by removing the weeds and giving proper sunlight, air, and nutrients was your prime duty. Protecting this legacy—ISKCON’s legacy for the future generations—is a huge responsibility that we cannot ignore or take lightly.

To discharge the weighty duties you have given us, we at the Central Office of Child Protection must establish clear guidelines and policies regarding care of these precious little Vaiṣṇavas. These policies must stand as clear objectives so that everyone, world-wide, is well informed about them. It means regular on-going prevention education on a community level. It means that every temple, center, and ISKCON facility must have a child protection team in place to deal with the issues and training in their area. It also means that we may have to uncover faults of the past or present and address them fully. Not in a punitive, harsh way, but with great humility, care, and love.

To some, this last aspect means sitting in judgment of others’ behavior, something that is particularly distasteful for Vaiṣṇavas. I am trying to understand and reframe this last aspect as part of “weeding out” the anarthas through teaching. The goal is to correct bad habits while teaching proper Vaiṣṇava etiquette in an encouraging and loving manner.

We have all brought so many bad habits with us to this movement. Slowly, over the years, through sincerity and your mercy, may we be able to see them clearly for what they are and discard them in favor of something more valuable, so that our service will become more pleasing to you.

Dear swanlike Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are still here with us, still guiding us, still managing and organizing
from behind the scenes, and still showering us with your blessings. When we can stop viewing other
people as objects for our sense gratification, when we can desire to serve them rather than exploit them,
when we can be satisfied with the immense blessings you have bestowed upon us instead of seeking
satisfaction by bowing to the dictates of our senses, then we will become truly pleasing to you.

I pray that you will continue to enlighten us from within. Please continue to shine the lamp of knowl-
edge upon our hearts and our heads. Please empower me so that I may have the strength to hold up this
light of truth and dissipate the material darkness that has seeped in among us. Purity is the force that
will lead us to your divine lotus feet.

Thank you for allowing me to use my meager skills in your glorious service. Please allow me to remain
within the association of Vaiñëavas for yet one more year.

Your humble servants at the central Child Protection Office in Alachua, Florida.

(written by Mahâviñëu-priyä Devî Dâsi)

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Cleveland Nāma-haṭṭa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Kindly accept our obeisances. All glories to you, who have built a house in which the whole world can
live peacefully! Hare Kṛṣṇa!

Thirty-one years ago you disappeared from our sight, and we have been hankering for your vapu ever
since. Yet you are manifest in so many ways around us—in your books, in your devotees, in the strang-
ers we meet, in the awareness that Lord Kṛṣṇa is in everyone’s heart, in our children, in our finances, in
the beauty of Kṛṣṇa’s creation when we remember to acknowledge Him as the best artist, in our minds.
In so many ways you are present in our lives.

As our savior, you are rescuing us from the devastating wheel of saṁsāra, the blazing fire of material
existence. You are training us how to be part of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s circle. You are giving us all facility to carry
out your instructions; now please give us the determination and the boldness to do so. Bless us that we
may be bold in your business: spreading the message of Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

O eternal father, your devotees here in the Cleveland Nāma-haṭṭa program are serving you in so many
ways: some in the grha-stha-aśrama, raising Kṛṣṇa conscious children; some as students in universities
or secondary schools; some as brāhmaṇas, preaching by precept and example; some in businesses.
But all are learning to cooperate more each day to spread Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mission. Our Nāma-
haṭṭa family has evolved over the years, with different branches springing up here and there. We are
encouraged by the maturity of many of the devotees, although many still struggle with sādhanā, family
maintenance, and Vaiñëava saṅga. We’re encouraged because by your grace we never give up. We hope
against hope for the favor of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī (āśa-bandha), and we are confident that we have your
blessings to do so.

Kindly take our hearts, mold them to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s will, stamp them with the eternal seal of Kṛṣṇa
consciousness—kṛṣṇa-prema, pure unadulterated love for Kṛṣṇa—and please, please allow us to serve
you eternally.

Your eternal servants in the ISKCON Nāma-haṭṭa program in Cleveland, Ohio, USA.
Dear Śrila Prabhupāda,

During the first years of your ISKCON, the almost all of your followers lived in temples. Now, after more than forty years, almost all of them live outside. This might appear to change the “rules of the game,” and some might feel challenged by the social transformation. Yet closer scrutiny reveals that your vision always included and promoted such a turn of events. In 1968 you wrote:

[W]e require many Deities for our temples as well as for our many devotees who want to worship Radha Kṛṣṇa at home. So we want to introduce this Deity worship in this country and as such, we may require 100’s of pairs of Deities of different sizes. [Letter, 13 October 1968]

In 1969 you wrote:

The temple is an ideal institution, and people should come to learn, because if they can make every house like our temples, then their lives will surely be successful. (Letter, 6 May 1969)

In 1972 you confirmed:

Actually there is no difference between devotees living inside the temple and devotees living outside the temple. You are right that the important thing is to remember Kṛṣṇa, whatever is your activity. [Letter, 29 September 1972]

Everyone can establish a small temple in his house, and he can begin family-wise—himself, his wife, his children. That is wanted. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement wants to see that every house has become a temple of Kṛṣṇa. That is our program. (Lecture, 13 December 1972)

That is your program, Śrila Prabhupāda, and we must endeavor to bring it about—to make it concrete, dynamic, and sustainable. And pleasing to you.

Your servants at the Congregational Development Ministry.
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Whenever I sit down to write an offering to you, I cannot separate what I write from what I do. In other words, glorifying you in writing should be matched, if not excelled, by my daily service to you and your ISKCON movement.

You stated many, many times that broadcasting the message of Lord Caitanya was para-upakāra, the highest welfare work. As devotees, we clearly understand this point, because no matter how people’s economic standards are improved, no matter how many hospitals are built, no matter how many schools are built, no matter how clean the environment is made, no matter how many peace treaties are signed around the world, no matter how the security of nations is improved, and no matter how many scientific advancements are made, without understanding the science of spiritual life, people will continue to be sold a false dawn and will continue to face traumas that no amount of human intervention will allay.

However, for the first time in the history of this world you have made available to the masses Lord Kṛṣṇa’s message of genuine hope:

mām upetya punar janma duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam
nāpnuvantī mahātmānaḥ samiśīdhiṁ paramāṁ gatāṁ

“After attaining Me, the great souls, who are yogīs in devotion, never return to this temporary world, which is full of miseries, because they have attained the highest perfection.” (Bhagavad-gītā 8.15)

There is no doubt in the minds of the devotees that of all worshipable people you are the most worshipable. Every other day we hear news from around the world of this statue or that memorial being unveiled for some politician or peacemaker or scientist or artist or sportsperson, etc. I will feel far more worthy of writing these offerings to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, when I manage to assist in having your glories properly unveiled to the world. There should be no one better known to the population of this planet than you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your servants at Dandavats.com.

(written by Praghoṣa Dāsa)
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please guide us through this dark age of quarrel and hypocrisy. Many say, “So and so is my spiritual master,” but their activities and thoughts in no way conform to the teachings of the so-called guru. You are the only one who has really touched the lives of millions and entirely changed the lives of your disciples.

If only we had an iota of the faith that you had in your spiritual master, and that your disciples also had in you, that would be sufficient for our complete spiritual success, to go back home to Godhead.

You often quoted Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad 6.23:

*yasya de
ve parā bhaktir   yathā deve tathā guru

tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ   prakāṣante mahāmanāḥ*

“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.”

The truth of this verse is seen in you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You went to the West armed simply with your faith in your spiritual master and your enthusiasm to carry out his mission, and on the basis of these things you spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the whole world.

In the very early days, you empowered your disciples within a few months after they had joined you to open centers in all parts of the world. They strode with full confidence, equipped with the faith you had instilled in them. Every new temple or congregation established then, and even now, is purely due to your continued inspiration. That is true even in Damodardesh (Dubai), where my father, now Mahāmaṇi Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, was encouraged to start a congregational program by our spiritual master, His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami, even when we were not initiated. Today there are over two thousand such programs throughout Dubai—whether Bhakti Yōkṣas, Friday congregations, children’s classes, or classes for laborers at various locations.

We are trying to help you by taking up the mission to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this part of the world, Damodardesh, and despite all our limitations, you are blessing us with results. I pray to you and your disciples, my dīkṣā and sīkṣā gurus, to bless us with their association and guide us to become a strong congregation, each of us working closely and seamlessly to spread your teachings and your glory.

We also seek your complete mercy, if you think it is the right time, to have a temple in Damodardesh. We can see that our programs are now being limited by the capacity of our venues and distances devotees need to travel, and having our own temple would accommodate the growing number of your servants here.

Our success will come only if we cling to your lotus feet as we learn your teachings and constantly endeavor to follow them and pass them on to as many as we can.

*Your servants at Dubai Congregational Preaching.*

(written by Śrī Vallabha Dāsa)
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to your service to our best friend, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa!

On behalf of all the prasādam distributors in the world, we thank you sincerely for the opportunity to participate in this most wonderful service. Every day your prasādam distributors experience firsthand how prasādam transforms a stone heart into gold. It can happen in an instant, or it may take a few weeks of consumption. Although prasādam certainly heals the soul, it also illuminates the heart, clears the mind, and makes people so happy. But more importantly, it plants the seed of bhakti and then opens the door for the Lord’s full mercy.

We all know what prasādam did for us, and so naturally a true devotee wishes that others may enjoy the same benediction. Sometimes the reactions we get from the people we serve stimulate our appreciation for our own good fortune. I remember talking with one elderly lady in Sukhumi, in the country of Georgia, during the civil war there in 1993. She was holding the hand of a young child and looked me in the eye and said, “There is no food in the city. We came from wealthy families, but now we have nothing. We are barely surviving, but you boys are coming here every day now and feeding us. Thank you. Thank you. I think it is a miracle. You must be sent by God.” It was a very touching moment in my Food for Life career. I didn’t feel any pride, but rather I felt thankfulness for what you had created through your preaching. If not for your sacrifice, your faith in Kṛṣṇa-prasādam, and your love for humanity, none of this would have happened. This touching moment is just one of millions that have happened throughout the history of Food for Life and are happening every second of the day. Yes, every second!

Based on our best estimates of the volume of prasādam being distributed throughout the world, we believe that more than ten people are blessed by Kṛṣṇa-prasādam every second of the day through a Food for Life project. Of course, if we were to include all the prasādam restaurants, prasādam snack businesses, temple anna-dāna, college vegetarian clubs, catering programs, and Sunday Feasts, as well as all the prasādam being distributed by devotees to their friends and colleagues at school and work, the numbers would be truly astonishing. The fact is that multiple millions of people are getting Kṛṣṇa-prasādam every day, and it’s all because of you! You told us, “Everyone should get a chance to take prasādam and thus be induced to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.” And it was your clear desire that prasādam distribution be “expanded universally.” Certainly, therefore, somehow or other your desire will be fulfilled. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for caring about us so deeply.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, there are some very wonderful Vaiṣṇavas who, in their own unique way, are helping to carry out your desire. First I would like to mention Dhananāja Kṛṣṇa Dāsa in New Delhi and Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Dāsa in Mumbai, who have raised the bar high with their exceptional standards of cleanliness and efficiency. Truly their mid-day meal projects in their cities are transforming the hearts of the prasādam recipients, the government leaders, and the general public who hear about it in media reports.

