

ŚRĪLA
PRABHUPĀDA
TRIBUTES

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20 AUG
2022

Celebrating the
appearance day of our
beloved spiritual master

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

Following traditional *Vaiṣṇava* etiquette, we have placed the offerings from sannyasis first, and then those from Śrīla Prabhupāda's other disciples, all in order of seniority by initiation. In the back of the book you'll find an index to all the contributors in alphabetical order.

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

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

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

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

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your servant,

Pradyumna Dasa
Production Manager

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- An anonymous donor in the UK, in loving memory of H.H. Bhakti Caru Maharaja
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The Tributes Team

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

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Thank you to Draviḍa Dāsa for sharing and editing many of the san-nyasi and some of the initiated disciples offerings which also appear in the BBT Vyāsa-pūjā book.

TRIBUTES
BY
SANNYASI
DISCIPLES

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept this or it's worse than useless.

1

You have given me spiritual life
and so my time is yours.
You want me to be happy in Krishna consciousness.
You want me to spread Krishna consciousness
working with my brothers and sisters
in the society for Krishna consciousness.
Please accept these lines
made so I can recollect you,
made in separation from you.

2

We live here until we die and
we can always remember those eleven years.
Think of you sitting in a rocking chair
in backyard of Dallas,
one of many places
you travelled,
eighty years old, Mississippi farm
walking through the grass.

Initiation: 1966 September. 26 2nd Ave, NY USA

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

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

The mantra's sound reveals the highest truth.
Let's speak of its revealer, Prabhupāda –
His wisdom, joy, compassion, gravity,
His ways of showing Kṛṣṇa true and real,
His fortitude, his vigilant defense
Of Godhead: stubborn Māyāvādīs smashed,
Reductionistic speculators smashed,
Illusioned welfare workers hung to dry,
Big karmis all deflated, jñānīs skewered,
Exalted yogīs minus bhakti smashed.

Pretentious goodness, useless passion... bah!
He drives them out and leaves not half an inch
For dreary, dull, or crazy ignorance.

He brings us to the transcendental plane,
Surpassing senses, mind, intelligence,
Surpassing ego, bringing us to glimpse
The world of Kṛṣṇa, world of purest love,
Where goddesses of fortune serve the Lord –
Govinda, first and ultimate enjoyer –
Beneath the trees that grant all one's desires
For ever-blissful service to the Lord,
Where all the land is made of spiritual gems,
Where all the water's nectar, speech is song,
All walking dance, and Kṛṣṇa plays his flute,
His cherished friend. In that effulgent world
Of bliss, that highest place, most relishable of all,
In that Vṛndāvan, Kṛṣṇa's countless cows
Give oceans of divinely flowing milk,
Milk showering love of Kṛṣṇa on the soul.
And time stands still, not half a moment lost...

For in that place – Goloka, Svetadvip,
Adored by Kṛṣṇa’s purest devotees –
Each moment lasts forever. That’s a place
Known here but to a few most blessed souls.

Delighting even such enlightened souls,
One most empowered kindly came for us,
To bring Caitanya’s message, coming down
To rescue us from Māyā’s painful grip
And her last snares of oneness and a void.
Transcending time and space, he came for us,
Our teacher, master, savior – Prabhupāda!

He gathers Kṛṣṇa’s mercy like a cloud
And pours it raining down upon our heads
In torrents, raining down and raining down,
Extinguishing the fire of birth and death.

He brought us Kṛṣṇa’s name and form and traits.
He taught us how to sing and chant and dance.
He brought us Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes and disclosed
The science of devotion, as detailed
Within the books: the Gītā, Bhāgavatam,
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta... the books!

He gave us temples, there to serve the Lord,
And gave prasādam, joyful to our taste.
He gave us Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s sacred love.
To him, to Prabhupāda, we owe our life.

Lord Kṛṣṇa sent his messenger to show
The way back home. Let’s take that way and go.

Initiation: 1968 March. 26 2nd Ave, NY, USA
Current location: USA-UK-Middle East-Africa-India.
jswami@pamho.net

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu is currently preparing the world to transition from Kali's Iron Age of disagreement and hypocrisy to a Golden Age of harmony and goodness. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the Iron Age of Kali is epitomized by a false king named Kali, who dressed as a ruler but was beating a defenseless cow and bull, both valuable material assets.

Even if the soul is different from its material coverings and is endeavoring for spiritual enlightenment in the human form of life, it still needs to maintain its material existence. According to the *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.14), the basis of material life is food, which material nature supplies under the direction of the Supreme Lord. However, when people violate God's laws, material nature restricts the food supply. This was the case when Mother Earth refused to supply food to the sinful people living during king Vena's rule.

It may not be apparent to many, but the root cause of the degradation of the populace in Kali-yuga is the exploitation of cows and bulls, which were previously valued as essential for economic prosperity. Everything necessary for happy and healthy living could be produced with the assistance of cows and bulls. Bulls would plow the soil, help harvest, process the crops, and perform other valuable work, while the cow would supply milk and ingredients for medicines. Both the cow and bull gave ample fertilizer in the form of their manure. In this way, there was no need for industry to produce tractors to produce food or other machines to process it, nor was there a need for heavy industrialization to manufacture ships, planes, trucks, and cars and fuel them with petrol to deliver food. When people produced their basic necessities, there was no need for large military complexes for protection or exploitation.

When industrialization and technology replaced human endeavor and food became more scarce, children were seen as expensive hobbies rather than as assets to the family. Previously, large extended families were helpful in agrarian societies. Hence, contraception and illicit sex were not very prominent. Moreover, when spiritual goals were emphasized, people suffered less from depression and anxiety; hence, intoxication was less prominent. Satisfied with healthy, fresh food, clean air, and water, as well as a higher spiritual consciousness, people in general were not so interested in unmerited gain from gambling, or from lying and cheating.

Like Kali the pretender, modern educators and leaders have lost their true spiritual intelligence and have become degraded and incapable of helping their dependents. With the degradation of the intelligent and administrative class in society, society has become misdirected. Instead of refraining from sinful activities, most people are being encouraged to indulge in them. Thus, by propagating ignorance instead of real knowledge, godlessness is rampant in society. Most people are unaware or have lost sight of the true purposes of life and are clueless about how to obtain even material success, what to speak of spiritual advancement.

Unfortunately, it seems likely that many people will soon be reduced to varying degrees of poverty. The *Bhāgavatam's* emphasis on economic self-sufficiency and happiness based on Krishna conscious spiritual values should, therefore, garner more appreciation. A reduction in fever is to be welcomed, especially if it concerns reducing the fever of material society for unrestricted sense gratification based on material exploitation. If Lord Krishna's devotees take this opportunity to become more serious about their own personal spiritual development, show practical examples of how to live according to Vedic directions, and spread Krishna consciousness with better organization and intelligence, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's Golden Age can soon arrive.

Your servant,

Prahladananda Swami

Initiation: 1969 February. Buffalo, USA

Trivikrama Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Savior of the most fallen. Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Thank you so much for giving your personal association so liberally to so many of us. Of course you are still giving your association through your books, disciples, lecture tapes etc. However, I was so fallen that I do not think these things alone would have been enough to bring me to your lotus feet, to turn my face away from the glitter of the material world. I needed the authoritative, vibrant, strong sound

of your voice aimed directly at my nonsense self. And of course the gentle, sweet, encouraging voice so full of compassion. By the combination of these two voices I became trapped, totally trapped, and remain so, hopefully throughout eternity.

I am just now finishing up a book of my exchanges with you. It should be ready for printing this year. I think you will like it. For me, writing it has been a wonderful meditation. Now I have turned eighty-years-old. Please bless me that with my remaining years, or months, I can do something to bring a smile to your face.

Your insignificant servant,

Trivikrama Swami

Initiation: 1969 April. Buffalo, USA.

Gopāl Krishna Goswami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most fallen obeisances unto your divine lotus feet.

Every year when I try to recount your transcendental glories for the Vyāsa-pūjā book, I realize how unqualified I am to do so. On a few occasions you stated that your spiritual master was a Vaikuṇṭha man and so it was not easy to glorify him. I feel the same about you. You are definitely a Vaikuṇṭha man who appeared on this planet to save humanity. In your first meeting with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, he recognized that you were that transcendental personality who could take Lord Caitanya's message to the Western world. You were determined to execute your spiritual master's order. After struggling for nearly forty years, you finally reached New York City in 1965.

Last year several preaching programs were organized to celebrate the 125th anniversary of your birth. On that auspicious occasion, the prime minister of India released a silver commemorative coin. This was acclaimed to be very prestigious, and the event was covered by the international media. He praised ISKCON for presenting the true Vedic philosophy, and he praised you for being a true ambassador of Vedic culture. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we could not celebrate your 125th birth anniversary as elaborately as we wanted; our temples were closed for nearly two years. Necessity is

the mother of invention, and devotees worldwide have started using online platforms for preaching.

In a brief span of twelve years, you wrote over eighty transcendental books, which have been translated into most of the major world languages. You often stated that ISKCON is your body and the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust is your heart. You wanted your temples to be well managed and book distribution to be expanded. Everything we need to know is available in your books. Your Bhaktivedanta purports were personally inspired by the Supreme Lord. You will be pleased to know that we have a nice team for translating and publishing your books in Urdu (the language spoken in Pakistan). Presently the Urdu team has published up to the Fourth Canto, and their goal is to complete the entire Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in the next two to three years. In your letter dated 24th Jan 1977, you stated that every respectable person should have full sets of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and Caitanya-caritāmṛta in his home. ISKCON leaders in India have taken this instruction of yours as a goal.

Due to the power of your books, people all over the world are taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As your devotees, we regard studying and distributing your books as our most important services. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja states that tasks that are very difficult to do become easy by remembering Lord Caitanya, but that if we forget Him, then easy things become very difficult. Lord Caitanya instructed Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs to go to Vṛndāvana and establish temples and write books. Following in their footsteps, you wrote many books and built so many beautiful temples. Your disciples have also taken mission this to heart, and several temples have been built and are being built for your pleasure. You had a strong desire that a beautiful Kṛṣṇa-Arjuna temple be built at Jyotisar, Kurukṣetra, the place where the *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken. We sincerely hope to complete this project in twelve to eighteen months. Important dignitaries are expected to attend the inauguration.

On this auspicious day, I beg you for spiritual strength so I can go on serving enthusiastically in your great movement.

Your fallen servant,

Gopāl Krishna Goswami

Initiation: 1969 May. Montreal, Canada

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

When an interviewer once asked you, “What is the goal of life?” you replied, “The goal of life is to enjoy.” The effort to enjoy materially, through the mind and senses, leads only to frustration and misery. But spiritually one can enjoy in relation to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and that pleasure, unlike the temporary so-called happiness of the material world, is eternal, and that eternal happiness can be realized through the mercy of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and you. *Nitya* means “eternal,” and *ānanda* means “bliss.” So if we can come in touch with Lord Nityānanda—through you—we can realize that eternal bliss for which we are hankering.

How do we become eligible for your and Lord Nityānanda’s mercy? We can learn how from the description of His qualities and pastimes in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā*, Chapter Seventeen entitled, *The Pastimes of Lord Caitanya in His Youth*:

TEXT 17

tabe śacī dekhila, rāma-kṛṣṇa—dui bhāi
tabe nistārila prabhu jagāi-mādhāi

TRANSLATION

Thereafter Mother Śacīdevī saw the brothers Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in Their manifestation of Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda. Then the Lord delivered the two brothers Jagāi and Mādhāi.

In your purport, you write:

Jagāi and Mādhāi were two brothers born in Navadvīpa in a respectable *brāhmaṇa* family who later became addicted to all kinds of sinful activities. By the order of Lord Caitanya, both Nityānanda Prabhu and Haridāsa Ṭhākura used to preach the cult of Kṛṣṇa consciousness door to door. In the course of such preaching they found Jagāi and Mādhāi, two maddened drunken brothers, who, upon seeing them, began to chase them. The next day, Mādhāi struck Nityānanda Prabhu on the head with a piece of earthen pot, thus drawing blood. When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu heard of this, He immediately came to the spot, ready to punish

both brothers, but when the all-merciful Lord Gaurāṅga saw Jagāi's repentant behavior, He immediately embraced him. By seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face and embracing Him, both the sinful brothers were at once cleansed. Thus they received initiation into the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* from the Lord and were delivered.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu ordered Nityānanda Prabhu and Haridāsa Ṭhākura to go into Navadvīpa to approach whomever they met on the way and to go door-to-door and request people to chant the name of Kṛṣṇa, to worship Kṛṣṇa, to follow Kṛṣṇa's instructions (*bolo kṛṣṇa, bhajo kṛṣṇa, koro kṛṣṇa-śikṣā*)—and not to distinguish between who was qualified and who was not. And you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, preached in that mood.

When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was ready to kill Jagāi and Mādhāi because the latter had physically injured Nityānanda, the all-merciful Nityānanda Prabhu said, “No, Lord, don't do that. Don't harm them. In Kali-yuga Our mission is not to kill the demons but to deliver them. And in Kali-yuga almost everyone is like Jagāi and Mādhāi.”

In a conversation on June 11, 1975, in Honolulu, you said, “This is a good certificate we have got from some very authoritative person, that we are turning these drug-addicted hippies into servants of Kṛṣṇa and humanity. Is it not a good certificate?”

“Yes. It's true. We were all hippies,” Govinda Dāsī responded. And you replied, chuckling:

This is the fact. And I came to America for this purpose. *Pāpī tāpī jata chilo, hari-nāme uddhārilo, tāra sākṣī jagāi mādhai. Hari-nāme uddhārilo*, simply by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, Caitanya Mahāprabhu delivered all sinful men, suffering humanity. Is it true? What is the evidence? *Tāra sākṣī jagāi mādhai*. Just see, Jagāi and Mādhāi was drunkard. So, I thought, ‘Why one Jagāi and Mādhāi? Why not hundreds and thousands of them, if *hari-nāma* has got so much power?’ So, actually it has done so. Now you also take it very seriously. *Pāpī-tāpī jata chilo, hari-nāme uddhārilo*. *Pāpī* means sinful, and *tāpī* means suffering. So, these two classes of men are there all over the world: sinful and suffering. As soon as one becomes sinful, he will suffer. So, all these sinful and

suffering beings were delivered simply by the method of *saṅkīrtana*: *hari-nāme uddhārilo. Tāra sāksī jagāi mādhai*. People would actually see Jagāi and Mādhai, what they were and what they have become. Try to administer this.

In your purport to *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 16.65, you write:

Jagāi and Mādhai were delivered solely by Nityānanda Prabhu's mercy. When they injured Nityānanda Prabhu, Lord Caitanya became angry and decided to kill them with His Sudarśana *cakra*, but Nityānanda Prabhu saved them from the Lord's wrath and delivered them. In the incarnation of Gaura-Nitāi, the Lord is not supposed to kill demons but is supposed to deliver them by preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In the case of Jagāi and Mādhai, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was so angry that He would have immediately killed them, but Nityānanda Prabhu was so kind that He not only saved them from death but elevated them to the transcendental position. Thus what was not possible for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was carried out by Nityānanda Prabhu.

Similarly, if one is true to Gaura-Nitāi's service in the disciplic succession, he can even excel Nityānanda Prabhu's service. This is the process of disciplic succession. Nityānanda Prabhu delivered Jagāi and Mādhai, but a servant of Nityānanda Prabhu, by His grace, can deliver many thousands of Jagāis and Mādhai. That is the special benediction of the disciplic succession. One who is situated in the disciplic succession can be understood by the result of his activities. This is always true as far as the activities of the Lord and His devotees are concerned. Therefore Lord Śiva says:

*ārādhanaṁ sarveṣāṁ viṣṇor ārādhanaṁ param
tasmāt parataram devī tadīyānāṁ samarcanam*

"Of all types of worship, worship of Lord Viṣṇu is best, and better than the worship of Lord Viṣṇu is the worship of His devotee, the Vaiṣṇava." (*Padma Purāṇa*)

By the grace of Viṣṇu, a Vaiṣṇava can render better service than Viṣṇu; that is the special prerogative of a Vaiṣṇava. The Lord actually wants to see His servants work more

gloriously than Himself... If we simply follow Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's instructions and follow in the footsteps of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement can advance, and even more difficult tasks can be performed by the preachers remaining faithful to the service of the Lord.

You took up the same mood of approaching anyone and everyone—pious or sinful, qualified or unqualified—without discrimination. As Nityānanda Prabhu said, in Kali-yuga practically everyone is like Jagāi and Mādhāi. That may be more apparent in America and Europe than in India—though I did hear a talk in which you were discussing how demonic Western civilization is and how the leaders, and pretty much everyone, are demons, but then added, “Actually in my country also, 80 percent are demons.” But still, what you encountered in 1965 when you came to America was something that people now, especially people in India, can hardly imagine.

Kṛṣṇa Candra Prabhu (Hrishikesh Mafatlal) from Mumbai used to say that people cannot imagine who you encountered when you went to America. He recommended that everyone see the DVDs of you when you came to America, first at 26 Second Avenue in New York, then at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. People can't believe, can't imagine, the type of people you were approaching. And they didn't always receive you well. To get some idea of what you experienced, everyone should read *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta* and watch the DVD series *Following Śrīla Prabhupāda*.

One of the most dramatic incidents occurred in the summer of 1966, when you were living in a loft in New York's Bowery, which was the most degraded part of the city, its “Skid Row,” and was inhabited mostly by drunks. But even they had a little respect. They would be sprawled out on the sidewalk and on the stairs leading up to your apartment, but somehow they sensed that you were a saintly person, and so they would try to move over and make room for you to pass.

You were staying with a young man who seemed interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In fact, you thought, “I'll train him as a Vaiṣṇava.” But one day the young man went crazy, probably from taking LSD, the 1960s equivalent of the strong liquor Jagāi and Mādhāi were taking five hundred years ago. In his crazed state he threatened to attack you. Indeed, he seemed ready to kill you, just as Mādhāi was ready to kill Nityānanda Prabhu. You bolted out of the room and ran down the stairs, much as Haridāsa Ṭhākura and

Nityānanda Prabhu had fled from Jagāi and Mādhāi.

It's quite a history. In fact, how you endured so much hardship for the sake of delivering the mercy of Gaura-Nitāi is inconceivable. On the boat to America you had suffered two heart attacks, and even in America you had a lot of physical problems. But you endured everything—all these “attacks of *māyā*”—for the sake of delivering Gaura-Nitāi's mercy to us. And what Nityānanda Prabhu wanted in India has been fulfilled by you outside India. What Nityānanda Prabhu wanted was fulfilled in Bengal, but through you it's been fulfilled throughout the world. So, you are really the embodiment of the mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu. There had not been anyone in the history of our *sampradāya*, no one after Nityānanda Prabhu, who had taken up that mood of approaching anyone and everyone without discrimination, without considering who is qualified and who is not.

And you gave the same message: chant Kṛṣṇa's name, worship Kṛṣṇa, accept Kṛṣṇa as your life and soul—but not in so many words, because the people that you were approaching didn't even know who Kṛṣṇa was. When Nityānanda approached people in Navadvīpa and told them, “Chant Kṛṣṇa's name, worship Kṛṣṇa, follow Kṛṣṇa's instructions,” they knew who Kṛṣṇa was, they knew what Nityānanda was saying, but in America and Europe nobody knew who Kṛṣṇa was. So “Chant Kṛṣṇa's name, worship Kṛṣṇa” had to be explained in books, and thus you wrote so many books to explain who is Kṛṣṇa, what is Kṛṣṇa's name, how to chant Kṛṣṇa's name, how to worship Kṛṣṇa, why we should accept Kṛṣṇa as our life and soul, why we should surrender to Kṛṣṇa—the same message that Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked Nityānanda Prabhu to deliver to everyone, but in an expanded form, because the people you were approaching had no idea of Kṛṣṇa's identity or instructions.

When we go out with your books, it is like when Mahāprabhu sent Nityānanda and Haridāsa to approach people with that message. Sometimes devotees are not well received, but even Nityānanda and Haridāsa were not always well received. Caitanya Mahāprabhu would have nocturnal *kīrtanas* in Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura's house, and if anyone was proud, he was not allowed to enter. Only humble, pure devotees were allowed. So all the proud people in Navadvīpa were upset that they weren't allowed to join the *kīrtana*, and when Nityānanda and Haridāsa came to their doors, they were angry with them—“Oh, you've come from that Nimāi Paṇḍita and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura”—and they spread rumors about Nityānanda and Haridāsa: “They

are thieves. They come to your door and say to chant Kṛṣṇa's name and worship Kṛṣṇa, but really what they're doing is looking in your house to see what you have so that they can come back at night and steal it." They were spreading a lot of false propaganda. So, we have to accept that—expect it and accept it—without being deterred. It didn't stop Nityānanda and Haridāsa, and it didn't stop you, and it shouldn't stop any of us.

ISKCON is the continuation of Nityānanda Prabhu's mission, and you really had His magnanimous mood. When one of your early disciples came to India and the Calcutta temple president phoned you in Bombay to tell you that the devotee was smoking *gāñjā*, marijuana, and asked what to do, you told your secretary to relay your response: "Tell him that if he doesn't stop smoking *gāñjā* I will reject him." Afterwards, Tamāl Krishna Goswami asked you, "Is it true that if he doesn't stop smoking *gāñjā* you will reject him?"

And you said, "No—I cannot reject anyone."

Tamāl Krishna Goswami asked, "But don't you have to draw the line somewhere?"

And you replied, "The mercy of Lord Nityānanda is unlimited."

So that was your mood: you were in the mood of Nityānanda Prabhu.

We are the recipients of Gaura-Nitāi's mercy through you. By your mercy we are chanting Kṛṣṇa's name, worshipping Kṛṣṇa, and following Kṛṣṇa's instructions, accepting Kṛṣṇa as the goal of our lives. And it is also by your mercy and order that we preach the same message to others. We can speak to our capacity, and whatever our capacity to speak may or may not be, we can give people your books, which convey the same message of Mahāprabhu. We just elaborate on it and present it in a way that people without any background in Vedic knowledge can understand.

So, on this most sacred and blessed occasion, we pray to you to inspire and empower us with your mood of humble persuasion. I saw that mood in you. You often instructed us, but I saw it personally. When we first came to Bombay, there was a program on the terrace of the house where we were staying—Seksaria Bhavan, on Marine Drive. It was very nice, very glamorous, near the sea, and our host, Kailash Seksaria, had invited all the elite, affluent, aristocratic people he knew in Bombay. And you, with the same humility as Nityānanda Prabhu, implored them, "I am taking the straw in my mouth and begging you, Please chant Hare Kṛṣṇa."

You often quoted a verse by Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī about how we should approach people. The verse is, *dante nidhāya tṛṇakani padayor nipatya*: “Taking a straw in my mouth [a sign of utter humility], I bow at your feet.” *Kṛtvā ca kāku-śatam etad ahaṁ bravīmi*: “And I flatter you a hundred times.” *He sādhaḥ*: “O greatly learned man.” *Sakalam eva vihāya dūrād*: “Whatever you have learned, you keep it far away from you.” And *gaurāṅga-candra-caraṇe kurutānurāgam*: “Just accept the mercy of Lord Gaurāṅga, just surrender to Lord Gaurāṅga, become attached to Lord Gaurāṅga’s lotus feet.” You approached people in that mood.

One of my favorite statements of yours is “To approach Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, you need the mercy of Lord Caitanya; to get the mercy of Lord Caitanya, you need the mercy of Lord Nityānanda; and to get the mercy of Lord Nityānanda, you have to approach people like Jagāi and Mādhāi.” If we ever feel, “Oh, I’m too high, I’m too holy, I can’t approach these people,” we should think of that instruction and your example and really pray, beg, to be humble instruments of your love and mercy and compassion. As your *guru-mahārāja* told you, “That will be good for you, and good for the people who hear you.”

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all you have done for us—for the world. Kindly engage me as your servants’ servants’ servant.

Your eternal, grateful servant,

Girirāj Swami

Initiation: 1969 July. Boston, USA

Hridayānanda dās Goswami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

By your mercy, we again celebrate your blessed appearance in this world. Our material and spiritual health is a gift of God, Lord Kṛṣṇa. You taught and showed us how to receive that mercy. You taught us to see the wonders and the tribulations of this world as

a gift of God. With endless patience, you guided us on our path, awarded us service, trained us, inspired us, corrected us. In short, you created for all who would hear and follow you a genuine, eternal, unlimited spiritual life,

It is said that by Kṛṣṇa's mercy one attains a guru, and that by the guru's mercy one attains Kṛṣṇa. In your physical absence, when your presence in this world is not manifest to mundane eyes, once again we are receiving you by Kṛṣṇa's mercy. By Kṛṣṇa's mercy, your faithful, devoted followers increasingly discover your glories by faithfully serving your mission.

As we do our best to serve you, we can only pray that our efforts will please you and Kṛṣṇa and bring the empowerment you boldly offered to us, if we would give ourselves heart and soul to the Lord's mission. Let us do that now.

Your servant,

Hridayānanda dās Goswami

Initiation: 1969. LA USA

Danavir Goswami

To our beloved spiritual master, His Divine Grace Om̐ Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājākācārya 108 Śrī Śrīmad A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have taught us that this material world is a place of danger at every step.

*samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavaṁ
mahat-padaṁ puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ
bhavāmbudhir vatsa-padaṁ paraṁ paraṁ
padaṁ padaṁ yad vipadāṁ na teṣāṁ*

For one who has accepted the boat of the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of the cosmic manifestation and is famous as Mukunda, or the giver of mukti, the ocean of the material world is like the water contained in a calf's footprint. paraṁ padam, or the place where there are no material miseries, or Vaikuṇṭha, is his goal, not the place where there is danger in every step of life. (SB 10.14.58)

The spiritual master is playing an instrumental role in reuniting the devotee with the Lord. On behalf of the devotee, the guru

petitions the Lord to kindly consider the qualifications of the aspiring devotee. The guru is like a very trusted secretary who schedules the director's appointments. When the secretary tells a man that the director will meet him at an appointed time, that assurance is solid. In the same way, Your Divine Grace has given a full guarantee that those who follow the formula of devotional service as offered within the International Society for Krishna Consciousness will meet Kṛṣṇa soon in the spiritual world. At this moment, some of Your Divine Grace's dear disciples and grand-disciples face imminent death. Yet because they have sincerely applied themselves to carrying out the orders of guru and Kṛṣṇa, their future is bright. Your Divine Grace wrote to one such devotee:

Now you must agree to very rigidly follow the rules and regulations, i.e. chanting sixteen rounds of beads daily, rising early and attending Mangala Arati, observing the four principles, attending the classes, eating only bhagavata prasadam, as well as working under the instruction of my representatives, such as your GBC representative and Temple President; and if you follow this procedure very strictly, then your life will be glorious and you will go back to Home, back to Godhead. This I can guarantee. (Feb. 16, 1973, Letter to Ghanasyama dāsa)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have demonstrated many times how one should be fearless in the presence of danger. For example when the Naxalites in Kolkata sent multiple notes to Your Divine Grace demanding "Fly or Die," you told the devotees, "What better way for a Vaiṣṇava to leave his body than while preaching the glories of the Lord?" While you were staying in California, the threat of earthquakes frightened devotees who expressed great concern for your wellbeing but you carried on preaching. And in New Delhi when the reporter spoke of enemy bombs as an ugly reality you said a Krishna conscious person sees bombs as Krishna coming to take him back to Godhead.

Therefore, we are all very fortunate to have been rescued by Your Divine Grace from the ugly material repetition of birth and death. Kindly bless us that we may be strongly engaged in devotional service (*tivrena bhakti yogena*) despite all obstacles, and like Dhruva Maharaja, board the Vaikuntha airplane. Thank you.

Your most unfortunate beggar,

Danavir Goswami

Initiation: 1971 February. LA USA.

Kavicandra Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

“I was born in the darkest ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him. When will Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, who has established within this material world the mission to fulfill the desire of Lord Caitanya, give me shelter under his lotus feet?”

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

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

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

I recite these verses many times daily and am waiting for realization. As Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura sang, *kabe habe*, “When will that day be mine?”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the full manifestation of Lord Caitanya’s mission because you are the perfect *rūpānuga*.

*ācāryere ājñā dila kariyā sammāna
'ā-caṇḍāla ādi kṛṣṇa-bhakti dio dāna'*

With great respect, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu requested Advaita Ācārya, “Give Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotion to Kṛṣṇa, even to the lowest of men [*caṇḍālas*].”

[Purport:] This is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s order to all His devotees. *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, devotion to Kṛṣṇa, is open to everyone, even low-class men like *caṇḍālas*. One should follow this order in the disciplic succession stemming from Śrī Advaita Prabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu and distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness without discrimination throughout the world. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 15.41]

The fact that you have reached out and tolerated me for so many years is proof that you are following Lord Caitanya’s order perfectly.

My dear Guru Mahārāja, you have given us so many sublime instructions, two of which are currently dominating my mind. The first is that Lord Kṛṣṇa is *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, which means that He is inconceivably simultaneously one with and different from everything. Material scientists cannot accept that, but it perfectly explains Kṛṣṇa. He is “inconceivable,” beyond our ability to understand.

The second instruction of yours that is dominating my mind is your order that we always maintain the principle of “unity in diversity” in ISKCON. As we expand globally and attract more souls from many different backgrounds, and as there are more and more varieties of spiritual seekers, we see more and more the need to understand how to apply this seemingly simple principle of “unity in diversity.” I pray that I can represent you and imbibe this.

The influence of the Age of Kali is increasing, as is the Golden Age of Lord Caitanya. Your books and lectures are spread far and wide. Naturally demons do not like that and are pushing their agendas aggressively. So we are faced with the task of teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness properly and widely. We feel about you the same way Paramānanda Purī felt about Lord Caitanya:

*loka-hita lāgi’ tomāra saba vyavahāra
āmi saba nā jāni gambhīra hṛdaya tomāra”*

“All Your activities are for the benefit of people in general. We cannot understand them, for Your intentions are deep and grave.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 2.137)

Indeed, in His teachings to Sanātana Gosvāmī, Lord Caitanya perfectly described how impossible it is for us to fully understand

you, Śrīla Prabhupāda:

*yāñra citte kṛṣṇa-premā karaye udaya
tāñra vākya, kriyā, mudrā vijñeha nā bujhaya*

“Even the most learned man cannot understand the words, activities, and symptoms of a person situated in love of Godhead.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 23.40)

Of course, so many are relishing your writings and taking up *bhakti* and the *saṅkīrtana* mission with great zeal. I pray that I will be able to imbibe your mission.

*kabe jībe doya, hoibe udaya,
nija-sukha bhuli’ sudīna-hṛdaya
bhaktivinoda, koriyā binoya,
śrī-āññā-ṭahala koribe pracār*

“When will compassion for all fallen souls awaken within this Bhaktivinoda, and when will he thus forget his own happiness and with a meek heart set out to propagate by humble entreaty the sacred order of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu?” (*Kabe Ha’be Bolo*, Verse 8) When will I feel as Narottama Dāsa Thākura does, as he reveals in this verse of Song 5 of *Prārthanā*?

*mo-baḍa adhama jane kara kṛpā nirikṣaṇe
dāsa kari rākha vṛndābane
śrī-kṛṣṇa caitanya nāma prabhu mora gaura-dhāma
narottama laila śaraṇe*

“Narottama dāsa prays to his golden-complexioned Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, ‘Please cast Your merciful glance upon this most fallen soul and keep me as Your servant in Vṛndāvana. You are my only shelter.’”

When will I be able to pray like Sanātana Gosvāmī?

*“tabe tāra diśā sphure mo-nīcera hṛdaya
īśvara tumi,—ye karāha, sei siddha haya”*

“O Lord Caitanya, if You would please manifest Yourself within my heart and personally direct me in writing this book [*Haribhakti-vilāsa*], then, although I am lowborn, I may hope to be able to write it. You can do this because You Yourself are the Supreme Personality of Godhead and whatever You direct is perfect.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 24.328)

For me, even writing this short note is difficult. But you have

kindly given us the Pañca-tattva. So:

*mūka kavitoa kare yāñ-sabāra smaraṇe
pañgu giri laṅghe, andha dekhe tārā-gaṇe*

“By remembering the lotus feet of the Pañca-tattva, a dumb man can become a poet, a lame man can cross mountains, and a blind man can see the stars in the sky.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 8.5)

*Your still aspiring servant,
Praying to accept your causeless mercy,*

Kavicandra Swami
Initiation: 1971 June. LA USA

BV Bhagavat Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your holy lotus feet.

We are now faced with horrible obstacles to our very existence. Kali-yuga is rearing its ugly head and staring us right in the eye. Gradually it is getting worse and harder to live. Now the prices of food, fuel, and goods in general are creating serious challenges for the common man to live their daily life. Instead of creating shelter for the citizens, the demoniac leadership is making life harder and harder on the citizens day by day. The Chinese Government is starving people to death in Shanghai, a war is raging in Ukraine, and the world is being forced to accept poison in their body. It appears that even worse things are yet to come.

You warned us Śrīla Prabhupāda. You told us it would become horrible in the cities, that there would be no food to eat and that the general population would be forced to go and live in rural areas. You told us we devotees would need to create shelter for the millions of people who would be coming to live on the self-sufficient farms. But we did not listen. We failed to make the self-sufficient farms that you asked us to create and now we are faced with so much disaster as all your prophecies come to pass that not only will we be unable to help the general population in this crisis but we are not equipped to help even the devotee population. The shame of our failure in this regard is monumental.

Our only hope is your mercy. Forced by the horrible circumstances

created by the demons we are forced to come to your lotus feet and beg for your mercy so that the worldwide mission that you created does not get lost. That its teachings will remain. Please help us, your dependents, to survive and be of service to you in some capacity by creating shelter for the devotees and the innocent people who are being harassed by the demoniac kings in this Kali-yuga. *Tomāra karuṇā sāra...* your mercy is all we are made of and all that can exist for us now. We submit our plea at your lotus feet to protect your mission. Please bless us in these trying times with the faith, courage, and conviction to be your worthy sons and daughters engaged in your service to make a better world out of the ash heap of this modern civilization that is surely being brought to its conclusion, as you said in 1973 in 50 years all of this will be finished. Please bless us, and what few farms we have, particularly our farm in Texas, with your divine mercy that we may carry on your mission into the future.

Please forgive me for not doing more for you in this regard.

Your fallen and worthless servant,

Swami BV Bhagavat

Initiation: 1971 July. Gainesville, FL USA

Subhag Swami

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-sālākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

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

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

During this pandemic, things have been far from ‘normal’. Thus, accordingly we have had to adjust to the situation. Because of travel restrictions many devotees were not able to physically travel to many places for preaching but by your mercy we were able to have the association of various devotees virtually. Online preaching has become an easier way to stay in touch with devotees across the world. Many devotees across our movement have implemented this means

to further spread the movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

In this regard I am reminded of a wonderful verse by Śrīla Rūpa Goswami:

*yena tena prakāreṇa
manah kṛṣṇe niveśayet*

As Rūpa Goswami advised us to somehow or bring our mind to Krishna, in the same way, somehow or other, we have to try and bring one and all to the lotus feet of Krishna.

You mentioned in a letter dated 8th May 1973 that, “Please preach this Krishna consciousness very strongly so that we may give people real light for seeing the way out of the darkness of Kali Yuga.”

You were very fond of college preaching and stressed to your disciples to preach to the educated class of people. You expressed this in a letter dated 7th April, 1973 wherein you wrote, ‘**I am especially pleased to learn that you are introducing my books as textbooks in the colleges.** We especially have to try to attract the educated young men and women in your country so that in future there will be many strong leaders to keep our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement strong.’ In the recent years we have been pushing our *brahmacārīs* to go to various educational institutions throughout India to reach out and share the Vedic teachings with them. The response is very promising and many students are taking interest. We pray for strength so that we can continue with more of such endeavors.

Along with preaching in the colleges we have arranged a few *saṅkīrtana* buses to travel across India and distribute your transcendental books throughout every town and village. You used to say, “Lock up the temples, everyone has to go out for book distribution.” You once mentioned that as the Germans fired bombs on England during the WWII, similarly we would also drop bombs in this world of *māyā* in the form of your transcendental books. And in a letter dated 3 August, 1973, You mentioned, ‘There is no doubt about it, to distribute books is our most important activity. The temple is ... a base from which we send out our soldiers to fight with *māyā*. Fight with *māyā* means to drop thousand and millions of books into the lap of the conditioned souls.’ We know how important distributing books was to you and we hope we can continue this service as a humble offering to your lotus feet. Please shower your mercy upon us and all the devotees so that we can serve you in some humble capacity and please you.

Yours insignificant,

Subhag Swami

Initiation: 1971 September. London, UK

Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Mahārāja

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace, and all glories to *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*. Thank you for engaging me in the service of the *saṅkīrtana* movement, which is a manifestation of the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

During the past year I have continued to be a resident of Śrī Māyāpur-dhāma. The pandemic situation has not changed, and there are restrictions on travel to other countries. I have not been able to travel, but I have been continuing to contact many devotees in other countries using a satellite connection. In addition, I continue to present seminars on your books relating to the *Bhakti-śāstrī* and *Bhakti-vaibhava* courses. These courses attract devotees from all over the world, all eager to join in the study of your transcendental literature.

For many years I have been participating in the annual Navadvīpa-parikramā, during which we have an opportunity to visit the nine islands of Navadvīpa and hear the *līlā* of Lord Caitanya and His devotees. This year I also had the opportunity to join a *parikramā* of some of the other holy places in Gaura-maṇḍala-bhūmi. We went to Katwa and saw the place where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu accepted the renounced order. Then we went to Śrī Kaṇḍa and saw the Deity who ate the food offered to Him by Raghunandana Thākura when he was only a boy. We then went to Jajigram and saw the temple recently renovated by your Bhaktivedanta Charity Trust. This had been the home of the maternal family of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and was often frequented by such great souls as Narottama dāsa Thākura and Rāmacandra Kavirāja, who were intimate friends of Śrīnivāsa. Another place we visited was Phuliyā, where Śrīla Haridāsa Thākura chanted in a cave despite the presence of a poisonous snake. The temple in Phuliyā has also benefited from the assistance of your Charity Trust. We went to Denur and saw the original manuscript of the *Caitanya-bhāgavata*, composed by Śrīla Vṇḍāvana dāsa

Thākura, and then to Śāntipura, where you offered prayers before going to the West.

Just a few days ago I had the opportunity to visit Kānāi Nāṭaśālā, where we have a temple on the bank of the Gaṅgā. It is situated on a hill, so we do not have to worry about flooding. On our land there is a sacred *tamāla* tree, and it is said that under the shade of this tree Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was embraced by Lord Kṛṣṇa. The village of Rāmakeli is not far away, on the other side of Mother Ganges. It is a very beautiful and peaceful village, with many cows and mango trees. Five hundred years ago Sanātana Gosvāmī resided there when he was in the service of Nawab Hussain Shah. At that time Sanātana desired to make Rāmakeli into a replica of Vṛndāvana-dhāma. Devotees recently acquired land there and plan to begin construction soon. From Rāmakeli it is only a distance of 14 km to the district capital of Maldah, and there we have two wonderful centers in the busy section of town and a large congregation of devotees, all eager to hear and chant the glories of the Lord.

In Kolkata we have been fortunate to acquire the land where you took birth, as well as the building on Ultadanga Road where you first met with your spiritual master, Om Viṣṇupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura. Certainly these two properties are of great value for the future generations of devotees.

Some important imminent events are the start of the construction of a temple at Ganga Sagar, where Kapila Muni had his *āśrama*, and, on the auspicious day of Akṣaya Tritiyā, the opening of an 80-crore temple in Putna, Bihar.

I feel very fortunate to be part of this wonderful preaching movement and cannot thank Your Divine Grace enough for all the mercy. My prayer is that I may continue to use whatever time I have left in this body in the service of Your Divine Grace so that I can be of some tiny assistance in your great mission.

Your most unworthy servant,

Tridaṇḍi-bhikṣu Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha
Initiation: 1971. London, UK

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

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

The other day I was looking at a photograph of Śrīla Prabhupāda. He was walking alone in the rain without any umbrella. How much inconvenience His Divine Grace accepted for delivering Krishna consciousness to the world.

So far I am concerned I always take risk for Krishna. I came here in your country risking my life. And still although I am physically unfit, I am trying to execute the orders of my Guru Mahārāja as far as possible. So, to take risk for Krishna is very good. You know the history of my starting the society in 1966, it was all risky, and I was alone, but I took it depending on Krishna.—Śrīla Prabhupāda Letter, February 12, 1968.

This mood of taking risks for Krishna in order to benefit mankind was brought by Śrīla Prabhupāda to the Western world. His writings and classes further reflected that mood and his disciples felt inspired and empowered to assist him in also taking some humble risks to spread the message of Godhead to far away, even very risky places.

I have come here to fight with these atheists, you see, and we go everywhere. We are fighting with atheists all over the world. So, we are meeting so many opposing elements. You see?—Śrīla Prabhupāda Conversation, Indore, December 13, 1970.

Fighting atheism and establishing Lord Krishna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead was Śrīla Prabhupāda's mission. He would not be satisfied with anything less. He did not compromise. He delivered Krishna consciousness for the maximum benefit of everyone. This is true compassion. A doctor administers the medicine as it is prescribed. He does not dilute the medicine in any way in order to preserve its full potency.

...My Guru Mahārāja never compromised in his preaching,

nor will I nor should any of my students. We are firmly convinced that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and all others are His part and parcel servants. This we must declare boldly to the whole world, that they should not foolishly dream of world peace unless they are prepared to surrender fully to Kṛṣṇa as Supreme Lord. — Letter to Girirāja, Bombay 3 January, 1972

Another feature of Śrīla Prabhupāda's non-compromised presentation of Krishna consciousness was that he always stressed the point that the chanting of Hare Krishna is the most effective process to attain liberation.

Our Krishna consciousness movement stresses the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* only, whereas those who do not know the secret of success for this Age of Kali unnecessarily indulge in the cultivation of knowledge, the practice of mystic yoga or the performance of fruitive activities or useless austerities. They are simply wasting their time and misleading their followers... — *Caitanya-Caritamṛta*, Adī 17.24, purport.

There might be many obstacles and setbacks in pushing on Śrīla Prabhupāda's movement, but as long as we don't compromise, strictly follow the principles of Krishna consciousness, and keep Śrīla Prabhupāda as founder-*ācārya* in the center, there will be success.

Devotee: Śrīla Prabhupāda, you said yesterday, or a few days ago, that this movement will go on unimpeded for ten thousand years, so...

Prabhupāda: Yes, provided we keep it uncontaminated. You should take this opportunity.

Dāsānudāsa,

Bhaktivaibhava Swami
Initiation: 1971. Germany

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

The following verse translation from chapter 18 of your *Nectar of Devotion* continues to resonate with me:

I have no love for Kṛṣṇa, nor for the causes of developing love of Kṛṣṇa —namely, hearing and chanting. And the process of *bhakti-yoga*, by which one is always thinking of Kṛṣṇa and fixing His lotus feet in the heart, is also lacking in me. As far as philosophical knowledge or pious works are concerned, I don't see any opportunity for me to execute such activities. But above all, I am not even born of a nice family. Therefore I must simply pray to You, Gopījana-vallabha [Kṛṣṇa, maintainer and beloved of the *gopīs*]. I simply wish and hope that some way or other I may be able to approach Your lotus feet, and this hope is giving me pain, because I think myself quite incompetent to approach that transcendental goal of life.

In the previous paragraph you explain:

The strong conviction that one will certainly receive the favor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is called in Sanskrit *āśā-bandha*. *Āśā-bandha* means to continue to think, “Because I'm trying my best to follow the routine principles of devotional service, I am sure that I will go back to Godhead, back to home.”

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.1, Kṛṣṇa's quality of independence is stated by the use of the word *svarāṭ*. It is up to His independent will as to whether one achieves spiritual perfection or remains immersed in His illusory energy. I can understand that I am undeserving of His awarding me pure devotional service.

However, Bhakti is the property of pure devotees and has been

given Her independence by Kṛṣṇa to manifest Herself when the pure devotee wishes. You are such a repository of Bhakti:

My great hope, trust, and faith is based upon my relationship with you. In *The Nectar of Devotion*, we find that one quality of pure devotion is that it is the only means for attracting and controlling Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, by your will I will certainly attain perfection.

Following Narottama dāsa Thākura, one should aspire to be a servant of the Lord's servant, life after life. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura also sings, *tumi ta' ṭhākura, tomāra kukkura, baliyā jānaha more*: "O my Lord, O Vaiṣṇava, please consider me your dog." One must become the dog of a Vaiṣṇava, a pure devotee, for a pure devotee can deliver Kṛṣṇa without difficulty. *Kṛṣṇa se tomāra, kṛṣṇa dite pāra*. Kṛṣṇa is the property of His pure devotee, and if we take shelter of a pure devotee, he can deliver Kṛṣṇa very easily. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.9.42, purport]

My one-pointed dedication is to please you. Your mood in relationship to your spiritual master is the guiding light of my life:

Personally, I have no hope for any direct service for the coming crores of births of the sojourn of my life, but I am confident that someday or other I shall be delivered from this mire of delusion in which I am at present so deeply sunk. Therefore let me with all my earnestness pray at the lotus feet of my divine master to allow me to suffer the lot for which I am destined due to my past misdoings, but to let me have this power of recollection: that I am nothing but a tiny servant of the Almighty Absolute Godhead, realized through the unflinching mercy of my divine master. Let me therefore bow down at his lotus feet with all the humility at my command. [From *The Universal Teacher*, Śrīla Prabhupāda's Vyāsa-pūjā offering read to members of the Gauḍīya Maṭha in Bombay, February 1936]

Please let me always remain in that consciousness, always serving you in your association. That is my spiritual perfection—to serve you eternally.

Your servant,

Bīr Krishna dās Goswami

Initiation: 1972 January. Dallas, Texas USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories to you.

Who can ever glorify you sufficiently? Your gifts, vision, and instructions are not time-bound but are effective right now, and will be for hundreds and thousands of years after you walked the planet.

When we read your transcendental books, we associate with you. You said this yourself. And that association immediately lifts us out of the mud of material consciousness.

Recently I had such an experience when I was reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.22.16:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is always anxious to elevate the living entities, who are His parts and parcels, and for their special benefit the Lord travels all over the world in the form of self-realized persons like you.

In your purport to this verse, you write:

The devotees are representatives of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and to elevate the conditioned souls to their original consciousness, they travel all over the universes to enlighten the conditioned souls about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The best devotees are *ātmavat*, or those who have fully realized the Supreme Soul. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, as Paramatma, is sitting within everyone's heart, trying to elevate everyone to the platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore He is called *ātma-bhāvana*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is always trying to give the individual soul the intelligence to understand about Himself.

As I read this text, I immediately remembered my encounters with you where I could always feel this "elevation" that was as instant as the experience of stepping into an elevator that transports one swiftly to higher levels.

Elsewhere it is stated that once a conditioned soul meets such a pure devotee, his “rotational journey” in the cycle of birth and death is stopped. Provided, of course, that such a fortunate person is holding fast to the spiritual master’s instructions – at least *desiring* to live up to these words of spiritual direction. Then, by and by, as he sincerely attempts to control his senses and act only on the spiritual platform of devotional service, he is supplied with the strength required to walk on that platform without faltering.

A few days ago, I received a letter from a new devotee who is waiting for a new heart in the heart transplantation centre of Berlin. At any moment, the nurse and doctor could come to her room in the hospital and tell her to get ready for the surgery. Her body has been prepared already for the last three and a half weeks so that it is in the best condition to accept the new heart and then function with it. But one never knows how such a complicated surgery will end. She regularly reads your books and has gotten the inner strength to accept the uncertainty and unpredictability of her situation. Should she survive, she only has one desire: to associate with devotees, read more of your books, visit the temples, and use her hands in active service.

Hearing about her situation was an important reminder for me. A few decades ago, I actually had a “heart transplantation,” by your mercy.

I recall that right after meeting you – first in the form of your books, and later during a life-changing *darshan* – I received a kind of total reset. A new lease on life. It was not just an enthusiastic projection – but I actually saw that by your mercy and strength, I was able to do things that were clearly outside the range of my own strength and intelligence. The operation had worked! Like so many of my god-brothers and godsisters, I could understand that it was your strength that carried us. Like a lion who may transport some ants that are crawling in his mane, you took us with you to levels of consciousness and experiences in *seva* that were previously unimaginable!

This memory lives on in me fifty years later and inspires me to continue trying to walk in your footsteps by following your instructions. Yes, I am not on the high levels of consciousness that you exemplified. But just like that person in the heart centre who is making a plan to live on with an increased focus on Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I pray that all possible distractions from your pure service will naturally fall away as I continue to serve you with ever-increasing

gratitude and enthusiasm.

As always in need of your mercy,

Your humble servant,

Sacinandana Swami

Initiation: 1972 February. Hamburg, Germany

Ganapati Swami

“DO THE NEEDFUL”

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

“Do the needful”—one of the most endearing bits of advice Śrīla Prabhupāda offered to his disciples via correspondence. Prabhupada was cent per cent devoted to his Guru Maharaja and to executing his order. No matter what obstacles arose or what austerities were required, he did the needful and got the job done.

I could not understand. “What is this, that I have to go outside India? That is not...” And Guru Mahārāja foretold. He told my Godbrothers, Śrīdhara Mahārāja and others, that “He’ll do the needful when time comes. Nobody requires to help him.” He told in 1935. And after all, this was true. Guru Mahārāja told. And in the beginning, first sight, he told, “You have to do this.”¹

So determined was Prabhupada to execute that order that he was willing to employ any means—even at the expense of societal norms or his own physical health—if need be.

An ācārya who comes for the service of the Lord cannot be expected to conform to a stereotype, for he must find the ways and means by which Kṛṣṇa consciousness may be spread.²

For, “utility is the principle”:

1 Conversation June 17, 1977

2 CC Ādi 7.31–3 Purport

You [Srila Bhaktisiddhanta] preached “utility is the principle”—that is, one should act without attachment and use anything that is deemed appropriate in the devotional service of the Lord.³

What about moral standards?

So our standard of morality and immorality is to see whether Kṛṣṇa is satisfied. If Kṛṣṇa is satisfied, then it is morality. If Kṛṣṇa is dissatisfied, then it is immoral. And Kṛṣṇa’s representative also. Therefore, it is said *yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto ‘pi*. Our morality is to satisfy Kṛṣṇa or His representative, guru. *Yasya prasāda*. If he’s satisfied, then it is moral. If he’s not satisfied, then it is immoral.⁴

But “it requires little brain”:

Unless we are ordered by Kṛṣṇa or Kṛṣṇa’s representative, we cannot violate the morality of this world. That is not possible. It is a great philosophy. It requires little brain to understand. So man nimitte kṛtaṁ pāpaṁ puṇya eva kalpate. So if sometimes we have to do something which is sinful for the sake of Kṛṣṇa, not for others, not for me... For me, even if we do so-called pious activities, that is also impious. And if we do something for Kṛṣṇa which is in the estimation of the world impious, that becomes pious. That is Kṛṣṇa philosophy.⁵

Can that involve cheating?

Sometimes we have to cheat, sometimes we have to be injured—so many things. The only device is how people can become Kṛṣṇa conscious. That is our mission. Some way or other these rascals should be converted to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, either this way or that way.⁶

Even great souls cheat:

That great souls cheat others may be astonishing to know, but it is a fact that great souls cheat others for a great cause.⁷

3 *Viraha Astaka*, Third Octet

4 Lecture Aug. 29, 1973

5 Lecture May 6, 1973

6 Lecture May 3, 1970

7 *SB* 1.13.37, Purport

Indeed, Śrīla Prabhupāda admitted doing so himself:

To satisfy the Lord, anything is good, for it is in relation with the Absolute Truth. We also had the same opportunity to cheat the family members and leave home to engage in the service of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Such cheating was necessary for a great cause, and there is no loss for any party in such transcendental fraud.⁸

But isn't a devotee supposed to be simple?

"Is a devotee simple or crooked?" he asked smiling.

"He is simple, Śrīla Prabhupāda," one disciple answered.

"Are you sure? Is he simple or crooked?" He again asked with a rascal-like gleam in his eye.

"Yes, a devotee is simple!" the disciple enthusiastically responded, not realizing he had fallen for a trick question.

Śrīla Prabhupāda then sprang the unexpected punch line.

"Actually, the devotee is crooked!" Everyone stood there with their mouths gaping.

"Take me for example," Śrīla Prabhupāda explained. "I came to your country and everyone was eating meat, taking intoxication, and doing so much nonsense. I tricked everyone. I've tricked all of you into becoming Kṛṣṇa Conscious. So, in that sense the devotee must be crooked, because he must be able to trick. Just like I have tricked everyone. No one wanted Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, but I have tricked you."⁹

"Actually, I am tricky":

[Madhudvisa] said that he considered the Indians to be very sneaky and tricky and that he didn't like dealing with them.

Prabhupāda said, "I am an Indian. Do you think I am very tricky?"

⁸ SB 1.13.37, Purport

⁹ *Srīla Prabhupada Uvaca* 28

“No, not you, Śrīla Prabhupāda,” said Madhudviṣa.

“Actually, I am tricky,” said Śrīla Prabhupāda, “because I have tricked all of you into surrendering to Kṛṣṇa, and now you are caught and you cannot get away.”¹⁰

And devotees loved Prabhupāda for it:

Brahmānanda: You also tricked us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, when you came to New York. You were just chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and speaking on Bhagavad-gītā, and we came and we listened, and then you took everything. You took our lives, took all of our money... We left our families.

Prabhupāda: There is a Bengali word, “Enter like a needle and come out like a plow.”¹¹

Śrīla Prabhupāda also taught us to employ this principle:

Śaṭhe śaṭhum samācaret. When there is trickery, you become trickery. *Śaṭhe śaṭhum samācaret.* Kṛṣṇa’s play, those who are plain, Kṛṣṇa is very kind and plain. Those who are tricky, “All right, I am also tricky.” We shall adopt all the means of the materialistic person, simply for Kṛṣṇa.¹²

How about lying?

We may tell any damn thing to induce people to give us money on Kṛṣṇa’s behalf, that is not the point. The point is that by saying lies, the less advanced neophyte devotees may become entangled or disturbed in their minds by it. Of course by their collecting more money and giving to Kṛṣṇa, He will relieve them of all anxiety of telling lies.¹³

But one must be an “expert fisherman”:

So far this making some false story for collecting money or selling book, of course we may do anything for Krishna, but that is supposed to be reserved for very advanced experts in Krishna Consciousness—they know how to catch the big fish without themselves getting wet.¹⁴

10 *Srila Prabhupada Nectar* 1.1

11 Conversation Oct. 9, 1977

12 Conversation May 7, 1976

13 Letter Dec. 31, 1972

14 Letter Dec. 25, 1972

This transcendental morality is the principle and therefore it cannot be denied, either due to risk of abuse or by the mundane judgement of vox populi.

Granted. But we can't compromise our four regulative prohibitions, can we?

Śrīla Prabhupāda admonished Harikesa dasa for holding anything above preaching:

He [Prabhupāda] said, "Then eat meat if you have to."

I said, "But what about my consciousness?"

He said, "Damn your consciousness. You have to preach." ¹⁵

But did Śrīla Prabhupāda actually expect Harikesa to eat meat? Indeed, would Prabhupada have done so himself? Generally, he never asked his disciples to do anything he wouldn't do himself. But when told that in America they only eat meat and potatoes, Prabhupada replied, "I shall live on bread and potatoes." ¹⁶

In addition, after he told devotees about his Guru Maharaja's determination to serve meat to attract people to the temple, he clarified his own position, "We will never serve meat. But the idea is that if visitors feel too much inconvenience from our rules, then arrangement can be made for tea or coffee, or even betel or bidis." ¹⁷

So while Śrīla Prabhupāda took many risks (simply sailing West on the Jaladuta was putting his life at risk) or flexed social and moral standards to spread Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, he did so only out of necessity. For example, he sometimes took snuff to facilitate his long hours of sastra translation and commentary. It is also said (albeit, not without challenge) that he even took vaccinations to facilitate his travels abroad.

Returning to the original point: by doing the needful for the pleasure of Sri Guru and Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda was the Supreme Moralist. Considering how he employed the above practices to spread his mission, should there be any doubt that he could have also simplified, cut corners, generalized, or hyperbolized in his presentation of Gaudiya theology? In doing so, he merely withheld or adjusted details without transgressing siddhantic principles. Śrīla

¹⁵ *Srila Prabhupada Nectar* 3.3

¹⁶ *Srila Prabhupada Lila* 7.2

¹⁷ *Transcendental Diary* 4.5, Sept. 29, 1976

Prabhupāda, as a fully realized, compassionate, and empowered acarya knew how—and how much—to say in order to inspire his audience to engage in sadhana bhakti so that they could rise to the platform of being capable of hearing and digesting all that he wanted to share with them. May we all become inspired and capable to follow his transcendental example.

All glories to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda!

daso 'smi,

Ganapati Swami

Initiation: 1972 April. LA, USA

Bhakti Aloka Paramadvaiti Swami

Śrīla Prabhupāda kī! Jay!

Śrīla Prabhupāda has the amazing capacity to stay with us, to stay on our mind, to remind us of the real duty of human life, to be able to support the difficulties which one encounters in life especially as one grows older.

I had the mercy to meet Śrīla Prabhupāda maybe fourteen times in my life and each and every one of those moments somewhere, are there, deep engrave in my consciousness.

I feel very sad that I cannot serve Śrīla Prabhupāda the way he deserves to be served but I know he is a beloved representative of Lord Nityānanda, and thus unlimited amounts of mercy flow from his heart to each and everyone who holds onto his *japa* and keeps chanting this *maha-mantra* *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare / Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare*. This *mantra* is the telephone number of Lord Krishna. It is a chance to enter into spontaneous devotion if you spontaneously call the Lord and cry for help. So, Śrīla Prabhupāda had the greatest keys of the world of the transcendental world. The keys to help us go back to home, back to Godhead, and even though we are not very qualified. We can only try to give those keys to everybody else who crosses our path. Śrīla Prabhupāda never will I be able to repay you for even one single moment of your association, your books and everything that you have given us.

I wish that this world could become more Krishna conscious.

That was your wish as well and to some degree we, your disciples and grand-disciples and great-grand-disciples trying to do this, trying to be in the lineage of your desires, still we see the world as a hard nut to crack. Maya is so powerful but what else can we do what else do we have except memory of your lotus feet of your kindness of how valiantly you spread Krishna consciousness.

When I sent you the first *Back to Godhead* magazine which we printed in Sweden. I published the picture on the front cover of you chanting in Tompkins Square Park. And your answer to me, you wrote, "...Am I not looking bold to be there and chanting for all these people by myself?"

So, yes! You are not only bold, you are divinely empowered to show us that we should be bold and continue whatever little capacity we have that you have given to us because if there is any success coming from it, it will be your credit. It will be your mercy and that is what I pray for continuously.

One more year has passed of your divine appearance in this world, but I am convinced that time will come and people will understand who you really were. By the intense presence of the easy way mayavadi interpretation, the Indian population is enamored, but cannot appreciate what you have done for the world by giving Krishna consciousness to every house in every country. For some reason it is a great challenge to some that *bhakti* is the key to the heart of everyone. You have shown that, what to do, impersonalism is rampant in this world and it gives the impersonalist a feeling, "Oh! I reached perfection! I don't have to deal with any deeper commitments!", but we know that this is not true. Only pure *bhakti* can help us overcome all these nasty symptoms of the age of Kali. Thank you again! Once and again because we, I, are nothing without your kindness, mercy therefore we try to catch hold of that duty which flows in front of us, as you go on preaching to everyone.

Haribol!

Jay Śrīla Prabhupāda! *Dāṇḍavats pranāms!*

Your insignificant servant,

Bhakti Aloka Paramadvaiti

Initiation: 1972 July. Paris, France

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī states, “The ocean of the pastimes of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu is immeasurable and unfathomable. Who can have the courage to measure that great ocean?”

Similarly, for me, the ocean of your activities is immeasurable and unfathomable. I don’t have the capacity to measure that great ocean. Simply standing on the shore, I am but touching the water and can only try to convey a glimpse of its nectarean and life-giving waves.

Before I met you I was walking among the living dead. Bewildered by the powerful influence of the illusory energy, I thought of myself as full of life and vigor although spiritually unconscious and agonizing under the unbearable burden of material existence. My position was very much like that described by Prahāda Mahārāja: “Because of my association with material desires, one after another, I was gradually falling into a blind well full of snakes, following the general populace.”

Living in a fool’s paradise, I did not realize that “a person who has not at any time received the dust of the feet of the Lord’s pure devotee upon his head is certainly a dead body. And the person who has never experienced the aroma of the *tulasī* leaves from the lotus feet of the Lord is also a dead body, although breathing.” That was my unfortunate situation: spiritually dead in the water although materially alive and imagining I was going strong.

Oblivious to the spiritual dimension of existence, the living dead ignore the flickering nature of the material world and believe that the path to a fulfilled life and true happiness lies in the pursuit of fleeting pleasures and enjoying life to the fullest because, as the ignorant conditioned soul believes, life happens only once. “Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we may die,” is their credo. By your causeless mercy, you lifted me out of that snake-infested pit and opened my eyes with life-giving instructions.

Following the example of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, you brought the potent medicine of the holy name, distributing it freely even among the lowest of creatures, thus bringing the living dead back to life: *enechi auṣadhi māyā nāśibāra lāgi' / hari-nāma-mahā-mantra lao tumi māgi'*. You are the true *sañjīvana-vaidyā*, the transcendental physician who can revive the spiritually dead by infusing them with the invigorating nectar of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*.

On account of some inconceivable good fortune, I accepted your offer, and gradually I am regaining my spiritual health. All those fortunate souls who came in contact with you and followed your treatment became healed and refreshed. As you explain in Chapter Twenty of *Kṛṣṇa* book, *Description of Autumn*:

We have practical experience of this with our students in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Before becoming students, they were dirty-looking, although they had naturally beautiful personal features; due to having no information of Kṛṣṇa consciousness they appeared very dirty and wretched. Since they have taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, their health has improved, and by their following the rules and regulations, their bodily luster has increased. When they are dressed with saffron-colored cloth, with *tilaka* on their foreheads and beads in their hands and on their necks, they look exactly as if they have come directly from Vaikuṇṭha... [Many] of our students were dry and morose previous to their coming to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but having come into contact with devotees, they are now dancing like jubilant peacocks.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, let me be counted among such fortunate Vaikuṇṭha residents, or among the jubilant peacocks. I am hopeful that, simply by following the path chalked out by you, I may be able to become eligible and, when the time comes, rise from the “living dead,” put my feet on the head of death, and go to the land of true and everlasting beauty, where all the fortunate “living alive” will reunite with you to serve the all-attractive flute-player and His entourage.

In eternal gratitude—risen from the dead—

Your aspiring servant,

Bhakti Gauravāṇī Goswami

Initiation: 1972 July. Paris, France

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

As always, I am faced with the perplexity as to what to write. This type of perplexity is, however, the best, since it brings meditation on you and pure devotional service. Glorifying Kṛṣṇa's devotees is more pleasing to Kṛṣṇa than glorifying Him.

*ārādhānānāṁ sarveṣāṁ viṣṇor ārādhanaṁ param
tasmāt parataraṁ devi tadīyānāṁ samarcanam*

[Lord Śiva told Goddess Durgā:] “My dear Devī, although the *Vedas* mention worship of demigods, the worship of Lord Viṣṇu is top-most and is ultimately recommended. However, above the worship of Lord Viṣṇu is the rendering of service to Vaiṣṇavas, who are related to Lord Viṣṇu.” (*Padma Purāṇa*, quoted in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 11.31)

Your Vyāsa-pūjā day—the most important day of the year—is a measure of the past year and whatever is to come. A time for opening the heart unpretentiously. What can we hide from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda? A time of genuine repentance, of humility and self-surrender. A time to appreciate others, of gratefulness, of respect, reflection, prayer, and submission. A time to realize a drop of the unlimited glories that emanate from you. To see the glorious manifestation of unity in diversity. A time when I cry in a repentant mood for all my foolish behavior and the offenses continually emanating from my pitlike heart. A time to look deep into the heart and measure the actual degree of faith and devotion. A time of heart-breaking pain for the many, many, souls who are struggling in the separation of ignorance, or who have drifted away from the divine path you have laid before us. Your divine mercy enables all these purifying emotions to become manifest. I hope the tears purify the mirror of my heart.

Each year that passes by illustrates my ineptitude in obeying

your will with sincerity. How long will it take before I awaken, let go of the fallible soldiers of this world, and cling firmly to your lotus feet as my only shelter?

In all honesty, I would say that among my innumerable faults and offenses, my lack of sincere devotion to you is the primary cause of my failings. You personally demonstrated the single most important quality of a devotee—absolute *guru-niṣṭhā*—in your every breath, word, thought, and action. It is this *guru-niṣṭhā* that I clearly lack. *Guru-niṣṭhā* and your impeccable ability to see into the hearts of others and prescribe the exact tonic—these two qualities of yours stand out incomparably.

Śrīla Gaura Govinda Mahārāja quotes a beautiful poem emphasizing the imperative need of *guru-niṣṭhā*:

*guru pāda-padme rahe yāra niṣṭhā-bhakti
jagat tārīte sei dhare mahā-śakti*

Whoever maintains unflinching devotion to Śrī Guru's lotus feet is possessed of the great power with which he can deliver the entire world.

*hena guru pāda-padma karaha vandanā
yāhā haite ghuce bhai sakala yantraṇā*

Just bow down to the lotus feet of such a guru, for by doing so, O brother, all afflictions are terminated.

This year marks one hundred years since you met your spiritual master in Ultadanga, Calcutta, and received the most profound history-changing instruction: "Preach the message of Lord Caitanya in the English language." An instruction which remained your life and soul throughout.

This year also marks fifty years since I entered your room in Bury Place for the first time. I was alone and nervous. I did not know what to expect. You could read my heart and see how helpless I was, and still am. After I'd bowed before you, you gently instructed me to offer my obeisances correctly, with both hands on the floor. You handed me my initiation beads, which you had chanted on. Beads which I had chanted on for many, many, months before—not even made entirely of wood: some were made of dough. There were no knots between them. Somehow or other you tolerated. You gave me my name and explained its meaning. I paid obeisances with the beads in my hand, and you again gently instructed me to pay obeisances

properly, with both hands on the floor. As I was about to leave, with nothing to say, you handed me a simply wonderful from your tiffin. Again I offered obeisances, and again you gently instructed me to put the sweet aside and then offer obeisances.

This simply wonderful experience remains ever fresh in my heart, small as it may seem. But small incidents like this sustain my life. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for accepting me and making everything so simply wonderful. Unfortunately, over the decades I have not been so simple, and thus things have not been so wonderful.

I am sitting at this moment in the very same temple of Rādhā-Londonīśvara, although in a different building, writing this short remembrance, appeal, and offering. How simple the divine Lord, Londonīśvara, and His consort appear, smiling on all who come! You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are the same. Still smiling on all who come, in whatever state or form. Despite my duplicity and insincerity, you appear smiling from your picture in front of me and are again instructing me to pay my obeisances properly, with both hands on the floor.

I do not know if I will ever follow this simple instruction, what to speak of others. For the last fifty years you have tolerated me and somehow given me the chance to render some kind of service, be it fraught with faults and offenses, and to continue paying obeisances, be they imperfect.

Thank you for allowing this complex fool to associate with your simply wonderful mission—the simply wonderful *saṅkīrtana* movement.

Repentant tears fall from my eyes as I gaze at your sublime picture. I wish this moment could last forever—sitting in front of you with my heart open, begging your merciful surgical incision to remove the disease within, with your simply wonderful words contained in your books, which sit next to me—just pick them up and hear. “If you want to know me, read my books.” “My purports are my emotional ecstasies.”

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for tolerating this errant and hopeless son, who has failed again and again in spite of the gifts you have offered. And I am still not falling at your lotus feet with my very being—and with both hands on the floor.

Selfish as it may sound, please allow me, however, to continue forever falling in the dust of your lotus feet, on the paths of world *saṅkīrtana*. I am not fit for anything else. Another of the inconceivable gifts you have given us. You are my only hope. I am sorry I am

not much use in fulfilling the name you gave me. When will *guru-niṣṭhā* be all that I am made of?

Thank you for being “simply wonderful.”

Your lowly servant,

Janānanda Goswami

Initiation: 1972 July. London, UK

Krishna Kshetra Swami

In this year 2022, one hundred years since you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, first met your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, I offer you my most humble prostrations.

Last year on the occasion of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā I expressed my appreciation for your greatness in terms of your experience and sharing of “complete knowledge of the Complete Whole, such that you do not experience any form of incompleteness.” Reflecting further on this quality of yours, I now want to express appreciation of your complementary opulence, namely, the many *refusals* you exhibited to affirm your full faith and attachment to Lord Krishna. Allow me to list briefly a few instances of such transcendent acts of refusal that you have shown, acts of rejecting what would not be favorable for your service to Lord Krishna.

It began early in your life when, as a small boy, you *refused* to give up your wish to celebrate Jagannātha Rathayātrā, a refusal rewarded by help from a neighbor to enable the event to take place. Some years later, graduating from Scottish Church College, you confidently *refused* your diploma as a symbolic gesture of non-cooperation with the ruling British imperial power. You were not afraid to speak truth to power in this way, a fearlessness that you would demonstrate repeatedly in later life.

And in later life, as you prepared to embark on your mission to the West, you *refused* the temptation to remain in Vrindavan to live a peaceful life of *nirjana-bhajana*, resolving instead to bring Lord Caitanya’s profound message of divine love to the world. When at last you arrived in New York, you also *refused* to follow the advice to wear “coat-pants-hat”—Western attire to conform to Western style, determined instead to be your authentic self in your traditional

dress of a Vaiṣṇava renunciant. In like manner, you *refused* to take the well-meant advice to name your fledgling missionizing institution the “International Society for God Consciousness,” knowing as you always have, that it is Krishna who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, identified only vaguely, and even in a sense misleadingly, as “God”.

In so many ways you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, *refused* to shrink from asserting your mission. Whether it was insisting on disciples following the four “regulative principles of freedom” or giving *brāhmaṇa* initiation to Western disciples; whether it was calling out Māyāvāda and Prākṛta-Sahajiyā ideas and practices; whether it was fighting for the Juhu land or standing up for your young and inexperienced disciples in India, you always *refused* to back down; rather, you showed us repeatedly how to “fight the good fight” on behalf of guru and Krishna. When it came to “impossible” achievements like producing and printing your Caitanya-caritāmṛta, you *refused* to identify with the fools in whose dictionary the word “impossible” is listed.

One could go on and on about the many sorts of transcendental refusal you demonstrated in service to your Lord Krishna, but there is one that I’m particularly fond of remembering today: You *refused* to accept the caution suggested (and well meant) by Śyāmasundara Prabhu regarding asking George Harrison for a donation to print the *Kṛṣṇa Book*. Rather, you reassured him that when he meets George and brings up the topic, “Krishna will help.” And sure enough, Krishna did help, by dramatically sending a perfectly timed flash of lightning and thunderclap, just at the moment Śyāmasundara popped the question, causing a short blackout and thereby very viscerally convincing George that he should indeed make the requisite \$19,000 donation for this glorious cause.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for showing us, your students and followers, by your sublime example, how to refuse the easy way and the less-than-faithful way in the bracing path of devotional service. Please bless me to continue in your footsteps, learning by your example how to be always ready to *refuse* whatever is unfavorable to this exalted purpose.

Your aspiring servant,

Krishna Kshetra Swami

Initiation: 1972 July. Paris, France

My dearest master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this occasion of the 125th anniversary of your birth, Your Divine Grace will be pleased to hear that it has been a phenomenal year for the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. We celebrated several golden anniversaries, headed by the anniversary of the installation of Choṭa Rādhā Mādhava, the first Gaura Pūrṇimā festival at ISKCON Māyāpur, and Your Divine Grace's laying of the TOVP's cornerstone. In addition, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of Your Divine Grace's receiving Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's first instructions to you.

While commemorating the anniversary of ISKCON Māyāpur's first Gaura Pūrṇimā festival, I reflected on that festival, which was held in your divine presence in 1972. Even though you had been actively involved in acquiring the property in Māyāpur, it would be the first time Your Divine Grace would be visiting ISKCON's property. It was on the auspicious day of Gaura Pūrṇimā that the cornerstone-laying ceremony for the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava Temple (later known as the TOVP) was held.

After this festival you went to Vṛndāvana to hold another cornerstone-laying ceremony. You wanted to feature Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma because the area of Ramaṇa-reti, where the temple was to be established, was the spot where Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma played as cowherd boys with Their friends. Your Divine Grace held the cornerstone-laying ceremony for the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple with one hundred people in attendance, and as in Māyāpur, you descended into the ceremonial pit and placed the Deity of Ananta Śeṣa there.

Then on March 22 you held yet another cornerstone-laying ceremony, this time for the Rādhā-Rāsabihārī Temple in Bombay. This was the third cornerstone-laying ceremony in the space of a month. Your many letters to your disciples around the world bear testimony to your deep interest in temple construction. I was just a brand-new *bhakta* who had dropped out of college to join the devotees at Hare Krishna Land in Bombay, so I missed the 1972 Māyāpur festival. But your mercy and compassion know no bounds, Śrīla Prabhupāda, because immediately thereafter you came to Bombay and held the festival at Hare Krishna Land. For me it was no different from

attending the festival in Māyāpur. I might have missed the 1972 Māyāpur festival, but in one sense I did not, because you brought the festival to Bombay.

So in 1972 the Māyāpur festival was born, and in 1973 it began to gather momentum, and in 1974 it blossomed in an unprecedented way. Encouraged by the success of the first Gaura Pūrṇimā festival, you invited all your disciples to attend the second one in 1973. Since 1973, I have attended all the Māyāpur festivals because I had made a promise to myself that I would never miss another Māyāpur festival.

Throughout 1973 I had the wonderful opportunity to serve as head *pūjārī* for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī in Bombay. When Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava were installed in Māyāpur 1972, I began nurturing a desire to do Deity worship in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur. Jananivāsa Prabhu, the head *pūjārī* in Māyāpur, was gracious and allowed me to bathe, dress, and garland the golden form of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. While I served the louts feet of the Deities, my thoughts would be fixed on the lotus feet of Your Divine Grace as you took your morning walk on Bhaktisiddhānta Road. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I was so conscious of your presence that even while serving Rādhārāṇī I would listen to the *kīrtana* in Rādhā-Mādhava's temple in front of the Lotus Building. I knew all the devotees would be greeting you as Your Divine Grace returned from your morning walk. I would hastily add the final touches to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava for Their beloved *senā-pati bhakta* to greet Them. I remember this so vividly. As soon as the curtains opened, Your Divine Grace would offer prostrated obeisances and stand with folded hands. The praise emanating from your mouth and the beaming smile on your face were your reward to us for our worship of Rādhā-Mādhava.

Kolkata will continue to be exceptional in many ways, Śrīla Prabhupāda. This year we celebrated the inauguration of the restored historical building at 1 Ultadanga Junction in Kolkata. This is the very same building and place where your Guru Mahārāja started his preaching movement and stayed for fourteen years. This is also the place where you met your Guru Mahārāja for the very first time, in 1922, and no sooner had you and your friend prepared to sit down that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura said, "You are educated men. Why don't you preach Lord Caitanya's message throughout the world." Although Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura gave the instruction, in essence this meeting and instruction were orchestrated by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who engaged your Guru

Mahārāja as the medium through which to convey the instruction. Caitanya Mahāprabhu knew that Abhay Charan De was *mora senāpati bhakta*, “the commander-in-chief of My *saṅkīrtana* army.” It was as if Caitanya Mahāprabhu were whispering to Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, “He has come to you. He is right here. Convey the instruction.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, this building is the birthplace of the Gauḍīya Maṭha and ISKCON, and the Chief Minister of West Bengal has declared it a Heritage Site now.

We are now concluding the celebrations of the 125th anniversary of Your Divine Grace’s birth. After performing a herculean task and jumping through many administrative hoops, ISKCON Kolkata has finally managed to acquire the very property where you appeared under the jackfruit tree in Tollygunge Road—yet another significant place to be revered and remembered.

Your Divine Grace expressed a strong desire to preserve the ancient manuscripts of our previous *ācāryas’* writings. This was the inspiration for the creation of the Bhaktivedanta Research Centre (BRC) in Kolkata.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the original Rādhā Govind temple at 3C Albert Road was the first ISKCON temple in India that was established, in early 1971. In the last few years the dedicated team of devotees of ISKCON Kolkata have successfully renovated it, ensuring that this temple will be well preserved.

These holy places will become pilgrimage sites for visiting devotees from around the world who go on *parikramā* in Kolkata. Through the endeavors of many devotees, Kolkata has become the gateway to Śrīdhāma Māyāpur.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I fall at your lotus feet to seek your blessings on this auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā. The numerous festivals and commemorations have become pivotal opportunities to deeply remember Your Divine Grace, your instructions, your mercy, your love for your devotees, and your *līlās*.

Your eternal servant,

Lokanāth Swami

Initiation: 1972 October. Vrindavan, India

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my sincerest obeisances. I pray to forever offer my body, mind, and soul in your service.

As I reflect upon my life over the past fifty-one years since I first met you, my heart fills with gratitude and joy. Through both the pleasant and the stormy times, your teachings and example have remained a constant shelter.

Bitter conflicts, heartbreaking disappointments, and ideological disputes are everywhere in the world. Dreadful diseases, mental anguish, and natural disasters are filling people's lives with uncertainty. The influence of Kali-yuga seems to leave no stone unturned, even within a society of devotees.

In this turbulent sea of material perplexities, your words and example give us shelter and provide a perfect compass to lead us always toward Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth and the goal of life.

As the years pass, the limitations of old age and the nearness of death are right before our eyes. The increasing occurrences of our most beloved Vaiṣṇavas and Vaiṣṇavīs disappearing from the physical world are now inseparable from the experience of living.

Yet, you have given us the gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, wherein we can know that Kṛṣṇa's ever-loving hand is reaching out to us in all situations. We need only to recognize His mercy and surrender to receiving it. As we grow on the path of *bhakti*, we are gaining deeper realizations of the glorious place that you are taking us.

You have entrusted to us the eternal message that the happiness of hearing and chanting Kṛṣṇa's names and glories while engaging in devotional service with sincere devotees is the highest reality. The rules and regulations that you mercifully gave are to protect us from the implications and distractions that draw our minds away from the joys of devotional service. You have given us a day-to-day way of living wherein our immortal souls may pass through this mortal world on a journey into Kṛṣṇa's pure loving service.

I am forever grateful.

This year, 2022, is the 100th anniversary of a historical moment that would forever change the world.

In 1922 in Kolkata you first met His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda at his residence on a rooftop at the first Gauḍīya Maṭha, on Ultadanga Junction Road.

One century ago, at this meeting, you were given the instruction to take the teachings of Lord Caitanya to the whole world in the English language. You accepted this order as your life and soul.

Years later, while residing in Vṛndāvana in a small rented room, you prepared for your mission by beginning your English translations and purports to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This was a humble beginning for your legacy of circulating the most Vedic literatures in history. Here in Vṛndāvana, you daily prayed at the *samādhi* of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī for his blessings to fulfill the impossible order that you had been given.

The miracle of your dedication, sacrifice, and compassion has fulfilled a prophecy that has been cultivated through the ages by the greatest of Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*. You have fulfilled a dream cherished by all of the *ācāryas* of our *paramparā*.

This year, for your pleasure, Śrīla Prabhupāda, this original temple at Ultadanga in Kolkata, where you first met with your Guru Mahārāja and received his order, has been procured and renovated. It was inaugurated on the Vyāsa-pūjā day of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura by the devotees of ISKCON Kolkata.

The building has been restored, as far as possible, to its original design, materials, and atmosphere. We are hoping that it will be an intimate place of pilgrimage for all of your followers to come and meditate upon Your Divine Grace. It is our hope that this sacred place may also help unite the greater Vaiṣṇava community.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the past year ISKCON Kolkata has inaugurated a memorial and pilgrimage site at the exact place you took birth in 1896 under the historic jackfruit tree. We will be striving in the days to come to develop this memorial in a way that devotees and sincere people of all backgrounds throughout the world will come to celebrate your glorious appearance and your pastimes of pure devotion and compassion.

In this way Kolkata will truly become a “gateway to Māyāpur” and to the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium, according to your desire. I pray for the sincerity to wholeheartedly beg for your mercy and to assist you in your glorious service to the *paramparā* of Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga.

Your servant,

Rādhānāth Swami

Initiation: 1973 February. New Vrindavana, West Virginia, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I met you in July of 1966. Only you could tolerate, tame, and begin to train me. Your external presence was comprised of an aging, yet powerful form...self-contained, composed, sense-controlled, yet ever reaching out, extending your mercy to even the likes of me.

You frankly said to my father, “There is something wrong with that boy.” Yet, by your unfathomable mercy, you added, “But we can fix him up!”... In 1966, I was just turning 20. And your physical body, 70. And now I’m well over 75, just see the relentless nature of Time and Tide!

But then it erupted – the “Hare Kṛṣṇa Explosion!” In this regard, Yadubara Prabhu has aptly named his film for your glorification, ‘*Hare Krishna – the Mantra, the Movement and the Swami who started it all.*’

In a filmed press conference, when asked why your movement had attracted so many American youths, you simply replied, “Because I gave them something substantial.” Yes, you magnanimously poured upon us the most matchless – and substantial – of gifts!

Of crucial importance was the gift of authentic Vedic Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta* revealed through Guru, *Sādhū*, and *Śāstra*. (Through your books, you ensured we would continue to assimilate such wisdom.) Together, Guru, *Sādhū*, and *Śāstra* comprise the foundation and entire evidential and epistemic basis of truly substantial, ultimate spiritual knowledge. You brought these three indispensable components which you naturally and opulently encompassed and embodied. “Bhaktivedānta” – devotion along with a mighty philosophical, scriptural foundation, your completely apt honorific title Being very merciful, you did not hesitate to gift us the treasures revealed by these three *pramāṇas* and continued nourishing us with, “something substantial.” Furthermore, you made it clear to us that true substantiality is ultimately spiritual, transcendental. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.2.3) describes the material abode as but the “world of names.” Then, in *Caitanya-Caritamṛta* (Madhya-līlā 9.19), Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is quoted as stating, “Spiritual substance is

never within the jurisdiction of the material conception.” By bringing us the means to surpass our materialism, you uplifted us toward Krishna consciousness, that sublime vantage point which allows us to increasingly perceive from beyond “the material conception,” to see (principally through hearing, *śrutekṣita*) beyond this phenomenal “world of names,” beyond this place of birth and death. You call upon us not to merge, but to unite by devotional service with the supreme loveable object, the All Attractive Supreme Personality.

Therefore, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are not just another teacher, nor one who delivered just another religion or scripture. Rather, your mission was and remains the Yuga Dharma, plain and simple. You undoubtedly get the credit for so wonderfully expanding the movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Your amazing accomplishment was even anticipated by our previous *ācāryas* such as Locana dāsa Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Yet you didn’t exactly come alone to the West; rather you carried the spirit of these and other most glorious personalities, who are like diamonds studding our *sampradāya*.

So this is my sincere, although admittedly quite inadequate attempt to write some words in glorification of Your Divine Grace, Patita Pāvana, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Kindly continue to allow me to hang on to the life preserver you kindly extend to this poor, drowning wretch.

*I beg to somehow remain your eternal servant,
and servant of your servants,*

Bhakti Prabhupada-vrata Damodara Swami
Initiation: 1973 March. Boston, USA

Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Goswami

Letting Śrīla Prabhupāda Speak for Himself

Part Four

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept millions of my heartfelt obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. Śrīla Prabhupāda, throughout the world you spread knowledge of the supreme goal of life—pure love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You also gave the world the

only means for attaining that goal, chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* without offense. After you had attained seventy years of age, you circled the globe fourteen times to spread the chanting of the *mahā-mantra* and the spiritual science supporting the chanting through your Bhaktivedanta purports—to anyone and everyone willing to hear.

Therefore, Śrīla Prabhupāda, of all the wonderful things you gave to the world, your books stand out as the most consequential. Your books are written in a language and style that allow an honest person to easily understand the essence of the profound philosophical thoughts of Vedic knowledge.

In past offerings I've also tried to express my wholehearted gratitude to you for opening my eyes with spiritual knowledge through your translations of and Bhaktivedanta purports to the most essential of the Vedic literatures, especially *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

For your pleasure, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I've spent the past three years recording *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and polishing the sound with the help of Rasika-śiromaṇi Prabhu and Bhakta Bland Mahdi. Now the BBT audiobook is finally available on bbtmedia.com and Audible. As the world hurtles towards self-destruction, may this audiobook help give relief to suffering humanity and stimulate its urge for self-realization. You are personally present in your purports, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and so anything is possible.

Today is the fourth anniversary of the day I began live-streaming my daily readings of your books. I read your books out loud while live-streaming them on Facebook. Then Māyāpur-śaśi Prabhu uploads them onto a YouTube channel named "Daily Readings of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Books." As of today, 1,170 videos have been posted: *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* twice, cover to cover; *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* once, cover to cover, plus a current reading up to the sixth chapter of the Second Canto; *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* once, cover to cover; your *Kṛṣṇa* book once, cover to cover; and the BBT's publication of *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*, translated by your faithful disciple Gopīparāṇadhana Prabhu. This is the first English translation of Sanātana Gosvāmī's *Dig-darśinī* commentary on *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*. About this book you write, "*Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* is very famous; anyone who wants to know about the subject matter of devotees, devotional service, and Kṛṣṇa must read this book." (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 5.103, purport)

The format of the daily readings is that I read verbatim for forty

minutes or so, followed by a reflection session, in which online viewers and devotees physically present at the live reading share their reflections on what we've read, and then we discuss. The results have been marvelous. I've received many comments from devotees who have reawakened a taste for hearing your books, finding them more easily understandable when received through the ear. This is all Your Divine Grace's mercy.

