

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA TRIBUTES

11AUG 2012 Celebrating the
appearance day of our
beloved spiritual master

“I have started the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in America. But actually the original father of this movement is Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, since it was started a very long time ago but is coming down to human society by disciplic succession. If I have any credit in this connection, it does not belong to me personally, but it is due to my eternal spiritual master, His Divine Grace Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrajakacarya 108 Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja Prabhupada.”

— Śrīla Prabhupāda, Preface, Bhagavad-gītā As It Is

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PRABHUPĀDA
TRIBUTES



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11AUG
2012

Celebrating the
appearance day of our
beloved spiritual master

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INTRODUCTION TO TRIBUTES

It is a pleasure to offer Śrīla Prabhupāda this third Tributes book. When the project was launched, there was a little niggles of whether it would take off; whether the idea of a Vyāsa-pujā book open to all of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disciples would be welcome. The response has been encouraging – thank you to all the devotees who have submitted an offering. Some devotees have also shared some personal reflections while writing their offering for Tributes. Here are a few quotes from letters I’ve received:

“I have always wanted to write an offering but never had the opportunity until now.”

“Thank you very much for the opportunity to participate in glorifying Śrīla Prabhupāda. It always brings me closer to him and to the devotees when I sit down to consciously meditate on what to offer in my Vyāsa-pujā.”

“I am very touched by this email. There were many time constraints on my schedule and I thought the deadline had passed and I didn’t think anyone would even notice. I feel that your reminder letter is Śrīla Prabhupāda calling me, so I will send you my Vyāsa-pujā before May 1.”

This makes our effort worthwhile. Though we have received only 250 offerings, the Tributes team is happy that this book brings another opportunity for us all to hear about, remember and glorify Śrīla Prabhupāda. If you’ve submitted an offering, you’re fulfilling a spiritual duty of offering homage to your spiritual master. For those of my generation who are not direct disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda, reading the Tributes book is an inspirational resource – each offering is a learning experience, an insight to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s personal relationship with his disciples. Thank you again for these wonderful offerings.

Looking forward to next year, I’d like to request you all you all to please reach out to your godbrothers and godsisters and encourage them to submit an offering. You may like to know that Gaura dāsa set up a Tributes Facebook page and reached out to 200 devotees, sending them reminders and encouragement to write an offering. Thank you Gaura dāsa.

I’d like to thank all the devotees who have helped to put the book together:

- Jayādvaita Swami and Satyarāja Dāsa, for their editorial and production advice.
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- Donors:
 - ISKCON UK devotees
 - Karuṇā Avatāra Dāsa and Viknesh Shivaram (Singapore)
 - Vāsudev Kṛṣṇa Dāsa

On a final note, if anyone would like to contribute to the book or sponsor a certain number, please get in touch:

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Hare Kṛṣṇa and thank you

Pradyumna Dāsa (Leicester, UK)
Production Manager

TRIBUTES
BY
SANNYASI
DISCIPLES

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I wish to write a Vyāsa-pūjā homage to you. But first I want to give a brief confessional report of my own situation. I recently had a very vivid dream of you. You have said that dreams of the spiritual master should be taken seriously. In this dream I felt the deep, urgent need to write you a letter. Somehow I thought it could be delivered even though you have disappeared almost thirty-five years ago. I wanted to tell you why I am not preaching so actively as I did when you were present. I wanted to tell you of the very real handicap of my longstanding chronic headaches. I know that you already understand this about me, but I felt a deep emotional need to write you a letter before I meet you face-to-face. I wanted you to be sympathetic to my plight. And I would tell you that I am still writing—on my website, publishing books, corresponding, lecturing at festivals, and keeping correspondence. So in this dream we had contact through my intense desire to write you a letter. That's all.

And now, to my homage. You are still my exclusive, worshipable spiritual master and I am your subordinate disciple, to be directed by you. I grow in appreciation for what you have done for me and for the world. Your exemplary disciple, Mukunda Mahārāja, has written a wonderful memoir of you entitled *Miracle at Second Avenue*, and you truly created a miracle there in 1966 by attracting serious followers to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa with you and hear your lectures on *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. You arrived at seventy years old at a unique moment in the social history of the United States, when thousands of young Americans were open to spiritual experimentation and renouncing the standard values of materialism as taught by their parents and government. If you had come a decade earlier or a decade later, you would not have found this receptive audience to your radical proposal to drop out of the rat race for material success and to embrace a life of very accessible ecstasy in service to the all-attractive Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Kṛṣṇa sent you at a perfect time to start the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in the West. By your saintly determination and charismatic friendliness, you attracted young people, first on the Lower East Side of New York City, then in the Haight-Ashbury heart of hippieland in San Francisco, and very soon in many other cities of America, and then in England and Europe. You established *āśramas* and communes

and rented buildings, and gradually through the sales of your books by disciples you were able to purchase impressive buildings where larger numbers of devotees lived and went out onto the streets to chant *harināma* in public and create great attraction. Your Movement grew like wildfire.

You gave the greatest importance to the writing, printing and distributing of your books. Your spiritual master had told you, “If you ever get money, print books,” and you took that instruction to heart. Beginning in India you printed a newspaper, *Back to Godhead*, with Kṛṣṇa conscious articles on topical issues. When you accepted *sannyāsa*, you turned your attention to beginning an English translation with purports to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Within a few years, by begging donations, you printed three volumes comprising the entire First Canto. You brought those books with you to America, and I bought the three volumes before I was even initiated. I dove into them and loved them despite the printing errors and grammatical mistakes. You gave a wealth of Vedic information, drawing from the previous *ācāryas* and adding your own sweet personal touch. You declared it was a powerful reading matter capable of defeating the atheistic notions and empowering the reader to be able to convince others of the *bhāgavata* conclusion. Within a few years, under your personal direction, your educated disciples produced edited versions of your Indian originals, and your disciples produced illustrations that were printed by a prestigious Japanese printing firm, Dai Nippon. You rose at 1:00am, and worked on your books and gradually produced the Second, Third and Fourth Cantos, etc. The devotees learned techniques to sell the books in public places, and the income supported the temples as well as printing more books.

I don't want to go on belaboring the history of you in ISKCON. This has been done elaborately in *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta* and many memoirs written by your disciples. I just want to thank you for coming to this world to pull us out of the material entanglement and engage us in Kṛṣṇa's service. Had you not come we would still be at the bottom of the well with no one to lower a rope to help us to get out.

I want to thank you for the special attention you gave to me when I was first approaching you. The very first time I was alone with you in your room I asked you if there was a stage of spiritual advancement from which one didn't fall back. In my own life I had often made resolutions to stop sinful habits, but in the end I always

gave into them. You answered me with one word, “Yes.” You were so firm and confident that I immediately imbibed determination to follow the four rules. I came to you in the early summer of 1966, so I was eligible to take initiation on the first initiation you gave on Janmāṣṭamī. But I held back. I had recently been discharged from two years compulsory service in the Navy and was enjoying my so-called “freedom” living as a hippie on the Lower East Side. I was donating my money to you and attending all the classes, typing your manuscripts and obeying the rules—but I was hesitating to surrender myself to a spiritual master. I attended the Janmāṣṭamī programs at the storefront until the afternoon, but then I went to my apartment and skipped the initiation. Instead I engaged myself in typing your manuscript. The next day I came to you with the typed pages. You were alone and you let me in. You remarked that I was absent from the initiation but you said it was all right. I gave you the typed pages, and you looked them over and said they were well done. Then you gave me a few grapes. I foolishly thought, “I worked so hard typing into the night and all I get is a few grapes?” Then I prepared to go. You gave me more manuscripts to type and then you said, “Doing this typing is not a mechanical exchange. If you will love me, I will love you.” These words had a profound effect on me. They broke down my barriers of resistance, and all the reasons I had for not being your disciple. Here I was demanding special attention from you, but you were telling me it was a two-way street. I had to love you and then you would love me. I left your room fully joyful and desiring initiation. The next day I was in your room and you took a phone call. You were making some arrangement for the marriage of two of your disciples, Mukunda and Jānakī. When you hung up the phone you told me about the marriage and personally invited me to attend. Personal touches like this were just what I needed. I went to the wedding and regretted seeing all the newly-initiated disciples with their spiritual names and red chanting beads around their necks. Within a few days I asked you if I could be initiated. You said, “You’ll have to be a vegetarian.” And I said I already was. Then you said that you were going to hold another initiation in two weeks, on Rādhāṣṭamī. And so I became your śiṣya and I have never regretted it.

You always treated me with respect and regarded me as sincere. I thrived on being a responsible son, and even when I have had to serve in separation —by going to Boston while you traveled around the world—I felt intimately connected to you, writing many letters, and periodically I got to see you in person. You selected me to be

on the GBC, awarded me *sannyāsa*, and later called me to join you and be your personal servant and secretary. As your institution grew big, you grew a little less accessible than when you lived at 26 Second Avenue and we saw you every day. But I maintained a vital relationship with you by traveling with the Library Party and distributing your books to colleges, and later by your personal request that I take up the editorship service of *Back to Godhead* Magazine. I visited you in India three times during your final illness in India in 1977 and was present for your disappearance.

By introducing a system of disciplic succession by initiating *gurus*, your ISKCON went through tumultuous times and a crisis in faith, but reforms were set in place, and you remain the pre-eminent *śikṣā-guru* for all your followers at present and in the future. We are only safe when we are keeping you in the center of our lives and following your instructions.

You are ISKCON's flag of victory. Your books will be the lawbooks for humanity for the next ten thousand years. By pleasing you we please Kṛṣṇa. When we displease you, our whereabouts are unknown. You are the eternal resident of Vṛndāvana whom we must follow if we wish to enter Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's service in Goloka Vṛndāvana. We must not be overintelligent and run after other *gurus* but listen only to those who are your strict followers. You are possessed of *kṛṣṇa-śakti*, which empowers you to spread the holy name all over the world. You are *jaḡad-guru*, or *guru* for the whole world, and you personally traveled all over the world many times just to keep your devotees alive and to attract new members to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You are the kind father-figure for all your spiritual children. You are able to keep close personal relationships with hundreds of persons and make them feel dear and accountable to you. As Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami has written in his Ph.D. thesis on you, you are a bona-fide prominent theologian of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava theology. According to Lord Kṛṣṇa's definition of a pure devotee in *Bhagavad-gītā*, you are, very very dear to Him. You always remembered Kṛṣṇa and never forgot Him and told everyone you met to surrender to Him. If I had a hundred mouths I could not adequately describe your glories.

I will end my homage by begging you to never kick me away but allow me to be your humble servant life after life.

Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

What more can I say?
The bird is in flight;
He's still in the night,
Alive in the day.

You wrote as we slept—
Books by the dozens,
Giving deep teachings
To white-faced cousins.

The sweet things in life
To us were just loaned,
So how could we lose
What we never owned?

I walked book in hand,
Reading in traffic,
Inured to bland stares
And trucks on land

That zoomed all around,
Almost hit and run,
Not caring for life,
Lost in the sound

Of your words
In books that
Sung like angels
And rounded up herds

Of wrecks like me,
Lost and entangled
In outer darkness,
Adrift on the sea.

Your wake-up call
Came suddenly—
Time to know,
Too late to fall.

Isolating and repeating a statement by Śrīla Prabhupāda can result in a major catastrophe. Nonetheless, I can't resist quoting a sentence from one of your lectures, when you said, "This is the definition of our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement." These were the very first English words you uttered after first saying *prasaṅgam ajaraṁ pāśam ātmanaḥ kavayo viduḥ/ sa eva sādhuṣu kṛto mokṣa-dvāram apāvṛtam*. You spoke these English and Sanskrit words on 20 November 1974, in Mumbai (then Bombay). The English translation is written in your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.25.20): "Every learned man knows very well that attachment for the material is the greatest entanglement of the spirit soul. But that same attachment, when applied to the self-realized devotees, opens the door of liberation." These two sentences are what you declared publicly to be "the definition of our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement."

In a sense, your greatest gift to the world was knowledge of "dove-tailing, " or doing what you're good at, or love to do, but doing it for Kṛṣṇa. The principle is enunciated in Rūpa Gosvāmī's famous *yukta-vairāgya* verses, translated (by you) as "When one is not attached to anything but at the same time accepts everything in relation to Kṛṣṇa, one is rightly situated above possessiveness." And "One who rejects anything without knowledge of its relationship to Kṛṣṇa is incomplete in his renunciation."

You taught that one could use expertise in automobile mechanics or toilet plumbing as pure devotional service. You taught that such seemingly unlikely activities could become bhakti. Hundreds and thousands of seemingly uncultured candidates became your disciples because they found they could dovetail their propensities in a way that would please you and Kṛṣṇa. Because you wholeheartedly accepted such outwardly nonphilosophical activities as service to the Supreme Lord, the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement took root in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, a part of the world

then thought to be a marginal realm of alternative and rebellious thinking.

The principle of *yukta-vairāgya*, in defiance of many strict Indian brāhmaṇas, became reality as Westerners began to take the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa seriously. Thus the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement began in the West.

Your accepting attitude toward everyone endeared you to such unlikely persons as professed atheists, practitioners of non-Hindu faiths, high-ranking politicians, scholars, police officers, and quite a few media representatives.

How was it possible to start a spiritual Movement in the West, that was oblivious to the deceitfully alluring advances in education, medicine, travel, and communication, a Movement that uncompromisingly defied the so-called good things in life? The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement was based on a religious philosophy that espoused voluntary austerity, requiring its dedicated followers to renounce intoxicants, gambling, meat-eating, and illicit sex.

You gave the West the gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement based on a religious philosophy that espoused voluntary austerity, requiring its dedicated followers to renounce intoxicants, gambling, meat-eating, and illicit sex.

You gave the West the gift of *yukta-vairāgya*, doing everything for Kṛṣṇa. This—in many ways—was the secret of your success.

Your servant,

Mukunda Goswami

Jayapatāka Swami

My dear spiritual father,

Please accept my respectful obeisances.

On the occasion of your annual Vyāsa-pūjā, I would like to offer you

an homage. This time I wrote a Bengali poem in the form of a song. I was inspired by a song about Lord Caitanya written by Vāsudeva Ghosa and titled “*If There Were No Gaura, What Would There Be?*” I was thinking, “If you had not come, if you didn’t exist, who would have given us all the mercy?” I think that devotees should meditate on how much they have received from you and how much we are indebted to Your Divine Grace. I personally have been so much benefited by your mercy. You gave me mercy when I was in Canada, in America, and in India.

Again and again I got your mercy. You have given me many instructions and many devotional services to complete. Now I am handicapped to some extent. Still, you allow me to engage in your devotional service. So please accept this Bengali song in your honor. I hope that it will be a source of pleasure for you and your followers.

I beg to serve your lotus feet life after life, however you want.

Your insignificant servant,

Jayapatāka Swami

Śrīla Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda Mahimā

*(yadi) prabhupāda nā haita tabe ki haita
(e) jivana bahita kise?
nitāi-gaurera apāra karuṇa
ke dita sakala deśe ||*

If Śrīla Prabhupāda had not come, what would have happened? How would we have passed our lives? Who else would have distributed the unlimited mercy of Lord Nityānanda and Lord Gaurāṅga all over the world?

*pāścātyera yata pāpi durācārī
śūnyavādī māyāvādī
tādera uddāra karibāre mana
hena kon dayānidhi*

Which other compassionate person would have endeavored to de-

liver the Westerners, who include sinners, impersonalists, voidists, and gross materialists?

*tādera nikaṭe kon janā āsi
bilāita harinām
sabhya jīva rūpe gaḍite tādera
ke haita āguyān*

Who else would have come to give us his association and distribute the holy name? Who else would have come forward to give us a cultured spiritual life?

*deśe deśe hari- vigraha sevā
āratī rātri-dine
ratha yātrādi mahotsava saba
śikāita kon jane*

Who else would have established Deity worship all over the world, including *āratīs* and *kīrtanas* from morning to night? And who would have taught us how to observe Ratha-yātrā and other transcendental festivals?

*gītā-bhāgavata caitanya carita
premāmṛta rasasāra
kata nā sundara sarala kariyā
ke bujhāita āra*

Who else would have translated and explained the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, containing the essence of the nectarean mellows of love of Godhead, in such a clear, simple, and beautiful way?

*kata kaṣṭa sahi prīta mane rahi
ke vā dita harinām
ke dita modera purī vṛndāvana
Māyāpur mata dhām*

Who else would have tolerated so many difficulties and distributed harināma with such a compassionate and loving heart? Who would have given us the holy dhāmas, such as Māyāpur dhāma, Vṛndāvana dhāma, and Jagannātha Purī dhāma?

parama maṅgala śrīcaitanya mahā-

*prabhura śikṣā dhana
ācāre pracāre sadā āmādere
ke karita niyojana*

Who would have given us the incomparable treasure of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's teachings and engaged us in practicing and preaching them?

*premakalpataru nitāi-gaurera
kṛpā kaṇa labhibāre
niravadhi jaya- patākā hṛdaya
tomare śaraṇa kare*

Desiring a drop of mercy of Nitāi-Gaura's wish-fulfilling tree of love of Godhead, with all his heart Jayapatāka incessantly takes shelter of Your Divine Grace.

*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*

Someone once asked why the spiritual master isn't included in the *mahā-mantra*, and Śrīla Prabhupāda replied in a letter that the spiritual master is indeed included because when we chant "Hare" we're addressing the energy of the Lord and this includes the spiritual master.

I was thinking this morning that the spiritual master is present in every word of the *mahā-mantra*. As Śrīla Prabhupāda pointed out, "Hare" addresses the energy of the Lord. We usually say that it addresses Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. And the spiritual master is considered one of the confidential associates of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, or a representative of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the merciful pleasure potency of the Lord. When we chant "Kṛṣṇa," the spiritual master is there too. *Sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-sāstraiḥ*: The spiritual master is directly the representative of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And when we chant "Rāma," the spiritual master is there again because the spiritual master specifically represents Balarāma, Saṅkarṣaṇa, that form of the Supreme Lord who is the source of all spiritual strength. *Nāyam ātmā bala-hīnena labhyaḥ*: One cannot attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness unless one is favored by the spiritual strength given by Lord Balarāma. And Lord Balarāma gives strength to the devotee by appearing through the bona fide spiritual master.

I don't wish to advocate some sort of artificial meditation. It's not that when we chant we have to think this way. Śrīla Prabhupāda never taught us to do that. We simply have to chant and hear. I'm just expressing some thoughts that have come to mind.

The spiritual master is present in the *mahā-mantra* in another way. It is from him that we receive the *mantra*. And therefore when we chant he is present. We are taught that the spiritual master is present in the form of his instructions, and it is the spiritual master who instructs us to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare

Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. So when we chant, the spiritual master is present.

When we chant we are obeying the spiritual master, remembering his instructions, which are not different from him, and therefore he is present in our thoughts. In 1973 Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote to one disciple, Cidānanda Dāsa, “Please always try to remember me by my teachings and we shall always be together. Just like I have written in the first publications of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, ‘The spiritual Master lives forever by His divine instruction and the disciple lives with him.’ Because I have always served my Guru Mahārāja and followed His teachings I am now even never separated from Him. Sometimes *māyā* may come and try to interfere but we must not falter, we must always follow the chalked-out path laid down by the great ācāryas and in the end you will see.”

In the end we will see — by hearing, and by serving the sound we have heard.

Like Kṛṣṇa Himself, the spiritual master is never impersonal. And like Kṛṣṇa Himself, the spiritual master is never alone. Kṛṣṇa is always with His pure devotees, and the pure devotees are always with Kṛṣṇa. And living always with a pure devotee are the followers who serve him. To Śrīla Prabhupāda, my spiritual master, that exalted pure devotee who gave Kṛṣṇa’s holy name to the world, may I dedicate my heart and soul. And may I always be blessed by the companionship of those who follow him.

Jayādvaita Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

It is said that “soft water wears away the stone.” Your unceasing mercy, which springs spontaneously from your all-compassionate nature, gradually wears away the stonelike covering of our heart. With your pure, peerless Kṛṣṇa consciousness you reveal the supreme reality of Kṛṣṇa to all. With your unalloyed, unflagging determination to serve Lord Caitanya’s mission, you ever remind us of, and inspire us to perform, our real duty in life.

Maturing and growing wiser in Kṛṣṇa consciousness means to appreciate more and more your inestimable glories. You are the perfect teacher and friend, and on your Vyāsa-pūjā day we beg to be useful in your mission.

Your servant,

Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda—A Vṛndāvana Man

It was April of 1977, in Bombay. You were living in your new quarters on the top floor of the west tower in Juhu, so ill that you never left them, and no one was allowed to visit you. I had become sick and practically just lay on the floor in my little office. My policy had been to listen only to the songs you had given us, the ones in Songs of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas. Someone had handed me a tape of Maṅgalānanda Prabhu singing original songs, and somehow I thought, “Okay, maybe I’ll listen.” One song particularly affected me, and I listened to it again and again.