Next we go to the more humble but no less noble efforts of such devotees as Mahāśīma Dāsa and Śastra Dāsa in Māyāpur, who are literally worshiped by the villagers for their tireless and loving service of distributing kṛṣṇa-prasādam and the holy name without discrimination.

Another “jewel” in the Food for Life family of projects is Food for Life Vṛndāvana (FFLV), headed by Rūpa Raghunātha Dāsa. What Rūpa has done over the last nineteen years, starting with barely a few buckets of kicharī, is beyond words. He is setting the prime example of how to create a Food for Life project that encompasses the whole gamut of Vedic hospitality. Through the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and Rūpa’s direction, FFLV feeds, clothes, educates, and provides medical services for the poorest of the poor; cleanses the holy dhāma; digs wells, plants trees, protects and nurses injured cows; trains and empowers women with social skills and knowledge, while simultaneously cultivating their love for Kṛṣṇa through the chanting of the holy name. It is a truly brilliant program and most certainly the largest bhakta program in the world.

In Europe, there are many fine examples of dedicated souls who have heard your call to distribute prasādam, but one comes to mind who has dedicated decades to this service: Paraśurāma Dāsa in...
England. His Food for All project, much like Rüpa’s, is a beautiful example of how FFL can be utilized to introduce Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a manner that is not only nonsectarian and palatable but also efficient and financially self-sustaining. Much can be learned from the examples of these two devotees.

Finally, I would be amiss if I did not mention the efforts of Indradyumna Swami and his Polish festival tour team. Indradyumna Swami has taken to heart the very essence of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement by adopting a laserlike focus on kirtana and prasādam distribution. The results speak for themselves. Indeed, it is your peace formula, and it works. Please continue to bless and empower Indradyumna Swami and the festival team to spread this formula all over the world.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, there are too many examples to share, but I know you are fully aware of every one of the great souls who cook and serve kṛṣṇa-prasādam every day, even if many of the members of the Society are not. Just like a mother who selflessly and lovingly prepares dinner for her children, but yet is only recognized on certain days of the year, in the same way tens of thousands of men, women, and children are serving in your “kitchen department” every day, and yet they do not get the recognition they deserve. I long for that day when in every temple there will be a prasādam distribution report to the Deities and an acknowledgement after kirtana, “prasādam distribution ki jaya,” as there is for book distribution and harināma. Sometimes I wonder what keeps us all going. And the resounding answer is: our love for you, and your causeless mercy. We can never repay what you have given us, and so we will keep trying to love you by serving in your “kitchen department” until our very last breath. Thank you.

Your servants at Food for Life Global.

(written by Priyavrata Dāsa)

Global Varnāśrama Educational, Social, and Cultural Organization

orī ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānānjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namāṁ

Śrī-caitanya-mano-‘bhīṣṭaṁ sthāpitaṁ yena bhū-tale
svayaṁ rūpaḥ kaṭā mahyaṁ dadāti sva-padāntikām

Nama orī viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preśṭhāya bhū-tale
Śrīmāte bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine

Nama te sāravīte deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīne
Nirvīśeṣa-sūnyavādī-pāścātaya-deśā-ṭārīne

Mākāraṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṅgūraṁ laṅghayate girim
Yat-krpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī-gurum dīna-tāraṇaṁ

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace, who have so nicely and clearly outlined the mission of Lord Caitanya in four simple steps, or “movements,” culminating with the establishment of daivi-varṇāśrama.
Since our last offering to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, a good number of developments have taken place in connection with GLOVESCO, the Global Vaiñāśrama Educational, Social, and Cultural Organization, which was started in 2002 to help promote the vaiñāśrama mission. We would like to report these to you with the hope that this information will be pleasing and meet with your approval.

One significant development was the setting up of the India (RGB) Vaiñāśrama Development Committee, with its own conference on PAMHO, some time in September, 2007. This was accomplished after we had written a letter to ISKCON’s Indian leaders requesting them to appoint a special committee for promoting vaiñāśrama. We are happy to report that the selected committee members have been exchanging correspondence regularly and have recently met in Vṛndāvana. Their purpose was to prepare a position paper to be presented to the Indian leaders at their next RGB meeting in Śrī Mayapur, in the month of May. By the time this offering is published in your Vyāsa-pūjā book, we should have a positive response from the RGB here in India for promoting and supporting the efforts of vaiñāśrama development in all the Indian temples. This is a prelude to what should take place in all your temples around the world.

Another noteworthy development this year was the presentation of two seminars in Śrīdham Māyapur in conjunction with the Māyapur Institute for Higher Education and Training (MIHET) and GLOVESCO. We presented two courses, one entitled “Yoga Therapy for Kṛṣṇa Devotees,” the other entitled “The Vaiñāśrama Mission: Make Vṛndāvana Villages.” The participation and response was most favorable, with some thirty to thirty-five students from almost twenty countries attending. The students enthusiastically shared their realizations and provided valuable suggestions. We expect to make similar presentations next year in Māyapur during festival time.

I am pleased to report that the vaiñāśrama mission under GLOVESCO has attracted a core group of devotees from Secunderabad to take the lead in setting up what has been termed the Vaiñāśrama Research Team (VRT). This group of some twenty-five devotee students and young workers meet every Sunday to discuss how the vaiñāśrama mission can be taken up and implemented more systematically. Some of these devotees have accepted key positions, such as national and state coordinators in India for advancing the cause of vaiñāśrama. We have also appointed a national coordinator for each of these countries: Indonesia, West Africa, Australia, and Canada. We have plans to increase such appointments during this year.

One of the important achievements of the Vaiñāśrama Research Team has been the completion of a forty-minute documentary called Save our Cows, Save our Planet, which was shown at both Śrī Māyapur and Śrī Vṛndāvana during the Māyapur/Vṛndāvana Gaura Pūrṇimā Festival. The members of the research team have worked very hard, and their research will form the basis of some thirty projected books on topics related to the vaiñāśrama mission. These devotees helped prepare the seminars on vaiñāśrama in Śrī Māyapur, and many of them took leave from their workplaces and traveled to Māyapur to help organize the seminars, all at their own expense.

I am happy to inform you that we have also recently registered the Vaiñāśrama Support Fund, which provided free sponsorship to all the students taking our courses in Śrī Māyapur. The Vaiñāśrama Support Fund will assist devotees involved in the vaiñāśrama mission by providing scholarships, and it will also provide other incentives to vaiñāśrama projects around the world.

In addition to the Vaiñāśrama Support Fund, we have also set up the Vaiñāśrama Book Trust (VBT) to publish books especially connected to the vaiñāśrama mission. You will be pleased to know that we have printed two new titles to advance the cause of vaiñāśrama, one being Vaiñāśrama Education: In Support of Traditional Education and the other being Implementing Vaiñāśrama: A GLOVESCO Reference Guide. A magazine entitled Introducing GLOVESCO has also been printed for selected distribution. We are presently working on bringing out three more books before Kārttika this year, one entitled Traditional Education: Selected Interviews, another Global Vaiñāśrama Resource Directory, and the third Extended Family Concepts. We are also planning to have your “Essay on Gītā Nāgarī” published by the Indian BBT some time before Kārttika.

We are now focusing on bringing more stable manpower to our vaiñāśrama headquarters at the Sahyadri Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Kṣetra. Our national coordinator for India, Harsha Wari, is joining us full-time to take up this responsible post of helping coordinate our global vaiñāśrama activities. We expect a small team of devotees to also join full-time within the next few months. Our director for the Sahyadri Yoga Therapy Institute, His Grace Prāṇānātha Prabhu, will be completing his Ph.D. in Yoga to also join us full-time this December. One of the exciting developments that should make you very happy is the setting up of our
GLOVESCO Varṇāśrama College on our present fourteen acres of land. We plan to launch the Varṇāśrama College this December, with both resident and visiting devotee teachers assisting in the project.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are convinced that by our continuing to promote the varṇāśrama mission, more and more awareness will gradually be created among both our devotee community and the public at large. We have a long distance to cover before reaching our goal. We are experiencing that the road is arduous and difficult at times, with few people lending their support. However, we will not be daunted in our attempts, keeping in mind the struggles you underwent in introducing Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the Western world. Please give us the needed patience and perseverance to overcome all obstacles. Kindly bestow your blessings on these humble efforts so that one day your dreams and expectations of a classless society, dāivi-varṇāśrama, can become fully realized.

We thank you for your constant inspiration and guidance. May we remain always sheltered under your lotus feet.

Your servants at the Global Varṇāśrama Educational, Social, and Cultural Organization.

(written by Bhakti Rāghava Swami)

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Guadalajara Preaching Center

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humbles obeisances under the dust of your divine lotus feet, which are the shelter of all fallen souls like us.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, today, on the anniversary of your appearance in this world, we want to glorify you to the best of our ability. Although you are no longer with us in your vapu form, because of your great spiritual potency, your ISCKON is growing every day despite opposition from enemies. They have tried to steal your temples and devotees, saying that your followers are not bona fide. They blaspheme your disciples who have taken the role of spiritual master, saying that only the gurus from India are bona fide and that we must give ISCKON to them.

These critics attack every day, but your loyal devotees do not believe them because we know you very well. We know that you gave your very life for ISKCON and that you want us to protect your great masterpiece. These critics have lured some innocent or naïve devotees into leaving ISKCON, but we see your true greatness. We are very sure that none of the so-called great gurus outside ISKCON will do anything like what you did, or like what you continue to do today by your spiritual potency.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the greatest spiritual master in this Age of Kali, and you will be known as the ācārya who changed the world.

All glory, all glory to the great Śrīla Prabhupāda, our savior!

Your most fallen servants at the Preaching Center and Vṛndāvana Restaurant, Guadalajara City, Mexico.