One need look no further than your purports, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for the factual solutions to the problems of the world, individually and collectively. Your purports speak for themselves:

Coming again to the point of pure devotional service, the Lord is describing the transcendental qualifications of a pure devotee in these two verses. A pure devotee is never disturbed in any circumstances. Nor is he envious of anyone. Nor does a devotee become his enemy's enemy; he thinks, "This person is acting as my enemy due to my own past misdeeds. So it is better to suffer than to protest." In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.8) it is stated: *tat te 'nukampāṁ su-samīkṣamāṇo bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtāṁ vipākam*. Whenever a devotee is in distress or has fallen into difficulty, he thinks that it is the Lord's mercy upon him. He thinks, "Thanks to my past misdeeds I should suffer far, far greater than I am suffering now. So it is by the mercy of the Supreme Lord that I am not getting all the punishment I am due. I am just getting a little, by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead." Therefore he is always calm, quiet, and patient, despite many distressful conditions. A devotee is also always kind to everyone, even to his enemy. *Nirmama* means that a devotee does not attach much importance to the pains and trouble pertaining to the body because he knows perfectly well that he is not the material body. He does not identify with the body; therefore he is freed from the conception of false ego and is equipoised in happiness and distress. He is tolerant, and he is satisfied with whatever comes by the grace of the Supreme Lord. He does not endeavor much to achieve something with great difficulty; therefore he is always joyful. He is a completely perfect mystic because he is fixed in the instructions received from the spiritual master, and because his senses are controlled he is determined. He is not swayed by false arguments, because no one can lead

him from the fixed determination of devotional service. He is fully conscious that Kṛṣṇa is the eternal Lord, so no one can disturb him. All these qualifications enable him to fix his mind and intelligence entirely on the Supreme Lord. Such a standard of devotional service is undoubtedly very rare, but a devotee becomes situated in that stage by following the regulative principles of devotional service. Furthermore, the Lord says that such a devotee is very dear to Him, for the Lord is always pleased with all his activities in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 12.13–14, purport]

A few of a devotee's qualifications are further being described. No one is put into difficulty, anxiety, fearfulness, or dissatisfaction by such a devotee. Since a devotee is kind to everyone, he does not act in such a way as to put others into anxiety. At the same time, if others try to put a devotee into anxiety, he is not disturbed. It is by the grace of the Lord that he is so practiced that he is not disturbed by any outward disturbance. Actually because a devotee is always engrossed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and engaged in devotional service, such material circumstances cannot move him. Generally a materialistic person becomes very happy when there is something for his sense gratification and his body, but when he sees that others have something for their sense gratification and he hasn't, he is sorry and envious. When he is expecting some retaliation from an enemy, he is in a state of fear, and when he cannot successfully execute something he becomes dejected. A devotee who is always transcendental to all these disturbances is very dear to Kṛṣṇa. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 12.15, purport]

Money may be offered to a devotee, but he should not struggle to acquire it. If automatically, by the grace of the Supreme, money comes to him, he is not agitated. Naturally a devotee takes a bath at least twice in a day and rises early in the morning for devotional service. Thus he is naturally clean both inwardly and outwardly. A devotee is always expert because he fully knows the essence of all activities of life and he is convinced of the authoritative scriptures. A devotee never takes the part of a particular party; therefore

he is carefree. He is never pained, because he is free from all designations; he knows that his body is a designation, so if there are some bodily pains, he is free. The pure devotee does not endeavor for anything which is against the principles of devotional service. For example, constructing a big building requires great energy, and a devotee does not take to such business if it does not benefit him by advancing his devotional service. He may construct a temple for the Lord, and for that he may take all kinds of anxiety, but he does not construct a big house for his personal relations. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 12.16, purport]

A pure devotee is neither happy nor distressed over material gain and loss, nor is he very much anxious to get a son or disciple, nor is he distressed by not getting them. If he loses anything which is very dear to him, he does not lament. Similarly, if he does not get what he desires, he is not distressed. He is transcendental in the face of all kinds of auspicious, inauspicious and sinful activities. He is prepared to accept all kinds of risks for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord. Nothing is an impediment in the discharge of his devotional service. Such a devotee is very dear to Kṛṣṇa. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 12.17, purport]

A devotee is always free from all bad association. Sometimes one is praised and sometimes one is defamed; that is the nature of human society. But a devotee is always transcendental to artificial fame and infamy, distress, or happiness. He is very patient. He does not speak of anything but the topics about Kṛṣṇa; therefore he is called silent. Silent does not mean that one should not speak; silent means that one should not speak nonsense. One should speak only of essentials, and the most essential speech for the devotee is to speak for the sake of the Supreme Lord. A devotee is happy in all conditions; sometimes he may get very palatable foodstuffs, sometimes not, but he is satisfied. Nor does he care for any residential facility. He may sometimes live underneath a tree, and he may sometimes live in a very palatial building; he is attracted to neither. He is called fixed because he is fixed in his determination and knowledge. We

may find some repetition in the descriptions of the qualifications of a devotee, but this is just to emphasize the fact that a devotee must acquire all these qualifications. Without good qualifications, one cannot be a pure devotee. *Harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇāḥ*: one who is not a devotee has no good qualification. One who wants to be recognized as a devotee should develop the good qualifications. Of course, he does not extraneously endeavor to acquire these qualifications, but engagement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and devotional service automatically helps him develop them. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 12.18–19, purport]

The words *bhadra karāṇā* are significant in this verse. Due to his long hair, mustache, and beard, Sanātana Gosvāmī looked like a *daraveśa*, or hippie. Since Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu did not like Sanātana Gosvāmī's hippie features, he immediately asked Candrasekhara to get him shaved clean. If anyone with long hair or a beard wants to join this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and live with us, he must similarly shave himself clean. The followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu consider long hair objectionable. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 20.70, purport]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the world situation has degraded to such an extent that the urgent need for your followers to take their hearing to another level has reached a fever pitch. By “another level” I mean that we must apply your teachings to ourselves and not just to others. You yourself make this point throughout your Bhaktivedanta purports. Unless we assimilate your teachings into our own thinking, feeling, willing, and action, how will we be able to change the hearts of others, as you did, not to mention work together in the co-operative spirit you taught by example?

I can only imagine how the world would change if all of us, your sincere followers, were to think, feel, will, and act strictly according to the profound instructions you have given us, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Hare Kṛṣṇa!

Your eternal servant,

Keśava Bhārati Dāsa Goswami

Initiation: 1973 May. San Francisco, USA

My dearest worshipable and revered spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Thank you for spreading the sacred message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. Of the many disciples of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, you are the only one who brought Vṛndāvana to the West.

You write in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (Canto 4, Chapter 28, Text 31, purport):

The disciples of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja are all godbrothers, and although there are some differences of opinion, and although we are not acting conjointly, every one of us is spreading this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement according to his own capacity and producing many disciples to spread it all over the world.

Without any institution or financial support, you left Vṛndāvana near the end of your life to fulfill the divine order of your holy master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja Prabhupāda.

By the arrangement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He had planted many Vaiṣṇavas in America, and in contact with you they helped start Kṛṣṇa consciousness in New York, and it spread like wildfire. You were the transparent medium for the potency of *bhakti* to spread. The *hlādinī-śakti*, which is the supreme giving potency, gave you “power of attorney,” and the *bhakti* potency began to sprout in the hearts of your disciples. Quickly this *bhakti-latā-bīja* spread through you to your sincere disciples and empowered them to preach all over the world. Endeavoring while undergoing great hardship, you also constantly traveled to nourish this mission and give us your disciples’ personal association.

Your most important contribution is your Bhaktivedanta purports. Thank you for this gift. I humbly ask that you allow me to continue to associate with you through your books, your sincere disciples and granddisciples, and your other followers. Without their guidance, support, and well-wishes, I would be lost and in illusion.

I hope one day to have your continued association again and serve you while you are assisting Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava in Their pastimes. This is my only objective and the ultimate sum of all my aspirations.

In the meantime, with the few years I have left in this mortal frame, I will follow the example of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja and offer my respects (*vandoṇ*) to the lotus feet (*śrī-caraṇa*) of all (*sabāra*) the Vaiṣṇavas (*bhakta-gaṇa*), both advanced (*baḍa*) and neophyte (*choṭa*). (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 2.93).

Praying to eternally remain in your divine association and that of your sincere followers,

Your servant,

Pārtha Sārathi Dās Goswami

Initiation: 1973 May. London, UK

Current location: South Africa

Candramauli Swami

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

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda, my eternal spiritual guide and the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have often told your disciples that reading your books is the best way of knowing you:

“If you want to know me, read my books.” “I may come or go, but in my books I will live forever.” “The more you distribute books, history will change.” “Whatever I wanted to say I have said in my books.”

During the recent “lockdown” due to the pandemic, reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was a daily affair that I could finally dedicate ample time to. I read more and absorbed more, appreciating how much time and energy you spent and how many sacrifices you endured to give us, your devotees, and the whole world the knowledge of Lord Śrī

Kṛṣṇa and the practice of devotional service to Him.

If you are strong in your position by reading books, Vedic literature, then you become very, very favorite of Kṛṣṇa.
[Arrival lecture, San Francisco, 15 July 1975]

You gave the world Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, through your words and your pure love for Him. And your books, especially *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, contain the essence of transcendental knowledge, made sweeter and more understandable and applicable by your Bhaktivedanta Purports. Many lifetimes of knowledge yet to be revealed and relished.

May we always remain cognizant of the eternal life-giving value of this gift of transcendental knowledge.

One who acts in devotional service, renouncing the fruits of his actions, and whose doubts have been destroyed by transcendental knowledge, is situated factually in the self. Thus he is not bound by the reactions of work, O conqueror of riches. Therefore the doubts which have arisen in your heart out of ignorance should be slashed by the weapon of knowledge. Armed with yoga, O Bhārata, stand and fight.
[*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.41–42, translation]

Candramauli Swami

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

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

My dear lord and master Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace. All glories to your mercy on even the most fallen, like myself.

We are seeing in different ways how we are deep in the material world, and how Kali-yuga is overwhelming the whole material situation. There can be a tendency to think that things here may get better, but by the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa it is becoming more and more clear that optimism on the mundane level is simply a waste of time. The situation is hopeless, and rapidly becoming even worse.

I remember the first time I saw you, at Auckland University, in New Zealand, in April 1972. You were the first devotee I ever saw, walking regally through the university grounds with a small group

of disciples. As you walked, two young female devotees danced gracefully next to you and threw rose petals under your lotus feet. A thought spontaneously entered my mind: “This must be like heaven!” It was completely amazing.

I was studying philosophy in the hope of finding some direction and meaning in my life, but all my study was doing was making things worse. One of the people I was studying—I think Descartes—developed the philosophy of doubt. Initially it sounded interesting to my hippie-type mind—“Don’t be taken in by misleaders; stick to the truth”—but then I found out that after some time he had told his followers to stop following him, since, he said, “I doubt my own philosophy.” In my confused way I understood there was no future in material life, but I could not see a clear alternative.

When you spoke to the students at the university, you pointed out the predicaments I and so many other youngsters were facing. You said:

Why younger section are feeling such frustration and confused in spite of so much educational institution? In your Western country there is no question of poverty. You are all well-to-do... I have extensively traveled over America and Europe, especially America. They are very opulent. I have traveled in Australia and come to your country, New Zealand. So far material necessities are concerned, you are all well-to-do. So why this question of frustration?

It did not really sink in at the time, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but gradually the depth of your words has become increasingly apparent to me. You are that unique person of our time who gave us, and continue to give us, hope, and a practical process for manifesting that hope. At the end of your class at the university you said:

So our request is that younger section may not feel confused and frustration. There is very nice hope. Those who are taking to this Kṛṣṇa consciousness, mostly they are younger section. Now ask them how much hopeful they are, how much jubilant they are. So my request is that—you are all young boys and girls, flowers of your country: don’t feel frustration and confused. There is nice hope in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. My only request is that—you are all learned boys and girls—try to understand this philosophy and science, and you will be happy. That is my request.

There is no doubt at all in my heart that you literally saved me from a most hellish future. Thank you again and again, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I give my life to you absolutely, and pledge that I will always be willing to do whatever I can to serve you. Without your mercy, my life is meaningless.

On this sacred day I pray to you to please keep me engaged in any type of service you feel you want. That is the be-all and end-all of my existence.

Begging for your mercy eternally, I am

Your lowly servant,

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

Initiation: 1973 September. London, UK

Bhakti Marg Swami

?!

In these last two years
We felt a build up of fears
In a battle of usual peers
We witnessed a shedding of tears

With large-scale character erosion
Sadly there's community implosion
Sunk in a lake of irrational emotion
Is it all a lack of devotion?

Even saints seem to be hating
Satan's presence—intimidating
And highly incriminating
Seeing viruses and prices inflating

Misappropriation of finances
These are Kali-yuga advances
Is Shiva doing his destructive dances?
In such chaos what are the chances?

Does the solution lie in activism?
Or in peace-driven pacifism?

Certainly not in capitalism
How to address narcissism?

Where does all this take us?
Do our leaders forsake us?
Is there anyone to wake us?
Is there anyone so gracious?

All fingers point to you
Prabhupāda, it's true
In analysis and review
Whom else can we pursue?

Do we just step right back
And see our own personal lack?
Why do we give others flack?
Isn't it better to self-attack?

You have given us everything
Wisdom, music, food for a king
How to serve, how to sing
All that involves a healing

We follow or we fall
It makes no sense to stall
When we started it was a crawl
Now we move, sit, and stand tall

We clutch onto your lotus feet
We utter the name and we repeat
We read, teach, know how to treat
We start this project, we complete

We must end our messing
Look hard at our possessing
Detach and do that assessing
We continue to receive your blessing!

—By Bhaktimarga Swami

Initiation: 1973 September. Toronto, Canada

Current location: ISKCON Toronto

bhaktimargaswami@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Seems like one aspect of old age is reminiscing. When I listen to recordings of you in 1977, you really enjoyed reminiscing about the “good old days.” It is now 2022, I am old, and I find myself doing the same.

I reminisce about the days in the Montreal bowling alley when I lived in a cave made from longish *Kṛṣṇa*-trilogy boxes, when warm bathwater was heresy, when life was the temple program and book distribution, when we wore lengths of cloth for *dhotīs* and saris, and when *tilaka* was fuller’s earth.

There are other, similar memories from Winnipeg, Minneapolis, and Chicago, even though there the *Kṛṣṇa* book boxes were shaped differently, showers had hot-water taps, and we sourced our clothes and *gopī-candana* from India.

Yet during those times and places, *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness and our lives were sweet and simple; most devotees were innocent and fully trusting in your spiritual formula; and yes, for better or worse—probably better—we saw things in black and white: *Kṛṣṇa* and *Māyā*.

Most important of all, you were with us.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says the limbs of *bhakti* all have their unique tastes, and so some devotees may be attracted to one limb more than to another. Thus some prefer chanting, others hearing, and yet others Deity worship. That is individuality.

I guess the influence of time on ISKCON is like that: *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness has a taste at the beginning, when you are here, a taste when you leave—bitter—a taste every decade later, a taste now—forty-five years later.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have tasted it all. I prefer the good old days best. I prefer when you were here; I prefer when our mission was just selling your books; I prefer when we were sweet, innocent, simple, trusting; I prefer when we saw only in black and white.

Of course, that’s just me. My taste. But we are individuals, and even though *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness and ISKCON are the tastiest of things anytime, anywhere, I have a right to my own preference: the good old days.

I miss those days. I miss you.

Your servant,

Śivarāma Swami

Initiation: 1973 September. Montreal, Canada

Bhakti Ananda Goswami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, Like offering Ganges water to the Ganges, I would like to offer these holy words of yours to you on this Vyāsa-pūjā Day.

When I was still a teenager, in the 1960s, it was your non-sectarian words of divine love, like these, which changed all of the rest of my life.

Thank you!

Your ever-grateful and still-aspiring servant,

Bhakti Ananda Goswami

Initiation: 1973

The precious words of my *diksha* guru, the innocent little child's 'Swami Jesus', His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON and my ever-living guru:

Girl devotee: Is Jesus in the paramparā?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: He says, "there is God. I am son of God". That is paramparā. (*Bhagavad-gītā* Lectures 1975)

Tamal Krishna: Can a Christian in this age, without a spiritual master, but by reading the Bible, and following Jesus's words, reach the...

Śrīla Prabhupāda: When you read the Bible, you follow the Spiritual Master. How can you say without? As soon as you read the Bible, that means you are following the instruction of Lord Jesus Christ. That means that you are following the Spiritual Master.

Tamal Krishna: I was referring to a living Spiritual Master.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Spiritual Master is not question of... Spiritual Master is eternal...[...] As you say that “by reading bible”, when you read Bible that means you are following the Spiritual Master represented by some priest or some clergyman in the line of Lord Jesus Christ. (Morning Walk, Seattle, 2.10.68.)

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Actually, one who is guided by Jesus will certainly get liberation.

(Perfect Questions, Perfect Answers, Chapter 9)

Śrīla Prabhupāda: “This is called Guru paramparā, disciplic succession. This is our process. We are getting knowledge from Kṛṣṇa, the most perfect. Or you get knowledge from Jesus Christ, that is also perfect, because source is perfect.” (Conversation, Germany 19.6.74)

“You must follow one *ācārya*, like Christians, they follow Christ, *ācārya*. [...] You must follow some *ācārya* ... *Evam paramparā praptam*.” (Room Conversation, Melbourne, May 20th, 1975)

Rāmāi Swami

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

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

Today, as I write, we are honoring the forty-fifth anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disappearance. Over the years I’ve had mixed thoughts about his departure. How should a disciple feel about the loss of the physical presence of their guru?

One famous explanation was given by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura upon the departure of his father and spiritual guide, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura:

Today is a day of great happiness and not the slightest grief.

Today our master has re-entered the eternal pastimes of the Lord. Now it is our duty to remember his eternal position, name, qualities, form, and pastimes. Henceforth we will follow in his footsteps with even greater concentration.
[*Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava*]

This statement reveals the exalted position and realization of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī: he was fully immersed in full transcendental Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Otherwise, how could he have “not the slightest grief” on the passing of his father, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura?

Someone who is attached to this material world, a nondevotee, is always in grief about a loss like that—but not the great *ācāryas*. They are actually happy because they know the factual reality of where great devotees go—that is, back home, back to Godhead, to be with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta said with conviction and certainty, “Today our master has re-entered the eternal pastimes of the Lord.” And lastly, he states the duty of a disciple regarding their departed guru: “To remember his eternal position, name, qualities, form, and pastimes.”

Why must a disciple do this? “Henceforth we will follow in his footsteps with even greater concentration.” In other words, by always remembering Śrīla Prabhupāda in this way, we will be able to follow his example and instructions even more than we did in his personal presence. That is quite a statement! Perhaps I will someday come near to that platform.

We honored him with worthy meed,*
Rejoicing in each glorious deed.
His task achieved, the foe removed,
He triumphed and the Lord approved.

The Golden Age had come again
To bless the days of Prabhupāda’s reign.
And when his life on earth had passed,
To Kṛṣṇa’s world he returned at last.

As long as on this earthly land
The streams shall flow, the mountains stand,
So long throughout the world, be sure,
The great Prabhupāda shall endure.

Misguided fools may search around
To see if fuller knowledge might be found,
But no greater words could anyone present—
Surely by Kṛṣṇa was he sent.

We too shall now at length recite
While good men listen with delight.
Well skilled he was to sing and dance
Like Lord Caitanya, with smile and glance.

So who throughout this world did go
To teach *bhakti*, that all may know?
None for the task could be more fit,
For skilled was he in Holy Writ.

He spoke those verses sweet and clear,
Delightful to the listening ear,
That told of Kṛṣṇa's noble life
And demons felled in battle strife.

Great joy to all who hear they bring,
Sweet to recite and sweet to sing,
Which laid so clear before the eye
The glorious deeds of days gone by.

Ever firm and just and true,
He kept love, duty, vows in view.
Never for anger, lust, or gain
Would he his lips with falsehood stain.

Imbued with mercy, he could scan
The weakness and the strength of man.
He looked alike, with equal eye,
On every caste, on low and high.

The students of that saintly man,
Moved by their love for him, began
To follow in his wondrous footsteps,
Trying to spread his lofty precepts.

One last thing I'd like to say:
There's none like him to this very day.
So there's never need to be afraid
When we take shelter of his merciful shade.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's insignificant disciple,

Rāmāi Swami

Initiation: 1973. Melbourne, Australia

*reward or recompense

Varṣaṇā Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you.

How appropriate is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's arrangement for your appearance on the most holy occasion of Nandotsava, when news of Kṛṣṇa's birth invigorated all the Vrajavāsīs. All glories to your Vyāsa-pūjā, foretelling the day when Lord Caitanya's message would inevitably cast its unfailing luster upon the entire world.

Your appearance in the Western world was the answer to our prayer that the Lord send someone fashioned after His loving heart to lead us back to Him. In you we discovered the treasure of divine wisdom. You were a trustworthy, true, and faithful guide—an ambassador of the spiritual world who descended to direct our hearts back to home. Finding confidence and respect in you and for the Lord whom you represent, we came to know and love Kṛṣṇa, who extended His loving hand in you, who spoke to you, who revealed the beauty, sweetness, charm, and splendor of Vṛndāvana through you.

Recently, a photo was given to me of a most meaningful experience with you. In it, you are pictured on a New Vrindavan path following a single cow. The devotees trail behind you in the frame. Upon viewing this image, the surge of memories, emotions, and

insights all clamoring for attention and acceptance testify to the potency of *smaraṇam*. How touching, powerful, and influential are remembrances of you savored over time. I therefore submit this recollection unto you.

The picture captures a moment from your final visit to New Vrindavan, when you returned to the community's original farmhouse temple for *guru-pūjā*, class, and *darśana*. That day in 1976, we had followed in your physical footsteps on the last stretch of the Aghāsura Trail, which forms a portion of the Govardhana Parikramā *mārga* here in New Vrindavan. As the path transitioned from forest to the pasturing grounds, Kāliya—the first cow in ISKCON, who you called your “old friend”—left her sisters in the meadow below and hastened up the slope to greet you. From there, she led the devotees the rest of the way to the doorstep of the farmhouse temple where Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vrindavanath had been awaiting your return.

It was in that same farmhouse temple in 1969 that you first tasted Kāliya's rich milk, further sweetened with New Vrindavan honey. Upon drinking, you proclaimed New Vrindavan to be a land of milk and honey. These simple words convey vast symbolism to me, as if acknowledging, articulating, and echoing the hopes and dreams of our ancient Biblical forefathers. Forsaking the world of bondage in Egypt, they ventured across the vast desert searching for the land said to flow with milk and honey. An entire generation perished in the wilderness, due to their disobedience of God's commandments, but with time and faithfulness, their descendants finally reached that promised land.

After our journey up the path following you, you entered Rādhā-Vrindavanath's temple. Kāliya stood at the gateway as if to grant us entry. I realized at that moment that I was experiencing *dīṃ vu*, transported back to my childhood days when I was irresistibly drawn to herding and serving cows by a mysterious sense that the cowherd path would lead me closer to God. And now, finally, seeing you as the central figure in this scene and the rest of us following in your lotus footprints as you follow the cow, it dawned on me that the missing element had always been the most crucial component in the search for God: the embodiment of the Lord's divine grace—you.

With this realization, the wisdom of the astrologer in Lord Caitanya's parable rang true: if you simply turn to the east and dig below the surface, you will find the treasure bequeathed to you. With your appearance on the Eastern horizon, this dark and dreary

world awakened to a new dawn cast by the treasure of a Vedic perspective, granted to so many lost souls by your causeless mercy

Here in New Vrindavan, the embassy of our eternal motherland offered a sweet foretaste of spiritual fulfillment, a promise of the fruit of our maturing along the path. You granted us a sampling of the nectar for which we ever hanker, yet still had no qualification to experience. As any earthly mother nurses her infants to strengthen and equip them before they must be weaned to become accustomed to a more substantial diet of grains, you too cared for us attentively with providential grace.

You drew our hearts onto the path of *bhakti*, thereby weaning us from material pursuits. Later, you provided bread to sustain us during the journey through the challenging and prolonged stretches of our own spiritual deserts. Traversing such terrain, we are given the opportunity to acknowledge and come to terms with our neophyte condition. You patiently prepared us for such times with the assurance that *vānī-sevā* is eternal, containing and expanding everything that had been nourishing us during your mortal presence.

We find that bread of life truly by returning to your books and memories of you. Therein we discover universal truths presented as deeply personal messages. Your words uncover the aspects of thinking, feeling, and willing that both perpetuate our dark bondage to pain, as well as reveal our vast potential for joy and satisfaction—found perfected in a world beyond our most creative imaginings.

The symbols and figures within scripture, which you dedicated yourself to making accessible to us, continue speaking to the range of hidden potentials concealed in our souls. Although we may deny the possibility of our ever becoming as depraved as Kāṁsa, vindictive as Duryodhana, or envious as Śiśupāla, can we truly deny the spark of recognition that, at times, we have all experienced such *anarthas*?

If we can humble ourselves to recognize such a reality, then the subtler and deeper voices of the divine become audible and inspire us to embody even a hint of Dhruva's determination, Bhīṣmadeva's fearlessness, Haridāsa Thākura's forgiveness, Queen Kuntī's forbearance, and Draupadī's total dependence, expressed in her crying out Kṛṣṇa's holy name. We have found the inspiration offered by all these great souls to be coalesced in you.

Such emotions, though neophyte feelings at first, give strength and illumination by touching our hearts with the many voices who talk to us through *śāstra*. And although they may speak in languages

and cultures unfamiliar to our modern condition, their unified voices and hearts all resonate in your pastimes and precepts.

In you we find the empowerment of the original guru, Lord Nityānanda, who directed his disciple Kṛṣṇadāsa to proceed in the direction of Vṛndāvana, with the promise “There you will attain all things.” *Sambandha*, *abhidheya*, and *prajoyana* awaited Kṛṣṇadāsa in Vraja through the pastimes and precepts of the Six Gosvāmīs residing there. You embody the essence of their teachings, rendering deep philosophical truths into a language that can be understood, embraced, and practiced by all. This is a mark of your exceptional empowerment.

The promised land, which Western civilization has pursued for ages—unachievable through the best efforts of the ascending process—has appeared at last by divine descent. You planted the seed for Vraja-dhāma, the true land of milk and honey, to bestow her nurturing support and influence upon all. This benediction equips and prepares us for our final journey back to Godhead. In time, we have seen here, above and beyond symbolic or figurative imagery, actual milk flowing from the cows’ udders onto the path as they approach the barn, as well as honey literally overflowing from local beehives due to an abundance of wildflowers.

After countless lifetimes of wandering in the desert of material existence, allured by fleeting mirages promising relief, parched and depleted of all hope and joy, we have finally arrived at an oasis of immortal nectar—Śrī Dhāma, our motherland, overflowing with milk and honey. Vraja-śakti, who you carry within your heart, emerged and expanded to reveal her divine nature here in Appalachia by the power of your *bhakti*.

Contemplating our inconceivable good fortune in receiving the treasure of service to Śrī Dhāma, which nourishes Kṛṣṇa-nāma and leads to Kṛṣṇa-prema, the only explanation is your causeless mercy. Such beauty, sweetness, and charm as revealed in Śrī Dhāma convey the depths of affection in the heart of her creator. It is a love so dynamic that Kṛṣṇa cannot contain it within Himself, so it has to manifest outwardly as well, assuming form and features worthy to serve as the abode of His confidential relationships.

Kṛṣṇa’s love can be tangibly experienced as the compassion of His pure devotee, which provides the impetus for the Lord’s original abode to expand and replicate wherever He desires for the spiritual welfare of lost souls throughout various regions of the earth.

Your Divine Grace has invoked that same Vraja-dhāma here in New Vrindavan, unveiling yet another face, character, and aspect of the same divine essence.

Memories of your pastimes abound throughout this sacred landscape. If we attune our spiritual senses to the deeper resonance, we can feel your heartbeat, the taproot from which New Vrindavan emerged, here at the original farmhouse. From this root of communion, a vibrant community has grown, where devotees are immersed in the terrestrial manifestation of your spiritual vision.

You have bequeathed to us a legacy of love capable of softening and opening the hardest of hearts. Bless us, we pray, that our souls blossom in the sunlike nature of your wisdom, blending with the moonlike rays of your compassion, to illumine the passages of *śāstra* and the confirmation found in nature, reminding us to always serve in love. Guard our hearts, lest offenses and *anarthas* lead us astray.

Today I return to the path Kālīya tread on that eventful day so many decades ago. Visions of bygone times blend with memories of the future. Daylight is now fading, shadows fall, the return path is calling me back to the pasture and the meadow beyond. In the background, the world as it is continues its chaotic course. I walk again with you, Kālīya, and the devotees in the picture. From where I am now, I cannot see you physically, though I still hear your voice and hold onto the blessings you bestowed.

Returning to the present moment, I see a monsoonlike cloud-bank slowly moving westward. While a curtain of rain falls, the setting sun casts a golden aura tinged with saffron across the sky. Sacred texts of my childhood resurface, describing the vision of God within a shower of golden light. This scene is followed, confirmed, and concluded by the appearance of a spectacular rainbow, the symbol of God's covenant, reminding us to be steadfast in following His Divine Grace. And then, within this vast archway, subtle pastel colors begin to form into a second rainbow. This display blends the eastern and western reading of the symbol as well as contributing a more esoteric perspective. To the Vrajavāsīs, this image serves as an invitation for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to meet in the forest beyond the pasturing grounds.

All these scriptural images integrate during the sunset, enhancing my memories and appreciations of you, the person *bhāgavata*, living embodiment of the cream of all Vedic scriptures. Your presence endures in the Bhaktivedanta purports, which unify and harmonize

other sacred texts into a higher synthesis.

As I begin the return journey down the slopes of the Aghāsura trail, I meditate upon the festival of Nanda, when you appeared within our mortal world. Bless us, we pray, to become worthy servants of the Vrajavāsīs by following in your footsteps. Let us forever assist you in serving Lord Caitanya’s mood by expanding the glories of Kṛṣṇa to every town and village. May His holy name, intertwined with *vraja-prema*, continue to encircle the earth like a vibrant garland of divine fortune.

Your servant,

Varṣāṇā Swami

Initiation: 1973. New Vrindavana, West Virginia, USA

Devāmrita Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my deeply considered obeisances at your lotus feet, the treasury of boundless *bhakti*.

For my offering this year, I would like to focus upon your breath-taking devotion to Kṛṣṇa’s service and pleasure.

Finally I have started to more profoundly see that your spiritual attributes—such as intelligence, strategizing, determination, and tolerance—all spontaneously manifest from your dedication to pleasing Kṛṣṇa’s senses. Therefore whatever you do and however you do it is always mesmerizing.

How much you love Kṛṣṇa—through the *paramparā*—I can’t, of course, ever fathom. As written in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 2.49):

Unalloyed love of Kṛṣṇa is like an ocean of happiness. If someone gets one drop of it, the whole world can drown in that drop. It is not befitting to express such love of Godhead, yet a madman must speak. But even though he speaks, no one believes him.

As I endeavor to grasp the fullness of your every word and action, I must confess that at some point—maybe far along in the analysis—I will hit an “in-built” epistemological limitation. As both the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* declare:

Even the most learned man cannot understand the words, activities, and symptoms of a person situated in love of Godhead. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 23.39]

Like a child seeking to touch the moon, I desire to understand as much about loving Kṛṣṇa as the transcendental system allows. I am sure that by my humbly and selflessly serving your lotus feet, a glimpse of that real love will be mine, to share with others.

But, my dear sir, I am obliged to you because now I can understand that this material manifestation is without substance although it appears real. I am confident that by serving your feet I will be able to give up the false idea. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.7.18]

What's more, though:

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

Aspiring to plumb the depths of your divine service,

Your insignificant servitor,

Devāmrita Swami

Initiation: 1974 January. NY USA

Mahādyuti Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances. All glories to you!

In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 1.106), Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja states, “Essential truth spoken concisely is true eloquence.”

Here are only a few examples of the heaps of transcendently eloquent gems of wisdom you have mercifully injected into this world of darkness and sorrow—a world that you assured us can become just like Satya-yuga, the age of goodness, simply by our spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

The highest truth is reality distinguished from illusion for the welfare of all. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.2, translation]

Our motto is simple living, high thinking. [Letter to Mukunda Dāsa, 18 February 1968]

The purpose [of life] is *ānanda*, pleasure.” [Conversation with a Sanskrit professor in Mexico City, 13 February 1975]

Our process is to show Krishna Consciousness as it is, not as others want to see it. [Letter to Yogeśvara Dāsa, 28 December 1971]

It is not that we should change to accommodate the public, but that we should change the public to accommodate us. [*ibid.*]

Better you devote your full time to one thing only, not many things. That way your enthusiasm and talents will have big effect by being concentrated. [*ibid.*]

These books are the best advertising; they are better than advertising. [*ibid.*]

If we simply present Krishna consciousness in a serious and attractive way, without need to resort to fashionable slogans or tricks, that is sufficient. [*ibid.*]

Our unique asset is our purity. No one anywhere can match it. [*ibid.*]

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is simple for the simple and difficult for the crooked. [paraphrased from your initiation lecture in Boston, 26 December 1969]

From hippies they are becoming happies... [Room

conversation, Los Angeles, 24 June 1972]

Every endeavor is covered by some fault. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.48, translation]

[If] a living being has no anxiety, that means he is dead. That is not the ideal. The anxiety should be purified from material contamination, and it should be only for Kṛṣṇa. Then it is perfect. [Morning walk conversation, Melbourne, 26 April 1976]

This place is for misery. So how you can say, in miserable condition, how you can say that “This is good” or “This is bad”? Everything is bad. [lecture on the disappearance anniversary of your Guru Mahārāja, Los Angeles, 9 December 1968; you repeated the same point several times]

It is sometimes misunderstood that a *gṛhastha*, a householder, is permitted to indulge in sex at any time. This is a wrong conception of *gṛhastha* life... The *gṛhastha* is allowed to indulge in sex life during the period favorable for procreation and in accordance with the spiritual master’s order. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.12.11, purport]

The spirit soul is equal in either a man or woman. One who is actually engaged in service of Krishna, there is no such distinction as man or woman. [Letter to Āditya Dāsī, 4 February 1976]

Kṛṣṇa is not a stereotyped, stagnant block... Therefore, everything can be dovetailed in the service of Kṛṣṇa.” [Lecture on *Bhagavad-gītā* 1.4–5, London, 10 July 1973]

Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa’s name nondifferent. As soon as you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, that means Kṛṣṇa is dancing on your tongue. [Initiation lecture, Seattle, 20 October 1968]

In Kali-yuga, you cannot strictly follow, neither I can strictly follow. If I criticize you, if you criticize me, then we go far away from our real life of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. [Morning walk conversation, Māyāpur, 10 March 1976]

[A] person free from all attachment and aversion and able to control his senses through regulative principles of freedom can obtain the complete mercy of the Lord. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.64, translation (Your phrase “regulative principles of freedom” is particularly brilliant because freedom, to most people, means to be *without* any regulation.)]

These are our two great contributions to the world: book distribution and Deity worship. [from my admittedly faulty memory]

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is 95% common sense. [not verbatim; based on a comment by Gargamuni Prabhu]

Morning is the best time to hold spiritual services. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.5, purport]

Those who listen to the *Bhāgavatam* may put questions to the speaker in order to elicit the clear meaning, but this should not be done in a challenging spirit. [*ibid.*]

In the Kali-yuga the whole atmosphere is surcharged with faithlessness. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.10, purport]

[P]unishment by the Lord through material nature is necessary in human society, for without it men forget the supremacy of the Lord due to their dull, blunt intelligence. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 9.10.14, purport]

If one cannot complete the fixed number of rounds he is assigned, he should be considered to be in a diseased condition of spiritual life. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 11.23 purport]

Only Kṛṣṇa can give you protection. [Lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.15.20, Los Angeles, 30 November 1973]

Life should be molded in such a way that not for a single moment you are without Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is real life. That is perfection.” [Lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.14, Los Angeles, 17 August 1972]

The secret of success in spiritual life is in satisfying the spiritual master and thereby getting his sincere blessings.
[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.1.8, purport]

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for saving the world—regardless of whether the world knows it’s being saved.

All glories to you!

Your servant and faithful disciple,

Mahādyuti Swami

Initiation: 1974 January. Puerto Rico

Nirañjana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Devotees in the former Soviet Union are taking advantage of a unique opportunity today. They are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of your one and only visit to the former Soviet Union. They have designated your Vyāsa-pūjā day as the day they will commemorate this event.

Although I was not yet engaged in your service at that time, still I’ve heard enough from those who were so engaged to know that this one visit was the momentous occasion when the seed of Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement was planted in the (till then) barren soil of the communist countries.

To take advantage of this opportunity, I would like to say a few words about the profound potency that has been discovered in the devotional seeds you planted within the hearts of those who were fortunate to have come in contact with you, both during and after that visit.

In the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa*, 4.20.41, it is said:

*śaktiśaṁ śakti-bījaṁ ca śakti-rūpa-dharaṁ param
śakti-yuktam ayuktaṁ ca staumi svecchamayāṁ vibhum*

“I glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the master of all potencies, the seed of all potencies, and the resting place of all potencies, who is simultaneously one and different from His potencies,

who is all-powerful, and all of whose desires are fulfilled.”

A little more than five hundred years ago, that same Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared in this world as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Before His appearance, Lord Caitanya thought:

My name is Viśvambhara, “one who maintains the entire universe.” Its meaning will be actualized if I can fill the whole universe with love of Godhead. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 9.7]

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī continues this theme in the following two verses:

Thinking in this way, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu accepted the duty of a planter and began to grow a garden in Navadvīpa. Thus the Lord brought the desire tree of devotional service to this earth and became its gardener. He sowed the seed and sprinkled upon it the water of His will. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 9.8–9]

In a similar way, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you came to this world to sow Lord Caitanya’s potent seeds of pure *bhakti* in the hearts of the lost, forgetful souls, not only in Navadvīpa but in places where no pure Vaiṣṇava had ever ventured before. Wherever you planted a seed, when it was sufficiently watered by faith in your words, then through Lord Caitanya’s inconceivable potencies, His will was manifest through you.

You have written in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 19.152 purport:

The *bhakti-latā-bīja* [the seed of devotional service] can be received only through the mercy of the spiritual master. Therefore one has to satisfy the spiritual master to get the *bhakti-latā-bīja*... The *bhakti-latā-bīja* is the origin of devotional service.

Once you addressed some guests who had assembled in an art gallery to hear you speak. In that lecture, delivered in Auckland, New Zealand, in April 1972, you compared the Lord’s potencies to those found in varieties of seeds:

In the garden you see different flowers are coming out. The same ground, the same water, but different flowers are coming out—different fragrances, different colors, all different varieties. So the answer is *bījāṁ māṁ sarva-bhūtānāṁ*. Kṛṣṇa is the seed. He is the seed. You have seen the banyan tree,

how it produces so many small seeds? But each small seed has got so much potency that if you sow it in a nice place and water it, one day it will become a big banyan tree. Now, what are the potencies, what are the artistic arrangements, scientific arrangements, within that small seed that it grows into a big banyan tree? Not only a big banyan tree, but also many millions of big fruits, and within each fruit there are millions of seeds, and each seed contains the potency of another tree.

In a similar way, Śrīla Prabhupāda, from just one person's faith in your words during that one visit to the former Soviet Union, the seed of Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* mission was planted and firmly took root in that most desolate place.

Soon, through your words and through other faithful servants carrying your words, servants impregnated with the potent seeds of your divine instructions, this seed continued to be watered. In time, through all these devotees, empowered by your pure desire and nourished from your books, armed with your books, more and more seeds were gradually sown.

In the *Padma Purāṇa* the Supreme Lord says, "Just as the fish, the tortoise, and the bird maintain their offspring by vision, meditation, and touch, respectively, so do I maintain My devotees, O lotus-born Brahmā!"

The tortoise lays her eggs on land and meditates on them while in the water. Śrīla Prabhupāda, we pray that in a similar way your meditation will remain fixed on the healthy germination of all these seeds that have come from the garden you planted. Your unflinching faith in Lord Caitanya's divine will is the catalyst that has brought His mission to where it is today.

On this most auspicious anniversary of your divine appearance in this world, we also pray that, with your blessings, the fully ripened fruits of pure love of Godhead will manifest from those seeds. Such pure love can be realized only by the continual watering of hearing and chanting the glories of pure devotional service, the exclusive message you came to deliver to everyone in this material world. In the dust of your lotus feet,

Your unworthy servant,

Nirañjana Swami

Initiation: 1974 May. Boston, USA

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

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

om śrī surabhyai namaḥ! om śrī gurave namaḥ!

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I remain forever indebted to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for having shown me and countless other conditioned souls the path back home, back to Godhead.

I continue to listen to your classes daily, these days the lecture series on the *Nectar of Devotion* that you delivered in Vṛndāvana in the year 1972. *The Nectar of Devotion* was one of the first books I read as a new devotee, and I recall seeing your photo on the back cover, shining within an attractive circular frame.

As I continue to hear that series of lectures, I continue to relish the deep insights you give in your commentaries on the original text of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. You stress the importance of reading this book again and again.

You also stress the importance of two other books, first the *Bhagavad-gītā* and then the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. More recently I have added the reading of a fourth book, the culmination of all knowledge, the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja. I feel more closely connected with you in this way.

I pray to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to give me a taste for chanting the holy names. Lord Caitanya prays in His *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, “O my Lord, Your holy name alone can render all benediction upon the living beings, and therefore You have hundreds and millions of names like Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, etc. In these transcendental names You have invested all Your transcendental energies, and there is no hard and fast rule for chanting these holy names. O my Lord, you have so kindly made approach to You easy by Your holy names, but unfortunate as I am, I have no attraction for them.”

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for sending more devotees to help push on your mission of establishing *varṇāśrama-dharma*.

This remains my focus. By next year I hope to have something more concretely established here in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur.

I first came to Śrīdhāma Māyāpur at the beginning of my first visit to India, in 1976. It seems that Lord Caitanya is giving me the opportunity to again come to His holy land of Navadvīpa to help establish what a group of devotees have registered as the Varṇāśrama College Foundation. By your kind mercy, may this help fulfill the desires of our previous *ācāryas*, and of you as well.

Thank you again and again, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please forgive my many shortcomings and allow me to remain a humble servant in your ever-expanding mission. Without your causeless mercy, nothing is possible.

Always praying to remain a speck of dust at your lotus feet,

Your humble servant,

RP Bhakti Rāghava Swami

Initiation: 1974 July. New Vrindavana, West Virginia, USA

Dhanurdhara Swami

The Significance of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Last Written Words

Unfortunately, Śrīla Prabhupāda's infirmity had visibly taken its toll on him. Day and night, he lay prone on his bed, and with whatever energy he could muster left in his body, he tried to rest comfortably and focus on the *kīrtan* that softly played non-stop in his room. It is beyond comprehension that anyone in such a condition could gather the energy and mental acuity to continue dictating a profound commentary on such deep textual work as the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. But he did. During hours through the day, he would listened attentively to his Sanskrit pandit read the various commentaries on a particular verse, assimilate them within his mind, and then with great effort bring his voice to a whisper into a dictaphone held to the side of his mouth, which is about as loud as he could struggle to be audible. Despite the condition in which these purports were written, I am convinced they are among his best. When going over those commentaries again recently, what particularly struck me was the significance of his last written words. They seemed to sum up in many

ways the spiritual practice he was leaving the world:

Seeing the Lord before him, Brahma began to offer prayers with great humility, respect and attention. (Purport, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.13.64)

Spiritual practice means concentration or attention. On the path of *bhakti*, that practice is *kirtan* or prayers, which to be done feelingly must be chanted from a platform of humility and with respect (offenselessly).

Am I reading too much into this? Anyway, in classical hermeneutics, and in writing in general, what is said last is always significant. Śrīla Prabhupāda said that his books were dictated in his heart by Krishna. If that is a fact, Krishna certainly dictated a perfect legacy to his teachings. Can there be anything more significant in our practice than prayers or *kirtan* done with great humility, respect, and attention?

Initiation: 1974 November. Dallas, USA

Bhakti Sundar Goswami

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

*namas te sārāsvatē deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe
nirviṣeṣa-śūṇyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Our Eternal Spiritual Master

Before meeting Śrīla Prabhupāda personally, I saw a picture of him. It touched me very much. It was on the back cover of the first *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, with Lord Viṣṇu on the front cover. In the picture Śrīla Prabhupāda was wearing a chaddar and a hat. He looked so humble, so genuine, so compassionate. That picture touched my heart as soon as I saw it. I thought, “This is a bona fide spiritual master, a real guru.” I was immediately affected so much just by looking at that picture, what to speak of reading the book. I was completely convinced. I had been influenced by impersonalistic ideas due to my practice of yoga. But in his *Śrī Īsopaniṣad* Śrīla Prabhupāda defeated

all my impersonalistic ideas. Totally, completely. And at that moment, after reading the *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, I accepted him in my heart as my eternal guru.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's demeanor was so simple, so straightforward, so humble, and so compassionate—all those wonderful qualities. Being with Prabhupāda meant being surrounded by his aura, feeling protected from *māyā*—just by being in his presence. He touched the hearts of everyone who came in touch with him.

One day, as I and several other devotees walked with Prabhupāda in a park in Caracas, Venezuela, a lady greeted him: “*Buenos días!*” Prabhupāda asked us, “What does that mean?” We explained, “It means ‘good morning.’” As we continued the walk, whenever other people passed Prabhupāda he greeted them in Spanish: “*Buenos días!*” We were surprised.

Prabhupāda was a perfect gentleman. He always treated everyone so gently, so nicely. He liked people—that's why. Prabhupāda said, “Unless you like people, you can't help them.” So Prabhupāda liked people, and he treated them nicely. He was always the perfect gentleman with them. So when a person greeted him with “*Buenos días!*” he wanted to answer them properly. That's why he asked what it meant. And after we told him, whenever another passerby greeted him, he answered in Spanish. That was a unique thing about Prabhupāda: he was so attentive to everything around him. That's perfect Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He didn't miss a thing: he always looked at all the details around him. He knew how to act perfectly in relation to other people—what to say to them, etc. His expressions were so gentle and compassionate, always. So that's a wonderful thing about Prabhupāda.

Prabhupāda stayed seven days in the temple, and the days flew by. And then came the last day—Prabhupāda had to leave for Miami. And some devotees had to stay back at the temple to serve the Deities. And before he left he gave us a short lecture at the temple. The sun was rising already, and some sunrays came through the window. Prabhupāda gave us a few minutes' lecture. He quoted from the *Upadeśāmṛta*, by Rūpa Gosvāmī—the verse beginning *utsāhān niścayād dhairyāt tat-tat-karma-pravartanāt*. He said, “*Utsāhān*, enthusiasm, is very important.” And he said, “Enthusiasm means ‘I must see Kṛṣṇa in this very life.’ That means enthusiasm. So follow the rules and regulations, don't deviate, and everything is possible.”

Wonderful lecture he gave.

And then he departed for the airport. The devotees who had to stay back ran after the car— downhill at great speed—and Prabhupāda looked back at them, and he was happy they were doing it. He commented, “That’s very good. When the guru leaves, the disciples must accompany him as far as they can.”

Of course, those of us who didn’t have to stay back took various cars and followed Prabhupāda to the airport. And at the airport Havi led the *kīrtana*, playing *mṛdaṅga*. And since Prabhupāda hadn’t had breakfast, the devotees offered him a silver plate full of cut fruit. So Prabhupāda ate a few pieces of fruit and then asked some lady devotees to distribute the rest as *prasādam*. So the lady devotees distributed the fruit not only to other devotees but also to the passersby. There were no cups or anything—they just put the fruit directly into their hands. And people accepted it and ate the *prasādam*.

Two men stood nearby, watching everything. I heard one say, “Oh, just see how nicely they treat this old man.” And the other replied, “Oh, he is the leader of the Hare Kṛṣṇas. That’s why they treat him so nicely.”

Prabhupāda noticed that Havi hadn’t gotten any of the *prasādam* because he was playing the *mṛdaṅga*. So Prabhupāda called one of the ladies over and told her, “Keep some fruit for him.” Just see! Prabhupāda was so aware of everything around him. He noticed that Havi hadn’t gotten any *prasādam*. So he told a lady devotee, “Save some fruit for him.” That was so nice and touching. Prabhupāda was aware of everything around him. That means he cared for his disciples, he loved his disciples.

I remember that once a devotee asked, “Prabhupāda, how can I please you?” And Prabhupāda replied, “Your desire to please me, pleases me.” So, this is very important: the intention, the attitude, is the most important thing in devotional service. The desire to please the spiritual master is the foundation of our spiritual life.

I hope that one day I can please Śrīla Prabhupāda by remaining always his humble and insignificant servant.

Bhakti Sundar Goswami

Initiation: 1975 February

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

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

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

Most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, captain of my life, lord of my heart! Please accept my prostrated obeisances in the dust of your most precious, divine, beautiful lotus feet.

My Vyāsa-pūjā offering this year is modeled on one made to me earlier this year, in which a disciple perfectly captured what I feel about you. I take it that he sees you in me—which is the perfection of my guruship, a service that I dare undertake simply on your order and desire.

I am very happy to report to you that many of my disciples far exceed me in purity, dedication, taste for chanting, distributing your transcendental books, sense control, austerity, scriptural knowledge, realization, and every other quality. I am learning so much from them about how to serve you better. It is all your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, which you kindly bestow on them, making me your instrument.

You are perfect. I have met many persons during my life. Out of all these persons, you stand out in my mind as being most perfect and ideal. To think that the spiritual master is an ordinary person is an offense. But it is not for this reason, just to follow a rule, that I see you as perfect. Factually, in each aspect of your personality I see only perfection. Among the multiple facets of your perfection, your knowledge stands out for me as the portal to service, devotion, commitment, and all else that follows.

You humbly said about yourself, “We are not very big scholars. We have no such qualification that we can compose very nice

literature. There may be so many mistakes . . . whatever it may be.”¹⁸ Nevertheless, I conclude that your knowledge is perfect. We repeatedly read your books and hear your lectures, and you perfectly fulfill the role of guru as being primarily a giver of knowledge. As I realized when I started to read your books, your knowledge is truly unique: it is life-giving and the only actual knowledge there is. You want to give not only to your disciples but to the whole world the knowledge you received from your Guru Mahārāja.

Although you vigorously and resolutely preach the Absolute Truth as it is, you remain so personal and personable. You mercifully dragged me to your lotus feet just two-and-a-half years before your disappearance from our mortal vision, and I got very little of your direct personal association. Nevertheless, by your mercy, by the knowledge in your books, you make yourself available to all your disciples and to all the world. I am very happy that I can daily relish your association in your teachings.

You are mercifully present in your books, in your instructions. You continuously draw enthusiasm from the ocean of mercy, and you share that mercy just as a cloud pours rain without discrimination on the fields, rocks, lakes, and seas. Your mercy pours especially profusely on those who undertake the *yajña* for Kali-yuga by day after day accepting the austerities required to distribute your books. You told us to distribute your books, and you mercifully pressure us to keep on distributing far and wide.

For us conditioned souls, the perverted tastes of this material world seem very attractive. But by your divine grace you give us the knowledge by which we can understand that there is something far superior to the bitter taste of this material world full of suffering. By your instructions you are bringing us to Kṛṣṇa. You promise to personally bring us to Kṛṣṇa via the *paramparā* system. You introduced us to your Guru Mahārāja and to his Guru Mahārāja, and on all the way up to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Kṛṣṇa.

You confidently carry the flag of pure devotional service in this world of darkness. You are an unparalleled general in the movement of Lord Caitanya. You are the best follower of your Guru Mahārāja, and thus you are a great general of a great general. By your life and your instructions you embody your Guru Mahārāja’s teachings. You are fighting for us fallen souls on many fronts. You are not only our general; you are our father, guide, friend, shelter, and our very life.

You are the only good thing that came to us in this miserable world. You are pure and you purify us. Your lotus feet are the only relief from the intense suffering that is this material world. You shine like the sun in the morning sky, dissipating all shadows and doubts. You worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead and all His followers. Your heart is full of compassion and understanding. Your heart is determined to give real help. You don't care about your personal comfort, but you are very sad to see others suffer. Your compassion knows no limits.

Your true followers magnificently continue the succession of great generals, attacking from all directions the daunting fortresses of the illusory energy. They transform wretched souls into shining devotees, returning them to their glorious position as spiritual souls. By taking all risks simply to benefit others, your true followers perform the topmost welfare activity. They inspire many thousands to fall at your lotus feet. With the strength gained from the *kṛṣṇa-śakti* you invest in them, they perform miracles. Untiringly, day after day, you, Abhaya Caraṇa, fearlessly lead your troops into the battle with the forces of illusion.

It is difficult to find proper words to describe your personality. I'm sorry for my poor attempt to glorify you. All my verbiage comes to nothing in the face of your actual glories. If I were to take all the superlatives that I know and multiply them by thousands, still I would hardly approach even the beginning of your glory. Kṛṣṇa asks Arjuna and Uddhava, "How far should I continue describing My own glory? Not even I know its limits." Similarly with you; I hardly know where to start in describing your perfection, and there is no question of reaching its end.

Wherever I look I see your glory. With the eye of knowledge you gifted me, I can see everything, everywhere—humans, animals, immovable objects—in relation to the Absolute Truth. I marvel at your wisdom and glory in possessing such rare and precious knowledge and your munificence and compassion in sharing it. You are the Supreme Lord's very dear servant who, on His order, came to give us this knowledge.

Practically also, you teach us how to serve the Lord. You kick far away everything that is not in line with pure devotional service. You show us the true path, and as we run toward Kṛṣṇa you cheer us on, tugging and cajoling us along the way, and warning about sloughs, potholes, and false turns. When we fall, you pick us up, dust us off,

point us back in the right direction, and help us get going again. You give us the strength, intelligence, and courage to continue. I fall down in the dust of your lotus feet, and I never want to go anywhere else.

*kadāham aikāntika-nitya-kiṅkaraḥ
praharṣayaīṣyāmi sanātha-jīvitam*

Desiring to be accepted as your permanent eternal servant and to always feel joyful to have such a fitting master,

a fallen,

Bhakti Vikāsa Swami
Initiation: 1975. London, UK

Guru Prasād Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to your infinite wisdom, which is guiding us to spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement all over the world.

Devotees have often asked me what is the most important aspect of your instructions. I find your example of continuous sacrifice to carry on the ISKCON movement, even to the point of not being able to finish your translation of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, to be the shining example of what we should be able to relinquish to follow in your footsteps. Without a strong Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, it will be impossible to systematically spread the *saṅkīrtana* initiative to every home in every town and village. We all personally have some service that we especially cherish, as you cherished your translation work. You repeatedly requested all of us to take up more responsibility so that you could spend all your time providing transcendental guidance for us and for future generations. We weren't able to do so to the degree that you requested. However, it is never too late to fulfill your most treasured desire, that all devotees, and the entire world, fully imbibe the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness from your glorious books. Therefore, I have accepted the request that I participate this year as a member of your GBC Executive Committee, in the spirit of acting as a tiny cog in an effort to offer ISKCON members a greater

feeling of inspiration coming from the GBC Body.

I was especially inspired to do so after reading the instructions you gave to one member of your GBC team in 1972:

You mention you like to speak now very often, but the first business should be to preach to the devotees. It is better to maintain a devotee than to try to convince others to become devotees. It is the duty of the GBC to *maintain* the devotees, keep them in the highest standard of Krishna consciousness, and give them all good instruction, and let them go out and preach for making more devotees. Your first job should be to make sure that every one of the devotees in your zone of management is reading regularly our literatures and discussing the subject matter seriously from different angles of seeing, and that they are somehow or other absorbing the knowledge of Krishna Consciousness philosophy. If they are fully educated in our philosophy and if they can get all of the knowledge and study it from every viewpoint, then very easily they will perform tapasya, or renunciation, and that will be their advancement in Krishna Consciousness. [Letter to Satsvarūpa, 16 June 1972]

I humbly beg you to give me the intelligence and ability to fulfill these instructions you painstakingly gave us, to both maintain our spiritual lives and give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. Without your blessings, there is no hope, as you stated in the following letter to another one of your stalwarts from the early days:

I am successful only because I am following strictly the orders of my Guru Mahārāja, and I do not deviate. Therefore people respect what I am saying, and they listen because I do not say one thing and do another. So now you are doing my work and you shall be like me and be yourselves the worthy representatives of our disciplic succession. [Letter to Madhudviṣa, 16 June 1972]

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all your blessings.

Your unworthy servant and beggar,

Guru Prasād Swami

Initiation: 1976 April. Costa Rica

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

At this juncture, it appears that Covid-19 is beginning to subside. Globally, the number of new cases has reduced to a fraction of what it was at the height of the pandemic. People are returning to the workplace, engaging in social, civic, and religious activities, traveling, and desperately trying to return to prepandemic normalcy. In its wake, the pandemic has claimed the lives of millions of people, while leaving countless others with long-term physical and psychological health challenges, loss of livelihood, and financial ruin.

Over the past two years, along with the pandemic mankind has also had to endure catastrophic earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, typhoons, floods, draughts, wildfires, famine, and war. These disasters were certainly not coincidental but the result of humanity's blatantly disobeying the laws of God.

Your prophetic words remain a warning to us all:

Material advancement of civilization means advancement of the reactions of the threefold miseries due to celestial influence, earthly reactions, and bodily or mental pains. By the celestial influence of the stars there are many calamities like excessive heat, cold, rain, or lack of rain, and the aftereffects are famine, disease, and epidemic. The aggregate result is agony of the body and the mind. Man-made material science cannot do anything to counteract these threefold miseries. They are all punishments from the superior energy of *māyā* under the direction of the Supreme Lord. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.14.10, purport]

This is the law of nature. If you become disobedient to God, then *prakṛti*, or nature, will give you trouble in so many ways. And as soon as you become submissive, surrender to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there will be no more natural disturbances. [Lecture, Māyāpur, 20 June 1973]

The Archbishop of Canterbury in his recent broadcast in London said, "In every quarter of earth men long to be delivered from the curse of War and to find in a world which

has regained its peace, respite from the harshness and bitterness of the world they have known till now. But so often they want the kingdom of Heaven without its King. The kingdom of God without God. And they cannot have it.” [First issue of *Back to Godhead* magazine, 1944]

For many people around the world, the past two years have been a strong wakeup call. Consequently, your books are being purchased in profuse quantities. The soothing balm of your Bhaktivedanta translations and purports are offering the solution to all suffering, and thus providing the relief and solace so badly needed in these troubled times.

Due to lockdowns and quarantines during the height of the pandemic, face-to-face association was replaced with Zoom meetings. Amazingly, these virtual gatherings were held more frequently than the in-person prepandemic gatherings, with increased attendance. I personally experienced that when I read your books out loud in these gatherings, old and new devotees alike gained deeper faith, became more serious in their *sādhana*, increased their service, and became more enlivened.

There is no doubt that anyone who seriously studies your books daily and applies the teachings in their lives will experience a total transformation of consciousness and become blissful.

Perhaps the most profound experience I’ve had this year is the response we’ve gotten from reading out loud your biography, *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*, to a group of devotees online. Several devotees, some recently introduced to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, were moved to tears by hearing of your struggles to establish Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West. They would often reflect that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, possessed profound compassion, selflessness, and determination to be able to gift us and the world Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Just by hearing your life story, many people in our region and indeed around the world have become committed devotees.

Therefore you said, “I will never die. I shall live forever in my books, and you will utilize.” (Press Conference, San Francisco, 16 July 1975)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please empower all of us to deeply study your books, distribute them, and teach them to others. In this way you will continue to inundate the world with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. May your glories be spread far and wide.

Your aspiring servant,
Giridhārī Swami
Initiation: 1976 July. NY, USA

Amala-bhakta Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, Hare Krishna

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you forever and ever!

Thank you for your endless mercy upon me, which I can never deserve. Please continue to help me to keep trying to deserve them.

Your worthless servant,
Amala-bhakta Swami
Initiation: 1976 October. LA, USA

Candrasekhara Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Sometimes it seems like I am being overwhelmed by various projects and services that I have either volunteered for or have been given to me, added to my roster. Although none of these are overwhelming in themselves, the aggregate of them gets to be daunting.

This has caused me to reflect on my services and responsibilities on numerous occasions. Just recently I have run across a section of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* where this topic is mentioned in particular. This is Canto 3, Chapter 9 where Lord Brahmā is praying to the Supreme Lord for the mercy and knowledge to conduct the creation of the Universe.

There it says that Lord Brahmā was anxious because of the fearsome waters of devastation and he was mentally overcome with uncertainty in how to proceed with creation. Thinking about these

two items, it occurred to me that many of us find ourselves in such a similar situation as Brahmā. Of course, Brahmā is in a unique position, but yet he has a situation that many devotees also face—that of being anxious about dangers in performing his service and wondering how to actually execute the service itself, apprehensive that he may fail.

Adding to those concerns, Brahmā also fears that he will become entangled in False Ego when he acts according to his role as engineer of the Universe. Brahmā knows that the Supreme is there, but he is unable to communicate with the Supreme directly, at least at first.

Things look foreboding, lonely and difficult. Brahmā knows that what he needs to do is pray. First he tries to crawl down the stem of the Lotus flower upon which his seat was perched, but that doesn't help him in any way. The empirical approach is too crude and the Universe too large to have any success from that approach. All that will occur is that one will either become bewildered or one will falsely think that he has acquired some final knowledge when in fact he has only acquired a single, mostly useless, perspective out of countless perspectives.

That is the nature of our current society where people think that they are situated atop a grand mountain of knowledge that has been carefully preened and established by the best minds in the history of humankind. Even this one Material Universe is infinite, what to speak of the rest of creation. The Universe is complex and constantly shifting as trends and shapes come into being and phase out later. Our society is so proud of its imagined knowledge, without noticing the fact that the scientific knowledge of our human race is thrown onto the scrap heap as newer ideas push the older ideas down. There is no such thing as final knowledge in our modern world-view, just an endless striving for so-called “more complete, more-accurate” knowledge.

Brahmā knows this and gives up on this empirical approach. Brahmā hears “*Tapa*” and engages in meditation. There is only darkness, and there are the fearful winds of devastation. There is no one to ask and no books to read. Brahma is however, not an atheist but has the basic faith that there must be some order behind everything. This good attitude earns Brahma the opportunity to have *darshan* of the Supreme.

Later Brahma worries for his insufficient intelligence necessary to create the Universe or his pride which might be infected by the mode of passion when he sets his hand to create.

In answer, Krishna replies, “[SB 3.9.29] The Supreme Personality of Godhead then said: O Brahmā, O depth of Vedic wisdom, be neither depressed nor anxious about the execution of creation. What

you are begging from Me has already been granted before.”

Then Krishna says, “[SB 3.9.30] O Brahmā, situate yourself in penance and meditation and follow the principles of knowledge to receive My favor. By these actions you will be able to understand everything from within your heart.” Later, Krishna assures Brahmā that Brahmā will see Him when Krishna performs His pastimes on Earth. To work in the mood of pleasing Krishna will allow a person to never be overcome with the ego of material expertise. After all, it is the energy of the Supreme which causes success in whatever endeavor.

So empires can come and go, time can move to the last point of universal existence, the people of the world can come together in service or burn the Earth to a cinder, all manner of speeches can be made about our purpose and goal, we may be wise or ignorant, we may be young or old, we may be advanced in our spiritual practice or just beginning, our circumstance may be favorable or deplorable, but one thing remains. That is our service in this mysterious world. If we just try to execute it, while remembering the Lord, everything will work out for us.

That is all I need to remember, and that will be sufficient for me.

Your servant,

Candrasedkhara Swami

Initiation: 1976 November. Berkeley, USA

Vedavyasapriya Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my timely obeisances hundreds of times at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this occasion of your divine appearance to invoke and establish eternal relationship to the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Sri Krishna so the people in general all around the globe will be happy perpetually.

I am begging you to pass on the same perseverance and enthusiasm to me so I can relish transcendental satisfaction by serving you and Lord Sri Krishna. With the blessings of my superiors, I have embarked on a project in Thailand at the advanced age of 78 that was unfulfilled for the last 25 years. I am begging your mercy because you are all merciful and extremely tolerant for our conditioning in this material world, yet I am willing to be an instrument in your divine hands.

As we were confined in dangerous Corona times, we opened up the world wide preaching through Zoom classes, the best service we could offer for your pleasure and benefitted by reading your books without any excuse or lack of time etc as an alibi. This was the major effort to please you when we have to shut down the Deity doors. We felt, at times despondent and morose and maybe sentimental too, but your practical wit and Krishna conscious applications during this adverse time was well-guided and manoeuvred by our esteemed GBC under your practical command. The only credit to devotees was that they became more intensified in devotion for you and your gift of preaching Krishna consciousness. Thus every one in our spiritual family was well protected to perform more vigorous preaching now. Even though we lost several staunch soldiers, yet their spirit of contribution in spiritual welfare of devotees was the beacon of inspiration and dedication for your pleasure. We were assured that Your Divine Grace called them up in your further services.

Surely when my time will be up here, please I beg you to pull me out from here and place me wherever you want me in Your Divine Grace's service.

Yours sincerely,

Vedavyasapriya Swami

Initiation: 1977 October. NY, USA

TRIBUTES
BY
DISCIPLES

Ding-ding!

“Shyamasundar?!”

Softly said, but cutting through a door and down the hall and through another door and into my sleeping skull like thunder—*Wham!* My body flies from bed, fresh from a dream—Prabhupāda calls!—and I hit the ground running, literally dashing down the hall, struggling to remember where I am and how to reach that voice, my heart leaping with joy and dread (did I do something wrong?) as I grip Prabhupāda’s door latch, squeeze a breath and plop to the floor. I catch a quick read of his mood: ahh, he’s calm and thoughtful—maybe I’m safe. As I scoot across the rug and compose myself before his desk, he points to his Dictaphone—that big gaudy watch someone gave him hanging loosely upside-down from his swanlike wrist—and says, “The letters are ready for typing.”

I’m grinning from ear to ear, always filled with delightful wonder at seeing him again—it’s been, what, four hours—and this morning I take an extra pause to drink in the beauty of his face. Is it the flickering fluorescent table light that casts his cheeks in blue? A couple of crows call through the predawn curtains rustling softly behind him. Outside I can hear distant temple bells, a taxi horn, the scurry of early traffic. His big teeth flash white and gold in the shadows behind the desktop pool of light, full face moving now into the light. Those soft doe eyes, so like the sacred brahmin cows of India, his velvet neck bristled with downy grey in the early morning—what matter of creation is he to possess such perfect youthful radiance?

“Sooo, you have taken rest?”

“Yes, Prabhupāda, but I got lost in the hall, trying to remember where I was.”

His face cracks open in a laugh, eyes opening very wide in surprise. Then he shuts them tight and his cheeks stretch back to impossible limits, and his head bobs up and down in a full belly laugh. His eyes are open again now, moist with delight, as he contemplates the strangeness of our high-speed journey, and he says, between gasps of laughter: “You are just like the, what is that, this goat, tied to my string, and always bumping.”

“Yes, Prabhupāda, even if you lead me to the slaughterhouse.”

“That is the position of guru, to lead you to Krishna, even you do not want to go.”

O Prabhupāda! Sometimes I've stayed this trail with you, glued to your lotus heels. Other times I wandered off, far off, and lost you in thick entanglements and concrete jungles. Sometimes we have camped and slept in adjoining beds. Some mornings I awake and find you gone, and I am desolate. But somehow here I am again, tucked into your slipstream and rocketing along at your usual lightning pace. Out here, Śrīla Prabhupāda, out here now, I'm far past the point of no return—out of the pandemonium. How silent and sure it has all become out here, beside you, my sole anchor, guide, and friend.

[Excerpts from *Chasing Rhinos With The Swami*, Volume Three]

Initiation: 1967 January. San Francisco, USA

Govinda Dasi

All glories to our beloved Master Srila Prabhupada!

I offer my most respectful glorification of our beloved Spiritual Master Srila Prabhupada, who has all the mystic siddhis to foretell the future as well as to reach into our hearts and enable us to grasp hold of his mercy in the form of Krishna bhakti. Out of love for us he has given us warnings and also told us exactly how to prepare for the collapse of Western civilization.

Recorded November 29, 1975, Delhi

Prabhupada: Civilization will collapse very soon, all over the world. It will collapse. Either you may bring this ism or that ism, this civilization will collapse. People will become mad, being harassed in so many ways. When one is harassed in so many problems, he commits suicide. So that position is coming.

Disciple: Or he starts a war.

Prabhupada: Yes. When the government cannot adjust, they start a war.

Srila Prabhupada, you repeatedly told us that the whole Western civilization would be “finished within fifty years.”

Prabhupada: No time immemorial. You are being cheated for two hundred, three hundred years, that's all. Not before that. All these scientists rascals have come out within two hundred years. That's all.

Prabhupada: So you are being cheated for the last two hundred years, not for thousands of years. So it will be finished. Within another fifty years, everything will be finished.

—Morning Walk at Cheviot Hills Golf Course -- May 15, 1973

The fifty years is up in 2023.

Exactly how the Divine Dissolution of an errant civilization takes place—that can be seen as “details” only. And it is not up to us. It is up to Krishna and it is being engineered by the devas under His authority.

The ongoing “pandemics” (there will be more of them) and the coming wars are being orchestrated by God, even though the demons think they themselves are creating them. The demons have their plans, but Krishna has His plans. As devotees, we must rise above the details.

Those who focus on the “details” of the Divine Dissolution, whether it is a pandemic, a pathogen, a food shortage, or whatever, often become panicky and fearful. The mainstream media is indeed designed to create fear of one crisis or another. But as devotees, we need to focus more on the spiritual dimension.

We first need to understand that this Divine Dissolution is destined. It is the end of yet another cycle in the day of Brahma. But a 10,000-year pause, a sliver of Kali yuga, has been set aside for a mini-Satya yuga. This has been predicted by the Lord Himself, as well as our Acharyas, and called the Golden Age.

Since we cannot change or stop this Divine Dissolution event, we need to change our response to it. Rather than becoming fearful, confused, or disoriented, we need to remember what Srila Prabhupada taught us. We have to apply our knowledge to the situation before us.

Srila Prabhupada taught us to turn to God, to take all our fears and anxieties and let them be consumed in the sacrificial fire of Sankirtan, the yajna for this Age of Kali—the congregational chanting of Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare.

Now we need to do this more than ever before! The past fifty years was all practice to get us ready for this important time in history!

The need of the hour is inspiration. Srila Prabhupada gave us a body of teachings that bring awakening and enlightenment and will bring our souls into alignment with Krishna's divine plans. We have the formula, Srila Prabhupada gave us everything, but now we must become more serious than ever.

Most importantly, we need to keep the kirtans going! Both inside and outside our temples. We need to bring Hare Krishna Kirtan to every gathering of any sort—street protests, concerts, conventions, fairs, whatever. Even if the kirtan parties are small, they will still be effective. The Holy Names will resound around the world, and will continue to circle the globe, thus raising the world consciousness so that we can enter into the golden age.

Srila Prabhupada talked extensively about the future in the very early days, especially in 1967 and 1968. I was with him from January of 1967 until March of 1969. Not everything was recorded then, since we had no such equipment. But I was his secretary and took good notes, diaries, and most of us remember much of what he told us about the future.

In 1969, after I traveled with him as his secretary for over a year, he sent me and my husband to Hawaii to open temples. The young brahmachari who took over my service lost faith and left Srila Prabhupada because he could not digest the fact that the moonshot was a media-driven hoax. Srila Prabhupada simply affirmed that “you cannot go to the moon by spaceship.”

So from then on, Srila Prabhupada no longer gave detailed descriptions of the future collapse so freely as he had before. (“There will be no food in your cities, the dogs will run in packs and attack and eat the people.” “Your cities will become bloodbaths.” “People will have to flee to the hills due to the looting and rioting.” “Your oil civilization will be finished within your lifetime.” He spoke on and on and on like this in the very early days.) Instead, he began urging the devotees to get out of the cities and “become self-sufficient.”

In 1975 he sent out a letter with orders for all householders to go to develop the farms, and the brahmacharis remain in the cities and preach. That way, his disciples would be protected from the mayhem of the coming collapse. But that order was ignored, or lost. So now, the hour is late..

Srila Prabhupada came to the Western world to teach and to

create a task force, to spread the Holy Names all over the world. He also came to warn and advise us of the upcoming Divine Dissolution. Now we look around in amazement, and often disbelief, at how quickly the dismantling of the Western civilization is taking place!

We need to encourage the devotees to get prepared for what is coming and, at the very least, to get out of cities that will become like prisons. There is very little time remaining. It is very important that devotees are reminded of the fact that Srila Prabhupada has all the mystic siddhis to foresee the future, and knows exactly what to advise us to do. He has all the answers.

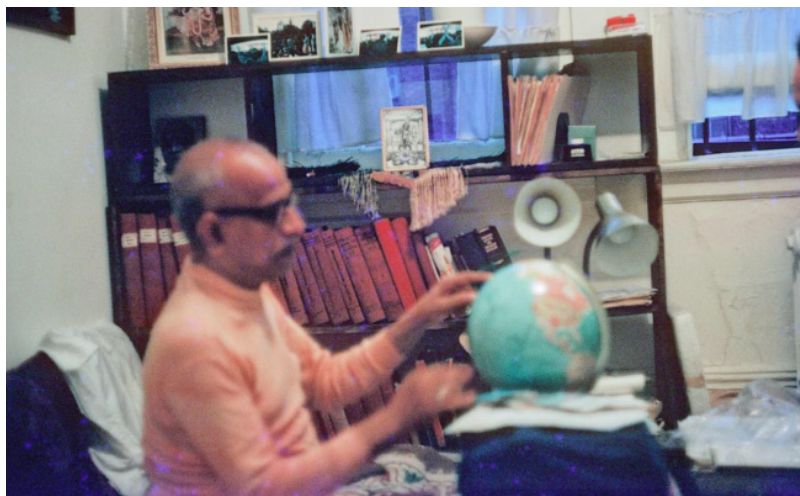
We early disciples witnessed all this first hand, and as such, it is important that we share this with future generations of devotees.

So far as the war between the demons and the godly, it has been going on since the beginning of creation. It so happens that in this era, the demons have named their camp “communism” or “atheism.”

Back in 1967, Srila Prabhupada, would slowly turn the globe in his tiny New York apartment, where his handful of teens and early twenties disciples sat before him.

He would say, “Brahmananda, you shall go to Russia. Rayarama, you will go to England. Goursundar, you will go to Japan.” and so on. Yet we were just youngsters in our early 20s! Little did we know he was planning a worldwide takeover with Hare Krishna Kirtan!

Slowly turning the globe, he gravely said, “There is a bearlike demoniac race that has come up from a subterranean planetary system into the caves in Russia, and they are intent upon making the whole world communist, atheist!”



As he studied the globe, he selected generals for each continent, planning the counterattack even though he had only a handful of youth for an army!

He often told us that this Hare Krishna chanting would save the world at its darkest hour! Now, the darkest hour has come. At this juncture, the most important thing we can do is to keep the kirtans going—on street corners, at protests, concerts, in temples, outside temples, in our homes and anywhere we can.

Hare Krishna Kirtan is the antidote for the evils of Kali Yuga!

Many mystics and prophets have foretold this dissolution. But we have our own prophet, Srila Prabhupada, and he is tri-kala-jnana. He knows the past, the present and the future. He can foresee everything, but more importantly, he can also guide us through the dark passageway to the Golden Age.

There are crises and hardships ahead, but we can see the light at the end of the tunnel—a Golden Age similar to Satya yuga, where people are joyful, worshiping God in their own ways, living close to the land, and a place where there are no slaughterhouses, abortion clinics, food shortages, or evil politicians.

So let us become encouraged to get past the fear porn spraying from the media, the political claptrap, and the demoniac agendas, and focus on Srila Prabhupada's teachings and spreading the Holy Names wherever and however we can. Let us grab hold of Srila Prabhupada's lotus feet and ask for his guidance and protection for the coming dark years of transition. Even if we are old or sickly, as are many early disciples, we can use our devices to send out the holy sound vibrations that will encircle the globe like a real spiritual prophylactic—the spiritual vaccine for Kali Yuga!

Malati Devi Dasi

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I offer my respectful obeisances to the lotus feet of my spiritual master, who is an ocean of mercy and conduit for a perfect life by his own example having taken shelter at the lotus feet of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and fearlessly delivered His message all over the world,

accomplishing what no other *Ācārya* had ever done before, nor could do so in the future. *Fait accompli*. By spreading the glories of the holy names of the Lord, as predicted by the Lord himself, a permanent victory was set in place that can never be rivaled, conquered or equaled, yet has left much for his followers to do in order to ensure that the victory of the holy name perpetuates throughout all future ages. “I want you, boys and girls, to push on this movement.” July ’67 SF. A glorious standing order for all generations to come, from the perfect person, *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*, Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājakācārya A C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Oh most worthy master, a fateful comment from your divine mouth (45 years ago) appeared before me today:

“The Russian philosophy is that periodically a revolution is required. That is also true to some extent and people will follow, and then it is failure, and again another revolution. But why revolution? Take to the standard! They do not know what is the standard... *That we can give. That will be our contribution*” (Conversation with Yogi Amrit Desai, Jan 77.)

How did you know all of these things in advance, such as now, when the world is witnessing this comment play out in real time? You generally replied “I only know what Krishna wants me to know,” when asked. It still amazes me when I read your incredibly accurate purports from the First Canto, written prior to your arrival in the West, yet masterfully and accurately detailing everything going up to the present time and I suspect, into future times to come for the next 10,000 years.

In great awe and reverence, in jubilation, falling at your lotus feet, always begging for their shelter.

Hoping to eternally remain as one of your spiritual daughters,

Malati Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1967 February. San Francisco, USA

Dayananda Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga!

In 1972, in your garden in Los Angeles, you encouraged me to write. Although I could not focus on that suggestion for decades, since retiring in 2005, I've completed a few books.

Now, I am working on a comprehensive text to show that Vaishnava culture is the solution to the current environmental problems. I clearly remember when you called me to your room and described that incredible culture. And during the 1970s, I could see your fondness not just for the philosophy but also the culture. You wanted us to sell your books and establish the culture side-by-side.

My new book is a guide to solving environmental issues. Its goal is to lay the foundation for youth recruitment, collection of funds, and purchase of lands. Here are the four essential elements of Vaishnava culture that I present to the youth and environmentalists:

1. Equality of all souls. The current materialistic idea is that non-human beings have no soul and exist for our consumption. However, the exalted view is that all souls are equal and must not be exploited unnecessarily or excessively.
2. Celebration of Vishnu/Krishna *līlā* and *nama*. *Saṅkīrtana* is the solution for modern society, as Caitanya Mahāprabhu has presented. For millennia, Vaishnavas have enjoyed the many *līlās* and *nāmas* through drama, art, music, dance, festivals, architecture, sculpture, storytelling, worship, feasting, etc. Such enjoyment replaces society's obsession with overconsumption, which causes nearly all environmental problems. And by redirecting money toward such *saṅkīrtana*, as you have encouraged many times, fewer funds will be available for overconsumption.
3. Agrarian economy. A simple, nature-based agrarian economy is the practical expression of the *varṇas* that Krishna has given. Such an economy restricts overconsumption.
4. The joy of austerity. Three-quarters of society (the *āśramas*) provide an example of austerity to the rest. And without understanding the pleasure of such austerity, society will never overcome its desire to overconsume.

Although somewhat diminished, the powerful Vaishnava culture still exists, and three-quarters of a billion people practice it.

The Vaishnavas have the solution to overconsumption. The environmental scientists, technologists, United Nations, Green Parties, liberals, socialists, Christians, and many others are trying; however, their problem is that they refuse to give up the attachment to the

exploitation of Krishna's nature. They will never be successful without *saṅkīrtana* and *varṇāśrama-dharma*.

Your servant,

Dayananda Dasa

Initiation: 1967 March. San Francisco, USA

Damodara Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are the one I pronounce prayers to three times daily and offer food to and dedicate my life to, although imperfectly.

You are the one who can unbuckle the straight jacket of my *karma* and liberate me to a life of holy sanity.

You are the one who always smiled at me whenever we met, even though I deserved a good thrashing.

You are the one who sent me to Washington D.C. and who sustained me as I gave your message to members of Congress.

You are the one who is forever my guiding light and heart opener who plucked me out of the muck of my tendencies.

You are the one who told the BTG staff to get out of our stuffy office and hit the streets with the sparkling holy name.

You are the one who wrote me letters that instructed me and sustained me by ever wishing me well.

You are the one who in the early months sat on a makeshift Seat of Vyas and fearlessly administered the straight sauce.

You are the one who sold me your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3-volume set which yanked me off my Buddhist train of thought.

You are the one whose three *Bhāgavatams* I worship today on my desk altar above the Jagannaths and below Rādhā Krishna.

You are the one whose life-sustaining quotes I post every day on two Facebook devotee groups.

You are the one who kindly named DC's uninstalled bell metal murtis Rādhā-Damodar before They left for the traveling party.

You are the one who then gave us ISKCON's first Krishna mūrti, Madan-Mohan to be joined by a Rādhārāṇī of your design.

You are the one who is an ocean of mercy and no one can estimate the depth of your inconceivable kindness.

You are the one I left one time but you brought me back and I pray I stay with you forever.

You are the one who even while I was away for four months was always my reference marker and guidepost.

You are the one who gives us all we need to know in your books if only we have the patience to unpack the secrets.

You are the one whose spoken words, even in recordings, are like honey drops of nectar for the heart.

You are the one who invites us all to sail away with you to the far bank of the River Virajā where pure souls await.

You are the one whose ISKCON is only 56 years old, and who knows how much the future will proclaim your greatness.

You are the one who surely stands in the firmament along with Jesus and Buddha as a great liberator.

You are the one who wore a ring given to you by someone so that they would always be in Krishna's service.

You are the one who was expert in everything as the occasion required a Philosopher, a Cook, a diligent Treasurer.

You are the one whose instruction to chant Hare Krishna 24-hours daily is embedded in my soul as the rule of my life.

You are the one who wrote me that, "English translation of prayers is good" but I still say them as you did.

You are the one who sat under a tree on October 16 1966 and opened a path for me to an infinite world.

You are the one whose chanting that day gave me a crazy vision that I was riding up an infinite silver ramp.

You are the one whose chanting Hare Krishna made me chant too on an upward ride to ever increasing bliss.

You are the one whose disciple Hayagriva that day gave me a leaflet that said I could 'Stay High Forever.'

You are the one in Tompkins Square Park who gave us a political force that I saw liberating the cosmos.

You are the one whose politics went far beyond the War Resisters League or Liberation Magazine or Dellinger or McReynolds.

You are the one who was the star of my movies and made my camera into an instrument as good as Ganesh's pen.

You are the one who returned from San Francisco in April 1967 to our airport welcome as seen in my movie, "*Vaishnavas*."

You are the one who was welcomed by a big crowd including the health food store owner lady we called Mother Nature.

You are the one who was so pleased that in your absence we had built you a proper, though very simple *Vyāśāsana*.

You are the one who recuperated from your stroke in Long Branch NJ, but didn't stop instructing us how to expand ISKCON.

You are the one who had us wear little Jagannaths on a string around our necks.

You are the one who said my short movie was "very nice" but I noticed you closed your Deities' curtains before I showed it.

You are the one who graciously let me film you the day before you left New York and we feared we'd never see you again.

You are the one who sat on your little space in the rear court building of 26 Second Avenue as I made "*Swāmījī*."

You are the one who is an ideal subject for meditation as you chant, read, eat, and give instructions in that movie.

You are the one who in "*Gurudev*" was welcomed at Kennedy Airport in 1968 by an even larger crowd of dancing disciples.

You are the one who made us all leap in ecstasy when you got up and danced with us there.

You are the one who then returned to your apartment at 26 Second Avenue and called it, "my old home."

You are the one who lectured at the 61 Second Avenue temple which used to be P. Blechman and Sons tuxedo rental parlor.

You are the one who I filmed in "*Paramhansa*" benedicting Boston and Montreal with your angelic presence.

You are the one who waved to me smiling as I bowed down to you while filming you leaving your Montreal apartment.

You are the one who waved to me again as I filmed you at the Montreal airport thus ensuring my eternal bond to you.

You are the one who did your morning walk on city streets with Jadurani and Goursundar looking every moment the King of Boston.

You are the one who presided at the Glenville Avenue temple in Allston in front of the partition I built with my dad's help.

You are the one who thus engaged my father in Krishna's service by your holy mercy.

You are the one who consented to be in "*The Full Nectarine*" a short movie by Nayana Bhiram and myself.

You are the one who thereby told a group of devotees and local children about Lord Chaitanya's taking *sannyāsa*.

You are the one whose transcendent presence there in Brooklyn Botanical Gardens made us call it Brooklyn Brindaban.

You are the one whose expansive spirit guided me as I served at *Back To Godhead* as art director and article writer.

You are the one who saved me I'm sure from destroying myself with my clever fabrications and ingenious degradations.

You are the one to whom I owe any continued propriety or sensibility in my life.

You are the one who said "Everything is Person", and thus obliterated the feeble philosophies of materialists.

You are the one who thus opened a view of the cosmos as composed not of dead stuff but of conscious entities everywhere.

You are the one who rides on the front of the Jagannath cart like a stalwart sea captain braving the storms of Kali-yuga.

You are the one who is our Hero and Deliverer, our Priest and Potentate, yes for my money the King of the World.

You are the one who is always my best friend even though I have denied you three times and even more than that.

You are the one whose mercy reaches down even to an idiot like me who wallows in the mud of self-importance.

You are the one who beckons us home a beacon of hope and glory for all sentient beings including me,

A lame man stumbling to your lotus feet,

Damodara Dasa

Initiation: 1967 April. NY, USA

Balai Devi Dasi

Dearest and most glorious Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your transcendental lotus feet. All glories to you! You are a vast ocean of unlimited mercy! Your tireless and uninterrupted devotion to your spiritual master is the most perfect example for your disciples to follow. Without serving you, there is no possibility of happiness.

Thank you for everything. Thank you for your books and your spiritual instructions. Thank you for picking up this most sinful spirit soul from the depths of the ocean of material existence and dragging me to your lotus feet to give me a chance to serve you, serve the devotees and the *paramparā*, serve Śrīmatī Tulasī Devī, serve Śrī Pañca-tattva, and serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Krishna.

There is absolutely no hope for anyone to revive his dormant

Krishna consciousness without the mercy of the bona fide spiritual master. I take shelter at your lotus feet and hope I can come closer to you by serving you sincerely and continuously.

Some nectar from your books:

In the material world there is always danger at every step. Nonetheless, if one takes shelter of Kṛṣṇa without hesitation and keeps under the shelter of Kṛṣṇa, he can easily cross the ocean of nescience. To the devotee, this great ocean of nescience becomes like a puddle of water in the hoof print of a cow. A pure devotee, without embarrassing himself by trying for elevation in so many ways, stays in the safest position as a servant of Kṛṣṇa, and thus his life is eternally safe without a doubt. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.15.68)

This material world is just like a big ocean. It begins with Brahmaloṇa and extends to Pātāla-loka, and there are many planets, or islands, in this ocean. Not knowing about devotional service, the living entity wanders about this ocean, just as a man tries to swim to reach the shore. Our struggle for existence is similar to this. Everyone is trying to get out of the ocean of material existence. One cannot immediately reach the coast, but if one endeavors, he can cross the ocean by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mercy. One may be very eager to cross this ocean, but he cannot attain success by acting like a madman. He must swim over the ocean very patiently and intelligently under the instructions of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu or His representative. Then, one day, he will reach the shore and return home, back to Godhead. (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Madhya 16.237, purport)

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Please always keep me under the dust of your lotus feet!

I pray to sincerely serve you!

Your humble servant,

Balai Dasi

Initiation: 1967 December. NY, USA

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It's only by your causeless mercy that I can do anything in devotional service, steering me

in the right direction. There is danger at every step in this material world, we just don't know when it will hit. But with your encompassing guidance, I, endeavoring with sincerity, along with humility, faith, perseverance, and enthusiasm all the while, taking shelter of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in loving devotional service to you and Kṛṣṇa. It is then, I am feeling confident and am convinced of being rightly situated following your divine instructions.

A moment's association with the topmost pure devotee is so invaluable. I've been listening about the 26 qualities of a devotee, with devotees sharing examples of what Śrīla Prabhupāda so ardently displayed as a true gentleman.

A devotee described how Śrīla Prabhupāda had given a lecture about the four orders of life; *Brahmacārī*, *Gṛhastha*, *Vānaprastha*, and *Sannyāsa*. And then, there are four classes of people; *Brahmana*, *Ksatriya*, *Vaiśya*, and *Śūdra*, now also a 5th class of citizens. A belligerent person in the audience challenged Śrīla Prabhupāda who said, "You have people offering you flowers, you are sitting on a high seat, what does that make you?" Immediately, Śrīla Prabhupāda said with genuine humbleness, "I am 5th class". That answer automatically took the person aback by Śrīla Prabhupāda's true humility. Always, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave all credence to his beloved spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja; never taking any credit for himself.

His focus, motivation was so clear. While having been reading Giriraj Mahārāja's book; *"I'll Build You a Temple" The Juhu Story*; even though, there was a raging battle with Mr. Nair, Śrīla Prabhupāda never wavered and continued with absorption of Kṛṣṇa, giving lectures at pandals, events, and meeting with others preaching Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda, besides being so kind he knew how to expertly deal with each situation. Towards the beginning, I remember he had wanted all the young girls in the movement to get married. At that time, I was 17 years old, still living at home, and was then

engaged to Madhusudan Prabhu by our Temple President. Even in the early times, it was always encouraged to remain *brahmacārī* than to get married. So Madhusudan wrote a letter to Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote back such a clear cut answer what to do which was so uplifting. Yet, being the young immature teenager that I was, I was thinking, I don't need to get married, I like being a *brahmacārīṇī*. A few months later, Śrīla Prabhupāda came to N.Y.

Madhusudan Prabhu and I went upstairs to have *darsan* with Śrīla Prabhupāda with another engaged couples to be. I was still just thinking like that. I was shy, I never asked many questions, not wanting to waste Śrīla Prabhupāda's time, but when there was a moment's silence, I asked what my name meant, as none of the devotees knew what it had meant either. Śrīla Prabhupāda said my name so melodiously.