The words were about going back to Godhead, and while listening I would think of you. I would feel happy, because clearly you were soon going back to Godhead—although in one sense you already were, and always were, back to Godhead. And I felt, “This is also my destination. One day I am destined to also go to the same place.”

After that period in 1977 I never listened to the song again, for fear that it would bring back the memory of those days too intensely. But today the words strike me as relevant, for they remind me of you—what you were like and where you were going. They also suggest, as they did when I first heard them, what I should become like and, if I do, what destination I will achieve—all by your grace.

The song begins with a wonderful description of devotees—you—and what happens to them:

Selflessness relieves distress.
The gentle rain of happiness
Puts out the burning fire of life,
Transports the soul beyond all strife,
Past starry night and cruel death

For those who give their living breath,
Upon their lips the holy name
In praise of Him who came.
To them a store of bliss is known,
And hidden worlds to them are shown.

And it concludes with a beautiful description of the spiritual abode and the life that awaits us there, which is our goal:

Where the Supreme Lord fills every eye
Sweet jubilation fills the sky
As dancing milkmaids and cowherd boys
Play in forests green with joys
Of bael and jackfruit lily white—
An endless full-moon nectar night
Of dancing magic loving smiles
And gopī damsels’ playful wiles.
They sport in lotus lakes with He
Whose glances taste of ecstasy.

Back in April 1977 I knew that you would probably be leaving us soon. And so I was thinking, “What will happen after you leave?” Once I even thought, “What will happen to me?” You had always personally protected me, so I wondered, “What will happen to me after you leave?” And I would listen to the song again and again.

I knew that you were going, and I knew that what was described in the song was my goal and ultimate destination, but I had no idea when I would reach it.

Thirty-five years have passed since then, and so much has happened—to me individually, to us collectively, to the movement, and to the world. And that goal, or destination, which seemed so immediate when we first met Your Divine Grace and joined you, now seems more and more distant—almost unattainable.

We know that your mercy is always there, and so there is always hope, but last year your mercy was manifest to me in a somewhat unexpected way, which made me feel new hope.

Last October you brought me to Vṛndāvana, and in Vṛndāvana to the association—the shelter and guidance and support and friendship—of many of your dear disciples. And that combination—

Vṛndāvana with the association of close godbrothers—proved to be especially powerful.

As stated in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 22.128 – 29), five items of devotional service are especially potent:

sādhu-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana, bhāgavata-śravaṇa
mathurā-vāsa, śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana

“One should associate with devotees, chant the holy name of the Lord, hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, reside at Mathurā, and worship the Deity with faith and veneration.”

And:

sakala-sādhana-śreṣṭha ei pañca aṅga
kṛṣṇa-prema janmāya ei pāñcera alpa saṅga

“These five limbs of devotional service are the best of all. Even a slight performance of these five awakens love for Kṛṣṇa.”

Somehow, although I am so unqualified, you arranged for me to stay in Vṛndāvana, in the association of dear godbrothers, continuously for months—much longer than ever before. And I gained hope that I might one day, somehow, attain my eternal service, in my eternal home, with you.

Akrūra’s words as he approached Vṛndāvana suddenly seemed more relevant, more true:

maivaṁ mamādhamasyāpi syād evācyuta-darśanam
hriyamāṇaḥ kāla-nadyā kvacit tarati kaścana

“‘Because I am so fallen I shall never get a chance to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead.’ This was my false apprehension. Rather, by chance a person as fallen as I am may get to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although one is being carried away by the waves of the river of time, one may eventually reach the shore.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.38.5, as cited at *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Madhya 22.44)

Of course, I do not know when I will ever see the Supreme Personality of Godhead directly, but I did feel that “by chance a person

as fallen as I... may eventually reach the shore.” Somehow, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mercy was bringing me closer.

I felt at home in Vṛndāvana and could relate to one of your descriptions of Vṛndāvana in *The Nectar of Devotion*:

“I remember the Lord standing by the banks of the Yamunā River, so beautiful amid the kadamba trees, where many birds are chirping in the gardens. And these impressions are always giving me transcendental realization of beauty and bliss.” This feeling about Mathurā-maṇḍala and Vṛndāvana described by Rūpa Gosvāmī can actually be felt.... The places in the 168-square-mile district of Mathurā are so beautifully situated on the banks of the river Yamunā that anyone who goes there will never want to return to this material world.

As my stay in Vṛndāvana was extended by your causeless mercy, week after week, I wondered how long you had willed me to remain there—secretly hoping it would be forever.

* * *

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, were a resident of Vṛndāvana, but you left. Why, and how could you tolerate the separation?

You explained in an early talk in New York City:

I shall be very happy to return to my Vṛndāvana, that sacred place. “But then why you are... ?” Now, because it is my duty. I have brought some message for you people. Because I am ordered by superior, my spiritual master, that “Whatever you have learned, you should go to the Western countries, and you must distribute this knowledge.”

If you had not left Vṛndāvana, how would we ever have come to know about that most sacred of places—much less gotten the chance to serve there?

In leaving Vṛndāvana, you exemplified the mood of Śrī Prahlāda:

*naivodvije para duratyaya-vaitaraṇyās
tvad-vīrya-gāyana-mahāmṛta-magna-cittaḥ*

*śoce tato vimukha-cetasa indriyārtha-
māyā-sukhāya bharam udvahato vimūḍhān*

“O best of the great personalities, I am not at all afraid of material existence, for wherever I stay I am fully absorbed in thoughts of Your glories and activities. My concern is only for the fools and rascals who are making elaborate plans for material happiness and maintaining their families, societies, and countries. I am simply concerned with love for them.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.9.43)

*prāyeṇa deva munayaḥ sva-vimukti-kāmā
maunaṁ caranti vijane na parārtha-niṣṭhāḥ
naitān vihāya kṛpaṇān vimumukṣa eko
nānyaṁ tvad asya śaraṇaṁ bhramato ’nupaśye*

“My dear Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva, there are many saintly persons indeed, but they are interested only in their own deliverance. Not caring for the big cities and towns, they go to the Himalayas or the forest to meditate with vows of silence [*mauna-vrata*]. They are not interested in delivering others. As for me, however, I do not wish to be liberated alone, leaving aside all these poor fools and rascals. I know that without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, without taking shelter of Your lotus feet, one cannot be happy. Therefore I wish to bring them back to shelter at Your lotus feet.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.9.44)

Prāyeṇa deva munayaḥ sva-vimukti-kāmā—almost all the great saintly persons we find in India are interested in their own liberation. *Maunaṁ caranti vijane na parārtha-niṣṭhāḥ*—they wander silently in the Himalayas or forests, not working for the welfare of others.

When I first arrived in Bombay with a group of devotees in 1970, there was a gathering of sādhus, saintly persons, in a large hall along Marine Drive. There were long lines of tables set up next to each other, and sitting cross-legged on the tables were various yogīs and munis in different types of attire (or lack of attire), with different types of tilaka and other markings and symbols—some with matted hair, some with flowing long hair, some with no hair—all engaged in different processes meant for their elevation, and I was quite impressed. Having been a spiritual seeker and read *Autobiography of a Yogi*, I was very intrigued by tales of saintly persons in India.

But when you arrived it became clear to me that you stood out from

the rest. You were in a completely different category. You were like the sun, as effulgent as the sun, and in comparison the others were like little stars. Your mood was different from theirs: you did not want to go back home, back to Godhead, alone, leaving aside all the poor fools and rascals—in other words, us. And if that had not been your mood, where would we be? I shudder to think of it.

You imbibed that mood through the *paramparā*, the disciplic succession, from your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and his father and *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktinoda Ṭhākura. And in your service to them, you were unparalleled.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī wanted his disciples to go to the West and preach. At great expense, he even sent some to London, and they met some people and gave some talks, but somehow they did not have much effect. And eventually Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta called them back.

When they returned, there was a nice reception for them. Soon thereafter, during the Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta again expressed his ardent desire—and hope—that someone would deliver Kṛṣṇa consciousness—the teachings of Lord Caitanya and the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*—to the people in the Western world. Śrīpāda Nayanānanda Dāsa Bābājī, a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, relates:

The last year that our gurudeva organized and performed Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*, thousands of pilgrims assembled at our Canpahati temple. There was an entire village of tents stretching in all directions. On the afternoon of the last day, one of our godbrothers had just arrived in Navadvīpa, recently come from London by ship. He had gone there to preach but had returned without meeting full success. That evening during his lecture, Guru Mahārāja explained his earnest desire that Caitanya Mahāprabhu's teachings be spread in the Western countries. He said that this was the last request of his mother, Śrīmatī Bhāgavatī Devī, to him before she left this world, and that indeed it would happen. Consequently, he had been willing to take the lifeblood of the Gauḍīya Maṭha funds to send devotees there, yet their attempts had been largely unsuccessful.

At that point in his talk I noticed something mysterious hap-

pening. Guru Mahārāja had been looking out at the packed crowd of devotees, especially in the front, where all the *sannyāsīs* and brahmacārīs in red cloth were. Then he turned his head and looked over to his left side, where I was standing. He was looking intently at someone and became silent for some time. I happened to look behind me and saw that the person with whom he was making eye contact was Abhaya Charanaravinda Prabhu [known after *sannyāsa* as A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami]. I felt that they were looking at each other in a special way. Then Guru Mahārāja turned and again addressed the audience in front of him and said, “But I have a prediction. However long in the future it may be, one of my disciples will cross the ocean and bring back the entire world.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, without your having taken up this mood from your Guru Mahārāja, where would we be?

In your purport to Prahlāda’s prayer in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, you explain his—and your—determination:

Prahlāda Mahārāja says clearly, *nānyam tvad asya śaraṇam bhramato ’nupaśye*: “I know that without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, without taking shelter of Your lotus feet, one cannot be happy.” One wanders within the universe, life after life, but by the grace of a devotee, a servant of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, one can get the clue to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and then not only become happy in this world but also return home, back to Godhead. That is the real target in life.

This is the decision of the Vaiṣṇava, the pure devotee of the Lord. For himself he has no problems, even if he has to stay in this material world, because his only business is to remain in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The Kṛṣṇa conscious person can go even to hell and still be happy.... [H]is interest is in the busiest part of the world, where he teaches people Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in coming to deliver us you practically walked through hell—and still you were happy. Mukunda Goswami, in *Miracle on Second Avenue*, describes one incident when you were in San Francisco, in Haight-Ashbury, the center of the hippie movement. The devotees then were friends with two brothers, early sup-

porters of your mission, who owned the Psychedelic Shop. Several times the brothers had invited the devotees to bring you to the program they held every Saturday evening in the meditation room at the back of their store, but the devotees had always refused, not wanting to subject you to the atmosphere there. But eventually they accepted.

And so you walked along Haight Street, accompanied by six devotees. The Haight was like a carnival—people in all sorts of dress, with different styles of hair and costumes, some singing and playing music, some drinking alcohol, smoking marijuana, or taking some other drug. Mukunda was concerned about your walking through that whole scene, which must have appeared so decadent to you, and to break the silence he ventured, “It’s a beautiful night.”

As Mukunda Mahārāja describes,

[You] scrutinized the street sellers, looked at passing smokers and bongo players, people with painted faces and wild, brightly colored costumes. [You] appeared to smell the air, taking in the burning odor of marijuana and the sharp putrid stench of alcohol, which was tempered by the fragrance of roses and carnations. [You] turned, smiling, and said, “Everything is beautiful.”

And Mukunda Mahārāja reflected on your statement:

There was no good or bad from the pure angle of vision—everything and everyone in every part of creation was Kṛṣṇa’s energy, and because the swami was in touch with that energy, he saw this beauty. The people were beautiful because they were all potential devotees. Everything was beautiful because everything was connected to Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mercy—your vision—is inconceivable. No matter where you were, even in the Haight, you were happy, because you were spreading Kṛṣṇa’s glories and pleasing your superiors.

* * *

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura said that the best *goṣṭhyānandī* is a *bhajanānandī* who preaches. Before you came

to America you prepared yourself by intensely chanting and studying and praying for the power to preach. Then you left Vṛndāvana for New York, San Francisco, and the world. And you were fully absorbed in Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and your spiritual master's mission.

Still, you hankered for Vṛndāvana.

In your Los Angeles headquarters one afternoon, after dealing with various managerial problems, you leaned back on the bolsters of your *āsana* and quoted a verse by Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura: *viṣaya chāḍiyā kabe śuddha habe mana kabe hāma heraba śrī-vṛndāvana*—“When will I give up material sense objects, and when will my mind become purified? Only then will I be able to behold Vṛndāvana.” Then you added, perhaps for me to hear, “Of course, it is not *viṣaya*, material; it is Kṛṣṇa's service. But still, I wish to be freed. I am hankering for Vṛndāvana.”

Thus you showed us the perfect example. You relished Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Vṛndāvana; you left Vṛndāvana to preach, to fulfill the orders of your superior authorities; while outside Vṛndāvana you always remembered Vṛndāvana, hankered for Vṛndāvana; and in the end you returned to Vṛndāvana—back to your home, back to Godhead.

Just as Kṛṣṇa does not take a step away from Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa's devotee also does not like to leave Vṛndāvana. However, when he has to tend to Kṛṣṇa's business, he leaves Vṛndāvana. After finishing his mission, a pure devotee returns home, back to Vṛndāvana, back to Godhead. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 13.156 purport)

On this occasion, I pray to follow you—wherever you are, whatever your service. You said of your spiritual master that he was “a Vaikuṅṭha man” and that he came to this world to execute the mission of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. “So he executed it. And when it was required, he left this place and went to another place to do the same business.”

You, too, were a Vaikuṅṭha man, or more specifically, a Vṛndāvana man.

In her offering to you on your disappearance day in 2003, your dis-

ciple Daivīśakti Devī Dāsī described your special relationship with Gita Devi Saraf, who donated the land for your Vṛndāvana temple. One evening Gita Devi confided in her:

She said, “You know, Śrīla Prabhupāda was just like my own father. He cared for me, and that was why I gave to him and no other.

He told me a secret once, when we were all alone. I’ll tell you what he said to me; it’s something you should know.

“I came to see him one evening. He was sitting in his garden.

Devotees sat by his feet, secretary and servants all around. As I came close he smiled at me and told them all to go. I sat nearby his lotus feet, and this is what he told.

“Kṛṣṇa sent me here to preach. He sent me from above. With English, Bengali, and Hindi I could preach all over the world.

I’ve almost finished my task, and soon I’ll return to Him.” He told her this in 1976; soon our lives went dim.

I was amazed at what Prabhupāda had revealed to her alone.

She knew he came from Kṛṣṇa and would soon be going home.

Such wisdom was not wasted on an ordinary jīva.

This blessing was hers from Prabhupāda—confidentiality. As we drove, she took my hand and made a simple wish.

She asked me in sincerity, “Please teach me to speak English.”

“But Gita Devi, you’re so old, your precious time will be wasted.”

“No,” she said, “I also want to preach as Prabhupāda did.” I looked at her in amazement; she really wanted to preach.

She had been transformed by Śrīla Prabhupāda’s grace. By associating with fire one becomes like fire; I saw Her desire to preach like Prabhupāda in an old woman bereft of all.

The inspiration she received from a moment of

Prabhupāda's love
Reminds us how compassionate he was to come here
from above.

Śrīla Prabhupāda—I, too, aspire to follow you, internally and externally, but I can do that only by your mercy, and by the mercy of those dear to you, who carry your mercy and love.

Please help me.

Your dependent servant,

Girirāj Swami

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

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

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

In *The Nectar of Instruction* Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī advises us to be intelligent enough to distinguish between different levels of devotional accomplishment: from the neophyte (*kaniṣṭha-Adhikārī*) to the intermediate (*madhyama-Adhikārī*) to the advanced level (*uttama-Adhikārī*). Although Śrīla Prabhupāda's books contain extensive information about these levels of spiritual attainment, it is still rather easy to become confused about one's own level of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and that of others.

It is said that in Kali-yuga everyone is born a *sūdra* or lower (*kalau sūdra-sambhava*). A *sūdra* is one who identifies with the material body and is dissatisfied because of his or her material situation. A fortunate person, however, comes in contact with a pure devotee and begins the process of devotional service. But even if one sincerely tries to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one's conditioned nature does not disappear immediately. A neophyte devotee still identifies with the body and will, knowingly or unknowingly, to some degree perform devotional service to fulfill material desires.

In the beginning one generally approaches Lord Kṛṣṇa because of distress caused by one's sinful habits. But by regulated devotional service one gets the spiritual strength to avoid sinful activities and becomes detached from sinful desires. In this way, the root cause of sin is gradually diminished and all distress is alleviated. Next, the desire for material comfort becomes prominent. But by controlling the mind and trying to engage it in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one develops good qualities: one becomes friendly to others, and so the miseries arising from envy diminish. And as one's spiritual vision develops, one's mind becomes more and more situated in a state of equanimity, and one learns to tolerate one's own material circumstances and those of others. However, when one realizes

that no amount of material satisfaction gives real happiness, a desire for real wisdom increases, a wisdom that awakens spiritual realization.

When one cultivates spiritual knowledge and wisdom, one remains unaffected by the dualities of material existence. From that platform one comes to the mode of goodness and acquires the qualities of a *brāhmaṇa*. Once situated in the mode of goodness, one understands the value of devotional service and tries to increase one's enthusiasm to please Kṛṣṇa—"Endeavor executed with intelligence in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is called *utsāha*, or enthusiasm." (*Nectar of Instruction*, verse 3) Such enthusiasm to please Lord Kṛṣṇa inspires the Supreme Lord to reveal Himself to His devotee, and thus the devotee begins to understand the meaning of peace, real knowledge, and happiness. As a result one becomes steady on the intermediate platform as a *madhyama-Adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava. But a devotee should not expect that he or she will immediately progress from a neophyte devotee to a steady engagement on the spiritual platform of consciousness.

Compared to an ordinary person or even an ordinary yogī, or sage, a *kaniṣṭha-Adhikārī* is a rare and highly elevated person. Śrīla Prabhupāda explains this:

Prabhupāda: *Kaniṣṭha-Adhikārī* means he must be a brāhmaṇa. That is *kaniṣṭha-Adhikārī*. The spiritual life, *kaniṣṭha-Adhikārī*, means he must be a qualified brāhmaṇa. That is *kaniṣṭha*. What is esteemed as very high position in the material world, *brāhmaṇa*, that is *kaniṣṭha-Adhikārī*.

*arcāyām eva haraye pūjām yaḥ śraddhayehate
na tad-bhakteṣu cānyeṣu sa bhaktaḥ prākṛtaḥ smṛtaḥ*

The *brāhmaṇa* means from the material stage gradually he is elevated to the spiritual stage. And below the brāhmaṇa there is no question of Vaiṣṇava. [Room Conversation, Varṇāśrama System Must Be Introduced, 14 February 1977, Māyāpur]

A neophyte devotee should try to come to the intermediate platform as soon as possible. This depends upon the devotee's sincerity and seriousness about achieving the higher platforms of devotional service. Indeed, actual devotional service begins at the level of lib-

eration from the misconceptions of material affection and identification. At the stage of *anārtha-nivṛitti* in devotional service (giving up unwanted habits), one is liberated from the effects of *anārtas* and *aparādhas* (offenses). When one chants at the *nāmābhāsa* stage, gradually these impurities are removed. One is no longer attached to material hankering and lamentation, and one sees all living entities as Lord Kṛṣṇa's servants and reciprocates with them according to their devotional qualification (or potential lack of it) to engage in devotional service.

One who is thus transcendently situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman and becomes fully joyful. He never laments or desires to have anything. He is equally disposed toward every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me. [*Gītā* 18.54]

Practicing devotional service on the *madhyama-Adhikārī* platform gives one the spiritual inspiration for spontaneous and other more advanced levels of *bhāva-bhakti*, *prema-bhakti*. However, Śrīla Prabhupāda cautions the sincere neophyte not to imitate more advanced devotees, for this will stop devotional progress and will eventually even end the attempt to rise to the level of pure devotional service. If one imagines that one has already reached perfection, why make any further attempt to achieve that perfection?

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu advised us to preach the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Those who follow the instructions of the previous ācāryas and repeat their message to others become dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa will not allow such devotees to remain devoid of spiritual awareness and devotional feelings. Thus, after studying Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, one should practice one's *sādhana* sincerely and then distribute transcendental knowledge to others, especially in the form of transcendental literature. At the same time, we should learn to give up unnecessary anxieties, material attachments, material desires, and misconceptions arising from misidentification with the material world. We should take shelter of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and have faith in pure devotional service.