(written by Premānanda Dāsa)
House of Vaiṣṇava Culture for Śrīla Prabhupāda

On this very special day, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are overjoyed to have the opportunity of chanting your glories and remembering your extraordinary activities. It is stated in the Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya 4.103: “You simultaneously perform both duties in relation to the holy name by your personal behavior and by your preaching. Therefore, you are the spiritual master of the entire world, for you are the most advanced devotee.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in this age of degradation it is very difficult to find a person with moral integrity, and it is even more difficult to find someone who is serving the Lord wholeheartedly. Thus to find a person like you, who combine both characteristics, is undoubtedly due only to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s causeless mercy. At Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya 19.151 Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu explains that it is only after many births of wandering in this material world that a person may find a bona fide guru, who, by Kṛṣṇa’s grace, can bestow the seed of the creeper of devotional service. Having received this unparalleled gift, we humbly pray to your lotus feet to be always engaged in fulfilling your desires, which are all related to spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness to every living entity’s heart. May we always have the same enthusiasm to serve guru and Kṛṣṇa that you had throughout your whole life. Your activities are full of courage and unflinching desire to save the world from the clutches of illusion and ignorance.

Crossing the ocean at an advanced age; cooking and serving prasādam to whoever came to the temple; tirelessly writing, printing, and distributing transcendental literature; establishing a society to educate people in spiritual life, a society that encompasses all kinds of people in the most diverse cultures—all these activities and many others constitute a great example of devotion and determination for every human being. And anyone who faithfully follows your example will certainly live an auspicious life and be able to return to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is our duty to be always spreading your fame in many ways, especially by distributing your books and preaching the spiritual science you taught us. As Lord Kṛṣṇa states at Bhagavad-gītā 3.21, “Whatever action a great man performs, the whole world follows.”

Only when people realize who the real ācārya is will peace prevail. May we work cooperatively under your guidance so that your unalloyed fame will increase more and more. Śrīla Prabhupāda-ki jaya!

Your eternal servants at Casa de Cultura Vaishnava Śrīla Prabhupāda, Suzano, Brazil.
Dear Śrila Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you, our most beloved spiritual master!

For us hard-hearted souls covered with envy, you provided a window that opens to a happier, brighter world, where our souls can soften with the association of the first and purest cowherd, Govinda. You knew it would take time for our hearts to soften; you knew we needed to stay here in the material world to suffer before we realized that only through love of Kṛṣṇa and his devotees will we be relieved of all suffering.

To soften our hearts and sharpen our realization, you gave us service to Kṛṣṇa’s favorite animal, the cow. The cow, who simply eats grass and gives milk that produces so many wonderful sweets and nutritious by-products like yogurt and ghee. The cow, whose dung and urine fertilize the fields and provide medicines to cure diseases incurable by other means.

The cow, who takes so little and gives so much.

You knew if we took care of these animals we too would learn to take little and give much. You knew that we might learn the basis of devotional service, to give not take. We are learning the lesson, and our hearts are beginning to soften by daily association with the noble majestic ox and the beautiful gentle cow. For this lesson, and so many other lessons, we are eternally thankful to you. For your pleasure, we will tell you some of this year’s cow-caring pastimes that have affected us deeply and begun to soften our hearts.

Oh No! Oh Yes!

Nanda has had nerve problems in his back legs for most of his life. When he was down at the New Vrindavan big barn, the more aggressive oxen jumped on him and pushed him. Although huge—he’s about seven feet from his toes to the tip of his horns and weighs about a ton—Nanda is a passive, gentle fellow.

One morning Balabhadra found Nanda on top of the hill in a prone position, unable to get up. Who knows how long he had been lying there since the previous evening, when I had checked the cows and saw him walking about. He was on his side with his face looking uphill, not a good position. While the sky was thundering and dark clouds poured down torrents of rain, we tried to flip him with the truck and ropes. We wrapped ropes around his front legs and back legs, tied those ropes together, and then tied that to the hook on the back of the truck. Then Chaitanya drove the truck very slowly. But it did not work. Nanda kicked Balabhadra in the legs, and Balabhadra fell twice trying to help Nanda flip. At this point Nanda got into a worse position. Then Balabhadra got the idea of pulling his back legs so he would lay sideways to the hill with his feet downhill and his head higher than the rest of him. We tied the ropes to his back legs and pulled with the truck. Nanda ended up in the position we wanted. Balabhadra thought that in this position Nanda would have more leverage to get himself up.

We could do no more with what we had on hand. Balabhadra then went to the temple barn to get the hip-huggers and the tractor. The idea was to get Nanda standing up, and then maybe we could walk him to the geriatric barn. We also feared that this was going to be a nightmare—trying to move him at all if he couldn’t move his back legs. We tried massaging his back legs, but they were so stiff we couldn’t get him to bend his knees.
I went home to take a hot shower, and Balabhadra and Chaitanya went to get the tractor. When they returned, they brought some additional hands with them. Bhakta Mathew came, and Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, Soma Dāsa, and another boy were ready to come if we needed their help. Moses also showed up. As Balabhadra drove the tractor up the hill and we all followed, there was dread in our hearts as to what we would find. Balabhadra led the way, and as he arrived at the crest of the hill, he saw that Nanda was gone! He feared that Nanda had rolled down the hill, but Nanda was not at the bottom of the hill either.

We came to realize that Nanda had walked away from the hill. Then we realized that he could again be in a difficult position somewhere. We started looking for him and found him in the overgrown area between the cow burial grounds and the lower pasture. He was standing up, eating grass. Of course, we were very happy, but then we knew that we should get him in the geriatric barn, where the ground is flat and thickly bedded. We walked him to the barn easily, and there he is right now, comfortable and happy. [Chayā Devi]

**Bhumī’s Operation**

I am so pleased to say that Bhumī’s eye area is looking great after having her eye removed due to a cancerous growth around it. It has healed extremely well. The hair that was shaved around the eye is growing back nicely, and the eye socket is nicely formed.

One really sweet and interesting thing is that every morning Jaya the ox goes and checks on Bhumī. The other cows stop and see her, but no one is as consistent as Jaya. In May of 2006 Jaya had the same operation as Bhumī’s, just on the opposite eye. Jaya remains cancer free.

Bhumī and I have made up. For a while, she was not happy at all with me. We gave her antibiotic shots to prevent infection after the operation, and I was the one who had tied her up so she could get her shots. Now, when I go into the barn she comes over to me of her own accord.

I took down the fence separating Bhumī from Gita the ox and the cows Asha, Dwadasi, and Shyama. Now Bhumī is really enjoying herself bossing the other girls around. She dare not try to boss Gita around, though. Gita gets this look that says, “Don’t even think of it.” He has this expression perfected. When I give the medicine in the morning to Bhumī, Gita, and Jaya, Bhumī very patiently waits until I have given Gita his grain and meds before begging for her apple and meds. Bhumī is back to liking lots of attention and rubdowns. [Lakshmi]

**Gita Passes Away**

Gita left early today, Lord Nityānanda’s appearance day, February 18, 2008. Last night strong warm winds were blowing, moving billowy clouds swiftly across the sky. As I walked to and from the barns, it felt like someone was turning a floodlight on and off until I realized it was the clouds passing over the bright white moon. The stars were also very bright in the sky, when not covered by the clouds. There was a presence in the night: the wind personified seemed to be taking Gita away as he thrust his head into the air and opened his mouth.

At first I said, “Don’t do that, Gita! Don’t stress yourself!” I would then put his head down. After several hours of Chaitanya Bhagavat and I trying to make him comfortable, we came to realize he was trying to leave his body. He was opening his mouth so his soul could leave upward. We had given him Gāgā water, placed the tape deck with a recording of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, chanting next to him, and placed Śrī Govardhana-śilā on his head. Śrī Govardhana-śilā then sat on His altar on the wall, facing Gita.

Gita had had arthritis for several years, and each year it became more difficult for him to walk. This past winter we put him in the geriatric barn so it would be easier for him to access his food and move around. Gita was one of our oldest cows. He had turned eighteen recently. His twin brother, Vraja, died last summer. He also had arthritis. Together, they led many Ratha-yāstrā parades in the United States and appeared at many events. They greeted guests with their handsome appearance and endearing personalities. In this way, they presented cow protection to the public.

On February 9 Gita was not able to get up. He did not have the power in his back legs to push up his large body. Since he was an old cow, we expected that he would leave his body in the near future. We kept him as comfortable as possible and fed him as much as he wanted to eat and drink. In preparation for his departure, he daily listened to your sacred chanting and received holy Gāgā water.
On February 13 we tried to move Gita into a better place, with an apparatus called hip-huggers. He was near the gate of the barn, and a lot of wind was blowing on him. As he was lifted and placed down, he surprised everyone and started walking around. However, he was weak because he had been down for a few days. After a few hours of walking, he sat down again in the same place.

On February 16 we moved him again, and again he surprised everyone and walked around. This time we made certain he was in the larger part of the geriatric barn, and he eventually sat down in a good place. However, the next day, after Chaitanya fed him his grains, Gita collapsed. From that point, he struggled to get upright. When he couldn’t, Chaitanya came to get me, and we both went to the barn to see what could be done. We realized that we needed to flip him to get him into a better position, but the two of us would not be enough to do it. Then Chaitanya went to the temple to see what help he could get. About forty-five minutes later, Chaitanya came back with six devotees to help flip Gita. We had four devotees on Gita’s legs and three at his head to make sure his head moved with his body. We expertly flipped Gita, and he landed sitting up. We braced him with square bales, and then he tried to eat the bales. Enthusiastically, all the devotees ran to him with hay to eat. The cows ran to the gate to see. Everyone was very happy at what appeared to be a miraculous recovery. Joy permeated the atmosphere. I was inspired and moved to see the selfless service of the devotees and their joy at Gita’s recovery.

When I checked on Gita later in the day, he was lying down, obviously struggling again to get upright. However, this time he was near one of the barn poles, and flipping him would not be possible. It was six o’clock, and it would be dark at 6:30. As he struggled to get up, I tried to brace his back with square bales, but he was too heavy and moved them away when he would fall back. He was fighting and trying to eat the bales that I tried to use to brace him. I knew Chaitanya was coming to check on Gita, and I tried to comfort Gita until Chaitanya came.

When Chaitanya came, we spent a couple of hours trying to make Gita comfortable. The winds were so strong and loud, and then there was a change in Gita. He started putting his head in the air and opening his mouth. He no longer reacted to our words. We felt he was in the process of leaving this material world. By then it was late evening. In a few hours it would be lord Nityänanda’s appearance day. Just like Gita. We had always called him the brähmaṇa of the twins. He was always the gentleman, sensitive to the feelings of others. Listening to you chant, Śrīla Prabhupāda, tasting Gaṅgā water, with Śrī Govardhana-silā in his sight, on Lord Nityänanda’s appearance day, he left his body. [Chayā Devī]

We pray these pastimes please you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servants at the International Society for Cow Protection and the ISKCON Ministry for Cow Protection and Agriculture.
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In his *Diary of a Traveling Preacher* (Volume VII), His Holiness Indradyumna Swami relates this wonderful story:

In a remote jungle village of northern Bangaladesh in 1992 an elevated Vaiṣṇava guru, at the age of 92, was seeing a Western Vaiṣṇava for the first time. “So, it is true.” Before his many disciples he then quoted the prediction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu:

\[
prthivite āche yata nagarādi grāma
sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma
\]

“In as many towns and villages as there are on the surface of the earth, My holy name will be preached.” (*Caitanya-bhāgavata*, Antya 4.126)

“Who has done this service for Mahāprabhu?” he said. “Who has introduced you Western boys and girls to the chanting of the holy names?”