He said the meaning; '*Kanchan* means golden, and *bala* means child or woman. It is one of the names of the gopis. And then he plunged into a whole discussion,

'how women should always be protected and are never independent'. I really was awestruck and moved how Śrīla Prabhupāda had seen right through me. After that, it eradicated any uncertainty. And throughout the years, I've read over and over that letter, amongst all the others of Śrīla Prabhupāda's which are so precious and such a treasure.

How I appreciate how Śrīla Prabhupāda has done this countless times in other incidences with other devotees, being able to alleviate any question.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, my spiritual father, and beloved spiritual master.

I bow down to you again and again with utmost gratitude.

I beg to remain your servant and spiritual daughter always,

Kanchanbala Dasi

Initiation: 1967 December. NY, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

All glories to Your Divine Grace.

By your mercy alone, I am feeling your presence in my life more these days than I ever have before. Your writing and teachings are finally beginning to open my eyes to the happiness and fullness of this process of Krishna consciousness.

In the purport to text *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5-19-27, you stated, quoting *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2-3-10, that “Whether one is freed from all material desires, is full of material desires,...engage in devotional service.” You go on to state in that same purport that, “...in this way, not only will the devotee’s desires be fulfilled, but the day will come when he will have no other desire than to serve the lotus feet of the Lord.”

The key is to stay in the fire of devotional service, by sincerely using our mind, body and words to understand your teachings. By studying your books, associating with devotees, and always trying to see Krishna’s divine influence in everything that happens in our lives, we can, and we will, become self-realized by this process.

Therefore, I dedicate myself on this most auspicious day of your *Vyāsa-pūjā*, to completely imbibe your teachings into the very fiber of my existence in this life, with the hope and promise of receiving your mercy.

Thank you again and again for all your kindness and patience, and for all your many sacrifices and gifts that you have so freely given me, that I may have access to this divine process of devotional service.

I now have the blessed hope of one day returning “Back Home, Back to Godhead”.

Your indebted servant,

Vamanadev Dasa

Initiation: 1968 March. 26 2nd Ave. NY, USA

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

vamanadev108@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you spent Janmāṣṭamī in 1970 in Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, Japan. On that day you and some of your disciples simply heard Kṛṣṇa Book throughout the day and night. The unachieved goal, as I remember, in service to full absorption in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, was to complete on that one day the entire book.

The day following Janmāṣṭamī was Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā. A mishap occurred, and you allowed us to observe it properly the next day, the morning after the proper day commemorating your appearance.

We few disciples sat on tatami mats at your feet and read their written offerings, and you, grave and peaceful, sat on the *Vyāsāsana* and simply listened.

The *one* part of the *one* offering that I still remember was spoken by Kīrtanānanda Swami, who read his offering from the 1969 *Vyāsa-pūjā* book:

"All that I have I owe to You,
All that I know I learned from You;
All that I want I see in You,
Prabhupāda, my worshipful Lord."

I remembered these words today as I meditated on a great gift of yours that continues to astound me, Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta.

Caitanya-caritāmṛta is a guide book for Kṛṣṇa conscious advancement, the most authoritative book of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's pastimes, and a multi-tiered philosophy book

summarizing Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*. And it also is a deep ocean of sweetness.

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta's Antya-līlā*, I read of Rāmānanda Raya and Raghunnath dāsa Gosvāmī's intimate association with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. I could not fail to notice that both were qualified to the extreme. Both were exempt from bodily consciousness. Both were fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's pastime.

All the other associates of Mahāprabhu that I read of also awed me—including Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, and Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī—for all possessed complete detachment from sensual allurements and fully blossomed attachment to the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Although I read the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* purposefully, to taste both the sweetness of the *līlās* and for direct instructions and hints from yourself and Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī on how to advance in my own Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that same sweetness and those same instructions that were my hope contrasted so clearly with my actual ability and powdered into insignificance my false-sense of capacity and importance. Humiliation again had preceded humility.

But I then thought of you. I remembered my fortune in you accepting me as your disciple. I remembered what it was like in your sparkling presence. I remembered your qualities—your chastity, your gentility, your human-ness, your tolerance, your strength, your full surrender, your expansive vision, your complete detachment from sensuality, and your boundless pleasure in hearing about Kṛṣṇa. I remembered you being qualified as the associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu were qualified, and I remembered the power of your mercy and your blessing. In your service, I regained hope.

Those written words Kīrtanānda Swami read aloud to you in 1970 then again appeared in my mind:

“All that I have I owe to You,
All that I know I learned from You;
All that I want I see in You,
Prabhupāda, my worshipful Lord.”

Your hopeful servant,

Bhurijana Dasa

Initiation: 1968 June. Montreal, Canada

My dear eternal father and master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,
nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine
namaste sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe

This year, 2022, is the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govindajī's arrival and installation in New York's Brooklyn temple on Henry St, where I was serving as *pūjārī* at that time.

I made grievous offenses to Their Lordships at that time, and we heard that you were furious about all that we'd done, at my investigation. I was ignorant, but as I've heard you say many times, ignorance is no excuse. Fire will burn even an innocent child if she comes too close.

I was that ignorant child, and I was so remorseful after hearing about your anger. I felt that my spiritual life was over and that I would surely die. I wrote you a letter expressing my grief and shame.

But your compassion and forgiveness surpassed my comprehension and imagination! Your return letter never mentioned my offenses, but rather stunned me with undeserved praise.

"If by chance a servant falls down and goes somewhere else, glorious is that master who captures him and brings him back by the hair." (*Caitanya-caritamrita* 3.4.47)

Later that year, you personally came to our Brooklyn temple. Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govindajī were dressed in a simple outfit— Govindajī in His classic yellow dhotī, and Śrīmatī Rāḍhārāṇī in a Vrndavan-style skirt and *chuni*.

The temple room was crammed with guests eager to hear your Sunday lecture. You entered the long narrow temple room and walked to the front where you stood with folded hands gazing at your worshipful Lords for a very long time.

I had just finished performing the *ārati* ceremony, and I hid behind the left hand curtain, trying to be invisible. As you started to bow down to offer your obeisances, I saw tears shoot out of your eyes like a syringe, just as we'd seen in pictures of Lord

Caitanya at Rathayātrā.

The devotees on the far right side of the temple room were splashed and blessed by your tears. I saw them looking around to see where the water had come from. Had the pūjārī thrown water from the *ārati* ceremony over their heads?

As you so humbly bowed down, I jumped off the side of the altar, telling my friend, Palika, “Those are Śrīla Prabhupāda’s tears!” We both gathered your precious sacred teardrops up from the floor and smeared them on our heads again and again.

When shall my eyes be decorated with tears of love such as yours? When shall my heart be decorated with compassion and forgiveness such as yours? When will that day be mine?

Thank you for your glorious, divine, amazing grace and forgiveness, which is fathomless and beyond my comprehension. Without which, my life would be meaningless.

I beg to remain your servant eternally,

Rukmini Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1968 July. Montreal, Canada

Ranadhir Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances at your lotus feet. Any appreciation or thanks that I might express for being your initiated devotee are woefully inadequate, especially since the visible display of my gratitude is so pathetic. Nevertheless, I am eternally grateful to have met you, bowed at your feet, and rendered some checkered service to your ISKCON movement for a few years of my life. Despite the many blessings you have bestowed upon me, I cannot seem to bring myself to a position of real and complete surrender unto you, and ultimately to Krishna.

I do remain in awe of your accomplishments, the beautifully written books, the erudite lectures, the many, many, sincere devotees you attracted, the gorgeous temples around the world, and my personal favorite, the wonderful legacy of recorded *bhajans* that you left us with. In these waning years of my life I am still hoping for some thunderbolt of devotion to strike me and propel me into real

Krishna consciousness. Of course there is little chance of that, but I would never put it past you or Krishna to surprise this arrogant, self-centered fool with some of that infinite mercy.

Unfortunately, my faith in you and your teachings remains fickle, despite your miraculous achievements in this world and your display of mystical powers when I was in your presence. At this point I can only pray for that undeserved thunderbolt to make an indelible impression on my soul and propel me into real service, be it blemished and inadequate, unto you, my eternal spiritual master.

Your servant,

Ranadhir Dasa

Initiation: 1968 January. New Vrindavana, West Virginia, USA

Srimati Devi Dasi

My dear eternal Father, Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept my humble obeisances again and again;
All glories to your divine presence here for our sake.

Today as I reminisce I see how you have changed this
entire planet...
Śrīla Prabhupāda, your devotees have manifested
all over the globe
due to your circling the world 14 times, preaching
your devotion to your Śrī Guru and
Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu....

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you sing *bhajans* and chant the
Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* on my cell phone.
You put me to sleep; you wake me up; you are my 24/7.

Daily, I read your translation and purports into
this mundane world
So many volumes of Absolute Truth to treasure
waking me up to my original *rasa* with
Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa....

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave me the Absolute Truth
you gave me *Sat Cit Ānanda* and *Vigraha*
you have given me the ability to love
and serve the Divine.....

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given me protection by associa-
tion with your devotees
You have given me the eyes to see with love,
the Divine Couples in Temples all over the world
And *Mahāprasādam*, how we all fight over that...

As oceans of material modes are washed away
by the holy name
uncovering my eternal nature, still.....
I must pray for the day that I may taste
the nectar of the holy name.....

I am hanging in, I am hanging out, with times like these,
there is no doubt.....
Śrīla Prabhupāda you are my world everlasting.

*Forever lovingly serving you my divine Spiritual Master,
Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Your forever servant,
Srimati Dasi ACBSP
(I just love the initials)
Initiation: 1968 October. Seattle, USA*

Arundhati Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
All glories to you on this 126th anniversary of your birth.

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

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

The ABCs of your glories

You are ABUNDANT in all the good qualities of life
Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your BEAUTY shines forth beyond all measure.

You have the greatest COMPASSION for all living entities.

All of you, inside and out, is purely DIVINE.

Your ENERGY when you were on this planet knew no bounds,
greater than those decades younger than you. (I will never forget
you walking up the hill in New Vrindavan with no difficulty whilst
all of us so much younger than you were huffing and puffing.)

There is no truer FRIEND to all who were and are fortunate to
have your association.

The divine GRACE that you have showered upon us has no limits.

You are a HEALER in the true sense of the word, namely
spiritual healing.

You are full of INSPIRATION, inspiring your disciples to engage
in devotional service and leave behind their temporary desires for
material satisfaction.

You possessed a delightful JOYFUL JOVIAL nature so
much of the time.

You gave us, through your books, words and chanting, the
highest KNOWLEDGE that exists, Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The LOVE that you emanated attracted thousands of
fortunate souls.

You were the true MASTER and created MIRACLES through
empowering your disciples. NIRVISESA sunyavadi – the great
understanding destroying impersonalism was your exceptional gift.

OPULENCES you possessed in great measure, just like Kṛṣṇa –
wealth, strength, knowledge, humility, renunciation, and more.

Your PATIENCE and PERSEVERANCE created a movement that
has changed the world and brought the Light of God onto this planet.

You possessed QUIETUDE of mind, through your constant
chanting, bringing peace within and spreading it everywhere.

REMEMBRANCE of God was there through thick and thin, no
matter what circumstances you were in. You were totally SINCERE
and STEADFAST in your desire to share the message of Kṛṣṇa.

TRUTHFULNESS was there in you in full measure. You gave us
the highest Truth at all times.

You have brought UNIFICATION of purpose to tens of thousands
of fortunate beings through the chanting of the holy names of God.

You were a VICTORIOUS warrior where you could not lose, because Kṛṣṇa was on your side.

You were simply WONDERFUL Śrīla Prabhupāda!

XCITEMENT was always there in your never-ending urge to do more and more to spread the Lord's glories.

Though an older man when you came to the west, you were YOUTHFUL in spirit always. You possessed a true ZEST for life, traveling around the world innumerable times to encourage your disciples and spread the glories of Sri Hari.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I give thanks to you again and again for giving me the greatest gift that exists, the true purpose of life, reviving my relationship with Kṛṣṇa. No words can express how grateful I am, for you have saved me from a useless existence that would only bring repeated birth and death. Now I have the opportunity to go back to home back to Godhead, to revive my eternal relationship with the Lord.

Thank you, over and over and over again Śrīla Prabhupāda. I love you. I pray for forgiveness for my offenses, and that you will always remember me, even if I ever forget you, but may I always remember you! Thank you millions of times over.

Your fallen servant,

Arundhati Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1969 January. Boston, USA

Balabhadra Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, our beloved spiritual master. All glories to you on this auspicious day of your *Vyāsa-pūjā*.

After writing to you last year, we experienced some trying and

sorrowful times. Three of our most beloved cows passed away. Their illnesses and passing were unexpected. We were unprepared emotionally, although you taught us how death can come at any moment and how our health and youth are fleeting.

Meenakshi was one of the eight calves we and ISCOWP members saved from slaughter in 2014. She had a large head disproportionate to the rest of her young calf body. But Lakshmi, our daughter, took pity on her and bought her to take home. Nobody else bid on her; she was unwanted due to her defect. When our vet looked at her, he said her head and body would eventually grow to be proportionate in size. However, he never mentioned that most calves born with water on their brains do not live very long, at best, maybe three years, because the condition cuts off some connections between the brain and the rest of the body. We didn't know this until she became quite sick, and we took her to the local large animal hospital.

At the hospital, they did not believe she was born with water on her brain as she was seven years old when we took her to the hospital. But as they tested her for other ailments, she tested negative. When the doctors concluded that water on her brain was the cause of her problems, we had an explanation for why her behavior was always a bit odd. Because of her oddness, she was never entirely accepted by the herd. However, one ox, Mādhava, graced her with attention regardless of the herd's opinion.

She had a hard time keeping a healthy weight. Therefore we kept her in our yard and fed her grain and her own hay bale. As the years progressed, she had a more difficult time keeping her healthy weight, and we became very attached to her, making sure she ate and was happy. Even after visiting the hospital to receive intravenous liquids, Meenakshi lost her ability to drink and eat. It was like her brain couldn't connect with the rest of her body to remember how to do these simple activities. She passed away soon after. We will miss her sweet, loving, and brave personality very much.

Keshava, brother to Mādhava, was older, in his late sixties, and had been experiencing what looked like some arthritis in his back legs. One day he could not get up. He tried and tried. Mādhavī, the cow, was guarding him and keeping him company. Then, with the help of some of our neighbors, we got him in a sitting position supported by a large hay bale. He drank and ate, but as the days progressed, he became weaker. He progressed quickly to a hospice situation and then passed away.

We remember Keshava for his reserved and gentle personality. He was brahminical in personality, emotionally removed from the herd ruckus, and unwilling to play politics to maintain any position in the herd. But, above all, his majestic and noble presence will be greatly missed. He stood six feet at the shoulders, and his horns swung upward, making him another foot or two. Weighing in at about 2,500 pounds, he was imposing and noticeable wherever he grazed. People would always watch him in wonder. Because the meat and dairy industries kill the male cow before they can grow to maturity, Keshava was an exceptional and rare sight.

Śrī Uddharan Datta Thakur sat down the day before Christmas, and on Christmas evening, he passed away. For 14 years, he shared love with guests and us by laying down to encourage massages and pets. His sudden passing was a total shock.

Our vet looked at him only a week before and thought he was very healthy. During the day and a half of Sri sitting and after he left his body, we noticed there were no signs of thrashing, no signs of pain, or discomfort. In human years he was in his late sixties.

We will remember him sharing his love with us for 14 years, even with guests he met for the first time. He also liked to leave the herd and sit down in the woods to meditate like a sadhu. If life was troublesome, we could go to the woods to sit with him and feel some solace. Not seeing him in the woods meditating saddens our hearts but may he now have a more heavenly place to meditate on transcendental topics.

When it was apparent each cow could not remain with us, we made sure they received blessings from Lord Krishna. Holy water from sacred locations in India was sprinkled on them or placed in their mouths. A *pavitra* garland from Lord Narsimhadev in Māyāpur was tied on their horns or placed on their necks. A harinama charter was draped over them or around their horns. And finally, the chanting of the Hare Krishna *mantra*, either by ourselves or recorded, was always near them.

Burying them was the most difficult as sometimes the herd gathered around and watched with mournful eyes. Then, days or even a month later, the herd gathered around the burial site as if to grieve. Watching them increased our yearnings for the presence of the departed souls for just one more moment of their association.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, how much we miss them! Who would have thought we could painfully lament the passing of cows we

learned to protect later in life after spending our ignorant youthful years eating cows. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, opened our eyes and hearts to the beauty of the soul in living entities who once we ate. The wonder of it! The power and force of your purity!

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Thank you!

*Your aspiring servants at ISCOWP, International
Society for Cow Protection, Inc,*

Balabhadra Dasa
Initiation: 1969 March. Hawaii, USA

Bhavananda Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

“We think that we have met Your Goodness by the will of providence, just so that we may accept you as captain of the ship for those who desire to cross the difficult ocean of Kali, which deteriorates all the good qualities of a human being.”

When you would circumambulate the Krishna-Balaram Mandir every morning, Viśāla prabhu would wait by the entrance and repeat that verse to you with folded hands. The last part of that verse, referring to the Kali-yuga, is especially pertinent in this so-called modern age. Any impartial observer of current society would have to admit that the overriding adjective to be used is “confused”. Men question whether they are men, and think they should be women, and women pretend to be men.

One of the main thrusts of your preaching is that we should all recognise our true identity. *Jīvera ‘svarūpa’ haya-kṛṣṇera nitya-dāsa*. We are all servants of Krishna. In the insane asylum, you can find so many Napoleon Bonapartes, Jesus Christs and Cleopatras, and no one will dispute that those people are mad. Similarly, in today’s global society, everyone is identifying as their body and, more importantly, their mind.

I asked you once, how could one godbrother of mine give up *sannyāsa* to marry an old woman? You said, “It is the mind. When you allow your mind to say, ‘I like it’, then there is nothing you won’t do, including marrying a woman old enough to be your grandmother.” This practice of determining everything by the dictate of the mind, with no intelligence, has resulted in a true pandemic of

confusion and despair.

You, Your Divine Grace, offered us shelter from this madness while you were here, and bequeathed to us and the world the compass to navigate the tumultuous ocean of Kali through the Bhaktivedanta purports. You said that your books would be the law books for the next ten thousand years. My goodness, if things are so confused and terrible now, one cannot imagine how bad they will be over the next thousands of years.

In the quoted verse, it refers to your goodness. One day in your room in Māyāpur, you quoted the verse “*brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā*”. You looked at me and said, “Do you know that? *Brahma-bhūtaḥ*? What does it mean?”

I said, “I don’t know, Prabhupāda.”

You replied, “*Brahma-bhūtaḥ* means “broad-minded”. In your preaching, you should be broad-minded and encourage all people to come to Krishna.”

It was your preaching in a “*brahma-bhūtaḥ*” mood which allowed us shelter on your ship. You rescued us and have given facility to the rest of humanity to also be rescued. That is goodness, which encompasses sweetness, kindness, mercy and love.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please bless me that I may live my remaining few years remembering and appreciating your sublime Bhaktivedanta purports.

*I remain your servant in the service of Śrīdhām
Māyāpur and the Temple Of Vedic Planetarium,*

Bhavananda Dasa

Initiation: 1969 April. LA, USA

Jayasri Devi Dasi

HERE COMES THE SUN

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you for coming into my life and illuminating my consciousness just like the sunrise. Your kind words and profound statements uplifted my soul and soothed my consciousness like the rising of the sun on a peaceful day.

I was told some years ago that George Harrison wrote his beautiful song, “Here Comes The Sun” about you coming into his life.

I can understand what inspired him when I remember our first meeting. Your presence, warmth, realizations and friendliness illuminated the room like the warm morning sun...dispelling the darkness of my life and offering me a wonderful path to meet your Lord.

Your wonderful association and warmth has guided my life.

Thank you for accepting me.

With much love and gratitude,

Your aspiring servant,

Jayasri Dasi

Initiation: 1969 May. Hawaii, USA

Current location: New Vrindaban Community

Sripati Dasa

In a world of limit, margin, mundanity and conditionality, how is it possible to expect a result from even the supermost exertion towards an apt appreciation of Your Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami?

Yet by your focus of purpose, Śrīla Prabhupāda, imbibed at your master's feet, you aid us with the solution: the Mayaic World has magic within! In the hands of one intent on repurposing and returning all – responding to its inherent ownership – the clouds of illusion part and clarity ensues!

By this proposition there may actually be some degree of hope that these naive and brief words can scratch the surface of validity.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

DEBITUM AETERNUM

Thank you, thank you, thank you

And how, how,

How can I repay?

I'll owe you, owe you, owe you

Beyond my dying day!

A journeyman at your feet,

Sripati Dasa

Initiation: 1969 June. Montreal, Canada

Laxmimoni Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I know you are here in your books, on the Vyāsāsana and on the altar of every temple in your ISKCON society. But still I'm missing you. You are simultaneously here and in the spiritual world with Śrī kṛṣṇa, and I am very much missing your personal association.

I am particularly missing:

Your clear explanations of the teachings of Lord Caitanya and the previous Ācāryas.

Your fidelity to the teachings of His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur.

Your wisdom in applying the teaching of the previous ācāryas in an ever-changing global environment.

Your ability to straighten out confusion with one sentence.

Your mediation skills

Your stellar example as a mature, unbiased, caring father.

Your strong determination to leave us your books to guide us for the next 10,000 years!

Your humility.

Your extraordinary tolerance.

Your ability to focus with undeviated attention on the sound of the holy name.

Your bright oceanic smile.

Your ability to offer correction with no malice.

Your ability to appear angry one minute, and be calm and loving the next.

Your ability to walk the fine line between being strict in practice and flexible according to time, place and circumstance.

Your deep understanding of what pleases Kṛṣṇa.

Your keen ability to discern what is a principle and what is a detail.

Your ability to create a clear and compassionate fusion of East and West.

Your strong direction.

Your soft encouragement.

Your ability to change with the times.

Your ability to remain true to tradition.

Your willingness to understand the needs and wants of your followers.

Your awareness of our strengths and limitations.

Your appreciation of even the smallest service.

Your masterful choreography when teaching us to dance at *kīrtan*.

Your ringing of the bell in Māyāpur while circumambulating Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava, inspiring the devotees to jump higher and higher.

Your giving and receiving flowers when returning from your morning walk.

Your far-reaching vision, based on the wisdom of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Your razor-sharp ability to see into the hearts of people.

Your compassionate way of delivering wisdom to everyone as required for their progress in spiritual life.

Your genuine sadness when one of your children left Krishna's service.

Your undying willingness to forgive.

You distributing cookie *prasādam* from the Vyāsāsana into the outstretched hands of so many children, both young and old.

Your ardent prayers for the recovery of all wayward souls

Your genuine detachment from Māyā and faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa, which allowed you to keep going despite so many obstacles.

Your warrior spirit when others were afraid to fight.

Your ability to appreciate Lord Kṛṣṇa's hand when He takes everything away.

Your willingness to undergo austerity whenever necessary.

Your willingness to accept opulence and not get enamored by it.

Your unflinching honesty and frankness.

Your sensitivity in all circumstances.

Your ability to pour water into your mouth from a height of 6 inches, without spilling one drop!

Your great culinary skills.

Your musical ability.

Your deep, realized *bhajan*.

Your effulgent, beautiful countenance.

Your ability to forgo sleep to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the devotees.

Your determination to give us your Bhaktivedanta purports.

Your love of dramatic renditions of stories related to Krishna!

Your innovative ability to share Kṛṣṇa consciousness with anyone.

Your animated facial expression when telling stories.

Your deep resonant laughter.

Your discrete displays of ecstasy.

Your shining example of every Vaiṣṇava quality

Yes Śrīla Prabhupāda, although I know that I reason ill to think that you have left us while you are living still in sound – yet I miss all these things and so much more. I long for the day we will meet again and I can offer my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Your daughter,

Laxmimoni Dasi

Initiation: 1969 July. Buffalo, USA

Cathurbhuj Dasa

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

I was born in the darkness of ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes by the torchlight of knowledge. I offer him my most humble obeisances.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

This year, on your 126th Appearance Day, also coinciding with the terrible events of Covid and the possibility of world war I think it is especially poignant to recommit ourselves and recall some of the precious gifts that you have given to us all, through which to conduct in devotional service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa.

I recall in previous *Vyāsa-pūjā Tributes* offerings (see *Śrīla Prabhupāda Tributes* 2015, pages 162-163) my co-devotees and disciples have spoken of your truly amazing educational programmes for helping humanity at large, this being a vehicle for communicating to the future leaders of society.

To further Kṛṣṇa's desire and just to save the fallen souls, you took great trouble and went through great toll to sail on the Jaladuta, departing from the land of India to come to the West in 1965. Since then, devotees all over the world, through your inspiration, have been doing their bit to sail with you and serve in your epic journey to capture Lord Caitanya's mercy.

This year, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I can report to you wonderful services in London, and elsewhere under the leadership of Dayal Mora and his team at Soho temple. It is with his grace, along with other devotees that we have an oasis in the middle of London. The London Temple performs such beautiful festivals – Gaura Pūrṇimā, Janmāṣṭamī, Rathayātrā, just to name a few. There are food distribution programmes and *Bhagavad-gītā* classes. Thousands are taking shelter because of the festivals and spiritual welfare programmes enacted through your mercy and grace.

This very modest offering is an opportunity to reinvigorate

oneself and catch up. May we all be inspired in your service.

It is estimated that there are now between six to seven million people plus practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the Western world, in one form or another.

It seems to us that we should all strive to inculcate principles which are actually directed at making ourselves purer and purer and thus, forwarding the movement in a way that is compatible with your personal instructions to us.

Within centres of excellence and in buildings and temples where science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is practiced, visitors should always be reminded of your valuable contribution and message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I feel there should be a grand hall called “Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Hall”. Such a hall shall become a magnet for attracting devotees rather than narrow sectarian interests.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your blissful and wonderful books (over one hundred) that you’ve left for all humanity, we are the guardians. To be true to you and to Kṛṣṇa we must re-commit ourselves in our service to you. In one of your early articles and booklet entitled *Easy Journey to other Planets*, you state:

People dream of travelling to the stars, but such travel is still far away. Ancient yoga traditions, however, describe subtle pathways by which master yogis transfer themselves to planets beyond the earth.

This book and many others take the reader to the most wonderful places in the anti material sky which are eternal, full of bliss, and beyond the reach of birth, death, old age, and disease.

On this *Vyāsa-pūjā*, I would humbly make the following request to your most dedicated Tributes team who take the trouble, and love to reach out to so many disciples.

I would like to propose that each participant should be invited to give his location, address, email contact details, and possibly a number.

This makes the offering very authentic, and allows others to express their appreciation when they have been moved and enlightened by the offerings and realisation of more senior devotees. In years to come, the contact details will prove valuable for researchers and writers who wish to use the *Vyāsa-pūjā* Tribute books to advance your mission.

So, I finally return to my point which is love of Godhead. By example and by your books, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have provided us a method and a tremendous insight into developing our role and attitude in devotional service. By highly practical advice and guidance you have steered devotees along the path of loving Kṛṣṇa and imbibing the science of Kṛṣṇa without adulation.

Today, of all days we seek your causeless mercy.

Your humble servant,

Cathurbhuj Dasa

Initiation: 1969 December. London, UK

Current location: London

Karanodakasayi Visnu Dasa Adhikari

Dear Srila Prabhupada,

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

*yasya deve para bhaktir
yatha deve tatha gurau*

One who has implicit faith in the spiritual master and the Lord, all the imports of the Vedic literatures are revealed to him. Srila Prabhupada writes in the preface to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that:

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the transcendental science not only for knowing the ultimate source of everything but also for knowing our relation with Him and our duty toward perfection of the human society on the basis of this perfect knowledge.

Perfection of the human society is what we are about. The Krishna consciousness movement is about four things:

1. Sankirtana: chanting the holy name of the Lord, book distribution, prasadam distribution.
2. Initiation: getting trained as a devotee.
3. Temple worship: worshipping the Deity and following all the rules and regulations in regard to that.
4. Varnasrama: living on a farm and preaching to the Prime Ministers and Presidents of this world.

We appear to have done three out of the four of these things, but as the GBCs, gurus, sannyasis, temple presidents or any other leaders of our movement need to concentrate our efforts on the heads of state if we actually want to implement change.

yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas....

This year, inspired by the Lord from within, I decided to make a tour of the United States to see how we can establish one Varnasrama

college with every ISKCON center in North America. I have presently been in America for 26 days and I have another 32 days to go. So far, no one has come forward to assist me to date as of the present time.

So, I decided to simply write my next book, Varnasrama: The Perfect Society, The Essence of All Vedic Knowledge. This is a summary of the five famous chapters in Srimad-Bhagavatam Canto Seven, Chapters Eleven to Fifteen where Narada Muni describes to Maharaja Yudhisthira how to implement Varnasrama practically. And in the middle of those chapters in Chapter 14 on Ideal Family Life Srila Prabhupada writes in the purport to SB 7.14.11:

The grhasthas, vanaprasthas, brahmacaris and sannyasis should endeavor together with their total energy to become Krsna conscious. This type of civilization is called daiva-varnasrama. One of the objectives of the Krishna consciousness movement is to establish this daiva-varnasrama, but not to encourage so-called varnasrama without scientifically organized endeavor by human society.

Very few want to even discuss varnasrama, let alone implement it. We have not even started towards implementing the 50% of the work still to be done. Until and unless one has implicit faith in the spiritual master and the Supreme Lord, we will not take the order of the spiritual master as our life and soul.

Therefore I say anyone who is serious about spreading the Krishna consciousness movement kindly contact me and let us see how we can actually implement Varnasrama: The Perfect Society, the Essence of all Vedic Knowledge, together.

Your servant,

Karanodakasayi Visnu Dasa Adhikari
Initiation: 1969 December. London, UK
Current location: London
mohan.gupta108@yahoo.co.uk
+44 20 8450 9603, +44 7913 897406

Svarupa Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

In a letter you wrote to a disciple in January, 1972, you said “I wish that it will be noted down in history that this Krishna consciousness movement is responsible for saving the world.” Without a doubt your wish is coming true, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thank you for allowing me to play a small part in helping you accomplish this herculean feat. You once said that if a person is not capable of doing something great then he should find someone who is and help him. On my own I am a useless self-indulgent rascal but by some causeless mercy I found you at a young age and recognized your greatness and you engaged me in your service. I can’t imagine how dark and hopeless a life I would have had without you.

Your unworthy servant,

Svarupa Dasa

Initiation: 1969 December. Boston, USA

Current location: Oceanside, CA, USA

swoop108@yahoo.com

Govinda Datta Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

After reading the *Līlāmṛta* again I am reminded of the austerities you tolerated and the dedication you persevered due to the love you had for your spiritual master. Practically anyone else would have stopped endeavoring having been discouraged, defeated and humiliated. But you understood the higher principles involved and remained so focused showing unprecedented enthusiasm to serve guru!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I beg you that I too may develop at least some of the vision that inspired you to leave the most sacred Vrindavana Dham and travel alone and penniless at such an advanced age to preach the mission of Krishna consciousness. I am sure that when you returned Back to Godhead all the greatest personalities such as all the previous *Ācāryas* and their associates, the six gosvāmīs and their associates, all of Lord Caitanya’s personal associates as well as

Lord Caitanya Himself and Lord Krishna Himself welcomed you with very special celebrations! The success you achieved will never be matched for the next many thousands of years. To say that you were a *Śaktyāveśa avatar* doesn't even fully explain your status. You were able to engage the most fallen Kali-yuga souls to the position of going back to Godhead! For the first time you unhesitatingly gave pure Krishna consciousness! We were never aware even what God looks like, let alone that He comes in so many different incarnations! And He came just 500 years ago!

Please let me also be inspired to present Krishna consciousness in a way that Westerners, especially as you encouraged Americans, to also take up interest in reestablishing their dormant Krishna consciousness. To accomplish this, my plan to please you remains fixed on expanding Krishna Lunch at many of the universities in America. Of course I know I cannot achieve anything close to your level of success, but as you prayed for even one moon-like devotee to surrender to Krishna's lotus feet compared to many flickering star-like devotees, I too pray that by this preaching program we may bring that one moon-like devotee to surrender to your lotus feet and help to preach this Krishna consciousness movement far and wide so we can spread your glories and Krishna's glories far and wide! I pray to be able to begin this Krishna Lunch program this year! I pray to be able to offer you this wonderful news that it has begun and will achieve the success of distributing much *prasādam*, many Krishna conscious literatures and most of all attracting sincerely dedicated souls to surrender at your lotus feet!

Thank you, thank you, thank you millions of times for your causeless mercy to this conditioned, unqualified and very fallen soul to be able to continue my dedication to your lotus feet!

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī Jaya!* Hare Krishna!

Your aspiring servant,

Govinda Datta Dasa

Initiation: 1969

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

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

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

Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed. (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.38)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

53 years ago I was lost in a wilderness of illusion. I had no idea where to go, what to do, who to trust. All I knew was there is a God and I felt hungry to know him. I cried and cried, prayed and prayed, I went to hear from Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, Vedantists, read books like the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and then *Autobiography of a Yogi*. That book particularly made me understand that I MUST have a spiritual master to whom I could fully surrender. I was thinking I would have to go to India and find my spiritual master.

Lord Krishna, as Paramātmā, sitting inside my heart heard my cry, and He guided me to meet one of your disciples, and just on seeing in his eyes for a moment, I immediately understood this is what I was seeking. He showed me your photo and within my heart I saw my births and deaths flash past, and your hand reaching out and you saying, “You are coming with me!”. I was crying, shaking and all my hairs were standing. I nearly fell over. From that moment in 1969, my faith has been in you, your words, your example, and my faith has thickened more with each passing year.

When I met you your family of disciples was a couple of hundred young boys and girls. But we were fearless because of you. We did not know who Krishna is, but we knew you. Because of you, we developed faith – infallible faith in Krishna and in you.

During my life, one test after another is being thrown at me. It

has not been a bed of roses. It is a battle, always.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for coming to the Western world and showing us the Absolute Truth. In millions of births, we are not capable of repaying our debt. Nevertheless, we are and will continue to try birth after birth. There is NO DIFFERENCE between pure devotional service and the spiritual world. So, we are not afraid of being born, we are only afraid of forgetting our eternal position as your servant.

When you gave me my name, you said, “Your name is Bhakta dasa. This name means you are the servant of the devotees. The more you become a servant of the devotees the more you will advance in Krishna consciousness, and the more you think you are becoming a master, the more you will go to hell!” Such a simple instruction, but it is the true essence of Krishna consciousness.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I beg to remain your eternal servant,

Bhakta Dasa

Initiation: 1970 March. LA, USA

Mahatma Dasa

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

I am writing this offering from Śrī Vṛndāvana dhāma, exactly 47 years after you opened this temple. I was present at that glorious opening along with hundreds of godbrothers and godsisters. It was such a special event, yet not one of us knew, or could even imagine, that a temple situated in a remote part of a remote village would someday become filled with a constant stream of pilgrims, or that Vṛndāvana itself would become a tourist destination.

Thousands of pilgrims are daily pouring into the Kṛṣṇa Balarama

Mandir year-round. We hear every morning after *maṅgala-ārati* how many books were distributed, how many plates of *prasādam* were served and how many pilgrims chanted one round of *japa*. Today about 2200 books were distributed right on the temple premises, 7400 plates of *prasādam* were served and about 1500 pilgrims chanted one round of *japa*.

In 1975, as I stood and watched you offer the first *ārati* in the Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Mandir, the idea that the opening of this temple would someday put Vṛndāvana on the map, not only for people in India, but for people around the world, was beyond anyone's imagination.

Yesterday, as I was returning on a rickshaw from visiting some of the Vṛndāvana temples, we ran into a traffic jam. Rickshaws were lined up in both directions as far as the eye could see, while crowds of pedestrians struggled to squeeze through the spaces between the rickshaws and the crowded shops that lined every square foot along the side of the road. I jokingly said to my wife, "This traffic jam is ISKCON's fault!"

And then there is the temple in Juhu. The disciples you left in charge to struggle to secure the land started to feel that the project was not worth fighting for. After all, it was in an out of the way place and we were expending massive amounts of energy in trying to secure the land. Eventually one of the leaders in Juhu decided to give up the fight, and had you not intervened we would have lost the land and the money we had invested in it. Again, we had no sense of how a temple in such a remote part of Mumbai, far from its city center, would be useful, what to speak of as massively successful as it is today.

And the list goes on. The huge amounts of *saṅkīrtana* going on today in the form of books, *prasādam*, *Harer-nāma*, festivals, and various outreach programs, are having their effects although we may not have the vision to see the long-term consequences. I joined ISKCON at a time when people thought vegetarians would become sick from malnutrition, *kīrtana* was something that only strange religious fanatics did, practically no young men were joining ISKCON in India, and ISKCON had only a handful of congregational members worldwide. Preaching in places like the Soviet Union and China was a pipe dream, and countries outside of India in which massive numbers of Indians had migrated for the past century were either slowly turning away from their culture or were focused on demigod worship.

Today these very places – India, Bangladesh, the former Soviet Union, China, South Africa, Mauritius, Singapore, Malaysia, and Fiji are where the greatest numbers of people are becoming devotees. Who could have imagined this in the early days of ISKCON?

Western Europe, North America, and the UAE have seen millions of Indians migrating to find a better way of life. Tens of thousands of these migrants have become devotees, and most of them became devotees after leaving India. In other words, they left India for material prosperity, did not have a deep religious commitment – or any religious commitment – but became devotees in the West because of their connection with ISKCON.

In 1975, in Māyāpur, you predicted there would be a world war. When it didn't happen you were asked why and you replied that it was because of our *saṅkīrtana* activities and therefore Kṛṣṇa changed his mind. We may think that ISKCON is an insignificant entity on the world stage, yet you told us that we stopped World War III at that time. You were asked about the rise in vegetarianism, interest in yoga and Eastern philosophy, and religious practices (which would include the popularity of *kīrtana* today) and you said it was all because of our *saṅkīrtana* activities that these changes had taken place.

The first followers of yours were somewhat amused that you named your society the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. After all, there was only one small storefront and a ragtag band of followers in this “international society.” But within a few years, temples started springing up around the US and Canada and then gradually around the world. By 1969, the devotees in the UK met George Harrison and the Beatles, and made the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra popular throughout Europe, acquired Bhaktivedanta Manor, and as the *Telegraph* newspaper headlines wrote, startled London with Rathayātrā (“Kṛṣṇa Chants Startle London.”)

In a lecture on the disappearance day of your guru mahārāja, I believe in Los Angeles in 1969, you revealed that even you could not have imagined such things. You told us, “I was born in a different family, my guru mahārāja was born in a different family. Who knew that I would come to America? Who knew that you American boys would come to me? These are all Kṛṣṇa's arrangements. We cannot understand how things are taking place.”

In other words, the spreading of Kṛṣṇa consciousness happens through the transcendental arrangements of Kṛṣṇa in such a way that it appeared mysterious, even to you. You wrote in a letter, “Only

about six years ago I could not even imagine how widespread and potent a force this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement would become, but now I am seeing that it is simply a miracle by Kṛṣṇa that we are coming to the forefront of all other spiritual cultures in the world. So I think that in the future one day we shall become the ruling party, at least if we can do that in your country then we may also do it everywhere else. So I am always thinking in this way, big plans on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

You ended your letter by explaining the conditions in which this would take place. “But I can understand that such big plans will never come true unless the plan makers and executers of the plan remain always extremely purified.” So we have a prediction that can only come true if we maintain a society of pure devotees.

In 1972, as I sat in a *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class in Los Angeles, you told us that this movement will go on with us or without us, but if we stay we’ll get the credit. It sounded like if we just stick around then everything will happen, even in spite of us. But what you meant – and we sometimes overlook this – is that your confidence in the success of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement was not just based on the purity of the message and the process, but on the purity of those delivering the message.

Puṣṭa Kṛṣṇa Swami once asked you, “How far is Lord Caitanya’s prediction that Kṛṣṇa consciousness will go to every town and village, true?” You replied that it will depend on those who are preaching In Mauritius, you said that Mauritius *could* (not would) be the first Kṛṣṇa conscious country in the world.

In 1976, Rāmeśvara Prabhu mentioned that you said that this movement will go on unimpeded for ten thousand years, to which you replied, “Yes, provided we keep it uncontaminated. You should take this opportunity.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you made it clear that this movement has the potency, whether we believe or not, to make drastic changes to the world, even alter the course of history, but the degree of ISKCON’s success will depend upon us. You are the one who set in motion the possibility that Mahāprabhu’s name could be heard in every town and village and you gave us the mantle. Now it is up to us to make this happen. I pray I can contribute in some small way to help make this prediction come true. Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless me to always properly represent your teachings, be a living example of them, and be motivated only to please you and Kṛṣṇa.

Your insignificant servant,

Mahatma Dasa

Initiation: 1970 March. LA, USA

Narottamananda Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In full faith and bold spirit you carried Krishna's culture to the Western world, planting the seed of loving service within our hearts and minds.

On arrival to Western shores, you noticed a skyscraper; within your mind's eye you saw a temple. You observed young curious souls and appreciated their connection to Krishna though that relationship was covered. Your eyes viewed seemingly ordinary objects, but your vision was different. The ordinary transformed to extraordinary through your perspective of sacred service.

Along with one-pointed Krishna focus and unwavering faith in guru, you carried *shastra*, *kīrtan*, and devotional hymns together with your personal warmth, humor and graciousness.

You nudged us. You encouraged us. You engaged us.

You gradually tuned our ears to *kartals* and *khol*, to *mantra* and *prayer*, to service and surrender, to humility and joy, to Rādhā and Krishna.

With personal humility you thanked your guru maharaja for sending us while we were more than aware of our lack of qualification. You became the one in front of our zeros creating a fledgling devotional family. Our commonality and uniqueness was your association.

You prepared us as we took baby steps in hopes to please you.

Though fully unqualified one starts somewhere.

Practice churned in time leads to the nectar which Chaitanya Mahāprabhu described as our goal, pure love and devotion through service. Indeed it was your example of selfless love that first captured our interest and attention.

When will this love ripen for us?

Within your society there is great service and devotional activity, but there is also dissatisfaction, even bickering. There is hierarchy, politics and ego. There are also areas of unity, sharing and caring. It would appear we have more inner work to accomplish.

We are spiritual seekers and practitioners, but we practice from various levels. Our goal is love in service, in worship, in respect for guru, in respect for our godbrothers and godsisters, in respect for all members of our devotional family and all living entities. This is the script for the path we are on.

If love and mutual respect are not manifest because someone is a woman, a man, an American, an Indian, if someone is poor, is wealthy, is this or that color, or if we recognize within ourselves aspects of selfish desire and personal ego, it is a sign we need to dive deeper.

We have been conditioned for lifetimes, but the process for cleansing the mind and heart is available. There is no specific cost, but ultimately one must give everything. The instructions are practical and clear, application is the challenge.

The more we are able to live in practice of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's instructions, the more harmony in purpose we will experience, the better decisions we will make, the more devotees will feel heard, respected and cared for :

Text 3

*tṛṇād api sunīcena
taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena
kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street; one should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige and should be ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly.

Text 4

*na dhanam na janam na sundarīm
kavitām vā jagad-īśa kāmaye
mama janmani janmanīśvare
bhavatād bhaktir ahaitukī toyai*

O almighty Lord, I have no desire to accumulate wealth, nor do I desire beautiful women, nor do I want any number of followers. I only want Your causeless devotional service birth after birth.

You often inquired from us, "is everything alright"? "Yes, Śrīla

Prabhupāda”, we replied, though we also struggled with our mind, purity of intention and various challenging aspects of practical life. Too often we stumbled losing our way, but as you have woken us to Krishna’s glories and Rādhā’s love, we pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off and practice anew in hopes to one day truly please you.

Living fully immersed in Krishna’s world is no small thing. Draupadī in full surrender is appreciated and remembered as one of the highest examples of surrender to God’s will.

Complete surrender is very rare.

Being a true devotee in pure heart is far from my mind and spirit while you remain one pointed, fixed and confident. Krishna is your Lord. He is the master artist flute-playing cow herder, as well as your friend and confidant.

I offer respects to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and to each of my godbrothers and godsisters.

I pray one day to become a qualified member of your family and join as a servant of the servant of the servant at the table of devotion you all so enthusiastically populate.

Hare Krishna

Humbly and unqualified

Your servant,

Narottamananda Dasa

Initiation: 1970 April. Detroit, USA

Madhukanta Dasa

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

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

*namaste sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviṣeṣa-śūṇyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In this excerpt from your letter of early 1970, you very expertly reveal the most wonderful quality of humility which has endeared your legion of followers to you, myself included.

And in your concluding advice, you share with us your most succinctly encouraging words for our ultimate eternal guidance and benefit:

Therefore it is the duty of all of us to execute it (the business of Lord Caitanya and His bona fide servants like my Guru Mahārāja as nicely as far as possible within our capacity. In other words, we shall just try to discharge our responsible duties faithfully and seriously, then all facilities will come for our help.

It is my perpetual prayer and focus to dedicate the remainder of this fleeting life and all future lives to the fulfillment of that loving grace and guidance.

It is the Lord's divine mercy that we have the immense good fortune to offer this feeble tribute in the Centennial Celebration year of the most gloriously auspicious meeting in human history which you allude to in your letter, that of two Śrīla Prabhupādas for the supreme benefit of one and all.

Your aspiring servant,

Madhukānta Dāsa

Initiation: 1970 June. LA, USA

I am so much moved from your kind sentiments that you have expressed for my humble activities. Actually I am not worthy of any one of the words spoken by you but all of them are due to my spiritual master who was so kind to me. In fact I am a worthless person because my spiritual master ordered me to take up this work in 1922 but I did not carry his order until 1958, when I was obliged to carry out his order by his arrangement only. This means although I was not very enthusiastic to carry out his order he forced me circumstantially to accept it. So this is his special mercy upon me and I always think about this with gratitude to this exalted personality coming directly from Vaikuṇṭha World and we had the great fortune to meet him. I think that is the

only credit on our part that we happened to meet Him by some “*ajñita sukr̥ti*” or unknown auspicious activities. He is so kind upon me that when I came to your country, where I was completely unknown, he sent to me some good souls like you unsolicited. So I accept you all as assistants or representatives of my guru mahārāja who is still helping me because I am so feeble and unworthy.

Anyway, the business which we have taken to work together is neither your business nor my business as far we are personally concerned, but it is the business of Lord Caitanya and His bona fide servants like my Guru Mahārāja. Therefore it is the duty of all of us to execute it as nicely as far as possible within our capacity. In other words, we shall just try to discharge our responsible duties faithfully and seriously, then all facilities will come for our help...

Your ever well-wisher,

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

Jamadagneya Dasa

The Birth of Bliss

Oh, listen gentle *ātmās* please hear us sing,
With joyful hearts a sacred message we bring,
Of he who came to save us from disgrace,
Our beloved Prabhupāda, His Divine Grace.

The sky was filled with flowers on that day
When he appeared as Abhay Charan De,
His lotus feet this fallen world would grace,
Our last chance, his divinely smiling face.

Lost we were and searching in the night
Crying in darkness “Please give us back our sight,
Turn toward us Beloved, O Moon-like face”.
Smile and show the way, you who are His Divine Grace.

All our misdeeds are burning in our heart
We are the fallen *ātmās*, missing our better part,
And only you can save the human race,
Thus, we fall at your feet, for you are His Grace”.

Chaitanya’s mercy, you came, chanting *Hari nāma*,
Imbuing all with *prema*, instead of their deadly *karma*,
You purified our hearts, leaving not a trace,
O beloved friend and master, you are His Divine Grace.

The Ultimate Truth has lotus feet you said,
What a gift, we thought that He was dead,
Such sweetness you brought to this terrible place,
So, we fall again at your feet, as His Divine Grace.

So simple and clean, so truthful, and pure,
This devotional message alone will endure,
Your words have shed their light in every place,
And we serve at your feet, O His Divine Grace.

Our dear Prabhupāda, please hear your children sing,
Now, your message, in every village will ring,
Loving service to Shri Krishna through your grace,
And we will serve you forever, as His Divine loving Grace.

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(An offering of gratitude, love, and appreciation to my diksha guru
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda on the
event of his *Vyāsa-pūjā*)

Initiation: 1970 July. NY, USA

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance, with the torchlight of knowledge.

All glories to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the eternal spiritual master and Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

It is with great joy that I undertake the writing of my *Vyāsa-pūjā* offering this year. I am feeling an intense connection with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and great hope that our movement will soon enter a new phase of rapid expansion throughout the world, focusing on propagating the chanting of the holy name of the Lord to every town and village. This will signify the fulfillment of the wishes of all of the great *Ācāryas* in our line beginning from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who was Krishna Himself.

The world is in turmoil, and the great demoniac enemy has taken hold of power. Atheistic totalitarian governments are blatantly threatening to bring down modern civilization and replace capitalism with their authoritarian brand of communism that promises to destroy the global economy and the entire world financial system. They want to usher in a New World Order devoid of God consciousness.

How can the world be saved in these perilous times? The atheistic pharmaceutical industry is already lining up new strains of poison they want to inject into the bodies of billions of uninformed citizens. We expect regions of the world to soon begin to suffer starvation due to food shortages, and crime continues to rise in all metropolitan areas where many of our ISKCON temples are located with our worshipable installed Deities like Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda, Krishna Balarāma, Gaura Nitāi Deities and Jagannath Swami. The tension reminds us of that time 5,000 years ago when, “the world was overburdened by the unnecessary defense force of different kings, who were actually demons but were posing themselves as the royal order.” (*Krishna*, Chapter One)

People of all faiths are saying these are like biblical times, and that if rectification is to take place, it will require a “force majeure”, or

“Act of God”. Wars are already breaking out, and there are rumors of much greater military conflicts on the horizon. On the other hand, your disciples and those who seriously follow your teachings are fearless. You prepared us for such situations. You told us to prepare to chant “Hare Krishna,” for this is the religion of the age and it is the method recommended to become fully God conscious in this fallen age of Kali.

No matter what the geopolitical future holds, we will continue to maintain the temples you established, and care for the Deities you installed in all of the world’s major cities. We will continue to perform *Saṅkīrtana*, which means distributing your books, distributing *prasādam* and chanting the holy name of Krishna for the upliftment of conditioned souls everywhere. As you instructed, “*Saṅkīrtana* must go on!”

We understand that our lives are in Krishna’s hands and that He is our master. If our lives are to end sooner rather than later, it means we will return back to Godhead sooner rather than later. No one can avoid the cruel hand of death: “For one who has taken his birth, death is certain.” Furthermore, Krishna reassures us that, “He who dwells in the body is eternal and can never be slain. Therefore you need not grieve for any creature.” (Bg. 2.30)

This human form of life is meant for the performance of sacrifice for the pleasure of Visnu. The Lord of all beings further declares, “Be thou happy by this *yajña* (sacrifice) because its performance will bestow upon you all desirable things.” (Bg. 3.10)

What we aspire to, as your disciples, is to be engaged in devotional service without interruption or material motivation, for we know this is what will most please you. And we know Krishna is pleased with our service when his representative, the spiritual master, is pleased.

Our only desire is to remain eternally situated at your lotus feet.
All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Your humble servant,

Locanananda Dasa

Initiation: 1970 August. Paris, France

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisance! All glories to Śrī Guru and Gourāṅga!

This has been a year of confusion (covid polarity), loss and miracles. In this situation, your continued shelter has proved to be our only true strength.

You warned us this world was no place for a gentle person, so my naiveté is no excuse. You warned us that we must take shelter of the holy names of Krishna, that Krishna's names would be our only shelter. When I first heard these words of wisdom, I surely did not understand the impending, precarious situation you were indicating. I do now!

I lost my mother the day after Rathayātrā. She put neck beads on and spoke lovingly about Krishna. By your mercy, the arrangements for her departure from this world were lovely. I had no idea how challenging her leaving would be for me, but your imperceptible mercy shone through, making all the adjustments my heart required to find peace.

Then, just a few days back, in the course of losing my estranged, childhood, kindred spirit and soul mate to death's final ravages, my coming to your shelter miraculously fulfilled a lifelong hope to share with him something of the enlightenment you had bestowed upon me. I had stayed far from him because he was married to intoxication, but you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, from whom mercy flows powerfully and without restriction, showed him your compassion in his last weeks, days, and hours. His daughter reached out to me in his final hours, so I sent her four sound files that she played continuously till his departure. He heard your deep, sonorous, all-powerful chanting of Hare Krishna, as well as *Vishnu Sahasranam*, *Śrī Narayan Kavacham* and Śrī Prahlad Maharaj's universal prayer for peace (SB 5.18.9). He heard spiritual sound vibration in the last four hours of his life.

This is simply another demonstration of your inestimable compassion. You arranged for him to be connected to the holy name in his final hour. Your mercy is thrilling, breathtaking, and totally beyond words.

While I grieve, I revel in wonderment. You miraculously saved my heart years ago, and you saved his soul weeks back. Thank you so much for bestowing your ultimate mercy upon us, who are most

fallen! Thank you! I beg to remain gratefully in your service! You have blessed our lives with the best of the best transcendental gifts!
I pray to always remain in the divine servitude of your loving grace.

Your eternal servant,

Kusha Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1970. Hawaii, USA

Nagapatni Devi Dasi

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Can adequate glorification be given to that pure soul who interrupted his own *bhajan* to teach us to reach beyond this material world? Encouraging us to strive for spiritual satisfaction, empowering us to give up all mundane pursuits.

Is it possible to properly show gratitude to one who gave us the only way, the only way, the only way back to Godhead, through the sublime method of chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*?

Please tell me, is there a way to give proper homage to that personality who sacrificed all his bodily comforts in order to translate and expound on the spiritual truths, only found in the *Vedas*? He gave us numerous transcendental books and the ability to understand them, without which we would continue to wander hopelessly throughout the material world.

Can words, by a meager neophyte explain the numerous, incredible, articulate lectures he gave continuously? These lectures were not in his first language, but have the potential to change lives, and nations. They started a movement that is saving the world and continues to, over and above our comprehension. The process he created raises *mlecchas* beyond *brahmins* to pure Vaiṣṇavas.

Is it possible in this forum, to transfer through words, the benefits this great person gave to people, all over the world by developing temples and installing beautiful, transcendental Forms of the Supreme Personality of Godhead? Places where anyone can connect with the most elevated nine process of devotional service. Only due to his complete dedication, to his spiritual master, was this made possible.

How can it be explained; his secret weapon of mass purification

– *Prashadam* distribution. Even if someone doesn’t want to chant, has no desire to read a transcendental book or give a little donation, they can just eat a cookie and receive the greatest benediction of their life.

Can we define or explain the great blessings he gave us all? The blessing of association with each other? Do you have the words to adequately give us the understanding of how that association elevates, enlightens and enlivens us all?

I am most unfortunate and unqualified to properly glorify this great personality. I can’t find the sufficient words to express my gratitude or love. These few words are like drops of water. Many of you have brought deeply, loving offerings and many homages have been given all over the world. We can add our words together and hopefully create an ocean of love and gratitude for our dearmost ever well-wisher, father, spiritual leader, source of all our happiness and *Jagat Guru*, Sri Abhay Charan Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Initiation: 1971 February. LA, USA

Sarvamangala Devi Dasi

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your beautiful lotus feet.

Thank you for engaging me, despite my lack of qualification. Your mercy is a wonder to me. As time goes on, it becomes more and more evident how this mercy is the exclusively precious gift upon which we are fully dependent.

These last few years, I’ve been reading your books via Zoom with both new and longer-standing devotees. We are also reading Mukunda Maharaja’s book, *Miracle on 2nd Avenue*. Everyone is in awe and a great happiness and gratitude for your incredible compassion is experienced by all. We previously read *Upadeśāmṛta* and *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*. together. My dear godsister, Sitala’s book on Śrīla Narottama Das was greatly appreciated, and I hope that this pleases you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. How beautifully you sing his *bhajans*!

In one group, we are reading your biography and it is wonderful to witness the enlivenment of devotees who discover the incredible surrender you made to bring us to Krishna consciousness. We catch a glimpse of your unalloyed and empowered loving service to Krishna. Every time we read together it gives strength and encouragement, especially to see how new devotees are affected

by association with you. Your position as ISKCON Founder *Ācārya* is the basis of everything. Your books are lifesavers, for sure! We are deeply moved, reading of the sacrifices you made out of sheer compassion for us fallen souls. The kindness with which you cooked for everyone! The feast you made for Mukunda and Janaki's wedding was a shining example of your complete love and care. My prime regret is that I have not adequately reciprocated your loving compassion and all I can do is to keep trying. I once had a dream in which you told me, "Thank you for trying." Oh, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I do treasure your reassurance.

My dear spiritual master, your humility for thanking us is phenomenal. You would say, "Thank you very much" to the devotees after giving a *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class that transformed us bit by bit over the years. We can still listen to the same class over and over again. Thank YOU for your loving glances that pervaded our hearts and split the atoms of *anarthas*. Please allow me to continue belonging to you forever and I shall keep trying and somehow having faith to go forward more sincerely. It is very hard for wayward souls to give up sense gratification. Of course, it is impossible unless one receives the grace and mercy of a pure devotee. This is the only shelter for our journey through *anartha nivṛtti*. Some of your disciples have travelled very well. I am so very fortunate to have been given a chance and yet so very unfortunate not to have made the most of it. I want to pray to you to never let me go as I cling on to your presence in my heart yet your remarkable loving hold on us is stronger than our ability to cling. When a pure devotee enters one's life, Krishna's presence becomes evident even to a neophyte. It is indeed a wonder that in spite of our perilous position in this material world, you have awakened our core desire to aspire to loving devotional service. You came to this world to wake up anyone who had any desire to escape from the nightmare of conditioned life. Now that you have revived our consciousness, we run behind you, attempting to become more **Krishna conscious**. You have named everything perfectly.

I love the song you offered to your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja – "*Adore ye all the happy day.*" Everything you have written gives hope and enlightenment. Shining the light of knowledge is your gift to this world. Your personal example of totally personal interaction with whoever had any attraction to "the message of Krishna" is dazzling within this place of darkness and ignorance. "Forceful and bold," you are the great

follower of your spiritual predecessors.

I know that I am spiritually impoverished but you touched me and brought me to real life. I simply hope that I can follow in some tiny capacity to follow you by an effort to be kind and personal to new seekers of the truth, remembering your miracles on 2nd Avenue. When we heard your spiritually surcharged voice and saw your golden hued body, your extraordinary smiling mouth that manifested so many transcendental expressions, your gracious movements and a million other attributes, we were somehow blessed to love you. That you were sent by Krishna as His intimate servitor was palpable.

It still is. You are our eternal shelter. I beg to follow in your footsteps.

Your servant,

Sarvamangala Dasi

Initiation: 1971 March. Bury Place, London, UK

Satadhanya Dasa

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

If I was to say that any of us, albeit within ISKCON for more than 50 years, and regardless of the positional heights we may have climbed, does not actually have full faith and conviction in the existence of Krishna or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I imagine there would be some vehement objection and challenge! We, although, may more readily admit, that we are not cent per cent Surrendered to the Lord—which, however, amounts to the same thing. Why would we, after all this time, not be *fully surrendered* to Krishna and His direct representative, Śrīla Prabhupāda? Well, could it be that we are not *completely pure or completely free from sin/sinful reactions*. Śrīla Prabhupāda many times stated that we must be devoid of even a *pinch of material desire* if we are to associate with the Supreme Pure, Śrī Krishna. After all, *purity and faith in Krishna*, does have its own correlative consanguinity. If we truly had '*full faith, conviction, knowledge and realization*' of the existence of the Supreme Person, who is the Absolute Source of everyone and everything, why would we hesitate, even for a second, to utterly surrender to Him? We wouldn't! Why would our chanting of the holy names still be clouded by offences? It wouldn't! Why would we maintain

mundane attachments for sense gratification, even profit, adoration and distinction? We wouldn't! Why wouldn't we be seeing Krishna everywhere present in His energy and all living entities? We would!

The point is that if *we were actually convinced and really believed and had faith in the existence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead* from whom everything emanates:

*aham sarvasya prabhavo
mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate
iti matvā bhajante mām
budhā bhāva-samanvitāḥ* (Bg. 10.8)

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja
aham tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ* (Bg. 18.66)

Why would we not SURRENDER TO HIM
TOTALLY & IMMEDIATELY?

Apparently, we are not completely situated beyond the bodily concept of life!

Apparently, we are not entirely purified in body, mind and intelligence!

Apparently, we lack full conviction in the existence of the Absolute and Supreme Personality of Godhead!

And Apparently, we still harbor some material attachment or sinful desire!

Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "Pretension cannot stand."

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thakur said, "At any given moment there can be no obstruction to our surrender to the Supreme Person. It is only due to our own WILLFUL OBSTINACY!"

All we can do is offer our prostrated obeisances, fervently beg and pray to Śrīla Prabhupāda so that we may make the right and only spiritual choice, and obtain the spiritual strength, courage and realization to surrender *now*!

Your servant,

Satadhanya Dasa

Initiation: 1971 March. New Vrindavan, West Virginia, USA

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We humbly bow down at your divine lotus feet.

We are beginning to see the end of this pandemic that has lasted more than two years. Our New Ramen Reti temple in Alachua FL was able to remain fully open from day 1 and available to all, which is a significant achievement by the full cooperation of our community. With excellent guidance by our Temple President, Mukhya Devī Dāsī, who charted our way.

However, many community members did get covid in their workplaces or elsewhere, but all quarantined afterwards and strictly followed directions for returning to temple programs. You told us that we can show our love for you by how well we cooperate together. We all have been striving to keep this cooperative spirit a deep part of our sacred bond with you.

We are all in great appreciation, Śrīla Prabhupāda, of all your careful and responsible labors regarding our health and safety while you were with us. During these crucial times, it became imperative for us to follow your example regarding personal care and care for others. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were always attentive and in tune with our needs, our safety, applying careful, intelligent, gentle handling for all in ISKCON, your home who could hold the entire world.

There are so many instances of your kind advice and concern to ordinary individuals, as well as your disciples that can easily be seen in your letters, video clips talking with visitors, or documented conversations and in remembrances by your devotees. Even disciples who have written their own books are reminding us of your fatherly affection and care, despite our youthful naivete, ignorance and stubborn carelessness in all things spiritual.

The pandemic forced big adjustments upon everyone, such as, isolation or social separation, cost increases, things we were used to having daily became in short supply; more people working from home lessened traffic congestion and so forth. But many devotees realized that the daily noise around them had decreased, that we could more easily hear the holy name when chanting *japa*. Our minds were able to focus more clearly on our personal spiritual goals. Mental distractions were reduced. In other words devotees were going inward more and finding wisdom and peacefulness by your mercy.

Devotees were able to accomplish much more in their service as

well. The pandemic had great blessings to offer to those who could recognize them.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave us so many precious gifts. You brought so much knowledge and information about the transcendental world to our young minds, inspiring and igniting our thoughts and imaginings. You touched our hearts deeply and allowed us to feel the sacred energy in which you kept yourself always. Your patience with us was immense and steady. You knew how to talk to each person perfectly, as an individual, because you knew exactly where they were coming from, where their past had led them. You knew their hearts better than they themselves did. And you dovetailed our weaknesses and strengths, channeling them toward Lord Śrī Krishna's lotus feet and his eternal service. You saved our lives from maya's clutches.

We learned from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that austerity is a wealth; a richness when practiced regularly prepares us for death. Thinking of Krishna, remembering him, worshiping him and chanting his holy name is the best practice for our own final exam. As you warned in your final days, "Do not think this won't happen to you,"

46 years ago, you told us that Krishna confided in you that there would be war. The war would begin between India and Pakistan, but later draw in Russia on one side and China on the other. You told us to "hang onto our bead bags," to chant the *mahā-mantra* sincerely and after the war, it would be a very good time for spreading Krishna consciousness. However, some weeks later you said, "Krishna has changed his mind. There will be no war. However, Krishna can change his mind again." You were earnestly, instructing us to take our *sādhana* more seriously.

This year Russia invaded Ukraine, killing many civilians and causing millions of people to flee their homeland. Russia indiscriminately bombed many hospitals, schools, senior citizen apartment buildings, playgrounds and parks, military bases and other major buildings in many cities. They did not allow civilians to leave from humanitarian zones set up purposely for free flow access to other countries from Ukraine. Russia agreed to this arrangement by NATO. But Russia ignored this agreement and did not honor their promise. Instead they targeted and bombed humanitarian safe zones so that citizens would avoid going there.

We attended *kīrtans* for the Ukrainians and all the Western devotees around the world are sending their prayers for protection,

safety and an end to war. Since you had said before that “preaching would be good” after the war, could it also be applicable to this war? Nothing wakes people up like a crisis, disaster, near-death experiences or WAR. Once experiencing these extreme calamities and difficulties, we clearly realize what is of real value and what is not. Or what goes with us beyond death and what can not.

When we asked you, “What will become of us after you depart from this planet, Śrīla Prabhupāda?” You soberly and thoughtfully looked at us and said, “Do not worry. Krishna will send so many others. Krishna will send good-hearted souls and many devotees. So many will come. They will step forward to help you spread Lord Caitanya’s message in every town and village.”

At other times, you frequently said that “the demigods are lining up to take birth in this movement.” Now, 50 years later, those demigods are here and living amongst us. They are the future of ISKCON and they are in every part of the world. They are giving wonderful classes based on a higher understanding of your books than any one of us could have realized when at their age. Their caliber of devotional service is on a high level.

We see the younger generations heading up Holy Name Festivals, Janmāṣṭamī’s Vrindavan Village re-creation, assisting in all festivals, *Harināma saṅkīrtana* throughout the year and many other projects. The strongest *kirtaniya* performances are performed by them, uplifting our entire mood and outlook with their amazing musicianship and vocal talent.

In Hawaii (May-June 1976), Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were speaking about the 5th Canto, which you were translating at the time. You spoke of the many planetary systems within millions of universes, etc.

You looked around the room and sensed that we were drifting away mentally, not paying attention and all looking dull. So to wake us up, you suddenly and loudly said, “All those who come after you, will be far more advanced than any of you!”

You looked around the room to read our expressions, but received only blank stares in return. You repeated this statement for a second time.

“All those who come after you will be far more advanced than any of you – because they will KNOW the perfect, pure example without ever having seen it!”

However, the greatest calamity for us would be if we failed to

adhere to your instructions. If we failed to protect your valuable ISKCON organization that you carefully placed into our young hands. Or to not pass on to those coming after us the pure, real mission/vision you put in place. We may adapt to time, place and circumstance but the foundational principle or the essence can never be removed, overlooked or discounted.

So many times you emphasized, we are not just selling books, we are reading and understanding this *bhakti* philosophy as well. You encouraged us to speak our realizations from reading your books and rendering devotional service faithfully. Our lack of understanding, or not applying ourselves as you have instructed or taking for granted all that you have given us, would be crucially dangerous, if we do not attempt to steadfastly and sincerely surrender day after day.

Even though Lord Caitanya's prophecy of 500 years ago will absolutely become realized, we are honored to be a small part of that unfolding process spreading throughout every town and village of the entire planet. This is due to your devotion in carrying out your spiritual master's order; to your dedication to spreading Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* message and to your deep, absolute faith in Lord Śrī Krishna. On the strength of your purity, you have succeeded where no other could have.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us our real purpose, for instructing us by your books, your lectures, your letters, your words and your divine example. We are eternally indebted to you for bringing us to this wonderfully beautiful, *bhakti* path. It is now up to us to continue to follow and serve you by adherence to your clear instructions and mission. All glories to you, Prabhupāda, who has brought the formula for saving humanity by giving Krishna consciousness to the world!

Your servants,

Gostabihari Dasa & Mahavisnupriya Dasi

Initiation: 1971 April. LA, USA

Initiation: 1975 November. Hawaii, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your service for the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. All glories to all the great Vaiṣṇava *Ācāryas*.

1993

I would like to share with you a little about my progress in spiritual life, starting from an encounter in 1993 when I was living in Vrindavana. As you know, that for me was a troubled time. I felt great difficulty trying to understand my progress in devotional life.

Then one day, when I was particularly confused and worried, I was praying for clarity. At that very moment my husband called me into his room. Sitting next to him was another devotee who knew how to read palms.

“Let him read your hand,” my husband said.

When my husband called me I had been worrying about my future. Sometimes a certain amount of difficulty and confusion comes from trying to move forward in spiritual life and sometimes it comes about when we are falling away. What I felt I needed to understand was whether I was moving forward, slowly, or slowly losing ground in devotional life.

Reluctantly I held out my hand.

“Hmm” the palm reader said. “You have a lot of trouble with your mind.”

That wasn’t news to me.

“I see on your hand that your life is currently running on two tracks and you cannot reconcile them. You just can’t work anything out. Don’t bother starting anything at this point in your life, because whatever you do will fail.”

Great! Just what I thought!

His reading made my heart sank. I became quietly hopeless. Feeling more confused than ever, I quickly excused myself and returned to my room.

Soon after there was a knock on my door. It was the palm reader standing outside. Perhaps he had seen the grief on my face as I hastily left my husband’s room?

He said he needed to clarify some points of what he saw on my palm. To help me understand, he compared me to a young student

learning maths, who for some reason, just cannot grasp the concept of multiplication.

“No matter how hard you try,” he said, “you will not be able to understand.”

Oh no! This was just what I needed to hear!

“But that isn’t what I wanted to tell you. I wanted you to know that according to your palm, your life ends very happily. It will become favourable at the end. I can’t tell you exactly what you’ll be doing, but I can see that you’ll be very happy.”

Now THIS was what I really longed to hear. There was a bright future ahead.

Sometimes despite the fact that I try to follow what you have instructed, I just can’t do it. My mind is passion driven and although I know that regularity and daily *sadhana* are the keys, I struggle with them both. It’s clearly due to insincerity, yet it remains beyond my ability to correct. Hearing that there was a positive future ahead allowed me to remain hopeful.

That was nearly 30 years ago.

1997

In 1996 we came to live in Perth, West Australia, a place you yourself visited in 1975 for a short while.

In 1997 I was blessed to receive a small one inch Deity of Krishna who was previously in the care of Upendra Dāsa, your servant, who I first met in Sydney in 1970. This Deity was clearly way too small for any form of worship, so instead, I began making things for Him.

First I made a seat, then a raised platform, then a little house with some trees. For Govardhana Pūjā, I created a large Hill out of clay and styrofoam. Then, thinking He might be lonely, I arranged in Vrindavana to get many small carved figures, including Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, a host of small gopis, parents, boys and cows. I was like a small child playing with sacred toys.

Soon I found myself making small dioramas of different pastimes of Vraja. It was fun, I enjoyed it, but no one paid any attention to what I was doing.

1974

I still recall how, in 1974 you were present in Vrindavana. You’d requested us to visit from Hong Kong where we were stationed. That was also a difficult time. When it was time for us to leave and return

to Hong Kong, we came to see you. In a playful, sweet manner you asked us how we liked Vrindavana.

“Oh it’s wonderful Prabhupāda!” I responded, in an equally playful mood

“Then you should come and live here!” you replied.

I laughed, because you had just sent us back to Hong Kong!

1997-2021

It was a combination of that same attraction to Vrindavana, and your mercy, which allowed me to gradually create so many miniature displays for my small Deity Gopinatha, that after five years we were running out of space.

Then we moved to our current destination, now known as Vrinda Valley.

In 2002 we began to set up The Sacred India Gallery. It took us 10 years to complete the work. Many capable, artistic devotees were involved. The gallery takes our visitors on a pilgrimage through Navadwip to Puri and then finally to Vrindavana. When they enter Vrindavana, they see 22 dioramas displaying the pastimes of Krishna. Many people come to visit and appreciate the work.

But a most astonishing thing happened last year. Through the recommendation of the Consulate in Perth and the High Commissioner in Canberra, our Gallery was introduced to India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji, as a topic worthy of sharing in his monthly *Maan Ki Baat* talks, where he addresses the Indian nation. Suddenly our small, beautiful project was internationally famous!!

I don’t know what to say. I’m sure all of this is an arrangement that either you or our dear Gopinatha planned. It’s an opportunity to introduce Vrindavana to the people of the world who are so deeply in need, being so confused and irreligious!

Dear Prabhupāda, you told us that Krishna is real, and you proved it by own your perfect example, yet sadly sometimes I don’t perceive it.

You told us that our future is very bright although to me it often seems otherwise.

But mostly you insisted that our happiness would come from sharing what we have been given with the rest of the world. In my own childish play I have made an effort to do that.

I know very well that it is not the craftsmanship alone that brought recognition to the gallery but rather its content – beautiful

Vrindavana's sweetness.

Thank you and thank you again for an uncountable number of times, for finding me some role to play in your mission. You've turned an oddly disorganized young Australian girl into a suitable servant to bring Vrindavana to the world.

I beg to remain at your lotus feet,

Jagattarini Dasi

Initiation: 1971 April. Hong Kong

Jaya Jagadisa Dasa

My dear most Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my unworthy obeisances at your lotus feet. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Within a week of moving into your London temple at 7 Bury Place, I realized that you were offering something of inestimable value: the perfect lifestyle.

I had come from the self-indulgent, undisciplined generation of the 1960s, but the result of that ill-fated social experiment was frustration and pain. The unrestricted sense enjoyment did not provide satisfaction, and the wishy-washy approach to spirituality was self-deception at its highest.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my "record" as your disciple is highly flawed. In fact, I was "missing in action" for many years, which I deeply regret. But having returned to your shelter a number of years ago – and at the advanced age of 73 – I have experienced renewed determination to strictly follow the path you have mapped out.

If I may, I wanted to express to you, my beloved guru mahārāja, some of the ways I feel gratitude for the gifts you've given us, your followers, and indeed the entire world.

They can be summarized as: the highest purpose, the greatest sublimity, and heightened appreciation for subtlety.

First of all, you gave us the highest purpose in life in the following five ways:

You gave us the highest purpose in life by giving us the greatest welfare work – how to provide the most good for the most people.

You gave us the highest purpose in life by teaching us a path to raise our consciousness to its utmost level.

You gave us the highest purpose in life by teaching us about a Person deserving of unlimited love (Kṛṣṇa) who gives unlimited love in return.

You gave us the highest purpose in life by teaching the cosmology of a just universe presided over by a Supreme Being who is fair.

And you gave us the highest purpose in life by teaching about the perfection of relationships – between individual souls and with the Supreme Soul.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you also gave us the most sublime lifestyle in the following nine ways:

You gave us a lifestyle that is full of joy.

You gave us a lifestyle that is full of kindness.

You gave us a lifestyle that is full of wisdom and clarity.

You gave us a lifestyle that is full of purification.

You gave us a lifestyle that is full of community.

You gave us a lifestyle full of growth and progress.

You gave us a lifestyle full of harmony with the universal order.

You gave us a lifestyle full of sublime sacrifice.

And you gave us a lifestyle that is free of fear.

And finally, you taught us to appreciate subtlety far and above what Western culture offers, for we Westerners are clueless and dull.

For example, I didn't know garlic from hing, unclean from clean.

I didn't know idols from Isvara, my left hand from my right.

I didn't know impersonal from personal, lust from love.

I didn't know trash from art, my mind from my self.

I didn't know cheating from integrity, ascending knowledge from descending.

I didn't know darkness from goodness, poison from *prasādam*.

And I didn't know an imposter from an incarnation, speculation from inspiration.

In summary, Śrīla Prabhupāda, though I am many lifetimes away from perfection on this path, the power of your message – philosophically and practically – is evidenced by the fact that this dullard has benefitted so much . . . has experienced so much

“fine-tuning” in such a brief amount of time.

Following in the footsteps of so many of your devotees, I pray that you bless me with a burning desire to bring many souls to the shelter of your lotus feet.

In gratitude for your many gifts, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I offer repeated humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

Your aspiring servant,

Jaya Jagadisa Dasa

Initiation: 1971 April. London, UK

Vishnu Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

Your lotus feet I bow to, please forgive my offenses.

You’ve sheltered this wretched one to clean up his act
You’ve taught me to discriminate between fiction and fact
Your divine wisdom still burns through my ego
You show me each day the illusions to let go
You’ve been my source to guide and inspire
You’ve given me hope for the purest desire
You’ve shattered my hope for continuing in nescience
You’ve shared Krishna *nam* to shatter my ignorance
You spoke the truth while others oppose
You remain undefeated by powerful foes
You’ve always given them your blessings and smile
Your compassion was boundless all the while
Your mission was perfectly planned by your grace
Your disciples could never keep up with your pace
Your *shakti* will always be found in your books
Your *bhakti* shines brightly for anyone who looks
Your students, servants and your artists too
You are their teacher, master and eternal guru
Your example is comparable to none
You are to me the Moon and the Sun
You are the master of my fate, you make me whole
You are the official captain of my soul
Please keep me on the path to where you are
You are my refuge, and my guiding star.

*Forever in loving debt to you, my Gurudeva,
your unworthy but hopeful servant,*

Vishnu Dasa

Initiation: 1971 April. LA, USA

Anadi Dasa

All glories to His Divine Grace, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda has changed the lives of millions of conditioned spirit souls, and are all now on their way back to Godhead, due to his mercy and the mercy of Lord Nityānanda and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Instructed to come to the West by his guru, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, we can see the results even today in 2022, how the Russian, Ukraine, and European boys and girls are fully embracing Krishna consciousness, and holding *mahā-harināmas* and festivals that rival the early years of ISKCON (60's and 70's).

Śrīla Prabhupāda has given so many fallen souls the chance to now return back to their original home in the spiritual world.

Who else has done so much in so little time? And we, Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples are so fortunate to be disciples. Our duty is to pass the mercy on to others.

All glories to the lotus feet of His Divine Grace, A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Initiation: 1971 May. Philadelphia, USA

Narayani Devi Dasi

One can gradually become purified by seeing, touching and worshipping temple Deities, places of pilgrimage, and holy rivers. But one can attain the same result immediately simply by receiving the glance of exalted sages. *SB 10.86.52*

When you were away from us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, so many problems would arise, but when you visited us, you would ask us, "is everything alright?" And when you glanced at us we would forget all our problems and say yes, everything is alright.

By your mercy we can reach Radha and Kṛṣṇa by chanting the holy names. It is better to serve the pure devotee like yourself than to

serve Kṛṣṇa directly. When we serve you, then Kṛṣṇa is happier than if we serve Him directly. When Prahlada Maharaja was face to face with Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva, he asked only to serve his guru Nārada Muni. When we serve you then we serve the whole *paramparā* of pure devotees and the mercy is multiplied. It's better to serve you because you are more merciful than Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa says: "This confidential knowledge may never be explained to those who are not austere, or devoted, or engaged in devotional service, nor to one who is envious of Me." (Bg. 18.67).

But in your purport of Bg. 18.70, you say:

In the sixty-seventh verse of this chapter, the Lord explicitly forbade the *Gītā*'s being spoken to those who are envious of the Lord. In other words, *Bhagavad-gītā* is for the devotees only. But it so happens that sometimes a devotee of the Lord will hold open class, and in that class not all the students are expected to be devotees. Why do such persons hold open class? It is explained here that although not everyone is a devotee, still there are many men who are not envious of Kṛṣṇa. They have faith in Him as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If such persons hear from a bona fide devotee about the Lord, the result is that they become at once free from all sinful reactions and after that attain to the planetary system where all righteous persons are situated. Therefore simply by hearing *Bhagavad-gītā*, even a person who does not try to be a pure devotee attains the result of righteous activities. Thus a pure devotee of the Lord gives everyone a chance to become free from all sinful reactions and to become a devotee of the Lord.

It's good that although Kṛṣṇa forbids it, you held open classes for all us non devotees so we could also become devotees and go back to Godhead. Because you understood the purpose of Kṛṣṇa, you opened the path for us to see Kṛṣṇa, dance with Kṛṣṇa, eat Kṛṣṇa *prasādam* and hear His pastimes.

It is only because of your desire that we are all here today. In the poem you wrote upon arrival in the States, you said:

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

I wish that You may deliver them. Therefore if you so desire their deliverance, then only will they be able to understand our message. (*Jaladuta Diary*, Verse 7)

Because you wished that we be delivered, we now have a chance.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us causeless mercy and we pray to always be open to receiving your mercy.

Your servant,

Narayani Dasi

Initiation: 1971 June. Florida, USA

Puskar Dasa

Please accept my obeisances. All glories to our divine guru, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Glimpses of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The Māyāpur Lotus Building in 1974 was impressive, although not yet finished. The brahmacārī rooms were twice as big as they are now. The *parikramās* had begun to go out; it was a bright, sunny morning and I had stayed back to study, thinking I could avoid the heat. I was already in the *dhama*, so why would I need to go anywhere? Around me there were many men spread out, sick and sleeping, unconscious. It was contrastingly amazing to see Prabhupāda, far brighter than the sun, enter the room with his servant, cane in hand.

Sometimes he was stepping over the bodies, sometimes around them. and his expression was less than pleased. as he walked among them. servant by his side. I can't describe the look on Prabhupāda's face, as he gravely assessed the situation.. After paying obeisances, I realized all the others remained prone, unaware of Śrīla Prabhupāda's presence.. I imagined Prabhupāda as the commander, viewing some of his 'wounded' soldiers. I thought that Prabhupāda would summon his managers and offer strong words of dissatisfaction. A little later, I stood to the side of the back window of Prabhupāda's *darsan* room, watching as the four *sannyāsa* managers sat facing Prabhupāda, while he voiced his concerns. The three local leaders complained that they weren't receiving

enough financial support from the GBC for India. It was obvious that Prabhupāda wasn't buying into their excuses. He repeatedly stressed that the devotees needed to be engaged properly. They replied the *prasādam* was poor and resulted in sickness among the devotees.. Prabhupāda repeated several times that the food should be healthy, but nevertheless there was no reason for them to be asleep, even if ill. Prabhupāda summarized the issue by announcing that if a man works hard he could 'digest stones'. During the conversation, Sudāmā Vipra, then Swami, entered the room dressed in his biker jacket, and sat behind them, unbeknownst to the managers. He was widely known as a separatist, strongly antagonistic to the GBC. One of the chief Muslim workers, named Chaku, who loved listening to Prabhupāda, even though he didn't know English, was seated next to Sudāmā Vipra. Prabhupāda took note they were there, made a hand motion towards Sudāmā Vipra, and said, "If you require money, Sudama Vipra will supply." Simultaneously, as Srila Praphupada spoke, Sudama Vipra gallantly took off his gold watch and immediately gave it to Chaku, as the sannyāsīs watched, amazed at this sudden charitable behaviour. Prabhupāda's unsurpassable ironic wit and mastery of time and place were on full display!

Initiation: 1971 June. NY, USA

Mahasini Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Lord Chaitanya knew you would appear
And carry His message; divine and clear

Every town and village He prophesied
Your guru said, "preach in the West"; so you tried

You left Vṛndāvana, where Kṛṣṇa resides
Your comfort, your safety; you set them aside

And those of us here, deep in our nescience
By Kṛṣṇa's grace, were drawn to your essence

Your physical grace, your deep erudition
You traveled the world drawing souls to your mission

All seek the answer to the human condition
You brought absolute answers to the soul's true position

You taught us to dance and to chant Kṛṣṇa's name
And today on the day of your birth we proclaim

The seeds of devotion you've planted are growing
We hope you are smiling; we know you are glowing

Our heads firmly placed on the ground at your feet
Our prayers filled with thankfulness never complete

Your ever thankful daughter,

Mahasini Devi Dasi
Initiation: 1971 June. LA, USA

Suresvara Dasa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Of all the Vaiṣṇava qualities you manifested, Śrīla Prabhupāda,
your compassion amazes me the most.

During your brief visit to Moscow, for example, your kind presence touched many – an Air India pilot carrying you across the Iron Curtain, the babhushkas sweeping Red Square, a taxi driver bringing you through the Soviet capital, a stubborn Leninist professor, and, by the will of Providence, a ripe Russian student to whom you gave all you could for three days before flying to Paris.

That *bhakti* seed you planted in the heart of Anatoly Pinyayev (later Ananta Shanti), who suffered unspeakable persecution at the hands of the KGB, continues to blossom in wonderful ways even today, as war ravages the most vulnerable in Eastern Europe.

Therefore in Europe, so many wars. Every ten year, fifteen years, there is a big war and wholesale slaughter of the whole humankind. But these rascals, they do not see it. The reaction must be there. You are killing innocent cows and animals. Nature will take revenge. (Room Conversation, June

11, 1974, Paris)

Although I never met Ananta Shanti, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I first met his spiritual beneficiaries, the devotees who grew up in the former U.S.S.R., during my visits to Māyāpur in the early 2000s. I saw in them what you must have seen in Anatoly: an unquenchable thirst for genuine spiritual experience, a good soul's tolerance of the people who had for so long denied him that experience, and endless gratitude to you for risking all to give him Krishna, "the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

Nowhere did I witness their *bhakti* more intensely than when I attended their week-long Bhakti Sangam festival in the Crimea in 2012. Thousands of Russian and Ukrainian devotees, comrades in *kīrtana*, turned the tourist town of Simferopol into a marathon of selfless service, the likes of which I hadn't seen in ISKCON, Śrīla Prabhupāda, since you first exploded Krishna consciousness in America nearly fifty years before.

At the invitation of Ukraine GBC Nirañjana Mahārāja, I was there to share my Founder-Ācārya seminar series, especially with those Slavic-speaking devotees who had never physically seen or heard Your Divine Grace. But as the days went by, as they drank in your life, teachings, mood, and mission, I found myself meeting you, their hero, through their hungry ears and eyes. So often did they break into applause to cheer your compassionate pastimes that each session ran way overtime. And after every Q&A period, they spontaneously rose from their seats and surrounded me, begging for more, refusing to let me go. Who are these people, I thought. Their Prabhupāda-*prema* just knocked me out.

That was ten years ago. After the Russian government forcibly annexed the Crimea in 2014, the Ukrainian devotees moved their Bhakti Sangam to another Black Sea venue, smaller but no less impressive for its spirit of selfless service. And even though the fire of war may cancel the festival altogether this year, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I'm absolutely certain the fire of compassionate service you've ignited in countless Russian and Ukrainian devotees will one day burn to ashes all the horrendous *karma* that has periodically devastated the region. Seeing and hearing how the devotees are bravely delivering *prasādam*, your "secret weapon," to the war's victims, I have no doubt your compassion will prevail. "The selfless service Śrīla Prabhupāda brought is the life and soul of the devotees here," says Nirañjana Mahārāja. "They already know what to do. All I have to

do is encourage them.”

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and your most compassionate followers!

Your aspiring servant,

Suresvara Dasa

Initiation: 1971 July. Detroit, USA

Somadas Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to you. Thank you very much for accepting me as your disciple. I will never be sufficiently grateful. My debt to you is unlimited and eternal, but still I feel so grateful for your causeless mercy. I know I will never be able to repay you for this but I pray that I may please you by following your instructions, and telling others about you.

Your servant,

Somadas Dasa

Initiation: 1971 July. Boston, USA

Mandalesvara Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful, loving, humble obeisance at your lotus feet. I am in awe that Your Divine Grace descended to this material world to invite such a fallen, conditioned soul as I to engage in your service. It is only by your causeless mercy that I now come forward to offer you my prayers, and surrender. I am begging for the proper words to glorify you on the auspicious anniversary of your holy Appearance Day (Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā). Eternal father, guide, protector, and friend, please bless me that I may properly express my gratitude, love, and indebtedness.

May I always treasure within the innermost chamber of my heart, the sound of your voice, the words of your lectures and Bhaktivedanta Purports, and the images and memories of when

you lived among us for those few, treasured years. It was as though you were holding us by the hand, as you walked and lived among us, perfectly accomplishing your mission of serving the order of your guru.

In November of 1977, I traveled to India, hoping to be with Your Divine Grace during what I had heard could be your final days to be physically among us. But on November 15, 1977, as I arrived at your temple in Juhu, a devotee handed me a telegram from Vrindavana: Your Divine Grace had left this world just one day before. I journeyed on to Vrindavana, where I joined the many grief-stricken devotees as we carried your *mūrti* on a Govardhana *parikramā*, and assembled together to share our Śrīla Prabhupāda *kathā*.

Despite the end of your manifest *līlā*, I know that Your Divine Grace is still sometimes holding me by the hand – guiding me toward our Lord Kṛṣṇa in His eternal home. Daily, I hear your words in your recorded lectures. I am often able to read from your books with one of my dear godbrothers. My wife and I daily chant *japa* together and regularly read from your books. And, despite my health issues, I can still visit your Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundar Temple here in Alachua, Florida (via the internet).