Your aspiring servant,

Prahlādānanda Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Recently I listened to some of my godbrothers describe how they were influenced in various ways by your person and how these influences have kept them in the service of you and Lord Kṛṣṇa over the years. I was, and continue to be, influenced by your person in a myriad of ways.

Most prominent to me was your kindness. You exhibited this in unparalleled ways by your always being willing to extend yourself and even inconvenience yourself if it would in any way be of spiritual benefit to others. As you once famously told Jadurāṅī Devī Dāsī, “For Kṛṣṇa’s service you could even stand on my head.”

This quality of yours was readily apparent in all your dealings. If any of us showed a little service attitude, you would immediately reciprocate with enthusiasm and encouragement.

How could we ever give up the service of such a superhuman person? This is not just the flattery of an admiring disciple: you consistently showed superhuman qualities because of your being transcendently situated beyond the moods of material nature.

What great good fortune to have met such an exalted person!

Aspiring to remain always fixed at you lotus feet throughout eternity, I remain

Your insignificant servant,

Trivikrama Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. Once again on your auspicious Vyāsa-pūjā day we have the opportunity to remember your transcendental achievements.

It is inconceivable that you came to the West at such an advanced age to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the fallen souls of Kali-yuga. You struggled to establish Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India, and then you struggled in America. With full faith in the instructions of your spiritual master, you departed from India on a cargo ship with only \$8 worth of rupees in your pocket. You were the transcendental general that Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda had predicted would appear to take Kṛṣṇa consciousness to every corner of the globe.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a Vaiṣṇava of the highest order. You were the personification of determination. One day, while distributing the Back to Godhead magazines in 112-degree heat in Delhi, you suffered a severe heatstroke and became unconscious. But as soon as you were brought back to consciousness, you resumed your transcendental distribution.

You taught us that the Supreme is a sentient being and not impersonal. You gave us transcendental literature that explains the purpose of human life and the importance of devotional service. Your books have been translated into more than seventy languages. Your books will be able to guide society for the next ten thousand years. Following in the footsteps of Lord Caitanya, you emphasized the importance of preaching. You wanted us to study your books and at the same time distribute your books. Recently in the Russian city of Tomsk an attempt was made to ban the Russian *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. Due to the sincere attempts of the devotees in Russia, and to some extent in India, the plan to ban the *Gītā* was defeated.

Due to your causeless mercy, the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is continuing to expand in India and other parts of the world. More and more temples are being built. These temples are spiritual hospitals. They are attracting huge crowds and are powerful outlets for book distribution. Residing in Vṛndāvana, you would regularly come to Delhi to collect funds, publish your books, and distribute

them. We now have eight temples in the greater Delhi area. Yesterday the deputy prime minister of Hungary, the deputy speaker of the Hungarian parliament, and the Hungarian ambassador to India visited your Delhi museum and temple for two hours. They were very impressed by your Delhi project. In my Indian zone we have started new projects in Ludhiana, Rohini, and Karghar. Very soon we will also start projects in Gurgaon and Dwarka. I pray that you please empower your representatives in these areas to work hard and complete these projects for your glorification. May your fame continue to expand every day.

Thank you millions of times for showing the world the path of devotional service. Please forgive me for my offenses. I pray for your causeless mercy so that I may become fixed in executing your divine instructions and in helping propagate the *saṅkīrtana* movement.

Your eternal servant,

Gopāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami

My dear godsister Jagaddhātrī begged for an offering and so I am sending two incidents which came to mind from the spring of 1972.

It was the first time Śrīla Prabhupāda was coming to Melbourne. We were not collecting much outside of the regular contributions from the public for '*Back to Godhead*'. Our PR couldn't have been better. Large crowds surrounded the devotees when we chanted at the Post Office and the City Square next to the Town Hall.

Shortly before His Divine Grace's arrival, Hanumān Swami arrived from Malaysia. He was a character. Originally from Canada, he pushed everyone out the door for fund-raising, which consisted of a *harināma* party and two or three *mātājīs* with donation baskets. The streets in Melbourne were always crowded and ideal for *harināma*, and of course, books. We went out regularly and ended up with a fair sum of money by which to pull off the reception of Lord Kṛṣṇa's ambassador. It was then that our first bad PR came in the way of an expose on our monetary collections. The article claimed we had collected a certain amount and ran us down for being hypocrites. I was sorry to see it but if the ends justifies the means, then it was still okay since Melbourne was about to see its first pure Vaiṣṇava *sādhu*.

Hanumān told me that he would take over the position of temple president which I did not object to, since he seemed to be inspired to put it all together in the short amount of time we had.

Our Temple was in St. Kilda in a two-storey, old ghost-ridden property where *maṅgala-ārati* was held regularly at 4:30am and evening *ārati* at 7pm. I still wonder how the neighbors ever tolerated the noise, but they did. Melbourne was also home to a large group of 'Guru Maharaj Jis' who competed for attention. It was also home to another congregation of impersonalists, both of whom we invited to the programs, especially the lecture at the Melbourne Town Hall.

To make it big (a word I had picked up from Bali-mardana who was the first devotee to arrive and preach in Australia) I designed a poster with Śrīla Prabhupāda sitting on his *vyāsāsana* and holding his right hand in a *jñāna-mudrā*. Hanumān then focused on some descriptive words under the picture, but the main lettering on top

was ‘Jagat Guru comes to Melbourne’, with ‘Jagat Guru’ being in huge letters on a bright red background. With home-made glue we plastered the city in the wee hours of the night. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s picture was everywhere, and we took great delight in covering up Guru Maharaj Jī’s posters which were also everywhere.

The big night was April 7th. I was really excited. We had put Śrīla Prabhupāda up in the *brahmacārī* quarters, redone with great finesse by Kūrma who had gotten some classic Victorian furniture on loan from a relative. The *vyāsāsana* was very artistically done by Śyāmānanda Dāsa who had had some experience in design and was later approached by Śrīla Prabhupāda for designing his future temples. The devotees who came with Śrīla Prabhupāda were Śyāmasundara (Mālatī’s former husband) and Nanda-kiśora, who sung very beautifully at the opening ceremonies in the Town Hall. The crowd was quite respectable. Many people came, particularly the young and Śrīla Prabhupāda sat on his *vyāsāsana* in the middle of the stage looking majestic. The sound system was good and the evening was dynamic. I ran upstairs to watch it from the balcony where I filmed the event.

After the lecture and questions, a *kīrtana* raged and things got out of control – people were dancing everywhere. Some came up on the stage and some, I was told, were even eating the flowers off the *vyāsāsana*. It was a grand success.

I must also mention that just prior to the lecture we were sitting with Śrīla Prabhupāda in the car with Śyāmasundara and a few others when Śrīla Prabhupāda was looking at the four and five storey buildings which he said we should buy! Anyway, we all went back to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s room after the event and watched as he took a light dinner and just listened to a playback of the lecture. The next morning Hanumān and I were called in to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s room when he asked if we had made the poster. We proudly confirmed the fact, but then he raised his eyebrows and asked us where his name was. We looked at each other and were at a loss. We had actually relied on the words ‘Jagat Guru’ as enough and were completely humbled when Śrīla Prabhupāda looked at us. Then with a nod of his head he smiled and said, “No matter, so many came”. We were off thehook and felt some relief.

In addition to the fabulously successful first time lecture to the city of Melbourne, we had also made contact with some Cistercian

Monks who lived on a farm outside the city. It was a Friday afternoon that we left St. Kilda with Śrīla Prabhupāda in the front seat and Mohānanda driving, if I remember correctly. It was actually a long drive and right in the middle of heavy traffic. Mohānanda asked if we should stop for gas and I thought it would be more delay and too upsetting for Śrīla Prabhupāda to sit longer, so I said no, since no one else knew where we were going.

We arrived around sunset and the monks came out to greet Śrīla Prabhupāda. One in particular had read his books and was moved, I think by Thomas Merton's comments to the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Later, Śrīla Prabhupāda revealed to us that the fellow was taking LSD.

The lecture began with all the monks listening quite attentively. I was also enthralled by the way in which Śrīla Prabhupāda had captured their minds and hearts. But, I also knew that we had no gas to go back. The tank was on empty. The monks were then allowed to question Śrīla Prabhupāda who then really poured the mercy. It was so moving that I had to force myself to go outside and with keys in hand, ask the first person I met where we could possibly get gas late at night out in the boondocks. To my utter surprise he said they had a bowser! They were using tractors so naturally they preferred their own gas station. I quickly drove over in the dark of the evening and filled up just as Śrīla Prabhupāda was sitting down to an evening repast of purple grapes and hot milk.

Śrīla Prabhupāda conversed with the 'LSD' monk and then got up to go. As we all got in the little five-seater when Śrīla Prabhupāda looked at Mohānanda, who was driving and asked in a kind of Bengali drawl, "so, there is gas?". When Mohānanda looked at the gauge he was aghast. How was it possible, he thought? He incredulously said, "Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda," and started the long journey back through all the little towns on the outskirts of Melbourne in the state of Victoria. In each town there was always a meat shop and one had the signboard reading, 'Quality Butcher', to which Śrīla Prabhupāda remarked, 'What is this quality?' We all laughed. It was late when we returned and all were in ecstasy.

Gaura-premānande haribol,

Swami Avadhūta
(aka Upānanda Dāsa)
Venice, CA

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your saving me in the darkest hour of my life. I feel blessed by Your Divine Grace that this feeling of gratitude accompanies me constantly in my activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is indeed the greatest blunder if someone does not acknowledge the good done to him by others. Amazingly, I came across the following quotation from the *Vāmana Purāṇa* that confirms this fact in a most graphic way:

Those who are ungrateful and thus condemned by people in general are always punishable. As Janārdana is the foremost of Lords, as the Himālayas are the best of mountains, as Sudarśana is the chief weapon, as Garuḍa is the foremost of birds, as the Gaṅgā is the best of all rivers, as Ananta is the chief of all serpents, as the lotus is the most glorious flower, as Nandana is the best of all celestial forests, as the abode of Brahmā is the best planet within the universe, as Agastya is the foremost of sages, as the moon is the foremost luminary in the sky, as the ocean is the greatest reservoir of water, as the brāhmaṇas are the best of human beings, as Kāñcī is the best of all cities, as the lion is the king of beasts, as the mango is the king of fruits, as the banyan is the foremost of trees, as Pārvatī is the best of all chaste women, as Vaitaraṇī is the most terrible hell, those who are ungrateful are the most heinous among sinners.

One can atone for the killing of a cow or a brāhmaṇa, but a person who does not acknowledge the good done to him by a friend or well-wisher cannot atone for that sin even in millions of years.

This feeling of gratitude and your blessings give me the strength to deliver your teachings to far-away countries. You might be pleased to hear that in the middle of Ulan Bator, the capital city of Mongolia, we acquired a piece of land and are planning to construct a temple there. The Mongolian devotees are very enthusiastic to translate

and print your books. More than fifteen titles have been printed so far, including *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and *Kṛṣṇa* book. All the devotees of the *Mongolian yātrā* are bowing down on this auspicious day to offer their gratitude to Your Divine Grace. Let your fame be spread all over the three worlds.

Your grateful servant,

Avināś Candra Bhaktivaibhava Swami

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

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

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

Śrī Garga-saṁhitā 1.1.6 states:

*śrī-śaunaka uvāca
satām paryaṭanaṁ dhanyaṁ ḡṛhinām śāntaye smṛtam
nṛṇām antas tamo-hārī sādhuḥ eva na bhāskarahaḥ*

“Śrī Śaunaka said: The auspicious travels of saintly devotees bring peace to those who stay at home. It is a saintly devotee, and not the sun, that removes the darkness in people’s hearts.”

Householders (*ḡṛhinām*) are generally enshrouded by thoughts of body, home, family, community, and national affairs. In this forgetfulness of life’s ultimate goal, they are sentenced to rebirth in the cycle of saṁsāra through 8, 400, 000 species of material bodies. It is indeed fortunate for them when a saintly person (*satām*) pays an unexpected visit, because this association may deliver the family members from this material world.

As Lord Ṛṣabhadeva explains, *mahaṭ-sevām dvāram āhur vimuktas*. One can attain the path of liberation from material bondage only by rendering service to highly advanced spiritual personalities (*mahātmās*—great souls).

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu confirms this:

‘sādhu-saṅga’, ‘sādhu-saṅga’—sarva-śāstre kaya

lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya

“The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment’s association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.”
(*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 22.54)

Sādhus (pure devotees) are very rare in this world, yet all the more valuable for that rarity. Anyone blessed by the inconceivable causeless mercy of the Lord and His pure devotees gains the highest perfection of life, namely, the chance to serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and then return to the transcendental abode called Goloka-dhāma. This opportunity descended upon the world recently when His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, a true mahātmā, sailed to the shores of the United States in 1965. Though uninvited and externally foreign, he brought a spiritual message that resonated with America’s youth. This joyful mission continues today as the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, which is expanding the spiritual ocean of *bhakti-yoga* to every town and village of the world.

Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira said to Vidura:

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

“My Lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified. Because you carry the Personality of Godhead within your heart, you turn all places into places of pilgrimage.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 1.13.10)

Since Śrīla Prabhupāda’s arrival, dozens of holy places of pilgrimage have emerged because saints make every place they walk a tīrtha, or holy place. Not only that, but saints bring Kṛṣṇa in different forms, such as the Deity form (*arcā-vigraha*), the holy name (*nāma-rūpa*), and the scriptures (Vedas). Thus there are now holy temples of Kṛṣṇa and places where His pastimes have been enacted, such as those of Lord Jagannātha riding on His Ratha-yātrā carts in cities like San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, and Toronto.

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
ahaṁ bhakta-parādhīno hy asvatantra iva dvija
sādhubhir grasta-hṛdayo bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyaḥ*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead said to the brāhmaṇa: I am completely under the control of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent. Because My devotees are completely devoid of material desires, I sit only within the cores of their hearts. What to speak of My devotee, even those who are devotees of My devotee are very dear to Me.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 9.4.63)

This assurance given by Lord Nārāyaṇa—“What to speak of My devotee, even those who are devotees of My devotee are very dear to Me”—should be especially pleasing to the followers of Śrī la Prabhupāda because of his impeccable character and devotion.

By studying His Divine Grace’s commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, we get the light (*purāṇa-arkaḥ*) by which we can comprehend other Vedic scriptures. It is only by his causeless mercy, which includes the combined kindness of Brahmā himself as well as the ācāryas in his line, that we are proceeding with this work of presenting Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world by a cooperative venture among many devotees.

This grateful servant humbly takes the lotus feet of his beloved spiritual master upon his head.

Dānavīr Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

You kindly taught us that human life begins with spiritual pursuits, preparing for dying properly. Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja stated that the most amazing thing in this world is that most do not prepare for death, but try to make a permanent residence here.

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

Every day, hundreds and millions of living entities go to the kingdom of death. Still, those who are remaining aspire for a permanent situation. What could be more wonderful than this?

[*Mahābhārata, Vana-parva* 313. 116]

Recently I have been thinking more seriously about my inevitable death. Many of your disciples are leaving their bodies. In the past year two of your very dear and prominent disciples, Gopī parāṇadhana Dāsa and Yamunā Devī Dāsī were called away from us. All of us became absorbed in remembering their sublime qualities and dedication to serving your mission. I found great bliss in hearing about their qualities and service. That was very purifying in that I realized more how much I am not ready, not having done much loving service.

I recalled the *Īśopaniṣad*, verses 17 and 18

*vāyur anilam amṛtam athedaṁ bhasmāntaṁ śarīram
oṁ krato smara kṛtaṁ smara krato smara kṛtaṁ smara*

Let this temporary body be burnt to ashes, and let the air of life be merged with the totality of air. Now, O my Lord, please remember all my sacrifices, and because You are the ultimate beneficiary, please remember all that I have done for You.

*agne naya supathā rāye asmān viśvāni deva vayunāni vidvān
yuyodhy asmaj juhurāṇam eno bhūyiṣṭhāṁ te nama-uktiṁ vid-
hema*

O my Lord, as powerful as fire, O omnipotent one, now I offer You all obeisances, falling on the ground at Your feet. O my Lord, please lead me on the right path to reach You, and since You know all that I have done in the past, please free me from the reactions to my past sins so that there will be no hindrance to my progress.

Although I recite these śloka almost daily, I have only recently seriously contemplated them. I am a fool who although always talks about surety of death, I live like I am not aware that at any minute my time may come.

I am understanding more and more that my entire life is only due to your mercy. Kindly let me take these prayers to heart and dedicate my life for your pleasure so that when death comes I will be depending upon your mercy.

It seems you are calling many of your best to join you in your mission somewhere else. When my time comes I pray to be begging for the association of your followers who will beg you to have mercy on me.

Your aspiring servant,

Kavicandra Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

With gratitude we join the large chorus of millions of voices who glorify you on your divine appearance day. The three worlds resound as humans, devotees and others recite your numerous qualities with joy in their hearts. They all know that a pure devotee of the Lord who is 100% surrendered to the will of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is extremely rare and only he can fulfill the purpose of creation: to bring fallen souls back to their original God consciousness. Such a liberated soul is no longer subject to the laws of *karma*.

*na karma-bandhanaṁ janma
vaiṣṇavānāṁ ca vidyate
viṣṇur anucarataṁ hi
mokṣam āhur manīṣiṇaḥ*

A Vaiṣṇava does not take birth under the jurisdiction of karmic law. His birth and disappearance are transcendental. The wise have declared that the servants of Viṣṇu are eternally engaged in the liberated service of the Lord and therefore free from the laws of material nature. (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, 10. 113, taken from *Padma Purāṇa*)

Your main tool in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness was to engage the fallen souls in chanting the holy names. In your own words:

I have not come to teach you, but only to request you to please chant the name of God. So our request to all, we are requesting all over the world the same thing, “Please chant this Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, be cleansed in your consciousness and understand your spiritual identity.”

This year, when I visited Śrīvāsa Aṅgam where the *kīrtana* of Mahāprabhu started, I was overcome with gratitude towards you. As we were reading from the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* about those ear-

ly nocturnal *kīrtanas* I could see how you have kindly taken the chanting out of India and distributed it all over the world.

I remembered a film of you in Tompkins Square Park, New York, where you chanted unassumingly under a tree surrounded by hundreds of curious young Americans. Suddenly, the movie showed how you briefly opened your eyelids – I was struck by the tremendous power which burst forth. It was clear, you were just about to fulfil a big vision: you were releasing a flood wave of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mercy which was soon to spread its influence all over the world. Not only were you recruiting new devotees – no, you wanted them to be part of Śrī Caitanya’s and your mission!

The main means in the mission:

Once, towards the end of His stay in this world, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu explained this mission in a nutshell. He told Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāmānanda Rāya what He considered to be the main means of attaining *kṛṣṇa-prema*:

“By performing congregational chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, one can destroy the sinful condition of material existence, purify the unclean heart and awaken all varieties of devotional service. The result of chanting is that one awakens his love for Kṛṣṇa and tastes transcendental bliss. Ultimately, one attains the association of Kṛṣṇa and engages in His devotional service, as if immersing himself in a great ocean of love.” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 20, 13-14)

In His manifest *līlās* Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had first trained His devotees in closed quarters here at Śrīvāsa Aṅgam. No outsiders to *bhakti* were allowed in the *kīrtanas* – not even the stepmother of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura.

After some time the devotees were requested to engage in *kīrtana* in their own homes. The Muslim government became alert and threatened to violently stop all further *kīrtana*. They would not tolerate the spreading of Hinduism. This was not a threat which could be ignored easily – the invaders were known for their tortures – they had proven on numerous occasions that they would not even spare saints from the most painful punishments one could imagine. Mahāprabhu’s response was one of full defiance: He called hundreds of thousands together and led them in an impressive *saṅkī*

rtana procession down the banks of the Gaṅgā to the house of the governor, Chand Kazi, and made him His follower. Mahāprabhu's followers then took the Kazi's sign – a moon which was slim on both sides, and put a *vaiṣṇava-tilaka* over it. Everyone thus knew – the problem had been overcome. Later Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu declared: Those who chant in *kīrtana* are protected by the Sudarśana-*cakra* of the Lord.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you also chanted in closed quarters in the early days with your early followers. You wanted to make them strong and fortify them against inner and outer obstacles. Then you sent them out all over the world trusting that Kṛṣṇa would protect your “Hare Kṛṣṇa people”.

From time to time you called us to your shelter, during festivals like Ratha-yātrā or when you visited our various countries. In your lectures you always placed your main emphasis on the chanting of the Lord's holy names. The message was clear: “Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. That's all.” You would often raise your hands and crowds of devotees and people would get wild and dance in abandon.

Once during a well visited public program in Koenigstein, Germany, one visitor got upset with the enthusiasm of the singing devotees and challenged you, “This chanting is self hypnosis!” Calmly you replied, “No, it's self purification.”