Guru-Gaurāṅga Dāsa, a disciple of His Holiness Bhakti Čāru Swami, told him all about you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

“It was my great misfortune not to have met him, the person who fulfilled the prediction of Mahāprabhu.”

* * *

So it is true.

You came to deliver us, and yet you said on a morning walk with some Indian gentlemen and disciples, “What is my credit? This expansion of Kṛṣṇa consciousness was destined in the West.” Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but other very nice Vaiṣṇavas had tried to propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West with very little result.

A foot soldier cannot imitate a general. Arjuna may have been an instrument—but such prowess! He devastated the Kaurava armies.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you possess the *gaura-śakti* to deliver the holy names all over the world. Now your *Back to Godhead* magazine needs pages and pages to list all of your centers—even Dushanbe, a village in Tajikistan! With the impossible determination of a consummate Kṛṣṇa yogi you travel country to country spreading the freedom light of transcendental knowledge, devastating the delusion of the bewildered living entities. Your onslaught against the dark bondage of Māyā is relentless, and you inspire us today to continue the teaching work.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are our Śiva, the greatest Vaiṣṇava. You elevate the lowly—the hippies, rogues, and hobgoblins—to the platform of love of Godhead. You doused me in the spring of 1971 with the cooling waters of the holy names when I was burning in the blazing fire of material existence.

Once, in Chicago in 1974, I met a Bengali scholar who had completed his doctorate thesis on the theology of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He was visiting the United States. As we were walking he began to cry. He saw across the street a beautiful Vaiṣṇava couple in radiant devotional dress—sari, dhotī, and kurtā, chanting on their *japa* beads. “I never imagined this could happen.”

So it is true.
With your grace and elegance you should be associating with angels and the denizens of Vaikuntha. But you descended to the Bowery, the Lower East Side, Haight-Ashbury, and the Tihar prison outside Delhi just to enlighten and raise us above the painful modes of nature. Your mercy is unlimited.

Thank you for saving us—the ruffians, rascals, and outcasts—and for elevating all classes of men to the platform of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. This is your miracle. This is your magic.

On this auspicious day we meditate on you. I remember the first time I saw your face in what is now the prasadam room of the Denver temple. It was the spring of 1972. Your face was so enigmatic, so attractive. Hayagriva Dasa, your beloved disciple, describes you so eloquently and with such affection:

Although seventy-six, Prabhupada seems as ageless as ever. His head is freshly shaved, and the aroma of mustard-seed oil tells me that he has just received a massage. His complexion is radiant, his eyes clear, his face full and healthy. This is the face that attracted me that day when I was walking down New York’s Houston Street and first met him, the face that brought so many young seekers to that little storefront temple on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday nights. For us, his face embodies all the attractive qualities of devotion, for it’s a pure, truthful, and compassionate face. It is both happy and grave. It is magnanimous, gentle, and forgiving. It is also determined and self-controlled, and, above all, most learned and intelligent. It’s a face not afraid to love and give all in love for Krishna.

Indeed, Prabhupada’s face conjures all those virtues that lead to love of Krishna. It’s not an ordinary man’s face. It transports an entire spiritual fact, the Vedic culture, an atmosphere of bhakti. I first began realizing his potency just by looking at his face. Whenever I’m Krishna conscious, it makes me joyful. Whenever I’m not, I’m afraid to look at it; it accuses me, makes me ashamed without uttering a word. What power there is in the spiritual master’s face! What magnetism! What volumes of wisdom! [Vrindaban Days: Memories of a Holy Indian town, Chapter Five, p. 44]

Your compassionate face has sparked a devotional revolution. Saikirtana had almost come to a stop before Bhaktivinoda Thakura’s time, but his son Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura further revived the saikirtana movement and spread it all over India, and your courage, devotion, and knowledge took it worldwide. You inspire so many devotees working on so many projects. Bhaktas in many countries love the Pancha-tattva because of you. I see love for Lord Jagannatha in the hearts of the ISKCON Vaishnavas.

*Je krsna se gaura se jagannatha:* Lord Krsna is Lord Gauranga, and Lord Gauranga is Lord Jagannatha.

It is still a thrill for me.

What makes you happy? That we love Krsna. You must be very happy because devotees are developing real attachment to Krsna—nishtha, ruci, and the dawning of bhava and prema. Lectures are being delivered in your ISKCON temples with sastri authority, deep meaning, and accurate siddhanta; devotees are teaching perennial wisdom without interpretation or deletion.

Bright and devoted Indian young men and women are coming forward to push on the mission of Sri Caitanya, giving ISKCON new life. You are creating harinama addicts, devotees who can’t live without the shelter of the holy names.

So it is true.

You brought Krsna consciousness to our IPM prison villages—remote villages so far from the birthplace of Lord Caitanya, including the Alachua county jail, in Gainesville, Florida, where Mother Akuti Devi Dasi regularly presents Krsna consciousness to the female inmates.

Srila Prabhupada, I remember how when Gaurasundara sold the temple in Hawaii and left with the money, you said, “He is rascal.” And then you added, “But I like that rascal.” Hayagriva Dasa, Gaurasundara Dasa, and I—we have our pockmarks, but you accept the glowing of our seva. Your gentle kindness touches our hearts every day.

You have touched the hearts of ten thousand IPM inmates over the years, and you inspire inmate bhaktas like Kevin Brown, David Lightsey, Justin Brown, Ralph Michael Pugliese, gurukuli Uttamacloka Dasa, and Jivananda Prabhu in Salem, Oregon.

Thank you, Srila Prabhupada, for saving us. Thank you. Thank you so much. On behalf of the preachers of IPM—Bhakta Jerry, Mother Shyama-priyaa, Bhaktin Heather, Bhakti-latã Dasa in Idaho, Dina-bandhu
Dāsa and Sārvabhauma Dāsa in India, and IPM preachers around the world, we thank you.

For us, loving Kṛṣṇa means loving you. In 1972, in a letter to Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, you explained: “You cannot go to Krishna directly, loving Him. It is common sense that if Krishna is the object of your love, His pet dog is also the object of your love.”

Please let us go on serving you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Let us love you. Let us be your pet dogs.

So it is true. You have come. You changed our lives. You changed the world.

For us inmates at the ISKCON Prison Ministry, serving in full freedom, you are our redemption.

The inmates at the ISKCON Prison Ministry.

(written by Candraśekhara Dāsa)

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ISKCON Television

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

\[
\begin{align*}
nama \text{ ori} \text{ visnu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale} \\
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāminān iti nāmine \\
nirviĉena-śūnyavādī-pāścātya-deṣa-tārīṇe
\end{align*}
\]

In material life, a conditioned soul can channel surf through many television programs designed to entertain him and distract him from his true purpose in life, namely, to find God, Kṛṣṇa, and learn how to return to His supreme abode. Before you made your merciful appearance outside India in 1965, no one could hit upon a show that could give them real knowledge about the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Now you are available on television stations, Internet sites, and DVDs, and the conditioned souls can experience your darṣana and receive your teachings just by pressing buttons. Your face and voice transcend the chasms of time. There you are, instructing anyone who will listen about topics relating to Kṛṣṇa. You wrote:

If we are successful in this program then my dreamt mission of life to spread Krishna Consciousness all over the world will be fulfilled. I wish to speak on the great philosophy of Bhagavata Dharma at least once in a week on Television, so if arrangement is made by you for this, then you will be doing the highest service for Krishna. [Letter to Karaṇḍhara, 22 March 1972]

I'm not sure we're there yet, but we're progressing.

It is so comforting to know that you are still with us in your virtual vāni. I have heard so many stories of people who have chanced upon you as they tried to find something of interest to watch. They have been astonished, transformed, and enlightened. There is no measure of how much potency you carry in this electronic incarnation. Sometimes I wonder if I understand how you can continue to live in the hearts of so many seekers who have “met” you after your departure. I find it hard to believe that you never did leave, because I miss you so much. I actually envy those sādhakas who discover you today. There is such a thrill that accompanies hearing from you for the first time. I remember how I felt: at last, finally, and forever, I have found someone who is telling me the truth —as it is!
You are so benevolent and kind to everyone in this Kali-yuga. I don’t deserve your mercy, but I treasure it. I pray that I will never let it go. Chanting the holy names is the main instruction you gave us so we could all be with you:

\[
\text{tuñde tāṇḍavinī ratiṁ vitanute tuṇḍāvalī-} \\
\text{labdhaye } \\
\text{karna-kroḍa-kadambini ghatayate karnaṁbudebhyaḥ sprhām} \\
\text{cetaḥ-prāṅgaṇa-saṅgini vijayate sarvendriyānāṁ kṛtiṁ} \\
\text{no jāne janitā kiyadbhir amṛtaḥ kṛṣṇeśi varṇa-dvayi}
\]

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my savior, I beg for your mercy to keep me fixed in pursing that gaura-bhāva, that mood of love that Rādhā has for Kṛṣṇa, that unique and rare feature of Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇavism. I want to . . . to serve you. Please keep me as a servant at your lotus feet. And thank you, thank you ad infinitum for allowing me to dovetail whatever paltry God-given talents I have in Kṛṣṇa’s service.

Your servants at ISKCON Television, Inc. (ITV)
(written by Nṛsiṁhānanda Dāsa)

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The Kṛṣṇa Center

\[
\text{nama oṁ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preśṭhāya bhū-} \\
\text{tale śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine} \\
\text{namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vānī-pracāriṇe} \\
\text{nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāscātya-deśa-tāriṇe}
\]

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda, the beloved and confidential servant of Nityānanda Prabhu! Nityānanda Prabhu is the most merciful master. He distributes the holy names like a madman due to His intoxication with kṛṣṇa-prema. Nityānanda Prabhu is so drunk with love that He runs about without any sense of propriety. He is unable to distinguish between brāhmaṇas and sūdras, the upstanding and the thieves, or even between different species of life. He was present on this planet so recently, but I am too fallen to have been a devotee at that time.

Lord Caitanya has blessed me with His mercy nonetheless. I know this is true, because He has sent Śrīla Prabhupāda, who traveled all over this earth to spread the ecstatic chanting of the names of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the most beloved Lords of Nityānanda Prabhu.

I now offer my humblest obeisances unto you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and make this offering. Please accept it. Your mercy is my only path back home.
Accepting a Spiritual Master

Many aspiring devotees wonder why one needs a spiritual master. One needs the guidance of a spiritual master to make progress in spiritual life, just as one needs the guidance of a trained lawyer in order to engage in legal study.