One very special blessing, for which I am eternally grateful, is that for more than six years after your November 14, 1977 departure from this world, Your Divine Grace gave me a wonderful service. During those six years, Your Divine Grace continued to hold my hand and to guide me, as I assisted in researching, managing, and especially in editing the authorized BBT biography of Your Divine Grace: *Śrīla Prabhupāda Līlāmṛta*.

When I ask my heart what it really means to be a disciple of a pure, *paramparā* spiritual master, I need only to look at my memories of Your Divine Grace. I need only to look at the loving, yet grave way you looked at me during the times I was blessed with your physical association. And then I look back over the history of your ISKCON, your wonderful lectures, your vision and determination to spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu throughout the world. I also remember your pure dedication to translating into English, *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*, *Nectar of Devotion*, *Nectar of Instruction*, and on and on. Daily, my love and appreciation grows for your empowered disciples who are carrying forward and expanding your divine mission.

Within my heart, I cherish how you are not only my spiritual master, but the spiritual master of ISKCON, the Founder-*Ācārya* of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, and the guiding light for the lost souls in this age of Kali. You are, therefore, the perfect, pure example of what a true *Ācārya* is. Your Divine Grace is my heart and my eternal spiritual master. Thus, with all the humility and sincerity at my command, I proclaim that my greatest treasure is that I have the honor of being your tiny, grateful disciple eternally.

Initiation: 1971 July. NY, USA

Atmananda Dasa

Dearest *Śrīla* Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful and humble obeisances at your lotus feet. Endless and unlimited glories to your superhuman service to *Srila* Bahaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Maharaja Prabhupāda and Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* mission!!

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

Because you are fully surrendered to your Prabhupāda, a lame man like me can cross over mountains, and a dumb fool like me can compose eloquent poetry! (How superhuman is that!)

It is only because of your guidance that I can presume to try to appreciate and glorify you. For this I am deeply and forever grateful.

In the *SB* 6.7.23 purport you write:

Lord Brahmā wanted to point out to the demigods that by the strength of the *guru* one can become most powerful within this world, and by the displeasure of the *guru* one can lose everything. This is confirmed by the song of Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura:

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*

“By the mercy of the spiritual master one is benedicted by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Without the grace of the spiritual master,

one cannot make any spiritual advancement.” Although the demons are insignificant in comparison to Lord Brahmā, because of the strength of their *guru* they were so powerful that they could even seize Brahmāloka from Lord Brahmā.

Like Śrīmatī Tulasī Devī, you possess the highest Truth and bestow pure devotional service.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, possess the highest Truth. You present that Absolute Truth completely, and on the highest level, though in plain English. Then you almost spoon-feed us with the practical application of that unalloyed Summum Bonum, using examples; metaphors; contemporary real-life scenarios; stories; parables; supporting references to individuals, spiritual and mundane ... and pictures!

You also give us examples of those who try to attack and defeat that transcendent Reality, like mundane scientists, philosophers and scholars; or *sahajiyas*, *mayavadis*, other atheists or agnostics – along with the “ammunition” to expose their fabrications.

All to equip and empower us to understand that Absolute Reality, Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Thus, any sincere soul can understand this highest knowledge, ‘*rāja-vidyā*’, on whatever level they are, even though it’s about the unlimited and inconceivable(!) ultimate Truth. This is only possible because you are the fully-empowered, most confidential servitor of the Supreme Lord and Friend: you make the universality of Lord Chaitanya’s philosophy and mission universally understandable, acceptable, appreciated and glorified!

This can only be called miraculous!

I saw a great bumper sticker: “BE REALISTIC, EXPECT A MIRACLE”. On your plane, Śrīla Prabhupāda – the unalloyed, transcendental level – so-called miracles, are a moment-to-moment reality!

This “miraculous” education, training, is the greatest service.

Thus, you serve *us*!!

You are the topmost, selfless and generous servant of everyone!!

Consequently, you are to be honoured as much as the Supreme Lord (and He likes you to be honoured *more* than Himself!).

“This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures, and is followed by all authorities” (Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, *Guruvaṣṭakam*)

And you are described as the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead:

From Cc *Adi-līlā* 1.45:

According to the deliberate opinion of all revealed scriptures, the spiritual master is non different from Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa in the form of the spiritual master delivers His devotees.

Purport: The relationship of a disciple with his spiritual master is as good as his relationship with the Supreme Lord. A spiritual master always represents himself as the humblest servitor of the Personality of Godhead, but the disciple must look upon him as the manifested representation of Godhead.

Cc *Adi-līlā* 1.46:

One should know the *ācārya* as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods.

Purport: ...Only out of His immense compassion does the Personality of Godhead reveal Himself as the spiritual master. Therefore in the dealings of an *ācārya* there are no activities but those of transcendental loving service to the Lord. He is the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead. It is worthwhile to take shelter of such a steady devotee, who is called *āśraya-vigraha*, or the manifestation or form of the Lord of whom one must take shelter.

Your explanations, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are your written (and spoken) ecstasies. Therefore, you especially stressed the essential importance of studying, discussing thread-bare, and distributing your books, the law books for mankind for the next 10,000 years!!

You once said, “Everything is fine, I have only one complaint, my students do not read my books.”

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* *Madhya-līlā* 25.278 you write:

All devotees in the Krishna consciousness movement should read all the books that have been translated (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, etc.). Otherwise, after a while they will only eat and sleep and eventually go off the spiritual path. So they will miss the opportunity to achieve eternal life, full of spiritual bliss.

Bhagavat Dasa: Prabhupāda said, “*Can you quote this verse?*”

The two of us looked at each other, and I thought, “*Tamal Krishna*

Goswami will quote the verse,” but Tamal Krishna Goswami thought I was going to do it. Neither of us knew the verse.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: *Just see. You are not reading my books. Every day you have to read, study, and learn my books just like a lawyer learns the law books. You must know everything, chapter and verse. If you do not know, how will you preach? Unless you know my books, how will you teach these men? Do you know that every day even I read my own books? Do you know why I read my books?*

We didn’t want to venture any answer. Prabhupāda said, “I read my books every day because even I learn something new when I read my books. These are not my books. I do not write these books.”

It seemed as if something mystical came over him at this point.

He said, “Every morning, when I sit here to write my books, Krishna comes personally and dictates to me what to write. I simply take dictation from Krishna to write these books. Therefore, when I read them, even I learn something.”

The way he said it was so dramatic that we felt the weight of his words. I was thinking, “I’m speaking with a person who’s speaking with God, who’s right next to God. I’m only one person removed from God. He’s so close.” Yet I knew, because of the state of my own consciousness, how far away I actually was.

But by some grace, I was being placed right next to God by being with Prabhupāda. It was amazing.

None of my students need to read any other books than mine. Moreover, reading other books may hinder their progress in Krishna consciousness. If my students can’t even read my books, why would they read anything else? I gave you the teachings of Śrī Caitanya, so what is the point of reading *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* in someone else’s translation? (From a letter from Śrīla Prabhupāda to Śrī Govinda, January 20, 1972)

In this way, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Person Bhāgavata are giving us the Book Bhāgavata, and thus also access to the non-different Supreme Bhāgavata, the Supreme Personality of Godhead!

This is a little glimpse I’m getting – or you are giving me – of what *paramparā* means.

And in this way you are caring for us, giving the steps and access

to the perfection of our lives, Krishna consciousness. In one lecture, you declare that one who takes care of his dependents, he is Guru.

Please continue to tolerate and encourage and engage me, so that I can bring unlimited souls to your perfect shelter, the *āśraya-vigraha*. Let me take the miracle of your example fully, and accept your call, your challenge, to become a perfect disciple, in spite of being so terribly unqualified. Let me remember that your mercy is all I made of!

The aspiring servant of the servants of your divine instructions,

Atmananda Dasa

Initiation: 1971 July. Amsterdam, Holland

Mahamaya Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Your mercy is unfathomable as exemplified by the fact that you have not kicked me out but have continued to let me serve you. This mercy is inexplicable to me yet I am deeply grateful.

Your servant,

Mahamaya Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1971 July. Washington, USA

Pancaratna Dasa

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

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

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

On this glorious day
The first word I must use
To express what I feel
Must surely be gratitude

But still this word
Falls far short of the truth
Of the simple fact
That I owe everything to you

There is no reason,
No cause one can see
For the mercy you've given
Again and again to me

No words of thanks
Can be enough to convey
Even a token of my debt
Impossible to repay

Still, I give you my life
Though alone it is worthless
Please use it in your mission
And give it real purpose.

Let each of my actions
With mind, words and body
Express what words can't
My gratitude to you, eternally

Pancaratna Dasa

Initiation: 1971 July. Washington, USA

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

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

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are the embodiment of the Lord’s intervention to salvage our world’s headlong rush toward desolation and destruction on all sides—a ruination encompassing all civilized peoples and all tribal and aboriginal humans as well; all animals, all fish and fowl; all crawling, creeping, and flying insects; all vegetation, from giant sequoia to the algae in ditches and ponds. Even the lifeless minerals are ravaged.

This world is a dangerous and precarious place, and it is burdened with a huge and ever-growing accumulation of evil deeds and wicked schemes that your faithful servants will, above all, be directed and guided to overcome—servants who will even sacrifice their own futures for that of the overwhelmed earth and its afflicted residents.

Like so many others, I myself am ever in need of constant repair, refurbishing, and revival by the ever vital and robust potency of your own work, your precious legacy to the world.

We have been blessed to see what you could do in a very short time, in countries not your own, among people very different from you, even while you were hampered by the adversities of old age and disease.

On one occasion you said: “I am one person and see what I have done. Now each of you become just like me and see what can be done.”

If we can receive your legacy, we will find we have all that we need. Even in difficulty.

Or especially in difficulty:

In December, a serious fall introduced several fractures near the top of the humerus bone of my right arm, and I spent two months with that afflicted arm immobilized in a sling. Now I have been undergoing physical therapy twice a week, therapy that is gradually but steadily restoring my afflicted limb to full function. It requires steady practice, patience, and determination, carefully following the

expertise of the physical therapist. This steady, persevering, and determined application works.

And, of course, I have realized that my own badly fallen, spiritual self requires a similar dedication to a parallel expert treatment: the steady practice, patience, and determination in the expert spiritual therapy you have graciously given to us—and to the world.

With endless gratitude, your patient

Ravindra Svarupa Dasa

Initiation: 1971 July. Philadelphia, USA

Vishnugada Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the shelter of your divine feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you write in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* how the renowned monarch Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira desired to bring all the important world leaders of his day together for a major sacrificial rite. People from all four corners of the earth gathered. As part of the ceremony, many famous and learned individuals were nominated but the one most qualified person was chosen to receive first worship (*agra pūjā*). Lord Krishna was recognized as the topmost. He was glorified and honored first in front of all attendees, which was part of King Yudhiṣṭhira's plan all along. To have all the global leaders bow to Lord Krishna, and participate in a grand *arati* vibrating Lord Krishna's names to purify their hearts.

I am envisioning a similar function being held today on the anniversary of your appearance. Let all the leaders of the world gather to nominate the greatest person in our lifetime. Undoubtedly, some of the attendees would put forward those identified as "Persons of the Year," or of the decade. Powerful presidents, great scientists, generals, entertainers, philanthropists, industrialists, popes who have all come forward on the world stage and either have vanished or will do so shortly. Bill Gates might be suggested as the ideal man. Others would bow to Ronald Reagan. Over the last 60 years many celebrated people have come and gone. But if we take a close look we can see all of them are driven by selfish motives. Their giving of welfare, if any at all, is restricted to a small section of humans. And because not one has had an inkling of his or her actual identity, none could bestow any lasting benefit to anyone, even their own group.

We here today joyfully nominate and recognize you as most worthy to receive first honor. Śrīla Prabhupāda. We today stand

witness that exactly following the footsteps of your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Thakura and Lord Gaurāṅga Himself, you did not kill the Śiṣupālas you encountered, me included. You uplifted us by delivering the most precious gift, the seed of devotional service. We today bear witness that without personal motive, you continue to liberate eternally conditioned souls in all kinds of material bodies. Souls condemned to a long harsh sentence in this temporary world. How? By your example, teachings, and followers. Thus the doors to the deathless transcendental kingdom of unlimited happiness have been flung wide open to each and everyone by your grace. We therefore nominate you as the most worthy, and in so doing we purify our hearts and our very existence.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Vishnugada Dasa

Initiation: 1971 July, NY, USA

Sankarshan Dasa Adhikari

My most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your most holy lotus feet.

In a *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class on 17 December 1973 given in Los Angeles you told us, your disciples, "...just become perfect in the understanding of this science and become guru and deliver the whole world."

So I am begging you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, now after almost a half a century since your physical departure that we, your disciples and grand-disciples, can now successfully carry out your order to deliver the whole world. The whole world has become dead without Krishna consciousness and you have blessed us with just what they need to be brought back to life.

So please, please, please bless us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that we can now deliver all the suffering souls of this material existence by bringing them to Krishna consciousness. We know that this is not possible unless we become completely free of offenses against Lord Śrī Krishna's unlimitedly sweet and merciful holy names. So please bless us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that we can all now become 100% pure chanters of Lord Śrī Krishna's holy names.

Your lowly servant,

Sankarshan Dasa Adhikari

Initiation: 1971 August. Austin, Texas, USA

Gunarnava Dasa

Planting my seed

From holy Vrindaban you came
You journeyed on a boat, the Jaladuta its name
Its freight was you, your love O'Master
Containers filled with boundless seeds

That journey was fraught with immense danger
A most piercing pain your heart was under attack
Not once but many times it happened on that journey
Fragile you were O' Master, giving up was not your option

Your undertaking to save the most fallen, gave you strength
You came with Krishna in your heart, you came here
Sometimes you thought why Krishna has brought you here?
The buildings, so grey and tall, hiding the sunlight as a black cloud

The darkness of Kali's tapestry wore layer upon layer
Your soft lotus feet moving down the plank to the floor below
Śrīla Prabhupāda O' spiritual gardener arrived you have
To plant those seeds within the hearts of souls who desire so

You planted many seeds in many hearts your mercy unfathomable
In London's Trafalgar Square surrounded by large lions
and steep steps
Śrīla Prabhupāda O'Master, in my granite like heart
you planted a seed
Your mercy rain, the sacrificial fire, red and
golden flames and holy names

Devotees chanting, the sound of your transcendental voice
I felt overwhelmed, my throat jumping as I tried to swallow
Looking at me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, with golden complexion

Gunarnava das, your name is Gunarnava das Hare Krishna

Hari Bol Gunarnava, was the sound that I heard
Dhananjaya temple president, smiling said
Prabhupads calling, to his room, you must come
A devotee friend too, Smara Hari, together we went

The door opened, inside a most golden-like hue
In awe and reverence, my head touching the floor
Śrīla Prabhupāda's request, go to Vrindaban, a temple to build
Their Lordships are waiting for Their house to be filled

We arrived in Vrindaban to sounds never heard
I could not sleep, my mind in a twirl, my heart racing
Transcendental, authentic, timeless, peacocks call-
ing, another world
I was speechless, felt helpless, humbling, and feeling not worthy

Living with others on the roof of Rādhā Damodar Temple
Prabhupāda suggested we live in huts on the land
Prabhupāda came to the land and smiled at our dwelling
This is Goswami mood, living in huts and under trees

All day counting bags of gold (cement) in blistering sunlight
Truck after truck till early evening, the count must be right
Prabhupāda said come to my room, and asked how many bags?
1623 bags I said, yes that is correct Prabhupāda replied

Over 300 workers now employed, serving round and
round the clock
Second chance, opening date looms, the image of
Prabhupāda's thunder
The cement mixers sound, "resembling an orchestra"
Prabhupāda said
Chief Minister arrives; its Ramnoui day, Their Lordships appear

Prabhupāda's stern thunder bolt transforms to the mood of a rose
Offering *arotik*, Prabhupāda smiling, feeling most
humble and proud
To the transcendental Brothers, at last, this moment profound
Śrī Śrī Krishna Balaram *kī jaya*, Srila Prabhupāda *kī jaya*

Vedic school education, parents should trust
Śrīla Prabhupāda pronounces, Gurukula a must
You and Tribhuvanath should try and collect laxmi
Also bring Arab boys to be taught at this school
Come back to my room, to learn how to preach

I return from my travels, Śrīla Prabhupāda calls me
Now build a school for hundreds of boys
Also be thinking that pure milk is essential
For Krishna, Balaram, and my disciples in need

In Goverdhan my Seiko watch turned into a cow
Very soon one cow multiplied into many more
Thanks to Śravānanda, his parents, and the Military to
Prabhupāda explicit, his every desire is driven by Paramatma
I am in complete unison with the Supersoul sitting in my heart
Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda

Around and around this earth, Srila Prabhupāda travelled tirelessly
Always coming back to Vrindaban, your home, from
whence you first came
This time, your return was different, because you will
now stay forever
Krishna and Balaram kept you home want-
ing so much your association

Prabhupāda! You became very frail, unable to eat
You said, bring a pure black cow; its milk will give strength
Bhagaji and I kept that black cow outside Prabhupāda's room
The special milk on tap twenty four sev-
en for Prabhupāda's well being

Śrīla Prabhupāda became stronger, taking his dairy requirement
He was beginning to sit up, although still visibly frail
Prabhupāda requested light *kīrtan* in groups of 3 or 4
I led a small group of 3 which included godbrother Pushkar

During *kīrtan*, one late afternoon, I was sitting close to Prabhupāda
He was sitting on the side of his bed, His lotus feet
touching the floor
During *kīrtan*, I thought call out, "Jaya Prabhupāda", I

did, quite loudly
He opened His eyes and looked down at me
Just for a moment, I saw Prabhupāda staring at me
I looked away feeling guilty I had unnecessarily disturbed my Master.

Moments of silence replaced the chanting, my heart beating loudly
Śrīla Prabhupāda said to me, “Gunarnava due to your mercy I
am living today”
Then silence, then again Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “thank you very
much, your mercy”
I replied “it’s your mercy Prabhupāda, it’s
your mercy, thank you thank you.”

Prabhupāda said, “Chant”, I began chanting. I felt
very warm inside.
That very personal exchange, the intimacy, left me ecstatic
We were chanting for about another 10 minutes or so.
Prabhupāda again said stop chanting, at once we stopped

Śrīla Prabhupāda looked down again and said
“It is your mercy that I am here, just drinking the black cow milk
You brought the cow like I asked and I’m here with you all
So that is your mercy, thank you for your mercy”

I am a speck of dust on the bottom of your slippers
Everything we do for you Prabhupāda is all your mercy
It is your causeless mercy O’Master that I am here this moment
Please, may I serve your lotus feet birth after birth?

The *kīrtan* group stopped and left Śrīla Prabhupāda’s room
It was time to share the mercy, we walked slowly away
I held those moments of ecstatic meaning, wanting them
to be ever fresh
I could not and would not sleep for many days; I
wanted to freeze those moments forever

Over the coming weeks Śrīla Prabhupāda kept translating
until he couldn’t
Prabhupāda invited many godbrothers, Krishna das Bābājī came
Chanting, dancing, laughing, and giggling like a

small cowherd boy
Prabhupāda, frail in body, emancipated, exhibited humil-
ity beyond belief
“Excuse any offenses I may have done towards
you all”, Prabhupāda said, again and again

I observed all these transcendental mellows, the purity, the inno-
cence, I felt alive
The assumptions I still sit with today, are exactly as they were then
Prabhupāda’s consciousness, pure, unalloyed *Uttama*
adhikārī the highest
Topmost swan-like devotee, seeing everyone better than himself
As a preaching *sannyāsa* he would use discrimination
Associate with the devotees, preach to the in-
nocent, and avoid the demons

tṛṇād api sunīcena taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ

That night in his room, Śrīla Prabhupāda left us, leaving His body
for us to preserve
Krishna arranged that I remained at Prabhupāda’s lotus
feet that night
The sounds of my godbrothers and sisters crying and
chanting in despair
I continue to serve you, my Master forever in sepa-
ration, until you decide otherwise

I pray to you O’Lord and Master to eternally engage this fool
In your devotional service birth after birth
As that speck of dust under your slipper
Śrīla Prabhupāda you would always write “please ac-
cept my blessings”
Planting my seed are your eternal blessings showered on me
I lay prostrate at your lotus feet forever
Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jai*

Initiation: 1971 August. London, UK

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace who had so kindly given us, from 1970 to 1977, your personal association and now, association through your potencies: your books, recordings, guidance, example, and—so vital to every devotee—the association and opportunity to serve your sincere followers who are tasting the fruit of your priceless gifts.

Where would we be without the combined mercy of Your Divine Grace and our Lords? Lord Krishna so many times in His *Bhagavad-gītā* states, “by My grace, by My mercy” you will come to Me. Otherwise, through our own endeavor, however impressive it may be, we have no hope of being extricated from the dark, labyrinthine maze of material life.

Krishna also states, “Intelligence, knowledge, freedom from doubt and delusion, forgiveness, truthfulness, control of the senses, control of the mind, happiness and distress, birth, death, fear, fearlessness, nonviolence, equanimity, satisfaction, austerity, charity, fame and infamy – all these various qualities of living beings are created by Me alone.”

Certainly, we see distress, fear and death everywhere, especially today. Śrīla Prabhupāda, we pray that all who experience adverse qualities understand that indeed this world is a miserable place; and the subsequent distress—however intense— is yet another feature of Krishna’s mercy, meant for causing us to approach Him with upraised arms in inquiry and submission.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are misguided by our minds, devoid of pure intelligence and bathed in the acidic waters of pride, but have hope against hope that we will be able to please you; if not directly, then please your servant, or his or her servant, however many times removed.

Your aspiring servants,

Yadubara Das & Visakha Dasi

Initiation: 1971 October. Calcutta, India.

Initiation: 1971 November. Vrindavana, India

Greater than the Sun

Material consciousness is devoid of real light despite the sun's daily rising, all are in sunk in Māyā's night the majesty of the sun, we don't mean to slight (but) Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the sun, you gave us our sight following impersonal doctrines is a fruitless occupation like clouds that create shadows but yield no precipitation the sun cannot penetrate such clouds despite its excitation Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the sun, you gave us loving reciprocation the energy of the sun, all life does support oblivious to the sun illusioned beings sport and cavort the relationship between the guru and disciple is one of deep rapport Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the sun, so voices all the Vedas purport sunlight takes eight light minutes to reach the earth from the sun's radius by seeing / hearing you, our love's awakening was spontaneous now you have become fortunate, make others also, your instruction still faces us Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the sun, you are so purely gracious as Lord Shiva was required to withstand Gaṅgā's descension and as it is unbearable to directly see the sun without some reflection Lord Śrī Krishna's loving affection is beyond our perception Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the sun, you are Krishna's mercy extension though far away, the sun has the power to purify an impure place but the heart of an offender remains a disgrace countless *jīvas*, your *vāñī*, their impurities will displace Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the sun, you, we can never be replace inspiration, guidance and nourishment all come with ease for those who, unto Your Divine Grace, offer their desires to please your umbrella-like lotus feet change the sun's heat wave into a cool breeze Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the sun, to you we bow on our knees after Lord Krishna's departure, guiding light was given via *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as brilliant as the sun, *dharma* and *jñāna* were explained ad infinitum but without the Mahā Bhāgavata Ācārya, to understand it was still a conundrum Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are greater than the sun, you are the Person Bhāgavatam.

Initiation: 1971

Jananivasa Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I remember you sitting on the veranda of the Lotus Building looking down the Bhaktisiddhānta Road towards the main gate and saying, ‘Why people are not coming? We have a nice temple, why they are not coming?’

Now even at four thirty in the morning the Temple is packed for *Maṅgal Ārati*. Who would have believed? Situated between two rivers that don’t go anywhere.

Almost everyday at noon and the evening is a traffic jam of totos and tourist buses.

People usually don’t like traffic jams, but when I see the jams, I think Śrīla Prabhupāda would be happy to see all the people coming.

The government is constructing a multi-crore project at Prabhupāda Ghat, here in Māyāpur.

“You do the service and if magic is required, Krishna will take care of that” – Śrīla Prabhupāda

Hare Krishna.

Your servant,

Jananivasa Dasa

Initiation: 1971 November. Calcutta, India

Current location: ISKCON Māyāpur

Advaita Acharya Dasa

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

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

unto you,

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

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

Prabhupāda, you have faith in leaps and bounds
No doubts not a sound

By serving you nicely we increase our faith in your
words and deeds

You have planted in us some transcendental seeds

Like a rock you stand in the battle with maya

Guiding us ever higher and higher

Enthusiasm, determination and patience – these are the keys

To chant nicely on our *japa* beads

This divine knowledge you have given freely

With love and compassion, so dearly

Together in our individual ways we can try to help
you, O Gurudeva

Serving on an equal transcendental level, the fallen souls to save

Our strength comes from the association of saintly souls

Who have given everything to help reach our spiritual goals

I pray for your mercy and from your devotees sublime

That we may reach our Lord Sri Krishna in eternal time

Jai Gurudeva

Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda

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

Initiation: 1971. London, UK

Padmanabha Dasa & Lilamanjari Devi Dasi

We offer our respectful obeisances unto our spiritual master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who has opened our eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance, with the torchlight of knowledge.

Every day we thank you for the mercy of allowing us to take

part in your pastimes, even though we are without qualifications. We realize we could have been better disciples than we were when you blessed us with your presence on earth.

By your mercy, please allow us to serve you again in our next life.

Padmanabha Dasa and Lilamanjari Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1971 July, NY, USA

Anuttama Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

On the back cover of your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, we find the words of Mahatma Gandhi: “When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and I see not one ray of hope on the horizon, I turn to Bhagavad-gita and find a verse to comfort me...”

Such is the impact of spiritual knowledge and inspiration. It can turn darkness into light, and sorrow into joy.

I have a similar experience, Śrīla Prabhupāda, whenever I read about your life from the many biographies about you, especially the *Prabhupāda Lilamrita*. You give me light, and hope, amidst the darkness.

Through these books I learn many lessons for my life. I learn to see a bit more like you see, and to connect with you more deeply as the single person who has molded my life more than any other. I learn of the challenges you faced, the heartbreaks and losses you overcame, the determination you manifested, and the humility and the love that drove you forward.

I also learn that, as Gandhi faced disappointments, you too faced disappointments. Most trying perhaps, was when the mission of your beloved spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura splintered. It seemed then that the greatest tool for spreading Lord Caitanya’s movement had been beaten down and lost. How painful that must have been.

But, that didn't stop you Prabhupāda. Instead, it instilled in you even more deeply the desire to write, and to preach, and to publish. And, it instilled in you a resounding conviction of the paramount need for cooperation amongst the Vaishnavas, the rūpānugas, the Prabhupāda-anugas, and all the disciples and grand-disciples of the *ācārya*.

Studying your life further, we learn that years later, as you built your International Society for Krishna Consciousness to continue the mission of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur, you carried that message of cooperation forward, and you implanted it throughout your society.

As stated within the 7 Purposes of ISKCON, your society would propagate the values that will “achieve real unity and peace in the world.” You stated twice therein, that your society will “bring the members together.” Yours would be a society to “teach and encourage the saṅkīrtan movement, congregational chanting.” That is, by definition, cooperative chanting.

Even your leadership model was based on cooperation. You created the Governing Body Commission and empowered not one man, nor one *ācārya*, but carefully crafted a system of collective leadership to be the “ultimate managing authority” of ISKCON in perpetuity. And, you instructed the GBC and other leaders of your society to *come together every year* in Māyāpur to discuss “unity in diversity.”

Those who pray to make whatever is dear to you to be the dear most to them, are always reminded of your prediction that “your love for me will be shown by how much you cooperate together after I am gone.”

That cooperation is being sorely tested today, Prabhupāda. Driven by different ethnic, cultural, and social conceptions that we bring with us into Krishna consciousness; impacted by whatever astrological or karmic influences are driving the entire globe into warring camps and oppositional social identities; and perhaps suffering from a collective loss of memory of your urging us to set aside sectarian differences, we struggle to stay together, unified under your leadership and the banner of Śrī Krishna and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

But, if we read of the pain you felt upon the splintering of the Gauḍīya Math; if we humble ourselves at your feet and ask what service we can render you; if we bring your desires into our hearts to replace the urge for power and prestige that may rot there today; we cannot help but see that your desire for a cooperative global society

to spread Krishna consciousness must be our primary guide, goal, most pressing mission.

Please bless us to study, remember, and drink more deeply of your example, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Bless us to see how you struggled *for decades* to bring the full opportunity of Krishna consciousness to the Africans, Europeans, Indians and others across the world. Bless us to see how—and why—you struggled to bring the full opportunity of Krishna consciousness to the rich and famous, the poor and destitute, the black and white and brown, and the women as well as the men, regardless of race, religion, gender, or nation.

If we keep your life's practical example in our hearts, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we will find that the love for one another that you felt can be awakened in our hearts, too.

Guide us to serve humbly, as instruments in your vision—and your demand—for a cooperative, global society of servants. Let us be bound together with a desire to serve one another, and the world, and Lord Krishna. Let us do so in remembrance of your example, your sacrifices and your deep desire to please your guru mahārāja by building an international society pledged to cooperation, and unity in diversity.

Your servant,

Anuttama Dasa

Initiation: 1972 January. Washington, USA

Ragatmika-Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

By your mercy only it's becoming more and more clear to me that living in this material world means painfully experiencing two things (as Prahāda Mahārāja expresses it, SB 3.19.20 purport), “namely separation from my beloved and meeting with what is not wanted.” That pretty much sums up the result of turning my back on Kṛṣṇa.

Yet, despite my foolishness and envy, you had compassion on this broken *jīva* and offered the only possible remedy to relieve me of all the suffering I've experienced birth after birth. You brought to me Kṛṣṇa in so many varied forms that I was bound to be attracted

to one or the other of Them and eventually all of Them. You've given me new life and I owe everything to you. I pray to remain faithful in service at your lotus feet life time after life time.

Your grateful daughter,

Ragatmika-Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1972 March. NY, USA

Ajamila Dasa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

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

Wow! It is 2022 and I'm still around and attempting to render you a little service. After the demise of my material body I surely will not have done enough service at your lotus feet. My only solace is that I tried hard and did not give up.

My material body is now reaching 71 years old and surprisingly it's still in a reasonably good condition by your mercy. Let's see if I can offer you something nice and make you smile. In this life my acceptance of your service has been my greatest good fortune. Your service has saved me from hell, for sure, and I can never pay that debt to you but only try to render a little service to your preaching mission. I do not have any big achievements to offer you and I hope you will overlook all my shortcomings and offences.

I hope and fervently pray that you will allow this unqualified soul to return to Goloka Vrindavana after leaving this horrible material world, because if I were to come back here again Māyā would surely bewilder me again and again.

Thank you my Lord and Master for giving me the holy names of Lord Śrī Krishna and Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Those unlimitedly sweet holy names are the greatest gift that anyone can give.

I remain your most unqualified servant forever,

Ajamila Dasa ACBSP

Initiation: 1972 April. Malaysia

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

My godnephews and nieces today sing the glories of Hari through the streets of war-torn Kyiv. The police want to stop them, but the city administration gives permission. “They make people smile,” is the official reason for allowing *saṅkīrtana*. “We need a little taste of happiness now.” Prabhupāda, you made “hippies” into “happyies,” and your mercy continues unabated.

Long before you arrived on the shores of America, you advised all the living entities of the ever-existing war against Māyā: The exodus of the residents of Calcutta to other places out of fear of being raided by the Japanese bombs, is due to the same tendency of non-destructible existence. But those who are thus going away, do not remember that even after going away from Calcutta saved from the raids of the Japanese bombs, they are unable to protect their bodies as non-destructible at any part of the material universe, when the same bodies will be raided by the bombs of material nature in the forms above threefold miseries.

The names “Japanese” and “Calcutta” can easily be replaced by “Russians” and “Ukraine” in your sage advice: The Japanese also who are threatening the Calcutta people with ruthless air-raids for increasing their own happiness by possession of lands-do not know that their happiness is also temporary and destructible as they have repeated experience in their own fatherland. The living beings, on the other hand, who are designed to be killed, are by nature eternal, impenetrable, invisible etc. So all those living entities who are threatened to be killed as well as those who are threatening to conquer are all alike in the grip of the ‘Māyā’ potency (6) and are therefore in the darkness. Continually conditioned by the mode of goodness, we repeatedly become attached to hearth and home. Only by hearing from the lips of a pure devotee can we hope to receive the transcendental message that keeps us from sleeping on the lap of the witch called Maya. *Jīva jāgo*; wake up sleeping souls.

You brought us the wisdom of your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī who said just a few days before his passing Dec 23, 1936: “You should all work conjointly under the guidance of your spiritual master with a view to serve the Absolute Knowledge, the Personality of Godhead. You should live somehow or other without any quarrel in this mortal world only for the service of Godhead. Do not please give up the service of Godhead in spite of all dangers, all criticisms and all discomforts. Do not be disappointed for most people in the world do not serve the Personality of Godhead; do not give up your own service which is your everything and all, neither reject the process of chanting and hearing of the transcendental Holy Name of Godhead. You should always chant the transcendental Name of Godhead with patience and forbearance like a tree and humbleness like a straw.”

His father, the spiritual great-grandfather of your disciples, inspired his son in the most profound, existential realizations which you so purely and deftly transmitted to the entire world: “Cultivation of higher spiritual knowledge which discerns the matter from spirit does not also help us in the achievement of the highest goal. By this culture of spiritual life one can realise only one’s self, as distinguished from gross matter, and can also understand that the spirit soul is above matter as ignorance of this fact makes him bound to undergo the rigours of conditioned life. This self-realisation may help one for attaining the marginal position between material and spiritual existence but this does not mean actual spiritual life and its spiritual activities without which the spirit soul cannot obtain the highest bliss. This marginal state of life may be called the life of self-satisfaction as distinguished from the life of self-realisation which means engagement in the transcendental activities of the spiritual world. Self-satisfaction without this self-realisation (attachment for spiritual activities) does not bear any substantial fruit.”

My prayer is to practice and broadcast this knowledge far and wide through the agency of movies. I beg you to please allow me to expand my preaching from home programs and SABHA (Spiritual Advisory Bhagavat Assembly) chairman *seva* to the big screen. I unabashedly beg you to facilitate this service which is like chasing rhinos. Only, this time, I need your divine mercy to capture, not just to run after it. My partner, Janardradhi prabhu and I have wonderful scripts, treatments, ideas. By your potency, together we can distribute your *vāṇī* to the entire world. Not only will Hare Krishna become a

household word again, but, your name, Śrīla Prabhupāda will be recognized in every town and village. Association with the pure devotee even for a moment can save one from the greatest danger.

My fathomless gratitude to you, my most intimate friend and preceptor, extends from this life - which is in its final act - to our next dance together if you will kindly accept me as your eternal servant.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jay!*

Your aspiring servant,

Nrsimhananda Dasa

NB: All quotes from BTG Vol 1 #1-4, December 23, 1944

Initiation: 1972 April. LA, USA

Pyari Mohan Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

For your *Vyāsa-pūjā*, I would like to offer you my heart, but right now it is still full of so many unwanted things. It is far from being pure and not yet ready to offer to you...more work is still needed. Although I am fallen and contaminated, I know there is a chance of becoming purified by serving you and therefore, I endeavor every day to render some service to you by rendering service to ISKCON. You said "I am ISKCON", therefore serving ISKCON is serving you, and serving you means purifying my heart and when my heart is completely purified, I can then offer it to you with love. Please help me to continue serving ISKCON and purifying my heart. Hare Krishna!

Your eternal servant,

Pyari Mohan Dasa

Initiation: 1972 April. Boston, USA

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Loving obeisances. All glories to your holy lotus feet which are my absolute shelter.

Deep gratitude for your divine presence in my life, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You continue to gift us the holy name – Hare Krishna, the sacred scriptures – windows to the spiritual world, the Deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna and associates, and the company of fellow aspiring devotees, pilgrims who inspire our days in service and friendship.

No words can express my debt to you for your kindness Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Fifty years ago on Sri Narasimhadeva's Appearance Day – May 1972 – you accepted me as your student in the old Temple Room in New Dwarka, Los Angeles.

That initiation day is timeless in my mind's eye and heart, and sustains me through all the trials and tribulations of life.

Each day – through an active daily practice, through study, through prayer, through worship, through sharing Sri Mahāprabhu's message with others – I see and experience you are indeed guiding us and watching over us, your children, and the family of devotees.

Deep gratitude for your divine presence in my life, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You are my shelter. You are my solace. You are my Guide and Master. You are my ever well-wisher.

I pray you forgive my numerous offences and allow me some service eternally.

*Humbly with gratitude and love,
Your aspiring servant,*

Manjuali Devi Dasi
Initiation: 1972 May. LA, USA

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

O Master, this year marks my 50th year of distributing your books.

I clearly remember the morning of February 1972 after having slept over at the small temple in Vancouver, the devotees took me out on *saṅkīrtana*. They gave me a cloth bag with BTG's, and my first piece of literature distributed was a BTG to an Australian lady who gave a nice donation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, reading your books daily and distributing them keeps me firmly in your association and gives me the inspiration to hear your classes online and embrace a strong *sādhana*.

The proof of the efficacy of your books was illustrated to me on Christmas Day of last year when a lady had sent me a recording expressing her gratitude for having received a *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* set in 2019 during the Xmas marathon. We were going door-to-door in Kamloops B C Canada and they graciously bought a *Gītā* and *Bhāgavatam* set. They are currently on the 8th. Canto, and her whole family had become Krishna conscious with very little association.

On the recording, her voice was choking up with emotion. She intimated that your books had changed their very life. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mercy can go to all corners of the world by this book distribution.

Here in Māyāpur, I see daily the wonderful enthusiasm and hunger of the visitors for Krishna consciousness as Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana* movement gradually inundates the world with *Krishna prema*.

Another adventure of mine occurred last December, *Gītā Jayantī* where myself and 12 devotees, mainly from Russia were invited to chant *Harinama* at a famous indoor mall in Kolkata. They gave us a two-hour slot to chant in the centre of this posh Western style mall and we subsequently and unabashedly proceeded to distribute eight cases of *Gītās* in that small window of time. The shoppers loved to see your dancing white elephants, now primarily from the East Bloc of the globe.

My dear spiritual father, please keep me under the shelter of your divine lotus feet. I am simply your dog, standing and waiting at your every command.

Your humble servant,

Kripanidhi Dasa

Initiation: 1972 June. Portland, USA

Prithu Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories unto you.

On this holy day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, this poor disciple of yours tries to attempt to write some words to glorify you. Kindly forgive my inability to express myself, akin to a candle trying to illuminate the Sun.

Your desire to serve Krishna bore fruit in a superhuman feat: a worldwide movement with millions of devotees by now, spreading the Hare Krishna *mantra* everywhere, a large amount of temples created all over the world, millions of books being distributed, millions and millions of people being able to eat Krishna *prasādam*...the list is long. That success of your preaching did by no means come easy to you.

At the very humble beginnings in your room at Radha Damodar Temple, two godbrothers visited you. They found you with high fever, lying on a thin straw mat in the cold of Winter. Their concern, that “you should buy a bed, otherwise you would not survive”, was brushed aside by you with these heroic words: “I will not buy a bed. I want to spend every *paisa* for book distribution.” Whether in the boiling summer heat of Delhi where you tried to distribute your books or *Back to Godhead* magazines, to the cold of New York in winter when you had only thin white Indian rubber shoes to walk in the snow, to the desperate living facilities in the Bowery, your life was full of indescribable austerities.

Once, I was sitting on a bench in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park to chant my rounds when an old, homeless black person approached me, pushing a shopping cart with his belongings. He looked at me for quite a long time, so I became somewhat worried when he said in a deep rumbling voice: “That man who kicked this off, this Krishna, he was a Cool Cat!” (words of appreciation common to the African American community). “I was living in the Bowery,” he continued, “and so was he, living in a house that was a complete mess.” Then he stopped for a moment and marvelled:

“But Jesus also, he was born in a barn...” and thus he walked away. I was moved by that comparison since I felt it to be so true.

Your life is a living example of a man who sacrificed everything to please Krishna, all the way from the humble beginning of Rādhā Dāmodar Temple, to your departure in 1977 in your living quarters at the Krishna Balaram temple in Vrindavana. I remember hearing at your bedside one of your godbrothers glorifying your huge achievement spreading Krishna consciousness all over the world, with you answering: “No, that was my duty. D – u – t – y”, you spelled it, letter by letter: “my duty to my spiritual master.”

That Ramanuja doctor from Kolkata told us at that time that no-one of us would be able to bear that pain that Śrīla Prabhupāda was experiencing in his body. But you are a pure devotee of God from birth under that iconic Jackfruit tree in 1896 in Kolkata, and thus there was nothing in your life to suffer for.

Indeed, you suffered only the reactions to the failures of your disciples, as explained by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Just as a king has to take responsibility for the faults of his ministers, and the husband has to take responsibility for the sins of his wife, a spiritual master has to accept the accumulated sins of his disciples. (*Hari Bhakti Vilas* 1.77)

In one of your purports to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* you explained: “When a devotee is in distress, he sees a condition of distress as but another feature of the Lord....” Indeed, this is how you taught us to deal with distress in our own lives...to see Krishna in all things in life, in distress as much as in death.

A devotee welcomes distress as but another feature of the Lord – *sarvam khalv idam Brahma* – a devotee can see that there is only the Supreme Personality of Godhead and no second entity.

True to your words as always, the your last sentence you spoke in this world, minutes before passing away was this one:

Everything moving and not moving – there is nothing but Krishna. This consciousness is called Krishna consciousness.

Uttering Krishna’s holy name, “Hare Krishna,” you passed away.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, it will take the world centuries to wake up to your glories. Five hundred years ago Śrī Krishna Chaitanya predicted:

I will personally preach and flood India with *Harinama saṅkīrtana*, chanting of the holy names. Then My *Senāpati bhakta* (great devotee commander) will come, to preach in different countries and flood the world with the chanting of Krishna's holy name.

That prediction of Lord Chaitanya, you fulfilled, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You created our good fortune, indeed you created the good fortune of the whole world. Thank you very much for coming.

My humble obeisances to you.

Your servant,

Prithu Dasa

Initiation: 1972 June. Hiedelberg, Germany

Rupa-vilasa Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances at your lotus feet. Thank you again and again for giving me your eternal shelter.

I was reading some statements by your guru mahārāja concerning his surrender to his guru mahārāja which inspired me about submission and surrender to you. Although your guru mahārāja was an extremely qualified and exalted soul, his approach to his spiritual master was one of determination, humility, and full surrender, deeply feeling that being accepted by Gaura Kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja was more important than anything else in this world:

“When out of false ego I was thinking ‘I am a great scholar of mathematics and philosophy—let any big *paṇḍita* come at any time, day or night, and I will cut his propositions to pieces,’ at that time I got the *darśana* of the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva. He ignored everything that was previously appreciated in me—my truthfulness, my moral and pious life, and my intellectualism—knowing them to be of little value. When I saw that he ignored whatever was good in me, I realized how good he himself must be, who could neglect so many ‘good qualities’ in me. What inconceivable wealth he possessed!”

“Being neglected by him, I understood that there was no one more fallen and contemptible than myself; that was my actual identity. The very things that I adjudged desiderata,¹ such as scholarship and upright character, this exalted soul regarded as valueless. I apprehended that within himself this noble personality possessed priceless treasure...”²

“Humbly and sincerely I prayed to the Supreme Lord for His mercy. Later, by His grace, I recognized that without receiving the blessings of this peerless saint and without serving him, nothing good could happen to me. When I accepted that and acted accordingly, and then received the causeless, unlimited grace of my *śrī-gurudeva* and refuge at his lotus feet, I deemed my life fulfilled.”³

“I have understood that if the people of this world do not receive the same jolt that I received from my *gurudeva*, then their consciousness will not awaken. Therefore I am telling everyone, ‘I am more foolish than anyone else on earth. Please, all of you, do not be foolish like me. Do not live your life within the limitations of calculating consciousness. Discuss *Vaikuṇṭha-kathā* and you will become a great person. I am telling you what I have realized to be supremely beneficial.”⁴

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have commented on this topic of full surrender to the spiritual master. You have stated that it requires both humility and fidelity to the order of the guru. Such surrender requires a lack of pretension about what I consider my own attainments

1 Something that is needed or wanted.

2 Sarasvatī Ṭhākura also said at that time, “You both (Gaura-kīṣora and Bhaktivinoda) are worshipers of the Crest Jewel of Debauchees [Kṛṣṇa]; therefore, why will you take mercy upon someone devoted to morality like me?” He then recited lines from a song from *Śaraṇāgati* by his father Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura: *karuṇā nā hoile, kāṇḍiyā kāṇḍiyā, prāṇa nā rākhibo āra*: “If you are not merciful to me, then I will constantly weep and weep, no longer being able to maintain my life.” (*Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura by Bhaktikusum Sraman Mahārāja*, Śrī Chaitanya Math 1983, pp. 72, 73)

3 When Sarasvatī Ṭhākura first approached Bābājī Mahārāja for initiation, he replied, “I once accepted a disciple, but he cheated me and went away. I will not make any further disciples.” (*Śrīla Prabhupādera Goloka-vāṇī*, a compilation of Bhaktisiddhānta Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura’s teachings, 2.10, spoken on the tirobhāvatīthi of Gaura-kīṣora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja in 1930, cited on p. 28 of *Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava* Vol. One by Bhakti Vikāsa Swami.

4 *Śrīla Prabhupādera Hari-kathāmṛtā* 1.61, cited in *Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava*, Vol. One by Bhakti Vikāsa Swami, p. 30.

and qualifications, as well as giving up the forlorn idea that I know something. The evidence that I have understood what submission to the guru is will be shown by my following your order as my life and soul. Your explanation about the value of scholarship, in relation to the qualification for becoming a devotee, is clear:

So Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was a great scholar. There is no doubt of it. But in spite of His becoming a great scholar, He is presenting Himself as a great fool. He says, “My Guru Mahārāja saw Me a great...[fool]” Even if one is a very great scholar, he has to abide by the decision of his spiritual master. **Even if one is very great scholar, and if his spiritual master says that “You are a great fool,” he should accept it. This is called full surrender.** For example, I’ll give you a practical [example]. My Guru Mahārāja was a very great scholar, and his Guru Mahārāja, from the literary point of view, he could not even sign his name, Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. And Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura asked Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura to accept Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja as his spiritual master, that: “You go and take your initiation from Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja.” So he thought that “I am a great scholar, and I am son of a magistrate, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and a great Vaiṣṇava. He’ll be very much pleased to accept me.” Of course, he was very much pleased. But in the beginning he refused. He refused. Because... Of course, that is only show. He was not proud. Just to teach us. Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī explained that “I was little proud. So I was thrice refused by Guru Mahārāja,” although he was the only disciple. **So scholarship is not a qualification of becoming a devotee. That is Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s teaching. Scholarship may help, but it is not necessary. Real necessity is that one should be humble and meek and follow the instruction of the spiritual master. This is the real qualification.**⁵

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thank you.

Your fallen servant,

Rupa-vilasa Dasa

Initiation: 1972 June. Dallas, USA

5 740313CC.VRN, Bhaktivedanta Vedabase 2003.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

What can I say I want to praise you in every way
You entered this world in a golden light
Opening our eyes redeeming our life
And speaking from my singular view
I am forever indebted to you
Gaurāṅga's message of love you have brought
Service to Rādhā/Kṛṣṇa Yugal, you have taught
But first the basic lessons you told
You are not this body you are pure spirit soul
While living in the bodily conception
Material happiness is just a deception
Like a man in delirium, how can he be saved
From the bodily conception in which he is enslaved
You brought the holy name, It is the cure
By chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa we will become pure
So, under your shelter and your merciful direction
I am aspiring to chant with love and affection
All glories to you service, all glories to your fame
All glories to your gift of the pure sweet Holy Name
Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare /
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

Your daughter and undeserving, very fallen aspiring servant,

Bhavatarini Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1972 June. LA, USA

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My obeisances onto you Divine Master.

*tad-vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evābhigacchet
samit-pāṇiḥ śrotṛyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham*

‘In order to learn that transcendental science, one must approach the bona-fide Spiritual Master in disciplic succession, fixed in the Absolute Truth.’ — *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1.2.12

“Today the ship is plying very smoothly. I feel today better. But I am feeling separation from Sri Vrindaban and my Lords Śrī Govinda, Gopinath, Rādhā Damodar. The only solace is Śrī Chaitanya Charitamrita in which I am tasting the nectarine of Lord Chaitanya’s Leela. I have left Bharat Bhumi just to execute the order of Sri Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati in pursuance of Lord Chaitanya’s order. I have no qualification, but I have taken up the risk just to carry out the order of His Divine Grace. I depend fully on Their mercy so far away from Vrindaban.” — Friday, September 10, 1965, the middle of the Atlantic Ocean

All glories, all glories, all glories to your divine appearance. Before I ever met you, I was most assuredly slowly decaying in this miserable world, not knowing much about anything. I had not the slightest notion what dangerous predicament I was really in. Sense gratification was all I knew and intently focused on as if my life depended on it.

Somehow by good fortune you miraculously showed up, not realizing you had to endure many hard struggles, to deliver this unique message of Godhead to the Western populace.

You appeared regally majestic, full of erudition, with a sublimely magnetic personality that attracted even the lowly fools and atheists. Your mission was in fact to smash the atheists, agnostics, scientists, speculators, and bogus gurus. You did and are still doing an excellent job on defeating all of those characters.

You radiated Vedic truth: One moment's look, all it took, perceiving our souls.

You taught us about true love, how to attain it, and at the same time keep a healthy distance from the poisonous Māyāvādīs.

Your everyday example helped us to detach ourselves from our false ego while encouraging us to engage wholeheartedly in unmotivated devotional service.

Your Divine Grace came to warn us that chasing after so-called happiness in this material world was not really a good idea, but rather it is implicating us further in more material misery and subsequent death.

You awakened us to the true meaning of life, by injecting real knowledge from the spiritual world and setting an example throughout your manifested *līlā*.

You shocked many personalities and audiences by your mere presence and your cutting message of *Bhagavad-gītā*. "We are not these bodies." "Simply rascal."

About hearing, you've stressed and stated numerous times that the most essential activity is hearing.

So the easiest process is simply hearing. Hearing of this *Bhagavad-gītā* or *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from the realized person, that will train up oneself, one, into the thoughts of the Supreme Being twenty-four hours, which will lead one ultimately, *anta-kāle*, to remember the Supreme Lord, and thus leaving this body, he will have a spiritual body, a spiritual body, just fit for association with the Lord. —February 19, 1966, New York

"Back in 1966 in New York, "So in the devotional service the first step is hearing, hearing submissively from the authoritative source and just to assimilate it and grasp it with our body, mind and intelligence." —November 30, 1966, New York

"To receive this light from Kṛṣṇa, one has to hear. Hearing is so important. Therefore Govinda dāsa says *śravaṇa*." —March 16, 1967, San Francisco

"We are opening so many centers just to give people chance of hearing about the transcendental message." —July 2, 1972, San Diego

“Hearing is so important. People cannot even hear, especially. They have become so disturbed, impatient; he cannot hear. It is pinching. The hearing becomes pinching. Māyā kicks him, “Get out, get out.” —February 7, 1974, Vṛndāvana

Please bless me to continue to daily hear your divine message.
All glories to Your Divine Grace.

Your lowly servant,

Ekanātha Dāsa

Initiation: 1972 June. London, UK

Gokulananda Dasa

Śrīla Prabhupāda is “*Krishna Preshtaya*” the Lord’s very beloved intimate associate, the *nitya-siddha mahā-bhāgavata* and divine ambassador from Krishna Loka. Sent by the Lord from within His inner circle of perfect servants, Śrīla Prabhupāda is the *śaktyāveśa* empowered instrument of the Lord chosen to be the modern saviour for all mankind.

Śrīla Prabhupāda has also helped to bring down into this Kali-yuga planet the entire culture of the spiritual world in its very essence: pure Krishna-*bhakti*, incarnated in his very person. All the spiritual opulences of the pure soul are gloriously manifested throughout his life’s miraculous achievements. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s life is the living proof of Lord Krishna’s desire to empower His intimate servants to be His perfect instruments of salvation, the living embodiments of His love and mercy. In His most generous incarnation of Patita Pāvana Śrī Chaitanyadev, our merciful Lord has also manifested Himself within the deeds and words of His via-media pure servants such as Śrīla Prabhupāda to uplift suffering mankind through the spreading of the divine blessing of the *saṅkīrtana* movement. Mahavandanayavatar Śrī Chaitanya specifically empowered Śrīla Prabhupāda with super-human organizational abilities to allow him to inspire his thousands of dedicated followers (through his *vaca* alone of letters etc.) to solidly establish the world (wide Hare Krishna movement to continue “saving mankind from godlessness”).

If we are to be successful in our individual and collective

efforts to do this great work, we can immerse our consciousness in the empowered utterances within Śrīla Prabhupāda's *vāñī*, which reveals in its most succinct and accessible expression the complete divine Gaura-vāñī. Śrīla Prabhupāda often stated that he did not alone write his books; rather they were dictated to him from within by the Lord Himself, so that the whole world can be blessed with the rare opportunity to become fully enlightened about Bhagavan Śrī Krishna's inconceivable perfections. Incarnated within Śrīla Prabhupāda's *vāñī* are Lord Krishna's own divine opulences and supreme abode, Krishna loka's eternal festival of love. We are all invited to experience that divine realm through our service connection to Śrīla Prabhupāda. And such is the supreme blessing which can be revealed to all generations by serving Śrīla Prabhupāda's desire to share these rare divine gifts in whatever way we can.

Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servant,

Gokulananda Dasa

Initiation: 1972 June. Portland, USA

Janakaraaja Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your mission to tell the world about Lord Śrī kṛṣṇa, The Supreme Personality of Godhead.

I have been listening to your disciple's remembrances of you each morning. I have listened to devotees who I have had some association with. I have been listening to godbrothers and sisters who I have never before met.

While their individual tales are fascinating I have noticed something that they all have in common: an overriding love for you. Great respect and love, and a desire to please you.

You passed on to us your guru maharaja's maxim: "...do not try to see God but act in such a way that God will see you".

I was reflecting today on what it means to know you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I was fortunate enough to have personally sat before you. To have

gone on morning walks with you. To have sat in your *darshan* room and had your *darshan* while you were in a relaxed intimate mood.

But the occasion on which I felt that I was closest to you was one day while I was on book distribution on Charing Cross Road in London.

I had been having a good day. I was not like some of my god-brothers and sisters who found book distribution “fun”. I found it austere. Really austere.

So on this day I was having what was probably my best day on book distribution. I had done many books and was having the experience that I am sure all your devotees have when surrendered to your mission.

I felt like I was being guided from within. I felt like I knew everyone I spoke to. I felt that I could see their lives, their aspirations and thoughts as clear as the signs saying Charing Cross Road.

In other words I felt that the Lord in my heart was helping me and bestowing on me what could only be called mystic powers. To read others’ thoughts, to control their minds.

This mind control could only be used to bring people to Kṛṣṇa. As soon as I started to try to use it for any other purpose it vanished but on this day I was using it correctly and it was growing.

I have seen your disciples draw persons across the road. Sell them a book and send them on their way without them really knowing what was happening. Such is the mystic potency of one in tune with the Supersoul.

I was beginning to experience that dynamic relationship with the Lord in the heart on that day in London on Charing Cross Road. I was buzzing.

I remember that I had a nice encounter with some gentleman and he went away with one of your books and a smile on his face. It was getting to the end of the day and I was feeling tired.

I looked at the book in my hand, a copy of which this gentleman had just received, and I turned it over thinking, what I had just given him, and appreciating the knowledge that was now his for the taking.

On the back of the book was your picture. Without even meaning to, I glanced at it.

Somehow or other you were there looking at me, smiling at me. Acknowledging me.

I have thought about that experience ever since that day some

50 years ago, because in that moment I felt closer to you than at any other, including all the times I had had your personal *darshan*.

Standing on Charing Cross Road giving out your books to the innocent people searching for the meaning of their lives.

I have recently understood why that moment was so special. It was because you were seeing me. Not because I was seeing you, but because, inadvertently, I had acted in a way that you had seen me.

Of course I do not know how this is possible. You have so many people who think of you so often but you have said that if we are thinking of you, you are thinking of us.

So what was so special about that day? It was that you were thinking of me and I was conscious of it.

I guess that's the specialness of that day. That my service had brought me to a level of consciousness whereby I could be conscious of you being conscious of me and it totally blew my mind.

It is in that realisation that I was closest to you Śrīla Prabhupāda. You were smiling at me and revealing in that something of your divine self.

Now of course this is revealed according to our surrender and I guess that was my moment of peak surrender and you smiled at me. You knew me totally and you showed me what it means to exchange love with a transcendental personality.

Of course this sounds like a moment in time that has gone but I do not think that is the case. I think this was a moment in time when you showed me how, inconceivably, one can have a loving exchange with the Supreme Personality of servitor Godhead which must be what it is like to exchange love with the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.

In showing me that you have set the bench-mark for the beginning of my journey into self-realisation. You gave me a taste of my eternal relationship with the Lord and His devotees that I will never, I pray, forget.

It was just a taste but it was the peak experience of my whole life without doubt.

So after that glimpse, I know that the spiritual life that you are offering to all persons is real. I know that it is amazing. I know that what I experienced was just the beginning or not even the beginning but a glimpse of the beginning and all I can do is fall at your feet and pray that one day all I will do is to serve your mission with all my heart so that you will see me doing so and smile at me with love.

Your worthless aspiring servant,
Janakaraja Dasa
Initiation: 1972 June. London, UK

Vishvadevi Devi Dasi

I offer my most humble and respectful obeisances at your lotus feet, my dearmost Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Everyday I thank Krishna, Lord Nityānanda and Lord Chaitanya to have blessed me to have you as my eternal spiritual master.

Kali-yuga has accelerated noticeably these past years, which makes us realize all the more what you have come to offer everyone on this planet; Pure unalloyed love of Krishna and the unique chance and opportunity to reinstate our eternal position in His devotional service, which as stated in the *Nectar of Devotion*, and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* [Madhya 19.151]

“Devotional service can only be obtained through the mercy of a pure devotee, there is no other way”, Krishna Himself declares it to Arjuna to be the goal and conclusion of the *Bhagavad-gītā* in the most sacred and confidential exchange at the end of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Reading your books, where you have written the supreme knowledge of the Absolute Truth in its entirety, which resonates deeply in our souls, and makes someone like me engaged in however small a capacity.

I am so grateful for the time in Vrindavana with you Śrīla Prabhupāda, Even at the time I could not believe my good fortune, to be engaged in the service that I love under your guidance in the Dham, going to the morning class which you gave, walking from Taporja House to the temple in the late afternoon, along with the cows coming back from the Jamunā to have darshan of Krishna Balarama, and be able to see you after the evening *arati* speaking with Bhagatji, the two of you alone on your roof.

And in the morning, you always went for your walk on the then Chatikara Road, now Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, and asked us about our different services. You asked to see what dresses were being made. After bringing them to your house, and after a merciful appreciation of the work, you told me that it should last for many years. Something I always try to follow.

You wanted to ensure that everything should be perfect. After

accomplishing the magnificent project of the opening of Krishna Balarama temple in the midst of Vrindavana and the Smarta Brahmans, you wanted the highest standard by training us personally.

It is impossible to ever repay you Śrīla Prabhupāda. All I can do is beg Lord Nityānanda to be allowed to be eternally at your lotus feet, the ultimate shelter. Also, as only by pleasing you will Krishna be pleased.

Forgive me for the offences I have committed at your lotus feet, at the lotus feet of the Deities, the Dhams, and the Vaiṣṇavas, so I may always endeavour to be worthy of being your disciple.

Your most grateful humble servant and eternal spiritual daughter,

Vishvadevi Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1972 June. Hiedelberg, Germany

Vaisnavananda Dasa

Our hero, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

‘Everybody needs a hero’ is the age-old American axiom, and yes, Prabhupāda, you told us that to worship or glorify someone eminent is a natural propensity for human beings. In comparison to the prominent icons of the world, viz., Einstein, Marx, Gandhi, Shakespeare, who is more prominent than you, Śrīla Prabhupāda? You are the World Ācārya, the Universal Teacher who can deliver us from birth and death! Certainly, awarding liberation from the mire of this material world is beyond the power of the aforementioned so-called prominent icons. You are the real icon Śrīla Prabhupāda, who has presented to the Western world the foremost transcendental knowledge of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *saṁpradāya*, *acintya bheda-bheda tattva*, the philosophy of simultaneously oneness and difference. Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and the previous *ācāryas* have introduced knowledge that surpasses science, mathematics, medicine, politics, Law, etc. And what is that knowledge? It is the knowledge that we are not the physical body, but spirit soul part and parcel of God, and our eternal constitutional position is to serve Him... Present and future historians will note and broadcast the paramount importance of your priceless contribution to humanity i.e., introducing the sublime science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Hence you will be notably recognized by the world at large as the true and foremost everlasting icon of the world! So, on this auspicious day of your divine appearance day, *Vyāsa-pūjā*, your disciples, grand-disciples, and sincere followers embrace the occasion to heartily glorify you. We thank you for the immeasurable kindness you have bestowed upon us, providing the opportunity to go back home, back to Godhead. And for this benevolent gift, you are : Our hero, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your fallen disciple,

Vaisnavananda Dasa

Initiation: 1972 July. Atlanta, USA

Ali Kṛṣṇa Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, our divine master and father,

I offer my obeisances at your lotus feet with all the humility and devotion present in my heart, and with the awareness that I will never be able to reciprocate adequately for your precious gifts. Nevertheless, I would like to express my deepest gratitude, hoping that my meditation on your benevolence and magnanimity may help me to appreciate each day more my fortune and saves me from being touched, even remotely, by some kind of forgetfulness or ingratitude.

Actually, it is very easy to feel deep gratitude for you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, because I am made of your gifts, and it is also very natural, like taking a breath of fresh air. Among the innumerable gifts you carried in your suitcase when you came to the West, three very potent items come first to my mind: the holy name, the sacred vedic texts, and the sanctified food. The potency of these three gifts is so extraordinary that even a light touch of one of them can save anyone from living an ignorant life and dying in oblivion. I would like to take here the opportunity to show with two examples their practical and overwhelming effects.

One of our guests at the Sunday feast in Villaggio Hare Krishna regularly takes home *mahā-prasāda* sweets. Once he brought some of these sweets to one of his work colleagues for the benefit of his wife, who was in a coma for many months due to a serious car accident. After writing on a sheet of paper the words of the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*, he gave the paper and the *prasāda* to the colleague

with the advice to recite the names into his wife's ears and put the sweets near her hospital bed for at least seven days (he thought that was the time limit for the sweets not to turn stale). He also told him that the holy names and the sanctified food represent the Supreme Absolute Truth, therefore those who take shelter of them receive the benedictions and realizations otherwise impossible to obtain. The colleague followed precisely the instructions he had received, and his wife reawakened from coma after about one week. When she was asked about the cause of her coming back to life, she said that she never heard and smelled anything similar, and the desire to hear that sound and taste that aroma was the impetus for reawakening.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, will I also have one day, by your grace, a speck of the faith that our Sunday guest had for the *mahā-mantra* and the *mahā-prasāda*?

You have translated for us with great care, pain and joy, sacred books like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*, and these essential Vedic texts are waiting to reach the right persons and make their life meaningful. Here is one example.

"It was a tranquil morning in a small town in central Italy, with only a few old people walking in the street, when I noticed the town hall with offices and I thought it would be a good place to distribute some books. Unfortunately the entrance was permitted only with facial identification. I put my face in front of the video camera and I said 'Hare Krishna!' I heard some crackling sounds and a digitalized voice saying 'Access allowed'. 'It is a good sign,' I thought, 'somebody must be waiting for Prabhupāda's books.' Inside I saw many office doors, I entered one, I closed the door behind me and I said to the lady sitting at the desk: 'I brought you the *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is.' I noticed the expression of surprise on her face and I thought: 'She does not know what I am talking about'. But to my astonishment she said: 'How did you know that I was waiting for this book? Today I was supposed to start my first online lesson on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, but yesterday night my teacher died, and the program has been canceled. And now you are here! Incredible! Wonderful! Now I will study your master's *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is.' "

Thank you, dearmost Śrīla Prabhupāda, for allowing us to serve your mission. Is there anything more joyful, useful, poetic, beautiful, heroic, encouraging, valid, authentic, altruistic, brilliant, perfect and sublime than being a simple instrument in your hands while you direct the orchestra that is changing the heart of the world?

Hoping to become finally a dedicated servant of your lotus feet,

Ali Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāśī

Initiation: 1972 July. Paris, France

Gauragopala Dāśa

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

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

Śrī kṛṣṇa Caitanya, Prabhu Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita, Gadādhara, Śrīvāsādi gaura bhakta vrinda.

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

Again, thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for bringing the teachings of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Lord Kṛṣṇa to the Western world 57 years ago (1965).

You have taught us that Kṛṣṇa only comes “once” as His ORIGINAL Vrindavana form at the end of a Dvāpara-yuga in every day of Brahmā.

And also comes as the combination of Rāḍhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa, known as Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, also only “once” in the Kali-yuga just after Kṛṣṇa’s appearance in the same period of Brahmā’s day.

There are many, many expansions of Kṛṣṇa – from Lord Rāmacandra to Lord Narsingadeva, etc, but these two here have special significance.

The first is Kṛṣṇa as His original Vrindavana form, and then Lord Caitanya, who is the most merciful Lord who comes to save the most fallen souls in the following Kali-yuga just after Kṛṣṇa’s appearance.

Both come only ONCE every 8 billion 640 million years.

The Lord says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.7)

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya
glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya*

“Whenever and wherever there is a decline in religious practice, O descendant of Bhārata, and a predominant rise of irreligion—at that time I descend Myself.”

Whenever Kṛṣṇa comes, once in a day of Brahmā, He comes to the house of Nanda Mahārāja in Vṛndāvana. Kṛṣṇa is the master of all creation (*sarva loka maheśvaram*) Bg. 5.29.

Therefore, not only in the neighbourhood of Nanda Mahārāja’s estate, but all over the universe—and in all the other universes—musical sounds celebrated the auspicious arrival of the Lord.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: “Now is the term of Vaivasvata Manu, during which Lord Caitanya appears.

First Lord Kṛṣṇa appears at the close of the Dvāpara-yuga of the twenty-eighth divya yuga, and then Lord Caitanya appears in the Kali-yuga of the same divya-yuga.

Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya appear once in each day of Brahmā, or once in fourteen *manv-antarās*, each of seventy-one divya yugas in duration.

From the beginning of Brahmā’s day of 4,320,000,000 years, six Manus appear and disappear before Lord Kṛṣṇa appears.

Thus, 1,975,320,000 years of the day of Brahmā elapse before the appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa. This is an astronomical calculation according to solar years.” (Cc. *Adi* 3.10, Purport)

Śrīla Prabhupāda: “The undifferentiated Absolute Truth, the original Supreme Personality, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, incarnates in this material world once in every day of Lord Brahmā—that is once every 8,640,000,000 solar years—to shower His mercy upon both His surrendered devotees and the atheistic non-devotees.

He protects His devotees and slays the atheistic demons, thus giving the latter troublesome release, so to speak, in impersonal liberation. The *Bhagavad-gītā*, on the other hand, teaches liberation through devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

The only way to obtain this devotional service is to take full shelter of the spiritual authority, the guru, who is coming in the line of a proper disciplic succession.

Those who toil without worshiping the spiritual master will find that all their endeavors are futile.”—*Renunciation Through Wisdom* 4.5

Śrīla Prabhupāda: “Actually this is exhibited when Kṛṣṇa came. Kṛṣṇa comes here, God in His original form, in one day of Brahmā. These are very long, long narration, but first of all try to understand yourself.

What is your nature? Then you will understand God automatically.

Or if you are so advanced that you can understand God, then you can understand your nature also.

Just like God is gold mine, and I am a gold ring. So the chemical composition of the gold ring and the chemical composition of the gold mine is the same. This is the position.

Qualitatively we are one. Quantitatively we are different. Quantity, God’s quantity, God’s power, God’s opulence, God’s riches, God’s beauty, God’s wisdom, they are very, very, very, very great than ours.

That is the difference between God and us.

Now try to understand your constitutional position. Don’t think that after this body is finished, or we meet death, then everything is finished, as it is going on.

The greatest mistake, the world is going on, on the mistaken platform. They do not know what is going to happen after death. There is no education. There is no department of knowledge in the universities, what is going to happen after death.” (Lecture on Bg. 4.1, Delhi, November 10, 1971)

Śrīla Prabhupāda: “Just like we have got a fixed time for the

sunrise. Everyone knows that in the morning at 6:30 there will be sunrise. That is certain.

Similarly, in the *śāstras* there is description when Kṛṣṇa comes down, descends in this universe. In one day of Brahmā at the end of Dvāpara-yuga... Brahmā's days are described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *sahasra-yuga-paryantam ahar yad brahmaṇo viduḥ*" (Bg. 8.17).

Forty-three lakhs of years multiplied by one thousand becomes one day of Brahmā. So forty-three lakhs thousand times, add another forty-three lakhs times thousand—this is the period after which Kṛṣṇa comes. (Lecture on Bg. 13.3, Hyderabad, April 19, 1974)

Srila Prabhupāda: "So Kṛṣṇa comes after this period after one day of Brahma, He appears".

Devotee: "Śrīla Prabhupāda, does Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu also appear every day of Brahma?"

Srila Prabhupāda: "Yes, following Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa comes in the Dvāpara-yuga. There are four periods of each yuga: Sattva, Tretā, Dvāpara, Kali. So Kṛṣṇa comes at the end of Dvāpara yuga, and Caitanya Mahāprabhu comes in the Kali-yuga." (Lecture on SB 6.1.3, Melbourne, May 22, 1975)

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "So Kṛṣṇa comes. *Yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata, tadātmānaṁ sṛjāmy aham* (Bg. 4.7)

This is the process. Every living entity is part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. He belongs to the Kṛṣṇa's family. Kṛṣṇa's family.

This is our original position. Vṛndāvana means whole Kṛṣṇa's family. Even the birds, beast, trees, plants, water—all belong to the Kṛṣṇa's family.

Therefore anything in Vṛndāvana is as good as Kṛṣṇa. Even the dust of Vṛndāvana is as good as Kṛṣṇa. This is the philosophy, Absolute Truth.

So Kṛṣṇa, out of His causeless mercy, He comes. At a certain

interval during one day of Brahma, He comes. He exhibits His *līlā*, that “Anyone who desires to go back to home, back to Godhead, they can enjoy with Me like this.” This is Kṛṣṇa’s mission.

“Come on. Why you are playing here and suffering this *māyā*’s play? Come to the real play.” This is Kṛṣṇa’s mission. *Tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mām eti kaunteya* (Bg. 4.9). Kṛṣṇa comes: “Just try to understand Me, why I come.” (Lecture on SB 6.2.16, Vṛndāvana, September 19, 1975)

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda for all this wonderful knowledge all found in your books, letters, morning walk discussions, and room conversations you gave us when you were physically present.

Thank you for guiding me through different times, and always having faith in you to keep me on the path back home back to Godhead.

All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda, my eternal spiritual master.

Your fallen servant, yet always aspiring to find ways to serve you more,

Gauragopala Dasa

Initiation: 1972 July. Sydney, Australia

Janmanalaya Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Please accept my humble obeisances at Your lotus feet.

Again and again, I recall and remember these moments of your presence here with us, your arrivals, your morning walks, lectures. You are the *āśraya-vigraha*, and without your shelter, Śrīla Prabhupāda, existence is frightening. Frightening to such a degree, that I crumple and feel always confused, desperate, empty and apathetic, like a dead rock. “You are children of the nectar world, *amrita putra*”, you call. I don’t know what made me so fortunate to hear your call. “Children of the nectar world” ... yes, that resonates in the heart. How to be connected with that nectar world? By *dāsyam*! By pure service. But not directly to Krishna. That is *jīva*’s disease. We think, oh, I can have direct connection with Krishna. That’s not the real Krishna; that’s my projection, hallucination, fiction. I don’t get more Krishna by going directly to Krishna. I would faint and burn

long time before I get there. Krishna is that intense. His beauty, His love is so intense.

And so is yours. Still, we felt and feel sheltered through the magnitude of your Krishna conception. Your compassion nourishes us – first *prasādam*, then *kīrtan*, then *Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, the nectar world, the real nectar world, not a “hotsh potsh”.

How can I glorify you today, Śrīla Prabhupāda? It feels beyond my capacity. When we worship Gaṅgā, we take a palmful of gaṅgā water and offer that to Mother Gaṅgā. Similarly if I want to glorify you, I have to quote your words and offer them back to you. Or I sing the *Gurv-aṣṭaka* by Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, quote words and songs by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. or other *Ācāryas*.

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, accept this tiny, atomic *jīva* and shelter me, eternally. I aspire to be an authentic, real disciple of yours. You make me feel like you are my father, and I your son.

Thank you.

Janmanalaya Dasa

Initiation: 1972 July. Paris, France

Sakshi Gopal Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances at your lotus feet.

Thank you for accepting me as your disciple. Even though a full fifty years have passed since my initiation in 1972, I still fail to comprehend the extent of the good fortune you have offered me ever since that day. Despite my present ineptitude, I know that one day, by your unconditional grace and whatever earnestness and sincerity to serve you and your mission that I can muster, that understanding will eventually manifest within my heart.

Meanwhile, the workings of the material energy are a constant reminder that this world of birth and death is no place to feel settled. It is just as your own guru-mahārāja said: the realm of the “cheaters and the cheated”. Nothing here is as it seems. It is neither secure nor trustworthy and the whole show can be swept away at any moment. The only shelter is what you continue to offer us where, living and dying, we take full shelter of you and your instructions. That is the best and only way to secure the brightest possible future. Please

don't allow me to squander the opportunity on offer. Human life is the rarest gift and is the gateway to perfection when blessed by your loving grace.

Begging to take full shelter at your lotus feet,

Your fallen servant,

Sakshi Gopal Dasa

Initiation: 1972 August. London, UK

Karlapati Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace. All glories to all of the Vaisnava *ācāryas*! All glories to the *Saṅkīrtana* movement and Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi!

My offering to you: Every moment I'm trying to remember your instructions, to act on them and to be absorbed in chanting the *mahā-mantra* certainly more than the minimum — double and triple when I can. If only I could never forget Kṛṣṇa — not even for a moment. What a blessing that would be. My offering would be so much more complete if there was never any lapse or a moment's absorption in matter to interrupt it. That's the point — pure devotional service is uninterrupted and unmotivated. Even while doing service, the details can be intense and overwhelming. It's so easy to forget and think WE are the doer and the controller. Māyā is so strong. Thank you for the opportunity to realize that I have no remembrance or ability, except what Kṛṣṇa gives me.

Please bless me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to be absorbed in pure devotional service and that the pure holy name will descend and dance on my tongue and in my heart. Then I can really be of some service to you in helping myself and other souls realize their eternal identity. I want to be like a pure conduit of mercy.

These desires had no form until you gave them shape. What wonderful news! God is a person! The perfect person to love. You revealed in your books and lectures and in your association and service, a world, a transcendental world, beyond our mind and senses, that we could aspire to be a part of.

This offering is not about my credit. It is about yours. You said your miracles were us, "your dancing white elephants". You took

us from the depths of Kali-yuga mentalities and engaged us in the Lord's service. For those who maintained their faith in you, success is assured. Of course this success is on a time schedule we are not privy to knowing — one lifetime, many? We have to sincerely continue taking shelter of you and pray for your mercy.

Just knowing what should be done isn't enough, though. There has to be "*The Change of Heart*" as you titled one of your books, where one follows in your footsteps, and aspires for full realization of what you are teaching. What is that? That we have an eternal relationship with the Supreme Personality Godhead — He's a person and He wants our unconditional love! We're His eternal servants and if we follow your teachings we WILL develop love for Him. I'm counting on it.

I say teaching, present tense. You are still teaching and guiding us from within your books, your lectures, videos of you, your deity forms, your devotees and other Vaisnavas and pure devotees of the Lord, and from within our heart — purifying us and inspiring us to keep on chanting and serving. Your physical body may be out of our vision, but you are not out of hearts.

You came to the West. You came on the order of your spiritual master with the desire to preach, write, and distribute your books, and to engage and help us lost souls under the material modes of nature to participate in the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and to find out who we really are and what is the goal of life in this world. You came to engage us in assisting you with your mission and in serving you so we would learn what satisfaction and joy there is in serving in spiritual life. Most people, even many so-called religious people, don't know about that experience. We heard you, like a voice from deep within our past and our hearts, and we came to you and stayed. I for one felt I had no other choice if I were to be true to my "self." Thank you so much for your compassion and kindness.

Now, that I am in the final stages of householder life, I remember that my home isn't mine... it really belongs to you and Kṛṣṇa. It is in my care to be used in the service of spirit, not matter, and certainly not for the satisfaction of my temporary senses. What lasting joy is there in temporary gratification of the senses? Thank you for helping me have that realization and so many more. Please bless me with many more to come.

It is because of you and the teachers you have sent me since

your departure from this realm that I still feel internal guidance and Kṛṣṇa's protection. How can I thank you enough except to chant more and to pray more for service?

Your eternal servant,

Karlapati Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1972 September. LA, USA

Vaninatha Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Thank you so much for kindly accepting me as your disciple in the early '70s. Madhudvisa Maharaja made a comment in the storefront ISKCON temple in San Francisco, when I was a brand new devotee. "Just give one lifetime to Krishna and see what is the result". I was 23 when I first moved into the temple. Now I am 75. In the intervening 52 years, we have seen the truth of the Vedic scriptures, as related to us in your books, come into full view.

To understand that Vishnu (Krishna) is Godhead is only the beginning. To comprehend how each of us is eternally the servant of the servant of Godhead constitutes the energy required for passing through the eight layers of false ego, whereupon we can soar freely into the Vaikuṇṭha and Goloka realms. I am still just a tiny ant in comparison to many of your mighty warrior disciples, so I still need your mercy. Kindly do not neglect this tiny soul, whose only desire is to satisfy your every wish.

Your humble servant of your servants,

Vaninatha Dasa

Initiation: 1972 December. LA, USA

Adideva Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances, All glories to your holy feet which trod the globe many times to help us rid our hearts of many dirty things entangling and frustrating our path back to our eternal home.

You came into my life via your teachings like clear rain water which washes away confusion and doubt.

Upon meeting you, your spotless character stood out like a beacon guiding lost ships at sea.

Your first words described Kṛṣṇa like the sun which shines even behind the darkest clouds.

Your instructions are like keys releasing me from engagement: chant, follow these four gifts of freedom, study my books, associate with devotees, be happy in Krishna consciousness.

Simple instructions for a simple life of service and advancement towards Kṛṣṇa's eternal home.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your servant,

Adideva Dasa

Initiation: 1972. Austin, Texas, USA

Sevananda Dasa

Feeling gratitude towards you, Śrīla Prabhupāda

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

By Your Divine Grace, I feel only gratitude and grace!

Now, in my old age, my days and thoughts are filled with feelings, memories and prayers of feeling gratitude and Your Grace.

I frantically searched for you for nearly two years, when you sent out the call on the Radio in 1969 with *The Hare Krishna Mantra* single. But there was no Center, or Temple in my home city, when I came running. I was only 16 years old, but Even then I felt so grateful and thankful.

Though, I should start much earlier to speak about gratitude to you.

I only know because you told us that, “Krishna asked me to go down to the material world and to write some books about Him. I said Oh no, Krishna, I don’t want to go. It is a horrible place! Please do not make me go! Then, Krishna repeated Himself...this time more forcefully. You just go down and write your books. I will provide everything which you could possibly require. I will give you palaces and servants to await you wherever you go!”

Therefore, you are His Divine Grace and I am eternally grateful!

I am filled with feelings of gratefulness and thankfulness to you for accepting me into your eternal, spiritual family, giving family and purpose!

There are no words to adequately express my thankfulness and gratitude to you! Our words are too paltry and small! You are after all, the external manifestation of The Supersoul... Paramātmā and, the paramount expression of Lord Krishna’s greatness and love for His parts and parcels. You are the person, *Bhāgavat*! You truly ‘walked the talk’!

My heart is overflowing to the brim with thankfulness for you. Of course, it is above our computing ability and ‘Pay-Grade to understand how you, though being a *Nitya-Siddha*, *Mahā-Bhāgavat*, *Uttama-Adhikary*, pure devotee of Lord Krishna, can intentionally lower his acting level to that of *Madhyama-Adhikary* for preaching or to apparently have to undergo a long lifetime of apparent struggling and apparent suffering in your transcendental *līlā*. It was illusory, meaning real in the sense that it happened, though being real, it was simultaneously not real, considering your *Uttama-Adhikary*, transcendental nature.

Gratitude, as a word is not enough! It is not gratis, but must necessarily include love, humility and service too.

Your compassion and mercy are inconceivable. You described that our good fortune was inconceivable and beyond all human calculation. Just as a turtle swimming underwater in The great ocean for a very long time, goes to surface to finally take a breath of air, and just at that exact time and place a log was floating by at sea with a knot-hole in it, which our head – apparently by accident – stuck right into and through that knot-hole, allowing us to take a breath. The chances of that happening are incalculable. In fact however, it was not simply an impossible chance occurrence. It was actually your incalculable and inconceivable mercy on us. So, gratitude is indeed, too small a word!

You always taught us that, "...upon achieving a high degree of purification in this life, we would then join Lord Krishna on His transcendental roadshow with His entire Vrindavana, Mathura and Dwaraka entourage in another universe for our further purification and training." I always felt grateful for that insight.

However, on at least two occasions, once with Brahmananda and Gargamuni, and one time to Jagadisha and Jayatīrtha Prabhus, you said that, "In my next life, I will go down to the Pātāla region to preach to the demons. Would you like to come? (In both cases)Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda! "Very good!", you replied. "Yes, all the great *Ācāryas* are like that, eternally preaching." This also is beyond my 'Computer Model and Pay Grade' to speculate on! Who can understand the transcendental characteristics, pastimes and qualities of Lord Krishna and His pure devotees? Nevertheless, I am filled with amazement and gratitude and looking forward to joining your service to you and with you in the future.

Hoping to become and begging to remain your eternal servitor,

Sevananda Dasa

Initiation: 1972. New Vrindavana, West Virginia, USA

Current location: Taipei, Taiwan

dassevananda@gmail.com

Sukla Devi Dasi

Our beloved Spiritual Master A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami
Śrīla Prabhupāda,

MEMORIES 1970'S

The temple had fallen silent as I walked the halls. With the exception of a few devotees, all had crashed into their beds. After finishing up my service on the altar I turned to the washing of Śrīla Prabhupāda's clothes. Along with those of Satsvarūpa Mahārāja, whose I had already folded. I considered it a daily blessing.

Further in the distance I could hear the tap tap tap of the typewriter as Satsvarūpa Mahārāja, rewound the tape again and again to be sure nothing was missed as he edited the recent translations stopping only briefly as I dropped off his clean clothes.

Returning to my task, I began ironing Śrīla Prabhupāda's clothes.

Wet to dry as he instructed – a tradition which began a few years earlier on my first attempt at this service after someone had stolen his shirt off the line, with the sound of Śrīla Prabhupāda still awake translating across the hall filling my ears.

As was frequent, it was a cold night in Melbourne. The warm steam from the iron gave some relief as I carried on, contemplating all that needed to be done by morning, but the ecstatic bliss of knowing Śrīla Prabhupāda was amongst us elevated any tiredness to enthusiasm.

Now when I think how casually I gave away food remnants, garlands from his room, and the occasional twig toothbrush, I reflect how little we understood the short time we were to have with such an exalted associate of the Lord walking amongst us showering upon us his LOVE, MERCY and smiles, let alone the volumes of knowledge that flowed from his lips.

Only now while listening to the daily readings of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, the virtuosity of words that were emanating from your mouth in those quiet, cold nights is beyond any comprehension. The knowledge that flowed whilst we slept can never be repaid.

Our spiritual master is the ocean of mercy. The gift that you gave, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to us is now slow-manifesting all over the world like a multi-faceted jewel whose rays reach the far corners of this planet.

In a period of eclectic international culture made ubiquitous by the communications revolution, the chanting of the holy name continues in all its forms – book distribution, readings and lectures are spread far and wide. Prasādam distribution, along with all the other devotional activities, are a result of the Lord's grace and your mercy alone.

And now on the shores of the swiftly flowing Mother Gaṅgā emerges an iconic building of traditional beauty piercing through the tranquil morning chants and song. Its golden spiral gleaming as it reflects the rising sun for filling a prophecy and your desire.

Thus I now pray fervently to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Designer that He will inspire me in my tasks and that my service as a designer on the team for the TOVP Museum may please you in some small way and make up for any creases left in your *dhoti*.

Your eternal servant,

Sukla Dasi ACBSP

Initiation: 1973 February. Melbourne, Australia

Bhrgupati Dasa

In New Dwaraka, every Sunday morning, we listen to a lecture given by Śrīla Prabhupāda. I always leave the temple room feeling a lot more Krishna conscious then when I went in. This morning towards the end of Śrīla Prabhupāda's lecture, I thought to myself, 'why don't we just listen to Śrīla Prabhupāda's lectures every morning at the time of *Bhāgavatam* class?' Of course I know there's a good reason. But we would be listening to someone who was able to attract to and engage so many fallen conditioned souls in devotional service, something that only an incredibly, advanced, elevated and empowered devotee can do. Someone who was intensely loved by his followers for doing that because they knew his motive was compassion, and that he made great personal sacrifice to do it.

I dread to think what my life would be if I hadn't come in contact with Śrīla Prabhupāda's Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. I'd probably be dead or in prison. When I was distributing books at the airport, sometimes people would say to me 'get a life.' I would think, 'I got a life, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave me a life, a good one'. I'm very grateful to Śrīla Prabhupāda. I enjoy distributing his books, reading them, participating in *kīrtans*, associating with devotees and honoring *prasādam*. I pray that my appreciation for the 'Matchless Gift' Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us will increase, and that I can continue trying to be one of his followers.

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your servant,

Bhrgupati Dasa

Initiation: 1973 April. NY, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this auspicious occasion of your appearance.

Your teachings and example inspire us on and on. Thank you for your courage and for all you have done for people all over the world.

The Sādhū and the Skeptic

In India, a learned *sādhū*,
armed with orders from his guru,
set out to fulfill his master's words:
"Take this Krishna consciousness
to English speakers in the West
and from there, every corner of the world."

He diligently took the task
of bringing this command to pass
and published several brilliant English books.
Though English there is spoken widely,
most in India denied him,
scarcely finding time to take a look.

And then one skeptic, very pleased
with all he knew of West and East,
encouraged the great *sādhū* to recant.
"If people here have no interest,
what of the people in the West?"
"And yet," the *sādhū* countered, "They can chant."

"You've never sailed," the skeptic claimed.
"If you go West, you'll have to change
and give up wearing robes for wearing pants.
And once you reach a Western port
you'll have to eat with knife and fork."
"Not me," replied the *sādhū*, "yet they'll chant."

"The people there," the skeptic claimed,
"are really, more or less, insane.
Are you aware of how they rave and rant?"

They smoke and drink and misbehave.
How can such lowly souls be saved?"
"No matter," said the *sādhū*, "They can chant."

"Their sense of truth," the skeptic cried,
"is microscopic in its size.
Their past and current pious deeds are scant.
Their outlook is most negative.
How can they take what you can give?"
"No matter," said the *sādhū*, "They can chant."

"If you expect," the skeptic roared,
"such people to observe the four
essential regulations, they just can't.
They're sinful to their chromosomes.
Most likely they'll say, 'Just go home.'"
"No matter," said the *sādhū*, "They can chant."

"They're carnivores, and sexually,
they have no sense of decency,
as they sit idly by and smoke some plant.
The gamble you propose to take
is therefore just a huge mistake."
"They'll change," replied the *sādhū*, "when they chant."

"Much better that you take your stand
With people in our sacred land
for whom the Vedic culture is extant."
"In India," the *sādhū* smiled,
"the people follow Western styles.
They'll join in when the Western people chant."

His next point made the skeptic start.
"Lord Krishna lives within the heart
Of every person, elephant, and ant.
He is the friend of everyone,
regardless of what they have done.
To reach Him, all one needs to do is chant.