On your appearance day I would like to request a blessing from you. O most merciful master – please cast a compassionate glance at me. Somehow you named me Śacīnandana Dāsa, a name of Śrī Caitanya. I can understand more and more that the chanting of the holy names is your most valuable gift. Please ignore my numerous disqualifications and engage me more and more in your and Śrī Caitanya's mission to spread the holy name. For this end I beg you to empower my dry heart so that I can chant the holy name with love and affection. Then my efforts will have effect and I may please you so that you smile happily in my direction. That's all I want.

With lots of gratitude,

Your humble servant,

Śacīnandana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace. All glories to your service to the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Somehow I have had the good fortune to be connected to your lotus feet. Out of your causeless mercy you accepted me as your disciple and brought me to your spiritual family, formally known as ISKCON but more commonly as the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. When I joined the society I could never have thought that forty years down the road I would still be wearing a *dhofī* and sporting a *sīkhā*, what to speak of being a traveling preacher. I

Your society has been through many changes over the years, but a lot of things remain as they were when you introduced them to us. We are glad to say that there is still the Sunday Feast and the occasional *harināma saṅkīrtana* party. Devotees somehow or other still manage to go out and distribute books, your Deities are still being worshiped, and *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* continues to make our life worthwhile.

For several years now I have been spending the first two months of the year in Māyāpur, giving classes as part of Bhakti-śāstrī and Bhakti-vaibhava courses. I very much appreciate this opportunity to make a detailed study of your books, and I find the Māyāpur atmosphere very conducive to this service. Students from around the world attend the classes and diligently apply themselves to the rigorous study schedule, generating a pure and powerful atmosphere.

This year Māyāpur hosted an innovative one-week leadership conference, and more than three hundred senior devotees from around the globe attended, voicing their hopes and doubts regarding the future of ISKCON. The theme for the conference was very apt: “More Devotees, Happier Devotees.” We all hope we can see this theme realized in the coming years. In three seminars we heard from learned Vaiṣṇavas of the importance of keeping Your Divine Grace as the central and highest of all our spiritual authorities. Provided we can keep this as the main theme of our movement, we will be strong and united, but if we neglect this principle, our movement

will be easily divided.

I would like to also mention to Your Divine Grace something regarding the Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*, which continues to attract large numbers of devotees to the annual Gaura Pūrṇimā festival. This year we had 6, 000 devotees on *parikramā*, in four groups. There was a Bengali party of 2, 500, a Russian party of 1, 000, a Hindi-speaking party of 1, 000, and an international party of 1, 500. Next year will be the 25th anniversary of this program, and we hope to have 10, 000 devotees take part. This would equal the number of devotees who took part in the *parikramās* performed by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda in the early 1900s.

You often said that it was the desire of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura that a great temple for the worship of Lord Gaurāṅga be established in Māyāpur. Now we are seeing the rapid manifestation of this great temple, which will be known as the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium. The construction is well under way, and if all goes as planned the Deities will move into the temple at the 2016 Gaura Pūrṇimā festival, the same year that marks the fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of ISKCON. The temple is already attracting more and more pilgrims to Māyāpur, and we can hardly imagine how wonderful the completed temple will be. However, the magnificent temple also reminds us that we owe so much to Your Divine Grace. Whatever we offer to you can never begin to repay you for all you have given us. Please allow me to never forget that.

Please keep me always under the shade of your lotus feet.

Your insignificant servant,

Tridaṇḍi Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Mahārāja

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please accept my 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-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, whether I really humbly bow down at your feet I am not sure. What is humility? You are the example of humility, as you said you never diverted from the order of your spiritual master, you just repeated the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness as it comes down through the chain of *guru-paramparā*. You said that is your credit.

So humbly follow your instructions, but in your preaching, you were bold. To boldly follow your instructions, your directions, your example. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I cannot compare with you. Thus I bow my head at your feet.

The dust of your lotus like feet. Was I ever close to that dust? In some ways I was. For me the dust of your feet was your speech. Those special moments when I actually was with you on your morning walks, they were not many, but some. And those precious times I could listen to your lectures, as you were sitting on the *vyāsāsana*. Then there was nothing else to think about or worry about. I was at your feet, in the dust of your feet. For me that is you.

There were those who actually were close to you and served you personally. That service I was not qualified for, or not required for. But by your mercy I had my personal service to you. There was *saṅkīrtana*, *harināma*, book distribution, and other preaching and service. That was my personal service to you. I took it personally.

There were moments I wanted to write you a letter, but I did not, I was too shy. What would have happened if I had written those letters? But Śrīla Prabhupāda I did write one letter to you, I am happy for that. And I guess you were as well. That letter made a difference.

I got initiation, you accepted me as your initiated disciple.

Thank you for that Śrīla Prabhupāda. Maybe that letter was enough, one drop, one significant drop, of your mercy.

Sometimes it feels as if you are nearby and then I cry. You are my spiritual father, you nourish me spiritually. But sometimes I am far away, but one day, who can say, I will pay my obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet and say, “here I am, thank you for bringing me back”.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I believe you remember us all. All those who remember you are remembered by you. In your mind, in your heart there is a place for me as well. In that place I like to pay my obeisances to you, listen to you and serve you forever. And Kṛṣṇa will not be far away, to be served and loved.

In the mornings, we are reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The verse for the day, with its translation and purport. Through your translations and purports we are getting close to you and Kṛṣṇa, *nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā*, may it go on forever. To forever pay my obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet.

Your attempting servant,

Smita Kṛṣṇa Swami

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

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

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, today is your auspicious appearance day, a day when we joyfully celebrate your appearance and try to understand your greatness. Also, on this special day we remember what you have done to bring people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and how you have taught us to serve a guru. We are unlimitedly indebted to you and pray that we can do some service for you. Please accept my humble obeisances.

In *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and many other places in your books you state that bhakti means “devotional service.” As the spiritual master for all your followers, you gave general instructions concerning devotional service, but you also gave personal instructions to many. I would like to tell you the services I am doing for your pleasure according to your personal instructions to me, as far as I remember them. I have traveled within India and other countries, such as Bangladesh, as per your instructions. In addition, I have also visited Singapore, as well as Indonesia and some of its many islands, along with Malaysia. The devotees in these countries, being humble and submissive, have been very encouraging and inspiring to work with.

Preaching In Indonesia

As a part of my preaching programs in Indonesia, I have started festivals like the Ciḍā-dadhi Festival in Bali and Sulawesi, which attracted many devotees from different islands and different temples. Many devotees were very much enthused, and they worked throughout the night prior to the festival, cooking and preparing *prasādam*. Many of the devotees joyfully heard Lord Nityānanda Prabhu’s pastimes. Now all the devotees wish to conduct this festival every year.

I was invited by one of the biggest bookstores in Indonesia, Gramedia, where they arranged interactive sessions on your *Bhaga-*

vad-gītā—large-scale programs in their biggest outlets in Bali and Surabaya. I and the devotees with me had a great opportunity to preach and to distribute your books, especially your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, as well as to distribute *prasādam*. The programs were very successful and given good media coverage. In particular, the *Jawa Post*, one of the most prominent newspapers in Indonesia, published an article glorifying your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and its circulation around the world. I have been invited to preach and to distribute books in Gramedia’s outlets in other cities also. They expressed their desire to arrange such programs for me whenever I visit Indonesia.

In Bali I was invited by some of the well-known schools, where we held successful programs and interacted with the students. I was also invited to give a presentation at a conference organized by the Indonesian branch of the Bhaktivedanta Institute, held at the Udyana University, in Denpasar. Many professors (local and international) and students from various departments attended this conference. Many took your books and highly appreciated your teachings. I am sure this pleases you, because as we distribute these books to the educated people, common people will follow suit and become attracted to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Now the devotees in Bali are gradually becoming enthusiastic and are coming out of their “mouse-holes,” as you said in one of your prayers. Our whole Society is a preaching movement. We are all about distributing books, the holy name, and *prasādam* and making devotees. The devotees in Bali began a program in a big park in the city where many people gather. The devotees do *saṅkīrtana*, and many people who come to the park are attracted. I personally attended this weekend *saṅkīrtana* program, which included book and *prasādam* distribution. The *gṛhastha* devotees contribute significantly toward the *prasādam* distribution *sevā*. Many interested men and women are joining, in increasing numbers. Gradually the Bali devotees have increased this park *saṅkīrtana* to twice a week, and recently I was informed that they will begin doing it three times a week. I am sure this pleases you, because the *brahmacārīs*, *gṛhasthas*, and *mātājīs* are all joining in and chanting and dancing in the center of the city and attracting many new people to our movement and philosophy.

From Bali I went to Sulawesi (another big island of Indonesia), where the devotees conducted a Ratha-yātrā. They successfully

organized the first Ratha-yātrā in Sulawesi, and the ratha was built by the devotees themselves. Also, this year in Jakarta the first Ratha-yātrā festival was held. The GBC of Indonesia, His Holiness Kavicandra Mahārāja, attended the festival to inspire the devotees. A huge number of people attended this Ratha-yātrā and joined the devotees in chanting and dancing. The devotees also distributed books and *prasādam*. The devotees will now conduct this Ratha-yātrā festival in Jakarta every year. Top Government officials, including the governor of Jakarta, attended the function. Although the governor was seeing the chariot of Lord Jagannātha, as well as the Lord Himself, for the first time, he was full of praise for how the devotees had nicely decorated the ratha and the Deities. He also highly appreciated the way our devotees conducted the procession.

This is all by your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I simply want to be your insignificant humble instrument so as to fulfill your desires, to make you and Lord Jagannātha pleased.

Preaching in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh most of my preaching was concentrated in colleges and universities. At one such program, held at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, in Dhaka, we got a very good response from the students, many of whom took your books and expressed their appreciation again and again. A similar program for the public was held at Mirpur. In Bhramanbaria, our local devotees there arranged very nice school and college programs; both students and the teachers became very much enlivened after attending our PowerPoint presentations depicting your message, as given in your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. We did good book distribution there, and the heads of the schools and colleges were so much pleased that they invited us to come every time we visit Bangladesh.

We also had a nice seminar at Barisal Digha Girls' College. Some of our devotees, namely, Jayarāma Dāsa, Anantadeva Dāsa, and Tulasī Dāsa, took the initiative to start preaching activities, especially book distribution, at Netrakona, and because of their sincere efforts and support from the ISKCON authorities in Bangladesh, they were able to conduct the first Ratha-yātrā in the area. The nine-day festival was well received by the locals. Indeed, everybody appreciated our prasadam distribution, slide shows, and book

distribution.

Narayanganj was the last leg of our trip. We had a program at the local Nāmaḥaṭṭa center and distributed a large number of books. The whole temple hall was packed with devotees. In the Marine Technology Institute, around fifty students gathered to listen to my talk on Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and many received your books, started chanting, and are now filling up their sādhana charts.

Preaching in India

I was invited to attend the Bhaktivedanta Institute conference in one of the most prestigious venues in India, the Vijnana Bhavan, in New Delhi. The program was organized by the disciples of His Holiness Bhakti Swarūpa Dāmodara Swami. This conference was attended by the president of India, Her Excellency Smt. Pratibha Patil, and many students from all parts of India also attended. It was a very successful conference, and the event was given good media coverage. In attendance at the function were Nobel laureate Werner Arber (the “father of biochemistry”) and P.B. Sharma, vice chancellor of the Delhi Technological University. The local GBC secretary, His Holiness Gopāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami, was also among the invited dignitaries, and he spoke at the occasion. Thereafter I was invited to another Bhaktivedanta Institute conference, at Utkal University, in Bhubaneswar, which was attended by Richard R. Ernst, a Nobel laureate in chemistry, and the King of Puri, Gajapati Dibyasingha Deb. Many college and university students from the local universities also took part in the seminar. Book distribution and *prasādam* distribution were two of the main parts of the function. I am very pleased to see that the disciples of Bhakti Swarūp Dāmodar Mahārāja are doing their best to continue his mission of glorifying you by preaching to the scientists, for I know that this pleases you very much.

Your insignificant servant,

Subhāg Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet, along with this humble attempt to praise you on this most auspicious day of your divine appearance.

Every morning, for some time now, I have been relishing reading and discussing at length your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with another devotee. It is indeed our favorite part of the day, for nothing else can compare to the transcendental artistry with which you reveal the beauty of Kṛṣṇa, the workings of *māyā*, and the glories of devotional service. Your vision, your humor, your wit, your intellect, your compassion, your conviction, your joy, your determination, your love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa—all spring forth and dance for us on every page.

Not only is hearing from you the sweetest nectar, but churning that nectar with others makes it even sweeter. It is said in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.25.25): “In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart.” You are that pure devotee in whose association we are blessed to be, whose words guide our *kathā* and inspire our realizations. As you have said, “Read and speak from the books, and so many new lights will come out.” (Letter, 16 June 1972) And elsewhere, “To hear and explain them is more important than reading them. One can assimilate the knowledge of the revealed scriptures only by hearing and explaining.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.6, purport). From the newest devotee to the most advanced, and even for those inquiring for the first time, anyone who sincerely hears your words, deliberates on them, and speaks his understanding feels the light of Kṛṣṇa consciousness brightening his life.

You have said that your purports are your devotional ecstasies and that Kṛṣṇa, not you, wrote your books. Day after day, week after week, year after year you dictated as your Lord spoke, your heart and His linked in a love that would manifest in your writings and liberate all those who sought refuge in them.

I was one such seeker of that refuge—a desperate one at that—

having for lifetimes been bound, dragged, and beaten by the ropes of illusion. You found me drowning in misery, reached out your hand, hoisted me up, and gave me sanctuary in your lifeboat of transcendental knowledge. How exhausted I had been after such a long journey of sin, suffering, and bewilderment! And how much relief I felt when you began filling my heart with your words, my life with devotee association, and my belly with *prasādam*.

As I witness the plight of all the sad and frightened souls presently in Kali's grasp, I am often reminded of that same despair I was feeling before being blessed with your mercy. And I reflect: What could be more foolish than to allow oneself to again become overwhelmed by the glare of *māyā*, to let go of your hand and fall headlong back into the miserable ocean of illusion? As senseless as that might sound, because I am still a child in spiritual life I must be vigilant to never underestimate the extent of *māyā's* craftiness and any propensity for foolhardiness that could still be lingering in my heart. My reverent prayer, therefore, is that you protect this otherwise helpless soul by blessing me to continue drinking, relishing, and sharing the elixir of your enlightened words, for they are my only hope and the only salvation for this parched and forlorn world.

Your insignificant servant,

Guṇagrāhi Dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Because you are so dear to Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa has been so patient with me and kind to me, your otherwise unqualified servant. Only because of you can I now see that Kṛṣṇa has been carefully making some intricate arrangement to purify my grimey heart these last few years. Therefore this year I am again able to offer you a Vyāsa-pūjā homage on your your divine appearance day. I am ashamed that I lapsed writing one for two years.

Without your words and personality—especially hearing your lectures every day—I would have been lost. Your words are always so fresh and revealing, beckoning me to try for perfection, going back to Godhead. Your conviction and faith are so comforting to me. Your boldness is so exhilarating and dynamic. Your softness and humility are so endearing and exemplary. Your personality is so fatherly. Your wit is so penetrating and revealing. Your knowledge, which is always completely true to Kṛṣṇa’s words, always corrects me or confirms my realizations and thoughts. Without your words, there would be no hope for me. I met you in your words four decades ago, and you are still with me. In fact, you seem to be coming closer and closer to me.

For example, since I am often trying to preach in Africa these days, these words of yours during question time after your class on *Bhagavad-gītā* 7.2, spoken in Nairobi on October 28, 1975, are very striking and pertinent to me:

Indian man: But Kṛṣṇa has not given you power as guru?

Prabhupāda: Yes, yes.

Indian man: So you can show?

Prabhupāda: So I am not so powerful that I can show the *viśva-rūpa*. He has given me this power, that “You go and speak to the foolish rascals that I am *Bhagavān*.” [laughter] That much power. Yes. That is my power. I can say to you that “Kṛṣṇa is *Bhagavān*.” That’s all. I never become equal to Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you so much for saving me. Please continue to have mercy on me through your words and example so that till I leave this world I can continue trying to follow in your footsteps as an ISKCON *sannyāsī* preaching Kṛṣṇa’s glories.

Your unworthy servant,

Mahā-Viṣṇu Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It is important for all members of ISKCON to recognize that they have a deep, personal, direct connection with you. Whether one is a *dīkṣā* disciple of yours or a *dīkṣā* disciple of one of your disciplic descendants, the connection is there. Every ISKCON devotee has an equal opportunity to take shelter of you, understand you, and serve you directly.

So that we may all take advantage of this opportunity, you have given us service to your mission and service to your *vāṇī*.

Service to your mission means to remain a faithful member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and endeavor to the best of one's capacity to assist in the spreading of this organization in a way that pleases you.

In your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.51 you state:

In conclusion, if a disciple is very serious to execute the mission of the spiritual master, he immediately associates with the Supreme Personality of Godhead by *vāṇī* or *vapuḥ*. This is the only secret of success in seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Instead of being eager to see the Lord in some bush of *Vṛndāvana* while at the same time engaging in sense gratification, if one instead sticks to the principle of following the words of the spiritual master, he will see the Supreme Lord without difficulty.

Service to your *vāṇī* requires regular study of your books, recorded teachings, letters, and other transcendental sounds that have ema-

nated from your lotus mouth. Also, studying your pastimes while you were with us is service to your *vāṇī*.

You have told us many times that the connection through sound vibration is most important:

Physical presence is immaterial; presence of the transcendental sound received from the spiritual master should be the guidance of life. That will make our spiritual life successful. [Letter to Brahmānanda, Hayagrīva, Kīrtanānanda, Satsvarūpa, Gargamuni, Acyutānanda, Jadurāṇī, 19 January, 1967]

We are not separated actually. There are two—*vāṇī* or *vāpu*. So *vapuḥ* is physical presence and *vāṇī* is presence by the vibration, but they are all the same. So Kṛṣṇa when He was physically present before Arjuna is the same when He is present before us by His *vāṇī* of *Bhagavad-gītā*. So far I am concerned, I do not factually feel any separation from my spiritual master because I am trying to serve him according to his desire. That should be the motto. If you kindly try to fulfill my mission for which you have been sent there, that will be our constant association. [Letter to Haṁsadūta, 22 June 1970]

Form is called *vapuḥ* and teachings is called *vāṇī*. Both should be worshiped. *Vāṇī* is more important than *vapu*. [Letter to Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa, 14th December, 1972]

There are two ways of associating, by *vāṇī* and by *vāpu*. *Vāṇī* means words and *vapu* means physical presence. Physical presence is sometimes appreciable and sometimes not. Therefore we should take advantage of the *vāṇī*, not the physical presence, because the *vāṇī* continues to exist eternally. [Letter to Śuci, 4 November 1975]

I pray that you give me the ability and intelligence to facilitate devotees in establishing a profound relationship with you. That will be my success in serving you.

Your servant,

Bīr Krishna Dāsa Goswami

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

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

“The special qualification of the pure devotee is that he is always thinking of Kṛṣṇa without deviation and without considering the time or place. There should be no impediments. He should be able to carry out his service anywhere and at any time. Some say that the devotee should remain in holy places like Vṛndāvana or some holy town where the Lord lived, but a pure devotee can live anywhere and create the atmosphere of Vṛndāvana by his devotional service.” (*Bhagavad-gītā* 8.14, purport)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you certainly exhibited the pure devotee’s “special qualification.” We are awed and encouraged by your example. What an ācārya you are! Nothing could impede your service—neither age nor physical debilities, the apathy of your countrymen, philosophical or legal opposition, the good-willed reticence of Sumati Morarji, the objections and bureaucracy of government agencies, or the frailties, failings, and even mutinies of your fledgling disciples. Your mind fixated on your Gurudeva’s order, you set your sights on the devotional potential of all jīvas of the world, setting into motion a “revolution in the impious life of a misdirected civilization.” Your unwavering determination and resolution swept us up in their powerful wake and remain to this day the force behind the spread of the modern Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

Vyavasāya-ātmikā buddhiḥ eka: fixed on one goal. To be so thoroughly one-pointed requires an “unflinching trust in something sublime.” Thus, *śraddhā* is at the root of resolute purpose, which is itself founded on knowledge and realization: *vāsudevaḥ sarvam*. The first installment of this realization is the attainment of *brahma-bhūtaḥ*, which is the result of *avyabhicāriṇi-bhakti*. So where do we start? It is by the dispensation of divine grace. As you once said, “We are their good fortune!”