The goal of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas is to establish Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in the heart. Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vyāsa tells us explicitly how to achieve this goal in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.1.2. “As soon as one attentively and submissively hears the message of the Bhāgavatam, by this culture of knowledge the Supreme Lord is established within his heart.”

From this verse, one can understand that there are at least three reasons why devotees should not try to approach Śrī Kṛṣṇa directly but should instead approach Kṛṣṇa through a bona fide spiritual master. Those three reasons are: (1) the need for humility; (2) lack of qualification; and (3) respect for the paramparā system. Each of these three reasons is discussed below.

1. Humility

“As soon as one attentively and submissively hears the message of the Bhāgavatam, by this culture of knowledge the Supreme Lord is established within his heart.” The “culture of knowledge” is described in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purport to Mantra 10 of Śrī Ṣañcārīṇḍa, and also in Bhagavad-gītā 13.8–12. The first quality of the culture of knowledge is “humility.” Therefore, one cannot approach Kṛṣṇa without humility.

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that humility means not desiring to receive honor from others and learning to give proper respect to others. Those “others” to whom the scriptures refer include those who speak the message of the Bhāgavatam. Such speakers are most worthy of our respect. It is only through their mercy that one achieves the highest perfection of life—establishing Kṛṣṇa in the heart. One honors these speakers by accepting them as spiritual masters.

Accepting a spiritual master means to become submissive and to accept the master’s word as law. This is not the relationship of friends. Friends are equals. Each friend speaks his own thoughts, and there never needs to be any conclusion or agreement at the end of a conversation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda uses Arjuna to illustrate this point:

Śīyasya te 'ham. Ahaṁ te śīyasya: “I just become Your disciple, and You just educate me. Please enlighten me.” This is the position. Before that, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, they were talking like friends. Friends means argument. We can go on arguing for days together, but there is no decision. That is friendly talk. But when there is talk between a master and disciple, there is no question of arguing. The disciple has to accept what is ordered by the master. [Lecture, 17 October 1976, Chandigarh, India]

Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa were friends long before the Battle of Kurukṣetra. They had joked with each other “lay on the same bed, or sat or ate together, sometimes alone and sometimes in front of many friends.” (Bhagavad-gītā 11.42). Despite Arjuna’s confidential friendship with the Supreme Lord, Arjuna was nonetheless bereft of a spiritual master. Therefore, on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, when Arjuna faced his relatives and preceptors in battle, he forgot himself and fell victim to the modes of material nature. (Of course, ultimately this was Kṛṣṇa’s arrangement so He could speak the Bhagavad-gītā to Arjuna and to all people for all time.) Arjuna’s friendship with Kṛṣṇa did not protect him. Overwhelmed, Arjuna decided to abandon his duty as a kṣatriya, and began justifying his decision with morality and logic. (Bhagavad-gītā 1.36-45)

Despite Arjuna’s eloquent words, Kṛṣṇa saw what was in Arjuna’s heart, and He knew Arjuna was acting from material attachment. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa refused Arjuna’s false justifications and ordered him to fight. Kṛṣṇa said, “O son of Pṛthå, do not yield to this degrading impotence. It does not become you. Give up such petty weakness of heart and arise, O chastiser of the enemy.” (Bhagavad-gītā 2.3)

Kṛṣṇa’s instruction was clear, but Arjuna failed to follow His order. This is because Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were still only friends. Arjuna continued to argue with Kṛṣṇa and remained bewildered by the modes of material nature. (Bhagavad-gītā 2.4-6)
Finally, after running out of arguments, Arjuna became humble. This humility allowed Arjuna to surrender unto Kṛṣṇa and accept Him as his spiritual master. “Now I am confused about my duty and have lost all composure because of miserly weakness. In this condition I am asking You to tell me for certain what is best for me. Now I am a soul surrendered unto You. Please instruct me.” (Bhagavad-gītā 2.7) This marked a change in their relationship. Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were no longer merely friends, but were now master and disciple.

This act of surrender allowed Arjuna to eventually transcend the modes of material nature and become clear about the correct course of action. Kṛṣṇa said, “That very ancient science of the relationship with the Supreme is told by Me to you because you are My devotee as well as My friend and can therefore understand the transcendental mystery of this science.” (Bhagavad-gītā 4.3) In other words, Arjuna became specifically qualified to cultivate knowledge because of his submissive attitude—not merely because of his friendly disposition. “Perfect knowledge is called paramparā, or deductive knowledge coming down from the authority [spiritual master] to the submissive aural receiver who is bona fide by service and surrender.” (Purport to Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.21)

To approach Śri Kṛṣṇa, one must cultivate knowledge. The first quality of knowledge is humility. One manifests humility by submission to the spiritual master. Therefore, devotees do not try to approach Śri Kṛṣṇa directly but instead approach Kṛṣṇa through a bona fide spiritual master.

2. Lack of qualification.

“As soon as one attentively and submissively hears the message of the Bhāgavatam, by this culture of knowledge the Supreme Lord is established within his heart.” Kṛṣṇa is established in the heart when one “gains positive scientific knowledge of the Personality of Godhead.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.20) In other words, spiritual perfection means to see or “realize” Kṛṣṇa directly, with one’s own spiritual eyes. Until one realizes Kṛṣṇa, one can see Him only indirectly through the scriptures or through the eyes of others (the spiritual master and other pure souls).

One realizes Kṛṣṇa directly by “rendering devotional service.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.12) The word “render” means “to present for consideration, approval, payment, action, etc., as an account.” Therefore, “rendering” indicates two aspects of devotional service—offering and acceptance. It is not merely enough that a devotee offer service to Kṛṣṇa. The service must also be accepted by Kṛṣṇa.

In our present lowly state, we are not qualified to serve Kṛṣṇa directly. So to insure that our service is accepted by Kṛṣṇa, we should render it through the medium of the spiritual master. If the spiritual master, out his mercy, accepts our service, then Kṛṣṇa will surely accept it because the spiritual master is so dear to Kṛṣṇa. If the spiritual master determines that the disciple is sincere, he will reveal his mercy by accepting the service and passing it on to Kṛṣṇa.

3. Respect for the paramparā system

In Bhagavad-gītā 4.34 Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, “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.” In this verse, Kṛṣṇa explicitly establishes the paramparā system (system of disciplic succession).

Kṛṣṇa established the paramparā system in order to glorify His pure devotees. The pure devotee takes all risks to render service to Kṛṣṇa.

One such pure devotee is Arjuna, who risked losing his life in the Battle of Kurukṣetra, and also risked his emotional well-being by fighting with his loved ones. Why did Kṛṣṇa order Arjuna to fight? Kṛṣṇa could have annihilated the Kaurava army in an instant and relieved Arjuna of all danger and anxiety. Why did Kṛṣṇa put His devotee and friend in this situation?

Kṛṣṇa ordered Arjuna to fight because He wanted Arjuna to be glorified. If Kṛṣṇa had annihilated the Kauravas, everyone would chant the glories of Kṛṣṇa. But because Arjuna fought the battle, we chant the glories of Arjuna even today, five thousand years after the Battle of Kurukṣetra.

Kṛṣṇa loves His devotees so much that He shifts the attention away from Himself and onto His servants. He puts His pure devotees in situations that will cause them to shine, so that their pure qualities will be revealed to all.
Another example of a pure devotee taking all risks for Kṛṣṇa is our own Śrīla Prabhupāda. Three examples of Prabhupāda’s sacrifices include distribution of Back to Godhead magazine, traveling to the United States at age sixty-nine, and accepting the karma of unqualified devotees.

Prabhupāda risked his life in India in 1956 while distributing Back to Godhead magazine. Despite the heat of summer, Prabhupāda canvassed customers on the street until he fell to the ground from heat exhaustion.

Prabhupāda again risked his life in 1965 by traveling via ship to the United States at the age of sixty-nine. He suffered two heart attacks en route.

When Prabhupāda was very ill in Vṛndāvana in 1974, he explained that his illness was due to the sins of his ISKCON leaders. He also said he himself had committed the “misdeed” of accepting too many disciples.

If Kṛṣṇa so desired, He could make the entire universe Kṛṣṇa conscious immediately. But Kṛṣṇa chooses not to do so. Instead, Kṛṣṇa sent Śrīla Prabhupāda, fully empowered with the mercy of Lord Nityānanda, to spread the chanting of the holy name to every town and village, with the promise of kṛṣṇa-prema for all takers. Prabhupāda worked tirelessly to fulfill this mission. Kṛṣṇa put Prabhupāda into difficulties so that Prabhupāda’s devotional qualities would be revealed. Now, Prabhupāda receives guru-pūjā every day, all over the world. Think how much this must please Kṛṣṇa!

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You are the guiding force of our Krishna Center, and your disciples and followers here depend on the mercy of your lotus feet. Without you, we are no different from the trash on the street.

Your servants at the Krishna Center in Urbana, Illinois, USA.

(written by Bhaktin Rita)
Will I ever fathom the depth
Of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s plan
When he asked you
To leave Vṛndāvana-dhāma?

“The Calcutta temple’s on fire!”
Śrila Bhaktisiddhānta had said.
“If you ever get money,
Print books instead.

“Go and give the holy name
To English-speaking nations,
To those who show no mercy
And have no interest in salvation.”

The Jaladuta left Bombay,
The universe held its breath.
You were old but brave and determined—
I’m forever in your debt.

And as you entered New York,
You bowed to pray,
“O Lord, make me dance, make me dance.”
History will mark this day.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet on your glorious appearance day.
You commented in 1976, toward the end of your pastimes in this sphere:

They do not know, neither there is any education, nor university. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is trying to educate people on that line. It is not a sentimental religious system, it is an educational system. [Evening darśana, 13 July 1976, New York]

At the Māyāpur Institute for Higher Education and Training, we are facilitating systematic spiritual education for the worldwide community of devotees with our Bhakti-śāstrī and Bhaktivaibhava courses. We are also training devotees in preaching and teaching skills and in other areas of devotional leadership.

Your writings are a fundamental component of your movement. On the strength of the legacy of your writings, your mission will continue to expand all over the world for thousands of years to come. The MI-HET team is endeavoring to facilitate the expansion of your mission and the spiritual nourishment of your followers by providing systematic education based upon your writings and instructions in general.
We pray that you are satisfied by our efforts, and we beg you to bless us with the ability to effectively further the sankirtana mission in this way.

Your servants at the Māyāpur Institute for Higher Education and Training.

Māyāpur International School

Nama oṁ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmāte bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine

Namaṁ te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-praçāriñe
nirviśeṣa-sūyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriñe

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept our humble obeisances All glories to you on this auspicious day of your appearance!