"Goswami Rūpa has decreed,
and done so quite emphatically,

that preachers never need be hesitant.
The Vedic rules and paradigms
will manifest in course of time
for one who thinks of Krishna and just chants."

"And finally," the *sādhū* said,
My guru's promise fills my head.
He said, "Gaurāṅga's movement will enchant."
If he likes, Western boys and girls,
and all the people of the world,
will gain Gaurāṅga's blessings as they chant."

The skeptic scoffed and walked away.
"It's useless," he was heard to say,
"to teach the *Gītā* in a land of sin.
One's birth defines one's purity
and chance to reach divinity."
And no one ever heard from him again.

The *sādhū*, on the other hand,
sailed boldly to the Western lands
and very soon he managed to implant
the seeds of love of Godhead in
communities of lowly men
by somehow just inducing them to chant.

The *sādhū's* legacy is such
that even now, the lowly touched
by his ecstatic words feel love of God.
And in this dark and dreadful age,
they reach the sacred Vaishnav stage,
and sing out, "*Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!*"

Your servants at ISKCON Gainesville
(Written by Kalakantha Dasa ACBSP)

Initiation: 1973 May. Portland, USA

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Please accept my humble obeisances!

Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth. (Bg. 4.34)

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for enriching my life and widening my horizons, to say the least.

Without Your Divine Grace, all aspects of my life would have gone unexplored. How would any of us ever have found the Absolute Truth?

Words cannot express the transformation you've brought into my tiny existence. It is so awesome that even after over 50 years Your divine mercy is still exponentially spreading all over this world.

Tirelessly I give thanks to you, Srila Prabhupada!

So humbled and most grateful for Your presence in this world of birth, death, old age, and disease!! How merciful, how brave, how compassionate, how tolerant and most loving, coupled with a towering humility.

Oh dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, how You showered us with abundant and amazing grace.

To the one who pointed the way to the self-knowledge that burns away the chains of innumerable births and their accumulated causes and effect, I salute you and bow down again and again.

I want to eternally praise Your Divine Grace and hope to remain forever at your lotus feet weeping tears and more tears in deep puddles of wholesome gratefulness.

As I compose this simple offering, my heart burns and yearns for your *darshan* as I remember I was graced with so many years ago! My eyes and ears adoring your every gesture, your every move, your every word, your *kīrtans* and *bhajans*, your every step, your many tears, your oceanic smile, your humor, your forgiveness, your sternness, your transcendental deeds and loving ways.

Someone once told me that we always get what we deserve except for one thing: that is the mercy of a pure Vaishnava!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I bow down to your lotus feet again and again with great awe and reverence.

Your presence is the supreme treasure for all of mankind.

You once said, “Do not be surprised who leaves this movement, be surprised who stays.”

I am very surprised I stayed, but I realize it is only due to your causeless mercy upon me that made it possible to hang around for more than 50 years!

Dearest Gurudeva, I’m at your feet and still attempting to serve in some humble way. May your mercy, in which I’ve abused time and time again, keep flowing like the Ganges river.

On board the ship, ‘Jaladuta’ you wrote: “I emphatically say to you, O brothers, you will obtain your good fortune from the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa only when Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī becomes pleased with you.”

In your ‘*Prayer to the Lotus Feet of Kṛṣṇa*’ you expressed your readiness to serve the order of your spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur.

Therein lies the essence of your transcendental message: if we are somehow or other able to please the spiritual master, to employ our sincerity and given qualifications in fulfilling your desires, by

this process alone we may attract the loving glance of our eternal Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, because the spiritual master is the most confidential servant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

You are telling us directly in your prayer: “As the vast mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu conquers all directions, a flood of

transcendental ecstasy will certainly cover the land. When all the sinful, miserable living entities become happy, the Vaiṣṇavas’ desire is then fulfilled.”

We have also received from you a great inheritance – greater than all the material wealth imaginable. You have given us eternal life, knowledge of the Absolute, happiness, hope, and a sense of what true selflessness is.

You have bestowed upon us the most valuable treasure, Krishna consciousness, a theology beyond all theologies!

We are learning the art of dying, and how to become self-forgetful, by always remembering your lotus feet.

Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda, you devoted yourself day and night to propagate the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Śrī Caitanyadeva with such intense enthusiasm that we humble servants were inspired to follow your awesome example and were blessed to assist you in accomplishing super-human, supernova feats of devotion.

Thus establishing over 100 temples in 10 years, producing so many

books and working tirelessly to uplift and elevate the entire world!

Where you are is where I long to be, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

We who take shelter at your lotus feet have absolutely nothing to fear even in the midst of the greatest calamities !

“Association of Srī Guru and those Vaiṣṇavas who are resolutely dedicated to Srī Guru (who have *guru-niṣṭha*) is specifically beneficial. If I, who am so unqualified, do not associate with the Vaiṣṇavas, how will I learn Vaiṣṇava etiquette, how to serve Śrīla Gurudeva, and so on? We always require an ideal role-model in front of us. Without the association of a Vaiṣṇava who has resolute dedication to Guru, resolute dedication to *Nāma*

and resolute dedication to *sevā*, we can never attain resolute dedication to Guru ourselves, nor a feeling of divine possessiveness toward Srī Guru, nor the feeling of awe and reverence for Srī Guru like that which we feel for the Supreme Lord, nor the inclination to serve Srī Guru. If the selfless *Guru-niṣṭhā-vaiṣṇava* who already has resolute dedication for Srī Guru does not teach me how to render service to Srī Guru and how to behave with Srī Guru, then even upon attaining the shelter of Sad-Guru, a true spiritual master, I shall be bereft of service to him, as if losing a precious jewel I have only just found.” —Srīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur

You have said, Śrīla Prabhupāda: “Krishna consciousness is a self-manifested peaceful condition which can be achieved only in relationship with Krishna.” And this can only come about by your causeless mercy upon us all.

“Certainly my spiritual master watches me. There is no possibility of receiving perfect knowledge without approaching a self-realized spiritual master coming down in disciplic succession. The mental speculator – no matter how advanced he may be – cannot deliver the right knowledge.” You wrote this in 1969.

“One can experience Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the association of devotees of the Lord. Without their association, one is in danger of being attracted to an impersonal conception of life, which causes one to fall away from devotional service to the Absolute Truth. Being discouraged by one’s failure to understand the Absolute Truth, one may return to the false platform of sense gratification. In conclusion, human life is meant for cultivating Kṛṣṇa consciousness under the guidance of the experienced, self-realized devotees of the Lord.” (SB 11th Canto)

“The human body, which can award all benefit in life, is

automatically obtained by the laws of nature, although it is a very rare achievement. This human body can be compared to a perfectly constructed boat having the spiritual master as the captain and the instructions of the Personality of Godhead as favorable winds impelling it on its course. Considering all these advantages, a human being who does not utilize his human life to cross the ocean of material existence must be considered the killer of his own soul.” (SB 11th Canto)

“The human body, which is obtained after passing through many inferior forms, is created in such a way that it can award the highest perfection of life. A human being is supposed to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the bona fide spiritual master is the appropriate guide for such service.”

But one who cannot understand that the human body is a suitable boat for crossing the ocean of material existence will see no need to accept a captain in the form of the spiritual master and will not at all appreciate the favorable winds of the Lord’s mercy. He has no chance of achieving the goal of human life. Acting against his own self-interest, he gradually becomes the killer of his own soul” (SB 11th Canto)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have said: “We must seek after the spiritual master who can teach us

about ourselves. This is common knowledge. So all the Vedic literature says that in order to learn that transcendental science about yourself or about God, seek out a bonafide guru.

In order to approach a bona fide spiritual master, one must be very much disgusted with this material way of life. This proposition must be convinced by one, that he should know certainly that in the material way of life I cannot become happy.

Therefore one should seek after a bona fide spiritual master and learn there. That is the Vedic injunction. So one who is actually convinced that the materialistic way of life cannot make me happy, his duty is to seek after a bona fide Spiritual Master to be enlightened in the transcendental science of understanding oneself and what is God.” —*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* you say that a bona fide spiritual master is one who has retired from the glittering illusions of materialistic society, friendship and love.

The duty of the bona fide guru is to connect the disciple to Kṛṣṇa. A scholar or meditator has no potency to connect another living being

with Kṛṣṇa if that scholar or meditator himself is not connected with Kṛṣṇa. Although many sports fans attend gymnastic competitions and applaud at the exhibition of difficult calisthenic feats, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not such a gymnastic spectator, and He does not applaud the calisthenics exhibited by foolish persons in the name of yoga. Nor is the Supreme Personality of Godhead impressed by mediocre attempts at philosophical speculation, since the Lord has already given His own opinion in the *Gītā*.

If one does not become a lover of Kṛṣṇa, his connection with Kṛṣṇa takes place indirectly, through the illusory potency of the Lord.

The idea that one can attract the Supreme Lord through mere gymnastics or foolish speculation on the Absolute Truth is certainly a product of *māyā*. One who is connected to Kṛṣṇa through His external, illusory potency can serve only as a material master to connect his so-called disciples to the same illusory energy. Those who are actually great souls have surrendered to the internal potency of the Lord and can similarly connect others to the internal pleasure-giving potency. A *mahātmā* is described in the *Gītā* as follows:

“He knows Me to be the cause of all causes and all that is. Such a great soul is very rare.” It is to such a spiritual master, who has reached the mature understanding that Vāsudeva is everything, that one must surrender.

“One should know the *ācārya* to be my Self and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods.”

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, if a spiritual master cannot destroy his disciple’s doubts by superior knowledge, the disciple will gradually become despondent in spiritual life. Because a bogus guru cannot actually give Kṛṣṇa to the disciple

the disciple will again become attracted to material happiness, not having achieved the bliss of Kṛṣṇa’s association. Such a weak disciple of a weak spiritual master will gradually become hopeless and discouraged in his attempt at self-realization and will again become fascinated by the temptations of illusion, such as women, money and so-called intellectuality based on speculation and imagination.

And according to Srila Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur, one who has understood the futility of material existence can approach a bona fide spiritual master.

Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda,

how grateful I am that Your Divine Grace has accepted me at your lotus feet. Please make me an instrument of your grace and love.

May I conclude this offering by REPEATING the words of your godbrother Sridhar Swami: “just as in the vast ocean, when nothing else can be seen, the ‘compass’ is the only guide, so in the world of the infinite, our only guide is the footsteps of those great souls who have traveled on the path of faith. The way has been marked by the holy footsteps of those who have gone to the highest quarter. That is our only hope.”

*You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are that great compass
for the whole world to be guided!*

*With profound gratitude,
Your aspiring disciple,*

*Arjuna Dasa
Initiation: 1973 May. LA, USA*

Govardhana Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You stand as a Colossus, towering above all the exalted members of your spiritual master’s organisation, the Gauḍīya Math. Who but you could even conceive of setting off for the West at an advanced age, with no backing at all? No-one even thought of taking the trouble.

I’ve an image of you sitting through talk after talk in a large Indian city. Then you would stand up and appeal to the audience for sponsorship to come to the West on the order of your spiritual master. Courage, steadfastness, determination and humility – surely you embody those qualities and many more, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Recently I attended the funeral of one of your followers. This was a boy who was able to compose symphonies, hearing the music in his head and then writing it down. Just see the calibre of the people you attracted to your movement, Śrīla Prabhupāda! This ‘boy’ died as an old man, and those of us whose lives he had touched went to the funeral.

Outside the crematorium I met a godbrother I hadn’t seen for a while, and we got to talking about the upcoming deadline for writing our offerings to you. He recalled an anecdote where you said Krishna had given you English, Bengali and Hindi, “So I could preach to the whole world.” My godbrother’s eyes filled with tears at the thought of you. Then he started laughing and counting on the fingers of his hands all the places he had been ‘locked up’ for distributing your books! All glories to your disciples’ association, Śrīla Prabhupāda! More than forty years after your departure, we are still crying at the mention of your name.

I spent that night in a hotel in Northampton, and the next morning I asked my devotee roommate to give a *Bhagavad-gītā* class. She read from your purports for a while and then broke off. She excitedly said, ‘I got Prabhupāda’s *Gītā* at the age of 14. And since I was reading it every day, I couldn’t eat meat any more. Though she disagreed, my mother had to comply. As a Hindu lady, she knew we should respect scripture.’

Her face shining, my friend had revealed her heart, how you came to her in the form of your books, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Her face was tilted back, her eyes were shining as she reminisced about the most important events of her life. As the tears fell from her eyes, she said, ‘Though I didn’t get to physically see him, just knowing Śrīla Prabhupāda was on the planet at that time gave me so much strength – so much strength.’

All glories to Your Divine Grace, who rescued and continues to rescue each and every one of us in the most personal way.

This is the point at which words become a song, and movements become a dance. My mother passed away, Prabhupāda. At the time of writing this offering, it’s not even three months ago. I was able to travel to her place and help her for about a year, then my sisters and I formed a team where for fourteen months or so we cared for her and she was never alone. I thought of you and kept you in my heart constantly, Prabhupāda. I was so happy and grateful to be able to perform this service.

She never, ever lost her sweetness, Prabhupāda. A couple of days before she passed away, I came in from the chemist's with some supplies. By this time, all of us were staying with her in her bungalow, because we knew the end was near. Mum turned to me with an ecstatic face that day. She was trying to tell me something, but she had lost the power of speech, and it was only sweet noises which were coming out. Her face was like that picture of Gaurī Dāsī, your disciple. That picture circulated at the time she passed away in Vrindavana. I'm not sure when it was, maybe the eighties. Gaurī Dāsī had said, "Take a picture of me to show the devotees how blissful it is when you leave your body."

I've come to the end of this offering, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but not to the end of my infinite thanks to you for pervading my life. I wanted to say much more, but I will keep it for next year, and the year after that, and for each year I survive in this body I will continue to thank you.

Your fallen servant who begs to eternally follow in the dust you walked in,

Govardhana Dasi

Initiation: 1973 May. Edinburgh, Scotland

Tirtharthi Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Hare Krishna! Please accept my humble obeisances

I feel so fortunate that I'm still connected to your ISKCON after all these years. I was initiated twice by Your Divine Grace in the early 70's.

I was so nervous that somehow or other I would offend you and damn my spiritual life forever but you were so patient with me as I tried to put my Brahmin thread on right and count on my fingers.

You smiled lovingly and waited till I got it right. You then turned you head sideways in a way that I knew it was time to go.

Our temple was so fired up back then! We all were bordering madness over serving you!!! I recall when I was new, you wanted to inspect the new building that was recently purchased and you walked directly into our apartment on Wateka Ave! You came in with Satsvarūpa Mahārāja, Karandhar & Jayatīrtha prabhū. I was scared and didn't know what to do. We paid obeisances, and when I got up, my then wife Jagarīnī handed me a silver cup and tray

with juice in it.

Prabhupāda stopped and drank from it and asked what kind of juice it was. I said it was apple/cranberry. He smiled and rolled his head from side to side with approval and I was so relieved! I have to thank Krishna and Jagarini for that wonderful experience. I actually have a picture of that moment in my home today.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your love and kindness to all of us who were trying to please you.

All glories to you, and to your merciful devotees who continue to press forward in your service today

Your servant,

Tirtharthi Dasa

Initiation: 1973 May. LA, USA

Baraha Murti Dasa

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

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

It is now 2022 and as I enter my seventieth year I am remembering that you were almost that age when you came to the USA in 1965 to teach the Western world the science of *bhakti* yoga.

Thankfully and by the causeless mercy of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa and His pure devotee, I had the great fortune of taking initiation from you.

It is now almost 50 years from that time I took initiation and it has been a long time since I had the great mercy of being in your presence and bathing in your transcendental aura.

I really miss your physical presence so much and without you being here I feel uninspired. I am trying my best to remember that *vāṇī* is more important than *vapu*, however, I still feel great separation.

I remember as if it were yesterday when you took us to Govardhan Hill and Rādhā and Shyama Kund and told us to bathe!! When you took us to a small village in Māyāpur and told us to enter

the water and play water games with the village boys whilst you sat and watched us. The time at Bhaktivedanta Manor when we were preparing the altar for the installation and I was taking a quick nap on the lawn only to be awoken to find you looking down at me with a big smile.

Well, as I get older I will treasure these memories more and more and pray to you and the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa that some day in the future, although I am totally unqualified, that I may gain your association again! Then all my dreams will have come true.

With my most humble obeisances,

Your servant,

Baraha Murti Dasa

Initiation: 1973 October. London, UK

Mrgaksi Devi Dasi

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

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

My humble obeisances again and again to you,
my Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda.
You save my life every day.
I hear your words as I look at this world
and I see the paths that lead me astray.

I keep on moving towards the goal,
To drop the temporary burdens of an eternal soul.
I try to speak of your love and grace,
To help other people try to find their place.

The busy lives of maintaining our homes,
To finally know we are not alone.
The days are less and my feet move slowly
When I chant Kṛṣṇa's names I know I am holy.

My service to you is imperfectly performed,
Incomplete, but certainly born

Of the desire to please you and your devotees
I pray to be of some worth before I leave.

To try again to get it right.
To be grateful for your mercy all day and night.
To realize the mission has to start
With cleansing the dust from this faltering heart.

All glories to His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Whose word and mood is our life and soul.

Your aspiring servant,

Mrgaksi Dasi

Initiation: 1973 June. Cleveland, USA

Kantimati Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,

A small humble offering of eternal gratitude on this
Vyāsa-pūjā Day.

Many years ago, whilst searching for the ‘truth’ or the real God, back in the ‘60s, when it seemed many of us were ‘searching’, we were somehow fortunate to come in contact with devotees. Realizing that you were VERY different from all the other ‘gurus’ out there at the time, I knew that YOU were not going to lie to me and that you knew the truth’. Surrendering was the way to get what we were looking for and it was bitter sweet at first, but total ever increasing bliss ever after for decades. Then, I succumbed to Māyā’s calling and gradually drifted away, pulled to business and nonsense per se.

After leaving the Temple and the shelter of your lotus feet, Māyā began her expert conniving to surrender to her and I began to be bewildered by her potent energies. She has beat me up and tossed me around many, many times, yet it seems that she cannot affect my feeble heart. Material life is basically difficult in millions of ways as you have taught us, and chock full of misery and calamities with danger at every step. So, without your love and tolerance of my life’s journey, I most certainly will be headed for the hellish planets.

Oh dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I owe my life to you and your causeless mercy! You are always there with your divine message of freedom

from illusion and pure love of God, how to go back to Godhead and cut the shackles of material attachments.

I fervently pray that my mind be forever absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and that I have the ability to serve Your Divine Grace in helping other living entities to accept your invitation to come home.

Please accept my most humble obeisances over and over. My heart belongs to you only, for any other so-called love fades and never brings real happiness. You have shown what love really means and where it is meant to be reposed. There is no higher knowledge, you are the *Jagat Guru*, deliverer of the most fallen through the holy names and service.

Thank you!

Your aspiring servant, dasi,

Kantimati Dasi

Initiation: 1973 July. Seattle, USA

Ramya Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Reading your letters I realise
your amazing compassion given free
I don't deserve your sacrifice
it's wasted on such a soul as me.
Your letters request us again and again
to let you sit, translate, and write
to free you from the management pain
so you could work night after night
not for yourself, your own satisfaction
not for glory, fame or wealth
but for us, to guide our future action
only to ensure our spiritual health.
Repeatedly you stressed how vital
to chant our minimum 16 rounds
and follow the basic principles
to remain spiritually sound.
Śrīla Prabhupāda, we let you down.
Simple requests you made to us all
made it so simple and wonderful

yet we continued to stumble and fall
too immature to be responsible.
I am lowly weak and small
I'm sorry for the mistakes I've made
not deserving your love at all
still hoping material desires will fade.
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, with folded hands
I stumble before your exalted form
begging you please don't kick me away
you're my only shelter from the storm.
With love from,

Your wayward daughter,

Ramya Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1973 July. London, UK

Jagaddhatri Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances.

No words can fully express how your unlimited mercy coming from Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi has enabled me to have at least a glimpse of how entangled we are here in this material domain. Yet even when I fall so far from the necessities of being named a devotee, your lotus feet protect me despite my ingrained obstacles...

You allow me the association of your REAL devotees, the association of the holy name, and the hope that one day I shall truly be a lover of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa.

This alone gives me hope that I may someday actually perform service that will be pleasing to you. All glories to Your Divine Grace... all glories for allowing me to distribute your *prasādam* and books to those souls that will change their world...

Your servant,

Jagaddhatri Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1973 August. Seattle, USA

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I kneel at your feet and gaze with gratitude at your delicate golden lotus face.

I haven't written an offering for a long while – only because I cannot imagine how to put into words my genuine feelings.

My greatest awareness is of my lack of service to you.

I know what I am not.

I am not much of a preacher, and rarely seek opportunities to tell people about Krishna, unless they ask. But I do miss serving the Deities.

I don't study the scriptures regularly, although I do like to chant *japa*, most days.

I am not a leader like so many of my god-siblings.

Neither do I work particularly hard, although my work brings me in close genuine contact with other troubled souls.

I live as a householder, yet too far from the temple to offer any regular service. I rarely have the opportunity to share *prasādam*.

The children have grown up and gone on to their own lives, with or without Krishna consciousness.

I like to travel, but I'm not travelling to places of pilgrimage.

So is it mercy, or my illusion, that I continue to think of you daily as my beloved spiritual master, and I as your servant?

The gifts of knowledge I have received by your blessings, however many years have passed, still remain fresh and fragrant.

So often a Sanskrit verse comes to mind, ricocheting down the years, and touches my heart with tenderness.

So often a photo of the Deities brings tears of happiness to my eyes.

So how can I identify by what I'm not? Neti, Neti, Neti!

And then another verse comes to mind:

*nāhaṁ vipro na ca nara-patir nāpi vaiśyō na śūdro
nāhaṁ varṇī na ca gṛha-patir no vanastho yatir vā
kintu prodyan-nikhila-paramānanda-pūrnāmṛtābdher
gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayoḥ dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ*

May I claim to be the servant of the servant of the servant of your Divine self, the servant of Rādhā Krishna's lotus feet?

Whatever else, I am still here, with your lotus feet in my mind. Just in the same way as I was in Paris in 1974, when you bowed

before Rādhā Parisishvara, and I bowed behind you, my head so close to your feet I could feel the warmth, and imagine the softness of their touch.

Bhogini Dasi-*dāsa-dāsānudāsa*
Initiation: 1973 September. Paris, France

Mohanasini Devi Dasi

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories, all glories to your effulgent lotus feet which I need to completely take shelter of! Oh, how I miss you, my beloved Gurudeva. On your *Vyāsa-pūjā* I fervently pray for your mercy. You know how weak and fallen I am and I know you are my only hope. I beg you to please give me the spiritual strength and desire to follow your instructions, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Despite all the health issues both my husband and I have been dealing with the last couple of years, I am so grateful that I've been able to get back out on *Saṅkīrtana* for the last few months. Also going through all the suffering has helped us realize we have to get serious as we don't want to continue on with this material consciousness.

You are so patient, tolerant and kind, and I feel especially blessed to be your disciple. I want to be a servant that you can be proud of.

I pray to take shelter of you every day. I am getting old and my end is inevitable, so now, more than ever, I must get serious!

By your mercy I've been saved. Please help me to always share these blessings with others. There is no other way than to chant the holy names: *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for blessing me with a Krishna conscious husband to guide me and always helping me to remember Rādhā and Krishna.

I love you and miss you so much.

Your servant,

Mohanasini Devi Dasi
Initiation: 1973 September. LA, USA

O Prabhupāda! Master of masters.

Under Śrī Krishna's command you have come into this world of darkness and lit a transcendental flame. The conditioned souls that are fortunate enough, are able to see that light and by its touch, remembrance of their true position is kindled. In this awakened consciousness, they develop the desire to return whence they came, in the eternal spiritual sky.

By leaving Krishnaloka where you enjoy while participating in the intimacy of Lord Krishna's pastimes, you manifest the greatest of sacrifices. And because of your merciful presence, liberation of countless souls is awarded. All glories to you!

This benediction is given to everyone who hears your convincing discourse under the condition that their hearing is honest and sincere. Very soon, they can feel the spiritual presence of the Lord Who lives within their heart.

By the mercy of the Lord they start to distinguish between reality and illusion. In such a state of mind they do not want to return into the dark well of material existence. And so, they become determined to direct all of their attention to your instructions and look straight ahead, wanting to fix their mind on Lord Krishna's lotus feet.

Anyone whose eyes become anointed with the salve of love of God by contact with you, becomes eternally indebted to you. And that is a delightful thing because serving your lotus feet is equal to serving the Lord directly.

May your glories reverberate in all the three worlds for you certainly are one of the most magnanimous liberated personalities that ever descended within this universe!

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

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Krishna, having taken shelter at His lotus feet. Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati Goswami. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord

Chaitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

I pray that I may eventually deserve this mercy of yours and come to a point where I can serve you properly,

Your insignificant aspirant servant,

Praghosa Dasa

Initiation: 1973 September. Montreal, Canada

Prthusrava Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Your divine appearance has proven to be Lord Caitanya's own plan to show His magnanimity of distributing love of God, *prema-bhakti*, all over the world by way of His own dear devotee.

The compassionate heart of a Vaiṣṇava always desires to relieve the suffering of all living beings by awakening their spiritual life. So, with the blessings of your own spiritual master and the previous *Ācāryas* you prepared for this great mission by translating and commenting on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

I dare to compare you to Śukadeva Goswami who made *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* sweeter by his recitation of it, just as a parrot cuts a fruit with its beak, making it sweeter. Similarly, your commentary has made *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* so tasteful and understandable that any sane human being can get some taste and derive spiritual nourishment. "O expert and thoughtful men, relish *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the mature fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literatures. It emanated from the lips of Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Therefore this fruit has become even more tasteful, although its nectarean juice was already relishable for all, including liberated souls." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.3)

The vibration from your lips has captured our heart and mind

and has convinced us that pure devotional service is the irrevocable fact which was missing from our life. You exhibited all the nine forms of devotional service and, in a state of complete self-surrender for many years, you explained them in recorded and printed word for the whole world to access and relish, making innumerable persons “thoughtful men.” Thus you created a “transcendental revolution for the re-spiritualization of human society.” In this way you have given yourself to the whole world.

We cannot sufficiently thank you but can only inquire how we may serve you.

Praying at your lotus feet, always desiring that your mercy bestows upon me a genuine taste for pure devotional service, I beg to remain,

Your humble servant,

Prthusrava Dasa

Initiation: 1973 September. Boston, USA

Sarvani Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

Yet another year has passed since I last attempted to pay homage to your saintly appearance in this material world. As I reflect on the past 49 years, after having encountered Your Divine Grace, I find that it still holds true that never has there been another divinely empowered personality since who has so purely given their life breath to serve humanity. In your graciously humble and empowered way, you have dedicated your life energy, heart and soul, to deliver the highest realized transcendental wisdom to the world. You have made it possible for the light of the ancient eternal *śāstric* truths to

become available to the darkest and most fallen regions of Kali-yuga. Among the countless teachers, philosophers, scientists, and others who have speculated and expounded upon this material nature and reasons for its existence you continue to stand superior.

With great effort and energy you have successfully given the whole world the transcendental knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī kṛṣṇa, by revealing His pastimes and spiritual abode. You have supplied this knowledge through your many books, lectures, and letters, which give the answers to such questions as: Who is God? Who am I? What is my relationship with God? How and why was this world created? Why am I suffering? How does one find eternal lasting happiness? How does one break out of this repeated cycle of birth, disease, old age and death? How does one qualify himself to go back home back to Godhead? Your wisdom in teaching others is indeed unsurpassable and through your tireless efforts and mercy these teachings now remain available for future generations to come. Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your lifetime you have exhibited a level of inexhaustible knowledge, sincerity, wisdom and transcendental experience that is rarely seen in this world, what to speak of the love and dedication you have demonstrated in wholeheartedly serving the wishes of your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, in helping him to propagate Lord Caitanya's mission by spreading the holy names to every continent, town and village on the planet.

In fulfilling your service to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga, you encountered many obstacles, yet despite any hindrances in your path, you never wavered in your determination and full reliance upon Kṛṣṇa's merciful intervention to succeed. You were fearless! Through your example you gave us glimpses of how Kṛṣṇa's magical potency was determining the outcome of any pure attempt to serve Him, demonstrating to us how Lord Kṛṣṇa was ultimately in control of all endeavours. In this way you helped to increase your student's faith, enthusiasm and determination to serve you by helping to spread Lord Caitanya's divine mission to every town and village.

As I increase in years, becoming elderly myself, I continue to be amazed at your fortitude and miraculous ability to have served in such a superhuman capacity while traveling the world many times over. Now it is up to each of your devoted students to follow in your footsteps to the best of their ability, to stay true to your original

teachings and instructions, and to take special care not to let the march of time dilute or change the divine teachings that you have so lovingly delivered unchanged ‘from previous *Ācāryas*.’ I pray that you please continue to bless your disciples’ attempts to serve you by following your most humble and dedicated example.

The world is indebted to you, as am I dear Śrīla Prabhupāda. How fortunate it is to have encountered your divine presence and mercy this lifetime. I can only humbly pray that I may someday please you and actually become qualified to serve your lotus feet and continue to somehow serve Lord Caitanya’s mission in future lifetimes.

Begging to remain your humble servant, with heartfelt sincerity and loving gratitude,

Your spiritual daughter,

Sarvani Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1973 September. Laguna Beach, USA

Mahabuddhi Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to Your Divine Grace and to our illustrious Guru Varga! Please accept my heartfelt *praṇāms* at your lotus feet.

We are nearing 50 years as your disciple and we are still trying to perform our *bhajan* as you desired of us. Though it has been many years since your physical departure from this plane, I feel you are still with me in our daily devotional activities and guiding over us, you also gave me a qualified *siksha* guru to assist me, for which I am also eternally grateful.

By your presence in my heart we somehow or other keep going on in our *bhakti*, despite the turbulence of the present global asuric civilization, as we are desirous for obtaining *Vraja bhakti* and the association of advanced *sādhus*. By your mercy you have taken this fallen soul and given us the inspiration and objective of desiring the service of those devotees dedicated to the *seva* of Śrīmate Rāḍhārāṇī. Thus working hand in hand with my *siksha* guru, you have filled this heart with the desire to obtain the moods of those *prema bhaktas* that have *prema* for Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava. This in itself is a miracle of untold proportion...

Being insignificant and unqualified, my glorification is simply

an acknowledgement of your magnanimous personality, befitting both as the representation of Śrīmate Rāḍhārāṇī's *kṛpā* and Śrīpād Nityānanda's *kṛpā*.

I pray that you have mercy on this fallen soul and allow me to preach boldly as you have instructed me, and serve you and those sincere devotees in our Gauḍīya Vaishnava lineage.

Your loving servant,

Mahabuddhi Dasa

Initiation: 1973. USA

Kadamba Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you for bringing Kṛṣṇa to the West. Kṛṣṇa was mostly unknown to the majority of people living here in the Western world. Maybe some scholars knew about ancient writings related to Kṛṣṇa, but I don't think people *really* knew about Kṛṣṇa or how to reach Him or who He is. Those keys were missing. You brought devotional service and access to Kṛṣṇa. Now that I am almost 72 years old, and as my life's vitality dwindles, I can understand even more what a sacrifice it was for you to come alone to America during the same window of time in your life – to deliver the message of Kṛṣṇa on the order of your spiritual master.

Just like Kṛṣṇa raised Govardhana Hill, using it as an umbrella in order to give shelter to the residents of Vrindavana during the torrential storms brought on by Indra, you have created ISKCON and given us shelter under the umbrella of ISKCON.

I feel fortunate to have three generations of family – husband, sister, son and grandson aspiring to serve Kṛṣṇa. You gave us this Kṛṣṇa conscious life. From an outside perspective, my life might not seem very remarkable, but that I came in touch with you and Lord Chaitanya's movement makes it the most remarkable life of inestimable good fortune.

Daily, I offer flowers to my Gaura-Nitāi Deities, and every night I end the day with the prayer to Lord Nṛsiṃha. It is not lost on me that these two activities in the day are perhaps the only ones that matter. When I see a beautiful flower, my inclination is to want to bring it to my Deities – to offer it to Kṛṣṇa. You gave us that understanding

– that nothing belongs to us; everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa and that to serve Kṛṣṇa is the aim of life. In the earlier decades of my life, I was blessed to live close to a temple and regularly was able to honor Deity *prasādam* and visit the temple Deities and better follow my commitments to you. I miss that. I deeply apologize for my failings and shortcomings.

In the *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* you quote Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura’s song, “*śrī-kṛṣṇa caitanya prabhu doyā koro more,*” praying for Lord Caitanya’s mercy. Can I pray for that same mercy brought to us by you? I know I have no standing. I am not a very highly qualified disciple and I can’t understand who you really are. It is said that the more fallen one is, the greater one’s claim to the favor of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; one must only be very sincere and serious. Even being infected with all the bad qualities of Kali-yuga, I still have some small desire to be that sincere and serious devotee who surrenders to Śrī Caitanya through the mercy of your lotus feet and the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

Initiation: 1973 October. LA, USA

Nrhari Dasa

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my millions of obeisances at your lotus feet, together with *puṣpāñjali*.

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

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

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in the 11th canto, Kṛṣṇa tells that the *Ācārya* is not an ordinary human being. He is the sum total of all the demigods, and in no way should we offend him by thinking he is an ordinary human being. He is not an ordinary human being, as a matter of fact, Kṛṣṇa says, He is the *Ācārya* Himself. So, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, tell us in your books, as written in the

scriptures, that the spiritual master, Śrī Guru is the outer manifestation of Supersoul. As you put it in that lecture in Los Angeles in 1974 one evening at the end of class, when you asked:

“Did you like the lecture?”

We emphatically replied: “Yes!”

After a pause you said: “Me too. That was Supersoul.”

Confirming the statement that Śrī Guru is the outer manifestation of Supersoul.

The great Ācārya, Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has written:

*sākṣād dharitvena samasta śāstair
uktas tathā bhāvyata eve sadbhīḥ
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī caraṇāravindam*

“In the revealed scriptures it is declared that the spiritual master should be worshiped like the Supreme Personality of Godhead and this injunction is obeyed by pure devotees of the Lord. The spiritual master is the most confidential servant of the Lord. Thus let us offer our respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of our spiritual master.”

The words *sākṣād Hari* mean that the guru is directly Śrī Hari, but at the same time the most intimate servitor.

Your glories are unlimited. I can see you are closer than the air I breathe and know my heart better than myself. You are my closest friend as you have shown me in the last fifty years. It only takes my surrender. It is you who is the constant in my life, my pole star. You have always cleared the clouds in my path. I do miss your physical presence: Those glorious days when you were in our midst. But, as you told me that night in your quarters, what matters the most is to follow the instructions of the spiritual master. As you said:

“That is the secret of my success.”

And in that way I mitigate the separation, remembering your sacred words. Then as the Supersoul you are everywhere and very close.

This very fallen and wretched Nrhari Dasa begs the shade of your lotus feet.

Initiation: 1973 October. Argentina

Ramanya Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, Dear well-wisher,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Especially on your most auspicious day of your holy *Vyāsa-pūjā* celebration, please give us your unlimited mercy to continue serving you on your mission.

Helping people to come close to Kṛṣṇa in different ways, by distributing your transcendental books that Kṛṣṇa Himself dictated to you, and distributing *prasādam* all over the world.

Please accept the small offering that we try to give you, the devotees of Mexico City Temple.

We are celebrating the 50th anniversary of your visit –1972-2022. All glories to your unlimited mercy. All glories to your eternal *Saṅkīrtana* movement. And please keep guiding us, the Captain of the Ship. All glories to Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *Saṅkīrtana* movement, which is the same *Saṅkīrtana* movement that you gave to us.

Thank you for your unlimited mercy. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please keep coming into my dreams.

Your insignificant servant,

Ramanya Dasa

Initiation: 1973 October. Mexico

Sangita Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most auspicious day of your appearance on this Earth in 1896, 126 years ago.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in 1999, by your divine intervention, I strongly felt in my heart that you wanted me to use my education and experience as a Hospice and Palliative Care Registered Nurse to begin an international program within your ISKCON movement to train volunteers and form teams in your temple communities to provide practical, emotional and spiritual care for your sick and dying devotees. I called this program, Vaishnavas C.A.R.E.

(Counseling, Assistance, Resource, & Education for the Terminally ill and Those in Need).

After receiving the blessings of the GBC in Māyāpur in 2000, I traveled to many of your temples to give 1-3 day training seminars, and help each temple to form a Vaishnavas CARE Team so when the need arose, the trained volunteers would be ready to implement appropriate care for the sick and dying Vaishnavas and family members.

Over the decades, hundreds of your devotees around the world have come forward to be trained in this much-needed service, assuring your devotees that they and their families will be cared for in times of need. These services have become very dear to those who give of themselves to render this care and to those devotees who receive this loving service. It has taken decades to extend our Vaishnavas CARE Teams internationally, but always remembering your example of perseverance and determination to fulfill the mission given to you by your spiritual master, we too have tried to follow in your footsteps and, in spite of many obstacles along the way, we have remained determined to spread this Vaishnavas CARE *seva* in as many “towns and villages” as we possibly can.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this year, to ensure the continuity of Vaishnavas CARE into the future, I have been training a very steady and dedicated young devotee named, Tārāvalī Devī Dāsī, in Toronto, Canada, to eventually become the leader of this project. She is also a Hospice & Palliative Care Registered Nurse, and is very devoted to her guru, to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to Lord Kṛṣṇa and to the Vaishnavas CARE mission. I feel I will be leaving this much-needed project in the hands of a competent and deserving Vaishnavi whose husband supports her in this service, just as mine has done for decades. I am humbly begging you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to kindly give Tārāvalī Devī Dāsī your blessings so she can continue to expertly render this service. Please guide her from within her heart so she always knows the correct way to carry on with this service to you and to your beloved servants.

Your forever servant,

Sangita Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1973 November. LA, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You are most dear to Lord Krishna, and my only hope in this mortal world is to also attain connection with Śrī Krishna, by (through) the shelter of your lotus feet.

Your Divine Grace has given me a shield of freedom against the entrapment of material nature. You described there is no freedom within the material realm and despite so many mundane arrangements, everyone's ideas of freedom are taken away and crushed to dust by the influence of time. I am grateful to you eternally, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for illuminating the path of absolute transcendent freedom and gracing me with the means to reach it, the chanting of the *mahā-mantra*.

namas te sarasvate deve gaura-vani-pracharine

Your dedication to the order of His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura to propagate the message of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and your immense success in fulfilling that order is something I hold close to my heart.

As you wrote. *"By the pleasure of the spiritual master, one can get extraordinary power, especially in spiritual advancement. The blessings of the spiritual master are more powerful than one's personal endeavor for such advancement."* — SB 8.15.28 Purport. Whatever small accomplishments I have achieved in your service to aid in helping your mission is due to your blessings alone. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādī-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I had become entrapped by impersonalism, which was like being imprisoned in a pitch-black room with no windows and a heavy locked door. A faint light emanated from a small keyhole. That minuscule glowing was a hint of some great unknown. Prabhupāda, you compassionately unlocked that door and opened it wide, allowing the light of the absolute, unlimited, self-fulgent spiritual reality to dissipate all darkness. Prabhupāda, your torch light of knowledge illuminated for me, a realm beyond imagination where the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Krishna,

reciprocates the loving service of souls filled with pure *bhakti* in an ever-fresh domain full of eternal life, desire trees, touch stones and endless inconceivable pastimes.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. With gratitude, I pray to reciprocate your magnanimous blessings by aiding you, life after life in your mission to disseminate the soothing warm light of pure *bhakti* into the ever-darkening cold material world.

Your servant,

Partha Dasa

Initiation: 1973 December. LA, USA

Citraka Dasa

Dear respected and beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my humble obeisances to your lotus feet with all the humility at my command.

Meeting you on this planet was the most significant event in my existence after the fall from the kingdom of God!

I felt your personality being like the personification of Lord Krishna's smile, signaling the end of my conditional life and the reinstatement to the original consciousness!

I am still transfixed remembering your radiant presence, organizational skills, absolute wisdom, fair judgment, all pervasive kindness and affectionate dealings.

Your exemplary behavior benefited me and all in three ways: First, because it proved the validity of your teachings. Second, because it provided a visual, practical way of application we could see and follow. And thirdly, because the attraction this behavior generated was a very strong factor of inspiration and motivation.

Becoming your disciple meant I was not anymore a "stray-dog" loitering in the material world, but the actual living of the ideal of life; *sanata* (protected) *jīvatam*, living with the assurance that "I've got my master who will give me protection", exemplifying this verse from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

"Those who are spiritual masters are very kind to the needy. They are always kind to their followers, disciples and sons, and without being asked by them, the spiritual master describes all that is knowledge." (SB 3.7.36).

You came in the West to relieve the anxiety of Mahāprabhu for

the deliverance of Kali-yuga's *mlecchas* and *yavanas*, afflicted by hedonism and impersonalism, empowered by His faithful servants, the Goswamis, Bhaktivinoda Thakur and Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī.

One of the most important qualifications of yours, that allowed you to succeed in such an "impossible" task, was certainly your firm faith in your guru and the transformative power of the holy name. On the appearance day of the "transcendental aristocrat", as you named him, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, you once said:

"Whatever happiness you have felt, you simply tell someone else about it. You don't need to teach anything. You just explain to people that because you chant Hare Krishna you have become happy, and if they chant, they will become happy. Then I will be satisfied, and my spiritual master will be satisfied."

Your faith in the holy name was absolute and the happiness you felt chanting it was contagious. So you achieved the spreading of it — not in a sentimental or fanatical way — but supporting it with the philosophy of the *śāstras*.

You gave us shelter in your Vaiṣṇava heart, protecting us from our material desires:

"By serving you constantly, one is freed from all material desires and is completely pacified. When shall I engage as your permanent eternal servant and always feel joyful to have such a fitting master?" This verse is from the *Stotraratna* of Yamunacharya (43) (Cc. *Madhya* 8.73)

Now, after so many years that your disciples and followers have been practicing the instructions that you gave us, the true seers are so happy to observe how purified and evolved so many of these living entities have become. Your movement is flourishing vigorously all over the globe, distributing great fortune, hope and happiness to millions!

Spectacular generation of transcendental products is the proof. They are in the form of new devotees made, BBT books distributed, new temples constructed, the TOVP, attractive *Harināmas*, profound lectures, melodious chanting, beautiful paintings, dramas, dances, theatrical performances, elaborated new books and so many others by-products of their transcendental consciousness.

This is the result of your preaching Śrīla Prabhupāda. As you said: "Lord Brahmā can create a universe but a pure devotee can deliver a universe!"

And me too, Śrīla Prabhupāda, everything I have of value in my life is due to you: Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna, Their glorious holy names, the "cream" of the scriptures, the holy dhamas, precious

devotee association, transcendental knowledge, faith, the *Mūrtis*, *prasādam*, everything!

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your mercy which allowed me to join Lord Caitanya's glorious movement, the Yuga-dharma, and thus make my life successful.

I loved you yesterday, I love you still, I always have and I always will.

Your aspiring servant,

Citraka Dasa

Initiation: 1973 December. LA, USA

The following mission statement of HH Śrīdhara Swami (1995) resonates completely with what I feel for you and I am including it as it expresses perfectly my intentions too:

"My mission is to serve my spiritual master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, with all my heart and soul...

"To achieve this goal has now become my only reason for living. Out of a great sense of debt for his having shown me the path, I want to become a sharp instrument to be used by Śrīla Prabhupāda in his mission of flooding the world with love of Krishna.

"I will strive to achieve excellence in all my activities... I will struggle to rise above my lower animal nature, my conditioning of the lowest of births, and my lack of cultural training... I will study Śrīla Prabhupāda books regularly and thoroughly. I will do my best to follow his teachings perfectly and teach others with whom I come in contact according to my own level of realization.

"I will be forever loyal to his ISKCON, being always positive and ready to help in its development. I will be proactive as a preacher, teacher, facilitator, leader, and spiritual master (servant).

"I will always be ready to, as Śrīla Prabhupāda put it,

‘do the needful,’

“I will meditate upon and try to imbibe the twenty-six qualities of a pure devotee.

“I will not over-endeavor but will strive for quality in my work and relationships. I will be constantly on guard against committing offenses to other Vaishnavas.

“Having realized that in previous years of association with devotees I must have committed so many offenses due to my gross and careless nature, I will sincerely try to recognize those offenses, beg forgiveness from those whom I have offended, and atone for these offenses as best I can.

“I will continually evaluate my progress, getting input from my peers. Despite all obstacles, personal and incidental, I will not cease from struggling to improve my character and obtain his mercy, to be finally accepted by Śrīla Prabhupāda.”

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Sarva-drik Dasa

Dear Srila Prabhupada,

With innumerable prostrated obeisances, I offer the following thoughts at your lotus feet.

Many times, I hear devotees express the need for hearing from and associating with, “a high class *rasik* guru.” And that one should meditate on that guru in Rādhā-Krishna *līlā* in his manjari form to obtain perfection in *seva*. They say that this is the non-negotiable requirement for making real progress in spiritual life, and that any lesser consideration is “*kanishta*.”

Thinking like that may be good for them, that is if such persons are truly able to come to the required standard that *begins* with having obtained liberation from the influence of the modes of nature. “*brahma bhūtaḥ prasannātmā...mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām*.” Bg. 18.54 But, mostly I see that there is considerable bluffing going on in this regard. Talk is cheap.

So, I see that there are searchers on the lookout for “*rasik* gurus” but if I examine the qualities of Śrīla Prabhupāda, his accomplishments,

his realization, and his inner life, I have to conclude that the world has not seen a *rasik* guru of his stature for hundreds of years, and no one had to advertise the fact. It was self-evident, at least to those with eyes to see. So, who is a *rasik* guru anyway?

A *rasik* guru is “*bhāvukāḥ*,” advanced in knowledge of *rasa-tattva*, who tastes the same, and who always exhibits ecstatic love for Rādhā-Krishna. But how is one to know? What is the proof and who is that *rasik* guru who is demonstrably relishing *rasa*? Is he sitting in a solitary place chanting *japa*? Is he publicly discussing Rādhā-Krishna’s confidential pastimes? Is he a bearded fellow with *jata* and big tilak? For definitive answers to these questions, we need look no further than the life, example, and activities of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

A *rasik* guru is someone that puts his life on the line for Guru and Gaurāṅga...and practically loses it, who endures two consecutive heart attacks while navigating the fearsome storms of the Atlantic Ocean, and who travels to an unknown country with no guarantee of shelter and no means of support. A *rasik* guru is one that exhibits unsurpassed “*vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ*” and unshakable “*ḍṛḍha-vrata*” determination to fulfill the order of guru and preach Krishna consciousness in spite of apparently insurmountable odds, with no other motive than to please the Lord and fulfill His mission. *Rasik* gurus are “*kṛipa-sindu*,” their mercy is oceanic in scope. They don’t mind personally cooking in order to distribute *prasādam*, opening temples, installing Deities, raising funds, washing the dirty dishes of their ignorant “disciples,” or even waiting on them like a servant, standing in line to use the restroom. They are seen to be happily accepting the inconvenience of constant travel, even in old age, in order to distribute the message of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu to every corner of the world. They are not self-serving, solitary *sādhus*.

The naysayers may counter, “Well many people could have done that, preaching doesn’t make one a *rasik* guru. *Rasik* gurus are in “*bhāva*.” That’s true, activity alone is not the exclusive qualification. BUT, the underlying motivating factor, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s intense emotional love of God, manifest as his preaching *bhāva*, is the qualification. All his sacrifices to preach Krishna *bhakti* were a manifestation of his internal *Gaura prema* and *guru bhakti*. These are the confidential devotees, the preachers, not the meditators. We read in *Chaitanya Caritamrita*:

yān-sabā lañā prabhura nitya vihara yān-sabā lañā prabhura kīrtana-pracāra

*yān-sabā lañā kareṇa prema āsvādāna yān-sabā lañā dāna
kare prema-dhana*

The internal devotees or potencies are all eternal associates in the pastimes of the Lord. Only with them does the Lord advent to propound the *saṅkīrtana* movement, only with them does the Lord taste the mellow of conjugal love, and only with them does He distribute this love of God to people in general. *Adi 7.18-19*

Śrīla Prabhupāda offered everything, including his very life, for the mission of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur at every step of his ISKCON journey. That was his love of God, he didn't wear it on his sleeve. And yet, on several occasions that generally hidden emotional love, his internal *bhāva*, irrepressibly spilled out in public, especially when expressing the mercy of Gaura-Nityānanda.

As far as mediating on one's guru; I meditate on you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, not as a mañjarī, picking flowers, braiding Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's hair, or decorating the *kuñjas*. I meditate on you standing alone in the snow on the streets of New York City wearing nothing but your *sannyāsa* robes, a thin *chaddar*, your white rubber slippers, and a "Prabhupāda hat" wondering, "Why Lord, have you brought me to this horrible place."

I meditate on you, chanting with your tom-tom drum, with eyes closed absorbed in *Gaura prema* and the order of your guru, in Golden Gate Park on "Hippie Hill." surrounded by free-wheeling, intoxicated, inappropriately dressed young men and women as they dance hand in hand during the "Summer of Love."

I meditate on you roaring like a lion in front of 30,000 pandal attendees in Mumbai, Kolkata, and Delhi that came to hear you and see the guru that made resolutely materialistic Americans and Europeans don *dhoti* and *sari*, *tilak* and neck beads, and dance in *harināma saṅkīrtana* ecstasy.

I meditate on you triumphantly riding on Subhadra Mahārāṇī's cart in Rathayātrā festivals around the world, attended by thousands of people, and organized by the disciples you empowered to arrange them.

I meditate on you, shouting in righteous anger at belligerent māyāvādīs or speaking softly to a young child with tenderness and love, holding a sweet cookie in your outstretched hand.

I meditate on you, forgoing sleep, absorbed in the commentaries of previous *Ācāryas* in the middle of the night, speaking into a

dictaphone, to share your personal ecstasies, your Bhaktivedanta purports, to bless and enlighten the world.

I meditate on you, alone, in the blazing, intolerable summer heat, going table to table in the tea stalls of Delhi, trying to elicit some favorable response from a disinterested public, fainting from heat stroke and being gored by a bull, with no one there to comfort or serve you.

I meditate on you, flying around the world at an advanced age when most men are lying on their backs in rest homes, or ensconced in comfortable armchairs in front of television sets vicariously watching football games and remembering their youth. Why? Only to save them and give meaning to their otherwise wasted empty lives.

I meditate on you in your last days of your manifest presence, in Vrindavana, lying on your back, motionless, with a microphone held to your mouth, dictating the last few pages of your priceless gift to human society, your Bhaktivedanta purports.

This is substantial meditation on Śrī Guru, nothing theoretical. Meditation on your emotional love of God manifests as service to the mission of Mahāprabhu, that is factual, substantial, immensely purifying, and is not the product of my imagination. It is this sacred meditation that inspires me to continue trying to serve you in spite of the obstacles of my birth. And it is this meditation that I pray comes to me at the time of my fast-approaching last breath. May my mind be fixed on you at that time, and may I again have the opportunity to try to serve your sacred mission of bringing the highest potential of self-realization to every soul of this dark universe. Thus even I, a certifiably fallen soul, may also taste a drop of the most confidential *rasa* of serving Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, there is no second person that can give me anything that I cannot get from you. I am not searching for a *rasik* guru because I have one, and don't need another. My highest aspiration is, "*Śrī guru caraṇe rati ei sei uttama gati*," your loving service. I therefore request your patience, lenience and mercy, that in spite of thousands of disqualifications, you acknowledge this one thing about me, *I want to serve you...* in any capacity, in any lifetime, and in any way that pleases you. Hare Krishna.

Your servant, life after life,

Sarva-drik Dasa

Initiation: 1973 December. Portland, USA

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

It has been 46 long years since I last saw you in person, in 1976. You never made it back to Los Angeles in 1977 – and I was not able to come to India to see you again. For 41 of those years I had a friend, a partner, my wife – who also left this world this year – and in an auspicious way. She had kidney disease, then congestive heart failure due to high blood pressure. In the last month she knew she would be leaving soon. In her last days, she hadn't slept for 36 hours, then finally she fell asleep. After 18 hours I tapped her on her shoulder and she immediately woke up, saying "Rādhā, Rādhā". I had never heard her call out to Radha like that before. She again said "Rādhā, Rādhā", then she told me to start chanting. I put a recording of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, chanting Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*, and I and our son who was home both started chanting the *mahā-mantra*. She asked for her Jagannath Deity, and I placed Him next to her. I put fresh tilak on her, and placed a Tulsi leaf in her mouth, and she left this world very peacefully, no struggle. She just stopped breathing. But, Kṛṣṇa was there, in the form of His holy name, being chanted not just by her husband and son, but, by you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the pure devotee of Rādhā and Krishna.

What was most auspicious, in my view, was that when I woke her up, and she called out for "Rādhā, Rādhā". I knew right then that she was already on her way back home, and my waking her up brought her back here, just long enough so that she could depart in a most auspicious way.

Then, a week after she left, she appeared in my dream where she gave me a message and asked that I tell others. The message she wanted me to tell is this: She was a simple devotee. She never held any position, she was not in charge of any projects. Yet, she wanted not just me, but others to know that she is being taken back home, back to Godhead.

What she wanted me to tell everyone was that the program that you taught us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, works. All we have to do is follow the simple program that you have so kindly given us. Just chant our 16 rounds daily, read your books, and render service to Krishna in the form of His Deity, to render service to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, Krishna's pure devotee. We don't have to become a big important devotee. We don't have to be in-charge of this or that, or

have followers, or be famous. If that becomes our service to you and Krishna, then fine, we carry it out the same as we clean the temple room floor, or wash Krishna's pots. We just do whatever service you and Krishna gives us in a humble and devotional mood. And, that is the most important part – the devotional mood. Even if we are not able to render physical service, our mood must always be of devotion to Krishna.

This was the message that she asked me to tell others. That your teachings work, Śrīla Prabhupāda. All we have to do is follow what you have taught us, and regardless of who we are, regardless even if we have no important position, we will be earning our ticket to go back home, back to Godhead, where we can serve you and Radha and Krishna directly.

So, I have decided to make this message as my offering to you, this year. To tell others what my wife told me, that your teachings work, Śrīla Prabhupāda. All we have to do is follow what you have given us.

There is no way we can thank you for what you have given us... the way out of this miserable *saiṁsāra* of this material world. From the lowest planet to the highest, it is all a place of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place. We are now bound up, birth after endless birth, death after death, we are bound up to this place of birth, death, old age and disease. As you told us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, this material world is no place for a gentleman. We must just do our business, and get out. And you have shown us the path. You have given us the map. Your teachings and books shed the full brilliance of a thousand suns lighting up this path. All we have to do is follow you. Follow what you have taught us, and our great escape from the endless cycle of birth and death are guaranteed. Even for us small, unimportant common devotees who have no important social position, your teachings work for everyone.

Thank you very much,

Aspiring to become your worthy and humble servant,

Ameyatma Dasa

Initiation: 1973 December. LA, USA+

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

My dear spiritual father, as a young child growing up in northern Canada, I often heard a song called “North to Alaska”. The melody was appealing and some of the lyrics beguiling, so the tune captured my imagination, but when in due course I came to know that all the fuss was about finding gold and romance, I was very disappointed. I was too young to understand the material value of gold, and I couldn’t understand what the big deal was around romance – everybody was doing that – there had to be something more exciting. Of course, when I was mercifully drawn into your ISKCON mission, I got to learn that there is a pure ontological Source of all that is valuable and enthusing. But because the songs of my childhood still pop up in my consciousness, I decided to try to dovetail the melody of this ode by glorifying the one who truly faced every adversity to bestow what is incomparably valuable and blissful upon this most undeserving soul.

Prabhupāda! Prabhupāda!

Saviour of the fallen, please accept this song

Saviour of the fallen, please accept this song

Prabhupāda left India in the year of sixty-five

He suffered greatly ‘board the ship, barely made
it through alive

He crossed the Atlantic Ocean with nothing to his name

Except trunks filled up with perfect books and full faith
in Krishna’s name

The ship reached Boston harbor one cool September day

When he saw the Boston skyline, he humbly began to pray

My Lord – why have You brought me here – I surely
don’t stand a chance

But You’ve brought me here to dance for You, so kindly
make me dance

‘Midst māyā’s illusion and Kali’s delusion –

Dance – make me dance – make me dance as you command

To lead them home – to lead them home

Back to Goloka – home, back home to You

Back to Goloka – home, back home to You

In New York the young folk began to gather ‘round

As he lectured and he chanted that eternal sacred Sound

He touched their souls and fed them food that was divine

The more they ate and danced and sang, the more
they were inclined
He said: You are always serving every moment every day
But if you serve illusion, in illusion you will stay
But when you love Govinda the Lord can set you free
And take you back to Godhead to be in bliss eternally
Where His *bhaktas* are playing, there He's always staying
Back in Goloka – back home where we belong
Back in Goloka – back home where we belong
He wants you home – let's go Home
Back to Goloka – goin' home – the rush is on!

Praying to be your worthy daughter,

Jaya Bhadra Dasi

Initiation: 1973 December. Vancouver, Canada

Naikatma Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most sincere obeisances at your lotus feet on this most auspicious day of your appearance

I have no qualification to write this glorification of you other than the fact that you are my eternal and only shelter. I won't pretend to be scholarly or qualified in any way but I do have firm faith in your words and mercy. '*Yasya deve parā bhaktir*'. The imports of your words to me are that Kṛṣṇa is real and that a wretch like myself can be uplifted into devotional service and become useful. I always marvel at how preachers in different parts of the world against all odds have been so successful, which is only a testament to your loving mercy. You showed by example how by surrendering to guru and Kṛṣṇa all their blessings are given. There is no guesswork involved, but factual. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, you stated that Uddhava was in such a transcendental position that he was selected to be a factual representative of the Lord in His bodily absence from the vision of the world. You also are certainly that representative. Having traveled worldwide as His ambassador preaching and planting the seed of devotional life into the hearts of countless souls.

Because your body, mind and soul are only for the transcendental loving service of the Lord, you were never affected by material

strength, intelligence, or even renunciation.

We can only pray that we may someday do something to assist you in your service to our dear Lord Kṛṣṇa and as you have stated, penetrate the mysteries of the Lord's transcendental loving relationships.

Because you have withstood the onslaughts of material nature, you have shown by example one situated in a loving relationship with the Lord.

Please give me your mercy that I may be able to assist you in that relationship

Your most fallen servant,

Naikatma Dasa

Initiation: 1973 December. Denver, USA

Uttama Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

I chant on the gift of the *mālā* you chanted on. Not only does it spur me to connect with Kṛṣṇa, but it also keeps me connected to you.

I don't care that neck-beads are not in fashion, you are my master, and I am your servant.

I once heard you say that when we decorate the Deity, we will lessen our attraction to ornament ourselves. I love placing *tilaka* on twelve places of my body. They are my real ornaments, effulgent tattoos.

I am only aspiring to be a devotee, but when I see the pure soul shining through the bodies of my godbrothers and godsisters, I feel that they are the perfect association.

When I don't know where to turn, I focus on feeling my hand in yours, and I don't feel lost.

Or I read from your brilliant purports and I find purpose, meaning, and enthusiasm in these strange times. In the blink of an eye.

I bow down to you, again and again and again.

H.H. Indradyumna Mahārāja shared a meditation by the poet Sura das which resonated deeply with me. I thank him.

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master who gave me beautiful *kañṭhī-mālā*, effulgent *tilaka*, the beautiful form of a devotee and who offered me his shelter. In one of his hands he is holding my hand and with his other hand he is holding the lamp of knowledge which helps me to cross over the dark ocean of the material world. My guru deserves the greatest respect because only he can rescue one in the blinking of an eye. I bow down to him again and again and again.

Your eternal servant,

Uttama Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1973 December. LA, USA

Dravida Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most respectful obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you!

I'd like to use this opportunity to thank you from the bottom of my heart for what I consider one of your greatest gifts to me and all other devotees in your ISKCON, and that is the famous "morning program," and especially *maṅgala-ārati*, and specifically the *Guro-aṣṭaka* prayers.

Almost every morning for the last forty-nine years, my time in your Society, I've been blessed with the opportunity to attend *maṅgala-arati* and the other portions of the morning program. As the *Guro-aṣṭaka* is sung, I meditate on how each verse describes another of your gifts, qualities, and pastimes...

Saṁsāra-dāvānala-līḍha-loka...

I and countless others in the West were certainly suffering in the blazing fire of *saṁsāra* before you courageously undertook the dangerous voyage to New York City in 1965 and began pouring down your soothing, cooling mercy upon us like an inexhaustible cloud. Your *guru mahārāja's* order and Lord Caitanya's prediction had inspired and empowered you to undertake in your seventieth year the seemingly impossible task of spreading Lord Caitanya's

saṅkīrtana movement in the West. I and my godbrothers and sisters, along with the many thousands of your grand, and great-grand-disciples, are the beneficiaries of your pure devotion, lionlike courage, and unshakeable determination to fulfill the sacred mission you'd been given.

Mahāprabhoḥ kīrtana-nṛtya-gīta...

The first installment of your mercy took the shape of your singing the *mahā-mantra* and teaching all who were receptive to sing along with you, to dance to the beat of your half a bongo drum, and to play along with tambourines and the like. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* teaches that although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there's one saving grace – the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Those who take to this chanting seriously can break the strong bonds of attachment to *māyā* and go back home, back to Godhead. You embraced Lord Caitanya's instruction in His *Śikṣāṣṭaka* that there is absolutely no restriction of time, place, or candidate regarding the chanting of the Lord's name. And you proved the truth of that instruction a thousand times as you spread the Hare Krishna movement worldwide.

Śrī-vigrahārādhana-nitya-nānā- ...

You were always worshipping Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the temple of your heart, and as soon as you got a chance to establish Deities and teach your followers about Their worship, you did so in San Francisco in early 1967. Eventually you established more than a hundred temples worldwide, knowing how important they are for regulation, cleanliness, and provision of a place where devotees can live and serve together, hear and chant about Kṛṣṇa, and invite guests to do the same.

Catur-vidha-śrī-bhagavat-prasāda- ...

Of course, even before any temples were established, honoring *prasādam* was an essential part of the Hare Kṛṣṇa experience. You introduced the Sunday Love Feast in 1966 at 26 Second Avenue, and before long your followers had learned to prepare standards such as *chapatis*, *dāl*, *subjīs*, and rice, along with special preps like *halavā*, *pakorās*, and *gulab jāmuns*. Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, dancing in ecstasy, and feasting on opulent *prasādam* comprised Lord Caitanya's program for mass preaching, and you perfectly executed it wherever you went in your worldwide preaching tour.

Śrī-rādhikā-mādhavayor apāra- ...

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* we learn how the *mahā-bhāgavatas* live on two planes – the internal and the external. Externally, they

interact with others, teaching the art and science of devotional service to those who are receptive, doing the needful to accomplish the mission of spreading the *saṅkīrtana* movement, while internally they render their personal service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, tasting varieties of the highest ecstasy. But occasionally, in your case, the inner ecstatic experience would become evident for all to see – such as when you occasionally became stunned in ecstasy while singing *Jaya Rādhā-Mādhava*. You once said that your purports were your emotional ecstasies, and so I think we can safely assume that as you dictated your books in the wee hours you were communing with the Lord. Indeed, once when you were relishing hearing one of your own books read to you, a devotee asked you why you were relishing so deeply, and you said something to the effect that it was because you hadn't written them...Kṛṣṇa had.

Nikuñja-yūno rati-keli-siddhyai...

In this verse we get a glimpse into your eternal relationship with Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. You are very dear to Them because you assist the gopis in making arrangements for the perfection of Their loving affairs within Vrindavana's groves. And I believe that you're especially dear to Them for spreading Their glories worldwide through your books, temples, *kīrtanas*, and the thousands of devotees who worship Them daily.

Sāksād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair...

When you told your first devotees in New York the teaching of this verse – that the *ācārya* is “as good as God” – they were shocked. But they were relieved when they understood the actual instruction, namely, “that the spiritual master is to be honored as much as the Supreme Lord because he is the most confidential servitor of the Lord.” When you explained the import of this teaching for your disciples, it made perfect sense: Kṛṣṇa is so great and we're so unqualified that there's no way we can please Him unless we get the mercy of His dear devotee. In other words, by pleasing you – by following your instructions, which are nothing but the teachings of Kṛṣṇa in books like the *Bhagavad-gītā* – we're sure to please Kṛṣṇa and advance in devotional service. Otherwise, we have no hope on our own.

Yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo...

I regard this as the most essential message of the *Guro-aṣṭaka*. Our advancement is wholly dependent on your mercy, which flows abundantly when we follow your instructions. But if we can't or

won't follow them, we have no hope of advancing in devotional service. Therefore we should remember and honor you morning, noon, and night.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I'm 74 years old. I don't have many more years in this body. I pray that I may continue to attend *maṅgala-ārati* every morning and meditate on you as the *Gurv-aṣṭaka* is sung, and that I will be able to clear away my remaining *anarthas* and rejoin you in Goloka-vṛndāvana when my time in this body has expired.

Your grateful servant,

Dravida Dasa

Initiation: 1974 January. NY, USA

Ramanotsuka Dasa

I am not known as a person of much words or emotion and prefer to express gratitude by doing *seva* that is within my means and capabilities.

But when Jayādvaita Swami invited me to contribute here, I thought I should at least try this time to make a contribution.

Perhaps I can make up for my own incompetence by quoting a paragraph I came across in my chance literary wanderings, in a publication from 1936 by His Holiness Jagadguru Shankaracharya Shri Bharati Krishna Tirthaji Maharaj (Govardhan Math Puri) author of "*Vedic Mathematics*", as follows:

...From the preceding paragraphs it must be clear to everyone that Bhagawan Shri Krishna's fame has been of such a universal, wide and all pervading character that we feel actually and fully justified not merely in hoping but in feeling confident that some day, not far in the future, the whole world will recognize Christianity itself (which the believers of the Western world profess faith in and swear by) as but a child born of the history and teachings of Bhagawan Shri Krishna that His influence on the Western world in the future will not, as at present, be of the unconscious type but will spread consciously over and encircle the whole of the Western hemisphere and that they will consequently acclaim and proclaim Bhagawan Shri Krishna as their own

Ishta Deva (Adored Deity). May he expedite the advent of that auspicious day.

It is obvious to us that it is to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda only, that we owe our homage and debt of gratitude for actually fulfilling this divine prophecy of the late Shankaracharya, even within our own lifetimes.

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Ramanotsuka Dasa

Initiation: 1974 February. Hawaii, USA

Mathura Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, thousands of *dandavats* at your lotus feet, which blessed the world wherever you travelled.

On this special day of *Vyāsa-pūjā* we honour and glorify your qualities and deeds, which are indeed ‘unique’ in the annals of history and too innumerable to estimate. We don’t say ‘unique’ casually but with the full import of your status as the Founder-*Ācārya* of the ‘International Society for Krishna Consciousness’, a grandiose title that you personally selected for establishing your fledgling mission on July 13th 1966, when there was just a small storefront as a centre and with a handful of dedicated disciples to help you.

There were many others who could have claimed that status or risen to the occasion, but somehow or other it was Your Divine Grace who was selected by Śrī Krishna and providence to spearhead and instigate a truly international phenomena in your late 60’s and 70’s, and it is you who will be eternally glorified for your ‘unique’ role in manifesting the prophecy of Mahāprabhu’s divine name being heard in every village of the world.

Apart from a lifetime of dedicated preparation, you miraculously managed to accomplish your heroic deeds within the short span of twelve years from 1966-78. When we hear the detailed stories from your early close disciples of how you accomplished those deeds, we are astounded and amazed by how Krishna empowered you to achieve such miracles. The scope of the international matrix was vast and constantly expanding as you traversed the world countless times to oversee and guide the mission you’d inaugurated.

Since your passing in Vrindavana 45 years ago, of which I was fortunate enough to witness, much water has flown under the bridge, the international Hare Krishna movement has expanded beyond a singular institution and developed to extraordinary levels of complexity. So much so that it has practically reached a crisis point in certain areas, especially between the Eastern and Western factions of ISKCON.

But despite all of the challenges and controversies involved in the expansion of the larger 'Krishna movement', I see hope in many of the younger generation who seem primed and inspired to address many of the anomalies and controversial issues that need to be tackled for the 'Mission' to thrive and develop through the generations to come. I feel fortunate to live in a part of the world where varieties of devotee *sanga* are available and provide spiritual nourishment without many of the complex pitfalls existing within many of the institutional formats.

And so the international mission goes on with a life of its own, but we will never lose respect and affection for the Founder of this amazing world-wide phenomena, who instigated and set it all in motion over 50 years ago.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your extremely grateful servant,

Mathura Dasa

Initiation: 1974 March. Amsterdam, Holland

Madhusevita Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances; all glories to your divine appearance day.

While I am writing this offering, the world is burdened with many catastrophes: a viral plague, droughts, floods, and a cruel war that risks spreading everywhere.

Everyone is looking for shelter and protection, but all they find is an army of fallible soldiers and cruel death will come and take them away; this because they lack *ātma-tattova* and Krishna consciousness.

Even though I have joined your transcendental family nearly 50

years ago I still haven't fully realized how to really deserve to be protected by you.

There is an hidden meaning in the words:

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasadan na gatih kuto 'pi*

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

That hidden meaning is twofold:

Firstly, if the spiritual master does not protect you, then Krishna, Rāḍhārāṇī, Gaurāṅga, Nityānanda, the previous *Ācāryas*, none of Them will protect you.

Secondly, every chanting of the *mahā-mantra*, reading and preaching of *śāstra*, prayer, service and sacrifice will not have any real effect if it is not permeated and energized by your factual presence.

A small child depends on the father for protection, but he is ignorant because his dependence is just based on needs and fears and not based on a mature realization of how his existence rests on that of his father, and of his father's love for him.

Still the father will protect the child waiting for him to grow and reciprocate.

Only when attachment to you caused by full realization of your immense love will manifest in my heart, I'll be protected in all times, places and circumstances from the real enemy: my own polluted consciousness and desires.

Then Śrī Krishna, Rāḍhārāṇī, Gaurāṅga, Nityānanda, the previous *Ācāryas*, will all protect my attachment to you, and I'll be safe at your feet back home, back to Godhead, in the ever-blissful, cognizant, dance of love of Rādhā and Krishna.

This illusory world with its illusory catastrophes will vanish; no one will be saved and no one can be protected.

Save and except those who are attached to you.

Your attempting servant,

Madhusevita Dasa

Initiation: 1974 March. Mayapur, India

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

As a young man in my early 20s, I began my search for true spiritual wisdom. I visited various “spiritual” groups, read various “spiritual” literatures, and explored various mind-altering “spiritual” substances. They all had a mystical feel, but were also nebulous to the point that one could not test their validity. If it wasn’t mainstream traditional religion, did that mean it was spiritual? How could I know when I had no idea what “spiritual” really was?

That confusion remained until I met you through your *Krishna Book*. Immediately the others were all exposed as pretenders, like children in a sandbox playing make-believe, pretending to be spiritual. You spoke with such deep authority and wisdom in plain language that made sense. You didn’t present the same kind of mumbo jumbo confusion in an attempt to be spiritual – you *were* spiritual. You *knew* what spiritual was, and you were able to explain it concisely and clearly. Among the other “spiritualists”, you stood as a giant among pygmies. The contrast was immense and immediately I understood that you were a genuine spiritual authority, and the one that I would follow. My search was over. I was no longer a “spiritual seeker” but a “transcendence finder.”

Reading your books, my intellect was both satisfied and challenged, and my mind filled with wonder by the great new timeless and borderless vistas that opened before me in the pages of your books. I remember how thrilled I was when I received the second canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and examining the Table of Contents finding chapters such as: “*The First Step in God Realization*,” “*The Lord in the Heart*,” and “*Pure Devotional Service: The Change of Heart*.” THIS is true spiritual knowledge that will bring the experience of transcendental bliss. THIS revealed actual, factual spiritual life. THIS is what I am meant to give my life to.

As if that were not enough, there was much, much more! The energetic *kīrtans* where we could dance in joy and abandon without the distraction or embarrassment of sex. The discussions of Krishna *kathā* from the pages of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which so satisfied my heart, and then, to top it all off, the most amazing and satisfying sense stimulation ever experienced – Krishna *prasādam*! Then the colorful and joyous festivals where we blissfully shared this

wonderful experience, hoping that thousands more would become infected with this amazing “disease” that makes everyone happy.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, what a world you have given us! An immeasurable gift that can never be repaid. We can never thank you enough! We can never glorify you enough! May your glories be spread forever throughout the universe so that unlimited souls will be similarly blessed as I was, to contact you. You have created a bullet train from Earth to Goloka Vrindavana to ferry unlimited happy souls from this world of birth and death to the world of eternal bliss.

Thank you! Thank you! Millions and millions of times Thank you!

Our best attempt to repay our eternal debt to you will be to bring millions of souls to your lotus feet, and we earnestly pray for your blessings for our efforts to do so.

I pray that I will be blessed to eternally remain.

Your servant,

Dhanesvara Dasa

Initiation: 1974 April. Gainesville, Florida, USA

Aristaha Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I am your servant in the farm community Almviks gård in Sweden. By your grace so many wonderful things are manifesting here despite so many material obstacles.

All glories to the devotees living here and to the Deities Śrī Śrī Pañca Tattva!

Thank you dear master for Your Divine Grace
You have bestowed on me, a fallen soul

I am not able to do much service
There are so many others more advanced than me

But by some inconceivable mercy
You could also recognise me

Small things over the years offered to the Deities
Not much ecstasy, no tears

More out of duty because it has to be done
A little bit of austerity, early to bed

Early to rise, keep you happy healthy and wise
Good association and a blessed life

One devotee said it is not my guru or your guru
It is our guru

But I am privileged because you gave me my name
Aristaha das, such a beautiful sound

In the spiritual world the name is the same
O Prabhupāda please bring me there

There is certainly a place for me in the highest abode
Whenever I can pay the price

Whenever I become free from all vice
A humble devotee, non envious and nice

When I am here, please let me do a little service
And note it down on my account

So it may accumulate one day
And show the way to a higher destination I never knew before

But which is destined for me
To serve the Lord and live eternally

I bow down to your lotus feet and pray:
Please give me a humble service to your feet

It may give me entrance to that supreme abode
Beyond birth and death where pure devotees meet

My offering may be verses my offering may be prose
Whatever you love and make us spiritually close

So this was my offering, some pebbles to a king
I feel like a infant songbird who just learnt to sing

Or like the squirrel who wanted to help Lord Rama
build the bridge
Although a few grains of sand was all he could bring

The temple the Deities the devotees is my foundation
And whatever service I have done is not my creation

I wish my heart was softer and was relishing a higher taste
But if my life is built on devotional service, it
is a success and therefore never a waste

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you saved me from disaster
And you will always remain my loving master

We are living in a difficult age
I feel so lonely and suffocated in the false ego cage

But by associating with sincere devotees a door
is being opened
When I lend my ear to hear I experience less fear

May I play a humble part in Lord Caitanya's move-
ment by your grace,
He has such a beautiful moon-like face

Here the youth is chanting every evening
from house to house
They have such love and youthful energy, it is contagious

It is a moonlike ray of everlasting hope in our Swedish farm
It proves that Lord Caitanya's move-
ment is alive and full of charm

For myself, I have not so much hope, I was
saved by a glance
From you who gave me a drop of faith in
Krishna, who is sweet and blue

Your humble servant,

Aristaha Dasa

Initiation: 1974 April. Stockholm, Sweden

Krsnavesa Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

So many of your millions of disciples, *śikṣā* and *dīkṣā*, want so badly to know you, to know your heart, to understand your teachings, that with deep concern and interest they take time every day to pore through and discuss your books and lectures. A practice that's come as an important feature of the Krishna conscious way of life you brought us up in, showing itself in daily *Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā* classes, and other forums of study. So much are the devotees absorbed in this mode of thinking, living, and being, that for many, a concerned and caring understanding of your teachings, perspective, and purpose has become interwoven with the very fibre of their being, and as they go about their daily lives, and I go about mine, I can benefit from experiencing you through them.

One day, many moons ago, I heard one such disciple of yours say to the assembled devotees, "Don't preach on a level too high for a person to understand. That's dogmatism—assuming the person should accept what you say whether they understand it or not. Don't do that! Gauge the person you're talking to, and speak for *their* understanding."

His words rang true, so true, and I knew he must have picked that up from you. Then later I read in the memoir of Brahmananda Das, *Swamiji: An Early Disciple Remembers His Guru*, quote:

At one point [on a walk in Times Square, New York], a matronly lady, who seemed drunk, bumped into him [Prabhupāda], and she turned around and said, "Who are you?" He just answered, "I'm a Hindu monk." He smiled at her and we walked on. She wouldn't have understood that he was a Vaishnava, coming from a non-sectarian spiritual tradition, so he just said something she could understand, something within her radar. (pp 54-55)

How remarkable that for the sake of having some kind of meaningful communication with that drunk old lady, you referred

to yourself as a Hindu monk, when on the higher level you'd been teaching your disciples at, they all knew then, and we all know now, that you and we are not Hindus but Vaishnavas, ostensibly transcendental to the sectarian religions of this world. This is particularly relevant for me, my husband Indriyesh Prabhu, and all devotees involved in presenting Hinduism with Krishna consciousness contextualised within it to thousands of groups of students and teachers from mainstream academic institutions every year. Is what we're doing legitimate? It's a good question that we often ask ourselves. But this anecdote demonstrates an instance of a pure Vaishnava referring to himself as a Hindu in order to meet another person where they were at, and challenges us to think deeper about the nature of preaching, teaching, language, and communication. "Language is conventional." So the saying goes. And Vaishnavas aren't dogmatic.

If I'm wondering about this pastime of yours in Times Square, New York, how about *this* pastime of Lord Caitanya's in Māyāpur? The reference—in the original Bengali—is *Caitanya-caritamrita*, *Adi-līlā* 17.174. When speaking to Chand Kazi, Lord Caitanya refers to *saṅkīrtana* as 'Hindu dharma':

*tumi kaji-hindu-dharma-virodhe adhikārī
ebe ye nā kara mānā bujhite nā pāri*

TRANSLATION

"As a Muslim magistrate, you have the right to oppose the performance of Hindu ceremonies ('Hindu dharma' in the Bengali), but now you do not forbid them. I cannot understand the reason why."

Why did Lord Caitanya refer to *saṅkīrtana* as 'Hindu dharma' when speaking to Chand Kazi? Because it was something the Kazi could understand, something within his radar. To meet the Kazi where he was at, to have meaningful communication with him. Because Lord Caitanya was not dogmatic.

Oh, Prabhupāda, may it be so, that the ordinary work I do in schools outreach may be counted in some small way as preaching, or supporting the preaching of Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement.

May it also be so, that in the next ten thousand years or more of your ISKCON movement in this world, whenever leadership is scarce in our society, the millions of disciples of yours, *śikṣā* and *dīkṣā*, present and future, who know you with a sincere and caring understanding woven into the very fibre of their being, will keep the

movement on course, never to be led astray by the tides of time and politics, through the billions of tiny choices they make daily in their humble lives with the protection of your interests at heart. For your interests are the interests of all of Krishna's parts and parcels, and serving them is the only purpose of our lives.

Your humble servant,

Krsnavesa Dasi

Initiation: 1974 April. Hamburg, Germany

Nirantara Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

As I write this year's offering, I am looking at a beautiful photograph of you. My attraction to you began in 1972 when I was given a small pamphlet, *Transcendental Teachings of Prahlāda Mahārāja*. Before finding you, I did not read much of anything. I somehow got by in school by listening attentively to the teacher. But when I read this writing of yours, I finally found someone who I could actually "read", without getting a headache or losing interest. And now almost fifty years later, still you are the only person I can actually spend time "reading" and not get bored. I agreed with everything you wrote in that pamphlet, and when I turned it over and saw your photograph, I knew that you were my spiritual master.

There were several incidents in your presence where I made a complete fool of myself. Still, you accepted me and even gave me brahminical-initiation, even though you were surprised that I was so ignorant and dull-headed. But just like a loving grandfather, you overlooked my stupidity. I shall never forget how we sat right next to each other, and from your initial surprise, "have you not seen the others???", your expression changed and you said, "alright!" and put the brahminical thread on my body. I was so embarrassed and flabbergasted that I immediately left the room. That scene plays over in my mind over and over, when I think that I could have asked you so many questions, I could have asked for some direct instruction, I could have made a deeper connection with you. That was September 1975 in Vrindāvana.

And it seems that is exactly how my life has played out. I have missed so many opportunities to come up to a higher grade of

Krishna consciousness, for still I am ignorant, foolish, stupid, dull and useless as your disciple.

If I can say anything in my defense, it is that I love your singing and your writing. Every day I listen to your heavenly *bhajans* and *kīrtans*. Every day I read your beautiful books. Your *Krishna Book* is what convinced me back in 1973 to join your ISKCON. I have read your *Krishna Book* several times from start to finish, and two years back I recorded it for my website. When I read *Krishna Book*, I am no longer in the material world; that book transports me to the spiritual realm for sure.

I have perhaps a few years left before my next birth, so I will spend the remainder of my days reading, preaching and living your books. On my death-bed, if I am fortunate enough, I will be hearing your voice singing. Your voice is like medicine for my crazy mind. There is one recording in particular where you sing the *Panca-tattva mahā-mantra* for 6:43 minutes, and *Hare Krishna mahā-mantra* for 7:17 minutes. That *kīrtan* has so much potency, as the devotees responding follow you with heart and soul, and you sing with so much force and ecstasy in love of GODhead.

I was in Atlanta in February 1975 when you sang *Parama Koruna*, first with *karatālas*, and then you over-dubbed *mridanga*. Unfortunately I have never been able to get a copy of that recording. But I can still remember you singing and playing, and I fell in love with you yet another time.

O most compassionate and merciful spiritual master, please allow me to continue hearing your voice and reading your books, wherever I find myself in the sojourn of my life.

Your useless and insignificant disciple,

Nirantara Dāsa

Initiation: 1974 April. NY, USA

Current location: Aliso Viejo, CA, USA

nirantaradasa@gmail.com

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who with the merciful torchlight of knowledge has opened my eyes, which were blinded shut by the darkness of ignorance born from false ego.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Every year that goes by I'm brought to my knees begging for forgiveness and mercy from Your Divine Grace. The stark realization of just how serious your teachings are and the lack of seriousness in me is a humbling experience that shakes me to my core. I still have so much more to learn. And the more I learn, the more I realise just how fallen I am and how much more I still must learn. I'm barely cognizant of my great fortune to have been twice initiated by an extremely rare and exalted *śaktyavesa-avatāra* guru as yourself. I sometimes comment to the growing devotee community that, being a Prabhupāda disciple doesn't really mean that much. By the will of providence, I had the good fortune to be in the right place at the right time to become your disciple. In modern day ISKCON all devotees who encounter your teachings have the same opportunity to advance and receive your inconceivable mercy. You are eternally present within your books and will perpetually remain the *sikṣa guru* Founder-*Ācārya* of ISKCON for the next 10,000 years. The only question is who will take advantage of your teachings in this lifetime and become serious in the science of *bhakti*?

I recently had the opportunity to share a multimedia presentation on Lord Śiva in *Rāma-līlā*. This is a fascinating topic for me. Through your mercy I've come to understand that Siva-tattva and guru-tattva are intrinsically intertwined. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I find much solace in helping to educate your followers about your own seriousness of devotion to Lord Siva. Some devotees maintain harmful misconceptions regarding your teachings that prevent them from receiving the mercy of the topmost Vaishnava guru; Siva Mahadeva.

Within the Rāmāyaṇa there are several levels of appreciation. The basic understanding of the loving reciprocation between Lord Rāma and Lord Śiva is sometimes obfuscated because Rāvaṇa was also a devotee of Lord Siva. The story of the Rāmāyaṇa illustrates

that there is both a wrong way as well as a right way to invoke the all-auspicious Śiva Mahādeva. Rāvaṇa, filled with narcissistic motivated ambitions for power and pleasure, obviously shows us the wrong way to worship Śiva. Lord Rāma also worships Lord Śiva, but only because of His deep affection and love for Mahādeva as His dearest devotee. Lord Rāma requested Lord Śiva to reside at Rāmeśvaram as an emblem for understanding the dangers and curse that is derived from *ahaṅkāra* or false ego. And Lord Śiva has happily remained there in his service to the Supreme Lord as one of the 12 jyotir liṅgams. He lovingly teaches humanity for many millennia yet to come about the self-destructive illusions exemplified by Rāvaṇa of material motivated desires born from false-ego.

While researching the story about Lord Rama's pure worship of Lord Śiva at Ramesvaram, I discovered that the temple is also known as the Ramanatha Swamy temple. After 49 years of service to Your Divine Grace I remained somewhat puzzled about the name you bestowed upon me, Rāmanātha-sukha dās. Only now am I just beginning to understand the deep and profound meaning of my name as the happiness (*sukha*) of the Śiva liṅgam formed by Sītā Devī at Rāmeśvaram to forever remind *Dharma* devotees about the dangers and inherent destruction of false material ego. This is the essential teachings of the Ramanatha Swamy temple at Rāmeśvaram.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, how could you have known back in 1974 when you initiated me as Rāmanātha-sukha dās that 48 years later I would happily be focussed on giving a variety of seminars and lectures in the important city of London about Lord Śiva assisting devotees to become free from the negativity of *ahaṅkāra*? We don't think of you as *tri-kāla-jñā*; a seer of past, present, and future. But what if the Lord in your heart mystically revealed to you the future service of one of your disciples? If the Lord bestowed such insight, then you would have certainly known what their proper name should be. No confusion; just perfect clarity. This thought has recently exploded into my consciousness and inspired me to continue my arduous but needed service of clarifying how to correctly invoke the all auspicious Lord Śiva as the topmost Vaishnava guru that can easily assist all devotees in seeing through the dense fog of *ahaṅkāra*. If I can just help a few of your followers realize the immense spiritual potency, humility, and profound love of Your Divine Grace for your Lord Krishna and all humanity, then my life will have a small modicum of meaning and satisfaction.

Today, on the auspicious occasion of your appearance day, I humbly and sincerely pray that I continue this service and remain forever fixed at your lotus feet birth after birth.

Your fallen and useless aspiring servant,

Ramanatha-sukha Dasa

Initiation: 1974 April

Tattvavit Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Aim gurave namaḥ.

Starting in 1922, you followed your guru. In Kolkata he met you, age twenty-six, on the roof of “Bhaktivinode Asan,” a building named after his father, at 1 Ultadanga Road, where he lived from 1918–32 and started his preaching movement. Now the building is yours — purchased and restored a century after you met him. The inauguration day (21 February 2022) was his *Vyāsa-pūjā* anniversary, the birthday of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. In his honor, that morning, I fasted. Inspired by my internet connection to the “live” celebration, I wrote about the meeting. You wrote about it: “we met by the order of the transcendental system” in a purport discussing your birth and his, in families of transcendentalists (*Bhagavad-gītā* 6.42).

The meeting eventually built up to the origination of your first temple in New York and the founding of ISKCON. A decade later (1976) you took Lord Jagannātha on parade down Fifth Avenue. The next Ratha-yātrā festival attracted the author and Harvard theologian Harvey Cox as chief guest. He rode on one of the carts built by Jayānanda Prabhu, but before the parade he spoke with concerned parents of devotees, at a meeting I helped Polly Perlmutter organize. She met you once; she and Jack Perlmutter lived in Hartford and their son, Śravanānanda, in India. Cox told the crowd in a park, “The deprogrammers are trying to deprive the devotees of the most valuable possession in life, faith in the Supreme Lord.” Fortunately, in March 1977, the New York State Supreme Court Justice John J. Leahy had ruled in ISKCON’s favor: “The Hare Krishna religion is a bona fide religion.” At age eighty, you’d happily heard this judgement.

You attributed your success to following Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta’s

orders and presenting the *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is, resolutely, with discernment and singular determination. You sometimes quoted Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, “It is Kṛṣṇa’s business — *kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nāhe tāra pravartana*: Without Kṛṣṇa’s strength, nobody can spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. 3.7.11). After you met Srila Bhaktisiddhānta, not only were you his honorable follower for fifty-five years but you became his most sincere, trustworthy, and empowered servant worldwide.