The theory of chance can best be explained in the Vedic literature by the words *ajñāta-sukṛti*, which refer to pious

activities performed without the actor's knowledge. But these are also planned. For example, Kṛṣṇa comes like an ordinary human being, He comes as a devotee like Lord Caitanya, or He sends His representative, the spiritual master, or pure devotee. This is also the planned activity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They come to canvass and educate, and thus a person in the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord gets a chance to mix with them, talk with them, and take lessons from them, and somehow or other if a conditioned soul surrenders to such personalities and by intimate association with them chances to become Kṛṣṇa conscious, he is saved from the material conditions of life. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.21.27, purport]

Lord Kṛṣṇa's supreme will is channeled through the disciplic succession—in our case, the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya line. It has descended through millennia, protected by an unbreakable chain of ācāryas, reconfirmed and reinvigorated by the Original Speaker in the *bhāva* of his most Beloved, culminating in its worldwide propagation by the pioneers of the modern age—Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and his illustrious disciple/son, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. It was Śrīla Bhaktivinoda's vision which was activated by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta and expanded beyond all boundaries and expectations by Your Divine Grace.

You humbly said that you had no qualification, no learning or wealth—simply an aging, humble, *vānaprastha*-turned-*sannyāsī* trying to directly execute your Gurudeva's order after repeated, aborted attempts to secure financing in the pharmaceutical industry. But since you were buoyed by a tenacious conviction (captured in your famous *sannyāsa*-initiation photo), all obstacles became like floating steppingstones to support your magical march. In one sense, anyone could have done what you did (provided they were empowered by *kṛṣṇa-śakti*). But you didn't just fantasize—you actually did it! Only you had the unshakeable faith that to attempt to execute the order of the Spiritual Master—successful or not—was the disciple's sole purpose, and was virtually tantamount to God realization:

When one becomes serious to follow the mission of the spiritual master, his resolution is tantamount to seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As explained before, this means meeting the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the

instruction of the spiritual master. This is technically called *vāṇī-sevā*. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura states in his *Bhagavad-gītā* commentary on the verse *vyavasāyātmikā buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana* (*Bg.* 2.41) that one should serve the words of the spiritual master. The disciple must stick to whatever the spiritual master orders. Simply by following on that line, one sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.51 purport]

So, with this consideration I continue my efforts to assist your mission by connecting as many souls as possible to your matchless mercy. I certainly have no qualification—no taste for *kṛṣṇa-kathā* and practically no ability to chant the holy names. Worse still, I am of feeble faith. But somehow I am inspired to act as your instrument, and this is sustaining my hope that the Lord may one of these lifetimes be inclined to attend to my plight and offer me some insignificant service in His eternal *līlā*.

Praying that you keep dragging me along, I remain your crippled servant,

Gaṇapati Dāsa Swami

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

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

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I sit pondering what to write this year. An account of the years' efforts. A glorification of your Movement and the devotees serving you. Glorification of your unlimited achievements. A philosophical presentation. A muse of your mood and mission or how it should be. My memories of you. However it seems this year I need to shed something from my heart. Who else can I turn to other than you Śrī la Prabhupāda?

Whatever the contents, the most significant aspect of Vyāsa-pūjā for me is that it is a time to remember you. It is a time to look deep into my heart. How much am I putting you in the centre of my life, connecting everything to you and genuinely recognising that I exist merely by your mercy?

To be honest, for most of the year I barely remember you. I plough on with so-called service with little consciousness, gratitude or dedication to you, what to speak of living for your pleasure.

Even during your personal presence I practically avoided getting too close to you and justified my behaviour in the guise of 'better to serve the mission'. Sometimes I regret missing out on the opportunity to spend more time in your presence on your many visits to the UK.

I look back nearly 40 years ago to sitting on the lawn at the Bhaktivedanta Manor. I would like to write that it was with you, during your many months of grace throughout the summer of the dream like year of 1973. But that is not the case, nor is it my thought Śrīla Prabhupāda, since I was not there during those magical moments.

What I am remembering is a time when tears were coming from my eyes, not out of the ecstasy of being with you, but out of a feeling of hopelessness. I could see little light on the horizon. I felt I had let you down. My aspirations as a fledgling devotee seemed to be reaching a stand still. I pondered my future. Is there any hope for me? At that time I felt you showed me, as you are always more than ready to do so, your causeless mercy. Somehow I picked up the Vaiṣṇava song book and opened to the song ‘*Gurudeva*’. It puzzles me why this song has become almost a theme song for anyone but you and when we sing it, you get the vibe that is not to be sung for you.

My mind became fixed on the meaning. Suddenly, I was transferred to another world – no longer wallowing in my failure and sorrows. I felt your overwhelming presence like a loving parent, caressing and allaying the fears of its child. I repeated the words over and over meditating on you.

Today again, as I write these few words, I reflect on the same subject. I bludgeon on in my unconscious-like way, existing on what I consider my own strengths. This last year has forced open a door in my blocked tunnel – painful that it is. It is far from open yet. Am I again going to resort to my closed shop approach and intellectualize the situation to my own suiting? When will that day come when I embrace the humble path of surrendering to the truth of dependence and not the illusion of relative independence? It’s a challenge of faith – there is need of adjustment.

“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.”

Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda, if I were truly humble I could take that mercy you are showering on us. To be always conscious of your presence in every step, freed of selfish motivations and desires to enjoy in gross and subtle ways.

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

When will that day come when I will offer you respects with my entire being and not just some ritualistic lip service. Even my so called taking shelter of the holy name is more of an egotistical exhibition aimed at impressing others, with no genuine devotion to you or the name.

“O Lord and Master! When will such mercy fall to this one who is weak and devoid of intelligence? Allow me to be with you.”

Answer: Whenever you sincerely want it – it is there, just take it.

But I am devoid of intelligence and am surely weak. Śrīla Prabhupāda you are not stopping anyone being with you. It is only my own self-centred foolishness that is the block. I still want to be seen in the centre.

“If you examine me, you will find no qualities. Your mercy is all that I am made of. If you are not merciful unto me, I can only weep, and I will not be able to maintain my life.”

Please do not examine me, my mind says. Take it on face value. But I am full of qualities. Yes – the qualities of a fool. In truth I am nothing without your mercy. You are more than willing to be merciful, even to a hog like person as myself, but I continue to grunt and search for the stool of name, fame, adoration and distinction. Who is to blame? I continue to think I know what is best for your institution, instead of seeing your institution is best for me. I continue to find faults in others, whilst tactfully avoiding surrendering myself. I lazily expect others to do it for me, blame them if they don't and minimize them if they do. My devious intelligence constantly tries to convince me that 'it alone is right'. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I see envy lurking at every step, as I do not give what you have given me. I am a miser and thus miserable.

I do not pray to you. I do not glorify you. I fail to read your books sufficiently and have become too lax in following the *sādhana* programme. I rarely instruct others as to the way you have taught. I have little faith or devotion. I want followers but not to, myself, follow. I want others to serve me but not to serve them.

What a hopeless self-indulging case. I could go on and on. The list would never end. Anyway, I have wasted your and others' time enough. Now is the time to use this life to bring pleasure to you instead of consternation. Now more than ever is the time to take shelter of your mercy and get on with it. How will I utilize whatever is left of this meagre life?

There is so much mercy to get and give. I hope that one day I will be humble and immerse myself in the dust of your lotus feet. When will I take the glorious opportunity of assisting you in expanding your movement instead of "Mine"? I hope that one day I will be an instrument for you to play. I hope that one day I will surrender. I hope that one day I will hear the Gāyatrī and the holy name. I hope that one day I will show respect to others and not desire respect for myself. I hope that one day I will genuinely serve the devotees and give up my false ego. I hope that one day I will love you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Only then is there any hope for this hopeless charade of a devotee. "Hope against hope" at least this one day there is hope.

Almost 40 years later I again sit, I am sorry to say without tears in my eyes, reflecting on the meaning of 'Gurudeva'. How much I have offended you and your mission and your devotees over the years, despite my own paltry contribution.

What type of offering is this? Śrīla Prabhupāda please forgive me. The offering I hope to make is my life. May I truly become grateful and at every moment recognize the true greatness of your mercy. This is your miracle and your glory that you have allowed someone of the likes of myself a place at your lotus feet.

It is an amazing testimony to your unlimited mercy that such a deceitful person as I am is still allowed the chance to associate with your mission. Please do not kick me away. Thank you for the opportunity to remember you on your Vyāsa-pūjā.

Your servant,

Janānanda Goswami

Śrīla Prabhupāda left this world in Vṛndāvana, from where he initially reached out to us. He left the world while absorbed in translating and commenting on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam's* *Brahmā-vimohana-līlā*. In this *līlā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa planned a picnic lunch, a well-known painting of which Śrīla Prabhupāda was so fond of. It is here—in this *līlā*, longing to go to Govardhana—that Prabhupāda's *brhad-mṛdaṅga* was silenced, not by any external influence, but by the blessing of Śrī Kṛṣṇa inviting him to lunch.

Bhāva is characterized by longing, longing well deserved, arising as it does out of *śraddhā* and *śaraṇāgati*. We see this kind of *bhāva* in Śrīla Prabhupāda, whose surrender was not partial but whole-sale. Glimpsing by his mercy alone the direction of his spiritual destination, may we all be humbled to fall flat in *śaraṇāgati* at his lotus feet. May we be showered by Śrīla Prabhupāda's infinite mercy, and may we one day be called to share some of Kṛṣṇa's *lāḍḍu* and *kacaurīs* with him.

Some time ago, I was asked, “How do we know if Śrīla Prabhupāda was a pure devotee? We can argue whether he was in this *rasa* or that but isn't it possible he wasn't in any *rasa* at all?” After thanking the questioner for the opportunity to glorify my eternal preceptor, Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, I replied as follows:

‘The scripture speaks to us about pure devotees (*śuddha-bhaktas*). They may be either practicing or perfected. It is apparent from your question that you are concerned about Prabhupāda's perfection: “Is Prabhupāda a *siddha-mahātmā* who has attained spiritual perfection? If so, how do we know?”

Real knowing involves realization. Some may have this realization, which involves experiencing Prabhupāda in terms of his *siddha-deha*. Otherwise, there are also some objective criteria that we can invoke in an attempt to gain insight into this subject. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes the superlative devotee thus:

*sarva-bhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed
bhagavad-bhāvam ātmanaḥ
bhūtāni bhagavaty ātmany
eṣa bhāgavatottamaḥ*

The most advanced devotee sees the soul of all souls within everything. Consequently, he sees everything in relation to the Supreme Lord and understands that everything that exists is eternally situated within the Lord.

Does Śrīla Prabhupāda fit this description? What did he see? He saw that there was much to be done in the service of Kṛṣṇa, and he had an uncanny way of engaging everything he came in touch with in that service. In all of his involvement with worldly things, which was considerable, he never became distracted for a moment. From a homeless status in the Bowery of New York's icy winter to temples in every major city of the world with millions of dollars at his disposal, he never changed.

He remained fixed in serving Kṛṣṇa. He ministered to people whom other Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas would not stand in the shadow of for fear of becoming contaminated. He cooked for such people and ate their cooking. It seems reasonable to conclude that he was seeing God within everyone, and seeing everything around him as the energy of God.

It is mentioned in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* that no one can effectively engage in propaganda of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa without *kṛṣṇa-śakti*, '*kali-kālera dharma—kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana/ kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana.*' Following this statement, Vallabha praises Mahāprabhu further, telling him that because he has effectively propagated the glory of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa in *saṅkīrtana*, this itself is evidence (*pramāṇa*) that he is the bearer of *kṛṣṇa-śakti*; '*tāhā pravartāilā tumi, —ei ta 'pramāṇa'/ kṛṣṇa-śakti dhara tumi, —ithe nāhi āna.*' He further emphasizes this point by saying, 'There is no doubt about it, '*ithe nāhi tumi.*'

There should be little doubt that Prabhupāda effectively engaged in *kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*. Indeed, we would not be having this discussion if this were not the case. Mahāprabhu predicted that his name would be chanted in every town and village, "*pr̥thivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma/ sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma.*" I think it is apparent that Prabhupāda was the devotee who fulfilled this prediction under the guidance of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda.

I was personally present and a part of his fulfilling the prediction of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who envisioned that one day people from

all parts of the world would chant ‘*Jaya Śacīnandana*’ in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur. It is ludicrous to consider that Mahāprabhu would select someone who was less than a *śuddha-bhakta* to fulfill these predictions.

Prabhupāda was the bearer of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa throughout the world. Wherever he went people were moved to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Some places he never physically visited, places where Mahāprabhu’s mission was unheard of and the local environment less than favorable, became centers of *nama-saṅkīrtana* and *sevā-pūjā* through his influence, with hundreds of devotees enthusiastically participating in these activities.

It is said that a devotee whose very *darśana* causes *kṛṣṇa-nāma* to appear on one’s lips is an *uttama-vaiṣṇava*. I had this experience on the holy day that Śrīla Prabhupāda first granted me his *darśana*. At that time tears poured from my eyes, and my hairs stood on end. My sense was that I had met a very old and dearest friend. But Prabhupāda’s empowerment in *kṛṣṇa-śakti* was so extensive that even one who simply saw one of his disciples would chant ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa.’

Kṛṣṇa-śakti refers to Kṛṣṇa’s internal energy (*svarūpa-śakti*). This *śakti* dawns in one’s heart when one develops from *sādhana-bhakti* to *bhāva-bhakti*. Rūpa Gosvāmī describes *bhāva-bhakti* thus, ‘*śuddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā prema-sūryāṁśu-sāmya-bhāk*.’ ‘It is the ingress of *śuddha-sattva*, the ray of the sun of *prema*.’ The word *viśeṣātmā* implies the particular combination of the *hlādinī* and *saṁvit* aspects of Kṛṣṇa’s *svarūpa-śakti*. When this appears in the heart of a *sādhaka*, that *sādhaka* becomes a devotee proper. He becomes a *bhāva-bhakta* who knows his relationship with Kṛṣṇa under the influence of a particular *sthāyi-bhāva* (dominant emotion, such as *sakhya* or *śṛṅgāra*).

The extensive *saṅkīrtana* of Śrīla Prabhupāda is an outgrowth of his empowerment in *kṛṣṇa-śakti*. He himself prayed for this empowerment, and under scrutiny, his prayer aboard the Jaladuta reveals something about the nature of the empowerment of *kṛṣṇa-śakti* that Prabhupāda experienced. Together with the external meaning of this prayer an internal meaning is intertwined.

Its internal significance was first brought out by Om Viṣṇupāda Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and it is very

deep. Śrīla Prabhupāda prayed as follows:

A Prayer to the Lotus Feet of Kṛṣṇa

Refrain: “O my dear friend, Kṛṣṇa, it is certain that you will attain piety if Rādhā is pleased with you.”

(1) Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī is extremely dear to the son of Śacī and no one is equal to him in serving Kṛṣṇa. A great *guru*, famed throughout the world, he delivered devotion to Kṛṣṇa wherever he went.

(2) He had a great desire to see Gaurāṅga’s name glorified throughout the Western world; so that in every town of the world, on the shores of its oceans, streams and rivers, people would call out Kṛṣṇa’s name.

(3) If that should happen, then that would be joy, that would be victory, that would be the extreme manifestation of Mahāprabhu’s mercy. All those miserable creatures contaminated by illusion would be happy and the Vaiṣṇava devotee’s desire will see fruition.

(4) Now he has given me the order to do this task though I am unworthy and most unqualified. This is why I am begging you for the blessings I will need, for today, you are wisest of all.

(5) If you would give me your strength, then I could serve my spiritual master, and if I can make my life perfect by so doing, if I perfect my service and become joyful at this achievement, then your company will be my reward.

(6) ‘Thus was I fallen into the deep snake hole of material existence, following the bad company of people caught up in the cycle of desire; O Lord, I was adopted by the seer of the gods who delivered me from this fate, so how can I abandon the service of your servant (my *gurudeva*)?’

(7) You are ever my companion, but I had forgotten this and so suffered *māyā*’s flogging birth after birth. Today again this chance has come: if we make the connection, I will once again be able to meet with you.

(8) Once we are together, brother, I will once more feel the happi-

ness of wandering all day long, grazing the cows. I pray for the day to come when we chase each other and wrestle in every one of Vṛndāvana's forests.

(9) Today, along with this great opportunity, I have been able to remember you and so, with great hope, I have called out to you. I am your eternal servant, this is why I can hope, for other than you, I have no other refuge.

In the refrain, Śrīla Prabhupāda says '*taba puṇya habe bhāi e-puṇya koribe jabe rādhārāṇī khusī habe dhruva ati boli tomā tāi.*' Here Prabhupāda negotiates with his brother-friend (*bhāi*), Kṛṣṇa. He gives Kṛṣṇa moral instruction, just as Subala-*sakhā* is said to be expert in doing in Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Rādhā-kṛṣṇa-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*.

In the *bhāva* of a *priya-narma-sakhā* (bosom buddy), Prabhupāda says, "O My dear friend, Kṛṣṇa, it is certain that you will attain piety if Rādhā is pleased with you." Here Prabhupāda says that this is as sure as the pole star (*dhruva*) is fixed. He tells Kṛṣṇa, "Your life revolves around her." In this way he captures Kṛṣṇa's attention. Having done so in the refrain of his poem, Prabhupāda then begins to bargain with his friend in the following verses.

In the first verse of this song, Prabhupāda introduces his *gurudeva* into his negotiation with Kṛṣṇa. Externally, in his *sādhaka-deha*, his *gurudeva* is the great preacher Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. Internally, he is Nayanamaṇi-mañjarī in his spiritual form, an intimate servitor in Śrī Rādhā's group. Here Prabhupāda implies his connection with Rādhā's group and Lalitā-*sakhī*, in whose service Nayanamaṇi-mañjarī is situated. In effect he says to Kṛṣṇa "My *gurudeva*, who represents Śrī Rādhā, has now appeared as a great preacher in Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana* movement."

In verse four Prabhupāda tells Kṛṣṇa that "Nayanamaṇi-mañjarī has given me an order that I must fulfill. However, I cannot do it without your help. As I have pointed out earlier, it will be good for you if you please Rādhā. This is my advice to you. Therefore, if you give me the *śakti* to fulfill her order to me, she will be pleased and you will attain piety."

In verse five Prabhupāda begins to express his own inner aspiration, which is further clarified in verses seven, eight, and nine,

which follow Prabhupāda's 6th verse, a citation of Prahāda's declaration of his indebtedness to his *guru* in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7. 9. 28).

In this prayer of Śrīla Prabhupāda, we find the essence of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. Everyone is trying to please Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa is trying to please Rādhā. Prabhupāda was well aware of this, and by pointing it out to Kṛṣṇa so sweetly he got his attention, and thus Kṛṣṇa bestowed the power to execute his *gurudeva's* order in no small way, and Prabhupāda's personal request was no doubt fulfilled as well.

Regarding his personal aspiration, he stated it thus in a conversation related in the *Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*: "I simply want to go to Kṛṣṇaloka, so I can have some of Kṛṣṇa's *lāḍḍu* and *kacaurīs*. I do not have any great diversion from this. I simply want to go there so that I can enjoy eating *lāḍḍu* and *kacaurīs* with Kṛṣṇa and the cowherd boys. Oh, 'If you will give me *lāḍḍu* and *kacaurīs*, then I will bless you.' "

Here Prabhupāda states his aspiration, and in the last sentence he imitates Kṛṣṇa's intimate friend, Madhumaṅgala, who is a *vidu-sakhā* (joker friend), and who is sometimes classified as a *priya-narma-sakhā* as well.

Thus we have *śāstra*, *sādhu* (Śrīdhara Mahārāja), and the words of the *guru* himself to refer to for an answer to this question. Other than through our own internal realization, this is how we know that Śrīla Prabhupāda is a pure devotee and a *rasika*. There may be other opinions regarding Prabhupāda's particular *bhāva*, but there is no room for doubting his overall attainment of *bhāva*. Let us be unified with regard to his perfection, and as we are moved by our developing inner realization through his grace, let us leave room for difference in experience. May he generously appear on the lotus of our purified hearts as he sees fit to, and may all of us who have been touched by Prabhupāda's *śakti* be as generous with one another as he is with us.

B. V. Tripurāri Swami

PIONEERING THE WAY

Śrīla Prabhupāda Impacts Mexico (Chapter 3)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus like feet,

*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*

In June 2, 1972, Your Divine Grace first visited our temple in Mexico City. We were in our early twenties, blessed by your divine association and initiation. In that same year, 1972, you had the first Gaura-pūrṇimā festival, and you started your plans to develop you spiritual city and the planetarium in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, as well your project in Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir in Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma and your Bombay project. You started preaching to the big Spanish speaking population – going beyond the English speaking countries as ordered by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, your Guru Mahārāja.

Your disciples remembering the time when you kindly gave us your holy association. We fondly remember your lotus feet, and how you went beyond the instructions of your Guru Mahārāja, *para-duḥkha-duḥkhī*, giving your mercy to the sufferings of the conditioned souls of this material world.