Living with the Legacy of Devotion

Apart from the obvious and transcendental primacy of Śrī Māyāpur-dhāma as the site of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s puspa-samādhi, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s presence is never more pertinent and palpable than when it is experienced by the fortunate souls who are born, live, or work in Śrī Gaura-deśa, or who visit there. The depth of gratitude we owe Śrīla Prabhupāda for establishing Māyāpur as the world’s hub of Vaiṣṇava culture is beyond our conception. His sublime vision of a transcendental city and community has allowed Vaiṣṇavas from every town and village to congregate there and practice the science of bhakti-yoga unimpeded. Following in the footsteps of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and fulfilling the order of his own spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvati Ṭhākura, Śrīla Prabhupāda has, through his vision and his instructions to his disciples, secured for future generations of ISKCON devotees, and indeed for every Vaiṣṇava in the world, the opportunity to relish sādhu-saṅga and the spontaneous and immanent experience of kāñëa-bhakti in the holiest of dhāmas, Lord Caitanya’s own domain.

One has only to stay a short time at Māyāpur to realize the depth of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s foresight and the extent of his efforts to provide us with our own place within the unique and spiritually vibrant atmosphere of Māyāpur. Living in the community of his devotees, it is possible to experience an intense devotional engagement with sincere, enthusiastic, and grateful participants at the mature stage of this collective endeavor in his honor. Anyone who attends the spiritual festivals and cultural presentations in Māyāpur has no doubt that he or she is witnessing the ecstatic fruition of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s transcendental strategy. It is only by his verve and persistence that we can luxuriate in the reality of Śrī Māyāpur. Moreover, anyone who has once experienced these inspiring activities has no doubt that it was Śrīla Prabhupāda who made it possible for his godbrothers, disciples, granddisciples, and further generations to easily establish “New Māyāpurs” and spread and maintain the culture of devotion anywhere in the world. It is an accomplishment without par and beyond our power to recompense.

On his order, devotees annually meet at the annual Māyāpur Festival and reinvigorate themselves by remembering Śrīla Prabhupāda’s pastimes. As we are only a generation from his earthly presence, we can hear firsthand of his determination and patience, his tenderness and empathy, his daring and conscientiousness, his struggles and triumphs. He has engendered in his fortunate disciples an insatiable spiritual longing for his service, and by their enthusiasm and zeal that longing has been passed to us. To be sure, it is by this temporal proximity that we can hear and see the results of the sublime relation-
ships he established by engaging the dexterous, diligent, and sometimes difficult and peculiar (but never dull) characters who assisted him in establishing his mission, ultimately bringing them to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s devotional service. It is inspiring and illuminating to hear firsthand how he was simultaneously forceful but caring, how he rebuked while reassuring. These accounts allow us, his granddisciples, to delight in the ripened fruits grown from the seeds of sevā he sowed forty years ago.

We can only offer Śrīla Prabhupāda our future and try to nurture the nascent devotional endeavors of his new students. There is only one boon we are qualified to ask of him: Please bless all of us so that we can carry on the legacy of your devotion, so that all may feel the same intensity to serve you for many years to come.

_The students, teachers, administrative staff, and school board of Śrī Māyāpur International School._

(written by Śuci Dāsa)

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**Padayāṭrā Worldwide**

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this most auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

While compiling your offering I came across two quotes that especially caught my attention, one from a morning walk conversation in 1975 and one from a letter in 1976. They caused me to reflect on the events that transpired in 1976. It is obvious from the following letter you wrote to Punjabi Premanand how keen you were to start _padayāṭrā_ bullock-cart _saṅkīrtana_:

Concerning your offering of doing padayatra, traveling village to village, what is the use of getting the land in the hands of politicians who cannot properly utilize the land according to the instructions of Krishna? That’s a fact, but if Indian young men join me I am immediately ready for this traveling touring from village to village, town to town. However, my foreign disciples have the language defect: they can’t speak the village language. Otherwise I would have started this program long ago. If some young men like you would join me, then along with some foreign disciples I can immediately take up this program. If you are very eager, please get hold of at least half a dozen young men like you, then with another half dozen foreign disciples I can immediately take up this program and tour village to village and town to town. It will be very, very effective, I know that. [Letter to Punjabi Premanand, 16 April 1976]

Later that same year, toward the end of August, I met you in New Delhi. You had traveled there from Hyderabad to celebrate Rādhāñōamé, and our traveling _saṅkīrtana_ party, headed by Harinādātu Prabhu and me, had come there to meet you. We had been traveling in northern India with two German buses. We had to return to Delhi because the bus permits to stay in India were expiring, leaving our party without transport. There you surprised us. We did not know how we would carry on, but you had the solution: bullock-cart _saṅkīrtana_. It was very much on your mind, and you asked me to take up this program. We had been enjoying nice rides in our German buses; you put me back into my constitutional position: from bus to bullock cart.

Although it came as a surprise, it also felt quite natural. It was part of my upbringing and culture. I was born and raised in a village with bullock carts as practically the only form of transport. It wasn’t until I was nineteen that I had my first ride in a car. How did you know all this about my background? I can’t
remember sharing these details with you, but you knew this service best suited my nature.

With the introduction of padayāṭrā, all our transport problems were solved. You wanted a party of Indian and foreign disciples, and that’s what our party was made up of. The language “defect” you spoke of was also taken care of by this mix of devotees. Soon afterward you traveled from New Delhi to Vṛndāvana. We followed you there and quickly prepared for the bullock-cart traveling party. You kindly presided over our inauguration ceremony and addressed us with encouraging words, giving us your blessings along with practical guidelines. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the founder-ācārya of padayāṭrā sankīrātana.

During a morning walk on November 21, 1975, you stressed the importance of traveling village to village.

**Mahāṁsa:** Also another party of five devotees, they have started on the bullock-cart sankīrātana, going village to village. But it’s very austere. They were . . . I told them, “You go for two months, come back after two months.” But they returned in six days. (laughter)

**Prabhupāda:** Why?

**Mahāṁsa:** Because first of all they did not know how to ride the bulls, so the bulls gave a lot of trouble.

**Prabhupāda:** Then there is no professional driver?

**Mahāṁsa:** Well, now we are going to hire one driver to take care of the bulls. And secondly, even the axle of the cart was a little defective. Otherwise the program was a great success.

**Prabhupāda:** Oh, that is success. People were coming.

**Mahāṁsa:** Yes. And one person came to the temple in Hyderabad and met me. He said that “After your devotees had a program in our village, the farmers in the evening they were coming and doing kīrtana instead of just . . . ” Previously they were not doing anything, but now they are coming after farming. In the evening they are collecting and they are doing kīrtana together.

**Prabhupāda:** Just see how quickly there will be response. Therefore I was insisting, “Go village to village, town to town.” Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s prediction, prthiviśe āche yata nagarādi. [Morning Walk, 21 November 1975, Bombay]

When we started our padayāṭrā you personally appointed your disciple Siddhārtha Dāsa as our driver. He was an experienced professional bullock-cart driver, which worked out well. He drove Gaura-Nitāi’s cart all the way from Vṛndāvana to Māyāpur in five months, as well as beyond. What started in Vṛndāvana in 1976 was discontinued for some time but then started again in 1984, and padayāṭrā has been on the road in India till this day. We are now preparing for the silver jubilee next year.

There are many padayāṭrā parties traveling off and on in India and around the world. It has become a global phenomenon and an integral part of the global strategy for propagating the sankīrātana movement. We organized padayāṭrā in over a hundred countries for the occasion of your hundredth birth anniversary. Many of those countries are still keeping padayāṭrā on the road. As I was writing this offering, we heard news of a Russian devotee, Rṣabhadeva Prabhu, planning to start padayāṭrā in Olga, a city in central Russia.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most auspicious day of your appearance, we pray that we may never lose sight of your padayātra vision and your insistence on its importance. May we become convinced of the process of chanting the holy name as the cure for all ills of the Age of Kali, and may we follow in your footsteps, village to village, caring for humanity at large by distributing the medicine given by Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Padayāṭrā Worldwide-kī jaya! Śrīla Prabhupāda-kī jaya!

*Your servants at Padayāṭrā Worldwide.*

(written by Lokanāth Swami)
Prabhupāda Manor

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Thank you so much for giving us the process by which we can come to know, love, and serve Lord Kṛṣṇa. You’ve given us a simple blueprint for success: Chant, dance, honor only Kṛṣṇa-prasādam, associate with and serve the Vaiṣṇavas, follow the four rules and regulations, chant a minimum of sixteen rounds daily, and engage in any of the nine processes of devotional service with faith.

Thank you for making it easy on us, Śrīla Prabhupāda. What other yoga process out there offers perfection by eating, singing, and dancing? Thank you for not asking us to “meditate” by twisting ourselves like a pretzel and performing some gymnastic feats that aren’t possible in this age. Of course, if you wanted that from us we wouldn’t hesitate to try our best.

We’re inspired by Bhagavad-gītā 3.21:

\[
yad yad ācaratī śreṣṭhās
tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇāṁ kurute
lokus tad anuvartate
\]

“Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.” You mention in the purport that “People in general always require a leader who can teach the public by practical behavior.” We wholeheartedly accept whatever you teach us because you not only preach it but you live it. How many cheaters have come in the past and said, “Do as I say, not as I do”? You’re different, and that’s so appealing to us. We realize that we hit the jackpot when we got your books and saw by your practical example that we too could love God.

Please bless us with undeviating faith and determination so we’ll never fall off this path you’ve so kindly set us on. Please kindly forgive our offenses and teach us how to serve you properly. You are our spiritual master, birth after birth, and we’re forever indebted to Your Divine Grace.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, for loving us unconditionally!!

Your aspiring servants at Prabhupāda Manor, Cleveland, Ohio, USA.

Prabhupāda Village

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances.

Forgive us for our lack of realization and eloquence shown in this Vyāsa-pūjā offering. For conditioned souls it is impossible to understand, let alone describe, the pastimes of a mahā-bhāgavata such as yourself.
Even from the beginning your life was marked with unalloyed love of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Your devotion was exhibited from your earliest days, when you organized Ratha-yātrā festivals and worshiped Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindajé as a child.

While providing for and nurturing your family, you exhibited how to be a responsible grhastrā by supporting your spiritual master’s temples, writing articles, and being involved in the chanting and spreading of the holy name. After taking sannyāsa you wrote your First Canto translation and commentary and then departed Vṛndāvana, armed with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda in your heart and his mission by your side. Who can fathom your devotion and dedication as you ascended the Jaladūta gangplank? This is undeniably one of the greatest acts of love, faith, and devotion to guru and Kṛṣṇa within the history of Vaiṣṇavism.

Upon your arrival in America, difficulties surrounded you in the forms of a foreign culture, a lack of funds, and health challenges. However, you pushed on determinedly. How easy it would have been to give up! Yet you continued no matter what the challenge—stepping over Bowery bums, fleeing a psychedly pschydlo loft-mate, having your requests for help rebuffed by your Godbrothers—and constantly fought to fulfill your spiritual master’s wish that Kṛṣṇa consciousness be spread in the West.