This centenary year is suitable for dedicating ourselves to take all that Krishna consciousness offers us, to contribute modestly and ambitiously to your movement, and to secure for ourselves a mature practice and understanding based on your self-realized devotional service to the Supreme Person.

Your immature servant,

Tattvavit Dasa

Initiation: 1974 July. San Francisco, USA

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It is now the middle of April. 48 years ago in April of 1974 I had been in the Ottawa temple for only a week. There was a collage of pictures of you on the wall in the hallway. I was just a baby opening my eyes and seeing my eternal father for the first time.

Each day I was hearing your words from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Those words were so very soothing to me. I was trying to extricate myself from the blazing fire of material existence and your words were like a cool rainfall bringing relief. At the time I was totally unaware of your extremely exalted position. As a fully self-realized soul you see past the curtain of maya and are always with Krishna. Your exalted position enables you to share the intense love that Krishna and you have for all *jīvas*.

Somehow or other I have been a recipient of this love. Like a horse who is drawn to the water I must drink from this ocean of love, this *bhakti rasāmṛta sindhu*. Due to my material nature I am somewhat reluctant to drink, but I must if I intend to become a dutiful disciple.

I have occasionally tasted the pleasure of serving you and your devotees. But when will my mind realize that this is the only true pleasure for me, the eternal soul.

Thank you for guiding me through the years and being so very patient with my slow progress. Each day I think, “Today will be the day I finally try harder to serve you.” And each night I think that I fell short and perhaps can do better the next day.

You have bound me to you with the rope of your love, please continue to pull on that rope so that I can truly come to be deserving of your love.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and your wonderful devotees for your patience with me. I long to serve you, eternally.

Your stumbling child,

Krsnadasa Kaviraja Dasa

Initiation: 1974 July. Ottawa, Canada

Rasaliladevi Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my humble obeisances at your lotus feet on the auspicious day of your appearance within this material world.

You were in this world but not of this world. Out of your causeless mercy, you came as the Lord’s emissary in order to claim so many fallen souls, such as myself, and to spread the glories and blessings of the holy name all over the earth planet.

Thank you for accepting me as your daughter/disciple. All these years later, I am still striving to become worthy of that honor and privilege. I am still trying to live according to the principles and precepts you have taught (and lived) by your perfect example. I am still attempting to pass on the brilliant light of your teachings by sharing them with others.

How kind you have been to me in encouraging me on this path of *bhakti* and in bestowing your grace upon even the smallest attempts at devotional service. Your loving guidance has been the only constant in my life’s journey – leading me on to the higher ground of deeper realization in Krishna consciousness.

Your glories are self-evident, even as their full extent is practically

unfathomable. Only by your mercy can I understand. Thank you for allowing me to realize a portion of your greatness.

Within the last year, here in Athens, Ohio a center of Kṛṣṇa consciousness has been re-established. We pray that Athens Krishna House becomes a source of pleasure for you and that you are pleased by our endeavors to “spread the holy name around.”

I feel honored to be able to serve there and be a part of this wonderful project. I implore you to please, forgive my shortcomings, as I am unqualified for this, or any other devotional service.

I beg to remain your humble servant,

Rasaliladevi Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1974 July. New Vrindavana, West Virginia. USA

Balabhadra Bhattacharya Dasa

To my dear eternal master and savior, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am so happy to inform you that I have finally reached what I have been calling “My Prabhupāda Year,” wherein I turned 70 last December. I have been deeply reflecting on the fact that you stepped onto the land of America, when you were 70, and began your mission of preaching in the western countries, as instructed by your spiritual master back in 1922.

My humble and sincere desire is to spend the balance of my life sharing direct Kṛṣṇa consciousness, with as many conditioned souls as possible, and also to support your followers, especially the current second generation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you set the perfect example, and we simply have to follow in your footsteps, especially with regards to public *kīrtana*. That is how you started this movement, and regardless of what some others may say, that process that you personally instituted, is still our most powerful weapon against Māyā, along with *prasādam* distribution.

The vision of you walking the streets of New York alone without any disciples or well-wishers, is a powerful inspiration for me, and I intend to follow your example by wandering the streets of Atlanta, and sharing Krishna consciousness with whoever is willing to listen.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the personification of *Bhagavad-gītā*
Chapter 3, Text 21:

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas
tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇam kurute
lokaś tad anuvartate*

Translation

Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.

I am just trying in a very small and humble way, to traverse the path that you so kindly and mercifully laid out for all the world to pursue.

Thank you my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, for blessing me in so many ways, especially through your books, and your perfect example of what it means to be a servant of our dear Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I offer myself at your divine lotus feet, and beg you to please use me as your weapon in the mission of fighting Maya, and rescuing the fallen souls of this dangerous age of Kali.

Your humble and eternal servant,

Balabhadra Bhattacharya Dasa
Initiation: 1974 July. Chicago, USA

Mahaman Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

Every word and sentence that you ever spoke has deep meaning and is nectarean and relevant to our lives.

Yet, I am most touched with your profound statement which I take the liberty to quote below. This statement is in the context of a reporter in the United States asking Your Divine Grace the question “What will happen when you die?” Your answer, Śrīla Prabhupāda: “I will never die. I will live forever in my books and they will utilise.” This statement and others act as *Sanjeevani*, the life-sustaining force in my spiritual life.

I cannot even begin to imagine how difficult and meaningless my life would be without your shelter.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, because of your total surrender to Lord Krishna, you had the potency to change the hearts and temperaments of millions and planting and nourishing the seed of most precious *bhakti*.

We can never even imagine that anyone else except you could have done this.

Recently, the Honourable Prime Minister of India, Sri Narendra Modi, while releasing a silver coin commemorating your 125th Appearance spoke eulogisingly about your inconceivable achievements. Among other praises, he said that what you had done was nothing short of a miracle. I would humbly go some step further and say that it is not just a miracle but THE GREATEST MIRACLE IN CREATION, although, out of humility you do not take any credit.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, just as Lord Caitanya is the most munificent incarnation of Krishna, Your Divine Grace is the most munificent devotee of the Lord.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray that I remain your humble servitor throughout this existence and even beyond.

In the CC *Ādi* 1.44, it is said *yadyapi āmāra guru.....*although I know that my spiritual master is the servitor of Sri Caitanya, I also know him as a plenary manifestation of the Lord.

Thanking you, I shall remain forever indebted to you for the precious gift you have given to me and to this world.

Your aspiring, insignificant servant,

Mahaman Dasa

Initiation: 1974 July. London, UK

Krishnarupa Devi Dasi

Most glorious Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances at your lotus feet! May I prostrate myself at your feet birth after birth, until I am again reunited with you and your followers in the spiritual world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, seeing you in person was a transcendental experience.

Being in your company was truly like being in the association of the purest of angels.

We felt uplifted in your presence, as you gave us the nectar

Of spiritual knowledge, of devotion to your beloved Lord Krishna.

Sitting next to you, with your soft palm held out to show me how to chant *gāyatrī*

I felt unfettered from the material plane – my saviour, my merciful father!

I did some silly things in your presence, too, yet you never chastised me.

Sprinkling rose water in front of you, as you climbed the stairs in Calcutta temple,

my spiritual exaltation increasing with each step at being so close to your physical presence led me to stop sprinkling and start *throwing* the fragrant water before your feet.

By Krishna's grace, you didn't slip, you didn't glare at me.

Just calmly climbed further up the stairs – and further and further into my heart.

You were quietly taking breakfast *prasād* in your bedroom one morning

in Māyāpur. Śruti Rupa, who had cooked that morning, was standing slightly behind you, waiting to see if you were happy with what she had cooked.

The cucumber was bitter and you spat it out. "Have you not tasted this?" he asked.

"Should I taste first, Śrīla Prabhupāda?" came the incredulous reply.

"Yes," he said.

I was stunned, and so was the cook.

Being as quiet as I could, I was cleaning the same room at that time, swabbing the floor more and more slowly so I could be in your divine presence that little bit longer.

You didn't chastise me, but the same day you declared as a general instruction that all cleaning must be done early.

One day, I had a small *kartal* bag I had embroidered to give you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I wanted to please you, to get noticed by you, but when my godsister handed it to you, with me peeping over her shoulder, you said, "What is this?"

Internally, I laughed at my foolishness. Prabhupāda, you read our hearts and our minds. Thank you for that lesson.

I could list many small incidents like this, but what I really want to do by giving these examples was that, despite being charged with such responsibility by Krishna, you always had time for insignificant

devotees like myself.

When you looked into our eyes, we knew that you truly knew us and how we had suffered birth after birth.

And now we have found you – or you found us!

We hold fast to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! The saviour of the whole world.

Your servant,

Krishnarupa Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1974 August. Vrindavana, India

Aja Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama oṃ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmine*

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

I offer unlimited obeisances to you, my eternal spiritual master, beloved father and Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead.

In the very first chapter of the *Śrī Caitanya Caritamrita*, you wrote:

Only out of His immense compassion does the Personality of Godhead reveal Himself as the spiritual master. Therefore in the dealings of an *ācārya* there are no activities but those of transcendental loving service to the Lord. He is the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead. It is worthwhile to take shelter of such a steady devotee, who is called *āśraya-vigraha*, or the manifestation or form of the Lord of whom one must take shelter.

I remember the first time I heard this phrase – Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead, and in hearing that, a recognition took place – a tiny glimpse into who you truly are – the magnitude of your position and personality. You are indeed the '*āśraya-vigraha*' – the one in whom we should all take shelter, but you are more than even that! Your appearance was predicted in the *śāstras*. You delivered the holy names of Lord Krishna to virtually every town

and village! You fulfilled the wishes of Lord Caitanya and the entire disciplic succession. You are a *śaktyāveśa* avatar, a fully empowered incarnation of Lord Nityānanda-Balarama and you have revealed the highest truth to all who can bear to listen AND hear! And even more so, to follow.

Sadly, not all of us have followed perfectly. As the Christians say, All fall short of the glory of God, or even his pure devotee. Forty-five years have slipped away since you left us, or rather left your body here in Vrindavana. It seems every few days we hear about the passing of another of our godbrothers and godsisters, your beloved disciples. And I can only hope that in those last moments, they received your sublime mercy. Sometimes I hear of those who, on leaving their body, see you approaching in the last moments of their life. Whether you are taking them with you, or simply guiding them into their next birth, I cannot know. But I imagine that any such association, even for “an eleventh of a second” is enough to fulfill all their desires and remove every pain and disturbance that life here has offered.

You once told me, when I inquired of you in a most beautiful dream, “I know all my disciples in my heart.” For my association with you in this body was limited, and I feared that you did not know who I was. But I was fully reassured from those words and felt the truth of them. How could you NOT know each and every one of us, and what great or little service we were able to perform for you? I simply pray that you will enable me to continue to be remembered within your transcendental heart, and perhaps, when it is my turn to pass from this temporary world of misery, you will bless me with your holy presence as well.

Begging to eternally serve at your lotus feet,

Aja Dasa

Initiation: 1974 September. Seattle, USA

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

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

One of the most important gifts you have given us is the chanting of the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*. Such a simple process recommended by Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. All we have to do is just sit down and chant the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*. You knew we were not able to perform so many difficult processes and thus you gave us this easy process..

There are so many problems, but as you wrote to one person in a letter; “So, I cannot give you any better advice for your problem simply chant Hare Krishna and everything will be alright.”

We see Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was always happy chanting and dancing. You are so kind to us for trying to make us follow Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s process of chanting and dancing. Simply by accepting this *Saṅkīrtana* movement, we can be free from the bad effects of this Kali-yuga.

When will we take your message seriously to chant the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* continuously, giving up the complexities of life and preparing ourselves for our next life? You so want us to transfer from this world of darkness to the world of light by purely chanting the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*.

From this day forward let me take to the chanting of the Hare Krishna Mahamantra seriously by making an attempt to chant purely and attentively.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for this gift.

Your useless servant,

Bhima Dasa

Initiation: 1974 October. Mayapur, India

My dear, beloved, all-merciful Spiritual Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviṣeṣa-śūnya-vādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Falling flat with straw in my teeth, I offer my prostrated obeisances unto your lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Speechless as usual in my inability to glorify you properly, I beg your forgiveness once again for my ineptness. Your Divine Grace has definitely scraped the bottom of the nastiest gutter to pick me up and rescue me from the labyrinthine knots of material attachments. How can I get out of this endless cycle of repeated births and deaths and return to my eternal service at the feet of my Isthā-deva? *How can I give you that pleasure of making all your efforts to save me worthwhile?* I can only think of one answer: to continue every day to chant at least sixteen rounds of *japa*, trying always to hear with attention and helplessness the holy names of the Lord, following the regulative principles, attending the morning and evening programs that you so kindly gave us, studying your amazing books, serving the Lord's devotees and the Lord Himself in His *arca-mūrti* form and dedicating every thought, word and deed to you in hopes that Your Divine Grace will be pleased to accept my measly offerings of insignificant, imperfect, fumbling attempts at service.

This world is such a scary place, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I am completely dependent upon your mercy. Kindly keep me on the boat.

Your struggling spiritual daughter,

Phalini Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1974 November. LA, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

By your mercy, last year we moved to our final address on Rādhā's Way. We are engaged in service and are settling in, preparing to devote as much time that remains to diving into your books and praying to chant the maha-mantra with greater and greater attention.

I am exceedingly grateful that you picked me up when I was a teenager and engaged my youthful enthusiasm in unending service to you in Lord Caitanya's movement. I beg forgiveness for still maintaining material attachments in spite of the spiritual treasures you continue to offer to me. I am so often embarrassed to see desire after desire being fulfilled and protection being offered to myself and family. Still, Lord Krishna gives me remembrance of His sanction and I am overflowed with gratefulness for how you so personally take care of this lowly person and redirect my consciousness towards you time and again.

When I was handed over my service when we moved here from a great soul, I did not know at that time that his wife along with himself were opening the way for us to have the association of devotees totally dedicated and absorbed in your every word! You would be so immensely proud of your disciples' disciples and their sincerity and depth of understanding of all of your books. They represent you exactly as you would have it. Their spiritual potency and attachment to Krishna consciousness affects and uplifts all that come in contact with them.

This ever-expanding transcendental family embraces us all and by this daily purification of our *anarthas*, we are becoming established in remembrance of the goal of life and serving all the Vaisnava devotees of the Lord in whatever meager way we can. We pray for your mercy to help us eventually overcome the effects of the modes of material nature and rise to the occasion of actually embracing the mood of service to your divine lotus feet! Only through your mercy can we even recognize the gift of our human life and aspire to the goal of this boon – Krishna consciousness!

All I can say is *Krishna, Krishna, Krishna He!!!!* Please, please help me to not let go of your beautiful lotus feet!

Your ever thankful servant,

Lalita Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1974 October. Montreal, Canada

Kalpalatika Devi Dasi

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this auspicious day of your appearance, please accept my most humble and respectful obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

Many years ago, I read something I never forgot. You said that your only qualification was that you were fearless. I remember being surprised that you would say that. I thought you might have said, “Because I never forgot Krishna,” or “I received the mercy of my spiritual master.” But, no, that time you said your only qualification was that you were fearless. And thinking about it, I realized that fearlessness was a preeminent aspect of your greatness. Indeed, it could not be accidental that the very name you were given at birth means, “One who is fearless, having taken shelter at the feet of Lord Krishna.”

You were fearless in the 1950’s when you walked alone in New Delhi’s scorching streets to sell your *Back to Godhead* magazines – even to the point of losing consciousness from heat exhaustion

What braver moment was there than the day you walked up the gangplank to the Jaladuta, elderly and alone, with only a few books and a few rupees, on your way to a land where you knew no one? And two serious heart attacks on the ship did not frighten you into abandoning your mission.

Then you fearlessly lived in the derelict and dangerous Bowery among winos, crazies and thieves so that you could fulfill the order of your spiritual master to bring Krishna consciousness to the West.

And as your mission grew, although you could be very charming, you also fearlessly faced off with prominent scientists, clergy and professors – never shying away from telling the truth about the ways they were rascals, deluding people with their deficient knowledge and bogus philosophies.

For example, right here in your garden in Los Angeles, you were speaking with several theologians, including the Chairman of Religion at the University of Southern California. You brilliantly and fearlessly defeated them on so many subjects. Ultimately, you told

them that since they admitted they did not know God, then they could not even be called theologians.

I guess my favorite example is the story Yogeshwara tells about the time you met with the Vice Mayor of Paris. You were told that the protocol throughout the entire French history was for the guest to stand up when the Mayor entered the room. However, you fearlessly remained seated despite a wave of shock and disapproval from the assembly. You knew you were a representative of Krishna and you certainly were not going to stand up for a mundane politician. The Mayor tensely waited and waited, sweating it out, for you to stand and then finally gave up and proceeded with his welcome address. When it was your turn to speak, in front of the press, cameras and lights, you proceeded to tell the Mayor that “a government that does not make a situation for the spiritual progress of its citizens is a rascal government.” That was all over the pages of the newspapers the next day! Fearless!

And perhaps most amazing of all, you fearlessly accepted unqualified disciples such as myself and took on so much of our *karma* in order to help bring us back to Godhead.

I still remain unqualified to be your disciple, but I pray to become more fearless like you in pushing on Lord Caitanya’s mission and giving Krishna to others.

It has been said many times, by many devotees, but I will say it again. “Where would I be now if not for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda?” It is a frightening thought. But because you had no fear I was saved from such a miserable existence and enjoy this beautiful life of Krishna consciousness that you have given us. So on this, your *Vyāsa-pūjā* Day I want to tell you how enormously grateful I am to you for your unlimited fearlessness and boundless love.

Your aspiring disciple,

Kalpalatika Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1974 November. San Francisco, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

I would just like to thank you for all the transcendental gifts that you have made available for us fallen souls in Kali-yuga.

These gifts uplift our consciousness from the mundane to higher spiritual values. Every day we are greatly appreciating and relishing your kindness and mercy. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

How you first met Srila Bhaktisiddhānta (in 1922) and he requested you to preach about Krishna to the English-speaking people. And also how you translated and wrote your purports for the 1st canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, then got donations to print, and then took 200 sets with you to the USA. 57 years ago you arrived in New York at the age of 70, completely depending on Krishna's mercy as Śrīla Bhaktivinode predicted, "A personality will soon appear to preach the teachings of Lord Caitanya and move unrestrictedly over the whole world with His message." And how you travelled to many countries preaching the glories of Krishna, at the same time translated many books and wrote your purports usually in the night when we were taking rest. And how you wrote on September 13, 1965 (board the Jaladuta) "As the vast mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu conquers all directions, a flood of transcendental ecstasy will certainly cover the land. When all the sinful, miserable living entities become happy, the Vaisnava's desire is then fulfilled." And how you taught us the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* and encouraged your disciples to assist you in spreading it to many countries around the world. So now (2022) your movement is expanding and going to every town and village as predicted by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya*.

Your servant,

Jagadvira Dasa

Initiation: 1974 November. Sydney, Australia

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

It continues to amaze me how you made the journey to come here and save us, especially now that I'm approaching your age when you made that world-changing voyage to America.

From the perspective of the materialistic mind, to travel to a foreign country with no friends, no support, no money and no prospects, defies all logic and, putting myself in your shoes, just fills my heart with fear and trepidation.

Yet journey you did, with the instructions of your beloved Gurudeva and your absolute faith in Sri Krishna and Śrī Chaitanya filling your heart with fearlessness and resolve, you brought Kṛṣṇa's holy names and the message of Sri Guru and Gaurāṅga, undiluted and pure, professing that your only credit was that you didn't change anything.

Of course we know that your glories extend far beyond that simple, yet profound statement. You manifest spiritual ecstasy, worked at a pace that was near impossible to match, and kept so many devotees afloat by your purity and potency, without which we would have sunk back to our former ways. And the compassion you showed, forgiving what seemed like unredeemable offenses to those around you with the explanation, "Do you not know the compassion and forgiveness of Lord Nityānanda?"

Who can understand the mind and heart of the pure devotee? Certainly not me. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you told us, "Your spiritual master is no ordinary man" and in your books, you wrote the same message. And yet your humility conquered all.

That you have not given up on me and still show me kindness and offer me service, is a testament to your deep and soul-touching compassion, but not just me, insignificant as I am, every devotee in your wonderful ISKCON family has your ardent support and love.

Your instructions live on in your books, your devotees and all the amazing *vāñī* you left for us. With keen forethought, you made sure we'd have the sweet and comforting sound of your singing, heart touching videos, morning walks and classes, and the portals offered through the books written by your disciples, draws us into their intimate relationships with you and increases our love, respect and amazement at how expertly you handled every situation.

I pray that you don't kick me away and that you allow me to remain your servant and the servant of the servant of your disciples, grand-disciples and great-grand-disciples no matter where or when I might be.

*Ever seeking your causeless mercy,
Your insignificant servant,*

Gopisa Dasa

Initiation: 1974 December. NY, USA

Tripti Devi Dasi

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Somehow or other, by your causeless mercy, I have the unfathomable blessing to be counted among your disciples and I am grateful to your sincere devotees who have given me this opportunity to search my soul and express my heart in this collection of tributes from your disciples.

A tribute is defined as "something done, said, or given to show respect, gratitude or affection".

But try as I might, my words can never convey the depth of respect, gratitude and affection that my heart holds for you Śrīla Prabhupāda. You who have given me everything in this life: eternal truth, unconditional love, pure knowledge and a sublime path back home—back to Godhead. Every smidgeon of light in my life is thanks to Your Grace.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my pole star, the one constant truth in my life. As I flounder through this vast ocean of material suffering, zig-zagging wildly, sometimes tossed by the winds of time and the currents of desire; occasionally on course making steady progress. But always in my heart, I look to you. I feel your love and guidance. You remain my shelter and in my darkest hours you are my beacon of truth. Your causeless mercy is, and always will be, my saving grace.

*I humbly pray to remain your eternally reverent,
grateful, and affectionate servant.*

Tripti Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1974 December. Denver, USA

Hiranmayi Devi Dasi

With all humility I offer you my respectful obeisances Śrīla Prabhupāda.

It was many years ago that I first met you in Paris in 1974. Krishna consciousness was the best thing that could happen to me. After having known a great degeneration, where no regulative principle existed in my life, a French devotee distributing the Hare Krishna magazine came to my workplace in Lausanne, Switzerland, and saved me.

I needed training to recover all my faculties. The temple was the perfect place to cater for the sick people of Kali-yuga. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for that heaven-sent shelter first in Switzerland, then in France where I completed my *brahmacārīṇī* education. Then back to Switzerland to live it and I find myself at New Māyāpur. And all this was accomplished by Your Divine Grace, our ever well-wisher.

Now at 71, when I look back I see a great lack of maturity on my part, especially when you left your body. Immediately, there were important changes concerning your instructions. Everyone suffered because of this. Me, I buried my head in the sand and closed my eyes so as not to engage in the intense politics of that time.

Let's turn our back on the past. Today, I still live with my husband. As best as we can in this big city of Montreal, we keep your instructions in mind. Some like the chanting of 16 rounds is not possible anymore for me who must face a genetic disease. So as not to forget Krishna, I read your books. Thanks to my husband, who has translated into French part of the tenth canto of the *Bhāgavatam*, I can enter into this great book in a more detailed way.

By your grace Śrīla Prabhupāda, I can say that my life has not been in vain. So what more can I say other than I'm eternally grateful to you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda kī jaya!

An insignificant one among your many disciples saying a thousand thank yous.

Your servant,

Hiranmayi Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1975 February. Geneva, Switzerland

Jaya Gouranga Dasa

Dear Divine Śrīla Prabhupāda.

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

Those divine lotus feet of yours, Śrīla Prabhupāda, which out of your unlimited causeless mercy you so kindly allowed me to massage so many times, which you so mercifully allowed me to physically place upon my useless head.

I never deserved so much mercy as you bestowed upon me, dear Father, and yet you showered me with so much of that sweet mercy.

From the very beginning of my coming in contact with Your Divine Grace, you knew me inside out. You could see how fallen I was, how polluted my heart was, and still you accepted me as your son and your disciple, such kindness and divine mercy.

It is now 50 years since I first met you personally in this lifetime. That beautiful morning when I brought some flowers for you and you so kindly and gracefully accepted them, and after smelling them and smiling at me, you put your divine hands together and said to me, “thank you very much”. Such a sweet, sweet moment in my life.

It has been 52 years since I first joined your disciples in Berkeley and started to chant Hare Krishna. I was only 16-years-old and, as a so-called hippie, I was searching for something in my life, although I had no clear idea what that was.

Then, by the mercy of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna, He brought me to the divine shelter of your beautiful lotus feet. You opened my eyes and filled my heart with transcendental knowledge and bliss.

Without deserving it, Krishna gave you to me and then you gave me Krishna and introduced me to Krishna’s sweet and divine world.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my divine Lord birth after birth. You are my eternal father, my life and soul.

In less than two months, I will be 69-years-old, and because this body of mine is suffering so many health issues, I feel I may have come to the point where any time now I may leave my body. I am not afraid of dying, dear Father, for I have faith in your instructions and

you have taught us that we are not these bodies and that because of the little bit of service that by Your mercy I was able to perform at some point in my otherwise useless life, Krishna will take care of me. But I do regret that I have not done enough in this lifetime to serve your divine mission, to serve your divine lotus feet, and to serve those sincere devotees who serve your divine mission.

By your divine mercy, and the mercy of Lord Krishna, I have lost most of my attachments and attractions for material things. However, I also see my heart still having so many *anarthas* and so I wonder where I will go when I leave my useless body.

I do know one thing, divine Śrīla Prabhupāda, while in this body and in this lifetime, the best times for me and when I was truly happy, was when I was with you, personally serving you my divine Master. Nothing in this life of mine can compare to those moments when I was in your divine physical presence.

Please grant me that opportunity again, dear Lord, that wherever I go from here – it does not matter if it is in heaven or hell – please, please let me be with you, and let me serve you. Let me serve your divine lotus feet, let me serve your divine mission, and let me serve those devotees who serve your divine lotus feet and your divine mission.

I know that because I have been so sinful and so very offensive, I have no right to ask for anything at all, but if I could ask for something, that is my only request and desire, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

To be with you serving your divine lotus feet. Those divine lotus feet that were so very soft and beautiful when I massaged them, and so very fragrant.

I remember the first time I discovered that; it was in Vrindavana of course, and that day I was not massaging your divine lotus feet, but I was standing right next to your bed chanting *japa*, while Satadanya Swami was massaging your divine lotus feet. He then looked up to me and softly said, “hey Jaya Gouranga, come smell this,” as he pointed to your divine lotus feet.

So I put my face next to your divine lotus feet, and... oh my God!! I was transported to a spiritual realm by the beautiful transcendental and ecstatic sweet fragrance emanating from your divine lotus feet. I know, because I was one of your personal servants, that we didn't put any scented oils or anything like that on your divine lotus feet. It was just the natural fragrance of your divine lotus feet alone, and it was so very, very sweet that it would immediately transport anyone

to a transcendental realm.

After that, I couldn't help wanting to smell your divine lotus feet every time I had the opportunity to massage them. And every time I did that, I experienced the same transcendental bliss.

Everything about you Śrīla Prabhupāda, is so divine and transcendental that I still cannot believe how very, very fortunate we have all been to have Lord Krishna send you to us, and even more, to allow so many of us to intimately associate with you.

Thank you dear Father, thank you. I know that you gave us our good fortune as you once told a devotee who said:

“Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda we have so much good fortune”. You said, “I gave you your good fortune”...Indeed you did Śrīla Prabhupāda, and there is no way we can ever repay you.

Therefore, I belong to you my Lord. You own my life, my soul, my heart, my mind.

You can do with me as you like, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and if you can, please engage me in your service. My existence will have some meaning after all.

All glories, all glories to your divine lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda. All glories to you who are eternally my sweet divine father, my Lord and Master, my life and soul.

All glories to all those sincere devotees who serve you, who serve your divine lotus feet and who serve your divine mission.

Signed by your most insignificant, unworthy, fallen dog,

Jaya Gouranga Dasa

Initiation: 1975 February. Mexico

Mahadevi Dasi

Please accept my humble obeisances, Śrīla Prabhupāda on your most glorious *Vyāsa-pūjā* day, 2022

In New Dwaraka, on August 15, 1972 You told a most wonderful pastime about a notorious thief who was so blessed to get Kṛṣṇa's personal association in Vrindavana.

Prabhupāda, we transcribed this most sublime narration. You described this amazing pastime like this ...

“One professional reciter was reciting about *Bhāgavata*, and

he was describing that Kṛṣṇa being very highly decorated with jewels, He is sent for tending the cows in the forest. So there was a thief in that meeting and he thought, "Why not go to Vrindavana and plunder this boy? He is in the forest with so many valuable jewels. I can go there and catch the child and take all the jewels." So he was serious. "I must find out that boy. Then in one night, I shall become millionaire." So he went there, but his qualification was that "I must see Kṛṣṇa! I must see Kṛṣṇa!" That anxiety, that eagerness, made it possible that in Vrindavana, he saw Kṛṣṇa. He saw Kṛṣṇa the same way as he was informed by the *Bhāgavat* reader. Then he saw, "Oh oh, you are so nice boy, Kṛṣṇa!" He began to flatter. He thought that flattering, I shall take all the jewels. (Prabhupāda you are chuckling, so expertly playing the roles of narrator, thief and Kṛṣṇa)

So when he proposed his real business, "So may I take some of your ornaments? You are so rich." "No, no, no, my mother will be angry! I cannot..." Kṛṣṇa as a child.

(Prabhupāda, you are laughing here with your devotees, sitting at your lotus feet)

So he became more and more eager for Kṛṣṇa. And then...By Kṛṣṇa's association, he had already become purified. Then at last Kṛṣṇa said, "All right, you can take." Then he became a devotee, immediately. So somehow or other we should come in contact with Kṛṣṇa. Then we'll be purified." (SB 1.2.12)

I fall down at your lotus feet Śrīla Prabhupāda.
Only you can deliver such a transcendental pastime
in such a perfect, pure, precise ...
in such a transcendently humorous way
Your English is perfect and pure, As It Is.

"Our only wish is to have our consciousness purified
by the words emanating from your lotus mouth."

Every day, we get to hear your immaculate wisdom
from your lotus lips, from your lotus heart,
from you Śrīla Prabhupāda.
This transcendental knowledge and love
is what we are always hankering for...

Being with you, serving you, trying to assist you
in your glorious *Saṅkīrtana* mission
is our life, our daily purpose, our ongoing prayers...
No matter what condition
our condition may be in.

You Śrīla Prabhupāda give us relief
from the grueling grip of
illusion, confusion, delusion
Simply by hearing from you.

We are living to be with you, please you, feed you,
Asking you to take rest, waking you up,
Offering you hot cow's milk, sweets, lunch
and special snacks in between,
along with your eternal Associates, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.
Offering you our hearts every day,..
Please please glance on us...

Hearing from you is soothing, moving devotional service.
You tell us you are in your books.
To hear from you is being with you.

You speak so authoritatively, so perfectly, so sastrically
Not "maybe, I think, or possibly" or
whatever, whenever, however...
You and your "coming from Kṛṣṇa" words
are precise, perfect, *pūrṇam*....complete
Because you have seen the Truth.

"Attachment to your lotus feet
is the perfection which fulfills all desires.
You open our darkened eyes
and fill our hearts with transcendental knowledge"

You open our darkened hearts
with the torchlight of *bhakti*...
Attachment to your lotus feet is pushing on
Krishna consciousness
Somehow or other.
Attachment to that service eternally
is the perfection which fulfills all desires..

Srila Prabhupada, did you know
you gave over 100 Classes in Vrindavana?
We can hear the sacred sounds of Vrindavana in
the background...
I'm addicted to hearing them over and over,
Especially those *NOD* Classes
you gave in front of Śrīla Rūpa Goswami's Samādhi
in Oct, Nov '72...

Same year you delivered the Class above in LA, April '72
(Just within a time frame of a few months,
you accomplished so much on two sides
of the world in the same year!)

Prabhupāda, You doing all this service
in your *elderly* body is most significant!
You were the same age as most of your disciples are now
Some of us can barely walk to the Temple and back.
Some of us need assistance to get back up
from offering our obeisances..

And there you are Prabhupāda, gliding across the floor
in ISKCON LA
Offering your *danḍavats* to Rukmiṇī and Dwarkadish,
Like a swan.
And again here in your Kṛṣṇa Balarāma
ISKCON VRINDAVAN Temple,
Gliding across the floor, offering your dandavats
to your eternal Lords Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma
Like a swan...

Getting up every morning at 1am to translate
while we are all sleeping,

Managing masterfully in great detail, daily heavy correspondence, daily meetings with officials, other outsiders, as well as devotees..

On top of every aspect of our daily lives.

Prabhupāda, you could have stayed in Vrindavana at age 70.

But instead, you worked tirelessly for global life-changing revolutions...

Still serving as Founder-*Ācārya* of globally, most famous ISKCON educational institutions.

Health, *sādhana*, service

Such a regulated schedule in your eating, sleeping, snapping; most busy every day.

Ayurvedic medicines, daily walk, daily massage.

Even at the age of 70, when *we* are all winding down,

It is astoundingly obvious,

Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are simply NOT from this material world.

You came from Goloka, personally sent by Kṛṣṇa

And you gave us your pure, pristine, magnanimous all-perfect self

STIILL you do this and STILL you help us find our way in this horrific, horrible tsunami of Kali-yuga

STILL you guide us, giving us your protection, affection with each one of us individually.

Since your victorious return to Goloka Vṛndāvana in '77,

I always remember the two sentences you said to me,

"I am always with you. Do not be fearful."

We can hear how you scared away a monkey

during some of those NOD Classes here in Vṛndāvana, '72

Hut hut! All the mostly Western disciples chuckling in delight,

stunned by your fearlessness.

ABHAY, fearless, full faith in your guru and Kṛṣṇa

We can get full faith too

by following you and try to do, what you ask us to do.

Around the world 14 times, unprecedented, exceptional, extraordinary
You said you were praying to Kṛṣṇa every day
to protect you from maya!
“The problem with you boys and girls”
is you need to pray more for protection from māyā.
Always teaching us by your humble example.

Prabhupāda, every day with you is STILL an adventure
Especially in Vrindavana, all day long, there you are
in everyone and in everything.
We open up *Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Kṛṣṇa Book*, Kṛṣṇa,
please guide, enlighten, and de-frighten us...
And there you are,
giving Kṛṣṇa’s personal words to us.
And there you are in our vow of 16 rounds daily
Just like Kṛṣṇa is present in His names
So you Śrīla Prabhupāda are present with us
in our daily *japa vrata*.

Actually, you say
“We don’t even care if Kṛṣṇa is God,
We just want to love Kṛṣṇa!”
When you say poetically incorrect words like that,
We give our hearts to you again and again.

Our lives are to repeat what you say Prabhupāda
We don’t need to hear *śāstric* words from others
Everything is known to you.
May we pray every day to always be faithful
in hearing from you,
Like a dog is faithful to the master.

Seemingly miraculously you translated
33 volumes of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*
17 volumes of *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*
and a very long list of other ancient scriptures
Just for us
and all the unlimited parched hearts on this planet

And despite all your elderly medical issues,

you continued in your traveling, corresponding, managing...
You were always staying on your schedule, regulated, no matter where you were.

We are filled with awe and reverence
when we see that famous photo of you,
lying down on your bed, with the dictaphone.
preparing to go back to your eternal Home
in Goloka Vṛndāvana.
And with your final breaths in those final months...
Prabhupāda, You were STILL translating
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam...

LORD BRAHMA STEALING THE BOYS
AND CALVES...

You were still so kindly, magnanimously giving us
your sacred self, your sacred wisdom,
your Vrindavana Kṛṣṇa,

And so I conclude this meager offering to you
Śrīla Prabhupāda,
by glorifying your perfect and pure translation
of SB 10.13.5...
This is from that last chapter you were translating
on your departure bed here in your
ISKCON Vrindavana home...

My dear friends, just see how this riverbank is extremely beautiful because of its pleasing atmosphere. And just see how the blooming lotuses are attracting bees and birds by their aroma. The humming and chirping of the bees and birds is echoing throughout the beautiful trees in the forest. Also, here the sands are clean and soft. Therefore, this must be considered the best place for our sporting and pastimes.
—Your Bhaktivedanta purport

The description of Vṛndāvana forest as given herewith was spoken by Kṛṣṇa five thousand years ago, and the same condition prevailed during the time of the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* three or four hundred years ago. *Kūjat-kokila-haṁsa-sārasa-gaṇākīrṇe*

mayūrākule. Vṛndāvana forest is always filled with the chirping and cooing of birds like cuckoos (*kokila*), ducks (*haṁsa*) and cranes (*sārasa*), and it is also full of peacocks (*mayūrākule*). The same sounds and atmosphere still prevail in the area where our Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple is situated. Everyone who visits this temple is pleased to hear the chirping of the birds as described here (*kūjat-kokila-haṁsa-sārasa*).

For 47 yrs, I've been falling down
at your lotus feet Śrīla Prabhupāda.
I beg to keep serving you, your Vrindavana Lords
and your assembled devotees.
I beg to keep hearing your sacred words
and *bhajans*, til my last breath,
pushing on your Krishna consciousness movement.

*Here in your ISKCON Vrindavana...
Your falling dasi,*

Mahadevi Dasi

Initiation: 1975 February. New Vrindavana, West Virginia, USA

Maha Punya Devi Dasi

All glories eternally to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda *ki jaya!!*

*śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma, kevala-bhakati-sadma,
bando muñi sāvadhāna mate,
jāhāra prasāde bhāi, e bhava toriyā jāi,
kṛṣṇa-prāpti hoy jāhā ha'te*

“The lotus feet of spiritual master are the only means by which we can attain pure devotional service.”

I prostrate myself before his lotus feet with great respect and veneration. By his grace, one can cross the ocean of material suffering and reach thus the mercy of kṛṣṇa.”

My dear, loved, admired and respected Spiritual Master, eternal father, I humbly beg you to please allow me to prostrate myself before your divine and sacred lotus feet hundreds and hundreds of times, for they are an oasis of eternal transcendental mercy.

I am an extremely insignificant soul, but it gives me great pleasure to have the blessing to praise him, to glorify him and to try to serve him one more year, if you grant me the opportunity to do so.

This is another year to celebrate in style his wonderful and very auspicious *Vyāsa-pūjā* 2022 festival. I remember a very beautiful prayer he wrote while traveling aboard the ship Jaladuta::

*kṛṣṇa tava puṇya habe bhāi
e- puṇya koribe jabe rādhārāṇī khuṣī habe
dhruva ato boli tomā tāi.*

“I emphatically tell you brothers, that you will only be able to obtain your good fortune from the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, when Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is pleased with you.”

*śrī siddhānta sarasvatī śacī-suta priya ati
kṛṣṇa- sevāya jāṇra tula nāi
sei se mohānta- guru jagater madhe madhe uru
kṛṣṇa bhakti dey ṭhāi ṭhāi*

“Śrīla Bhaktisidhānta Sarasvatī, who is very dear to Lord Gaurāṅga (the son of mother Sacī), He has no equal in his service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. He is the great holy spiritual master who bestows intense devotion to Kṛṣṇa in different places in the world.”

These are the instructions that he fully and with absolute precision, compiled and spread to every corner of this material world. They bestowed upon him all the blessing and absolute power to propagate the glories of the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and his associated saints.

Now we, his devotees and disciples and generations of Vaisnavas that precede us, have a great responsibility to continue this spread throughout the world. Infinite thanks for so many blessings. Thanks to that, we have the great fortune to continue expanding this valuable and precious legacy.

The holy name of Lord Hari will continue to be heard in every corner of this planet and its surroundings.

He has always instilled in us the enormous importance and great responsibility of preaching, translating, editing, printing and distributing his sacred and perfect books, for that is what pleases his divine person and Śrīla Bhaktisidhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Mahārāja. He also instituted the gurukula, so that at a very young age, children may learn to preach and study his books.

Since he came into our lives, he always had a fixed mission in his mind: to print and distribute books. He taught us to do it too. His mission still stands and he has been, is, and will continue to be at the forefront of it, as the great commander-in-chief who is of this great army of soldiers formed around planet earth.

When he was lying in his room in Vrindavana due to the state of his health, in October 1977, the devotees who cared for Him asked Him not to leave His body for he was to finish translating the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He replied that these bodies only cause expenses and miseries, and that Lord Śrī kṛṣṇa gave him the freedom to decide whether he wanted to leave or stay. He decided to leave in November of the same year, to go on to the wonderful, transcendental, divine, perfect, and eternal pastimes of the Supreme Lord and His associates, knowing with certainty that here he left his disciples and devotees to continue with this nectarine devotional service.

He will never die, he will never be forgotten under any circumstance.

He will live eternally through his books, his example, his teachings.

I sing my rounds every day with the *japa* that he personally gave me with his holy lotus hands. It is my great treasure.

I am eternally grateful to have known him. To be his humble disciple and try to perform some service to please him.

My humblest and most sincere obeisances to his divine lotus feet, again and again. Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your would-be servant of his servant,

Maha Punya Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1975 February, Mexico

Current location: Soledad Adalid Guadarrama

Col. Las flores Celaya Guanajuato, Mexico

Mrtyuhara Dasa

Most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

Every year on this divine day of your advent, we, as your disciples, gather to show with letters, poems and narrations, our personal feelings towards Your Divine Grace.

Although forty-five years have gone since your physical disappearance and fifty since our first meeting, my memory of you does not fade. Your remembrance always remains prominent in my memory and the relationship established after my initiation, which has continued over time through devotional service, is always there, ever stronger and even more prominent.

It is certainly not to my merits if today I am still here to dedicate these few lines to you, in trying to express the feeling I have towards your divine person, whether I see you as “Spiritual Master”, as a “Father” and as “Friend”.

This is one of the most sublime aspects of your divine character.

This is the metamorphosis of the pure devotee who, under different circumstances, manages to appear in different aspects only and exclusively for the benefit of his disciple.

As you have explained in one of your lectures on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, a person must have a spiritual master and he must look for him in the right place.

If a person is interested in culture, he does not go to a clothing store but goes to an educational institution.

However, I did not have the slightest idea of what it meant to have a spiritual master.

I never searched for you.

Your Divine Grace has come to get me.

My culture was not in the least similar to that of a disciple who seeks the right teacher, I was out of reach of your influence, but you are the one who came to me. And you took me!

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to invent a new method [CC *Adi* 7.31-32] to convert the *Māyāvādīs* and all the others who did not

take an interest in the spiritual life, and many did not understand this innovation.

In the commentary on that verse, you highlighted how Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is one of the greatest innovators.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, we can find the same qualities in you.

Your Divine Grace is the most daring amongst the innovators.

To get to us you have adopted a *modus operandi* that was, until then, inconceivable to the followers of the *Gauḍīya Sampradāya*.

You have directly applied the method of “time and circumstances” and succeeded in obtaining the result that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami set out to achieve through Your Divine Grace.

Still you did everything by strictly following the teachings of the previous *ācāryas*, and that is the hardest thing to do.

You managed to achieve the result without weakening or watering down our spiritual life.

You managed to teach us how to swim in this stormy ocean of Kali.

The whirlwind of this Era of Kali, which, as never before, is devastating everyone’s life on this planet, does not affect the life of those who have taken shelter at your lotus feet.

It is only through the mercy of Your Divine Grace that we are now protected from the influences of material nature.

Narottama Dasa Thakura sings:

*āra kabe nitāi-cānder koruṇā hoibe
saṁsāra-bāsanā mora kabe tuccha ha’be*

When will I get the mercy of Lord Nityānanda-Candra?

When, through His mercy, will the desire for material enjoyment become insignificant?

Likewise, through Your Divine Grace’s mercy, the desire for material enjoyment is becoming more and more insignificant.

You are the embodiment of the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu.

Only remaining close to Your Divine Grace, we will be able to cross this dark ocean of birth and death!

Who could ever abandon your association?

Who is that lunatic who will even remotely dare to think of separating himself from Your Divine Grace, leaving aside your eternal teachings?!

At this time, just like on an old boat taking on water, in getting closer and closer to the last shore of my present life, I will still try, with

all the strength at my disposal, to reach the goal you have set for me.

Like a child looking for his mother, I cannot grow up without Your Divine Grace's guidance. For myself it is not and never will be possible to take even just a small step ahead without being firmly attached to your divine lotus feet. Whether this life or those yet to come.

I do not want to become a sort of heirloom in an old museum where I am revered just because I am your disciple. I want to stay out of such a museum and, following Your Divine Grace's example, be actively engaged in devotional service.

However little it may be, I hope, with any of my small and insignificant services, to be able to repay at least a few drops of that ocean of mercy, which you have kindly donated me.

Therefore, again and again, every day and forever, I offer my most respectful obeisances at Your Divine Grace's lotus feet.

Your eternal servant,

Mrtyuhara Dasa

Initiation: 1975 February. Rome, Italy

Nartaka Gopala Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my loving obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you!

By your saintly association, countless people developed the utmost respect, inspiration and love for Krishna. I became acquainted with one such soul when I was living at your magnificent Juhu temple in Bombay (now Mumbai) from 1990 to 1995. His name is Sri Tulsidas J. Sharma and he met you at the first ISKCON pandal at Cross Maidan in downtown Bombay in 1971.

Mr. Tulsidas J. Sharma: "At the Churchgate Maidan I saw the Indians as well as foreigners dancing and chanting *Hare Ram, Hare Krishna* before the Deities in the tent and saw Prabhupāda playing on *pakhavaj*. I was overwhelmed with joy because he taught the world our Vaishnava religion, made the foreigners brahmanas, and above all he made them Krishna *bhaktas* irrespective of their caste or creed. After *arati* I met Śrīla Prabhupāda in the tent and bowed my head to this great soul. I told him, 'God has given you the power to preach

Krishna *bhakti* all over the world, which none of our Goswamiis or head priests of the Vaishnava temples of India have done after Goswami Sri Vallabhacharyaji and Sri Shankaracharyaji.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were pleased to hear his humble words and gave him flowers and *prasādam* with your blessings.

We have all heard the history of Juhu temple, that when you purchased the land from Mr. A.B. Nair he attempted to cheat you as he had already sold the land to others and defaulted on those agreements but kept their down payments. You even had to pay off one of the people he had cheated before being allowed to obtain the deed to the land. I was astonished to find out that Tulsidas Sharma had purchased the Nairwadi land where your Juhu temple now exists several years before you did.

Mr. Tulsidas J. Sharma: “In 1965 I had purchased the land where the Juhu temple is today from Mr. A.B. Nair. One day Mr. Nair called me to his office of *Free Press Journal* on Dalal Street and requested me to give up my rights to the land as Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted the property to construct the *Hare Ram, Hare Krishna* temple. I laughed at this proposal and did not believe him at all. I thought that he had some other buyer at a higher price and that he wanted to fool me. Therefore I told him, “If Śrīla Prabhupāda tells me in person that he wants to construct *Hare Krishna* temple, I will surrender my right in his favour.” He agreed to call me when an appointment was fixed with Śrīla Prabhupāda.”

“After one month Mr. Nair called me to his office where I met Śrīla Prabhupāda. I bowed to him with folded hands saying *Jaya Sri Krishna* to which he reciprocated. I requested Prabhupāda to explain if he really was interested in the property for a temple. He spoke that Lord Krishna wants to have His house on this land in Bombay, and that he wants to construct the temple with contributions from devotees all over the world.”

“At this I immediately got a flash in my mind that the whole universe belongs to Lord Krishna, and if I get this opportunity in my life to do a little by giving up my right to the land, I consider myself very fortunate as I am His devotee from my ancestors. I told Śrīla Prabhupāda, ‘I surrender my right in favour of Lord Krishna and Lord Ram through your blessings.’ He was very much pleased.”

“Now I am very happy when I go to the temple at Juhu for *darshan*. Even though Prabhupāda has left this world physically, he is always there in the temple giving his blessings to millions of

devotees from all over the world. Śrīla Prabhupāda changed the old Nairwadi to Vrindavana.”

More recently, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we see how your influence has expanded exponentially around the world. When you went to Russia in 1971 the Russian officials told you that as a tourist, you were not allowed to speak with any Russians in the general population. Against all odds, by Lord Krishna’s grace, the only Russian youth you preached to there became Ananta Shanti Dasa. Now, 50 years later, there are thousands of devotees in that area of the world. Just in the country of Ukraine alone, now in 2022 there are over 20,000 devotees and 25 temples. This is all due to your compassion, potency and mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The highest blessing, I feel, is that your association through your *vāñī*: your words, instructions, books, videos, classes, letters, are always available to any sincere seeker today as much as they were when you were on the planet in your manifest form.

Please help me to serve you and push on your mission, so that others may be given the blessings of your association as well.

Aspiring to serve you,

Nartaka Gopala Dasi

Initiation: 1975 February. Miami, USA

Current location: ISKCON Miami/ISKCON Alachua, Florida, USA

Rathayatra Dasa

To our Acharya Deva, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

My humble prostrated obeisances to your divine lotus feet.

On this auspicious occasion of your 126th *Vyāsa-pūjā*.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I am looking forward to every morning to meditate on your *Śrī Guru-aṣṭaka*, hearing about you, the bona fide spiritual master who is very dear, knowing you’re the expert in assisting the gopīs, who at different times make different tasteful arrangements for the perfection of Rādhā and Krishna’s conjugal loving affairs within the groves of Vrindavana.

Then chant my *japa* along with you, clearly focusing on each syllable and chanting the Gayatri *mantras* which you personally gave me in 1976, Detroit, Devasadhan Mandir.

Recently I spent one year hearing a recording of you chanting the *gāyatrī mantra*, perfecting my understanding and knowledge of this powerful *mantra*, remembering when you were chanting each word to me and gently placing the brahmin thread over me.

After rounds are completed, diving deeply into the meaning and words of *Śrī Guru Vandana*.

Only you have opened my eyes and filled my heart with transcendental knowledge.

You are my Lord, birth after birth.

Next, in my morning schedule, to hear daily one of your numerous *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class lectures which are available to listen to.

Your perfect presentation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is your spiritual ecstasy.

Your eternal *vāṇī* has been given to us and future generations.

In this technological age, you knew the future, for the sincere seeker, just by the click of our fingertips, you will appear.

During the day, we can be listening to or watching you on numerous devices.

He lives forever by his divine instructions, and the follower lives with him. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Dedication, 1962).

We are following your instructions, by your grace.

To be self-sufficient and independent, which you instructed, means growing our own organic food.

“Civilization will collapse very soon. All over the world. It will collapse.”

“When the government cannot adjust, they will start a war.”
(Quotes from your morning walk, November 29, 1975, Delhi).

Karuna Farm is a self-sufficient organic farming community, started by your disciple, Mahamsa Swami, in the blue mountains of Kodaikanal, South India.

We enjoy our own pure alkaline water and the fresh, cool air.

We have over a thousand fruit trees, solar and hydro (waterfalls) for electric power.

Tilling the land free of chemicals and inviting others to join our community.

Thank you for your living presence and your wonderful original books.

That you yourself read on a daily basis and frequently exclaimed,

"I did not write these books! Kṛṣṇa has written, He has dictated!"

Your *līlā* is eternal, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

We can enter into it simply by remembering you and your magnificent activities, such as reading your pure books, and as much as possible, chanting the holy names of *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*.

Your lowly servants,

Rathayatra Dasa and Vaidhi Bhakti Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1975 February. Chicago, USA

Current location: South India, 2022

Sauri Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my *daṇḍavats* from the bottom of my heart at your lotus feet. Your influence completely changed my life in an unlimitedly better way. I was born in an atheistic family and as a result was very unhappy until you came into my life.

You gave me the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. *Daṇḍavats* to you!!!

You gave me the association of devotees. *Daṇḍavats* to you!!!

You gave me the nine processes of devotional service, especially *kīrtana*. *Daṇḍavats* to you!!!

You gave me practical spiritual knowledge through your books, lectures, and conversations. *Daṇḍavats* to you!!!

You gave me by your example how to properly execute spiritual life. *Daṇḍavats* to you!!!

Please continue to tolerate me and inspire me in spiritual life. *Sahasra koṭi daṇḍavats* to you Śrīla Prabhupāda!!!

Your unworthy servant,

Sauri Dasa

Initiation: 1975 April. Hawaii, USA

Gopaswami Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It is my turn to reach 50 years since I met you in 1972, in Paris. By your mercy only I have been able to remain happily connected to you and to your ISKCON movement. I have been offered the services of book translation, book distribution, caring and preaching to devotees and non-devotees. This past year, I was offered the service of building a prototype of eco-house in your wonderful New Māyāpura, and of writing a history of your movement in France.

My real goal is to serve and please you, my dear and extraordinary spiritual master and savior. Please bless me for the next phase of my life with another service for your pleasure. I depend on your mercy.

Your ever grateful,

Gopaswami Dasa

Initiation: 1975 March. Paris, France

Medhavi Dasa

*ātmānam ca kuru-śreṣṭha
kṛṣṇena manasekṣitam
dhyāyan gate bhāgavate
ruroda prema-vihvalaḥ*

“Understanding that he was remembered by Lord Kṛṣṇa (while quitting this world), Vidura began to cry loudly, overwhelmed by the ecstasy of love.” (SB. 3.4.35)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my most humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

On Saturday mornings, here in Cape Town, South Africa, we read of your wonderful activities in spreading the Krishna consciousness movement all over the world as presented in Śrīla Prabhupāda *Līlāmṛta*. We have completed the 6 volume ‘*Līlāmṛta*’ quite a few times. We have recently completed the 7th volume, ‘*Śrīla Prabhupāda Līlā*’ as well. At present, we are reading ‘*Śrīla Prabhupāda Nectar*’, the

little red books.

H.H. Satsvarūpa Mahārāja, in my opinion, has done a great service to new and aspiring devotees for years to come, by presenting these records of your transcendental activities.

Just as your translations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Caitanya-Caritamrita*, *Nectar of Instruction* and your compilations – the *Kṛṣṇa Book*, *Nectar of Devotion*, *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, etc, give solid evidence of the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, so the histories of your achievements give solid evidence of the existence and attainment of pure devotional service, which is so rarely achieved.

You calmly overcame so much adversity, even to get to the gangway of the Jaladuta, what to speak of the journey across the Atlantic, what to speak of the year of the struggle in New York until some fortunate souls came to accept your guidance.

Over the years you had to conquer the different beasts and charlatans of the concrete jungles, the Mr. Prices, the Professor Stahls, and the Mr. Nairs. Everyone needs to regularly hear of your courage, your intelligence and your determination to serve your spiritual master, Srīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

While reading the *Līlāmṛta* to new listeners or while teaching a Disciples Course, my deepest satisfaction is to hear new-found appreciation for your incredible service by the persons who are coming to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, the movement that you founded. They can also feel that you were personally thinking of them while you were moving through this world. Therefore, the quote from Third Canto mentioned above, some of them even relate dreams in which you appeared and instructed or consoled them.

In a few years, all of your initiated followers will have left this world. Our success will be in how transparently we have delivered to others what you have given us. This also involves in delivering you, your personality, your achievements, your kindness and our personal memories of you.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, in a future birth, if you so desire, please allow me to more closely associate and serve you so that I may always be fully absorbed in your *Līlāmṛta*.

Your lowly servant,

Medhavi Dasa

Initiation: 1975 April. Vrindavana, India

*sarīsāra-dāvānala-līḍha-loka
trāṇāya kārūṇya-ghanāghanatvam
prāptasya kalyāṇa-guṇārṇavasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

The spiritual master is receiving benediction from the ocean of mercy. Just as a cloud pours water on a forest fire to extinguish it, so the spiritual master delivers the materially afflicted world by extinguishing the blazing fire of material existence. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.

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

“The mercy of the spiritual master is always there, but we have to take it. Just like the sun, it is there for everyone, but we at least have to stand in a receptive place to get the benefit.”

(Letter to: Kadamba Kanana / Vrindavan, 8 December, 1975)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I have zero qualifications to even claim to be your disciple. I must have been the ultimate ‘mercy case’, stumbling unto the cooling shelter of your lotus feet, where you have accepted me in spite of this. I was 20 years old, and my vision of this material world was not one of a ‘blazing fire of material existence’. It was more like a luscious garden that I was just about to enter. I was young, had found my ‘prince charming’ and (thought) I was on the road to domestic bliss. The house was being built in the outer suburbs...I could see the future shaping up. It would be like one of those romantic novels that I so readily devoured.

There was only one problem. My Prince Charming kept asking these annoying questions...Like “Who am I?” “Why am I here?” “What’s this life all about and why do we all have to die?”

“He’ll get over it,” I thought. But he didn’t ...those questions kept coming up and disturbing our potential bliss.

And then there was that *Bhagavad-gītā*, your *Bhagavad-gītā* As It Is, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that he kept in his cupboard. I knew it was the source of all this...I also knew and felt that it had some special power.

I would explore it when he wasn't there...trying to understand what was drawing him in. Your precious books, Śrīla Prabhupāda, were delivering the materially afflicted world, and they seemed to follow me everywhere. A book distributor's dream, I could never say no. I would give a few dollars, take the book, never read a word, and put it on my shelf along with the romantic novels.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Your mercy, however, coming directly from the 'Ocean of Mercy', Śrī Krishna, was always consistent and relentless. One fine day my 'Prince' and I found our way to your temple in Melbourne, Australia. My husband felt like he had arrived home, all his deep questions were answered and 'this was it!'. I, on the other hand, felt like I had entered a different planet, and an alien one at that. But I developed a 'back up' plan. I would go along with this, bide my time, and just wait for him to 'snap out of it'. However, again by your mercy Śrīla Prabhupāda, I slowly, very slowly, became purified. I chanted rounds, (full of offences), heard classes that went way over my head, went out on *Harināma* and performed some devotional service. I was pretending, but you kindly accepted my pretence. And then one day, when I was just on the verge of giving up, you showed me, gave me a deep realisation of all that I had read and heard in your books and classes. At my darkest hour, I felt the curtain lift and I could clearly see the other side. I began to comprehend the futility of material life as you so expertly describe in all your books. I could clearly see the 'blazing fire of material existence' and in spite of my fragile spiritual state, you gave me ultimate shelter and stability, by initiating me into your fold.

I thank you again and again from the very bottom of my heart, Śrīla Prabhupāda! You never gave up on me. You are indeed an ocean of auspicious qualities. I hang on tightly to the dust of your lotus feet and pray for your continued mercy.

Your lowly daughter,

Vimala

Initiation: 1975 April. Melbourne, Australia

Current location: Auckland, New Zealand

vimalahowie@gmail.com

My dearmost ever-present Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my heart's *daṇḍavat praṇāms* at your lotus feet.

I am taking your feet upon my dull head knowing that only by attaining your blessings one can cross the ocean of maya.

How can I ever forget who has given us the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and taught us how to chant it to attain the maximum human aspirations?

I remember the essence of your teachings summarised in your nectar-like words:

“While chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare* you should always feel the presence of Kṛṣṇa in Person and as soon as you remember Kṛṣṇa in his original *rūpa*, you can remember also about His talks with Arjuna. But if you cannot remember Kṛṣṇa in Person you should try to hear attentively the word *Kṛṣṇa, Hare Rāma* as you go on chanting.”

“Chant sincerely, attentively, and with feeling and only then the highest possible joy can be obtained.”

I offer you my homage on this glorious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration.

All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Eternally grateful,

Chaitanya Swarup Dasa

Initiation: 1975 April. Vrindavana, India

Lelihana Devi Dasi

To my glorious guru mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

You are wonderful beyond words. Everything you did when you were here with us was perfect...and still is...as you are an absolutely pure and perfect devotee, always with Krishna in His eternal pastimes.

Somewhere in one of Krishna's universes in the material creation, you are still preaching the glories and philosophy of Krishna consciousness, and saving innumerable lost souls. But you

yourself are never in this material world, even though it appears to the conditioned souls that you are. You are so amazing!

I wasn't fortunate enough to have your personal association when you were here, but nonetheless, I have had so much association with you by hearing your lectures, reading your books, and hearing the nectarean memories of so many of your disciples. I have bought and listened to the few published audiobooks of your fascinating and amazing pastimes, all such great nectar that I could not listen to them just once. I recommend that everyone should hear them, and feel closer to you.

I must also tell you that I just purchased Gurudāsa's recently published nectarean book, *"The Swami - Who Rocked the World,"* Photographical Essays of A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. It is wonderful, fascinating and superb! Every photograph has where it was taken, a story to go along with it, and so much more. Every one of your disciples will cherish this book. And I am sure you are very pleased with Gurudasa.

One thing that makes me smile in my own life, is that every time I cut an apple I remember you. Having read in some pastimes in the early days, that you would always cut pieces of an apple and give them out to the people you were with at the time. It was so sweet. Just like you are always so sweet and lovely.

I pray for your forgiveness for my fallen nature.

No matter what, you will always be my forever guru mahārāja.

Your aspiring servant,

Lelihana Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1975 April. Vrindavana, India

Mokshalakshmi Devi dasi

My dearmost Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your wonderful lotus feet.

All glories to you, my divine spiritual master.

And here we are in 2022 and what a glorious celebration we may have as it is 100 years since you met your own glorious spiritual master Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. A meeting made in heaven!

Just imagine the world if this momentous meeting had not taken place. Imagine the world without all the wondrous things you brought to us captives of this jail house. All I can say is thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, and of course thank you Krishna. And I guess we shouldn't forget your friend Narendranath Mullik who insisted you meet the 'saintly person'. For without this historic meeting things would be even more miserable than they are on this volatile planet. It was at this very first meeting that you had with your future spiritual master that he instructed you to preach in the English language. I can imagine you just like Arjuna, who only saw the eye of the fish when he needed to compete in the archery challenge to gain the hand of Draupadi, keeping this instruction that close to your heart. And so you proceeded through life facing your own challenges, but luckily for us, never forgetting your true goal in life. Hence at the advanced age of 69 you boarded an old cargo ship to fulfil your life's mission.

I always knew this was an exceptional feat, something quite phenomenal, after all we all know that you had two heart attacks on that boat and had to suffer through twelve thousand miles of rough, but not the usual amount of rough, seas. But since I am now 69 myself, I am getting a much clearer picture of what a 69-year-old body is like and all the restrictions it seems to face. I always used to question myself how you accomplished all the miraculous feats you achieved, but now I am doubly amazed at your accomplishments because I have first-hand experience of a 69-year-old body. Prabhupāda, you are a true superhero. And that's not considering the personal sacrifice you made leaving that most precious of residences, Śrī Vrindavana Dham.

I can imagine the wondrous days you spent in Vrindavana, living in the Radha Damodara Temple only steps away from the breath-taking forms of Krishna and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. I can imagine you poking your head out of your kitchen, taking a couple of steps and peeking at your neighbours, the Deities. I think you must have had long conversations with Their Lordships, making all sorts of plans for your future trip to the English-speaking world. What a sacrifice you made for us lucky English speakers and subsequently everyone. You left the perfection of Vrindavana where sacred cows wandered the winding streets with the tinkling of thousands of temple bells in the background. Out of your compassion you left this sacred home of yours, a jewel on this planet, and descended into the hell

of our existence. I too have experienced the despondency of leaving Vrindavana, but how lucky are we that we managed to share a part of your journey? I try to remain grateful for everything you gave and shared with me. It has struck me recently that maybe the opposite of humility is not arrogance but entitlement. For what were we entitled to? Whatever we got was simply your inexplicable mercy. Your endeavours seem even more of a miracle now that I know the restrictions of the sixty-nine-year-old body.

I find it ironic that at the age you started your great adventure and went on to achieve unfathomable success, I'm ready to throw the proverbial towel in and lead a quiet life preferably in Vrindavana. Once again it makes me realise the sacrifice you made for us and just how special you are. Thank you again.

Of course now Krishna has lifted the veil somewhat on the fragile nature of the material world. First we have a pandemic and now a war in Europe. Fool am I to think I could make plans for retirement in the now more obviously unpredictable planet where the three-fold miseries rule. I look to you once again for inspiration. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, never slowed down really. You just kept circling the world ever spreading the glories of Krishna. Of course I did see a difference in you when you returned from Rishikesh to Vrindavana. Your body somewhat emaciated, but your spirit strong. Ever showing the perfect example. What to speak of the time you left for London. The plan was for you to go to New York with a stopover in London. You left Vrindavana around midnight and naturally all the devotees were assembled outside Krishna Balarāma Temple to see you off. You were in your maroon coloured Ambassador car. And then a defining moment in my life happened; the car started off but suddenly stopped in such a position that I was staring down at you and you were staring up at me. It was a bit of a shock to say the least. You were lying in the back of the car on a couple of guesthouse mattresses, but what struck me was the condition of your body. It was as if the skin was lying on top of your bones with none of the usual padding that comes between them. You just looked so weak and vulnerable lying there but at the same time so powerful and unstoppable.

As I questioned myself on how you could be undertaking such an arduous journey in such a frail state I understood that your motivation was love. Love for your spiritual master and his instructions but also love for us, the conditioned souls. Most of all it

was your determination that stood out to me. Despite the restrictions of your bodily condition nothing deterred you from your goal. A lesson indeed. Then the car pulled off and you were gone leaving a shocked young girl on the road behind you.

As I reflect on this pastime 45 years later, the difference between a pure devotee and myself strikes me. You, Prabhupāda, like a knight in armour ready for a battle, and me trying to run off the battlefield. You, Prabhupāda, ignoring your bodily state, and me waning under the pressure of life. You, Prabhupāda, preparing to meet the world full on and me meditating on the benefits of being a hermit. But no! I have seen your determination, your perfect example at every step, and pray that I can follow your lead and somehow find the strength to face another battle. After all, you have perfectly showed us how to follow the instructions of a spiritual master by your own example. You spent your life preparing for this and your execution of your mission was perfect.

So somewhat humbled in my frailer state and appreciating you with more understanding of the sacrifices you made I once again beg to remain in your service.

Your servant,

Moksha Laksmi Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1975 April. Vrindavana, India

Adikarta Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Although I never spoke to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, it's quite obvious that you have been my greatest friend through thick and thin. The gift that you have bestowed on anyone at all who takes your teachings seriously, is just so divine, unlimited, nectarean and absolutely beyond the purview of material nature, that it makes the heart swoon and the head spin in ecstasy. Not that I know what ecstasy is very deeply, but I am beginning to get a glimpse of the potential state of permanent bliss and wonderment induced by the divine process of devotional service.

Even though, sometimes at *mangal arotik*, which I attend most

days, where I am ashamed to admit, I tend to look at the clock, I am sure that by the process of *sādhana bhakti* the heart softens and a slight ray of love enters. Here in Alachua where I live, there is a large community of many varieties of devotees. Many devotees may do their *sādhana* in their homes, I don't know about that, but I do see that most of the participants are quite elderly ladies, often over 70 years old, and it's such a testament to their dedication to you, and their desire to follow your instructions, that for the past fifty plus years for some of them, they are still determined to please you.

There are most definitely many devotees who have completely taken shelter of your instructions to serve selflessly, but I can think of one, in particular, whose name I won't mention, because she would be too embarrassed, who is over 70, works hard all day at our eco village, never, ever, misses *mangal arotik*, gives classes, does the Sunday feast cut up every week, never complains about the state of ISKCON, and is as steady as a rock. What is it that drives her, and others on, year after year, decade after decade, to want to please you, by making ISKCON a better place? Of course it is you alone and the love she feels for you.

You are the most lovable person, because you just gave love. Just like the *ācāryas*, the six goswamis, Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu Himself, they all came to give love. Just because of your blessings you have made the most unfortunate, very, very fortunate.

In the Tenth Canto, Chapter 7, text nos 13-15, purport you explain the necessity of having qualified brahmanas in society. "Nanda Mahārāja was very confident about the qualifications of the brahmanas and their blessings. He was fully confident that simply if the good brāhmaṇas showered their blessings, the child Krishna would be happy. The blessings of qualified brahmanas can bring happiness not only to Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but to everyone. Because Krishna is self-sufficient, He does not require anyone's blessings, yet Nanda Mahārāja thought that Krishna required the blessings of the brahmanas. What then is to be said of others? In human society, therefore, there must be an ideal class of men, brahmanas who can bestow blessings upon others, namely, the *kshatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, and *śūdras*, so that everyone will be happy." Further on in the purport you state that, "The most important word in these verses is *mahā-guṇam*, indicating that the brahmanas were offered very palatable food of exalted quality. Such palatable dishes were generally prepared with two things, namely food grains and

milk products. Therefore, *Bhagavad-gītā* 18.44 enjoins that human society must give protection to the cows and the brahmanas. This is the way of human society. Killing the cows and spoiling the land will not solve the problem of food. This is not civilization.”

One day, I hope to fulfill that desire by becoming a genuine brāhmaṇa who is qualified to bless others. Obviously I am far from the standard. My other desire would be to help everyone, especially the Vaisnava community, to realize the importance of cow protection, so that we could work together to acquire large tracts of land to properly demonstrate it. Sadly it seems that many of your followers are unaware or uncommitted to this most essential aspect of your teachings, without which our philosophy is more of the armchair variety.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given the blueprint for an ideal society. I pray that by your blessings I will be an instrument in your goals of blessing the suffering people of this earth planet, Mother Bhumi.

*Aspiring for your blessings,
Your eternal servant,*

Adikarta Dasa
Initiation: 1975 May. London, UK

Jivanausadhi Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.
Unlimited glories unto you!

You have given us everything; there is nothing lacking. If we see or feel any deficiencies, it is only due to our own inadequacies.

I know that we can never repay our debt to you for the unfathomable kindness you have bestowed upon us, but we can try by giving others what you have given us; your sublime books and

the joyful process of Krishna consciousness. To please you in some small way would be our greatest happiness.

We were confused about what direction to go in life until we came across your beloved books. Your books are like a transcendental handbook for surviving this material world. The closer we follow the directions in your books, the clearer our path will be for reaching life's ultimate goal of going back home, back to Godhead and engaging in service to the Divine Couple under your guidance.

"He lives forever by his divine instructions and the follower lives with him."

Your eternal servant,

Jivanausadhi Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1975 May. Seattle, USA

Sandamini Devi Dasi

Had You Not Come – The Great Gift *Astakam*

Prabhupāda, had you not come
Wherever would we be?
Bound by Māyā's shackles
Unable to break free.

Had you not awakened us
We'd have wasted our lives in sleep
Missing those pre-dawn chanting hours
For a snoozing garbage heap.

Had you not given us *prasād*
Our sins would simply mount
While eating forbidden food
Bad reaction tantamount.

Had you not given us knowledge
We'd still be ignorant fools
Absorbed in darkest nescience
Braying, like besotted mules.

Had you not given us *harinām*
Life would be incomplete
Forever chewing the chewed
Never tasting what's truly sweet.

Had you not allowed the ladies
To serve inside your temple,
Without your shelter we'd never know
Fine feelings, chaste and gentle.

You rendered the Holy *Bhāgavatam*
In English with exacting grace
Without which we'd be so lost
Clueless of time and place.

All these gifts you've freely given
To spare us a wretched fate
We love you, Śrīla Prabhupāda
Our beautiful, Krishna saint.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Indeed, had you not come, there would be no *Vyāsa-pūjā* offerings, no temples, no *prasādam*, no dancing before Deities, no loving exchanges, no books worth reading, no festivals worth celebrating-only the blazing fire of material existence. On this most merciful occasion of your appearance in this world, we desert dwellers of ISKCON Tucson, Arizona, rededicate ourselves to bringing as many fortunate souls as possible to the oasis of your lotus feet.

On behalf of your Tucson servants,

Sandamini Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1975 May. San Diego, USA

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

*namaste sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

I bow at your feet, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda
Grateful to you, oh, servant of God.
Thank you for kindly and generously giving
A reason and purpose for meaningful living.

You sacrificed everything, whatever the cost.
Without your compassion, I'd surely be lost.
To travel so far, to the West you came,
Delivering the greatest gift: the holy name.

Though innumerable disappointments came and went,
Nothing restrained your determined intent.
Through poverty, hardships and struggles you served
While sharing the mercy to all, unreserved.

Detached from results, you remained content,
Accepting circumstances, whatever Krishna sent.
You came to this world, our souls to awaken
With wisdom, love and resolve unshaken.

You've introduced *bhakti* and Godhead Supreme
Arousing us from materialistic dreams.
Providing structure; foundational protection
Giving us life with your loving affection.

You've appeared in our world to eradicate
Illusory Impersonalism, my karmic fate.
Guiding me to take chaitya guru's assistance,
Please help me be willing to give up resistance.

Though my ego armor, an impenetrable shell
Locks me out of my heart wherein you dwell,
Slowly and surely Krishna's name does act;

To purify consciousness, my defenses are cracked.

So rather than running to fill an empty void
Or endlessly distracting by trying to avoid,
I pray to appreciate, becoming fully equipped
To compassionately value each relationship.

You've spread this mission, your solemn vow
By constantly being in the eternal 'Now'.
Little by little your words open my heart.
Your mercy is flowing, each day a new start.

You've come to bring the truth absolute
Please reveal hidden lies, the ones that pollute.
Protect me please from my tendencies to cheat.
I place my weaknesses at your loving lotus feet.

Praying for faith and strength
To serve your servants at length.

Your insignificant daughter,

Sukhavaha Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1975 May. New Vrindavana, West Virginia, USA

Mahakala Dasa

My dearmost Guru Mahārāja,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. It is always such a blissful opportunity to celebrate your *Vyāsa-pūjā* by remembering and sharing your transcendental teachings and glorifying your unlimited qualities.

I remember how you would deal with your disciples' relationship issues. Since most of us were still very young and spiritually immature, you would always settle any controversies, not by taking the side of one of your contending disciples, but rather by quoting or telling a story from *śāstra*. That would encourage us to overlook any apparent contradictions or shortcomings and focus on chanting more, serving more and deepening our connection with you.

As much as you have always been the perfect example of a

surrendered disciple of your gurudeva, I pray at your lotus feet that you inspire me and give me spiritual strength so that I may always be an instrument in your mission as a bonafide commander in Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's movement.

Your unworthy disciple,

Mahakala Dasa

Initiation: 1975 June. Brazil

Ramananda Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

This year I gained a deeper appreciation of my older godbrothers and godsisters. The following two verses from the prayers of the Pracetās to Lord Viṣṇu very nicely summarize what I have experienced at least to some degree over the last year.

Even a moment's association with a pure devotee cannot be compared to being transferred to heavenly planets or even merging into the Brahman effulgence in complete liberation. For living entities who are destined to give up the body and die, association with pure devotees is the highest benediction. (ŚB 4.30.34)

Whenever pure topics of the transcendental world are discussed, the members of the audience forget all kinds of material hankerings, at least for the time being. Not only that, but they are no longer envious of one another, nor do they suffer from anxiety or fear. (ŚB 4.30.35)

Your ISKCON society is certainly filled with many pure devotees. They are certainly my *śikṣā-gurus* and worthy of my worship. It is gratifying to be able to take their instruction and direction. With their help I can better understand your teachings. For me, I take inspiration from you and in depth understanding of the intricacies of devotional service from them. By this method I really feel the effects of such association as described; that at least while absorbed in listening I am free of *trṣṇāyāḥ* (material hankerings), *vairam* (enviousness) and *udvegaḥ* (fear) as well experience *prāsama* (satisfaction). These are the very powerful effects of hearing from these great souls

which you have created. For this and for everything else you have given us I am eternally indebted.

Unfortunately, I have never rendered valuable service to you. This means I am a taker, not a giver. Not that there is no opportunity. There is unlimited service, but I am selfish and weak. However, I am not opposed to the idea. I see a way out of this predicament. Please do not lose your patience with me. I dearly want to repay you by serving this great mission. I need more time to purify myself and I see that taking shelter of the society you have created is the way to do this. I fall at your feet and at the feet of all my godbrothers. I sincerely want to attain *śuddha-bhakti* and serve this great mission. Don't kick me away in disgust for my weakness and lack of purity. Please wait for me.

Your servant eternally,

Ramananda Dasa

Initiation: 1975 July. Chicago, USA

Ambarisa Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to your compassion for the fallen souls of Kali-yuga.

Rūpa Gosvāmī has written;

*namo mahā-vadānyāya kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ.*

“My dear Lord, You are the most magnificent of all the incarnations.” Why? *Kṛṣṇa-prema-pradaya te*: “You are directly giving love of God. You have no other purpose. Your process is so nice that one can immediately learn to love God. Therefore You are the most munificent of all incarnations. And it is not possible for any personality other than Kṛṣṇa Himself to deliver this benediction; therefore I say that You are Kṛṣṇa.” *Kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nāmne*: “You are Kṛṣṇa, but You have assumed the name Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. I surrender unto You.”

Even more merciful than Śrī Chaitanya is Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, and more merciful than Nityānanda Prabhu is you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

As we enter 2022, it is the 3rd year of the global pandemic which

has affected the devotees worldwide, Śrī Māyāpur Dhām and the TOVP particularly. Progress has been slow and difficult due to a series of restrictions and lockdowns. Nonetheless, we continue to be blessed by the Guru Paramparā and presiding Deities. This is due to your unlimited mercy which we are constantly striving to be worthy of, and the tireless efforts of all the devotees led by Braja Vilas Prabhu, the local team of devotees led by Sadbhuja Prabhu, lead architect Vilasini Mata, and Cushman and Wakefield.

We are praying for release from the pandemic and the pent-up desire to complete the project by the end of 2024 is stronger than ever. Please continue to bless us with your causeless mercy so that we can fulfill your desire for a significant Temple in Śrīdhām Māyāpur. Despite the ongoing impediments, below please see the progress made in various areas.

Sadbhuja Prabhu, Bhavananda Prabhu, and their team, along with lead architect Vilasini Mata have focused on fine tuning the design and construction details. With their diligent work, the TOVP is emerging and taking a relevant place as an iconic worldwide spiritual center. Already the building is famous, far and wide. So many people who visit the website want to visit Śrīdhām Māyāpur. As the pandemic recedes, the visitors are surging. Here is a list of accomplishments submitted by Vilasini Devi Dasi:

A. ARCHITECTURE WORKS

1. Interiors

- Railing Drawing Interior.
- Coffered Ceiling Drawings -INT.
- Utility Block Working Drawings.
- Main Podium Detail Drawings.
 - Chandelier.
 - Lighting Drawings
 - Service Detail Drawings
 - Window Detail with Sandstone
- Jali Surround @ Utility Floor
 - Festival Altar Ceiling & Wall Details
 - Utility Floor Plan +1550 M Lvl Cornice Detail
 - PST-NST Cornice Band @ 28.55m
- & Column Capital Detail
 - Lift and Staircase Lobbies
 - Utility Floor Ceiling Plan

- Ceiling Marking Plan
- Ceiling Panel Details
- Rear Part Elevation

2. Museum Floors

- Measurement for Lighting - Museum Level-2.

3. Exteriors

- Elephant Column.
- Palm Column
- Verandah Column
- Couple Column
- Behind Fountain Column
- STP Working Drawing
- ETP Drawings
- TOVP Landscape Layout Revised
- Trees, Fundraising, ETP & STP
- Terrace Railing
- Design for Rear Canopy
- Rear Side Elevation with Ramp
- U & P Floor Sandstone Work - Behind Fountain MW

B. CONSTRUCTION STAGE

1. Artwork

- Relief Panels on The Walls
- Sankirtan Band Panels – Main Dome Interior
- Demigods – Complete – Narsimhadev Wing
- Jay Vijay – Complete – Entrance Area

2. Museum Floors

- Layouts – Concept and Autocad

3. Chandelier

- Model

4. Exteriors

- GRG – Completed for Narsimhadev
- GRG - Midway for Main Wing
- Sandstone Jali and Jaipuri Windows- Almost Complete
- Grand staircase – Marble Cladding preparations
- Main Dome Tiers - Underway
- Narsimhadev Dome Tiers – Complete
- All Chatri Balustrades – Almost Complete
- MEP Civil Works Complete (During Covid)
- Terrace Areas

- Clock Tower Finishing – Started
- Mosaic

Braja Vilas Prabhu, working closely with Sachin Prabhu's team from Cushman, Wakefield, USA, have completed much of the preliminary work before commencement of the ceiling work in the main Temple Room as well as the Narasimha Temple. This is his list of accomplishments for 2021:

A. DESIGN STAGE

1. Temple Floor – Main Wing & Narsimhadeva Wing

- Above Ceiling Services Design in Main & Narsimhadeva Altar complete.
- Narsimhadeva Wing Interior Design Drawings complete.
- Main Wing Interior Design Drawings complete.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda Vyāsāsana Design complete.
- Temple Floor Lighting Design for Main Wing Altar, NT Wing Altar and Śrīla Prabhupāda Vyāsāsana under progress.

2. Main Dome & Narsimhadeva Dome

- Coffered Ceiling Design for Main Wing Dome finalized.
- Coffered Ceiling Crown Design for Narsimhadeva Wing Dome finalized.

3. Museum Floors

- Reflected Ceiling Plan (RCP) for Museum 1 & 2 finalized.
- Interior Design for AV Control Room finalized.

4. Utility Building

- Interior and Structural Drawing for Utility Building finalized.

5. STP

- Sewage Treatment Plant Structural Drawing finalized.

B. TENDER STAGE

1. Temple Floor – Main Wing & Narsimhadeva Wing

- Civil & Interior Vendor for Main & NT Wing finalized. Work commenced.
- Marble Railing (Peacock) Vendor for Main Wing finalized. Work commenced.
- Marble Sthapati for Narsimhadev Wing Marble Works finalized.
- Light Management System Vendor for Main Wing finalized.

2. Main Dome

- Main Wing Coffered Ceiling Vendor finalized.

Work commenced.

C. CONSTRUCTION STAGE

1. Pūjārī Floor

- Pūjārī Floor Snag list complete.
- Handing over process complete.

2. Narsimhadeva Wing & Dome

- Above Ceiling Services Work complete in NT Wing & Dome.
 - False Ceiling Work in NT Wing Area and Corridor in progress.
- NT Dome sub-frame fabrication and Installation work complete.
- NT Dome GRG Frames painting work and Installation work ready to commence.
- NT Dome GRG Frames casting work complete. Painting work and Installation work ready to commence.
- Hydro-chroming painting work to commence for NT Dome Coffered Ceiling

3. Main Wing & Dome

- Above Ceiling Services Work complete in Main Wing.
- False Ceiling Work in Main Wing Area ready to commence.
- Main Dome sub-frame fabrication 90% complete.
- Marble Railing Work in Main Wing in progress.

4. Utility Building

- Construction work commenced. Piling work in progress.

5. Safety

- Over 1 Million safe man hours complete.

Svaha Devi Dasi. and Rangavati Devi Dasi have worked diligently to complete the design of the Narasimha Temple and the Vyāsāsana. The following is from them both:

Our beloved and most worshipable, dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept our humble obeisances at the dust of your divine lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, ISKCON, and the wonderful association of your loving devotees.

My undying gratitude unto your lotus feet for allowing mother Rangavati and myself to serve you in the most personal way possible! I had always wanted to design your Vyāsāsana and your causeless mercy allowed us this good fortune.

We not only completed this service for your pleasure and to the satisfaction of your advanced devotees, but we were blessed by them and Your Divine Grace with the divine responsibility of designing

Lord Narasimhadeva's temple!

It was a challenge to accomplish this in record time with obstacles but only because of your unprecedented grace were we able to complete this for the pleasure of all the devotees of Lord Narasimhadeva and Śrī Prahlād Mahārāj!

We sincerely pray we have pleased you in an insignificant way by serving your mission of presenting the TOVP to the world!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the ultimate perfection of our eyes is to see your smiling form seated on your Vyāsāsana in the TOVP, as the Jagat Guru for the next 10,000 years!

All glories, all glories to Śrī Śrī Guru and Śrī Śrī Gaurāṅga, all glories, all glories to your divine grace A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in October, we had a grand ceremony to welcome you as Founder-Ācārya to your home in the TOVP. Your beautiful *mūrti* in a worship pose, created by Locan Prabhu is now being worshiped and offered *prasādam* on a daily basis while you supervise and approve the continuing work of the TOVP.

The Total cost of the TOVP Project is budgeted at Rs. 659 Crores, of which we have already spent Rs. 407 Crores and we are in need of another Rs. 252 Crores to finish all the pending construction works. Through Braja Vilas' tireless efforts, till December 2021, we have collected about Rs. 475 Crores, out of which in the calendar year 2021 alone, we have collected Rs. 49.82 Crores.

As you can see Śrīla Prabhupāda, this is a monumental effort engaging many, many devotees. We are all so glad you have tasked us with this effort. Thank you for the vision you had for Śrīdhām Māyāpur which you personally planted in my heart in 1976. You have always encouraged us to fulfill this vision, and we are always endeavoring to remain true to it. In 1976 you told me in Detroit "my idea is to attract people of the whole world to Māyāpura". Our humble effort is to assist you in this mission, eagerly seeking your blessings.

Falling at your lotus feet, your servant always,

Ambarisa Dasa and the TOVP teams

Initiation: 1975 July. Hawaii, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances. All glories to your lotus-like feet! Thank you for accepting me as your disciple and allowing me to serve you. Serving you was/is the best thing that ever happened to me. I have written some of my memories of your amazing activities and I am including part of it here.

The Topmost Most Gracious Host

One of the things I remember the most about Śrīla Prabhupāda is what a great and gracious host he was. He loved sharing Krishna consciousness with the guests and devotees. A wide range of people came to see His Divine Grace – from new and senior devotees, to religious and world leaders. From professors to villagers; all the guests left Śrīla Prabhupāda's presence with a feeling of respect and admiration for him, who treated them so nicely.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was always very charming and would use his sharp Vaiṣṇava wit to win over everyone. He would use practical examples to prove the scientific basis of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and expose bogus scientific theories. He liked to meet with the professors especially, and said that his garden in LA was one of his favorite places on earth, where he met so many of them.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was very caring and concerned about the guests. He always made sure they were all given *prasādam*. When George Harrison met Śrīla Prabhupāda in London, Śrīla Prabhupāda would have the devotees make fresh samosās for George who was known to be fond of them. He would eat quite a few on Śrīla Prabhupāda's charming insistence.

Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote a few letters in those days of 1977 to all the temples, saying that they should always have *prasādam* available for all guests. He even said it should be prepared fresh and always available. In the early days, Śrīla Prabhupāda did a lot of the cooking and distributing, training the devotees up. He was expert in every department. If the temples followed these instructions to the letter, there would be a lot more happy guests and devotees.

I learned a good lesson about the importance of *prasādam* distribution in Rishikesh in May of 77. I had just arrived from Bombay to continue serving Śrīla Prabhupāda. Śrīla Prabhupāda was having a public *darshan* in the house on the Ganges, donated for his use by a life member. My service was to stand by the door with a

box of *prasādam* sweets and distribute them to the guests as they left.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was sitting behind a coffee table and noticed a man waiting outside the screen door so he told me to let him in. When I opened the door to let the guest in, another guest went out. Śrīla Prabhupāda asked me if I gave the guest that left some *prasādam*. I replied that I did not because they crossed paths and I couldn't reach him. Śrīla Prabhupāda turned to his secretary and said, "This boy is incompetent." The secretary, Tamal Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja, told me to go downstairs and he would talk to me later. I was devastated. I had given my life to Śrīla Prabhupāda and Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and wanted to personally serve Śrīla Prabhupāda so much, but when I got my big chance, I felt I was rejected due to my incompetence.

I went down to the Ganges and entered the water thinking I was finished spiritually and since I was rejected by Śrīla Prabhupāda, my life was now useless and the best thing I could do was to drown myself to atone for my incompetence.

I was trying to get the courage up to take the ultimate plunge. Then, just in time, Tamal Kṛṣṇa Maharaja came to the shore and told me to come back and not to take it so seriously. He told me to go up and clean Śrīla Prabhupāda's room. I was surprised I was going to get another chance to serve Śrīla Prabhupāda. I entered the front *darshan* room and started to sweep the floor. I still felt ashamed, but when I looked over at Śrīla Prabhupāda he smiled at me very nicely as if nothing ever happened. All of my anxiety immediately disappeared so I started cleaning very enthusiastically. I learned the hard way how to treat the guests well, with respect and attention and always serve them some *prasādam* like our topmost host and guru always did.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was sent by Kṛṣṇa to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world, and he transcended bodily limitations – going beyond expectations to preach because he loved doing it – and he got so much strength from Kṛṣṇa for doing it even at a ripe old age when most people would have retired.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was a very considerate host and won everyone over with his charm and humility. Even though he was so exalted he always remained humble and lived very simply spending most of his time writing his books and hosting devotees and guests. He was always getting a higher taste of spiritual bliss, and never engaged in mundane sense gratification. He saw Kṛṣṇa in all things and always related everything to Him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda will remain our guru and inspiration, and fortunate souls will benefit from him and his books for at least the rest of this Golden Age of Lord Chaitanya that we are now in. And it will last and increase at least for the next 9,000 + more years.