Your Divine Grace wrote to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura in December

1936, asking about offering some more direct service:

“So that letter was replied in 13th December, dated 13th December, from Purī. And he passed away on the 31st December. Just a fortnight before. So the reply was the same as he wanted me to do this preaching work in 1922, when I first met him that “You try to preach

whatever you have learned from me to the English-knowing people in English. That will do good to you and to the people to whom you shall preach. That is my instruction. "So I took up, (that) direction. "

So whoever wants to know about character and Vaiṣṇava's mercy has to study Your Divine Grace's world-wide preaching and they may understand Vaiṣṇava-*krpā*.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept the following words of our godbrothers and godsisters, which we put together for a book *PIONEERING THE WAY Śrīla Prabhupāda Impacts Mexico* (Chapter 3), as the Vyāsa-pūjā offering for this year on your holy appearance day

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA ARRIVES IN MEXICO CITY

With his expanding Movement in the West, Śrīla Prabhupāda started his main projects in his homeland, India. So in March on Gaura-pūrṇimā 1972, he laid the cornerstone for the new temple in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur and started the annual international Gaura-pūrṇimā Festival, asking the world-wide devotees to take part in it and organized the world-wide preaching of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, fulfilling Śrīla Bhaktivinoda and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's desires.

His Divine Grace never gave up once he set his mind on a project for the glorification of Lord Kṛṣṇa, even if it meant a fight. He won a huge legal battle in Bombay to build a beautiful temple and guest-house complex at Juhu Beach, when a wealthy businessman had tried to cheat him. In Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma he also established a large Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple and school complex. After started the main projects in India, he started to preach beyond English speaking countries by visiting Mexico City, Hare Kṛṣṇa temple, for the first time in June 2nd, 1972.

His Divine Grace wrote a letter to the temple president in Mexico City:

"I am sending one of our new *sannyāsīs* Hanumān Dāsa Goswami, to South America. He is here with me now, but he shall leave by ship very soon, so if you have got any Spanish-speaking devotees there who can assist him in preaching throughout South America, you can tell them to

write him here at the above address, and they can make arrangements to meet for performing this great task of pioneer preachers on South American continent.”

(Letter 15. 04. 72)

As told by Śrīla Prabhupāda, on his way to South America with the purpose of initiating preaching activities there, H. H. Hanumān Dāsa Goswami stopped in Mexico City to visit the temple. This helped the devotees to better prepare themselves for Śrīla Prabhupāda’s arrival.

Devotee: We had just recently moved into the temple ashram when Mahārāja visited the temple, so understandably we ignored the Vaiṣṇava etiquette on how to deal with a *sannyāsi*. Mahārāja tolerated our ignorance and very patiently instructed us.

The devotees in the temple ashrams had a meeting in which the details concerning Śrīla Prabhupāda’s visit were discussed. Almost everyone there was new and so many instructions had to be given.

Rāma Govinda Dāsa: I remember that the first time I visited the temple we were sitting in the garden in front of the building’s main entrance when Śrīvāsa Dāsa announced that Śrīla Prabhupāda would be coming to Mexico. We all became very happy to hear this. He also talked to us about the significance and the great opportunity it represented to be able to meet a pure devotee of the Lord.

Almost all of us were new and needed the information in order to be prepared for the event.

Devotee: The first time I went to the temple was on a Sunday and we were sitting in the garden when Śrīvāsa Prabhu announced that Śrīla Prabhupāda was going to visit the temple. Everyone around me became very happy to hear the news. He explained Prabhupāda’s arrival was an occasion of great transcendence. The Mexican devotees were very enthusiastic and they would surely do everything possible to be good hosts.

A section on the first floor was prepared for Śrīla Prabhupāda. A large room with a terrace facing the garden would be used by him, and a small circular room next to it would serve for his secretary and personal servant. Next to this was a complete bathroom. These facilities would be suitable for Śrīla Prabhupāda and could afford him some privacy.

Apsarā Devī Dāsī: On the day that Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived, everything was clean and decorated with fresh flowers. We filled up several baskets with rose petals. After this, everyone went to the airport and I was left at the temple entrance with a basket in my hands.

Rāma Govinda Dāsa: When we arrived at the international section of the airport, we saw Pradyumna Dāsa and Śyāmasundara Dāsa with their hands in the air trying to get our attention. This wasn't really necessary because they stood out in the crowd by their height, white robes, shaved heads, and *tilaka* on their foreheads. When we saw them, we got out of the car as soon as we could, and left it to Śrī vāsaa Dāsa. Mahārāja ran after them towards where Śrīla Prabhupāda was.

When we arrived where Śrīla Prabhupāda was, we fell to the floor like bamboo canes offering our *daṇḍavats* to His Divine Grace. This was the first time that I had the great fortune to see Śrīla Prabhupāda. As we slowly stood up we could see that he was sitting on his suitcases; with both hands on his walking cane, one on top of the other, he leaned over resting his chin on them with a big smile in his face. In some mystical way you could perceive the peace and tranquillity of the spiritual world in his divine presence.

Many people passing by were visibly surprised to witness the scene. Apparently because the devotees were prostrated on the sidewalk, offering respects to their spiritual master without caring what they thought. Other guests and devotees arrived, but there was no sign of the car that was supposed to take Śrīla Prabhupāda to the temple.

Some people from the Indian embassy arrived, and being familiar with the etiquette, they touched his feet and *dhotī* and then touched their foreheads with both hands as a sign of respect. This is the custom when meeting a saintly person. In the meantime, a crowd

had gathered around Śrīla Prabhupāda. The Indian guests offered to take Śrīla Prabhupāda to the temple when they saw that his car hadn't arrived and His Divine Grace kindly accepted.

Apsarā Devī Dāsī: When Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived at the temple I was overwhelmed by the surprise, and for a moment I didn't know what to do, but then I started chanting and throwing flower petals at the car, and afterwards at Śrīla Prabhupāda. I sung and danced as I followed them. Then other devotees and guests approached and welcomed him. As Śrīla Prabhupāda entered the temple, someone indicated to him where the altar was, and he then went up to the first floor in that direction. At that moment the devotees and guests started to arrive and hurriedly followed Śrīla Prabhupāda as he entered the altar room.

The light green paint was fresh, Bhakta Francisco was giving the room its last touches, and a devotee had to put his *cā dara* on the floor so that Śrīla Prabhupāda could offer his obeisances without getting paint on his clothes or body.

After offering obeisances to the painting of the Pañca-tattva, he slowly got up and looked at the pictures on the altar. There was a picture of Śrīla Prabhupāda, and another of his own spiritual master, and the Pañca-tattva painting that had been carefully painted by local devotees.

Respectfully, with folded hands, he passed in front of the altar and went to the *vyāsāsana* which was situated next to the entrance in front of the altar. It was a circular seat with four carved legs covered in gold leaf. The rest of the seat was a slate of white transparent onyx and on top of that was a circular cushion with red and gold upholstery matching the back of the seat. The seat itself stood on a low two-level platform which was being covered with paper mache by two brothers who were also devotees. Śrīla Prabhupāda got on the platform while all the assembled devotees and guests chanted and danced to the holy names. Elated by Śrīla Prabhupāda's presence, a lady who was a regular guest at the temple began to glorify him, and noticing this, His Divine Grace gave her his blessings. Śrī la Prabhupāda then began his arrival address.

Nandanandana Dāsa: When I arrived at the temple, I went up and saw that he was sitting on the *vyāsāsana* giving his arrival lecture. At that time the altar was in one of the rooms with a balcony to the

street. The feelings I had were very intense for having the great opportunity of being with him personally. Before, I could only hear about him, but now he was personally present before me.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was received and led up to the stairs leading to the first floor where the temple room was situated, where His Divine Grace spoke after the reception. Many people came up to the temple and gathered there to hear Śrīla Prabhupāda's words translated into Spanish by a lawyer friend of the devotees who was helping in the translation of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. He was coming from a friendly yoga society in Mexico City. All the devotees and guests were very carefully following the translation of Śrīla Prabhupāda's words, as Śrīla Prabhupāda also noticed:

"I only had some difficulty with the language to preach, but still I could see how pious they were and eager to listen. That is the only qualification, if someone is eager for spiritual improvement." (Letter 11.12.72).

So Śrīla Prabhupāda's preaching covers all the main continents of the globe, fulfilling the desires of his Guru Mahārāja, the great Bhaktivinoda, and fulfilling the prophesies of the holy scripture.

Thus ends the third chapter, *PIONEERING THE WAY Śrīla Prabhupāda Impacts Mexico*.

Offering our humble obeisances unto His Divine Grace's lotus feet, praying for his divine mercy.

Tridaṇḍi Swami

Bhakti Prapanna Parvata Mahārāja

My dear lord and master Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you and your mission of delivering the universe.

Your program for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world is unfolding before our eyes on a daily basis. Everything is increasing in wonderful ways, and I feel so inspired by it all. Your mercy is gradually inundating this world more and more.

Recently we were in Śrī Māyāpur Dhāma and saw the development of the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium. The impact this will make on the world is going to be very great, probably more than anything your movement has done before. Just recently here in Durban, South Africa, we had our biggest Ratha-yātrā festival ever, attended by well over a hundred thousand people over four days. Right now there is a major *kīrtana* festival going on in the temple here, with hundreds of young devotees drowning in the ocean of the holy names. It's truly wonderful.

All these things, and so many others, are unfolding from the transcendental depths of your heart, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your heart is like an unlimited mine of nectar and mercy, because it is full of love for Kṛṣṇa, and He is therefore happily residing there. The heart of a great pure devotee like yourself is the most amazing thing there is. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 17.186) Lord Caitanya quotes the Mahābhārata:

*tarko 'pratiṣṭhaḥ śrutayo vibhinnā
nāsāv ṛṣir yasya matarṁ na bhinnam
dharmasya tattvarṁ nihitarṁ guhāyāṁ
mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ*

“Dry arguments are inconclusive. A great personality whose opinion does not differ from others is not considered a great sage. Simply by studying the Vedas, which are variegated, one cannot come to the right path by which religious principles are understood. The solid truth of religious principles is hidden in the heart of an unadulterated, self-realized person. Consequently, as the *śāstras* confirm, one should accept whatever progressive path the *mahājanas*

advocate.”

Yours is the heart Lord Caitanya was referring to when He quoted that verse, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We just need to stick to the service of your lotus feet, and then from your heart everything will become manifest to us. In the *Bhakti-sandarbha* Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī quotes the line *mad-bhakta-pūjābhyadhikā*, spoken by Lord Kṛṣṇa at *Śrī mad-Bhāgavatam* 11.19.21, and comments on it as follows: “With these words the Lord declares, ‘By worshiping My devotees one attains more intense love for Me than by worshiping Me directly.’”

In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Antya* 3.486) Vṛndāvana Dasa Ṭhākura quotes the following verse from *sāstra* (Śāṅḍilya-smṛti):

siddhir bhavati vā neti saṁśayo ‘cyuta-sevinām
niḥsaṁśayas tu tad-bhakta- paricaryā-ratātmanām

“There may be a doubt whether the servants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead will attain perfection, but there is absolutely no doubt that those who are attached to serving the Lord’s devotees will attain perfection.”

It is impossible for me to comprehend the extent of the mercy I have received from your kind heart. The mind boggles just beginning to think of it. But I have firm faith that if I remain engaged in your service everything will come to me.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for everything.

Hoping this meets you well,

Your servant,

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept this offering for 2012.

For Many Generations

For many generations
And thousands of years,
People will shelter
Under your guardianship

They will walk your line,
They will see the need
For one fatherhood,
One major thrust

For one *mantra*, one God,
One book, one system—
A system which puts out
A name, soft or as a shout.

They will engage and work
Beneath one umbrella,
With distinct slowness,
With passion and goodness

Doors will be open;
Walls will then fall.
For Kṛṣṇa they'll clamor
And see a new glamour.

You will make earth happy—
Su-sukhaṁ kartum—
With a life deep and full,

A lessening of the mundane pull.

Your compassion is such
That everyone must
Taste *bhakti*, as accessible
As it is sweet and simple.

You feel some things must go—
Illicit this, illicit that.
Parties will be bumped,
And *kīrtans* will be trumped.

You invoke a clear vision,
One we must inherit.
We must then act
And see that it becomes fact.

The public will know “Founder”
And remain curious about “*ācārya*.”
We’ll say, “Action speaks louder than words.”
We’ll repeat—“Louder than words!”

Your servant,

Bhaktimārga Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāminn 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
nirvīṣeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to your appearance in this world.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura predicted, “A personality will soon appear in order to preach the teachings of Śrī Caitanya and move unrestrictedly over the whole world with His message.” (*Sajjana-toṣaṇī*, 1885)

We are eternally blessed and supremely grateful that you have come into our lives to offer us the greatest and rarest gift, the opportunity to render pure devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, under your expert guidance. Your appearance in this realm of existence is your munificence and great kindness upon us fallen and unworthy *jīvas*. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an eternally liberated soul whose only purpose for appearing on this planet is to fulfill the mission of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in bringing everyone to His lotus feet in ecstatic loving service.

Recently I came across this historical account by my senior god-brother Patita Pāvana Prabhu, revealing your spiritual position.

Tirupati 1977

A dollar fifty a day is all Gargamuni, then the head of the BBT Library Party out of Bombay, would allow me for food, travel, and shelter. So on a budget of \$50 a month I was traveling third class and alone throughout India to collect reviews of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. I would introduce scholars to the "Library Encyclopedia of Vedic Knowledge" (as we members of the BBT Library Party called the collection), and they would all oblige with letterheads of glowing praise. Today, looking back, none of those intellectual leaders sticks in my mind as does the renowned scholar Dr. D. Arkasomayaji.

He was a strict brāhmaṇa, an author, a past college principal, and a winner of a government award for his Sanskrit scholarship. He was also the head of the Tirupati-Tirumala-Devasthanam, which oversees the world's most opulent temple of the Lord of Lakṣmī at Tirupati. Since he was also a paṇḍita, I showed Dr. Arkasomayaji Śrīla Prabhupāda's horoscope. Immediately he noted that His Divine Grace had been liberated from birth. He declared, "This is the chart of a nitya-mukta jīvan."

Dr. Arkasomayaji (who hailed from a long line of astrologers and whose name means "one who performs yajñas to the deities of the sun and moon") quickly spotted some of the rare horoscopic combinations of the liberated pure devotee. He observed, "There are separate yogas for Lord Viṣṇu (Hari Yoga), His wife (Lakṣmī Yoga), the creator (Brahmā Yoga), and the creator's wife (Sarasvatī Yoga). That means that there are two sets of Husband / Wife yogas, an unheard-of rarity in any horoscope."

After scanning the stars of His Divine Grace, Dr. Arkasomayaji took out his pen and wrote the most spectacular review of Prabhupāda's books out of the hundreds I collected. He considered Śrīla Prabhupāda to be "the world's greatest spiritual force in the twentieth century." Naturally all the state's college libraries purchased complete sets of the BBT publications. I sent Dr. Arkasomayaji's horoscope reading and review to Śrīla Prabhupāda, who much appreciated the good devotee-scholar's understanding of his position as the world ācārya. Dr. Arkasomayaji wasn't long for the world after that, but when he left here he was surely blessed by the

pure devotee.

Perhaps Dr. Arkasomayaji stayed in this world just long enough to make this information available to all and to receive your merciful blessings.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.43.17) describes the various ways different persons in King Kāṁsa's wrestling arena viewed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His powerful brother Balarāma as They entered:

TRANSLATION

The various groups of people in the arena regarded Kṛṣṇa in different ways when He entered it with His elder brother. The wrestlers saw Kṛṣṇa as a lightning bolt, the men of Mathurā as the best of males, the women as Cupid in person, the cowherd men as their relative, the impious rulers as a chastiser, His parents as their child, the King of the Bhojas as death, the unintelligent as the Supreme Lord's universal form, the yogīs as the Absolute Truth, and the Vṛṣṇīs as their supreme worshipable Deity.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī quotes the following verse, which explains the ten attitudes toward Kṛṣṇa described here:

*raudro 'dbhutaś ca śrīṅgāro hāsyam̐ vīro dayā tathā
bhayānakaś ca bībhatsaḥ śāntaḥ sa-prema-bhaktikaḥ*

“[There are ten different moods:] fury [perceived by the wrestlers], wonder [by the men], conjugal attraction [the women], laughter [the cowherds], chivalry [the kings], mercy [His parents], terror [Kāṁsa], ghastliness [the unintelligent], peaceful neutrality [the yogīs], and loving devotion [the Vṛṣṇīs].”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī points out that people like the wrestlers, Kāṁsa, and the impious rulers perceive Kṛṣṇa as dangerous, angry, or threatening because they fail to understand the actual position of the Personality of Godhead. Actually, Lord Kṛṣṇa is everyone's friend and well-wisher, but because we rebel against Him, He chastises us, and thus we may perceive Him as threatening. Kṛṣṇa, or God, is actually merciful, and when He punishes us, that is also His mercy.

All these different persons' mentalities reflected the nature of their relationship with Kṛṣṇa. All had different experiences while viewing the same person.

A great spiritual personality is also understood and perceived in different ways by different types of persons, along with being misunderstood in different ways by different persons. The pure spiritual master is imbued with many of the transcendental qualities of the Lord, and these qualities and attributes are often viewed differently.

Some persons saw you just as a very nice sādhu, others as:

- An emissary from the spiritual world;
- A great proponent of Vedic knowledge whose books are read and studied worldwide by scholars and religionists;
- A prolific author of ancient philosophical and spiritual teachings for the modern world;
- One who came to expose and destroy *māyāvāda* (impersonal) philosophy;
- One whose books are translated into more than seventy languages.
- One who adapted the strict standards of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism to establish ISKCON as a diverse worldwide movement;
- An expert at preaching according to *kāla*, *deśa*, *pātra*;
- One who traveled the globe more than fourteen times to preach *bhakti-yoga* and establish Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temples, farm communities, restaurants, and preaching centers;
- The perfectly pure representative of Lord Caitanya and His teachings;
- One who built a grand temple near Lord Caitanya's birthplace and is fulfilling the previous ācāryas' desire for a magnificent Vedic planetarium and temple;
- One who fulfilled the prediction of Lord Caitanya's that "In every town in village My name will be heard";
- The disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī who successfully carried out his instruction to preach Lord Caitanya's teachings to the whole world;
- One who gave the world *Bhagavad-gītā* "As It Is," thereby giving the Western world the first clear and correct understanding of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's instructions;
- One who discussed Kṛṣṇa consciousness with persons worldwide in fields of architecture, literature, religion, politics, sociology, psychology, entertainment, business, and sports,

- and with the young, the old, and the in between.
- One who empowered his disciples and granddisciples to perform many outstanding activities;
 - One who began a worldwide spiritual movement at the age of seventy.

And from a more materialistic angle, some saw you as

- The best of the male chauvinists (Esquire Magazine, 1977); A great proponent of religious teachings “who [shook] things up” (from a recent publication on modern religious leaders);
- One who became successful in life after fifty years of age (CNN: 2010).

Śrīla Prabhupāda I listed only a few of the outstanding achievements of Your Divine Grace, just to illustrate how you are appreciated and understood by others. As for my lowly self, you are my only shelter in everything I need to serve and surrender. Thank you for always allowing me the shelter of your lotus feet, although I am undeserving.

My prayer is that I may please you by somehow assisting you in bringing others to your lotus feet.

With love and gratitude,

Candramauli Swami

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet, dust that goes on purifying the world by making Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mercy accessible to all in the form of your recorded material and transcendental purports.

*vāyur anilam amṛtam athedam bhasmāntam śarīram
om krato smara kṛtam smara krato smara kṛtam smara*

“Let this temporary body be burnt to ashes, and let the air of life be merged with the totality of air. Now, O my Lord, please remember all my sacrifices, and because You are the ultimate beneficiary, please remember all that I have done for You.”

*agne naya supathā rāye asmān
viśvāni deva vayunāni vidvān
yuyodhy asmaj juhurāṇam eno
bhūyiṣṭhām te nama-uktiṁ vidhema*

“O my Lord, as powerful as fire, O omnipotent one, now I offer You all obeisances, falling on the ground at Your feet. O my Lord, please lead me on the right path to reach You, and since You know all that I have done in the past, please free me from the reactions to my past sins so that there will be no hindrance to my progress.”

As a result of my past sins, my body is now diseased and full of suffering, like all aging material bodies. O Śrīla Prabhupāda, when will I stop wallowing in the mire of chronic pain and take full shelter of you and of the Lord’s holy names!