The printing of your Bhagavad-gītā As It Is became the second largest printing in the history of the United States and precipitated a massive dissemination of Vaiṣṇava literature throughout the world. Never was there a more poignant example of your spiritual master’s bṛhat-mṛdaṇga at work. He must be so pleased with your effort.

Your teachings and example influenced millions, ranging from heads of state to religious leaders to intellectuals, and transformed hippies into happies. Your merciful gaze knew neither limit nor prejudice. You revealed to us how the Absolute Truth, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, could be realized through a practical rural lifestyle dedicated to simple living and high thinking. But of course your ultimate mercy was accepting us as your servants and inspiring us to engage in devotional service. There are no words at our command with which we can thank you properly for such a boon.

Our prayer on this day is that you do not kick us away from your lotus feet, that you allow us to assist you in your service to Lord Kṛṣṇa eternally. This is the perfection of our lives, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your selflessness, teachings, and inspiration.

Your eternal servants at Prabhupāda Village, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, USA.

Prahlāda and Kuntī-devī Āśramas

oṁ ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāṁ jaya-salākayā
cakṣur unmittelāṁ yena taṁma śri-guravo ṇamah

nama oṁ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śriṁate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine

namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṁ-pracārīne
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our respectful obeisances unto your merciful lotus feet. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! All glories to Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi!

On this special occasion we would like to offer you a few words of glorification. We would also like to
report on the activities we are conducting to help continue your mission.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your continued mercy, your disciples Bhakti Rāghava Swami and Gaura-Maṇḍala Bhūmi Prabhu are always enthusiastic to guide us in our practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We are all high school and college students.

The Prahlāda and Kunti-devi Āśramas were established to help educate high school and college students so they could have a chance to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness in their daily lives. Furthermore, His Holiness Bhakti Rāghava Swami also teaches us how to prepare ourselves to live our lives based on the varnāśrama-dharma system. Thus we cultivate vegetables, fruits, and flowers on the land in our āśrama. This farm, which we call Vṛndāvana-dhāma Garden, produces spinach, eggplant, tomato, coconut, and various spices. By your mercy, we are able to offer these to Guru and Kṛṣṇa.

Now the Prahlāda and Kunti-devi Āśramas consist of eighteen devotees from various parts of Lampung province. O Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your mercy we can are maintaining our daily routine of maṅgala-ārati, sandhyā-ārati, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and Bhagavad-gītā classes, and chanting the holy name. We hold a weekly Sunday Feast, which is followed by a special class about learning to read Bhagavad-gītā, because we realize that many of our friends in college still have problems reading and are not motivated to learn the Bhagavad-gītā. By this program, and by your mercy through the purports in Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā, now many of our friends are starting to visit our āśrama to learn more about Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your grace we are trying to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness by distributing your books. We also publish a monthly newsletter called “Sādhana Bhakti” so that youngsters can learn about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We also visit residents in some Hindu communities in Lampung to spread your teachings. As for prasādam distribution, we are making good use of the talented devotee cooks here with our catering service.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, all these programs can run well only by your mercy. All of this is possible because we have your guidance through your disciples.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, we pray that your glories will always motivate us to advance more and more in devotional service.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!!

Your servants at the Prahlāda and Kunti-devi Āśramas, Bandar Lampung, Indonesia.

(written by Kṛṣṇa Prema Dāsa and Guṇa Avatāra Dāsa)

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Radio Krishna Centrale

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\text{nāma oṁ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preśṭhāya bhū-tale}
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\[
\text{sṛimate bhaktivedānta-svāminn īti nāmine}
\]
\[
\text{nāma te sārasvate deye gaura-vānī-pracāriṇe}
\]
\[
\text{nirviśeṣa-sānyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe}
\]

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We beg Your Divine Grace to please accept our prostrated and respectful obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories, all glories, all glories to your transcendental literature!

Your books, more effulgent than millions of suns, are shining their brilliant light over this worldly material illusion, dispelling its thick syrupy darkness and illuminating the way back home, back to Godhead, for the repatriation of countless emigrated devotees of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
We, an unlimited, unfathomable number of fallen souls, have misused our independence and therefore been deported here by Māyā-devī. Since time immemorial we have been trapped in this universe, deeply sunk into the material atmosphere.

Completely covered by all-pervading ignorance, we have forgotten Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and therefore we do not even remember who we are what our engagement was in pure devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His associates.

Frantically, in full anxiety, unknowingly trying to regain our original position in the Vaikuṇṭha atmosphere, we keep embracing again and again the shadowy, inconsistent gratifications of the material senses, only to exponentially increase our suffering, frustration, anger, and madness.

In madness we end up believing we are as good as God, the supreme enjoyer and controller, and we venture into the intricate network of the material senses’ pathways, which all lead in the same direction, toward continuous entanglement with death.

But as a manifestation of the causeless mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Caitanya Mahaprabhu, along with His intimate associates, Your Divine Grace Oṁ Viṣṇupāda Paramahāṁsa Parivṛjñakācārya Aṣṭottara Śata Śrī Śrīmad Abhay Ācārā-vinda Goswami Mahārāja Śrīla Prabhupāda decided to appear among us fallen, conditioned souls and bring us back home, back to the pure unadulterated devotional service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Once an interviewer asked you, “Are you God?”

“No, I am not God,” your replied, “I am a servant of God.” Then after a short pause Your Divine Grace went on. “Actually, I am not a servant of God. I am trying to be a servant of God. A servant of God is no ordinary thing.”

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we can definitely see that a servant of God “is no ordinary thing” and that you are His best servant.

In fact, in our humble estimation you are the most extraordinary personality among extraordinary personalities. The whole guru-paramparā is proud of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

We have no doubts and no fear in proclaiming it.

It is in front of everyone’s eyes.

You have demonstrated it.

You have spread pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, pure devotional service, throughout the whole world and beyond.

Not just high philosophy, piety, mundane goodness, liberation from the suffering of material entanglement, or access to the heavenly regions, but pure love of Godhead on an unsurpassed grand scale. Therefore, according to guru-sāstra-sādhu, you are the most glorious.

In the form of your teachings, present within your extraordinary books, Your Divine Grace is dispelling the darkness of this material existence and exposing Māyā’s nakedness. In shame she runs away from your presence.

Sometimes (strange) questions arise regarding your purports—whether they are sāstra or not. After all, what is sāstra if not the words of the great souls? What could be more śastric than the words of such a mahā-bhāgavata as Your Divine Grace?

In your own words:

So, utilize whatever time you find to make a thorough study of my books. Then all your questions will be answered. [Letter to Upendra, 7 January 1976]

If it is possible to go to the temple, then take advantage of the temple. A temple is a place whereby one is given the opportunity to render direct devotional service to the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. In conjunction with this you should always read my books daily, and all your questions will be answered and you will have a firm basis of Krishna Consciousness. In this way your life will be perfect. [Letter to Hugo Salemon, 22 November 74]

Every one of you must regularly read our books at least twice, in the morning and evening, and automatically all questions will be answered. [Letter to Raṇadhīra, 24 January 70]

In my books the philosophy of Krishna Consciousness is explained fully, so if there is anything
you do not understand, then you simply have to read again and again. By reading daily the knowledge will be revealed to you and by this process your spiritual life will develop. [Letter to Brahmārūpa, 22 November 74]

O most magnanimous Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, we wholeheartedly pray for the benediction of those great devotees who are instrumental in helping so many souls come in contact with such an extraordinary personality as Śrīla Prabhupāda in the form of His extraordinary books. Please, one way or another, let us participate in this great service of distributing his books, a service so pleasing to our beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda. And thus let us have the opportunity of sharing with those great devotees the unlimited pleasure of seeing Śrīla Prabhupāda manifest His full ecstatic satisfaction.

Our dear Lords, please, let everything that we deserve happen to us, but we beg Your Lordships to please always give us the association of His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda, life after life.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your unworthy servants at Radio Krishna Centrale, Terni and Pisa, Italy.

(written by Tridāṇḍi Dāsa)
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We were born in the darkness of ignorance, and out of your causeless mercy you opened our eyes with the torchlight of transcendental knowledge. We offer our respectful obeisances unto you again and again on the occasion of your most auspicious appearance in this dark world.

As we meditate on your glorious appearance, we are amazed to realize how you manifested before our eyes all the rare and celebrated qualities of a transcendental paramahaṁsa parivrājakācārya nitya-siddha associate of Lord Kṛṣṇa. As you traversed the entire world loudly glorifying the holy names of Kṛṣṇa and Nityā-Gaurāṅga, you uplifted countless fallen souls from the dirt and contamination of Kali-yuga and placed them in a position of shining and spotless eternal service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore who can estimate your position in relation to Lord Kṛṣṇa? Who can understand the extent to which Lord Gaurāṅga and Lord Nityānanda have placed Their full trust and their potency into your hands, thus making you the instrument of Their munificence and magnanimity? Truly They have given you full license to distribute the inexhaustible storehouse of love of God to all the people of this world.

Also, it is our experience that you have exceeded the devotional contributions of Veda-vyāsa and the Gosvāmīs, not only by expounding widely the science of kṛṣṇa-bhakti in your translations and purports, but also by simultaneously establishing a worldwide society of devotees who are being trained in every corner of the world as leaders and preachers to take this great offer of mercy and spiritual salvation to every town and village. The marketing and distribution of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu’s mercy on all the fallen souls of this useless material world has been expertly executed by you. You have so easily and effortlessly fulfilled the prediction of the Lord: prthivīte ache yata nagarādi grāma/ sarvatra pracāra hoibe mora nāma. “In as many towns and villages as there are on the surface of the globe, My name will be broadcast.” (Caitanya-bhāgavata, Antya 4.126) Yet in the mood of a humble disciple surrendered to his guru, you have claimed that your only credit is that you simply repeated your spiritual master’s words without changing anything.

There is no material calculation that can do justice in describing your qualities and achievements. It is our conviction that Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself was using you as His instrument at every moment, yet we never saw Lord Kṛṣṇa doing all these things. We saw only your holy form before us, and as we listened to you we became inescapably attracted to you like bees to honey. May that attraction totally fill up our hearts and minds and not let even an atom of māyā enter in so that we may be forever situated at your lotus feet, birth after birth. Let us be attracted to your words just as the gopīs were attracted by the sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute. Śrīla Prabhupāda, now that we have surrendered unto you as the lord of our lives, we have nowhere else to go. So please save us, protect us, and guide us onward to Lord Kṛṣṇa’s eternal dance. Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

All of us unworthy servants of yours offer koṭi koṭi daṇḍavats at your lotus feet.