We are so fortunate to have so many recorded conversations and lectures of Śrīla Prabhupāda to benefit from, now and for the generations of devotees to come.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Vrindavana to leave his body, he said that he would live on in his books. He said if we read his books and cooperate with each other everything would go on nicely. Many of his godbrothers would come and see Śrīla Prabhupāda in Vrindavana in 1977. They would praise Śrīla Prabhupāda, and every time Śrīla Prabhupāda took a humble position. He gave the credit to his guru mahārāja and his disciples. He said Śrīla Bhaktisidhānta Sarasvatī Thakur sent disciples to help Śrīla Prabhupāda spread Krishna consciousness.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda was in London in 1977 he dictated a letter to me saying that he remembered me very fondly. That made my life! Serving the topmost host Śrīla Prabhupāda was my dream come true.

When the Radha Damodar devotees and I first met Śrīla Prabhupāda the day after the 1974 San Francisco Rathayātrā, he said, “You are all very bright-faced and fortunate to come to Lord Chaitanya’s movement. Now that you are fortunate; make others fortunate. Preach this message of Lord Chaitanya’s all over the world.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda was effulgent, sitting gracefully behind his low table desk, so relaxed with one leg up. When he smiled the room lit up even more. The many pictures of Śrīla Prabhupāda smiling are amazing. The potency of Kṛṣṇa was evident in our self-effulgent Ācārya, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We can all see and hear how special he is. Thank you, thank you, thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda for being the topmost host and loving well-wisher to all of us! May more and more souls become your fortunate followers by Your Divine Grace!

Your eternal servant,

Gauridasa Pandita Dasa

Initiation: 1975 July. Chicago, USA

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to you, most intimate associate of Lord Caitanya.

You are not an ordinary person, but a confidential servant of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda Gopinatha descended from Goloka Vṛndāvana on a rescue mission.

You are famous throughout this universe. You are magnanimous, and your main concern is the welfare of conditioned souls suffering in the three worlds. Your objective is nothing less than to change the course of humanity as it plunges lower and lower down the degraded path to hell. Anyone who speaks your name can only do so because of untold pious credits from good works performed in the past, or a causeless blessing from God.

How is it that you have accepted me? How is it that I was captured in your net of mercy? I am unknown, uninfluential, inconsequential, insignificant and unfortunate. It is only by divine grace that, although I am unqualified in so many ways, I am not disqualified, for your rescue mission is to save the wretched and hopeless.

I am grateful to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You set my life in order by giving me your divine order. Though I am undeserving, you have awakened within me a goal that burns in the hearts of the most righteous.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the absolute divinity of *audārya-rasa*, performs manifold pastimes. Bringing you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to the West, is His direct compassion upon the lost conditioned souls of this Kali-yuga.

My Grateful Heart Is Shaken

Associating with Śrīla Prabhupāda through transcendental sound,
Breaks apart the fearsome walls of ignorance we're bound.

While this connection radiates a scent so recognizable,
His truthful words which reign supreme are never compromisable.

Hearing Śrīla Prabhupāda my grateful heart is shaken,
And hope replaces all despair as faith becomes awoken.

Confident I hear his words that conquer misconceptions,
Clearly he shows the path free of all deceptions.

When I hear his potent words I see the possibility,
That he accepts my sacrifice when offered with humility.

To encourage all of us by his sacred speech,

What was unattainable is now within our reach.
Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your dependent and grateful daughter,

Samapriya Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1975 July. San Francisco, USA

Chaitanya Chandra Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you and to Guru-paramparā.

We are at your feet – your disciples. We pray to you to represent us at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna. You wanted us to come with you and be with Them. We are completely at your mercy. There is not a single word we can say nor is there anything we can do without your explicit mercy and permission in *bhakti-yoga*. As we are approaching you, we ask for service. Beggars are no choosers – so any service that you give us we are grateful and especially grateful for your association and care through your books and lectures.

Our dear ones, as you called them “the agents” of our *karma*, may distract us or try to do just that, but we are firmly fixed in your service and hearing *kṛṣṇa-kathā* from you. So many gurus come and go, but you are not an “ordinary” guru, we value every word and every syllable of your instructions. This is our most important link to Krishna and your service.

Our separation with you is obviously a pain. But as Vishvanatha Cakravartī writes in his Second Canto comments, even if for devotees’ death and disease and old age come, by Krishna’s care it all intensifies his devotion to Him. So our devotion to you is also intensified by our separation. Please help us to be fixed on you at the time of death. With all the wars and devastation and imminent death – we all completely rely on you to depend on you at the time of death. Please help us.

Initiation: 1975 July. Chicago, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, Please accept my humble obeisances.

In 1965, I was living near Boston when you got off the Jaladuta there. That winter was one of the coldest. My mother would bundle me up for school with so much clothing I could not lower my arms.

The United States of America was a different country. You changed the way people think. Before you came most people had never met a vegetarian or knew anything about the soul or who is Krishna. In less than ten years you spread Krishna consciousness like wildfire.

One time you said that the Hare Krishna movement would become the religion of America in a way like Buddhism became the religion of Japan. When I saw the President of the United States with his arm around your disciple, I knew it was becoming true.

The difference between the body and the self, *karma*, and Krishna have become common knowledge in western society. The chanting of the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* is being performed all over the world.

You often said that the credit goes to your guru maharaj who you are a humble servant of. In 1969 Jay Jones met you on Telegraph Av. He had come from Vietnam and asked if you were a monk. You told him how you have come to America to fulfill the order of your spiritual master and spread the chanting of Hare Krishna.

When we met you told me to, "Chant Hare Krishna and everything else will come." "You have a good leader Tamal Krishna Maharaj", and "I am very thankful that you are distributing my books." My life is meant for carrying out your instructions, as you have taught us the secret of success in spiritual life.

Your servant,

Mishra Bhagavan Dasa

Initiation: 1975 July. Chicago, USA

Current location: Radha Kalachandji Dharma, Texas, USA

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda — I offer eternal obeisance to your lotus feet, the feet at which all other masters sit. The feet at which all exalted devotees sit. The feet at which even ordinary devotees sit — and, especially, the feet at which even non-devotees sit. I know this latter component for certain, for they are the feet at which *I* sit. All glories to those transcendental feet and everything that springs forth from Them.

As we in your Society know, the word “Prabhupāda,” literally refers to the “master at whose feet all other masters sit.” As an extension of the word’s meaning, we might note that we in this world are all “little masters,” controllers of our own small domain — and you are the master of all such masters as well, especially for those on the spiritual path. “Prabhupāda” can also refer to the master who sits at Krishna’s feet, and thus the name refers to Your Divine Grace as it does to no other.

In ISKCON, we first heard the sound “Prabhupāda” in mid-1968, but it took some time for the mass of devotees to use it in regard to Your Divine Grace. As for how we were apprised of the name in the first place, Govinda Dāsī, who was in Boston at the time, tells the story best:

On one particular afternoon, I was sitting in front of Swamiji’s desk taking dictation when Goursundar came to the door. He was standing in the open doorway, asking Swamiji some questions about his Sanskrit studies.

“Swamiji, I have been learning prefixes and suffixes. I was wondering: Is it alright to call Govinda Dasi, Govinda Dasiji? Is that OK?”

Swamiji surprised me with his response. He said, “No, ‘ji’ is a very third class form of address. You should not call her Govinda dasiji — it is not very good. Not a very first class form of address.”

My eyes grew wide and I exclaimed, “Well, then how come we are calling you Swamiji? That’s the ‘ji’ tacked on the end. What is a better way to address you?”

Swamiji very humbly said, “Oh, it is not very important. Not a very big thing.”

I protested. “Oh yes, it is a big thing! To us, it is very important! We want to address you in the most respectful and first-class manner!”

Again, Swamiji quietly and humbly said, “That’s okay, it is not so important.”

But I insisted. “Please, Swamiji, please just tell us what we can call you that is the most respectful. We want to honor you in the best possible way!”

Swamiji’s humility was certainly very praiseworthy, but I was determined to find out the best possible way of addressing him.

Since I was unrelenting, Swamiji finally said, “Well, yes, Gurudeva is nice, or Guru Maharaj is also good, and Śrīla Prabhupāda is also nice.”

Slightly exasperated, I exclaimed, “But that’s three names — which one is the best? Which of the three do you prefer to be called?”

He thought for a minute, then very quietly and humbly, he replied, “Śrīla Prabhupāda is nice.”

Greatly relieved, I announced, “Yes, from today you shall be known as ‘Śrīla Prabhupāda!’” I was so very happy to know from him the most respectful way we could address him.

Then I proceeded to inform all the devotees that Swamiji wanted us to address him from now on as “Śrīla Prabhupāda.” I contacted Satsvarūpa Prabhu, as well as others, and also sent out letters to other centers. So from May of 1968, in Boston, Swamiji would be known all over the world as “Śrīla Prabhupāda.”

But not so fast.

It wasn’t until April 18, 1969, nearly a year later, that *Back to*

Godhead editor Rāya Rāma Prabhu penned the following short article, in issue Number 23. The essay is worth quoting in full:

The word Prabhupāda is a term of the utmost reverence in Vedic religious circles, and it signifies a great saint even among saints. The word actually has two meanings: first, one at whose feet (Pada) there are many Prabhus (a term meaning "master," which the disciples of a Guru use in addressing each other). The second meaning is one who is always found at the Lotus Feet of Krishna (the Supreme Master).

In the line of disciplic succession through which Krishna consciousness is conveyed to mankind, there have been a number of figures of such spiritual importance as to be called Prabhupāda:

Śrīla Rūpa Goswami Prabhupāda executed the will of his Master, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, and therefore he and his associate Goswamis are called Prabhupāda. Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswati Goswami Thakur executed the will of Śrīla Bhaktivinode Thakur, and therefore he is also addressed as Prabhupāda. Our Spiritual Master, Oṃ Vishnupad 108 Sri Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swami Maharaj has, in the same way, executed the will of Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupāda in carrying the message of love of Krishna to the Western world, and therefore we American and European humble servants of His Divine Grace, from all the different centers of the Saṅkīrtan Movement, have followed in the footsteps of Śrīla Rūpa Goswami Prabhupāda, and prefer to address His Grace our Spiritual Master as Prabhupāda, and he has kindly said "Yes."

Further, it wasn't until issue 28, nearly half a year after the above pronouncement, that the new name was reflected in the magazine, as in your interview with Allen Ginsberg, and, in upcoming issues, as the by-line for your articles. Gradually, the devotees started calling you Prabhupāda, and then "Śrīla" Prabhupāda. ("Śrīla" derives from *śrī*, "beauty," and *līlā*, "the Lord's pastimes" — i.e., Śrīla is "one who has become beautiful by absorption in the Lord's pastimes.")

Again, it took a while to catch on — maybe a year and a half — not least because the earliest devotees were accustomed to addressing you as "Swami," or "Swamiji." For them, understandably, the Swami

nomenclature embodied fond memories of exchanges with their beloved spiritual master.

Besides, at that time you were officially known as “A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami,” especially on the cover of your books. With no “Prabhupāda” anywhere in sight. Though the additional name would emerge on your literature in the near future.

In your humility, of course, you never thought of yourself as a master of that calibre. But your disciples saw you in that way, and we wanted to properly honor our reverence for you. You allowed us to do so for our own advancement in spiritual life.

More, you fully exhibited the qualities of a “Prabhupāda,” and the world needed to know it.

Additionally, you saw the title as establishing the preeminence of the tradition you so ably represented, which, indeed, was a tradition “at whose feet all other traditions could sit and learn.” In other words, because you were the spiritual master in the Gauḍīya Vaishnava lineage, you felt that the title was appropriate, establishing the ultimacy of Śrī Chaitanya’s doctrine of divine love.

However, your adoption of the name was frowned upon by some of your godbrothers, who felt that it should be reserved for your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. In the modern world, they argued, only Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta was fit to be called “Prabhupāda,” for he was as exalted as Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and other leading teachers of the lineage, several of whom had adopted that name in centuries past.

Brahmānandajī, one of your earliest disciples, remembers, “Once, while staying in a small hut in Māyāpur, a delegation of Prabhupāda’s godbrothers led by Mādhava Maharāja came to see him. There were two rooms in the hut. I stayed in the outer room, with Prabhupāda in the inner room. Anyway, I announced the visitors to Prabhupāda, who told me to wait for a few minutes before showing them in. While waiting in the outer room, one of them asked me my name, and when I told him what it was he said that ‘Brahmānanda’* had Māyāvādī implications and that my guru shouldn’t have given it to me. I didn’t know what to answer, intimidated by their presence. It seemed that this individual was trying to break my faith in Śrīla Prabhupāda.”

When they finally went in to see you, they challenged you: “Why are you now using ‘Prabhupāda’ as part of your title?” In response, you had Brahmananda bring them your letterhead, which had

only your name, “A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami” on it, without any reference to the name “Prabhupāda” — a practice you continued until the end of your earthly pastimes.

“See?” you said to them, “I am not using ‘Prabhupāda’ of my own accord; my disciples are addressing me with it, out of respect; so what can I do?” Thus, the Godbrothers left, unable to debate with you. As usual, you expertly silenced all of those who might challenge you — for you had a mission, you knew, that should never be disrupted.

In concluding, I would like to say, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that, from an objective point of view, you are uniquely worthy of being called “Prabhupāda.” And I say this while fully acknowledging the glorious personalities who previously held the title and their preeminent qualifications of being “Prabhupāda” in their own right. There is no question that they too are Prabhupāda and deservedly so.

But it was you who took what your predecessors gave and spread it around the world, fulfilling both Śrī Chaitanya and Śrīla Bhaktivinode Tākura’s predictions to take Krishna consciousness to all parts of the globe. You indeed took their seeds and nurtured the best of trees. No one else accomplished this. Thus I say with boldness and confidence that while there are certainly others who are worthy of being called Prabhupāda, you are a “special Prabhupāda,” both objectively and in my own heart. And I am forever in your debt.

Your unworthy servant, Satyarāja Dāsa

*In normal parlance, *brahmānanda* refers to “the bliss of the impersonal Brahman,” thus making it an uncommon name in the Vaishnava community. Still, Prabhupāda remembered well his guru’s efforts in the 1930s, when the Gauḍīya Maṭha had competed with the Ramakrishna Mission in Calcutta for public attention. The first president of this latter Mission was one Swami Brahmananda, a direct disciple of Ramakrishna himself who was groomed as his “spiritual son.” In fact, Prabhupāda once mentioned to his own Brahmananda that he had named him after this Swami from the Ramakrishna Mission. Interestingly, Prabhupāda conferred this name on his disciple months before conceiving of ISKCON’s institutional structure, indicating that when he gave Brahmananda the post of ISKCON’s first temple president, it was part of a larger plan of which only Prabhupāda was aware.

Initiation: 1975 July. Chicago, USA

Current location: New York, USA

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

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

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

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

prema-bhakti jāhā hoite, avidyā vināśa jāte

“From him ecstatic prema emanates; by him ignorance is destroyed.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

One hundred years ago, you met your eternal spiritual master, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Prabhupāda. He immediately asked you “You are all educated boys. Why don’t you preach the message of Lord Caitanya all over the world!”

We now see that this was a divine prediction for what you were to accomplish in this material world.

It is stated that the disappearance day is more important than the appearance day of the *ācārya*. Because it is not clear that this person is divine at his birth. After his disappearance, we see the effect that such a divine empowered *ācārya* has on the world. Now, we can honor his appearance day in great awe and reverence.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your greatness has no boundaries. You physically departed this world on November 14, 1977. Yet, your ISKCON mission is still expanding way beyond the 108 temples and 60 volumes of books you completed by your departure day. Your books are now published in 80 different languages. Over 500 million books have been distributed worldwide, hundreds of new temples have been opened, and Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees reside in almost every country in the world.

Hayagrīva Prabhu wrote a book entitled “*The Hare Kṛṣṇa Explosion*”. What you really did is create a tsunami that is flooding

the world with Krishna consciousness.

I am here in Śrīdhām Māyāpur Chandrodhaya Mandir. I remember visiting for the first time the 1977 Gaura Pūrṇimā festival in Māyāpur. Nothing was there at that time. Just a few buildings and that BIG gate with the walls paneled with Lord Caitanya *līlā*. I thought to myself “Why did they make such a big gate in the middle of a field with nothing on either side of it??? I did not have the divine eyes to see what was going to manifest after your departure. You could see it.

At that 1977 festival, there were only 300 or 500 Western disciples. There wasn’t even a rickshaw around. This place seemed so barren.

Now, you can barely get inside the huge temple room because so many people are visiting from all over India, and the world. Your service to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda is still increasing. Six million people visit Śrīdhām Māyāpur yearly!

I had the fortune one year to associate with Umapati Swami, one of your first disciples, in Śrīdhām Māyāpur during the Gaura Pūrṇimā festival. I asked him “When you were visiting Śrīla Prabhupāda in the 2nd Ave storefront, did you ever imagine that this Chandrodhaya Mandir would manifest years later?

He replied, “We had no idea how great and powerful Śrīla Prabhupāda is. We thought Swamiji is ours and we will be with him in this storefront forever.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for bringing Kṛṣṇa consciousness to all of us. Thank you for creating a society that is still expanding Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. There is no stopping this Kṛṣṇa conscious mission. Your “explosion” is still expanding and creating a tsunami that will flood the world with the real cure for the suffering of the living entities in this age of Kali.

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servant,

Sikhi Mahiti Dasa

Initiation: 1975 July. Chicago, USA

Current location: Śrīdhām Māyāpur Chandrodhaya Mandir

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your mercy is all that we are made of! As I daily read and hear the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* I am in a constant state of gratefulness for all that you revealed. In a world that is increasingly competitive, greedy, careless, cruel, thoughtless, and violent, the purports of the scriptures you have so kindly written continue to be a beacon of light, what to speak of your own perfect sterling example that always inspires. I didn't have much personal association with you, but those moments are etched in my mind and heart forever.

I was convinced of Kṛṣṇa consciousness by reading your books and associating with your disciples, so I was excitedly anticipating your arrival at the Miami Airport. Abhirāma Prabhu, the Temple President, appointed Nartaka Gopāla and myself to sprinkle rose petals and rose water before you, as you walked. When the doors opened and you emerged so full of compassion, so beautiful, confident, and effulgent, I realized that it was the first time in my life that I wasn't disappointed. As the milestones in my life passed one by one....16th birthday, 21st, graduating from high school, from college, teaching, marriage....not one of them lived up to my expectations, but upon seeing you I was instantly transported to a spiritual realm. One day, as I returned from book distribution at the Miami Airport I wandered into the backyard, forgetting it was off limits while you were visiting. Instantly, someone took my arm and whisked me away into the nearest house where devotees were lined up head upon head watching you. We were transfixed as you were golden, and we all felt privileged to be able to view this beautiful intimate exchange. You appeared youthful, vibrant and always serene. That night you gave class under the banyan trees. A slight breeze blew, sweet balmy weather under the banyan trees and devotees came from everywhere to hear your transcendental sound vibration. At one point you began speaking about *prasādam* and the benefits of eating sacred food. You exclaimed that all of us, including the Temple President, Abhirāma, had come to Krishna consciousness because of *prasādam*. Someone raised their hand and asked, "Is it true that if you take *prasādam* you are guaranteed a human birth?" Prabhupāda assured us that this was true. Everyone loudly, almost raucously, cheered at this confirmation. Prabhupāda waited until the noise quieted and calmly said, "There are some

species of monkeys that are considered human.” This created a more sober mood among the crowd. We needed to do a lot more than honor *prasādam* to reach the goal.

When you were here, life seemed so much easier, but you created through your books and living example enough inspiration to carry us all back home. So few examples of honesty, truthfulness, morality, and divine love in our world, but you have given us the association of divine personalities. We have come to know and serve Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, and Their servants; Nārada Muni, Dhruva Mahārāj, Queen Kuntī, Vṛtāsura, the Pāṇḍavas and so many others. You pointed out that becoming a devotee did not absolve us from suffering. We could see the life of the Pāṇḍavas, Dhruva Mahārāj, and Queen Kuntī as examples. They demonstrated how to weather the storm, how to be indifferent to happiness and distress with our sight always on the goal. We learned that Queen Kuntī prayed for misery because it enhanced her love for Kṛṣṇa. Please bless us on this special day with the determination to stay fixed on your instructions so that we too can rise above the modes of material nature to revel in transcendental bliss, and to share with all as you did.

Initiation: 1975 July. Philadelphia, USA

Vaiyasaki Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

All glories to your *Krishna Bhavanamrita Saṅga*.

My report for 2022 is similar to my previous report, in that I am still following your instructions, still living in Śrī Vrindavan *dhāma*, still traveling, preaching, and still chanting the *mahā-mantra* as you have instructed.

What’s noteworthy is my new found interest in *daivī varṇāśrama dharma*, which you portrayed as the second 50% of your mission. You described that Krishna represents *go-raksha*, cow protection, and Balarāma as Haladhara represents *krishi*, agriculture. Together, Śrī Śrī Krishna Balarāma represent *krishi go-raksha*, the fundamental basis for living a self-reliant Krishna conscious lifestyle.

Cow protection means *go-seva* and agriculture means *bhūmi-seva*. When we protect go-mata, she abundantly reciprocates with milk that we can transform into yogurt, butter, ghee, paneer, ice cream, and so many different milk sweets. Protecting bhūmi-devī means

growing food crops; grains, fruits and vegetables on our land. In this way we will never be dependent on *ugra-karma* corporations and governments for our subsistence and health.

Moreover, you taught that human civilization can only become vegetarian by cultivating the *krishi go-raksha* lifestyle. Otherwise, humans will have to hunt for their food, thus depleting valuable surplus time which could have been utilized for *bhakti-yoga seva*.

Over the last two years I have been doing a lot of online preaching. Last summer, I wrote a Facebook article glorifying Krishna Balarama as representing the *daivī varṇāśrama* lifestyle via *krishi go-raksha seva*.

Subsequently, I received a request to visit a devotee who had read my article. Accepting his invitation, my wife and I took a train to a small village deep in the heart of Rajasthan.

I quickly discovered that this Indian family are totally following the *daivī varṇāśrama* lifestyle as described in your books. They have purchased some acreage for protecting cows and growing their own food grains. Thus, they have an abundance of milk products and grains without having to purchase from outside.

The family had many questions about the deep meaning of *daivī varṇāśrama*, and I simply repeated what you taught me about Krishna Balarāma representing *krishi go-raksha*. As I repeated your teachings on successfully implementing *daivī varṇāśrama dharma*, the family was overjoyed. They wanted to know how to expand their *daivī varṇāśrama seva* to benefit the entire village. I explained everything you taught about how to make self-sufficient communities centered on *go-raksha* and *bhumi-seva*.

Before returning to our home in Śrī Vrindavan *dhāma*, I promised to return and always be available to guide the family in their *daivī varṇāśrama seva*. In this way, my service is expanding in various areas as I become more and more experienced in the *bhakti yoga* lifestyle.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for pulling me out of conditional life and setting me firmly on the path of devotional service.

*Aspiring to return back to Godhead in this very
life, I remain your eternal servant,*

Vaiyasaki Dasa

Initiation: 1975 July. San Francisco, USA

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are the very source of my life and I bow down flat to the dust of your divine lotus feet with deep respect and love!

Every day that I come before you I see my appreciation and love for you are increasing more and more! The more I study you, the more I know you, the more I respect you and the more I love you. *Bando mui savadhana mahate!*

For the last two years I've been engaged in serving your mission in Athens, Greece. Although I am definitely not qualified for such a privilege to follow your divine footsteps and pioneer your movement in a foreign country like Greece! Depending on your mercy, like you did depending on the mercy of Śrī kṛṣṇa and your divine spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta!

I feel it practically, every little achievement brings me closer to you! I feel your determination in the midst of the enormous difficulties you faced! I'm more and more amazed by your dedication to the order of your spiritual master. Your very life itself was to follow his order to preach in the Western world! Such exemplary behaviour is very rarely seen! *Yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau!* This is real *Para Bhaktir*! Your life is the "*para bhaktir*" the supreme devotion, supreme love to Śrī kṛṣṇa and Śrī Guru Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur!

Your struggle between life and death is now becoming our lifeblood, becoming our permanent mediation. Nobody preached Krishna consciousness all over the planet as you did! Nobody received the power to do it like you received! *Kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana!* Only very very, very special souls receive such mercy from Lord Śrī kṛṣṇa! Therefore, you are the prominent *Ācārya*, Spiritual Master of this planet Earth! You are the real hope for this planet oppressed by the war, economic crisis and pandemic situation!

I beg to remain forever at your lotus feet, and of those who seriously and sincerely serve your sacred mission!

Your aspiring servant,

Dayanidhi Dasa

Initiation: 1975 August. Paris, France

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

All glories to you who so mercifully continues to broadcast your powerful Krishna consciousness from Goloka Vrindavana! “Everything will be fine. I sing there, and if you sing here, we will both be united by singing”. You said this once when you were in this world, and I believe that now that you are in the abode of the Lord it continues to be the same.

Fifty-five years after your departure, the quantity and quality of devotees grouped in ISKCON has increased so much that it cannot be counted. Hundreds of thousands of devotees committed to your mission to spiritually reorient humanity militate daily in all corners of the world, happy to preach Krishna consciousness, and they are grateful that they can do it on your behalf thanks to you. Millions of sympathizers admire your work, and part of them collaborates in some way helping devotees preach.

Although I am not on the front lines of the momentous war against Maya that you inaugurated, I am endeavoring to foster the spirit of Krishna consciousness in everyone I meet and in myself. Thanks to you I assume my discreet participation in your work, giving testimony of everything I learned from you through my writings and weekly talks by Zoom. You used to say: “Preach and the first devotee to be made will be yourself”. Thanks to you, these words become reality in my person. Thank you for such perfection! There is so much perfection in your work and writings that I don’t need to go to the Ganges to purify myself. In fact, every day I can feel that the river of immaculate perfection of your teachings flows within me, lavishing wisdom, love and support. The fact of being able to be an instrument of Your Divine Grace for others and for my own mind, makes me float with joy, despite the limitations of my environment.

Thank you with all my heart for the immense purifying influence that you work on me just by remembering you. Reading your books draws from my soul a capacity for higher understanding that increases day by day, making me exclaim in ecstasy: Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

With immense gratitude, your eternal servant,

Sri Padambuja Dasa

Initiation: 1975 August. Paris, France

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

I have always avoided writing a *Vyāsa-pūjā* offering, since probably 1977, I am not exactly sure why, but I felt it has all been said.

However, recently some godbrothers and sisters have encouraged me to write something, possibly because I always avoid speaking every year on your appearance and disappearance days at the temple, wherever I happen to be.

As you know, I had always wanted to be noticed by you and worked desperately hard in distributing your books and getting my name into the *saṅkīrtan Newsletter* regularly, particularly during the December marathons. I apologise for being selfish in that, but later as a party leader, and then as the UK *saṅkīrtana* party leader in '76 and '77, I was obsessed with our team competing to get the whole Śrī Śrī Rādhā Gokulānanda-Rādhā London īśvara's TSKP on the top of your temple's worldwide scores, as the leading *saṅkīrtana* party in the newsletter.

As a natural competitor, you inspired me and our whole generation of wonderful young men and women to publish, print, and distribute millions of your magazines and books all over the British Isles. And that evolved to being all over the world with the millions of souls we met from every corner of this planet. Ever since those days, I have been trying to distribute your books every day, every week and every year. When I finished with your BBT in 1999, I am pleased to say I had counted over 65 million of such literatures sold in the British Isles alone. Your great general, Tamal Krishna Mahārāja told us in 1977, on your *Vyāsa-pūjā* day at the Manor, is what attracted you to visit our temple first when leaving Vṛndāvana. At that time the British devotees led the world in the distribution of your powerful books, and you kindly thanked us, but in reality we all thanked you for being engaged in what I can only call pure devotional service.

That blessing that you showered – not only the direct book distributors – but the whole community of administrators, cleaners, cooks and *pūjārīs*, gardeners and festival kirtaneers, temple visitors and life membership recruiters, handymen and cowherds, children and congregation, the good and the bad at every skill and labour, the best and the worst in all aspects of *sadhana* and *bhakti*, those who

memorised chapters of *slokas* and those who knew none.

We all strived for your favourable glance. Perhaps only 5% of us ever received a letter from you or had a direct instruction, or even exchanged words with you. Yet, we were all satisfied in knowing, in hearing, or seeing your satisfaction with our efforts at service to you and your Lordships, installed in this corner of the planet to engage us in Their service, in training for the reality of pure *bhakti*, pure service in again striving to please the Supreme Personality and their pure devotees.

Only lately when I contemplate by some unknown chance, perhaps just a complete mistake, how incredibly lucky I am to have had the chance to be in the tiny universe, on this small planet, at this specific time, and then to come in contact with the *yuga dharma*, with the *yuga avatar*, just a few years after His brief appearance. And then, to be given the very simple but hardly known *mahā-mantra* as the key to unlock my eternal sentence to *samsara* in the material world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have not only delivered to us so many rare secrets of the purpose of life, but you have sprinkled so many gifts of free mercy that we hardly have to do anything to make spiritual advancement in these bodies. Tulsi and her *mālā*, *prasādam* and *darshans*, *bhakti* and reading, chanting and hearing, service and association. And that is just the shallow end of this ocean of opportunity that we are reliably informed will not always be available to us and all other embodied souls. Just the first line of your enlightenment...‘We are not these bodies’, was a massive realisation that almost everyone can digest. It was and still is a revolution in thinking, for all human beings, regardless of language, culture or gender.

Please forgive my emotional reaction to this small realisation of the gifts you have given, not just to me but to billions of others by now. Even while I accumulate more karma or sinful reactions, you are still engaging me in *bhakti*, purifying service and association. But when I think just a little more deeply of who you really are, and your place in this creation, Krishna’s instrument for releasing trapped souls, like birds in a cage, or prisoners in a cell, I become overwhelmed and tears well up with gratitude.

We are all trapped animals in this zoo, our wings have been clipped, yet you have delivered to us not just one process but multiple keys to unlock the door, open the roof, and break the net we are trapped in.

Please bless me that I can help you release multiple other trapped souls, or at least aid them in their untying the knots that bind us all in this material illusory energy. “Even if they read one word”, “even if they hear the holy name”, “even if they think favourably of Krishna’s devotee”, their spiritual life has begun. I cannot perfect any aspect of a natural devotee, no part of recommended *sādhana* is easy for me to adopt.

I don’t know why, but I do know it is good for me to help you release other embodied souls from this prison. I WILL NEVER GET OUT OF HERE IN Satya or Tretā yugas, the prescribed methods are way beyond this monkey, and Dvāpara-yuga would be also impossible for me to escape. But in this little window of Kali-yuga, through meeting other prisoners, and serving some who are your devotees, young and old, I hope to make a run for it just by assisting them. And if they then serve you, who must be attracting Rāḍhārāṇī’s attention for a second of Brahmā’s day, I might just sneak through the Vaikuntha door. if you don’t mind, can I say I was invited by you?

Please don’t leave me here, not for too long anyway. I am totally dependent on you, the pure devotee, to carry what I lack, and maintain what little I have.

Your temporarily fallen, but eternal servant,

Amita Dasa

Initiation: 1975 September. London, UK

Anandamaya Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to you! Another year has passed so quickly and it is now time to glorify you again during your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration. I have been thinking since last year’s Śrīla Prabhupāda *Tributes* what to write.

After re-reading my offering from last year, I detected that I was neither feeling nor expressing sufficient gratitude for your having saved me. In an effort to rectify that, I edit last year’s statement “... fortunately for us the way out of the quagmire of misconception is associating with *sādhus* and chanting the holy names!” to “... fortunately for us the way out of the quagmire of misconception is associating with *sādhus* such as yourself and chanting

the holy names!”

Unlike so many of your disciples, I have no personal anecdotes to relate about you, since unfortunately we did not meet in person. That must have been Krishna’s arrangement for reasons known only to Himself. When we temple members came from Vancouver to San Francisco on the temple bus to attend Rathayātrā (pretty sure it was ‘76, but it could have been ‘75), I was hoping to meet you, but that was the first year that you did not attend San Francisco Rathayātrā. After that, I never had nor made an opportunity to meet you. Many years later Gopta Dasa, my godbrother, told me how he found out your schedule and went to meet you! Unfortunately, in my dullness, I never thought of doing that. So, although I have a pretty good idea of your personality from your books, I can only imagine your personal magnificence to be as so many disciples and direct witnesses have stated and the photos certainly reveal. Perhaps in the future, may we meet?

I continue distributing your books to the “little free libraries,” and have now nearly reached what I consider a full commitment to doing this. I feel that this is some small payback for your having written these magnificent books and for dear Satsvarupa’s library party having placed them. Our mini *sangha* of older (in physical age) devotees, mostly comprised of your disciples and the occasional guest, continues meeting outdoors weekly, and I am hoping that it will not die out as we pass on, since we are not gaining many new members. I am still not strong enough, and without *anarthas*, both gross and subtle, to make devotees or sometimes even influence people in the general direction of *bhakti*, although I feel that I am gradually becoming a better devotee and preacher as well as a loyal follower of Your Divine Grace’s preaching spirit.

I cannot fathom the extreme degree of mercy that you showered upon us, the fully unqualified from the *mleccha* lands. Your sacrifice is truly in the mood of the causeless mercy showered upon *jīvas* by Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Otherwise, we would have simply remained mired here. Yet I still do not fully grasp the tenet of surrender, *śaraṇāgati*, which is likely the single most essential tenet of *bhakti*.

As I submit this, we are now on day 37 of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Once again, we see the violent karmic reaction due to the habitual meat-eating that goes on in Europe. Yet now I am beginning to feel some genuine compassion for the tremendous struggle and suffering of souls confined to matter. *Jiv jago!*

I did manage to write a little poem this year, entitled “Towards Transcendence.” I hope you will like it:

Regardless of morality,
The certainty of mortality
Strikes us with totality.
Yet it is not finality,
But a step towards eternity.
Chant the names for purity.
Read *shastra* with full scrutiny.
Follow regs with certainty.
Associate most diligently
Enhancing your serenity.
Chant the names, become glorious.
In battle with *māyā*, become victorious.
The holy names are most fortuitous.
Conquer doubts, for they are dubious.
Forsaking all hesitation,
Transit the world of exploitation
Towards the world of dedication.
Proclaim these thoughts throughout the nations.
Do so now without procrastination.

Praṇāms, Your disciple and servant,

Anandamaya Dasa

Initiation: 1975 October. Vancouver, Canada

Sriniketan Dasa

Dear Srila Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet on this blessed day of *Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā*.

We are feeling so fortunate to glorify a pure devotee of Krishna as yourself. As confirmed in *Śrī Caitanya-Caritamrita*, it is so incredibly rare to find a soul fully surrendered to the Lord that it is almost like finding a needle in a haystack. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructs Rūpa Goswami:

Among the followers of Vedic Knowledge most are following the process of fruitive activity and distinguishing between good and bad work. Out of many such

sincere fruitive actors there may be one who is actually wise. Out of many millions such wise men, one may actually become liberated, and out of many millions of such liberated persons a pure devotee of the Lord Krishna is very difficult to find.

We are always conscious that only by being very fortunate we were able to establish a link with you. Why this great fortune has fallen upon us is a mystery. An answer can be found in a question you answered in South Africa on October 18th, 1975: You explained:

.....Therefore Caitanya Mahāprabhu says *ei rūpe brahmāṇḍe kona bhāgyavān*,....unless one is very fortunate he'll not go Back to Godhead. He will rot here. So this Krishna consciousness movement means we are trying to make people fortunate. If he wants he can become *bhāgyavān*. That is our attempt. We are creating so many centres. We are teaching how to become *bhāgyavān*, fortunate, how to go back home, how we can be happy. Now if one is fortunate, they will take this instruction and turn his life. Therefore this mission. But without becoming *bhāgyavān*, nobody can go....The most unfortunate is getting the chance of becoming fortunate...This is Krishna consciousness that we are giving chance to the unfortunate. Everyone is unfortunate, everyone is rascal. We are giving chance to become intelligent and fortunate.

Until that particular day in 1969 when we heard the Hare Krishna *mantra* for the first time being chanted on *Harināma Saṅkīrtana*, we belonged to the unfortunate, rascal class of human being. But then the unfortunate became fortunate as a few years later we met the devotees again chanting the holy names. And soon after this second encounter we had the opportunity to meet you in person at the Sidney temple of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Gopinath.

In this way we could connect to your wonderful movement and get initiated by a wonderful spiritual master. Had you not come to spread the holy name around our good fortune would have been of no use. We pray to you on this auspicious day of *Vyāsa-pūjā* to give us your mercy that we will always be engaged in your service until we relinquish this mortal frame. Let us always remember to use our good fortune for your pleasure and to never take it for granted.

Ever grateful, your unqualified servant,

Sriniketan Dasa

Initiation: 1975 October. Mauritius

We were the music makers
and the dreamers of dreams.
Wandering by lone sea breakers
and sitting by desolate streams.
World losers and world forsakers...
yet we were the movers and shakers
of a changing world it seemed.
Forever searching for a captain to guide,
Lost without a master for us to heel at his side.

And therefore today is thrilling!
The prophecy of past days fulfilling.
You journeyed in a boat meant for cargo
to a far Western shore
that had no hope for tomorrow.
And now as predicted,
the multitudes are enlisted
as our Spiritual Father persisted.

Our captain was found!
Our master had spoken!
And you gave us a vision amazing
of the Godly house you were raising.
From your books and lectures
came a divine foreshowing
of the land to which we were going.
It was in your heart Śrīla Prabhupāda
that this vision had broken
and its brilliant light did not depart.
One look, one nod, or a word that you spoke
lit a flame in another one's heart.

All glories! We praise you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!
Arriving from the distant dazzling
transcendental shore.
Wake us from this slumber,
bring us to Śrī kṛṣṇa's land of bliss
and renew our memories of yore.

Teach us your songs, ancient numbers and
things we dreamed not before.

O we with our singing and dancing,
ceaseless and sorrowless are we!
The glory about us is clinging
to the glorious future we see.
And our souls with high music singing,
O dear Master forever let us be
dwelling in our chanting and singing-
always falling at your lotus feet.

One breath of your inspiration
becomes the life of a new generation.
A wonderful thing
your transcendental message brings.
Unearthly, impossible seeming...
that the soldier, taxi driver, hippie, and peasant
are working together as one
till your dream becomes the present.
Your work is this world will be praised
by poets and writers, historians and broadcasters.
The captain of our fate,
our Spiritual Master
Your Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda

Your servant,
Kriyashakti Devi Dasi
Initiation: 1975 November. Hawaii, USA

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

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

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my most humble and respectful obeisances.
I bow down in the dust of your lotus feet.

You are truly the one who, with such paramount mood of surrendering, love and determination, have made Lord Śrī Krishna's plan unfold, so to put an end to the otherwise never-ending suffering of the fallen conditioned souls.

Your achievements are unique and overwhelming. I mean no exaggeration in saying that your glories are everlasting and ever-expanding. Forever all the *mahājanas* will chant about your exalted character, enumerating your wonders as the pinnacle of such a transcendently superlative pastime of the Lord.

As far as I am concerned, I was literally dead, and you brought me back to life. Therefore you are, in all respects, the owner of my life. As Your Divine Grace's menial servant, I am forever unconditionally yours, and just this simple fact makes me utterly ecstatic.

While the *Jaladuta* was nearing Boston's coasts, in getting a first-hand impression of the place and its inhabitants, you kindly allowed us to partake in Your Divine Grace's profound feelings by expressing it in your *Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma*. Your transcendental sentiments of pure devotion are such a great source of inspiration and deep meditation that they cannot fail in making me fully appreciate how eternally indebted I am to Your Divine Grace.

§ § §

Based on the *Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma*

You've called upon the Lord: "Why have You brought me here? You're kind upon this soul, therefore I've got no fear. Now You can do whatever You like to do with me. My dear Lord Krishna, use me, unworthy as I may be.

Still I'm failing to see, how they will understand. They have no sense at all, but you must have it planned. This dark place is just hell, where everyone ignore, What lies above this world; that Transcendental Shore.

How can they appreciate, engrossed in chewing the chewed, Lord Vāsudeva's message, such a nectarean food. But one thing I do know, Your causeless mercy's strength, Which makes what's hopeless possible, no matter its extent.

How will they understand the mellows of devotion? How can I make them feel such pure love and emotion? How to convey Your message, and my mission fulfill? I'm simply praying and hope that, by Your mercy, I will.

Your will has let them come, within this *māyā's* kingdom, And by that Your same will, they can regain their freedom. My wish is that You free them, from such an heavy toll. If that's also Your wish, You may release them all.

The *Bhāgavatam's* words, with every single sentence, If submissively heard, reveal Your divine presence. By regularly hearing, and serving who is pure, All dirt within their heart, will almost go, for sure.

Then true pure loving service, unto the glorious Lord, Who is praised with chosen hymns, will be lastly restored. But then, how will I make them, this message appreciate? I'm fallen and unlucky, and most inadequate.

I seek Your benediction, to make your message known, Because I've got no power, to do it on my own. O Lord, one way or another, You've brought me here to speak, And I will speak about You, no matter if I'm weak.

It's up to You, my Lord, it's up to You indeed, To choose if make me a failure, or make me to succeed. O Lord, Spiritual Master, of all the countless worlds All I can do is repeat Your message by my words.

If so You like, You can, to make all come about, Make suitable my speech, freeing them from any doubt. I'm sure that when this message, will penetrates their heart, So, gladdened, they will feel their suffering depart.

O Lord, I'm just a puppet, a puppet in Your hands You brought me here to dance, so make me dance and dance! I've got neither devotion, nor knowledge, as well, But of Your holy name, my faith has made its dwell.

My name, ‘**Bhaktivedānta**’, has been allowed by You.
Now if You so desire, let its meaning come true”.

§§§

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, we bow down at your feet,
Which like the lotus petals, are just so soft and sweet.
All the “*bhaktivedāntas*”, so exalted and so rare,
Because you’re “**Prabhupāda**”, they are also sitting there!

After so many years, from your astounding prayer,
Sri Krishna’s plane unfolded, piercing through *maya*’s layer.
But “you” are the one who did it, who brought it to this land,
You are the one whose glories will never find their end.

‘cos if you had not come, who could have come to know
The reason for this life, and which is its real goal.
No matter where or how, from here to yonder skies,
Forever you’ll remain, the owner of my life.

Dear Supreme Lords Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, even if I am
unable to fully understand how much indebted I am to Śrīla
Prabhupāda, and properly appreciate the real magnitude
of the gratefulness I owe to him, please forgive me.
I beg Your Lordships: please do not allow Māyā’s power of oblivion
to cover my constant perception of His Divine Grace’s presence.
Please allow me to eternally remember Śrīla Prabhupāda so that I
can remain, eternally, at the service of his lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda kī jay!

Hare Krishna.

Your Divine Grace’s menial servant,

Narakantaka Dasa

Initiation: 1975 November. Rome, Italy

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances on to your lotus feet again and again.

Today is a very auspicious and special day, your *Vyāsa-pūjā* day.

I want to glorify you, not only today but every single day. Your glories are so, so, so great that it is not possible for me to describe them with my words.

You are Rishi, Muni, Sādhū, Mahātmā, Saint, all in one. You are a real guru, *Jagat guru*. You spread Krishna consciousness all over the world in every corner single-handedly to follow the instructions and to please your guru maharaja, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī.

You are very kind and merciful. To deliver mankind you underwent so many difficulties. You did not care for any of your own comforts or facilities.

You made so many devotees; many fortunate souls are adopting Krishna consciousness in your ISKCON movement.

With your spiritual power there are so many temples. Book distribution, *prasādam* distribution, *Harināma* distribution, and the nectar of Hare Krishna chanting is being spread all around the world. It is such an amazing and wonderful thing. Your glories are spread all over the world.

I am very fortunate to have you as my guru, a genuine guru. Thank you for accepting this fallen soul at your lotus feet. Please always keep me at your lotus feet.

We are still in your ISKCON, trying to serve in whichever way because we are inspired by the sweet memories of the pastimes with you which are unforgettable.

Please always keep us in the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Krishna regardless of any circumstance.

Thank you for everything.

Your worthless servant,

Ashalata Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1976 January. Toronto, Canada

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
of my good fortune you are the creator
of my path in *bhakti* you are the delineator
of this movement you are the inaugurator
of all of my senses please be the regulator
of the chain of my *karma* you are the terminator
I follow you voluntarily, you're not a dictator
to protect me from Māyā, you are my insulator
of my debt to Krishna you are the remunerator
for tellers of falsehoods you are the interrogator
of the seed of *bhakti* you are the germinator
of my service you are the facilitator
of your orders I won't be a violator
of impersonalism you are the exterminator
of false ego you are the incinerator
you are never a prevaricator
neither are you a procrastinator
of Krishna's teachings you are the propagator
you are His best communicator
of the *Paramparā* teachings you're the true replicator
among your friends you were the predominator
of Krishna's qualities you are the investigator
of His festivals you are the chief celebrator
of principles of *bhakti* you are the demonstrator
of rival teachings you are the eliminator
for our advancement higher you are the escalator
in controversy you are the greatest debater
of bold preaching you are the instigator
of my offenses you are the annihilator
of astonishing acts you are the perpetrator
of the tradition you are the innovator
but also the greatest conservator
of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes you are the illustrator
of my ignorance you are the illuminator
in management you are the chief operator
of words of wisdom you are the translator
of our laws you are the legislator,
of plans to please Kṛṣṇa you're the incubator

of disputes among your disciples you are the mediator
you are for ISKCON the best administrator
for the fallen you are the elevator
of my relation with Kṛṣṇa you are the renovator
of my service you are the accelerator
on the boat of my life you are the navigator
with Kṛṣṇa's desire you are the cooperator
of the teachings of *bhakti* you are the collator
to your guru's order you were never a traitor
for my deliverance you always labor
you guide me as Paramātmā's external collaborator
for illusion's captives you are the liberator
of guides and masters there is none greater,
may I follow your orders sooner than later.

Your servant,

Drutakarma Dasa

Initiation: 1976 January. Miami, USA

Current location: LA, USA

drutakarma.acbsp@pamho.net

Subhavalasa Dasa

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

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

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your appearance is most wonderful and brought light of Godhead to dissipate the darkness. You spread the unlimited mercy of Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi and the power of *Saṅkīrtana* across the world. You have shown compassion to the lowest of mankind by giving them the path of Krishna *bhakti*. Even you taking the bold step to embark on your journey to the West was a miracle and a blessing of mercy to the lost souls.

You are the greatest, who brought *Harināma*, books, temples, festivals, and causeless mercy to everyone all over the world. Śrīla Prabhupāda, if you had not appeared, millions and millions of people would not have known Krishna consciousness and had the opportunity to get out of the cycle of *maya*.

You have given meaning to people's lives by imparting the highest knowledge of self realization. You are the most important messenger of Lord Chaitanya, giving the opportunity to know Krishna to the entire world through *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-Caritamrita*, and your instructions.

What you have done is incredible! The holy name is known over the entire globe fulfilling the prediction of being spread in every town and village. The results of your miraculous efforts are being seen through the success of your flourishing ISKCON. This is because of your power and purity.

You are the perfect guru, leading by example in all aspects from how to conduct oneself personally, to how to serve Their Lordships. You left nothing to speculation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am so fortunate to have your mercy and association and it is because of that that I continue to sustain my service to you, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Krishna, and ISKCON. My life would have been useless without your causeless mercy. Thank you for your love and compassion.

I am so thankful to you for accepting me unto your lotus feet. As always, my request is to keep me in service of your lotus feet and your ISKCON. Please continue to be merciful unto me.

Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your insignificant servant,

Subhaviṣa Dasa

Initiation: 1976 January. Toronto, Canada

Sauri Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my *dandavats* from the bottom of my heart at your lotus feet. Your influence completely changed my life in an unlimitedly better way. I was born in an atheistic family and as a result was very unhappy until you came into my life.

You gave me the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. *Dandavats* to you!!!

You gave me the association of devotees. *Dandavats* to you!!!

You gave me the nine processes of devotional service, especially *kīrtana*. *Dandavats* to you!!!

You gave me practical spiritual knowledge through your books, lectures, and conversations. *Dandavats* to you!!!

You gave me by your example how to properly execute spiritual life. *Dandavats* to you!!!

Please continue to tolerate me and inspire me in spiritual life. *Sahasra koṭi dandavats* to you Śrīla Prabhupāda!!!

Your unworthy servant,

Sauri Dasa

Initiation: 1976 February. Hawaii, USA

Hansarupa Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

“By the mercy of the guru, even a dumb man can become the greatest orator, and even a lame man can cross mountains. As advised by Lord Brahmā, one should remember this śāstric injunction if one desires success in his life”

Please accept my grateful, respectful obeisances. All glories to your inconceivable mercy which eclipses all mundane calculations and has revived the dormant spiritual consciousness of innumerable fallen souls, like myself. I humbly pray to be allowed to remain under the shelter of your lotus feet and to have the privilege of participating, in some way or another, in your mission to please our predecessor *ācāryas*. We are jointly reading your *Līlāmṛta* biography on a regular basis and are currently appreciating the chapter “*Chant Hare Krishna and Fight*”. I humbly pray, on this special day, to remain a fighter in your service, birth after birth. Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jai!*

Your insignificant servant,

Hansarupa Dasa

Initiation: 1976 March. Vrindavana, India

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you on this *Vyāsa-pūjā* day. It is a happy day, a day when we celebrate your appearance in the world, and in our lives.

Sometimes I sit close to the *Vyāsāsana* here in your Washington, DC area temple. As I see people approaching you and, as they do in all your temples, respectfully placing their palms together and bowing to you, some touching your lotus feet, I marvel at the variety of these good souls. They come in all shapes and sizes, nationalities, colors and all designations we might imagine. Rich and poor, old and young, all kinds of people, except perhaps those averse to respecting saints—and maybe even some of them come to honor you because of the heart-changing effects of all the grace (*prasādam*) you have distributed to the world.

It is touching to see those who have no formal obligation to you offering you all respect, and we feel grateful for our connection to Your Divine Grace. Our feelings deepen especially when we hear “outsiders” praise you and your writings with eloquent words. For example, we can remember these words of Dr. J. Stillson Judah, who was Professor of the History of Religions at the Graduate theological Union in Berkley, California and who met you a number of times:

I certainly honor Śrīla Prabhupāda as one of India’s pre-eminent scholars. As a translator of many of India’s important religious texts, he gave special attention to the spirit and beauty of the texts. I have seen, of course, many self consciously literal translations of Indian philosophical and religious classics. These very literal translations are generally very barren—void of the intended religious sense of the text. But Śrīla Prabhupāda, in his translations, really captured their essential spirituality. A literal translation which lacks sympathetic reverence for the text itself can obscure rather than elucidate its profound inner meaning. I find that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s translations bring these works to life.

These “brought to life” translations—your books—give life to your readers. They are a literary sanctuary where we come to be with you and with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

And when asked about what impression he had of you

personally, Professor Judah said:

I was also very much impressed, even at that first meeting, and have been subsequently impressed, that he lived his life in the same way that he expected his disciples to. This is quite different from so many other gurus who come to the West and take up drinking a few cocktails and the like. Prabhupāda really lived a strict life. He was the perfect example for his disciples. And I think this is certainly part of the great power of the man—that he did preach a very severe disciplined life, but he followed it himself, right down to the letter. His popularity among his disciples owes much to the fact that his own life was so truly exemplary, to the highest degree of the holy and disciplined life he demanded of them.

Although he certainly was exalted by his disciples, he did not put himself on a plane above them. He ate what they ate, lived in the same kind of building. He didn't want a palace to live in. He followed the same life as his disciples, strictly. The example he gave was a very good one, one that certainly impressed the devotees. I too was very impressed.

The good professor has described you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as an *ācārya*, a professor of the scriptures who abides by the scriptural teachings, lives a holy life and teaches by example. We are reminded by Professor Judah's words that we are obliged to live up to the standards you upheld and to honor your ever-well-wishing hopes for our more and more advancement in Krishna consciousness. We pray Lord Sri Krishna fulfills your desires for us by irrevocably binding us to you as your faithful followers.

Your servant,

Haridasa Dasa

Initiation: 1976 March. Mayapur, India

Respected Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this 126th auspicious day of your appearance, please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

After two years of pandemic in India last September, we went to Māyāpur. We saw lots of wonderful preaching was going on. Thousands of people came to Sri Dham Māyāpur. People came from villages, towns to have *darshan* of Sri Radha Madhava, Pancatattva and Lord Nrsimhadeva. *Mangal arotik* was packed with people, as was *Sandhya arotik* and the people chanted and danced in the *kirtana*. The devotees announced to the people to take your books and that way many books were sold.

In Kartik there was a festival to celebrate the arrival of your *mūrti* in the TOVP. Devotees came to Māyāpur to celebrate your coming into the TOVP. It was a grand celebration. The devotees felt that you now were personally there to guide the construction. By your presence, in the form of your *mūrti* or your instructions, a nice palace for the Lord will be completed. Jayapatāka Mahārāja, Jananivas Prabhu, and many other senior devotees partook in the festival.

In Kolkata, the place where you met Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Prabhupāda for the first time has been renovated. On the Appearance Day of your guru maharaja, the Ultadanga property acquired by ISKCON was officially opened. Also, your birth place in South Kolkata was acquired and a nice memorial has been established there. Now devotees from all over can come to the jackfruit tree and offer their obeisances.

In Mumbai, your books are going out nicely. Full sets of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Caitanya-Caritamrita* are being sold in large numbers. Also your marathon of distribution of *Bhagavad-gītā* is increasing more and more.

In Vrindavana, the devotees celebrated the 47th year of the grand opening of the Krishna Balaram Mandir. Devotees spoke about the wonderful opening and installation ceremony. Their Lordships were dressed in a flower outfit and the Rāmāyaṇa play was performed by devotee actors. Everyone enjoyed the festival very much.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you very much for giving us a life of Krishna consciousness. We pray on this auspicious day that we may serve you life after life.

Hare Krishna.

Your servant,

Jalatala Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1976 March, Mayapur, India

Current location: ISKCON Juhu, Mumbai, India

bhimadas@gmail.com

Arjuna Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

In Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma Māhātmya*, Chapter 1, I found these inspiring words that I would like to share with you and all your followers:

Come, spirit souls of Kali-yuga! Give up this hypocrisy and just accept the pure ecstatic love of Śrī Gaurāṅga!" In this way Nityānanda Prabhu would call out again and again. But still the unfortunate living entities did not accept.

Now let us consider carefully why these people do not accept such wonderful love of God. In pursuit of happiness, living entities in the material world follow various processes, such as logic or mystic yoga. And, in quest of happiness, some give up the material world and go to the forest, while kings constantly wage wars amongst themselves. Desiring happiness, others run after women and wealth, while others take to arts and sciences in pursuit of happiness. Others reject happiness and learn to tolerate the miseries of life, and still others simply drown themselves in the ocean.

Raising His lotus hands in the air, Lord Nityānanda exclaims, "Come, living entities! Give up the troubles of karma and jñāna. Since you are endeavouring for happiness, I will give you happiness without asking anything in exchange. In this happiness there is no trouble, loss, or pain. Just chant the name of Gaurāṅga and dance without anxiety. There's nothing equal to the happiness that I am giving. That happiness is pure, eternal ecstasy—beyond all illusion!"

In this way, Nityānanda Prabhu begged everyone to take pure ecstatic love. Still, unfortunate persons, influenced by previous sinful activities, did not even want it. But if such persons chant even once the names of Gaurāṅga and Nitāi, the effects of unlimited sinful activities are destroyed.

Listen, everyone, to one more confidential topic. The most suitable thing for the souls of Kali-yuga is this treasure of gaurāṅga-līlā. Gaurahari is the combined form of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, who eternally enjoy pastimes in Vṛndāvana along with the sakhīs. The truth of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's eternal pastimes and the glories of Vraja-dhāma can be known by everyone through the scriptures. And the unlimited glories of Kṛṣṇa's name and abode are known through the scriptures by people all over the universe. But still, actually obtaining kṛṣṇa-prema is not at all common. Let us contemplate the reason why.

Herein lies the secret of secrets which the living entities bound by Māyā cannot discern. One who does not attain love of God after worshipping Kṛṣṇa birth after birth has certainly committed heaps of offenses. For only by chanting Kṛṣṇa's name without offenses can one attain incessant kṛṣṇa-prema.

Śrī Caitanya's incarnation, however, is most uncommon. By His mercy, a serious person, though filled with offenses, can quickly obtain love of God. **When someone calls out the names of Nitāi and Chaitanya, kṛṣṇa-prema comes looking for him.** Offenses do not hinder his progress, and he soon sheds tears of ecstasy out of pure love of God. By the mercy of Lord Chaitanya, all the offenses quickly flee away, the heart becomes pure, and love of God fully blossoms. Because people in Kali-yuga commit unlimited offenses, which are difficult to check, there can be no means of deliverance other than Gaurāṅga's name. Therefore, Raising His lotus hands in the air, Lord Nityānanda exclaims, "Come, living entities! Give up the troubles of karma and jñāna. Since you are endeavouring for happiness, I will give you happiness without asking anything in exchange. In this happiness there is no trouble, loss, or pain. Just chant the name of Gaurāṅga and dance without anxiety. There's nothing

equal to the happiness that I am giving. That happiness is pure, eternal ecstasy—beyond all illusion!

Your Divine Grace is the most merciful representative of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Like Lord Chaitanya your mission is *jīvo-dōya*, to be merciful to and uplift all spirit souls.

When reading ‘*I’ll build you a Temple*’ I greatly appreciated how your excellent disciple His Holiness Giriraja Swami and your other disciples are such great saintly pure devotees, so dedicated to trying to please you, how much hardship they underwent and how much they sacrificed for you. Then I realize how worthless a disciple I am, how little I have done for you.

Sometimes we accuse God of cruelty – after all, He is the cause of all causes. But it is not Lord Kṛṣṇa’s fault that we have to suffer – it is our own bad *karma*. “*bhunjāna evātma-kṛtām vipākam*” [SB 10.14.8].

On page 266 of *I’ll build you a Temple*, you explain why we suffer as follows:

Prabhupāda:the surgical operation is there, the knife is being used on the body, that means he is getting relief. It is not punishment.

Girirāja: Is that benefit coming in all suffering, or only when it is given by Kṛṣṇa?

Prabhupāda: Yes. When there is suffering given by Kṛṣṇa... Therefore a devotee does not take seriously suffering. Tat te ‘nukampām susumīkṣamāṇaḥ. A devotee thinks, “It is the favor of Kṛṣṇa that He has put me into suffering.” They never see suffering as suffering. It is favor of Kṛṣṇa. That is devotee’s vision. It is exactly like a son who knows his father well. If the father slaps, the son never protests. He knows that “It is good for me.” Similarly, a devotee never is disturbed when there is suffering given by Kṛṣṇa.

Girirāja: A karmī is suffering just the laws of...

Prabhupāda: The karmī is different. The karmī is suffering... He is suffering just like criminal is suffering. A criminal is given slap by the police. That slap and the father is giving slap, that slap is different. Although it looks the same thing, but there is great difference.

Satsvarūpa: So there is no benefit to suffering unless it is connected with Kṛṣṇa?

Prabhupāda: Yes. Therefore we shall fully surrender to Kṛṣṇa. As Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, mārobi rākhobi yo icchā tohārā: “Now I surrender. Now if You want to maintain me, that is all right, and if You want to kill me, that is also all right.” This is surrender. It is not business: “If You maintain me, then I surrender. If You kill me, then I do not.” It is not like that. Mārobi rākhobi yo icchā tanhārā. “Now, as You like. If You want to maintain, that is also good; if You want to kill, that is also good.” This is devotee’s view.

Satsvarūpa: Someone might say, “But if one is surrendered, why should Kṛṣṇa give him trouble?”

Prabhupāda: Yes, it is because he is always free. Why do you make Kṛṣṇa dependent on your so-called goodwill, that “Kṛṣṇa must give me always pleasure”? This is sense gratification. This is sense gratification, that you approach Kṛṣṇa for your comfort, sense gratification. That is not bhakti. That is sense gratification. Prahlāda Mahārāja was given suffering by his father so harshly, but he never said, “Oh, I am devotee of Kṛṣṇa and giving me so much trouble? Oh! Give it up.” He never said that. Neither he asked Kṛṣṇa to come and save him. That is kṛṣṇa-bhakti. The Pāṇḍavas, they were always with Kṛṣṇa, and they were suffering. They never asked Kṛṣṇa that “You are the Supreme, and why we are suffering?” Never said. That is kṛṣṇa-bhakti.

Girirāja: “Because You are the Absolute Truth, there is no difference between Your mercy and punishment.”

Prabhupāda: Yes. This is to be understood. If we understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Absolute Truth, then this is understanding, that either suffering or enjoying, it is all Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. There must be some purpose. When Kṛṣṇa puts me into suffering, there must be some purpose. So we should welcome, because it is Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. *Tat te ’nukampāṁ susumikṣamāṇo bhuñjāna evātmā-kṛtaṁ vipākam.*

On page 90 you said, “Obedience is the first law of discipline.”

And “Your servant said to you, ‘Śrīla Prabhupāda, everyone likes you so much.’ And you replied, “Yes, because I like everyone.”

Following your instructions is my salvation. *kāṇḍiyā kāṇḍiyā, tomāra carāṇe, poḍiyāchi suvihvala*, “I fall at your feet weeping and weeping, overwhelmed by anxiety.” You are my only hope. When I leave this body I hope I can come and continue serving you, wherever you are, life after life.

The worlds’ demons are desperately trying to subjugate us, but how will they catch us when we go back home to the shelter of your lotus feet? They will never be able to even conceive of your eternal glory but will simply disappear into the oblivion of time. A forgotten list of names.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*I beg to remain,
Your servant,*

Arjuna Dasa

Initiation: 1976 April. Vrindavana, India

Jagannathesvari Devi Dasi

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisance at your lotus feet.

On this auspicious day of your *Vyāsa-pūjā* festival, my humble offering to you is simply to recommit myself to your service by endeavouring to serve your sacred mission, which is, in your own words, to deliver the Western countries from impersonalism and voidism.

The best way that we can express our gratitude for all the transcendental gifts that you have given to us is to pass them on to others. I know that this pleases you and gladdens your heart more than anything else. And to pass on these gifts in the 21st century, we may have to change the wrapping for them to be willingly received, just as you did for us when you travelled from the East to the West, while the inner content remains always the same. Please bless us with the intelligence to adjust details as appropriate, without changing core principles, so that the *saṅkīrtana* movement can grow from strength to strength and become a positive force for change in

the modern world, for your pleasure.

Your eternal servant,

Jagannathesvari Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1976 April. Vrindavana, India

Jagatam Devi Dasi

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances in the dust of your divine feet. All glories unto you.

Dear Prabhupāda, I feel very, very unqualified even to write to you or glorify you. You are so kind and merciful, and these two qualities are as big as an ocean. Somehow or other you picked me up out of the cesspool of material existence and put me in the ocean of your kindness. To this day – from 47 years ago – I still have no idea how it is that you accepted me. I only understand it as completely CAUSELESS mercy.

That's really all I can say, Prabhupāda. Your mercy is all that I am made of. Though I studied many years in university, I remained ignorant of who I really was. You have made me into a human being, and by your mercy only, I have been able to stay in the ocean of *bhakti*.

I love you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You are my true father. Please accept my heart millions of times at your beautiful lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda ki JAYA!

Your undeserving disciple,

Jagatam Dasi

Initiation: 1976 April. Vrindavana, India

Aparajita Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your *saṅkīrtana* mission, through which, my fallen self, received such mercy.

*May I always be your servant, aspiring always to be
taking shelter in the dust of your lotus feet.*

Aparajita Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1976 April. Melbourne, Australia

Atitaguna Devi Dasi

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you.

This morning after *mangal arotika*, I went upstairs above the Panchatattva temple room in Māyāpur Chandrodaya Mandir to chant my *japa*. It was dark. There were a few birds outside twittering their early morning songs. And suddenly, a pinkish light started to appear over the horizon.

After a short while, there it was: the neon orange-pink globe pushing itself up above the trees. I thought of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You are the one giving us light every day with your morning program and Bhaktivedanta purports in your divine books.

I would like to thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda from the inner recesses of my heart for your mercy and compassion. You are a miracle maker and miracles will unfold if we just follow your instructions.

In Māyāpur, there is *harināma* every day where the visitors relish chanting and dancing with the resident devotees. There is also book distribution and *prasādam* distribution. (You said that no-one within a ten mile radius of Māyāpur should go hungry).

Māyāpur is expanding exponentially. Your transcendental vision of a spiritual city of 50,000 devotees will happen before we know it. In 2024, your great vision of a most glorious temple, where the whole world will want to come and experience your great vision, will open up like a lotus flower.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, living in Māyāpur is a jewel-like experience. You had the vision to see this and we are the

fortunate recipients.

You are a transcendental personality wanting the world to get back on track. You want to help us all understand that they are spirit soul and their body is a mere covering of the real person. not the be all and end all in life.

Despite such daunting circumstances as we find ourselves in, in 2022, we must rely on what is in your books and your kind instructions. We know that this movement will only grow bigger. We know that the key to success is to give up speculation and follow your guidance.

Nowadays there's pandemics. There are wars. There are dictators in the world who want to control it all. But, from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we know that Krishna is the Supreme Controller and these small controllers will be defeated eventually.

We can see how Kali-yuga is making people miserable. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are our only hope in these difficult times. Without you, there is no hope. We want to catch your lotus feet and never let go. You attracted so many devotees with your purity.

Vyāsa-pūjā is the most auspicious time to remember your glorious pastimes. Every evening, my husband and I view "Prabhupāda Memories" on video and just marvel at how many devotees' lives you have touched. You are our divine inspiration. We want to remain faithful and loyal to you.

By obeying your sublime instructions, Śrī Māyāpur will develop in the way you envisioned and so many wonderful things will happen. By your mercy, the energy that emanates from you. like a river of compassion, will flow into the hearts of all who come into contact with you especially through your books.

Just as Lord Krishna is attracted by devotion. you are attracted as well. So, we just need to serve you Śrīla Prabhupāda, and your mission. You are Krishna's pure devotee. I am asking for your blessings to continue with my service.

Your unworthy but grateful servant,

Atitaguna Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1976 April. Australia

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You have explained that there are innumerable incarnations of Kṛṣṇa, like the waves of the ocean, because there are innumerable universes and living entities to reclaim. The children have forgotten the father and are trying to enjoy this world, but the father cannot forget his children. Therefore Kṛṣṇa in his many forms comes again and again to bring us back. He is so kind.

You also explained:

So *guru* is also incarnation of God, mercy incarnation of God. God is within you, *caitya-guru*, the *guru*, or the spiritual master, within your heart. *Īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṃ hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati*. So this Paramātmā is also incarnation of God. And the same Paramātmā, when He comes before you, being very much merciful upon you, to teach you from outside, that is *guru*. (Class on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.26 - Oct. 1, 1972 Los Angeles)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are certainly the mercy incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. He especially empowered you to spread Krishna consciousness in an unprecedented way. You are still with us through your words which awaken faith and love in the hearts of aspiring devotees. Our only aspiration is to be your faithful servant.

Thank you for your unlimited gifts, especially your books, your devotees, the holy name, *kirtana*, *prasādam*, the Deities, your temples, the holy abodes of Māyāpur and Vrindavana, and most of all for your love which awakened in our hearts the desire for pure devotion to Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Please give me a drop of faith to unlock the treasure of the holy name. Please allow me to become an instrument of your mercy.

Your aspiring servant,

Bada Haridas

Initiation: 1976 April. LA, USA

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Offering my sincere obeisances unto you today, dearest Gurudeva, on the auspicious day of your *Vyāsa-pūjā*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, having taken shelter at His lotus feet. O Spiritual Master, servant of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami, you

are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanya Deva and delivering the world, which is filled with impersonalism and voidism.

This past year, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your ISKCON has flourished with many open dialogues, and the Global Strategic Planning Committees have set in motion many innovative ideas to expand your mission in every area. The 'Devotee Care' teams are being trained nicely, as we have all been battling to rise above the ever-mounting depths of loss. Together, we are learning how to cope with grief overload and many new projects are forming.

Gratefully this year, here on Vancouver Island, B.C. Canada, I have found an amazing way to distribute your small books to over 500 plus tiny community libraries and your original *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* to many yoga students and teachers. Only by your special mercy are we able to stay enlivened by following in your footsteps, fearless on the path. Food distribution continues by providing free *prasāda* (mostly fruit) to the local community free fridge. We are looking forward to more *Harināma Saṅkīrtana* and 'In the park' *kīrtanas* as the mandates and restrictions from the past two years are slowly being lifted.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have shown us how this 'eternal knowledge' is relevant and applicable to any time, place or circumstance, enthusing us by your pure devotion and desire.

Staying grateful for each day in your loving service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda.

*With gratitude, love, and trust,
Hare Krishna*

Damayanti Devi Dasi (ACBSP)

Initiation: 1976 April. Toronto, Canada

Current location: Victoria, B.C. Canada

Mandapa Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

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

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

By some good fortune I stumbled across your devotees performing *Harinama* on the streets of London in the early '70's and was quite taken aback. They looked so otherworldly and happy. This planted a seed and by the time I saw the devotees again, chanting in the streets, I thought to ask: "How is it you are all so enthused, blissful and knowledgeable?"

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you made over 5000 disciples during the time of your manifested appearance in this world and one has only to watch a video series like Siddhānta prabhu's, to realize how amazing you were. You made and continue to make so many wonderful devotees who you empower to do wonderful *seva* and who continue to do so to this day. It really is stunning how you continue to attract intelligent and sold-out seekers. I observed that no other "new cult" leader could do like this.

You immediately win the hearts of so many who come in contact with you and your disciples. You are so attractive because you do not cheat anyone, and you actually love all those who help push on your movement.

So my question to those *Harinama* devotees in London was answered, in several ways.

Your menial servant,

Mandapa Dasa

Initiation: 1976 April. Vrindavana, India

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

You mercifully came to us and explained the truth about who God really is. Not a light, not an energy, not an old man, but a youth possessing the most beautiful, and attractive bodily features. Thus you gave us the real understanding of the Absolute Truth. Everyone in this Kali-yuga is swimming in the ocean of ignorance, and in illusion about the real nature of the Absolute Truth. For a very long time the Lord did not benedict the fallen souls with this divine knowledge. That knowledge can free us from the cycle of repeated birth and death, and relieve us from all material suffering, and enable us to regain our real life of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. But in this Kali-yuga the Lord has come as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to benedict all the fallen souls with the highest understanding of the Absolute, namely Sri Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He also came to deliver the process for attaining that knowledge, the congregational chanting of the holy names.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are His most intimate messenger. You delivered His message of chanting the holy names, all over the world. Your movement was founded on your faith in the holy names. When you came to America, you had full faith that the holy names could deliver the fallen souls of this age. Although you saw their fallen condition, you still had faith that the holy names and the Lord's mercy could save them. Armed with just the Hare Krishna *mantra* and a few books, you sat down in a park in New York City and chanted the holy names. Just by the chanting of the holy names, many followers joined. Gradually, your movement spread all over the world, and now this chanting is spreading everywhere. You have created a house in which the whole world can live, and this *mahā-mantra* can unite the whole world. You always remarked how the United Nations was not really uniting all the world's different nations. But your movement and the holy names can actually unite everyone. I was recently listening to some *kīrtanas* and *bhajans* on YouTube. Below the videos of the chanting, there is a comment section. Many of the comments show the power of the Hare Krishna mantra to transform people's lives. Some of the comments of newcomers to the chanting are as follows:

"I am Muslim, but I like this. So heart touching".

"I honestly can't control my tears, It's like my whole body is shivering. I don't know why. I just feel this urge to shed tears. I'm blessed".

"I'm new to this, but this is the most beautiful song I have ever heard, and I heard a lot"

"Listening for the first time, and feeling a powerful connection in me, it put me to tears."

"This song, this melody took my heart. I am a believer of Krishna, but when I hear this song, I want to live and die for Krishna."

These are just a small sample of the many, many wonderful comments about the effect the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* is having on people. Śrīla Prabhupāda, it's obvious that the divine Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* you have given us can purify and unite the whole world. You gave us the order to spread these holy names and your books everywhere. Then the world will undoubtedly become a place of peace and spiritual happiness. That was your mission; to transform this suffering world into the spiritual abode of the Lord. I pray that I can assist you in your mission of spreading the holy names and your books everywhere.

Aspiring to serve you,

Cakri Dasa

Initiation: 1976 June. Chicago, USA

Current location: Dallas TX. USA

Drumila Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have been a father to me in this life and a best well-wishing friend. You are trying to save me from repeated births and deaths in this material world, but I have as of yet been able to grasp the rope of mercy you have thrown me, to pull me out of my quagmire. I am stubborn like a mule, clinging onto all of my unwanted bad habits. I have not fully taken the process as you have given it. Sometimes I do, and then I foolishly jump ship, and jump back into the entangling world of action and reaction, and suffer. When or when will that day be mine when I pass all tests.

One thing is for sure though, I realize that you have not let go

of me so to speak, and abandoned me, given up on me. I know there is a great need in this world for leadership, as the world is deeply immersed in the lower modes of nature, and people's futures are very dark. Please kindly use me as your instrument to show them compassion. You once said, "Now you have become fortunate, now go, and save your countrymen as they are suffering greatly"(paraphrasing). And you have given us all the necessary tools to do so. But purity is the force, and I have to come up to a higher standard, to fully receive your mercy and the mercy of their Lordships. So thank you unlimitedly for your causeless mercy on this wretched, rotten, fallen servant of Kṛṣṇa. You are *jagad guru*. A devotee told me recently that he read that even one pure devotee of Lord Caitanya can deliver the entire universe. You are such a personality Śrīla Prabhupāda. It is my great, great fortune to have your divine association and guidance. I fervently pray that you never reject me, and keep me always in the realm of your sweet mercy.

Your eternal servant,

Drumila Dasa

Initiation: 1976 June. LA, USA

Nitya-trpta Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my prostrate obeisances.

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

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviṣeṣa-śūmyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

We are/were all in the situation of Arjuna:

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 Your disciple, and a soul surrendered unto You. Please instruct me. (Bg. 2.7)

I was confused about what is to be done with my life. Thankfully,

Your Divine Grace has come to shed light on this problem. You have come here to help extinguish the blazing fire of material existence.

As the transparent via-media to the spiritual realm you have written many books, spoken many lectures, given many instructions on how to get out of this world. My only desire is to somehow help preserve these treasures.

I came to your movement enchanted by the holy name in the Los Angeles temple. That chanting removed all my anxieties. I knew then as I know now,

The human body is the boat, the instructions of Lord Kṛṣṇa are the favorable winds, and the spiritual master is the navigator. The spiritual master knows well how to adjust the sails to catch the winds favorably and steer the boat to its destination. If, however, one does not take advantage of this opportunity, one wastes the human form of life. Wasting time and life in this way is the same as committing suicide. (SB 4.23.28, Purport)

Your wisdom, *bhakti* and life knit us all together, we are one family somehow trying to work together for Your Divine Grace. You set standards/traditions. During years of travel and visiting numerous temples around the world those traditions knit us together, each temple although situated on different continents, different cultures, the familiarity is there.

Your Divine Grace is my guide. My desire has always been to use whatever abilities I may have in some useful way in and for your Hare Krishna movement.

Please allow this fallen servant to remain near your lotus feet.

Your servant,

Nitya-trpta Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1976 June. LA, USA

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

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

Dear beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this most glorious occasion of your appearance we are eager to present our offering unto you for your pleasure.

Śrīla Prabhupāda has the unique position for all time to come as the Founder and Ācārya of ISKCON and the pre-eminent śikṣā guru for all devotees now and to come. No one can ever take his place in this role for which he is eminently qualified. And as a result, every devotee now and to come to ISKCON has and should establish a personal relationship with him as well as with their own gurus.

I feel it is my service to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to teach and encourage devotees to carefully study your books, lectures and conversations so that upcoming generations can be deeply well versed in your precise teachings as you have given them to us. Otherwise, how will ISKCON continue to follow you as you desired for generations in the future?

Śrīla Prabhupāda gave us the 7 purposes of ISKCON and this is a guiding structure for us to follow for generations to come.

So as followers, disciples and grand-disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda, what are the primary qualities that define us and empower us to spread Krishna consciousness? The first is of course fidelity or faithfulness to Śrīla Prabhupāda. How can we be faithful if we are not crystal clear on your instructions, desires and the special flavor you gave to spreading Krishna consciousness. It is ultimately in its pure form an unquestioning loyalty and surrender to follow the rules he gave and to surrender ourselves to the dedication of our lives in gratitude to pleasing him. This means we personally follow his teachings in our life and we teach these same teachings to those who we come in contact with whether they are our family members and those who show interest in Krishna consciousness. To be faithful of course means first we must know what Śrīla Prabhupāda taught

and follow this carefully. It is also a type of chastity, that we always remain “Prabhupāda’s sons and daughters,” and not add or subtract from what he taught and requested of us. What is the ultimate result of following Śrīla Prabhupāda? He stated that he will personally take us back home back to Godhead. This is so vitally important because we want and need such a guarantee. Without this we have no hope of really pleasing Krishna and thus achieving spiritual perfection. Without his help and guidance we will not gain release from Māyā and be able to exit from this material world.

In 1976 I met with my parents and they inquired what taking soon to come initiation from Śrīla Prabhupāda meant. At 25-years-old I was full of enthusiasm and the feeling of invincibility of youth. So I replied that, initiation meant that I would follow Śrīla Prabhupāda for the rest of my life. They stared at me and their mouths were slightly open in disbelief. How could a young boy, their son who recently graduated from the university, make such a commitment to an elderly Indian spiritual teacher whom he has never even personally met yet. At this age what does one really even know about such commitments which can only be made out of love?

But looking back I can see the secret that Śrīla Prabhupāda had indicated often before.

That by regular daily service and surrender, love grows drop by drop and day by day. He knew this fact which is true for all living entities and he knew that it will work for anyone one even in this age of Kali.

My life has been filled with many milestones of commitment, surrender and love. And it is still active and alive today. I find that when I make a commitment to serve and complete some particular project or task, there is a newer opportunity to feel the reciprocation with Śrīla Prabhupāda that has kept me close to him for so many years. Otherwise how is it possible? In this age of Kali and specifically at this time people find it hard to make strong commitments to anything other than the most selfish of goals.

When one steps out of his comfort zone and tries to please Śrīla Prabhupāda by taking on responsibility and service which seems beyond his capacity and experience, then magical things start to happen. First one must begin with commitment that I will do this to please Śrīla Prabhupāda. Then he must make every possible effort to complete the project. But that is not enough and will not bring forth the closeness to Krishna and Prabhupāda.

One must pray and pray and pray for Guru, Śrīla Prabhupāda's and Lord Chaitanya's help at every step. He must know and pray that all the success will come **only if I obtain their help and not just their blessings**. Otherwise on my own I will fail and not bring the pleasure to Śrīla Prabhupāda that is so relishable and on which one can meditate day after day and year after year. I am not a seasoned book distributor so in my early years I used to ask what is the key or the method required to get someone to take a book. I was a bit surprised at the answer because it was the same as I was already trying to do. It is to pray again and again to Śrīla Prabhupāda and Lord Chaitanya for their help to do the impossible. Which is to turn the heart of a conditioned soul from their selfish desires under Maya to hearing from and following Krishna. A truly monumental task to say the least.

But something I learned each time I reach out of my comfort zone to please my guru is that to please Śrīla Prabhupāda is simpler and clearer than to try to please Krishna directly. And Śrīla Prabhupāda, my guru, makes it so much easier to please Krishna. If Śrīla Prabhupāda is pleased then he may mention to Krishna that I have done some service and Krishna will accept whatever His pure devotee requests.

We hope that this offering is pleasing to you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

We continue to beg for your mercy so that we can continue to expand the glories of the Supreme Lord Krishna and bring more and more conditioned souls to surrender at your lotus feet.

Your humble servants,

Ramiya Dasa and Ananta Dasi
Initiation: 1976 June. Detroit, USA

Vegavati Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I just wanted to thank you, again and again, for the amazing gift you've given to me, and to the whole world. "Simple people, chanting and dancing and eating nice food – that is spiritual life." These words of yours, from the first time I heard your voice, on tape,

captivated my heart then and made me feel so safe. They still do.

I'm sorry I'm not a more perfect follower; yet still you accept me and my offerings. Thank you for that.

Please forgive me for the many missed opportunities to spread your message of deep spiritual reality, love and compassion. Yet there are opportunities I've taken, too, and some successes. Thank you so much for encouraging us to connect with others and spread the holy names, philosophy, and *prasādam*.

I know that in spite of superficial setbacks, within my heart is a deep and abiding love for you, for Gaura-Nitāi, and for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, and all His associates. Please continue to bear with me, while I try to uncover that love.

It may take lifetimes, but I will keep trying. Thank you so much, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thank you so much. Please keep me in a corner of your lotus feet.

Your very foolish and fallen servant, and affectionate daughter,

Vegavati-Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1976 June. LA, USA

Hari Chakra Dasa

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

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

Beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Again I address Your Divine Grace, on this beautiful date of your advent, to pay you my humble tribute of admiration, praise, recognition, to your many wonderful qualities that Your Divine Grace eternally possesses!

Please allow me, my dear eternal master, to tell you that after 46 years of receiving the blessed initiation in the chanting of the holy name, as well as the recitation of the holy Gayatri, I am finally managing to understand what you are saying in relation to the chanting of the holy name. In a *Bhagavad-gītā* class in Los Angeles, in December 1968, you say that if one sincerely chants this Hare

Krishna *mantra*, then everything may be completely clear, although he may still have some wrong ideas.

In another reading of the *Bhagavad-gītā* 7.19 in Hamburg in September 1969, His Divine Grace encourages us by saying that after 50 years of chanting this *maha-mantra* we can achieve perfection.

I must confess to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that I do not have enough intelligence to achieve this purpose, but I do have the untainted faith that you have sown in me, and that comforts me fully.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I can only beg you to help me to continue eternally, under the sweet and loving protection of Him.

*I am of His Divine Grace,
An eternal and simple unconditional servant,*

Hari Cakra Dasa Brahmachari
Initiation: 1976 July. Caracas, Venezuela

Bhaja Govinda Devi Dasi

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your service to your glorious spiritual master Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Here it is time to formally offer some appreciation of you. As the years quickly fleet, I find myself realizing how fortunate I am and how only due to your mercy I find myself in this position. I am understanding more and more that it is only your mercy that sustains me. As I read the glorifications of the previous *ācāryas* I find myself in such a bewildered position. As I remember many of my godbrothers and godsisters that are no longer in our association, I feel comforted in the fact that you will receive me as you have given shelter to them. This fact gives me faith each day. You are my miracle.

Your loving spiritual daughter,

Bhaja Govinda Dasi
Initiation: 1976 July. Gainesville, Florida, USA
prabhupadas.govindadasi@gmail.com

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My obeisances at your feet. You are the well-wisher of everyone.

Forty-five years ago, just one month before you left us, I was a speaker for the Bhaktivedanta Institute at the First International Conference on *Life Comes from Life*, held at the Krishna Balarāma Temple in sacred Vrindavana. I was so fortunate to be with you near the end of your sojourn to save the Western world (and all of the planet). Now 45 years later I am the Director of the Bhaktivedanta Institute for Higher Studies. I could never imagine that my final lap in *seva* would be such an intimate dear service to you.

I am pleased to report that through the generosity of the Hridayananda dasa Goswami family Trust, we have a new grand mansion as the BI headquarters in Gainesville, Florida, to be used as a retreat and think tank. In 1977 we had five devotee scientists at the *Life Comes from Life* Conference and several other devotee scholars in humanities. Now, we have over 75 devotee scholars and mostly PhDs. We are dealing with the core issues of *Life Comes from Life*, now referred to as consciousness studies, and the core issues of cosmology in support of the TOVP. Devotee scholars are working with us on five continents.

In 2022 there is a keen interest in many scholarly circles to deal with the ‘hard problem of physics’ – consciousness. Due to the insights you have provided we have the ‘edge’. Others may realize that life is beyond the body yet have little insight into the nature of the living force. With your discernments we are able to philosophically and experimentally begin demonstrating that life comes from life.

The atheism of the Darwinian revolution is fading in intellectual circles, yet is being replaced with impersonal philosophies. The BI is dedicated to going beyond the impersonal vision and introducing radical personalism as a functional paradigm.

We pray that we may please you and that with your blessings our humble attempts will make a difference.

Your servants at the Bhaktivedanta Institute,

Brahmatirtha Dasa

Executive Director

Initiation: 1976 July. Houston, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

This auspicious occasion of your *Vyāsa-pūjā* is a time for me to reflect on your unconditional love, a love that will change the lives of unlimited souls for thousands of years to come. It is a time for me to reflect on how great is your compassion and how determined was your conviction to bring the holy name to us fallen souls all over the world. It is a time for me to reflect on my level of advancement after so many years of endeavor. It is a gradual process, but am I guilty of following the process gradually? This is a time for me to reflect where I have fallen short of the mark in my service, in my treatment of your devotees, in my lack of patience and understanding to others. Please forgive me, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I am such a newcomer and I have such a long way to go on this path.

I went searching for your devotees some 45 years ago, realizing I needed higher, spiritual association. I wanted to learn from them how to give up my harmful, dead end habits. By their grace I was allowed to receive your causeless mercy. You have made my pathetic life as a human, fortunate. I do not fully understand the amount of love you have for me but I do hope that my love, gratitude and knowledge of your unlimited good qualities matures to a fuller understanding with each passing year. I pray that I may render eternal, loving service to you as a sincere gesture of gratitude.

I know your teachings have spared me unlimited births of pain and suffering. I know it is a great fortune to be allowed to render service to you, such a divine and supremely wonderful personality. Even though I stumble again and again in attempting to follow your instructions, I am given the chance to offer service to you again and again. Realizing your love and life of sacrifice wells up pain and gratitude in my heart. You created so many temples so that thousands of us could take up this path of devotional service and realize the highly esoteric concept of who we are and why we are here, in a spiritually structured, regulated lifestyle.

I will humbly endeavor to perform devotional service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Vrindavancandra, developing my love for the Lord, knowing that this is what pleases you. This is one way to attempt to repay you. I will enthusiastically tell anyone I meet about this wonderful spiritual path you worked so hard to bring to the Western world. Your glories are unlimited. It is an honor and a privilege to give witness to

your divine character. It is an honor and a privilege to share your life's work, your translations of the Vedic scriptures, to those still in ignorance. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for spreading the glories of Lord Caitanya's message all over the world, a message of chanting Krishna's name, dancing at *kirtana* and feasting on Krishna *prasādam*. Thank you wholeheartedly for saving us, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please accept my humble attempt to broadcast your glories.

Your humble servant, disciple and spiritual daughter,

Mallika Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1976 July. NY, USA

Jayagurudeva Dasa

Not our civilization
Said the Shaman from Amazonia
Rascal civilization
Said Śrīla Prabhupāda
The saintly Vaishnava from India

It is not civilization
But rather decadence
That the Europeans
The Anglo-Americans
Imposed on the Native Americans
And on the followers of *Sanātana Dharma*
Close to Nature, close to God, close to Krishna

The Europeans, the Anglo-Americans
The so-called civilized people
Became followers of Faustian Science
Devotees of Mefisto, the great seducer
Of the Cartesian Method
Systematic doubt, skepticism

Of the Baconian "New Atlantis"
With Man as the Master of Nature
Above Nature
Creating a kingdom of god

Without God
Through Science and Technology

The Europeans, the Anglo-Americans
The so-called civilized people
Conquered the world
Killing Nature, destroying Faith
In God, Krishna, the Scriptures, and all the Sages

Despite the fact that many of us rear from European,
Anglo-American backgrounds
The so-called civilized people
As your disciples we humbly de-
clare: this is not our civilization

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for giving us Krishna
consciousness, the eternal science of devotion to Guru and Krishna,
the foundation of true human civilization.