I feel tangible relief, however, from continually traveling with you, Śrī la Prabhupāda. I ride the exhilarating waves of your morning-walk discussions, powerful lectures, room conversations, interviews, public programs, and piercing question-and-answer sessions. I listen again and again as you travel everywhere, enlightening everyone you meet. From whatever position a person has attained on the continuum of spiritual evolution, you take him or her—devotee or not, favorable or not—at least a step closer to reality, toward Lord Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet. What an intensely delightful experience this is:

to hear daily, in chronological order, all of your published recorded material. And each time I go through it, you reveal something new of your extraordinary personality.

Wielding Occam's razor-like logic, you find the simplest explanations for effects that seem complex, as you staunchly stick to the Vedic conclusion, which makes no speculative assumptions. In this way, your dazzling spiritual intelligence consistently and repeatedly deals with even age-old controversial issues in a way that satisfies any honest person who inquires from you.

An airline pilot asks how to understand evil if God is good and the source of everything. You explain in clear, unequivocal logic the relationship between darkness and light. Kṛṣṇa is all-good. For Him there is no evil, just as for the sun there is no darkness. We create evil by turning our backs on God, just as we create darkness by turning our backs on the sun. The pilot goes away enlightened and a step closer to his real destination.

A disciple asks what evidence we can give to the scientists, who need observation and experiment to confirm something as true. You hold fast to the simple logic of the *Gītā*: "First of all you observe that this man is moving, or this animal is moving, that there is some moving force. And the experiment is that now [after death] you can understand that the moving force is gone. This is experiment.... It is simple. But because of their bad education, they cannot understand the simple thing."

A psychologist comes to visit you. You tell him that he doesn't know anything. And still he comes back for more! He's sincere and honest, you note. You then go on to point out that Kṛṣṇa speaks like a gentleman in the *Gītā*. From the beginning, Kṛṣṇa highlights how the body is changing from boyhood to old age in this life but the person remains the same. What is the difficulty in understanding the eternity of the soul? But, generally, educated persons need to make things complicated. If it's not complicated they won't consider seriously the point being made, much less accept it as true.

During a lecture one leader calls out: "All the children should go out." You respond, "No, that's all right. Children are not punishable." Cheers and laughter. "Neither the women." More laughter with clapping. "But don't take advantage." More laughter. "And here we have only *brāhmaṇas*, saintly persons, women, and children. Who is to

be punished?” The laughter and clapping crescendo.

But at other times, you say from the *vyāsāsana* that the children should be taken out. You know exactly what to say and when to say it in order to train everyone in every circumstance. What an artful teacher you are, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

You repeatedly tell us not to waste time with those who are dishonest and unwilling to hear, who simply argue for the sake of argument, no matter how logical the presentation. Look for the innocents, you say. We’re not here to please the public, the common man, but to please Kṛṣṇa and our previous *ācāryas*. The others will eventually follow if we don’t compromise our core values and principles; then they too will be pleased.

Your dealings are filled with grace, dignity, and humor, even as you are expressing your disapproval of ignorance or correcting the faults of your disciples. Your love and compassion, your genuine concern for whomever you talk to, is self-evident at every moment, even as you call the whole world “rascal.”

Authorities learned in subjects you admittedly know little about go away with genuine respect for you, even when you point out the defects in their theories and label them rascals and cheaters to their faces.

A woman reporter tries to embarrass you because of your stance on women’s liberation. But even she is forced to chuckle when you propose that it’s better to have a cool head and hot legs than cool legs and a hot head. And you win the hearts and heads of bystanders fortunate enough to hear from you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in this conflict-ridden world, hearing from you soothes the mind and senses like a *mogra*-scented breeze. May all of us who claim to be your followers learn from you the fine art of living in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness by listening to the transcendental gems that pour forth from your lotus mouth as you travel the earth delivering the fallen conditioned souls.

Aspiring to assist you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I remain forever yours,

Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Gosvāmī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories unto you.

Recently while residing in the shade of Govardhana Hill, I have been honoured to play your morning walks, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* classes, and conversations recorded 37 years ago when you visited South Africa. Listening to your transcendental voice is very relishable and an intimate way of associating with Your Divine Grace.

I have also been trying to increase my appreciation of your sincere followers. I want to develop genuine love for all your associates whether big (*guru*) or small (*laghu*). During the history of the South African *yātrā* and ISKCON in general, so many Vaiṣṇavas have come and apparently gone. All of them contributed something to your mission and therefore their sacrifice will not go unnoticed by you.

Like the multi-various associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu you also have many followers and all should be appreciated. Daily I offer my respects to Your Divine Grace and your numerous followers.

Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi. 10. 4-7:

*caitanya-gosāñira yata pāriṣada-caya
guru-laghu-bhāva tāñra nā haya niścaya*

The associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu were many, but none of them should be considered lower or higher. This cannot be ascertained.

*yata yata mahānta kailā tāñ-sabāra gaṇana
keha karibāre nāre jyeṣṭha-laghu-krama*

All the great personalities in the line of Lord Caitanya enumerated these devotees, but they could not distinguish between the greater and the lesser.

*ataeva tāñ-sabāre kari' namaskāra
nāma-mātra kari, doṣa nā labe āmāra*

I offer my obeisances unto them as a token of respect. I request them not to consider my offenses.

*vande śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-
premāmara-taroḥ priyān
śākhā-rūpān bhakta-gaṇān
kṛṣṇa-prema-phala-pradān*

I offer my obeisances to all the dear devotees of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the eternal tree of love of Godhead. I offer my respects to all the branches of the tree, the devotees of the Lord who distribute the fruit of love of Kṛṣṇa.

PURPORT: Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī sets the example of offering obeisances to all the preacher devotees of Lord Caitanya, without distinction as to higher and lower. Unfortunately, at present there are many foolish so-called devotees of Lord Caitanya who make such distinctions. For example, the title “Prabhupāda” is offered to a spiritual master, especially to a distinguished spiritual master such as Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī Prabhupāda or Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda. When our disciples similarly wanted to address their spiritual master as Prabhupāda, some foolish people became envious. Not considering the propaganda work of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, simply because these disciples addressed their spiritual master as Prabhupāda they became so envious that they formed a faction along with other such envious persons just to minimize the value of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. To chastise such fools, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī very frankly says, *keha karibāre nāre jyeṣṭha-laghu-krama*. Anyone who is a bona fide preacher of the cult of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu must be respectful to the real devotees of Lord Caitanya; one should not be envious, considering one preacher to be very great and another to be very lowly. This is a material distinction and has no place on the platform of spiritual activities. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī therefore offers equal respect to all the preachers of the cult of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who are compared to the branches of the tree. ISKCON is one of these branches, and it should therefore be respected by all sincere devotees of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Following in the footsteps of the previous *ācāryas* I would also humbly like to offer my respects to all of your exalted disciples and granddisciples and great-granddisciples. By pleasing them I can

please you. By serving them I can serve you. This is “*ānugatya-sevā*” or “*ānugatya-dharma*”. Both on this plane and in Goloka Vṛndāvana this concept of being the servant of the servant is essential.

In your apparent physical absence, my esteemed godbrothers are my only shelter. If I can serve them and please them I am confident this will please you. I accept your desire and instruction as coming through them.

I don't have the strength to approach you directly but I can approach you through those who know how to serve you. I am very wretched, worthless, insignificant, and destitute and I pray one day to be recognised as your disciple. So for the time being I will offer my respects to all of your followers without consideration of “*guru-laghu-bhāva*” the conception of higher or lower.

You have touched the heart of so many devotees and although over the years they may have temporarily drifted from the strict practice of *vaidhī-sādhana-bhakti* they still feel some incredible attachment to Your Divine Grace. In French it is “*je ne sais quoi*”... you possess a special, unique, indescribable quality that endears your followers to you.

Perhaps in some future lifetime I could call myself a real follower and disciple of Your Divine Grace but for now let me rub my head in the dust of your true followers, whether they are *guru* (big) or *laghu* (small).

I remain,

Your servant,

Pārtha-sārathi Dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances.

Since the moment of your physical departure, we have been left here, in the material world, depending upon your extraordinary legacy of service in separation.

Twenty-nine years after the disappearance of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, at the age of sixty-nine, with no money or assistance, you set out to cross oceans, seas, and continents to fulfill his will.

While aboard a cargo ship, in the wake of heart attacks, you wrote in your diary,

I am feeling separation from Sri Vrindaban and my Lords Sri Govinda, Gopinath, Radha 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.

You once told us that through the insurmountable challenges you faced, as well as through your incredible accomplishments, at every moment you felt the presence of your Guru Mahārāja. In these words we find shelter, a place where we can connect to the sweet abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, beyond the raging fire of material existence.

We especially feel the touch of your grace in those who you personally inspired. As the years pass, your beloved associates are being called to serve you in the spiritual realm. Earlier this year, a treasure house of your divine grace, Yamunā Devī, was called. Her love for you and her dedication to you were unique. In everything she did, she strived for perfection, down to the minutest detail. This was one way that she expressed her love for you. Through your beloved daughter Yamunā Devī you conquered our hearts through

her singing, intoxicated our minds through her cooking, and blessed our souls through her wisdom and kindness.

While unparalleled in everything she did, Yamunā Devī chose to remain far in the background, deeply absorbed in bhajan and sevā. Yet wherever she dwelled, her extraordinary spiritual power infused us with her indomitable devotion. She was a pioneer at every stage of her devotional life, leading us into higher realms of bhakti. On your behalf she was everyone's well-wisher.

In separation from your beloved associates, Śrīla Prabhupāda, we feel that you are forever with us, beyond time and space, in Kṛṣṇa.

With my sincerest prayer to be the servant of your servants,

Rādhānāth Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

On this occasion of your divine appearance, please accept by humble obeisances at your Vraja-dust – laden lotus feet and allow me to offer the following paltry words in praise of you and your mission.

Your eternal servant,

Śivarāma Swami

* * *

Chanting japa, I walk along the dirt road from Sunrakh to Garuḍa-Govinda in Vṛndāvana, Govinda Mahārāja ten paces ahead of me, the late morning sun beating down from above, the silence of the *dhāma* all around. Birds sing in the trees, a herd of blue cows graze nearby, and the silence is broken by the occasional gust of wind shaking the leaves on the trees. I see the banyan tree where the cowherd boys would rest and the ruins of the large *kuṇḍa* where the cows would bathe. I feel the transcendental atmosphere unique to Vṛndāvana-dhāma—a pervasive sweetness that invokes memories of the divine cowherd prince, of His exploits and His exchanges of love with His associates.

As that sweetness mixes with the sound of my chanting and the sights of the *dhāma*—completely captivating my heart—a very different picture suddenly comes to mind. A picture in a faraway land, and yet a picture pervaded by the very same Vṛndāvana atmosphere in which I walk.

It is Montreal, 1976. Śrīla Prabhupāda and the devotees are sitting at Dorval Airport, waiting for the departure of the plane that would take His Divine Grace to New Delhi and a meeting with Indira Gandhi. Śrīla Prabhupāda sits in a chair fingering his beads, and we devotees sit around him chanting.

Suddenly I feel a wave of spiritual energy that seems to wash away not only the sounds and sights of the airport but the influence of

the modes of nature from my heart. Suddenly I am seated in another land. I experience freedom, lightness, happiness, and sweetness—inexplicable sweetness. Where does it all come from? The compass of my being spontaneously points to Śrīla Prabhupāda, a waterfall of bliss cascading wave after wave of transcendental emotion that transforms the waiting room into Vṛndāvana, the same Vṛndāvana in which I now walk to Garuḍa-Govinda.

How wonderful! But how is it possible? Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja explains:

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

“My Lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified. Because you carry the Personality of Godhead within your heart, you turn all places into places of pilgrimage.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.13.10)

Because Kṛṣṇa always resides in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s heart, wherever Śrīla Prabhupāda goes is Vṛndāvana; he transforms whatever place he visits into that sweetest place of ṣṇa always resides in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s heart, wherever Śrīla Prabhupāda goes is Vṛndāvana; he transforms whatever place he visits into that sweetest place of pilgrimage. In turn, the people in those places also become purified, and in time they themselves become places of pilgrimage—residents of Vraja.

On that day at Dorval Airport, out of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s boundless grace, I became intensely aware of his Vṛndāvana presence. It was an experience not to be forgotten. It made me understand that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s traveling and preaching was taking Vṛndāvana all over the world, and turning the entire planet into a place of pilgrimage.

But as Govinda Mahārāja and I neared Garuḍa-Govinda, I recalled how Śrīla Prabhupāda also wanted all his followers—especially *sannyāsīs*—to help him in distributing the sweetness of Vṛndāvana. He did not take such a responsibility exclusively as his own. Śrīla Prabhupāda had said,

[T]īrthī-kurvanti tīrthāni svāntaḥ-sthena gadābhṛtā. Because a pure devotee carries Kṛṣṇa within his heart, therefore wherever

he goes he makes a holy place. It is said in the *sāstra*. So not me, but everyone of you, if you are pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, then wherever you'll go, that is a holy place. *Tīrthī-kurvanti tīrthāni...* To become *sannyāsī* means that, that he'll be pure devotee, and wherever he will go, he will purify. That is [what] *sannyāsa* means. [Morning Walk conversation at Marina del Rey, Los Angeles, 14 July 1974]

His Divine Grace ordered us to become pure devotees and transform into Vraja all the places we travel to and live in.

I take a deep breath, as if to inhale the Vṛndāvana atmosphere around me. In Dorval, Śrīla Prabhupāda inexplicably revealed to me a glimpse of what it means to be Kṛṣṇa conscious and to be an emissary of the spiritual world. It will take more than deep breaths to become the pure-devotee/*sannyāsī* Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke of. But it would be possible by repeated showers of Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy, the grace of Vṛndāvana itself, and the power of the holy names he has given.

Although this year has not blessed me with such a transformation, I pray that one day I may honor Śrīla Prabhupāda's appearance day by having become the devotee/*sannyāsī* who converts every place he goes into Vṛndāvana. When that personal transformation does come, when I one day join the ranks of such similarly accomplished godbrothers and godsisters, that day will have been a suitable offering to His Divine Grace. He is most pleased when the Kṛṣṇa consciousness he brought matures in his followers.

O gentle Vaiṣṇavas who celebrate the appearance day of our beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda! O Garuḍa-Govinda! O divine land of Vraja! Please bless me to one day offer a spotless Vṛndāvana-heart at the feet of His Divine Grace, our ever well-wisher.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

While the sacred tradition you represent has no beginning or end, tracing out its roots in cosmic antiquity and looking to its future unfoldings provides an expanded frame of reference for our attempts in appreciating and glorifying your appearance.

All *jīvas*, beginning with the first being, are endowed with creative potential. The potential invested in Brahmā is shared in minute quantity with all of his descendants.

Creation is initiated with sound. From the seed form of sound, the music of love conveyed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa's flute touched the heart of Brahmā, illuminated his consciousness, and enlivened his spiritual senses. Thus he awakened to know and to answer his calling – to create the Universe as a reflection of the spiritual world.

From the sound he sang, galaxies spiralled into being, expanding into universes – all intended to facilitate the conditioned souls in the pursuit of their own desires and destinies.

Words are sound. Sound begins in the subtle element of ether which then develops into the form of thoughts and words. The consciousness and environment born of thoughts and words will be either spiritual or mundane depending on the sounds we choose. The atmosphere evolving from mundane sound constitutes a place of refuse, appropriate for crows and creatures like them. Conversely, the realm of transcendent sound creates a place of pilgrimage for swan-like souls.

Today, inundated by the internet age, we are engulfed in words which emerge from a digital world to take birth, grow, transform, and change in color as they dance across screens of all shapes and sizes. Those words whisper, speak, scream, and shout to capture our attention, dominate our consciousness, and dictate our behavior.

The internet has primarily made the word informational. And, if we approach The Word – scripture – in that mode, we will receive only information. We see repeated confirmation that those who approach scripture without submitting to spiritual discipline may “master” volumes of spiritual understanding without actually growing and maturing in their spiritual lives. This is a futile and potentially destructive path in that one grows in information about spiritual life without living in a spiritual way.

The tower of Babel is emblematic of this approach. That monument represents the endeavor of mortals to make a name for themselves. Their efforts lead only to the heights of pride, self-deception, confusion, disintegration, and alienation. The Pure, Absolute Truth conceals himself from such ascending pursuits.

Survival in this internet age requires desensitizing ourselves to the clamoring voices of the impure words surrounding us. This is risky in that our insensitivity may also deafen us to the subtle and tender voice that counsels from within.

Whether we know that inner voice to be conscience or Paramātmā, His guidance is essential. Truly it is only in submission to the instructions of *gurudeva* that our hearts can be open to discern the word of God, His *śuddha-nāma*, and the path back to home.

The quest for The Absolute is synonymous with the appearance of Śrī Guru. We cannot realize Kṛṣṇa as separate from *guru* anymore than we can know *guru* apart from Kṛṣṇa. They are inseparable aspects of the sacramental word. Śrī Guru and *śāstra* are similarly inseparable, being respectively the active and passive agents of Absolute Truth.

The name and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa constitute a realm which material senses, mind, and intellect can never touch, conceive, approach, or attain. The scriptures consist of divine sound, identical with the Absolute Person, compiled in a language that is inaccessible by empiric approach. Yet the Lord so graciously agrees to descend through our layers of conditioning in order to take root in our hearts in the form of transcendental sound vibrating from the lips of His pure devotee. The Absolute Truth reveals himself as The Living Word in this personal form. As sacramental sound, Śrī Guru kindles the fire of devotion in our hearts.

The Absolute Truth descends through the channel of submissive oral reception, revealing Himself in proportion to our growth in faith and love. True love is expressed in giving our heart to Śrī Guru. In reciprocation the sacramental word, after purifying our minds and enlightening our intellect, blissfully and gracefully descends deeper, to take birth into the core of our hearts. There He develops personality as the Living Word, awakening our dormant soul from its comatose condition.

The chain of disciplic succession from Brahmā to his current representative embodies living communion with Absolute Truth via The Word. In time, Vedavyāsa gave written form to the spoken word. Through his agent in

paramparā he continues to edit, emphasize, present, and comment on the scriptures in a manner ensuring that revelation thrives. With your appearance, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Word developed further into a form suitable to the understanding of a western audience and modern living.

The power of Godhead to convey himself through the medium of *guru* and *sāstra* forms the living communion we celebrate on this most blessed occasion. Vyāsa-pūjā commemorates this covenant with the power of the Lord who acts through Vyāsa to communicate the nature of divine reality as well as the process for conditioned souls to approach it.

Even though I had heard of the concept of a Living Word in the religious tradition of my childhood, the dichotomy between words and actions in that line crippled my infant faith. It was only in hearing from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that my faith was revived and fortified. In your divine example, the perfect integration and personification of words and deeds, was dynamic. We were blessed beyond measure to witness the perfect disciple who became our perfect master.

Sitting at your lotus feet, hearing *Kṛṣṇa* book on Janmāṣṭamī evening in 1972, the portals to the spiritual sky opened wide. The next day, worshipping you on Vyāsa-pūjā, we were literally transported into the realm described in *Kṛṣṇa* book. By your grace we briefly experienced the treasure awaiting those who attain perfection in the worship of Śrī Guru. In your presence on that hilltop, we experienced such complete unity and harmony both internally and outwardly. Even though we were not qualified to stay in such a beau-

tific state, its impression has never faded. That memory sustains us as we pass through the lonely valleys and arid regions when Kṛṣṇa seems so distant and life so futile.

Now, thirty-five years after your return to the spiritual world, our relationship continues and develops as we serve your sacramental sound in the form of your *vānī*. Your pastimes and precepts are exemplary in the way they synergize one another and flow as a single current of devotion. They leave an example and lead the way to the destination from where you still beckon us to follow.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, bless us that our inspiration for shelter in your words not be motivated by a desire to be more informed but rather to be formed, reformed, and transformed by them. May we submit to be mastered by your words rather than seeking to master them. By offering words of glorification to you, may we cultivate the seed you planted in our hearts and nurture it to fruition. In so doing we connect with the deeper internal voices speaking ever so sweetly.

Amongst them you are most prominent as the one who lives and speaks within us, fulfilling our deepest desires and aspirations, guiding our spiritual destinies. You do all this from the world that forever endures and expands in the form of sacred sound.

Your servant,

Varṣāṇā Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

There is a land where we'll never, ever grow old. Nongeographical in the ordinary sense, this place is not situated in time or space. To attain it, we don't have to travel to another continent or planet. This land of agelessness obviously can't be physical, since the time factor deteriorates anything material.

So where is this land of ever-freshness and newness? It's the spiritual world that's contained in your service. The more our expertise in your service seems to increase, the more we realize how much better it could be. As His Holiness Bhakti Tīrtha Mahārāja commented to me before his departure, the more service we do, the more we realize there's so much more service to be done. Our service cravings multiply, while simultaneously our abilities to recognize service opportunities expand.