Your servants at the ISKCON preaching center in Sacramento, California, USA.
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please kindly accept our humble obeisances. All glories unto Your Divine Grace’s holy lotus feet! On this very auspicious day, please let us pray to you for your blessings and allow us to express again and again our deep gratitude to you for your compassion.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your mercy you have changed our lives. We learned how to follow the four regs and chant the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa with love and devotion. Our useless lives would have been filled with suffering without your gifts.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your mercy we can engage our senses in devotional service by dancing and singing in ecstasy, which make us very happy. We love it so much.

You are so kind to us that you sent us spiritual masters of whom we can take shelter and whom we can ask for guidance in spiritual life. We are so lucky to get the association of your disciples, from whom we can learn how to serve you by serving them. We can see how much they love you by how closely they follow your instructions.

Dear grandfather spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda, please let us keep your smile in our hearts, and let us remember your deep voice speaking your profound teachings. Give us strength to distribute your books and tell people about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We know that this will please you and our spiritual masters. May you always keep us fixed in this way.

The servants of your servants at Sāndipani Muni Āśrama, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia.

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I used to wonder what it would be like to be a sage like you. I imagined that by the time I approached sixty years of age I would be mature and wise in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that my general demeanor would be delightful, just as yours was. How wonderful it would be, I thought, to always know exactly what to say and to be intimately connected with God Himself. I thought that no matter what time of the day or night, or regardless of what was happening around me, I would be spontaneously photogenic, just as you were. I would be so deeply immersed in my love for Kṛṣṇa that the mere act of offering articles of worship would spawn deep ecstasies within me.
And yet after several decades of earnest endeavor in sādhana-bhakti, I am still the same old me, with most of the same old attachments. I am not transformed into some other being, as I imagined. In other words, I have not become you. But one miracle has occurred. Somewhere deep in my heart there is a tiny spark that is starting to glow. It only took me one lifetime, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to realize that the goal was not to become you but rather to serve you. I can hardly wait until my next life, when, I believe, Kṛṣṇa will grace me with sufficient determination and intelligence to please you in various ways at every minute of the day. After that lifetime of sacrifice, I am sure you will introduce me to Kṛṣṇa Himself. I can hardly contain myself when I think of that day.

In the meantime I am passing the days in this present ignorant birth by chanting my rounds regularly and associating with my more advanced godbrothers and godsisters. And even this, on occasion, gives me immeasurable joy. So you can understand why I am so excited and optimistic about my future births. I offer ten million obeisances to you in the frozen mud of our roads here in Śaraṇāgati Village, and I eagerly await the eternal future in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Thank you for accepting me.

Your servants at ISKCON Śaraṇāgati Village, Ashcroft, Canada.

(written by Yoganātha Dāsa)

The Ultimate Self-Realization Course

Dear paramahaṁsa parivṝjākācārya jagat-guru Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī characterizes Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this way:

\[
\text{anāsaktasya viṣayān yathārham upayuñjataḥ}
\]

\[
\text{nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe yuktaṁ vairāgyam ucyate}
\]

\[
\text{prāpañcikatayaḥ buddhyā hari-sambandhi-vastunāḥ}
\]

\[
\text{mumukṣubhiḥ parityāgo vairāgyam phalgu kathyate}
\]

"When one is not attached to anything but at the same time accepts everything in relation to Kṛṣṇa, one is rightly situated above possessiveness. On the other hand, one who rejects everything without knowledge of its relationship to Kṛṣṇa is not as complete in his renunciation." (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.255-56)

So this accepting everything in relation to Kṛṣṇa is what you are teaching your followers how to do. It is the essence of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Entering into this spirit, we at The Ultimate Self-Realization Course are engaged in utilizing the Internet to spread the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to the far corners of the earth. By the power of the Internet we are reaching and guiding more than eight thousand people every day in over one hundred countries in English, Spanish, French, and Russian.

By your mercy and the mercy of the previous ācāryas, so many people are learning about Kṛṣṇa’s teachings in the Bhagavad-gītā, so many people are feeling enlivened to take up the simple and wonderful path of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. In fact, we are considering that this Internet technology is simply one of the instruments given by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to rapidly expand the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement further and faster than anything before. Indeed, people are taking to chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and reading your books that haven’t had any contacts with devotees other than through the medium of the Internet, and they are very quickly coming to the standard of initiation.
Srila Prabhupada, in the *Caitanya-caritamrta* (Adi 17.203 purport) you declare:

[The] prediction of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu will triumph: *prthivite ache yata nagaradi grama/ sarvatra pracara haibe mora nama*. “In every town and village, the chanting of My name will be heard.” (*Caitanya-bhagavata*, Antya 4.126) No one can check the spread of the Krsna consciousness movement because upon this movement is the benediction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Dear Srila Prabhupada, O merciful master, please bless us that we may continue to serve your wonderful mission in this way, always remaining humble instruments in your loving hands.

*The Ultimate Self-Realization Course team.*

(written by Prema Bhakti Dasa)

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**Vaisnavas C.A.R.E**

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nama oṁ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivīdānta-svāminī iti nāmine

namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sānyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe
```

Dear Srila Prabhupada,

On this, the auspicious anniversary of your divine appearance, we, your menial servants, prostrate ourselves before you to offer ourselves, heart and soul, in your service eternally.

Gurudeva, you are our father, our friend, our guide, our protector, our ever well-wisher. Whatever strength, determination, intelligence, and ability we have come from you. As our captain you set the course, and if we simply follow your orders we will forever be your servants and return back home, back to Godhead.

Our hearts are overflowing with the deepest appreciation for all you have sacrificed and given us. To fulfill the order of your spiritual master, you came to the West in your old age, and at great physical risk, just to save us. We gratefully and joyfully have an eternity by which we can endeavor to repay our debt to you.

You urged us to fully utilize our lives in devotional service and to not waste even a moment. As we approach old age and can see the final examination coming, we are beginning to comprehend the true value of your instructions.

By rendering service to the devotees through Vaisnavas C.A.R.E., we are beginning to realize for ourselves the urgent need to prepare for death, as you have taught us. We feel an urgency to develop humility so that we are qualified to serve your servants. We understand that for our relationship with you and with Krsna’s holy name to evolve, we must become humble. But, our dear Srila Prabhupada, we are helpless to do this without a drop of your causeless mercy. We beseech you to continue to patiently direct us so that our blackened and hard hearts will be cleansed and softened, thus making them a suitable place to which we can invite you to reside.

In your purports to *Bhagavad-gītā* 8.5–6 you stress that every one of us will be faced with so many impediments to tolerate right up until the time of death. You write: “If one wants to achieve success
at the end of his life, the process of remembering Kṛṣṇa is essential.” Our capacity to overcome the impediments and to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare depends on our dedication to following your instructions while we still have full power to do so. For this ability we are completely dependent on your mercy.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura prays in his Saranāgatī (Śuddha-bhakta, Text 1):

śuddha-bhakata- caraṇa-ṛenu,
bhajana-anukūla
bhakata-sevā, parama-siddhi,
prema-latikāra mūla

“The dust from the lotus feet of pure devotees gives rise to devotional service, and service to the devotees is itself the supreme perfection and the root of the tender creeper of divine love.”

With these sentiments in mind, we endeavor to serve you by serving the Vaiṣṇavas, especially at the crucial time of death. Our ardent desire is to assist your devotees in remembering Kṛṣṇa as they embark on what we hope will be their final journey. To facilitate this service we are presently developing care teams and hospice rooms in your North American temples. We also have a well-appointed, sparkling clean Vaiṣṇavas C.A.R.E. hospice flat, medically staffed by your granddisciples, in Vṛndāvana. We humbly offer these modest achievements at your lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, today we pray that we may somehow please you by displaying the same determination and dedication to fulfilling your wishes as you had for carrying out the orders of your Guru Mahārāja. Please continue to shower us with your blessings so that we may develop perfectly pure and unwavering faith in your instructions, along with the understanding by which we can best serve the Vaiṣṇavas.

Placing our hearts at your lotus feet,

Your aspiring servants at Vaisnavas C.A.R.E.

Vṛndāvana Institute of Higher Education

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our respectful obeisances. All glories to your wonderful appearance in this world, and all glories to your divine instructions!

We at the VIHE have been blessed with one more year to be able to serve you. Thank you very much. Being inclined to study by nature, we spend a lot of time with your books. Ultimately, like all living entities in this world, our attempt is only a search for shelter, for it is the nature of all jīvas to be sheltered at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord. As we have searched through Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam patiently, the truth we have found is that the shelter is in serving your mission, and your mission is to serve the devotees by lovingly offering them a way to access deeper and deeper levels of devotional service. It is one thing to serve because one is told to, but it is another to serve because one is motivated from within, having a sense of what it is that has to be given to others. By our study and teaching of your books, the depth of realization and the conviction thereof increase with the unfolding of the verses and the light spread by your commentary, which is a door onto the wisdom of the previous teachers. Hearing the transcendental
message as presented by the person who cared to come and give it to us is the necessary complement that nourishes our daily chanting of the holy name and practical services. You stressed the educational purpose of the society you formed. You expected us to come together and cultivate our intelligence so we may rise with one-pointed determination to serve your order. There is so much risk incurred by not cultivating our understanding of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and by not associating with each other on the platform of transcendental sound. How will we cooperate without constantly hearing about the goal, the process, and all the relationships involved? Your instructions give us the way for progress, cool our passions, and blow away our misunderstandings. They preserve the mission.

So we are here to serve you by hearing and chanting. Together we learn to open our hearts to receive your instructions and the instructions of your servants, and we learn to open our hearts to generously give whatever we have received. You said we should speak from realization. We depend on your mercy. Of this there is no doubt. Please give us the opportunity to continue serving you and expand our services to you, in quantity, and most importantly in depth and quality. May we become effective servants of those who have chosen to serve you and may we attract many to your service.

In Vṛndāvana there are so many temples, they have become, made a business by showing temple, collecting money. This is not good. There must be... Temple means people should come, people should learn the science of God. That is temple. Not that to make a business of temple. Therefore everything is, not only in India, all over the world, the churches also, they’re dwindled. Now, Europe and America, so many churches are for sale. We have purchased so many churches because people have no more interest. There is no education. Temple means spiritual educational shelter. People should come, they should learn what is spiritual life, what is God, what is my relationship with. That is temple. Otherwise, if you simply came... Therefore two processes should be followed: pāñcarātrik-viddhi and bhāgavata-viddhi. We follow both. Bhāgavata-viddhi is the philosophical side of religion, and pāñcarātrik-viddhi is the worshiping side of temple—how to worship Deity, how to dress, how to decorate, how to offer respect. Mad-yājī. Man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī. Temple worship is mad-yājī, worshiping the Deity. So this is the test, this is the test. [Bhagavad-gītā lecture, Calcutta, 8 March 1972]

Kindly keep us at your lotus feet.
With immense gratitude, we remain

Your servants and students at the VIHE.

(written by Praśāntā Dāsī)