Your ever-indebted humble servant,

Jayagurudeva Dasa
Initiation: 1976 August. New Mayapur, France

Vaibhava Dasa Adhikari

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We are servants of the servant of your matchless gift: ISKCON,
which is Śrī Krishna's gift through you. Because of this, it is our duty
to cooperate by helping your personified message to remain alive as
it is. You taught us to utilize every good occasion which Śrī Krishna
manifests for us to give freely this knowledge you received from the
Supreme Lord through the *Paramparā*, always conscious that every
part and parcel of time is important. Through your example I can try
to understand what my mission requires, what must I do, according
to what you know it is to be fulfilled in Krishna consciousness. So I
must hear from your teachings by reading from your books, in this
way associating myself with you. From such association I will be
inspired, due to Śrī Krishna's mercy, to have a perception of what at
any time Śrī Krishna wants from me.

I must be witness in every activity of how you wanted things to be done or conceived. Having been your disciple, I must hand down the truth. I know that you were always vigilant by staying attentive, always making sure that what Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta required became accomplished. It is the responsibility in the succession of masters and disciples. We can understand that Kali-yuga is inclined to do so that we forget our realizations, therefore it remains important always to study your books and to associate with the holy name Śrī Krishna, in this way following you in your association with the *paramparā* and with your spiritual master in the spiritual world.

Your humble servant of the servant,

Vaibhava Dasa Adhikari

Initiation: 1976 August. New Mayapur, France

Gaura Keśava Dāsa

*rādhā kṛṣṇa samārambhām kṛṣṇa caitanya madhyamām
bhaktivedānta paryantām vandē guru paramparām*

“I offer my respectful obeisances to the lineage of teachers that starts with Their Supreme Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa, includes Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and runs up to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmīn, Śrīla Prabhupāda.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my deepest respects unto you! Your teachings about the holy names of the Lord are prolific. I pray to you and the Supreme Lord for the realization to understand them. Below is an example of your teachings on the holy name which I need help realizing and understanding. Please grant me that realization and understanding?

*nāmaikaṃ yasya vāci smaraṇa-patha-gataṃ śrotra-mūlaṃ gataṃ vā
śuddhaṃ vāśuddha-varṇaṃ vyavahita-rahitaṃ tārayaty eva satyam
tac ced deha-draviṇa-janatā-lobha-pāṣaṇḍa-madhye
nikṣiptaṃ syān na phala-janakaṃ śighram evātra vipra*

If a devotee once utters the holy name of the Lord, or if it penetrates his mind or enters his ear, which is the channel of aural reception, that holy name will certainly deliver him from material bondage, whether vibrated properly or

improperly, with correct or incorrect grammar, or properly joined or vibrated in separate parts. O brāhmaṇa, the potency of the holy name is therefore certainly great. However, if one uses the vibration of the holy name for the benefit of the material body, for material wealth and followers, or under the influence of greed or atheism—in other words, if one utters the name with offenses—such chanting will not produce the desired result very soon. Therefore one should diligently avoid offenses in chanting the holy name of the Lord. (CC *Antya* 3.60)

Purport

This verse from the *Padma Purāṇa* is included in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.527) by Sanātana Gosvāmī. Therein Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī gives the following explanation:

vāci gataṁ prasaṅgād vān-madhye pravṛttam api, smaraṇa-patha-gataṁ kathañcin manaḥ-sprṣtam api, śrotra-mūlaṁ gataṁ kiñcit śrutam api, śuddha-varṇaṁ vā aśuddha-varṇaṁ api vā, vyavahitaṁ śabdāntareṇa yad-vyavadhānaṁ vakṣyamāna-nārāyaṇa-śabdasya kiñcid uccāraṇānantaraṁ prasaṅgād āpatitaṁ śabdāntaraṁ tena rahitaṁ sat.

This means that if one somehow or other hears, utters or remembers the holy name, or if it catches his mind while coming near his ears, that holy name, even if vibrated in separate words, will act. An example of such separation is given as follows:

*yadvā, yadyapi 'halaṁ riktam' ity ādy-uktau hakāra-rikārayor
vṛttyā harīti-nāmāsty eva, tathā 'rāja-mahiṣī' ity atra rāma-
nāmāpi, evam anyad apy ūhyam, tathāpi tat-tan-nāma-madhye
vyavadhāyakaṁ akṣarāntaraṁ astīty etādṛśa-vyavadhāna-
rahitaṁ ity arthaḥ, yadvā, vyavahitaṁ ca tad-rahitaṁ cāpi vā,
tatra vyavahitaṁ nāmnaḥ kiñcid uccāraṇānantaraṁ kathañcid
āpatitaṁ śabdāntaraṁ samādhāya paścān nāmāvaśiṣṭākṣara-
grahaṇam ity evaṁ rūpaṁ, madhye śabdāntareṇāntaritam
ity arthaḥ, rahitaṁ paścād avaśiṣṭākṣara-grahaṇa-varjitaṁ,
kenacid aṁśena hīnam ity arthaḥ, tathāpi tārayaty eva.*

Suppose one is using the two words 'halaṁ riktam'. Now the

syllable *ha* in the word *halam* and the syllable *ri* in *riktam* are separately pronounced, but nevertheless the holy name will act because one somehow or other utters the word *hari*. Similarly, in the words ‘*rāja-mahiṣṭ*’, the syllables *rā* and *ma* appear in two separate words, but because they somehow or other appear together, the holy name *rāma* will act, provided there are no offenses.

*sarvebhyaḥ pāpebhyo ‘parādhebhyaś ca saṁsārād apy
uddhārayaty eveti satyam eva, kintu nāma-sevanasya
mukhyaṁ yat phalaṁ tan na sadyaḥ sampady-
ate. tathā deha-bharaṇādy-artham api nāma-sevanena
mukhyaṁ phalam āśu na sidhyatīty āha, tac ced iti.*

The holy name has so much spiritual potency that it can deliver one from all sinful reactions and material entanglements, but utterance of the holy name will not be very soon fruitful if done to facilitate sinning.

*tan nāma ced yadi dehādi-madhye nikṣiptaṁ, deha-
bharaṇādy-artham eva vinyastaṁ, tadāpi phala-janakaṁ
na bhavati kim? api tu bhavaty eva, kintu atra iha loke
śīghraṁ na bhavati, kintu vilambenaiva bhavatīty arthaḥ.*

The holy name is so powerful that it must act, but when one utters the holy name with offenses, its action will be delayed, not immediate, although in favorable circumstances the holy names of the Lord act very quickly.

You have taught us that there are three stages of chanting the holy names:

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura elaborately describes the stages of chanting the holy name in his *Hari-nāma-cintāmaṇi*: Chanting that is full of ignorance and offenses is known as *nāma-aparādha*. The next stage, which still contains imperfections, is known as *nāma-ābhāsa*, or the shadow of the holy name. This is the stage in which one can attain freedom from sins and even liberation. But one can attain pure *kṛṣṇa-prema* only by chanting without offense, a stage known as *śuddha-nāma*, or the pure chanting of the holy name. (*Mukunda Mālā Stotram* 51, Purport)

The definition of *nāmābhāsa* (semblance of the holy name) is given in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*sāṅketyaṁ pārihāsyam vā
stobhaṁ helanam eva vā
vaikuṇṭha-nāma-grahaṇam
aśeṣāgha-haraṇi viduḥ*

“One who chants the holy name of the Lord is immediately freed from the reactions of unlimited sins, even if he chants indirectly [to indicate something else], jokingly, for musical entertainment, or even neglectfully. This is accepted by all the learned scholars of the scriptures.” (ŚB 6.2.14)

Such is the greatness of the holy names that even the offensive chanting: *nāma-aparādha* and the offenseless semblance of chanting the holy names: *nāma-ābhāsa* will save us eventually and immediately. What then can be said for the pure chanting of the holy name *śuddha-nāma*?

I pray that you please give me the intelligence to understand this and realize it.

Śrīla Prabhupāda ki jaya!
All glories to you!

dāsan

Gaura Keśava dāsa

Initiation: 1976 August. Sydney, Australia

Jayagauri Devi Dasi

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

At this stage, my *sādhana* has become much more internal. The constant hearing of the Lord’s pastimes from the lips of your senior disciples is giving me the association necessary to fill my consciousness with remembrance of what is important in life – to remember Krishna and never forget Krishna. You have shown us by example how to surrender your life to loving

devotional service. The more I hear of your glorious pastimes it totally humbles me seeing myself as a servant of the servant of the servant. This position of servant makes it possible to appreciate every present moment as an opportunity to serve you. I am eternally grateful for your gift of knowledge opening the possibility of service to Śrī Krishna and I hope to eternally serve your lotus feet with heart and soul. Please make me an instrument of your mercy always and forever!

Your tiny disciple,

Jayagauri Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1976 August. New Mayapur, France

Current location: Alachua, Florida, USA

jayagauridevi@gmail.com

Rāmaśarana Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvyata eva sadbhīḥ
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

-Śrī Śrī Gurvaṣṭaka

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

The spiritual master is to be honored as much as the Supreme Lord, because he is the most confidential servitor of the Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and followed by all authorities. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is a bona fide representative of Śrī Hari (Kṛṣṇa).

In my humble opinion, I not only consider Your Divine

Grace my spiritual master, but also my mentor, spiritual father, well-wisher, life skills coach, and dearest friend. Your compassion for us is unparalleled! You really wanted us to revive our love for our Supreme Lord Krishna and to that end you engaged us, unqualified as we were, in devotional service. You cared not a fig of who we were or what we may have done. Your Divine Grace accepted us with loving care and compassion.

There is not a day that goes by when I don't remember and worship Your Divine Grace and marvel at your achievements!

In under 12 years Your Divine Grace inaugurated Lord Chaitanya's mission and fulfilled your spiritual master's desire of spreading Krishna consciousness all over the world. As another anniversary of *Vyāsa-pūjā* dawns, and as I prepare to glorify Your Divine Grace, I feel inadequate, ill prepared and unqualified. What worthwhile quality do I have to make any meaningful contribution? Yet I am feebly trying to glorify Your Divine Grace with my meagre words.

In fact, Your Divine Grace's glories are self-evident. Your Divine Grace has begun a movement and planted an international tree that encompasses all the continents and is growing branches in myriad ways.

Many are following Your Divine Grace's instructions sincerely while others not so much, but however I look at it, it's growing exponentially!

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.4.21, purport, Your Divine Grace writes the following:

The Lord is what He is, the Absolute Personality of Godhead, and He demands absolute surrender unto Him only. The pure devotee, however, by following the ways of previous ācāryas, or authorities, can see the Supreme Lord through the transparent medium of a bona fide spiritual master (*anupaśyanti*). The pure devotee never tries to see the Lord by mental speculation, but by following in the footsteps of the ācāryas, *mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ*. (Cc *Madhya* 17.186).

I am trying to follow in your footsteps, but they are so deep and devotional, that I stumble frequently, praying and begging Your Divine Grace not to banish me from your association, but rather keep inspiring me to get up and try, again and again and yet again!

The recent pandemic has in some ways helped jolt us into

appreciating the fragile reality that's life in the material world. It has also spotlighted what divides us; as evidenced by issues such as masking and vaccines that are hotly debated in social media. The social isolation mandated due to the pandemic has prompted some devotees to reach out in creative ways, while others have had a lot of down time to reflect on Your Divine Grace's instructions that are freely available in so many formats, both online and off, including books, CDs, videos, letters etc. There's no dearth of your teachings to be found and relished. Underscoring everything, whether in your talks, letters, books or messages Your Divine Grace's fervent plea, hope and desire for us is that we stop our nonsense and try to love Krishna!

As war rages in Europe we are reminded of Lord Krishna's divine words:

*mām upetya punar janma
duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam
nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ
saṁsiddhiṁ paramām gatāḥ*

After attaining Me, the great souls, who are yogis in devotion, never return to this temporary world, which is full of miseries, because they have attained the highest perfection.

I know, that was and continues to be Your Divine Grace's plea: "Be Krishna conscious and be happy!"

On the auspicious day of Your Divine Grace's appearance, I only plead for your blessings that I may try to love Krishna and be joyful, while Your Divine Grace forgives my offenses, committed by my neophyte nature.

My sincere prayer is that we all keep Your Divine Grace at the center of our lives, and return to shelter at your lotus feet.

*Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda! Jaya Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga!
Your eternal disciple,*

Rāmaśarana Dasa

Initiation: 1976 September. London, UK

Atmatma Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Please accept my repeated obeisances at your feet.

You are very dear to the Lord of the heart for whom you are His pure devotee.

The carrier of divine knowledge and the saviour of the most fallen.

All the qualities of pure devotion reside with you.

Compassionate, faultless servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa who dwells within the heart of His devotee.

You have fearlessly taken up the order of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī.

You are the guiding light and the doorway home.

You have made the path home, so very clear and given us the perfect example.

There are many who are looking for the missing link. You are the missing link.

You came and rescued us from the grip of maya and accepted so many of us to the shelter of your love.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for this life lived with you.

Your eternal servant,

Atmatma Dasa

Initiation: 1976 September. London, UK

Janaki Devi Dasi

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda, my beloved Spiritual Master.

It is with gratitude that I come before you to present this year's offering of glorification to you.

I am approaching my 69th birthday – so I cannot help but be reminded of what you achieved during your 69th year during your earthly pastimes. That was the year you decided to take the plunge and make your arrangements for your very first trip outside of India, to the lonely shores of America. So many trials and tribulations you

endured – making the decision that there was no time to spend any longer preparing, the time to finally set out on your mission to the West was upon you, to do your best to fulfil the desire of your own beloved guru maharaja.

Now the task of obtaining a ticket from Srimati Morarji of the Scindia Steamship Company – she didn’t want to give you one at first, feeling protective of you, like as though a father to her – how could such an elderly saintly sadhu survive the harsh climate and people and the US? But your determination was strong and fixed – this was a matter of urgency, and you would not give up. Finally, she relented and procured for you a ticket to Boston, on the good ship Jaladuta. Ahh what a blessed ship to carry you and your message to us parched and confused souls, wandering here through the dense darkness of ignorance in our bewildered lives.

Hardly a rupee in your pocket, but firm faith in Śrī Krishna and your guru mahārāja, you set out – with your three carefully and painstakingly prepared volumes of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, to undertake this momentous feat of bravery and conviction – to spread the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and assist Him in His desire and prediction, that this chanting of Lord Krishna’s holy names, in the form of the *mahā-mantra*, would resound in every town and village around the world.

A lesser man would have given up long ago, but you had been singled out by the Lord, to be the Senāpati, the Great General, the Captain of the Ship – the Founder Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Changing the hearts of a generation and establishing a worldwide movement to bring spiritual awareness and knowledge to the world, in this degraded age of Kali-yuga.

Somehow or other, I have had the tremendous, good fortune, to take shelter of you as an initiated disciple. I joined at the Bhaktivedanta Manor in 1976, having read some of your enlightening literatures that had brought the torchlight of knowledge to awaken my blinded and confused soul. I knew as soon as I read the first few pages in your amazing books. I knew that this is what I had been searching my whole life for. I vowed then and there that I would try my utmost to dedicate my life to serving you to the best of my ability.

Now here we are, 46 years later and by your kindness and mercy, I am trying to do something to please you, to serve you, to take shelter of you. I have many faults and shortcomings – that we both know – but my prayer to you is that you will continue to shower

your blessings upon me, as you have undoubtedly done throughout the years, thereby allowing me to move forward and engage in some service that is pleasing to you and your devotees.

I gaze in awe at your outstanding ability to create, nurture and maintain our international society – establishing temples, Deity worship, restaurants, and farm communities, whilst continually travelling around the globe. At the same time translating, writing and printing your voluminous library of intensely focused spiritual texts...wow, a superstar, a genius, a great saintly devotee!

As the years roll by, these tremendous achievements will be more fully comprehended. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for keeping me, and thousands of others, under your protective wings.

What a visionary you were. Sitting in a park with no material assets, seeing the growth of the movement but commenting that “only time is separating us” from these achievements that you were to bring to the world.

In your Bhaktivedanta purports, you often mention the need for simple living and high thinking. You want us to be self-sufficient – not dependant on the fluctuating fortunes of the false foundations we currently find ourselves entrenched in. Farm communities, protecting cows, working the land with trained oxen, growing our own grains, fruits and vegetables, making our own cloth – all centred on the *bhakti* tradition, keeping Krishna – the source of all that be – in the centre, this is what you want to establish. You once said: “they will come in the thousands to our farm communities”. We need to be ready, using our intelligence and organisational skills to create these oases’ for the world, to provide an example of how we can live in harmony with Mother Nature, at the same time prepare to reach the highest spiritual perfection and end this repeated cycle of birth and death.

We’ve seen in the past few years – with the Covid crisis and now the Ukraine/Russian war – how desperately real this need is. Pollution, climate change, sky-rocketing cost of living, depleting resources, food shortages, thousands of refugees, chaos, uncertainty and confusion...how urgent now is the need to push forward with trying to establish these communities?

I would like to take this opportunity to re-dedicate my life to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I pray that whatever obstacles still remain on my path, that you kindly guide and protect me, like the loving father you are, so that the vast ocean of *anarthas* may be reduced

to a ‘puddle of water in a calf’s hoofprint’ so that I may become a transparent instrument, a vessel for you to work through, assisting in implementing your desires and vision for this world.

Hare Krishna!

Your humble but aspiring disciple,

Janaki Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1976 September. London, UK

Current location: ISKCON Leicester / Ahimsa Farms
janaki108@virginmedia.com

Yogindra Dasa

In my Tribute last year, I described how the ISKCON farm in Sweden, Almvik, was troubled by an outbreak of Covid with many devotees afflicted. This year, I report how the farm is resiliently developing.

For the maintenance of the cow-protection, a house has been recently erected at the farm by donations from sympathetic supporters to provide a home for a family whose service is dedicated to the care of the cows and bulls. A devotee family was recruited and has now moved into the new house. The aim is to increase the herd so that milk production covers the needs of the Pañca Tattva temple and the farm community. This entails that the oxen are engaged and for this purpose an “Ox Experience” program is being launched to attract people to come and see how the oxen work in the forest and in fields; the participants are to also get a feel for caring for the oxen by suitable hands-on participation.

In the beginning of March, the Almvik devotees contacted ISKCON devotees in war-torn Ukraine by social media inviting them to come to Sweden and Almvik. The first refugees arrived shortly thereafter and now there are over twenty at Almvik. The Swedish neighbors took note of this first wave of arrivals from Ukraine and supported the Almvik initiative with many generous contributions of food, clothes, equipment and other necessities. The immigration authorities are arranging formalities and the Ukrainian children have started to attend Swedish schools. Śrīla Prabhupāda told us here in Sweden when he came in 1973:

I understand that in this country the farmers are taxed so

heavily that they are forced to work in the factory. This is a policy of the government leaders to engage people. If anyone wants to live peacefully, save time for developing Krishna consciousness, then the leaders of the society or the government will not allow him to do so. This is the position. So you are all fortunate, or you are so kind that you have joined this movement despite all these obstacles in this country. (Lecture, SB 5.5.1, Stockholm, 1973 Sept. 6)

Almvik is a great blessing for which we are greatly indebted to Śrīla Prabhupāda for his instruction and inspiration to acquire and develop it. The Almvik devotees feel indebted to the early Swedish devotees who pioneered the yātrā's establishment. As a token of appreciation, a guest cottage is planned to invite the older devotees to come back "home" for regular visits. To this end, lumber is being produced on the Almvik sawmill and planer from trees (felled very selectively) from the Almvik forest. A trust account has accumulated the necessary funding for the workmanship and various materials. If Krishna wants, we can report the completion (or at least a solid progress report) in next year's Tribute.

May Krishna bless us that we always remember Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions and recite them without difficulty.

Yogindra Dasa

Initiation: 1976 September. Stockholm, Sweden

Atmarama Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

As we begin approaching the age that you were when you first came to the West, as we begin to literally walk in your shoes in terms of age and experience, our understanding of and our appreciation for the struggles you underwent in establishing a global movement in the 20th century, continue to grow. The challenges you faced seem

inconceivable in retrospect, though at the time it was all largely taken for granted by us as your neophyte followers.

Now, just like you back then, we have had almost a lifetime of experience being part of a devotional society and a missionary organisation. As for you with the Gauḍīya Math, our participation in ISKCON has at times been exciting and exhilarating, especially during the period when the *Acharya* was still personally present. With your departure however, as with the departure of Srila Bhaktisiddhānta, things rapidly began to change, and often not for the better. Without your personal guidance and inspiration, your wise direction and correction, many mistakes were made, not just superficial or inconsequential mistakes, but in certain cases serious errors with systemic consequences. Inexperience no doubt played a role in our getting so many things wrong but, as in the case of the Gauḍīya Math, certain things we did wrong can be traced back to direct deviations from your clear instructions and already established arrangements. Things with which we were already well-acquainted, and for which there can really be no excuse.

On the other hand, in certain regards we have tried to be steady and consistent, if not always with complete success. Organisationally we have certainly persevered in maintaining ultimate allegiance to the GBC Body. And, even though its international authority has at times been placed under strain, after 45 years that is still going on. So far as keeping up a level of organisational cohesion this continued allegiance to the governing body you so determinedly established has likely been something of a saving grace. On a grass roots level however, disaffection with ISKCON's leadership, especially in terms of its performance at an institutional level, has been perhaps the major factor in the loss of countless devotees who at one time would have considered themselves members of ISKCON. Especially this has been the case perhaps in the West, where ISKCON was first established and, in consequence, has likely experienced these disappointments longer and more severely than elsewhere. But we must always be careful in our tendency to lay blame, never forgetting that ultimately if things aren't going any better than they are, we should be looking to ourselves for the reason. Rather than getting consumed with resentment, or spend our life bemoaning the apparent state of affairs, better we should rather follow your personal example, pick up our individual burdens of responsibility and push on – undaunted – as best we can. Not only would that be more honest, it would

be more useful.

We may certainly see errors, or make judgments regarding what is right or wrong, but we can never dare – on the strength of your example – to make excuses for ourselves not continuing to persevere. Whatever troubles may plague our ISKCON movement, they are no less severe than the terrible disasters that befell the Gauḍīya-Math. As disheartening as that must have been for everyone involved, you yourself ultimately remained undaunted. You continued in your own way, ever faithful to the spirit and the specific instructions of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur. In this regard, as your own disciples, our responsibility remains crystal clear. When you first came to the West, as a “penniless beggar”, there was no external cause for your determination and commitment. Externally there was only the challenge of the *tamasic* West in front and the “depression, suppression, compression” of apathetic India behind. Yet you pushed on – “I continued strong in my duty” – day by day, in the face of likely failure, certainly with no guarantee of success.

Vyāsa-pūjā day always compels us to reflect on you, your example, your achievements, and your unique position in the devotional firmament. All of these are of course extraordinary, and such reflection can only leave us feeling insignificant; completely inadequate. Be that as it may, the only way you ever saw yourself was as a faithful disciple doing your duty according to the standards and instructions laid down by your spiritual master. Big achievements are one thing, but aspiring to emulate you in these terms, in your example of loyal and committed discipleship, is the critical thing. These are the important timeless footprints laid down by you for us to follow. At age 70 you came to the West and a global movement certainly manifested. But it was from age 26, as many of us experienced in our own lives, that the real journey and story began. Big as ISKCON might be, could have been, or might even become, it will never be anything more than the obvious tip of an iceberg. The real story of ISKCON, and of Śrīla Prabhupāda, lies underneath all of that. It lies in the courage and determination of a good and faithful disciple, someone who really understood his spiritual master’s mind and intentions and who followed his critical instructions with an undeviating commitment.

As they say, history repeats. And now we find ourselves on the threshold of our own old age, the age you were when you first came to the West. The age you were when we first saw you. From this

point on we will literally be walking in your shoes, certainly in terms of material age and experience. But now the real question in our own lives, and the real challenge of your own example looms ever larger. It is the challenge of those daunting footprints laid down by you as a faithful and committed disciple. Of one who continued, regardless what else might have been happening, or whatever anyone else might have been doing, to be “strong in my duty”. Let us pray on this day, at this age, that we ourselves will also not fail in that test. That we can also gain the courage and determination to be as you always were, a good and faithful disciple, “strong in my duty”.

Your humble servant,

Atmarama Dasa

Initiation: 1976 November. Melbourne, Australia

Nidra Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances.

All glories to your Divine Grace.

How much gratitude your followers have for your blessings, especially the holy names and your books, all the temples and all manifestations of your mercy. How much we all feel happy because of these gifts which you freely give. May we be fortunate to be always guided by you to reciprocate in the topmost way for your pleasure.

During the past few years, people have been especially receptive to receive your books, because of their stress and frustrations that were heightened due to the global scene. Lord Caitanya’s plan is unfolding more and more to push the souls to your books. Sometimes the shopkeepers would express their concerns to us that we were out in the midst of the pandemic. They wished us well and thanked us for the books. They felt like we were their friends or family members.

So this environment of distress in the world is a great opportunity for the souls to open up. Hopefully by your blessings, we can increase worldwide the distribution of your books, the holy names and *prasāda*. This is your mood of compassion and your desire to flood the planet.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for the privilege to serve you, the devotees and the world.

Your aspiring servant,

Nidra Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1977 January. Denver, USA

Current locaiton: ISKCON Denver, Colorado, USA

Guruprasad Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

On this auspicious occasion of your *Vyāsa-pūjā*, I offer my humble obeisances with great admiration, gratitude and love.

I am filled with great admiration for Your Divine Grace when I think about all you accomplished during the 12 short years since you arrived on the eastern shores of North America. In terms of translation and writing various books, you already started that task even while in India. However the actual full-scale implementation of the task of publishing your books began after much effort, with the formation of BBT.

Your guru mahārāja personally told you, “If you ever get money, print books”, which became your personal “*mantra* or *sūtra*” to meditate upon throughout your physical presence in this material world. Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your own grand style, you published big books like the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, the multi volume *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya Caritamrita* along with many other small and medium sized books. Almost all of these books were translated into different languages of the world and were distributed widely by your enthusiastic disciples, grand-disciples and some great-grand-disciples as well. Such world-wide book distribution efforts kept increasing, even amidst the COVID-19 viral pandemic which caused unexpected disruptions to people in all walks of life all around the world. Under the guidance of stalwart book distributors, various schemes like the annual “Christmas marathon” were chalked out in the past two years, 2020 and 2021. Such well coordinated efforts, using the modern technical innovations in social media, resulted in the distribution of millions of your books around the world.

In these twelve years, 1965 to 1977, the efforts you took to

establish ISKCON centers / temples around the world, in their turn, took you around the world twelve times. Such trips certainly were great austerities even to the youngsters who were serving you as personal servants, secretaries and assistants. One can only imagine how much strain you personally had to tolerate in undertaking such trips. Wherever you went, without any break, you participated in the daily temple programs, public meetings, many media events and big celebrations like opening of new centers / temples, Ratha-yātrās, Śrī Krishna Janmashtami, Śrī Gaura Pūrṇimā, etc.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am forever grateful for the various gifts you bestowed upon everyone so freely. I am one of the scores of people who benefited immensely in the spiritual sense. You told us, as human beings what we are supposed to do, based on the *śāstras* and the *ācāryas* of our *paramparā* or spiritual lineage. You gave us all the facilities to achieve that goal of human life, in terms of purpose, processes, guidance, support through beneficial association or *satsanga*. Like many others I too wonder how come such a great fortune befell upon me, someone who wasn't even looking for such a fortune.

After so many years, now in my retired life, I started to realize the significance of this fortune. Ever since I started to appreciate what a glorious personality Your Divine Grace truly is, I have some sort of loving feeling for you. I know that, only by serving you, your mission and your devotees, my own spiritual growth and progress on the path leading towards "unmotivated devotion" to Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitai and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava will be possible.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you often quoted the words of Śrīman Mahāprabhu: "*Jīvera svarūpa haya nityera kṣṇa dās, gopī bhartuḥ pada kamalayor dāsa dāsa dāsa anu dāsa*". I understand that the inherent nature of the soul is an eternal loving servant of the Lord. In practice, it means to render service to the servant of the servant of the master of the gopis of Vraja dham. By such service, one pleases the devotees of Lord Sri Krishna, which is more pleasing to Him than even direct service to Him, like in His Deity forms.

At present my love for you is only in the budding stage. I pray earnestly to become and remain a sincere and humble servant of your dear servants. In this way I may please Lord Śrī Krishna, the True Friend and Benefactor of every soul and by His grace my love for you will grow and be established firmly in me.

"Gurudeva, give to this servant just one drop of mercy. I am lower than a blade of grass. Give me all help. Give me strength. Let me be as you are, without desires or aspirations. When will such mercy fall to this one who is weak and devoid of intelligence? Allow me to be with you."

Once again I convey my sincere gratitude to you for your gifts

which benefitted me immensely.

Thank you very much Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your grateful aspiring servant,

Guruprasad Dasa

Initiation: 1977 January. Montreal, Canada

Paurusa Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

I have given up my life for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I neglected my own hopes, desires, and dreams... for you. I cast away my attachment to family and society, turned my back on my cultural heritage. Everything I did was for your pleasure, and it has been my greatest honour to serve you, and I don't regret one moment.

In the SB 10.47, entitled *The Song of the Bee*, a gopi meditating on Kṛṣṇa saw a bumblebee and imagined the bee was a messenger from her beloved Kṛṣṇa. She then said, "Oh honeybee, you friend of a cheater, do not touch my feet with your whiskers still carrying the *kum-kum*, from His garland, that rubbed-off the breasts from rival lovers."

The gopi contrasted Kṛṣṇa's meeting with other gopis by comparing Him with a bee jumping from one flower to the next. In this way she dwelt upon her own misfortune and her rival's good fortune, while glorifying the names, forms, qualities and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa. She later declared that although Kṛṣṇa may have abandoned the gopīs, they could not stop remembering Him, even momentarily.

How pleasing "*Kṛṣṇa prema*" must be, and how more wonderful is *Kṛṣṇa prema* in separation. Each day, I exercise patience, following the rules and regulations of *sādhana bhakti* strictly, chanting Kṛṣṇa's sweet names attentively, yet Kṛṣṇa is holding Himself back as though I am unclean or fallen. I attempt to make this body a pure temple, for Him and I, to reside in together, yet only His four armed Kṣīrodakaśāyī form is present, never His beautiful two armed form. Why is that? Why can't I see Kṛṣṇa?

I know I've been fallen and conditioned by the material energy for countless births, turning my back on Kṛṣṇa, but His will is mine now, so there should be no excuse. I have followed the process strictly,

but now my time is drawing to a close, can't Kṛṣṇa make one exception for this poor fallen soul. I have never asked for anything else.

I serve Kṛṣṇa each day with love and devotion, increasing my sincerity, giving all my limited energy back to Him. Because of my age and broken body, and because of disease ravaging my remaining vitality and strength, I may be like the spider compared to Hanumān when stood next to another devotee, but I have done big things in the past. I am more surrendered and sincere now, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please appeal to Kṛṣṇa to not neglect me. Each day I chant Kṛṣṇa's sweet names incessantly and offer that as a service to Him. Twice monthly I lovingly offer Kṛṣṇa all the accumulated benedictions that I gain by following Ekādaśī strictly, no food, no water, for up to forty-four hours, I read and write about Him, I converse about Him, I pray to Him hoping He may allow me to one day perform pure loving devotional service to Him in Goloka Vṛndāvana. Why don't these things compel him to reveal Himself?

Kṛṣṇa is such a rascal, I give Him everything, but still He neglects me, leaving me to suffer His absence alone.

It's true that devotees must learn to be satisfied by the pleasure obtained by performing service to Kṛṣṇa, and cannot expect more. I have been patient, but my time is ending, I need Kṛṣṇa now...! Is He simply a trickster, ignoring me, attempting to increase my attraction for Him. If that's the case it's working. I seem to desire Kṛṣṇa more because of His neglect.

He is no better than Dāmodara, that naughty boy who stole butter from His mother Yaśodā, then ran away. Kṛṣṇa likewise has stolen my youth and energy, and even reached deep within my heart and stole my love. Like a thief He snuck in and took everything from me, my innocence, penance, austerity, adoration, even my thoughts, words, and deeds. I have nothing left except a constant desire to find Him and to know Him even more. Oh, woe is me!

Śāstra says, "For every step one takes towards Kṛṣṇa He will take three towards you", and yet I give everything only to find I am alone full of sorrow and distress.

There are many instances of devotees who gave Kṛṣṇa something insignificant and received His eternal compassion, so why is He neglecting me? I am not after wealth, or knowledge, or mystic power, or even liberation, I simply wish to be kept in the cooling shade of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet and wait to be called for the opportunity to lovingly serve Him.

Scriptures declare that Kṛṣṇa generously satisfies everyone's desires; and in particular His devotees lack nothing and as He knows their hearts they don't have to ask as opulences are bestowed upon great souls automatically, so why is He neglecting me?

Just as Kṛṣṇa is the most beautiful and attractive person, He is also the most dishonest and immoral. He cannot be trusted, He is deceitful, He says one thing, "I am always with my devotees", but I can never find Him. I am always in distress thinking about where He is.

Kṛṣṇa gained fame stealing from His mother, but what sort of person does that. He is a thief; He stole everything from me, my wealth, my highly paid job, my youthful energy, my intelligence, leaving me always engaged in searching for Him. Kṛṣṇa even takes the breath of my life as I chant His name calling for Him. He stole the sense gratification I was due from past pious acts. He should be locked in the jail of my heart, yet, I feel cheated for I am the prisoner in jail because I cannot get away from Him. I'm forced to constantly call out His name, eat His remnants of food, think of Him day and night. Kṛṣṇa is like a ruthless warden, who enjoys punishing poor prisoners, not caring for their welfare.

Even the materialists are daily enjoying as Kṛṣṇa fulfils one desire after the next. How can He ignore me like this, I am a simple soul, I have no desire other than His service yet He withholds it from me as though I am a bad person. When will Kṛṣṇa give me just one drop of kindness?

Every day my sole occupation is looking for Kṛṣṇa, I look everywhere, I travel so far searching for Kṛṣṇa in every corner of my heart, why can't He simply look at me. In the light of eternity, is one simple sidelong glance asking too much, what I request is nothing for Him, but everything for me.

Kṛṣṇa presents Himself in numerous ways in His creation; as the taste of water, as merciful *prasādam*, He is represented by the sun and moon, and His entire body as the *Virāṭa Rūpa* form. Kṛṣṇa appears as amazing incarnations to re-establish religious principles, as the Supersoul within everyone's heart, in His Deity forms made of earth, wood, stone, metal, and even as pixels on a screen, or a painting on a wall. Kṛṣṇa is present within the atom and between the atoms; there is not a part of creation that is not made up of His energy, He even reveals Himself as the dancing sound vibration of His holy name for those with the eyes to see Him. So why won't He come to me? What great offence have I committed that distances Him from

me? Please tell me Gurudeva, and I will rectify it immediately. Give me the intelligence. I have suffered enough in separation, crying for His association.

I was attempting to cross the ocean of nescience, yet its huge size, although reduced, overwhelms me. I console myself contemplating the message that Kṛṣṇa gave to Uddhava for the gopīs. Kṛṣṇa said, "...that the gopīs are most dear to Him, but to increase Their attraction for Him and intensify their remembrance of Him, He left them".

Considering this I give Him the benefit of the doubt and believe that He does care for me and that He is simply intensifying my affection for Him, but when will He appear and extinguish the unbearable anguish of separation.

My only hope is to stick close to You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my entrance to Goloka. When my godbrother Jaya Gopāla died in a car accident, you said, "Jaya Gopāla wasn't ready to go back to Godhead but Kṛṣṇa made an exception and took him anyway". It was only because of your causeless mercy that Kṛṣṇa showed any interest. Kṛṣṇa is happily enjoying in Goloka and is not personally engaged in the material world, but when a pure devotee gives his mercy to someone then Kṛṣṇa accepts that fortunate soul. How wonderful is that!

I have no qualification to enter Goloka Vṛndāvana, but I earnestly pray that my link to you, Gurudeva, is my passport to entry.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda was in Mexico City speaking about how important it is at the time of death to remember Kṛṣṇa... an elderly lady asked, "Śrīla Prabhupāda, what if at the time of death, we remember you?" So Prabhupāda just smiled and said, "That's alright."

I am fortunate to have you as my Gurudeva, I can think of Kṛṣṇa or you and achieve the same goal. Thank you; your mercy is all I have.

Your servant,

Paurusa Dasa

Initiation: 1977 February. Bhubanesvar, India

Current location: Banora Point, Australia

paurusa.dasa@gmail.com

Your fame is spread throughout the three worlds!

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

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

*nāma-śreṣṭham manum api śacī-putram atra svarūpam
rūpam tasyāgrajam uru-purīm māthurīm goṣṭavātīm
rādhā-kunḍam giri varam aho rādhikā-mādhavāśān prāpto
yasya prathita-kṛpayā śrī-gurum tam nato 'smi*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I am eternally indebted to you for all of these treasures!

Your glories are not possible to describe, but we who took birth in the West, are completely dependent on you. Your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is so sweet, giving the simple method to make it practically possible!

As the emissary of the greatest gift of Lord Caitanya, you changed the world forever. If you hadn't come with the *mahā-mantra*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, how could we have lived? We'd never have known the promise and ecstasy that our existence holds.

I pray to be a servant of a servant's servant in the land of divine love, Śrī Vrindavana Dham & Navadwip! You showed those *dhāmas* to the whole world and gave the highest hope to all.

You are the most compassionate savior and so causelessly merciful to accept me! Amidst a world of betrayal, your lotus feet are SATYA! Though you departed many decades ago, you never forget even insignificant servitors. I pray that you will be pleased with me though I am covered with faults. One drop of your mercy would enable me to chant the *mahā-mantra* incessantly without offense. Kindly bestow upon me the association of pure Vaiṣṇavas to help me overcome all ignorance-obstacles and obtain taste for chanting the pure holy name.

Your mission to give divine love to all must be done. Though unqualified, let me be a sweeper in that work to help you with my energy.

My aspiration is to please you always, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Allow me a place at your lotus feet. Without their shade, I am lost.

Your dependent daughter,

Tamra Dasi

Initiation: 1977 February. Seattle, USA

Karunaksi Devi Dasi

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

When the precious disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda write poems and stories about him and their experiences with him, showing emotions that produce our profuse tears, that flow from their revelations of the kind and pure *siddha-bhakti* character of Śrīla Prabhupāda—totally focused on his *seva* to his beloved Sri Gurudeva to bring Kṛṣṇa to the western world, and showing the effulgent, divine presence of the Lord—it is plain that Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s statement in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.17.27:

*ācāryaṁ mām vijānīyān nāvamanyeta karhicit
na martya-buddhyāsūyeta sarva-devamayo guruḥ*

One should know the *ācārya* as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods”...

It illumines Sṛla Prabhupāda as the most perfect representative of this statement of Śrī kṛṣṇa and what more can be said?

Just to read and study his books that give everything by which we can perfect our lives in the devotional service of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Rādhā who waits for us, Śrī Gaurāṅga who shows us what *bhakti* is and what *bhakti* is not, and Śrī Nītāi who accepts our service despite our sins and faults, and takes us to His beloved Gaurāṅga, and They, Śrī Guru-Nītāi-Gaurāṅga, are our only way to the Divine Couple in Vraja in Śrī Goloka Vrindavana!

The fact of my God {as Christian} demanding me to drop my current life of enjoyment and submit to Him, in 1975, and move from Michigan to Laguna Beach CA with my two little girls—it was within a month and a half that we were hearing about Śrīla Prabhupāda, and soon getting cookies from him in Los Angeles—on his last

visit to America...

This was simply the inconceivable mercy of Śrī Nitāi, putting us back on the path...as *bhāgyavān-jīva*, bringing us “energetically” to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

It was more than proof to me that “Śrīla Prabhupāda IS the ONE.”

The One who, by his own complete surrender in devotion to the Lord, can save us and all others from the hell we face as *baddha-jīvas*...of independence from God and His agents.

Some months later, living in the Seattle temple, we were doing *sādhana* and *tuccha-seva* at his lotus feet, never to go away...

His shocking disappearance in a year and a half left us tragically feeling like broken-hearted orphans. But he actually has never left us. By the power and mercy of Śrī Nityānanda-rāma Prabhu who is *akhaṇḍa-guru-tattva*—he is always with us. As we have ever sincerely and humbly sought his help, his guidance, we have always felt Śrīla Prabhupāda’s care and will for us... to save us from ourselves by always keeping us with him, directing us in affection to the practice of *bhakti*.

My eternal obeisance is at his lotus feet.

All glories to his divine lotus feet!

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

Initiation: 1977 February. Seattle, USA

Shyamasundara Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisance. All glories to you, who are very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

You are never far from my thoughts; indeed I find myself thinking of you often throughout the day. I start listening to your lectures as soon as I rise and while I do the many mindless tasks in life. As soon as I hear your voice I feel a soothing comfort and all is well.

Over the last year, I was fortunate enough to watch the whole series of “Śrīla Prabhupāda Memories” of hundreds of your disciples produced by Siddhānta Prabhu. (A great service on his part.)

These memories are truly inspiring, so many new things I learned about you Śrīla Prabhupāda, and so many perspectives and

ways to appreciate you. Many times I was brought to tears. At others I was astonished. And sometimes my mind was filled with wonder. After watching I would sleep and have amazing dreams. I cannot even comprehend my good fortune that somehow, a useless person like myself has been accepted as your disciple. But these memories of other devotees increase my attachment to you and inspire me to be more humble and appreciative of you Śrīla Prabhupāda and to understand that I am just a fool thinking himself wise.

Yet I wonder who you really are? On the one hand, you appear like an ordinary human — though a kind, lovable, humorous, and benevolent one. Yet, at the same time, it is clear that you are intimately connected to Kṛṣṇa, and because of this, you are imbued with mysterious and ineffable powers.

I am just a stupid man. But sometimes when I think about you, and deeply consider that you are my direct connection to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I then wonder how is it that a degraded sinful fool such as myself could be in such a fortunate position? I am now beginning to understand the meaning of causeless mercy. Otherwise, if it were not for your causeless mercy I would be lost, but you picked me up and gave me both a purpose and the means to fulfill that purpose.

I am aware that in a past life, I offended you by disobeying your instruction thus causing me to take birth again. Such is the penalty for neglecting your instructions. Thus I must be very careful in this life to avoid the familiarity which breeds contempt and taking you for granted. Instead, I must redouble my efforts to imbibe and follow your teachings as found in your books, recordings, and now also the memories of your disciples.

One devotee asked you if we would recognize you in the spiritual world? And you responded, “Yes, I will be the one who brings you to Kṛṣṇa, and place your hand in His.” Knowing that you are my eternal connection to Kṛṣṇa removes the fear and anxiety of this temporary and horrible material world.

For some time I was despondent at seeing the direction your holy mission was going. But now, seeing a new generation seriously taking up your instructions and distributing your books in massive quantities and preaching without adulteration, the real “Kṛṣṇa Life” brings me great joy and fills me with hope. Your potency is now flowing through these devotees and others like them who are strong links in the Guru *Paramparā*. They are successful because

they are determined to fulfill your instructions to implement *Daiva Varṇāśrama Dharma*. Your mission is the mission of Lord Caitanya and it cannot fail but must be successful.

I pray to Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Pañca Tattva that before my body becomes useless that I can do something to please you and bring a smile to your face. That would be the success of my life.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your foolish servant,

Shyamasundara Dasa

(Jyotisa sastri)

Initiation: 1977 March. Mayapur, India

Nrsimha Dasa

I met Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1971 in Gainesville, Florida. It was the fourth time I went to the temple.

I was an 11 year-old-boy, He asked a *brahmacārī* to give me a *japa mālā* and tell me to chant as many rounds as possible. It took me a few years and lots of struggles to finally be able to live in a temple and be initiated by His Divine Grace. Fifty-one years later, I am still struggling to be worthy of his mercy.

Jay Śrīla Prabhupāda! He changed my life forever.

Initiation: 1977 March. Caracas, Venezuela

Ankottha Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

You are the perfect spiritual master. You teach not only by precept but by example what it means to live a godly life. This comes naturally and spontaneously to you since all the previous *ācāryas* have poured their mercy onto you because of your complete

surrender and dedication to pleasing your own spiritual master.

As children look to their parents to understand how to act, speak, think, function, relate, and aspire, you are giving all the proper spiritual conceptions to your disciples and followers. If you had not come into our lives, how would we have gained entrance into the godly life – a life so natural and satisfying to the innermost self?

Even with the challenges of old age and failing health you did not give up on your intense preaching and your exemplary *ācārya* activities. You tolerated all kinds of inconveniences that came from traveling constantly, and bodily pains and discomforts due to the aging process, and wherever you were you would energetically and in a fresh and brilliant way expound on the necessity for spiritual life.

While you were so kindly manifesting your spiritual campaigns amongst us, most of us were young and inexperienced. Like a loving father looking to give guidance to his children that would serve them well in the future, you told us: “Don’t think the ravages of old age will not happen to you.” In this way you encouraged us to use our young bodies and minds wholeheartedly in Kṛṣṇa consciousness so that we could advance steadily and surely so that we would be well equipped to deal with the challenges that the later stages of life invariably bring. Now, when I look around at my godbrothers and godsisters, I see the ravages of old age and disease really don’t leave anyone alone.

But we are not entering uncharted waters without a captain. Even though you have not been with us physically for so many decades, your instructions are our guides and beacons as we move toward the final test.

Dear lord and master, I beg that I may be of some use to you even as the resources and energy I have at my command are dwindling and fading. You so kindly accepted me in my youth and now I am requesting that you please continue accepting me in my older age.

I aspire to live only for your pleasure.

Your grateful servant,

Ankoththa Dasa

Initiation: 1977 March. London, UK

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrate obeisances at your feet.

I wanted to let you know things are well at Bhaktivan. The cows are starting to graze as the grass comes back after the winter freeze, preaching is going on, our Thakur Ji are bright and receiving daily worship, and the devotees continue to thrive. If I have a regret it is that I myself am unworthy, but I consider that the emblem of the *sādaka*, to be unworthy till he or she becomes worthy. Our worth is only in the company we keep, what comes out of our mouths, and how we behave. I think getting old helps.

I meditate on the fact that at my age you set out to a foreign land with nothing but your faith and a trunk full of books (but what books they were!). I cannot imagine how you felt, but often I imagine it must have been daunting, even for one such as you. I remember hearing that one time your dear friend BR Sridhar Mahārāja said he had a dream, and in it Kṛṣṇa took away all his knowledge and left him naked with only his faith. I wonder if maybe you felt a little like that 57 years ago onboard the Jaladuta as it came into Boston harbor. I was told that on that dock there was a sign that said *Unalloyed Steel* and you took that as a sign from Nityānanda that your preaching should be bold, unalloyed, pure and untainted, no compromise. I think we needed that, having been cheated so many times. So when we heard the call we came to you, o pied piper of the fallen. I sat at your feet in the airport and could not look into your face and now I sit at your feet and try to imagine the kindness and mercy you gave us, in that short sojourn in the West.

I pray in some lifetime I may meet you again, perhaps, as you say in your poem:

O my dear brother! In Your company I will experience great joy once again. Wandering about the pastures and fields, I will pass the entire day with You in tending the cows. Joking with You and frolicking throughout so many forests of Vraja, I will enjoy pastimes of stealing and eating one another's lunch. When, oh when will that day be mine?

I can only echo your words, *when o when will that day be mine?*

Praying for mercy I beg to remain,

Your humble servant,

Indranuja Dasa

Initiation: 1977 March. London, UK

Jiva Pavana Dasa

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Some see you as great as a mountain
Most high but miss your depth
And what's inside
The deepest of moods
Is what you hide
Of this there can be no doubt
Both within and without
I pray one day by service
And chanting the holy name
In the same mood
I can eternally remain

Your servant,

Jiva Pavana Dasa

Initiation: 1977 March. RDTSKP, USA

Mahendrani Devi Dasi

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet.
Thank you again and again for your patience with me, and the constant flow of your mercy upon me.
This year in gratitude for your unlimited blessings, I would like to repeat some glorification of your guru maharaja and of Your Divine Grace that I heard from your grand-disciple, Amarendra Prabhu, which inspired me.
In one class, he said that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur was like Vāmanadeva. To some he may have appeared small, but over time he grew more and more in stature. He took three giant

steps over the Age of Kali and kicked out atheism, impersonalism and ritualistic religion, and promoted *bhakti*.

As Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur's most faithful disciple, you have rigorously taken up his cause and made great strides in driving out these three elements and promoting *bhakti* all over this earth planet in so many places where *bhakti* was never heard of before. Thank you.

In another class on the glories of Hanumān, Amarendra Prabhu made the following comparison:

Just like Hanumān revived Mother Sītā in the Laṅka of Rāvaṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda revived the Sītā called Bhakti Devī in the Laṅka of the western world. In the Laṅka purī of the western world, it was very difficult to find Mother Sītā, but Hanumān came in the form of our Śrīla Prabhupāda, saved Bhakti Devī, and in the process set the whole of Laṅka Purī on fire... the Hare Krishna explosion. Where is this explosion coming from? They tried in so many ways to put this Indian Swami down. His typewriter was stolen. His dictaphone was stolen. He had no money with him! He had no manpower with him! He had absolutely nothing! So many challenges, but this was like setting fire to the tail of Hanuman. Śrīla Prabhupāda went from strength to strength to strength. He used that fire on his tail to set Maya's western world ablaze.

Just as Hanumān used monkeys in his army, Śrīla Prabhupāda used all of us to spread and find Bhakti Devī in the heart of the *jīvas*. There are two findings of Mother Sītā in ISKCON. One is what Śrīla Prabhupāda did to find Bhakti Devī in the western world. That is the public approach.

The second is the personal approach. In all of our hearts we have the Laṅka Purī where the desire to serve Mother Sītā is hiding. When Śrī Guru comes into our life, he finds that Mother Sītā and sets ablaze the Lanka of all of our *anarthas*. How does he do that? By devotional ecstasies, by *Harikathā*, by giving us beads, by answering our questions with humility.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda! Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your servant,

Mahendrani Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1977 March. Trinidad

Pancagauda Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet which are our only shelter.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu descended to deliver all the living beings in the three worlds, by meeting the fallen souls directly, in other places by empowering a pure devotee. There is no doubt that you have been spiritually charged, that Lord Caitanya entered your heart with the treasure of love of God. Reading your books is associating with you directly, hearing your classes gives us inspiration and crystal-clear guidance. By hearing about your extraordinary endeavours to preach the message by always remembering your spiritual master's instructions, we feel safe, protected and enlivened.

Krishna Balarāma Mandir is dedicated to maintaining the spiritual standards that you have given us according to the teachings of Rūpa and Sanātana Goswamis. We welcome devotees and friends from all over the world to come and visit us in Śrī Vrindavan Dham. The spiritual power of the holy *dhām* moves pilgrims, filling them with emotions and feelings toward development of their spiritual lives. Thousands of your transcendental literatures are being distributed daily, we are feeding 10,000 visitors daily, 24 hour kīrtan is continuing in the temple, Samīdhi, your house, and all around the campus. Daily, thousands chant one round at your Samādhi Mandir, we have youth programs and we celebrate all festivals with flowers, *kīrtan* and enthusiastic participation.

For the special occasion of your 125th anniversary we made a beautiful museum just next to your Samadhi. It will serve as a great preaching tool showing the Vedic knowledge coming down in Guru *paramparā*. With profound gratitude, we honor you the transparent, empowered *jagat guru* saviour of the entire universe. Please keep us engaged in your devotional service so that we can assist you in spreading this wonderful *Śaṅkīrtana* mission.

Your servant,

Pancagauda Dasa

Initiation: 1977 March. Miami, USA

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

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

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviṣeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

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

Kali-yuga is advancing triumphantly. The spread of hedonism, materialism and nihilism have produced a loss of the meaning and purpose of life, and the majority of people are suffering deeply.

I am writing to you from Italy, where people live obsessed with fear, in a climate of growing hatred and verbal violence, one that troubles minds, wounds consciences and destroys relationships.

While a physical virus affects the body, other even more dangerous and cunning viruses, such as lies and deceit, lead to conflict and dismantle solidarity between individuals on every level: personal and collective. Following the pandemic, the current Russian-Ukrainian conflict has become a new pretext to push humanity closer to the abyss.

From the dream of unbridled materialism cultivated in the name of material pleasure that is achieved at the price of peace without justice, those who deluded themselves based on a false sense of well-being, experience today the concreteness of standing before a great disaster: the nightmare of a nuclear war and poverty without even the bare necessities for survival.

Free information has been overshadowed by war propaganda. It is difficult to separate the truth from the lies because of the systematic falsification of information. In this scenario, groups that oppose one another with mounting hatred keep forming. Another group however, is also emerging; those who seem to be awakening from their numbness, understanding the looming danger and turning to God for protection. All these groups taken together, although heterogeneous in their understanding of spirituality, are somewhat inclined to listen and facilitate the awakening of their consciousness.

This phenomenon appears to my eyes as a light at the end of the tunnel, a precious opportunity to transmit the sacred and luminous knowledge of the *Bhagavad-gītā* transmitted by your teachings, which restore sight to those who wish to see reality.

In these dangerous and chaotic times, I renew my gratitude to you every day, to your holy teachings, your body of work and your perfect way of life.

Your teachings and coherent way of life allow us to preserve the values of the Vaiṣṇava tradition amidst rampant moral, ethical and spiritual decay.

Your teachings and coherent model of life, along with the daily practice of these teachings, enable us to overcome fear without losing the meaning and purpose of living, understanding how those who lack these, have gone adrift today, desperate and distressed.

You have taught us again and again that embodied life is constant change, and we have realized that change does not always equal evolution. You reminded us that only the uninterrupted cultivation of a love for God and, by virtue of that love, also treating all living beings lovingly, allows us to change while evolving, towards spiritual realization.

The elevated perception that is reached by virtue of spiritual practices, above all *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana* (listening to your spiritual lectures and daily practice of *Harināma-japa*), is what liberates us from fears and protects, all the while confirming that any catastrophe, past or present, true or invented, natural or artfully provoked, individual or collective, can be surmounted and can lead to self-realization, if we remain free from the destabilizing emotional entanglements of the empirical and war-like ego, conscious of our spiritual matrix.

With immense confidence in your holy teachings and coherent way of life, please spiritually bless this servant of yours with the strength from faith to transform the catastrophes of Kali-yuga into extraordinary opportunities to spread *bhakti* into the hearts of those who wish to fulfill themselves spiritually.

On that bright morning of August 30, 1976, You told me: “Chant the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*, become a devotee of Krishna, study the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and share it with whomever you meet. Lord Krishna will protect you...don’t fear”.

My beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, I ask you again and again to bless me with spiritual strength and intelligence so that I may always serve you better, as you asked of me.

Today more than ever, I wish to bring your saving message of love of *bhakti* to all the people I meet, and will meet over the rest of my embodied life.

Without your holy presence in my heart, the world would be cold and deserted, dark, mute and aimless.

You are the light of my eyes, the voice of my conscience, my savior.

I am and wish to remain your apprentice servant, with you wherever, in service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Govinda and Their devoted eternal lovers.

Your grateful and loving servant,

Matsya Avatar Dasa

Initiation: 1977 May. Rome, Italy

Gopimata Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your consciousness is deep and wide. For you, this planet and its problems are easily surmounted. Because you are completely aligned with Lord Kṛṣṇa's desire, your vision is perfectly focused, and your determination is invincible. Even though you exhibit struggle against the inevitable obstacles in this world, it is to teach us the way to progress by accepting difficulty in the cause of Kṛṣṇa's service. Just like the fights Kṛṣṇa displayed with the demons who tried to uphold Kāṁsa's evil plans, there is only enthusiasm and joyful exuberance in your brave and creative endeavors. You fearlessly distribute the Lord's mercy to all of us who have been nearly swallowed whole by the monsters of *tamasic* and *rajasic* materialism, voidism and impersonalism.

You teach us to fight the demoniac natures within our own mind and heart rather than blame other conditioned souls for our difficulties. To face the enemies of greed, anger, lust, envy, illusion, and madness who would steal away our ability to take shelter of

our Divine Friend. We do not know what challenges will come to us personally or collectively in the future, but thanks to you, we have the tools we need to practice facing them with integrity. We have opportunities to do this inner work every day of our life, so for a disciple, there is never a dull moment!

Thank you for upholding Lord Caitanya's teaching that there is no discrimination in the culture of *bhakti*. Each aspirant devotee is encouraged by you to utilize their abilities to serve, regardless of caste, *varṇa*, *āśrama*, race or gender. Whether they are endowed with the qualities of a *brahmin*, *kṣatriya*, *vaisha*, or *śūdra*, we understand that, as devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa, they are accepted as acting on the platform of the soul. By this practice of seeing everyone as Kṛṣṇa sees them, we learn to honor and respect all our brothers and sisters, and to try to find ways to engage in peaceful co-operation.

You have promised that if somehow or other we can have the correct intention, to dedicate our actions to Kṛṣṇa and to do them with love, then there is all success. I hope that one day soon, I will stop acting like a robot, and be able to carefully integrate body mind and soul with pure motive, just like you have shown.

Thank you for kindly taking the time to be here on this planet with us. I think otherwise there would be only danger. It means so much to us to know that there is someone we can trust completely. Without your grace, there would be no possibility of knowing who we are or what the meaning of existence is. If not for your guidance, the world would be only a place of diminishing returns, a dark and cold prison leading to death.

Let us always eagerly stay close to you by hearing constantly the streams of nectar of your excellent books. May we always stay in the association of your devotees and float in the waves of the sweet holy names, *Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*.

Your servant,

Gopimata Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1977 July. London, UK

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to Your Divine Grace!

It has been 45 long years since your disappearance. At first I thought I was doomed, as I was such a new devotee with barely any of your personal association. I had only been initiated a few months before your departure. Some devotees began to leave the temple. My own husband was one. I hung on as best I could, remarried, and stayed near and involved with the temple to raise my children as devotees. At times it was very hard, and challenging to do so. I sometimes felt alone and bereft.

These past few years I've had a wonderful realization about your continued mercy upon the conditioned souls, such as myself. I've learned to find you more and more through my godsisters/godbrothers and your followers. Their sharing of you through social media has helped me become more attached and dedicated to your service.

Listening to devotees recounting your pastimes on the *Prabhupāda Memories* series, seeing/hearing excerpts from your letters, morning walks, classes and *darshans* have reestablished my understanding that you have always been with me. Seeing photos, watching you move, hearing your instructions, joining in on *kīrtanas*, festivals and *Harināma* parties from around the globe have reconnected me to the nine processes of devotional service.

Through the kindness of devotees, and the seeming magic of technology, I am able to hear you chanting *japa* and *bhajan* all through the day and night. This is such mercy, for I am a forgetful soul, with the need to hear you anywhere and everywhere.

You stressed the importance of association. I am learning how to get that association in ways I hadn't originally expected. So many of your disciples are treasure troves of nectar.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, for this gift of association. You are certainly still with us and your devotees have helped me to know

and remember that.

Your aspiring servant,

Sankirtana Dasi

Initiation: 1977 August. Atlanta, USA

Antariksa Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories unto you on this blessed day of your Vyāsa- pūjā.

You are the savior of this suffering world Śrīla Prabhupāda. For example, you teach us that Kṛṣṇa's talk with Arjuna, commonly known as the *Bhagavad-gītā*, is good for guidance on any problem in life. This guidance is needed now more than ever. Coming out of a pandemic has offered many realisations about the reality of this illusory world. You emphasised again and again, the most basic principle of spiritual life: *we are not this body*. Some people may be convinced to trust materialists and their vision of health, which can be seen as a direct contradiction to the teachings of Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*. Śrīla Prabhupāda – thank you for your bold preaching and scientific presentation that life is not just this body, but that each of us is a spark of consciousness, part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. This knowledge is needed to rise above the wranglings this pandemic has brought upon us. You further reveal that faith in Kṛṣṇa, in Kṛṣṇa's name, Kṛṣṇa's words, is the real medicine for this age of hypocrisy. And, we can turn to Kṛṣṇa even for our health, as He says, "I am the healing herb."

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am dedicating myself to preaching, bottom-up Śrīla Prabhupāda! I see you as the transcendental genius of spiritual democracy, spiritual communism. There are, of course, no shortcuts to implement this philosophy. You said once that you did not come to America to teach us anything, but you came to ask us to please just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa *maha-mantra*. As I have followed that advice as sincerely as I can, it has made me into more and more of a mad man. In my madness, I hear other of my god siblings experiencing the same desire to see the glorious BBT manifest your transcendental teachings through your many, many books. And as we move forward, your mystical ISKCON will manifest more and

more brightly, as we, your helpless children, will live our lives based on the perfect instruction of Lord Caitanya, to be humble, tolerant, prideless and respectful. Your beautiful lotus feet are the true nectar of my heart Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thank you for saving me.

Your eternal servant,

Antariksa Dasa

Initiation: 1977 August. Detroit, USA

Daiva Dasa

A small token tribute in honor of the world's greatest author and duly authorized representative of Śrīla Vyāsadeva and Śrī kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, our divine Lord and Master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda!

I beg with the utmost respect and humility your causeless forgiveness for this most imperfectly composed offering from this most unqualified aspiring servant.

From all corners of the world leading pundits, scholars, academics, world leaders, dignitaries, and the common people of the world increasingly bestow the highest acclaim for your legacy of published works, your uncompromisingly written books that are overflowing with the immortal nectar of your impeccable translations and *guru paramparā*-infused transcendental Bhaktivedanta purports!

Every word chosen so carefully in your purports, you told us, are your 'emotional ecstasies', sublime revelations from your spotless pure mind, a brilliant mind undoubtedly fully absorbed in divine trance or *samādhi*, thus allowing you to communicate directly with the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the previous *ācāryas* in disciplic succession!

Senāpati General & Ambassador of the Spiritual World, you live forever in your books as the eternal guide and well-wisher to all ! You continually amass armies of dedicated foot soldiers fully armed with your *brahmastra*-powered purports, the only weapons capable of conquering the demoniac mentality and putting a welcome end to the devastating rampage of Kali-yuga's unprecedented war crimes against humanity and innocent animals and our divine Mother Earth.

The book distribution results always gave you the greatest

satisfaction, not simply to fill the temple coffers, but knowing that Krishna consciousness, God consciousness was being introduced successfully and would lead to 'bringing about a revolution in the world's misdirected civilization!' Your only motive was to revive suffering amnesiacs everywhere, to what every individual soul has so long forgotten – our fully blissful eternal relationship and anxiety-free, tax-free life with our only true eternal Friend, Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead! Who can put a price on the matchless gifts you continue to offer?

If one poses the following questions:

What made ISKCON, the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya, such a powerful revolutionary world-changing force during your manifest pastimes?

How can your ISKCON society be revived and once again have the same potency it had when personally nurtured and guided by you?

You always told us that physical presence is not required to understand you and you would never die because you live forever in your books, that through *vāṇī*, we can always be guided by your words, and feel your presence. So therefore, in order to truly revive the powerful *saṅkīrtana* revolutionary party, there must be a revival not only of book distribution, but of each of the primary purposes you pushed vigorously and meticulously outline in the ISKCON corporation documents. These purposes emanating from your lotus hand are also as good as your purports and must be understood by all your followers. You created a global family and you have given us the family business to share with everyone. We must understand what is the family business plan, thus we do not have to reinvent or speculate and waste valuable time.

FOUNDING DOCUMENT FOR ISKCON

CONSTITUTION OF ASSOCIATION

1. The name of the society is The International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
2. The headquarters of the Society are located at Radhakrishna Temple, 26 Second Avenue, New York City, 10003, USA.
3. The objectives for which the Society is being established are:

(A) To educate the greater human society in the techniques of spiritual life as the basis for a balanced psychic and biological development, and thereby achieve for the first time in human society a real peace and unity among the contending forces in the world today.

(B) To propagate the Sense of Godhead, the all attractive Personality of primal and eternal Form, as He Himself revealed in His own words in the Bhagavad Gītā, the Holy Scripture of the Lord Sri Krishna, the Godhead.

(C) To bring together individuals in a Society, regardless of nationality and irrespective of creed or caste, in order to develop a nearness to the Godhead and thereby the idea that within the members and humanity-at-large there is an infinitesimal soul-spirit that is part and parcel in quality with the Godhead, and that all life is meant for the satisfaction of said Godhead, the Supreme Soul.

(D) To encourage the teachings of Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who demonstrated practically the transcendental process of approaching the absolute Personality of Godhead by His acts of congregational chanting of the holy name of God, a process known as Samkirtan.

(E) To prove by active work and preaching that Lord Sri Krishna is the only enjoyer of all the outcomes of individual and collective sacrifice, penance, meditation, arts, culture, science, because He is the Supreme Proprietor of the whole universe, eternally apart of Him everyone knows Him as a friend. Real peace can be attained when this is realized, in fact.

(F) To assist whenever and wherever possible in the building of a social structure on the real foundation of spiritual progress and establishment of peace and unity between men throughout the world.

(G) To attempt to save men individually from the chain of victimization the ongoing trend in modern civilization operates by, in the name of ideologies of false sentiment, so that

Man may again be a free soul, to act and live freely with spiritual vision. This is possible by individual spiritual initiation, Diksha, when a man can see everything in Godhead and Godhead in everything.

(H) To further toward realization this highest truth as revealed by Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and the six Goswamins headed by Śrīla Rupa and Sanatana Goswamins.

(I) To have for its objectives amongst the others four principles which the Goswamins had in view. They are the following:

1. To erect a holy place of transcendental pastimes as well as a place where members of the Lord Sri Krishna can flourish.
2. To propagate all over the world in the form of missionaries the process of devotion, the transcendental service to the Godhead, and to make known that this devotional service is the main function of the human being.
3. In order to accomplish this, to adopt proselytizing methods of peaceful means and to establish a broader society of association for all members, including scholars and admirers, to engage in this service as put forth in the Śrīmad Bhagwatam.
4. To install, wherever it is possible, the worship and temple of Radhakrishna and that of Sri Chaitanya, and to give facility to everyone to become trained in the modes of Archan or preparatory principles of devotional service.

(J) To introduce to the members of the Society and humanity-at-large a simpler and more natural purpose in life by means suitable to the particular place and time, and as enjoined in the Bhagavad Gītā.

(K) To organize educational programs, such as classes and lecture tours, and to institute services, such as mailing, for the benefit of the members of the Society and humanity-at-large.

(L) To publish periodicals, books and/or pamphlets in all important languages in order to reach human society and give an opportunity to same to communicate with the Society.

(M) To invoke the quality of goodness particularly in every member of the Society, individually by the process of Diksha and by establishing one in the status of a Brahmin (good and intelligent man) on the basis of truthfulness, knowledge and faith in the transcendental service of the Lord.

(N) Among the secondary objectives of the Society, it shall undertake the following activities:

1. To revive the scientific system of social orders of classification based on intelligence, martial spirit, productivity and common assistance, generally known as the four castes with reference to quality and worth for the common cause of world society.
2. To discharge as a matter of course the vitiated system of supremacy of one man over another by false prestige of birthright or vested interests.
3. To popularize the vegetable-grain diet under approved methods in order that full value of protein, carbohydrate, fat and vitamin benefit may be derived therefrom.
4. To discourage intoxicating or addicting habits of all descriptions and dimensions and to expose such persons thus afflicted to approved methods of spiritual realization.

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami,
Acharya

I beg to remain in your blissful service eternally,

Daiva Dasa (Daivaji)

Initiation: 1977 August. Miami, USA

Nanda Kumar Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this most auspicious day of your *Vyāsa-pūjā*.

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

It is said that the more one loses himself in service to others, the more he is able to discover himself.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving me the opportunity to grow through service.

Your servant,

Nanda Kumar Dasa

Initiation: 1977 September. Durban, South Africa

Prahlada Bhakta dasa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Every year, I struggle to manifest my appreciation for you without resorting to formulaic sentiments, or simply cutting and pasting extracts from your books. Instead, I want to provide an honest assessment of my current status in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and thus reveal my mind to you in the presence of these special personalities, who have kept the faith these many long years.

But first let me confess that I find some of your views difficult to assimilate due to the mundane perspective of my sense of reality. However, I have a wife, who is totally in acceptance of what you say and this has been my saving grace. And by her insistence, I have downloaded every one of your talks and am working my way through them as I go about my daily chores.....and what I find is that I am intrigued, enamoured and captivated by the sound of your voice.

And the photos I have of your smiling beaming face...

You are that person that I can trust implicitly; and I hope that those of us still left, who are now in our final years, can continue to set the standards by our example that you had us adopt way back then.

Please forgive my offense, but if I cannot reveal my heart to you, who else can I reveal it to?

Hanging on till the end.

Your servant,

Prahlada Bhakta Dasa

Initiation: 1977 September. Sydney, Australia

Jivananda dasa Vanacari

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

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

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

This journey through the material world has been a long one, full of insecurity and ignorance. In search of some shelter I have found myself, again and again, surrounded by an army of fallible soldiers such as family, and so-called friends many of whom were promising love and loyal comradeship while simply trying to survive by looking out for their well-being often at the cost of mine. Such is the nature of we who are caught up in the illusory energy where illusion is seen to be real and lust is mistaken for love.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were the first to introduce me to a true, limitless love that was not motivated by some scheme for personal gain. Yours was a love that I had done nothing to earn or deserve and yet you were giving it freely without any self-motivation whatsoever. I had never experienced anything like your loving compassion and was, therefore, immediately captivated. You re-defined love and you re-defined compassion. Coming in contact with you was the biggest life-changing event and a turning point in my life that gave me hope and purpose.

You are the first father that I have ever known in this life, and

like a perfect father, you taught me and continue to give me the most valuable of all knowledge. Like a perfect father, you have surrounded me with a perfect family in your International Society for Krishna Consciousness which is the perfect shelter for all the fallen souls who have lost their way in this material world. Thus this International Society for Krishna Consciousness of yours is the greatest inheritance any son could ever receive.

Śrīla Prabhupāda I cannot find words to express my gratitude and thankfulness to you for all that you do for me and for all that you mean to me. While trying to find the words to express my gratitude to you I can understand that I am only in the beginning stages of learning what real gratitude truly is. Just attempting to express my gratitude in words for what you have done and continue to do for me is not enough. Gratitude in the material world, is typically a very shallow emotion subtly meaning “I’m grateful for what you have done for me lately, but what will you do for me next?”

It is said that “action speaks louder than words”, so, I must show my gratitude by actions along with my humble attempt at verbal expression. *Śāstra* says, “by the mercy of Krishna one gets guru, and by the mercy of guru, one gets Krishna”. Therefore the proper action to demonstrate my gratitude to you for giving me Krishna and, therefore everything, could only be to offer you all that I have: all of my thoughts, all of my words, all of my actions, and all of my life in servitude, again and again, birth after birth.

Just as I am still in the beginning stage of learning what is true gratitude, I am also still in the beginning stage of learning what is true surrender. As I think that I have surrendered my life to you I realize that there is so much more to becoming truly surrendered. Please continue to be patient with me as I try again and again to surrender fully.

Please continue to shower me with your limitless and causeless mercy by allowing me to assist you in your mission to spread Lord Caitanya’s mission all over the universe. Please use me as you see fit, and please never let me forget my eternal debt to you.

Your unworthy servant,

Jivananda dasa Vanacari

Initiation: 1977 September. Gita Nagari, PA, USA

Current location: Tucson, Arizona USA

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You are the deliverer of the whole world and came into my life as a messenger. When I, along with my husband (HG Kratu Das), came to America, we started associating with Hare Krishna devotees. But later, when we shifted to Canada, we got the opportunity to meet you. You were roaming all over the world and stayed very few days at one place. When I got an opportunity to meet you for the first time, the Temple President informed us that you will stay for the weekend. We planned to come, but due to some emergency you left early. I had missed the opportunity to meet you and felt very sad and waited for your next arrival. It was during your next visit that I finally met you.

You are so pure and so powerful, just by having your one glance, anybody's life can change. Your sitting, walking, talking, seeing, *kirtan*, dancing, offering garlands to the Lord, etc., every activity is full of divine energies. My daughter liked you very much as you used to distribute cookies to the children. She was so captivated by your divine *darshan* that she would go twice to the queue of children to get closer to you and take *prasādam* from your lotus hands. Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving so much love to all of us.

You can understand our inner thoughts and show your mercy to all. When I made a garland of different roses from my garden and my husband put it on you, I was thinking my garland was smaller as I had used all roses. You were the heart and soul of every disciple of yours. Many put many beautiful garlands on you. When you sat for the lecture, you started removing all of the garlands from around your neck. I was thinking, 'oh Śrīla Prabhupāda wore my garland only for a few seconds. If only he would wear it more!' Then, after removing all the garlands, you wore the smallest one – the rose garland offered by me. I was overwhelmed and surprised and thanked you from my mind for accepting the garland.

I was serving Kheerchora Gopinath in Toronto and very attached to the Deities there. During initiation time, I was thinking, if Śrīla Prabhupāda could give me a name related to Kheerchora Gopinath it would be nice. Surprisingly you gave me the name "Amrita Keli", the name of the sweet rice (Kheer) offered to Kheerchora Gopinath in Remuṇā. Thank you very much, Prabhupāda! This etched strongly in my heart how you fulfilled the wishes of your disciples.

My dear Prabhupāda! During the first meeting you told my

husband that: “there are many doctors and engineers, you become a preacher”. The next day he left his job without informing me and also put his American Masters degree in Engineering certificate into the garbage. He said: “I don’t want to go back again into a material job and all.” I was surprised, but knowing that you advised him to become a preacher, felt blissful.

Sometimes, when I need some answers, you give your answers by your lectures. I feel you are always with me and with each of your disciples and grand-disciples. Your preaching and teachings are exemplary. Each lecture and book is very nectarian and has the full potency to change the lives of others. Śrīla Prabhupāda! You took so much pain and performed so much austerity to deliver the fallen souls all over the world. Sixty is considered the retirement age but you started travelling all over the world at that age, distributing the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* without any differentiation. You are the commander of Lord Śrī Chaitanya’s movement and you trained human society how to win over the senses by fixing them in Krishna’s service and become a real Goswami. In *Upadesamrita*, you mentioned that one should become Goswami first and then can become a pure devotee. That is why even going after the western world, you were strict about the four principles and trained all how to control the forces of the material body and mind.

In scriptures, women are considered as mothers and you trained all to respect women as *mātājī* except one’s own wife. You taught that children should be taken care of like one takes care of their Deities. You were most concerned about everyone’s Krishna conscious life and taking them back to Godhead. Poor-rich, man-woman, children-old people, American-Indian whoever, in whatever condition, they can do *bhakti* and achieve the ultimate goal of this human life...only you gave us that confidence. Śrīla Prabhupāda! By your mercy I am assisting my husband in preaching activities and travelling to different places in the world. Thank you very much for giving me energy and blessings.

Thank you very much Śrīla Prabhupāda. On this special occasion of your *Vyāsa-pūjā* day, kindly grant me a boon so that I can follow your instructions and can preach your teachings to others by my words and actions.

Yours forever,

Amrita Keli Devi Dasi

Initiation: 1977 September. Toronto, Canada

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet on your Appearance Day.

All glories to you.

You are the merciful devotee of Lord Krishna and possess unlimited qualities.

You are very dear to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī as you have spread the teachings of Śrīla Rūpa Goswami (Roopa Manjari) all over the world. These teachings are as pure as Ganges water. Who can be dearer to Śrīla Rūpa Goswami than you? You had not only spread the philosophies but also taught them practically how to live a pure Krishna conscious life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are so intelligent and surrendered to your guru that you choose a Western country to propagate the Krishna consciousness movement as per order of your spiritual master. During that period the British government was very active and were governing in many countries. But instead of choosing the United Kingdom, you selected the United States of America. It seems, you knew that in the future America will be the country that other countries will follow. In India, people used to consider American products and their lifestyle as modern and sophisticated. So, you first went there and preached, making the hippies into happies, into pure devotees of Lord Krishna. Then you had brought them to India, rekindling the lost consciousness of devotional service. You have taught many Indians through this example, how one can become a pure devotee irrespective of whether they knew about Lord Krishna from birth or not. Even were they sinful and completely in ignorance, you made them realize that if one follows the instructions of guru and *Paramparā*, they can become a pure devotee.

You wrote purports for *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* as Lord Krishna was dictating. This *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* possesses the potency to reawaken any soul towards devotional service. It changes the heart of living beings. This is the proof that this is the most authentic translation of *Bhagavad-gītā*, and that all over the world this book is still making many devotees. What more proof does one need to understand that you were totally connected to Lord Krishna and Krishna was guiding you to deliver the humans from this world of death, *Mṛityuloka*.

Simple Living High Thinking can be a new year resolution to many. But you practically taught us how to implement this all over the world. Earlier it was a misconception that in very cold countries one cannot survive without non-vegetarian foods and wine, coffee, tea etc. Because at that time it seemed as if whoever went to cold countries had to eat meat and drink wine to maintain the body. But your teachings and practical implications proved all of them wrong. By your mercy, at the present Age, irrespective of cold or hot countries, devotees are following four regulative principles and chanting 16 rounds, even not taking tea or coffee. It is indeed a miracle and that can be done only by you.

You taught how to maintain a livelihood by farming and how to implement *gurukula* systems. Before the British came to India, there were 732,000 *gurukulas*. Almost all were destroyed by the British govt in India, and they also announced Sanskrit as a dead language. You are the saviour who brought back Vedic education for the deliverance of human beings. You brought the whole world under one umbrella – International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and taught everyone who thought they were British, American, Indian all are nothing but misconceptions. We are not this body but spirit souls. We took birth in America so we are thinking we are American, but if we take our next birth in Japan, we will think we are Japanese. But that is not real truth. We all are the soul, and part and parcel of Lord Krishna. Our first duty is to serve the Lord and go back to Godhead. Fighting is due to bodily platform. One should fight within himself to be free from lust, anger and greed. One should fight with his own mind to remain Krishna conscious. *KṚṢṆA PREMA* is the ultimate goal for everyone. You instructed that we have been given many births for sense gratification, now to give only this birth to Lord Krishna.

Your qualities are unlimited Śrīla Prabhupāda, thus your contributions are also unlimited. You are very dear to your guru and Krishna. You made us realize how much faith one should have on his guru and how success will follow him. You are the live example.

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

“Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord

and the spiritual master are all the imports of the Vedic knowledge automatically revealed.” (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.23)

Thank you very, very much Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us ISKCON, your lectures, *Rathayātrā*, *harināma*, *gurukulas*, restaurants, farms, books, Vaiṣṇava attire, Vaisnava etiquette, *Guru Paramparā* and Kṛṣṇa.

On this very special occasion I request you to grant me a boon so that I can serve you each and every moment by preaching and teaching your philosophies all over the world.

Your forever servant,

Kratu Das Adhikari

Initiation: 1977 September. Toronto, Canada

Devadeva Dasa

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

We were very fortunate to have had the association of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

We would chant *japa* at Prabhupāda’s feet.

We would eat the *mahā-prasādam* remnants from his plate.

We would read to him from *Bhāgavatam* at times when he wasn’t feeling well.

I am appreciative of the experience from that time.

Your servant,

Devadeva Dasa

Initiation: 1977 October. Vrindavana, India

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

All glories to you on the most auspicious celebration of your transcendental appearance in this world to benedict all the fallen souls of this illusory world with your all powerful words and exemplary example as the most empowered preacher in the line of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu!

It should not be difficult to find something to say about your glories at this or any other time, yet I am so dull, lazy and unfortunate that I struggle to find the appropriate words to offer. There is no doubt that my humble attempt will fall far short, yet I must try to express my unbounded gratitude to you for so kindly coming to these fallen, degraded and dirty Western countries and gifting us the highest and absolute best possible goal of human life; your own faith in and love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa in all of his various manifestations. *Premā pum-artha mahān*. You did this at the final stage of life after training yourself fully for such a daunting task and going about it under great personal austerity and sacrifice, humbly carrying the sacred order of your spiritual master, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Swami Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, depending fully upon his mercy and that of the Lord.

Fifty years later, we can still see the reciprocation of the entire *paramparā* and Lord Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu upon the movement you humbly began at that small storefront on the Lower East side of New York City – ISKCON, The International Society For Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. For the next 11 years, you worked intelligently and tirelessly to help us in our youthful, fledgling attempts to follow you on the path chalked out by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu – minimizing your own comfort and bodily needs to travel all over the world, lecturing, translating, corresponding with and personally training your many hundreds of disciples and new *bhaktas* everywhere in the science of love of Godhead; Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Your wonderful disciples have done an incredibly fantastic job of distributing your transcendental books and making lovely presentations of Kṛṣṇa conscious culture all over the world, preaching just as you trained them to do. I pray that this culture of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness will continue to spread unlimitedly to all

sincere souls and that we are always protected from falling victim to deviation, philosophical misunderstandings, or change disease as you warned us against. Your wonderful request (order) was that we work together cooperatively without offense or fighting to push on this movement you worked so hard to establish on our behalf. I pray that future generations of great devotees will forgive our shortcomings and do everything in their power to bring your pure desire to fulfill the orders of your divine master and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to fruition without sectarianism, envy or fighting within our family of devotees.

*I beg to remain,
Your humble servant,*

Dhira Dasa

Initiation: 1977 October. Washington, USA

Sarnga Thakur Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, our beloved spiritual master. All glories to you on this auspicious day of your *Vyāsa-pūjā*.

After writing to you last year, we experienced some trying and sorrowful times. Three of our most beloved cows passed away. Their illnesses and passing were unexpected. We were unprepared emotionally, although you taught us how death can come at any moment and how our health and youth are fleeting.

Meenakshi was one of the eight calves we and ISCOWP members saved from slaughter in 2014. She had a large head disproportionate to the rest of her young calf body. But Lakshmi, our daughter, took pity on her and bought her to take home. Nobody else bid on her; she was unwanted due to her defect. When our vet looked at her, he said her head and body would eventually grow to be proportionate

in size. However, he never mentioned that most calves born with water on their brains do not live very long, at best, maybe three years, because the condition cuts off some connections between the brain and the rest of the body. We didn't know this until she became quite sick, and we took her to the local large animal hospital.

At the hospital, they did not believe she was born with water on her brain as she was seven years old when we took her to the hospital. But as they tested her for other ailments, she tested negative. When the doctors concluded that water on her brain was the cause of her problems, we had an explanation for why her behavior was always a bit odd. Because of her oddness, she was never entirely accepted by the herd. However, one ox, Mādhava, graced her with attention regardless of the herd's opinion.

She had a hard time keeping a healthy weight. Therefore we kept her in our yard and fed her grain and her own hay bale. As the years progressed, she had a more difficult time keeping her healthy weight, and we became very attached to her, making sure she ate and was happy. Even after visiting the hospital to receive intravenous liquids, Meenakshi lost her ability to drink and eat. It was like her brain couldn't connect with the rest of her body to remember how to do these simple activities. She passed away soon after. We will miss her sweet loving, and brave personality very much.

Keshava, brother to Mādhava, was older, in his late sixties, and had been experiencing what looked like some arthritis in his back legs. One day he could not get up. He tried and tried. Mādhavī, the cow, was guarding him and keeping him company. Then, with the help of some of our neighbors, we got him in a sitting position supported by a large hay bale. He drank and ate, but as the days progressed, he became weaker. He progressed quickly to a hospice situation and then passed away.

We remember Keshava for his reserved and gentle personality. He was brahminical in personality, emotionally removed from the herd ruckus, and unwilling to play politics to maintain any position in the herd. But, above all, his majestic and noble presence will be greatly missed. He stood six feet at the shoulders, and his horns swung upward, making him another foot or two. Weighing in at about 2,500 pounds, he was imposing and noticeable wherever he grazed. People would always watch him in wonder. Because the meat and dairy industries kill the male cow before they can grow to maturity, Keshava was an exceptional and rare sight.

Śrī Uddharan Datta Thakur sat down the day before Christmas, and on Christmas evening, he passed away. For 14 years, he shared love with guests and us by laying down to encourage massages and pets. His sudden passing was a total shock.

Our vet looked at him only a week before and thought he was very healthy. During the day and a half of Śrī sitting and after he left his body, we noticed there were no signs of thrashing, no signs of pain, or discomfort. In human years he was in his late sixties.

We will remember him sharing his love with us for 14 years, even with guests he met for the first time. He also liked to leave the herd and sit down in the woods to meditate like a sadhu. If life was troublesome, we could go to the woods to sit with him and feel some solace. Not seeing him in the woods meditating saddens our hearts but may he now have a more heavenly place to meditate on transcendental topics.

When it was apparent each cow could not remain with us, we made sure they received blessings from Lord Krishna. Holy water from sacred locations in India was sprinkled on them or placed in their mouths. A pavitra garland from Lord Narsimhadev in Māyāpur was tied on their horns or placed on their necks. A harinama *chadar* was draped over them or around their horns. And finally, the chanting of the Hare Krishna mantra, either by ourselves or recorded, was always near them.

Burying them was the most difficult as sometimes the herd gathered around and watched with mournful eyes. Then, days or even a month later, the herd gathered around the burial site as if to grieve. Watching them increased our yearnings for the presence of the departed souls for just one more moment of their association.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, how much we miss them! Who would have thought we could painfully lament the passing of cows we learned to protect later in life after spending our ignorant youthful years eating cows. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, opened our eyes and hearts to the beauty of the soul in living entities who once we ate. The wonder of it! The power and force of your purity!

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! Thank you!

Your aspiring servants at ISCOWP, International Society for Cow Protection, Inc.

Initiation: 1977 October. Potomac, USA

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisance and forgive my offenses at your lotus feet.

I was born in ignorance and you opened my eyes with your transcendental knowledge.

I am eternally grateful for your books, your special disciples, your devotional centers around the world and your glorious instructions that I cherish as my life and soul.

Thank you for accepting me in your international mission with your initiation vows, and please empower me to keep these vows and help rectify the deviations in your sacred movement.

We humbly beg for your blessings in encouraging the second generation to accept in turn responsibilities on your behalf, follow your teachings seriously and apply them in your temples and rural communities.

At your lotus feet, we bow down as your menial servants,

Krishna-kirtana Dasi

Initiation: 1977 November. New Mayapur, France

Mahapurana Dasa

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

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

Again I have entered another womb,
packed up tightly as if entombed,
hurting from the bites of enemies unseen,
promising upon birth to tread the path serene,
but with birth comes increased confusion,
and the dancing modes add to the delusion,
as parents coddle, indulge and pamper,
my chances to remember the Lord are hampered.
But you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, O Reservoir of kindness, O

Ocean of Mercy, have come to show us how to remember and truly render service to our Śrī Śrī Rādhā Rādhā Kānta and how to really embrace Them by sincerely embracing Their Divine Names and how by sharing this knowledge with others we all might experience the greatest joy of eternal *seva*.

O dearest Resident of Sri Vrindavana, you have descended for the benefit of fallen souls like us, to teach us the love of Śrī Rādhā for Her Śrī Kānta. Please be kind upon us and continue to shine light upon the path so that we don't get lost, and please, never give up on us.

Your servant,

Mahapurana Dasa

Initiation: 1977 November. New Orleans, USA

Haridas Thakur Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I have been knocked down many times by maya over the years. But still, somehow or other I don't. In fact, I can't forget you.

And as you well know, maya is very strong, in fact insurmountable unless we take shelter of the holy names of Krishna.

These last few years have been very difficult, worse in fact than taking cold showers outside at 2:30 in the morning.

My good fortune in this life was meeting the *harinama* devotees at Trafalgar Square in 1971. Even at the time I didn't realise my good fortune, but that seed of spiritual energy entered my heart and it transformed my life.

You know that I was very, very sinful – and an out and out rebel. You took me as I was and gradually turned me into a *saṅkīrtana* man. You know that I love to give Krishna to others and I know that that is what you want me to do.

There are so many people who do not see us anymore, but for some reason we don't feel bad about that. Therefore, I am praying to you in this offering to inspire within the hearts and minds of all devotees the need to do what you want us to do. To go out and visit every city, town and village with our *harinama* and book distribution. We need to have faith that we can change the world. We need to get our heads out of Facebook and into the world where people are

suffering for want of knowledge. Knowledge about who God is and who they are. We need to make a difference.

I love you, Śrīla Prabhupāda and although I'm useless, a small timer, I want you to help me make a difference.

Your most fallen disciple,

Haridas Thakur Dasa

Initiation: 1977. London, UK

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