Undoubtedly the body will end, but devotional service to your mission keeps snowballing, whether quantitatively or qualitatively. We may take for granted (considering them elementary) Rūpa Gosvāmī's teachings on artificial and real renunciation of the material world—lessons you so vividly confirmed. But Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, in his Eleventh Canto commentary (11.7.12), calls this knowledge of *phalgu-vairāgya* and *yukta-vairāgya* “confidential purports of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* meant for the understanding of fortunate living entities.”

Surveying your devotees, with their multifarious scintillating aspects of *bhakti* skills, I can easily remain humbled. How amazing it is that whatever service we may perform nicely for your pleasure, we can be sure that at that very moment, somewhere in the huge world of ISKCON, someone is doing it better—whether the devotee is celebrated or unsung.

I have learned that it's the non-neon devotees in your ISKCON one has to especially watch out for—the *prabhus* faithfully serving “behind the scenes.” Somehow they seem to enter the ultimate scene, back to Godhead, via the most amazing final moments.

Please accept this personal anecdote, submitted for your pleasure, since you would often spice your morning walks and lectures with striking tidbits from the cultish realm of *māyā*.

Four years ago, after the USA elected a president with a partially different body color, my youngest brother, at significant expense, packed up his beige-skinned family of five and scurried all the way from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C., to attend what the media touted as a historic inauguration.

“Why did you do that?” I queried. “So much time and money just for such a hyped affair with such flickering, superficial consequences.”

“Can’t you see it?” he exclaimed incredulously. “I want my children to know *there are absolutely no limitations!* Don’t you understand, big brother: *no limitations!*”

Oh, really?

This, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is just a small sample of the ignorance you saved me from—the pretentious little world of mundane sociopolitical variations and their hallucinogenic effects.

The Yamadūtas, in their conversation with the Viṣṇudūtas in the Sixth Canto of the *Bhāgavatam* (6.1.52), explain:

The foolish embodied living entity, inept at controlling his senses and mind, is forced to act according to the influence of the modes of material nature, against his desires. He is like a silkworm that uses its own saliva to create a cocoon and then becomes trapped in it, with no possibility of getting out. The living entity traps himself in a network of his own fruitive activities and then can find no way to release himself. Thus he is always bewildered, and repeatedly he dies.

Without the guidance of Your Divine Grace, I would have known nothing about the omnipresent cosmic low ceilings—limiters far more stringent than class, race, and gender. I would have lived my whole life oblivious to the three modes and karma. Perversely seeking knowledge and pleasure through my distorted senses, I would have surely disregarded time, manifesting as the consummate barriers of birth, death, old age, and disease. Echoing King Mucukunda, I was habituated to forgetting about time, yet time

would certainly not ignore me.

After the U.S. presidential hoopla, one of my senior relatives remarked to me: “Just see the successes, all around. Your middle brother, the doctor, is CEO of a medical foundation backed by investments worth 200 million dollars; your youngest brother, the Harvard lawyer, is a board member for Toyota. And you... er... uh... well... you could have been up there too... but. . .”

Up *where*?

Horse eggs... sky flowers... as the *śāstra* says.

Gandharva-nagara: the fantasized sight of palaces or cities deep in the dense forest.

I can just see you on a morning walk at Santa Monica Beach, suddenly stopping, turning to the devotees, planting your cane, and issuing an all-conquering commentary, protecting your devotees from such well-intentioned yet utterly hollow quests for fulfillment and wholesomeness through material acclaim, corporate climbing, and social mobility.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.12.15 states: “Śrīla Dhruva Maharaja realized that this cosmic manifestation bewilders living entities like a dream or phantasmagoria because it is a creation of the illusory, external energy of the Supreme Lord.”

How is it that I am chanting Hare Krishna more and still loving it more, with each passing day?

Why is it that for almost forty years I’ve read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and especially *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* over and over, and still I think I’ve barely touched their depths?

What kind of hankering is it, that I beg for intelligence from the Supersoul to better serve you any way you want?

Where does the mercy come from, that a formerly self-indulgent New Yorker can look at your devotees and think, “How would Prabhupāda see him or her? What delight Prabhupāda would take in this devotee’s devotional service!”

And to top it all off, before you rescued me I had embraced as the highest realm, the supreme abode... Manhattan! Frenzied, maddened, I saw it as the inner whorl of the lotus flower known as New York City. Now, by your dispensation, I long for the divine intimacy of Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana: *śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya rādhā-kṛṣṇa nahe anya*.

Let us proclaim it to the three worlds: your devotional service has no limitations, in either this world and body or the next.

Your devotees are truly “up there” as long as they endlessly strive to please you.

In your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.30.33 you write so beautifully:

Out of humility, a devotee considers himself unfit to be transferred to the spiritual world. He always thinks himself contaminated by the modes of material nature. Nor is there any need for a devotee to ask to be freed from the modes of material nature. Devotional service itself is in the transcendental position; therefore there is no question of asking for this special facility. The conclusion is that a pure devotee is not anxious to stop the repetition of birth and death, but is always eager to associate with other devotees who are engaged in chanting and hearing about the glories of the Lord.

May that be my standard, and when this present body has done its dash, I look forward to starting off from the very beginning with you, wherever you want, however you want it.

Your insignificant servant,

Devāmrita Swami

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-sālākayā
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.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this, the 116th anniversary of your appearance day.

This morning, at the Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple here at Sahyadri, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Kṣetra, in South India, we started to read the introduction to your biography. Although we just read a few pages, all the devotees attending the class immediately began to appreciate your transcendental qualities and the great fortune we all have of receiving the shelter and mercy of such an exalted spiritual master as Your Divine Grace.

*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.”

By your mercy, and only by your mercy, let me try to glorify you by offering these few words.

Your glories will continue to be sung as more and more conditioned souls come in contact with the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu—in particular with the fourth wave of this movement, namely, the establishment of self-sufficient communities that will gradually lead toward the development of the culture of *varṇāśrama*. To highlight this important desire of yours, I have taken a formal vow to remain for two years in this small community of some twenty devotees and thirty-two cows, in keeping with your intense desire that we develop these farm communities. I pray that this meets with your kind approval.

Many years ago, in the year 1977 to be precise, you ventured on what was to be your last journey overseas. You were greatly inspired to visit Gītā-nāgarī in Pennsylvania, where you planned to sit and show the devotees by example how to develop a self-sufficient varṇāśrama community. Although your physical condition was very frail and weak, your vision was clear and your determination strong to firmly establish this aspect of Lord Caitanya’s overall mission. You made it to England, stopping at the London temple, where devotees from different parts of Europe came to get your *darśana*. You remained a few days in London, but then your health suddenly deteriorated to such an extent that you decided to return to India and remain in Vṛndāvana, your home, till your last days. During that period you continued to instruct and remind devotees about the *varṇāśrama* mission. In the last few weeks before your physical departure, you spoke the following words:

Live very simple life. Produce your own food, and produce your own cloth. Don’t be allured by the machine civilization. *Varṇāśrama* will help you to divide society. Do it. [Room Conversation, Vṛndāvana, 8 October 1977]

A few days later, on October 18th, you made the following statement:

Unless in the human society the system of varṇāśrama is introduced, no scheme or social order, health order or any other order, political order, will be successful. [Room Conversation, Vṛndāvana, 18 October 1977]

Although you stressed book distribution over all other aspects of preaching, you would again and again point out the need to also be very practical, thus underlining the aspect of “utility is the principle.” In a conversation with Trappist Monks in Atlanta, you had stated:

Our first problem is, because we have got this material body, eating. Everyone must eat. So Kṛṣṇa says, *annād bhavanti bhūtāni*. “If there is sufficient food grains, then both man and animal, they become happy.” Therefore our first religion is to produce food grains sufficiently to feed everyone. [Room Conversation, Atlanta, March 1975]

With your transcendental vision you developed the idea of a special institution that you named “Varṇāśrama College.” While speaking

with devotees in Los Angeles in 1975, you expressed your desire to establish such a *varṇāśrama* college and a big temple at the historic place where Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kurukṣetra. Taking your divine instructions to heart, devotees traveled to India intent on finding a suitable piece of land at Kurukṣetra to help fulfill your desire. For reasons unknown to the devotees at the time, the land acquisition could not be completed and the project was abandoned. It was only recently that a professor attached to the University of Kurukṣetra who had met with devotees at that time met one of those same devotees and candidly asked him if he ever knew why that land could not be acquired. The devotee said no, and the professor explained that the university authorities, upon hearing of your plans to establish a *varṇāśrama* college, were convinced that the establishment of such an institution would likely close down their university, and so they decided to approach influential people to block the sale of that property.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when will we have sufficient faith in your instructions about *varṇāśrama*? When will we develop the strong conviction that *varṇāśrama* colleges are the key to opening the doors to a *varṇāśrama*-based society? When will we have the strength and determination to put into practice these most important directives you repeated on so many occasions?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, kindly forgive me for my inabilities to serve you as you should be served. Kindly give me the courage to somehow or other accomplish this almost impossible task of establishing *varṇāśrama*. Kindly help me to remain a faithful servant and to become humble.

Your servant,

R.P. Bhakti Rāghava Swami

P.S. I have added “R.P.” for “Rāghava Paṇḍita,” the name you gave me at initiation, to remind me always of your causeless mercy.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my innumerable obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to your divine appearance in this material world, and your divine mission of delivering the fallen souls and distributing pure *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

You are the Master in so many ways, and that is why your *sannyāsa* name is Swami (one of the 108 Gauḍīya *sannyāsa* names).

You are the Master of worldwide preaching. Who else could dream of what you undertook and achieved? Subsequently, other *ācāryas* have also preached in different parts of the world, but you are the icebreaker who showed the way and created a free passage.

You are the Master of the written word. You featured in the *Guinness Book of Records* as the most prolific author. Not only have you written more books than anyone else, but these books are an unprecedented flood of more-than-Ganges nectar from the transcendental world.

You are the Master of book distribution, for you have released these books in an otherwise inconceivable flood from which Kali's forces in the material world will never recover. You are the Master of transcendental emotion. Your every word and every gesture were extraordinary. You were in ecstasy, even when relating in apparently mundane matters. Every photograph is an expression of your extraordinary moods and emotions. Even so, you contained your moods of transcendental service in a jug, so that we could relate to you and not become bewildered.

You are also the master of Kṛṣṇa, because you His pure devotee. Lord Nārāyaṇa informed Durvāsā Muni, "I am completely under the control of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent." Above and beyond this, you are the master of Kṛṣṇa in a very special way, because you are the servant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Of your father, you said, "He prayed to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī that in the future we would become a servant of the eternal consort of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus somehow or other we are now engaged in that service." Who but a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī could follow Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī

(*rūpānuga*) and spread Lord Caitanya’s mission all over the world? In *Cc. Madhya* 13. 150, you make the astounding statement “In Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa is the instrument of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī; therefore all the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana still chant ‘Jaya Rādhē!’ From Kṛṣṇa’s own statement given herein, it appears that Rādhārāṇī is the Queen of Vṛndāvana and that Kṛṣṇa is simply Her decoration.” Only a very close associate of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī could write this; no one else – no cowherd boy friend, and no parental associate – could do so.

You are the Master of mystic potency and mercy. You are a uniquely elevated personality, yet you appear in the material world, disguised as a mortal, and canvass for assistants.

You are Master of your devotees’ hearts. You have inspired us to leave all kinds of rotten lifestyles and convictions, and aspire for loving service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. You have inspired your devotees to perform impossible tasks, even after your physical departure. You have the power to inspire us with transcendental faith. In the 90’s, one of your disciples told a senior Vaiṣṇava that he was still chanting but he had no taste. The senior Vaiṣṇava was astonished and said to his own disciples, “How is it possible to chant the holy name without taste for 15 years? This is *guru-niṣṭhā!* You should have *guru-niṣṭhā* like this!”

You are the Master of beauty. Your astounding grace, your astounding friendship to this truly broken and destitute person, your aristocratic stance and beautiful smile, your matchless gifts from the other side of infinity, the breadth and depth of your desire to bring transcendental happiness to poor souls lost and rotting in this world – they are all supremely beautiful, for your natural position is in the world of beautiful love and loving beauty.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you fully manifest the mystery of *guru-tattva*. Lord Balarāma is *akhaṇḍa-guru-tattva*, the origin and basis of all *guru*-ship. He manifests the spiritual world, and – because of our (my) reluctance to engage in service in the spiritual world – He also manifests the material world. Not only that, but He appears within this material world as Nityānanda Prabhu to reclaim the conditioned souls rotting here. You are the full manifestation of Nityānanda Prabhu’s loving mercy and potency, and of Nityānanda Prabhu Himself, yet you (like our other *ācāryas*) appear as your own utterly unique and miraculous individual personality. And de-

spite being fully potent, you have presented yourself as being completely helpless and dependent on Kṛṣṇa's mercy. This loving surrender is a deep mystery.

Guru-tattva is too deep and high and broad for me to understand. I am like a glow-worm trying to understand how the sun works. My real question is, "How may I serve you? When will I see you again?" These are not just questions, but prayers from my heart.

When I wrote to you to inform you that I had joined the Bhaktivedanta Institute, you wrote back, "Yes, this is the first class engagement." I have not forgotten your instructions, Śrīla Prabhupāda. In 1977, I came to your room in Bhaktivedanta Manor with Bhakti Svarūpa Dāmodara Mahārāja (then Brahmācārī). You emphasised the importance of scientific preaching, and asked me, "Do you agree?" I replied, "I agree, Śrīla Prabhupāda." I think you put something in my heart at that time.

I remember the first *Life Comes from Life* conference in Vṛndāvana. Your scientist disciples were wearing suits, and some other devotees laughed and said we looked like Mormons. But you were happy. "They look very elegant," you said approvingly. At the end of the conference, you called us to your room, and we came, still wearing suits. You told the devotees to bring chairs for us, because you knew that it is difficult to sit on the floor in trousers. Despite your own deeply pitiful condition, you were thinking of our slight inconvenience. There were five or six of us, but the devotees could only find two chairs, so we pretended to sit down on chairs. You were physically almost blind at that time, so when you asked if we were sitting comfortably, we said that we were, so that you would begin to talk to us. We cheated you with love.

That was 35 years ago, but I have never stopped trying to make a scientific presentation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The First Purpose of ISKCON that you established in 1966 has always been such an inspiration for me: "To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large, to educate all people in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values to achieve real unity and peace in the world." I want to do this in a scientific way.

I am getting old now, almost as old as you were when you came to the West to save us. You said of yourself that you thought, "Guru Mahārāja asked me, so let me try, at least, at the fag end of my

life.” I am also reaching the fag end of my life, but I am still trying “in a helpless way, in a hopeless way” to do something to fulfill your desire and purpose. I pray that in this lifetime you will tell me, “Oh, that’s just what I wanted.”

I approach you like a simple pilgrim offering Yamunā water back into Yamunā, because I have nothing of my own to offer you. *Tomāra karuṇā sāra*. I have no power to serve you, but I pray with full confidence that by your grace, you will accept me as your loving servant eternally, and bring me to the point of real service.

When will I offer heart-*puṣpāñjali* – flowers from my heart – to your lotus feet? When will those flowers actually be my heart, and not just from my heart? And when will the rest of me follow my heart to your lotus feet, so that nothing at all is left behind? When will I be nothing but my offering of myself to you?

Whatever reality I have is only your mercy, and if you do not give that mercy, I have no reality and no life. But I know that you came simply to give that mercy. I am praying at your lotus feet, fully confident that you will eternally be busy giving me more mercy than I could ask for or even conceive of.

Your tiny aspiring servant,

Swami B.V. Nemi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My humble obeisances. All glories to you!

Today I reflect on what I learned this year about who you are and what you have done. First a story:

I am writing this offering waiting for my plane at Blue Grass airport in Kentucky. I just attended the opening of a new project. After deeply studying your books for the last few years to the level of *Bhakti-sāstri* and *Bhakti-vaibhava*, Cārucandra Dāsa decided that he must not only know the philosophy thoroughly, but he must live the life that is described there and also share it with others. He worked hard and bought a 180 acre farm with a beautiful house. Land here is very cheap, fertile, has no building codes, and the taxes are just a few hundred dollars a year. A sincere couple also joined him. They are filled with hope that they can live the life they came to Kṛṣṇa consciousness for, where spiritual life is protected from ugra-karma, exhausting work in a system that drains most of the fruits of that work and gives little relief in sight.

Forty minutes away I visited Ādi-kartā, my godbrother. His land is breathtaking with beautiful cows, crystal clear waters and rolling hills. I received the same message there. Kṛṣṇa is a cowherd boy. The life he lived is not just for study and meditation, but the example of life in which Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not only nurtured but practically shown to others.

Isn't that what you preached for years? And isn't it becoming apparent more than ever as the standard of living in the USA is substantially waning to the point where if one stops working like a dog for a minute (often both husband and wife) the welfare of one's family is threatened? And even if not threatened, one's spiritual life certainly is.

Now back to what I think I realized this year about you:

Seeing the increasingly oppressive economic and social culture of America and how the devotees are suffering very much in their Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I realized just how much of a visionary you

were. You saw it coming and you warned us how much Kṛṣṇa consciousness needs the proper social and economic environment to prosper.

I am also pained that although more than forty years ago you were already at the cutting edge in America in Eastern philosophy, vegetarianism, and sustainable living, we have let others take the lead in many ways. That's not fair and not service to you.

I am not pointing fingers, just expressing a humble realization that I must work harder to protect your legacy, to help in some way so that your vision for America of happy devotees can become a fact.

Humbly in your service,

Dhanurdhara Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at the dust of your divine lotus feet on this most auspicious occasion of the 116th anniversary of your glorious appearance.

The moment we are no longer an observing, reflecting being, we have ceased to be aware of ourselves and only exist in that quiet. On the occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I humbly reflect with much sobriety on the formative years when I first joined your organization. Recently, in March-April 2012, I was in Juhu, Mumbai, and that triggered my memory about the early days and prompted me to reflect on how I joined this glorious Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in March 1972. This year marks the 40th anniversary of my joining your transcendental movement, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I joined you right after our second meeting.

Around this time I was a simple and inexperienced college student wrestling with my conscience and my spiritual identity. From the moment I met the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees at the Bombay pandal the previous year, I was constantly thinking about them and wanted to join them, but family obligations stopped me from fulfilling this spontaneous, heartfelt desire. College life had become increasingly unbearable, and I simply tolerated the tedium of the long hours of study and the examinations.

On one occasion, as I carried my heavy chemistry and physics books, I felt completely weighed down physically and emotionally and yearned to be far away from everyone and everything I knew. During the long walk, which lasted several hours, I contemplated my undesirable situation and realized that all I wished to do was chant and dance with the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees. It became apparent to me that I did not want to sit for these tiresome examinations. I was doing it simply to satisfy my family. The further I walked, the clearer it became to me that I could no longer continue with this charade! Although I was the top student in primary and secondary school, when I entered college my inner being had become transformed. I was putting on a good show, but I had no passion or sincerity in pursuing a college degree. Whenever I was alone in my room I would bolt the door and leap up and down with raised arms,

imitating the devotees I had seen chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa *kīrtana* at the Bombay pandal. I was overwhelmed with disgust as I carried a variety of books, notebooks, pens, and papers. As I continued to walk, a strong wave of emotion impelled me to start hurling each item, one by one, with all my strength as far as I could. I threw away everything—my chemistry book, my assignment papers, and my notebooks, and then I feverishly dug deep into my pockets for pens and other bits of paper, which I flung away with renewed vigor. I was finally left bare-handed and with empty pockets. I was overcome with a great sense of relief and victory. “Why haven’t I done this earlier?” I thought. I had been anticipating this poignant moment for years! All that I desired was to be free from all shackles—free like a bird to soar to new heights. I had finally found the willpower to release myself from this stranglehold. It was a long but satisfying walk, and I headed home, warmly embracing my new-found freedom.

My only goal now was to find the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees. I had not seen them since April of the year before. I wondered whether I would ever see them again. How could I possibly find them in such an overcrowded place? To my surprise and relief, and as Kṛṣṇa would have it, two weeks later I saw an advertisement in a newspaper about a Hare Kṛṣṇa festival at ISKCON’s new property in Juhu. It was scheduled for March 17. This is exactly what I had been waiting for, and I practically raced to Juhu to attend the festival. It was at that festival, the second pandal program in Bombay, that I saw you again, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Attendance at the festival was not as great as it would have been in downtown Bombay. At least the festival was on our own property, and this was only the beginning. I was gripped by what you had to share with the congregation:

So this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is for *para-upakāra*, for doing good to others—the best welfare activities in the world. And it is India’s duty, it is India’s prerogative to take this knowledge and broadcast all over the world for *para-upakāra*. And actually it is happening. All these European and American boys and girls, they are trying to understand this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement very seriously. So it is very scientific, authorized, and practical also. So we hope that all of you who are present here will try to cooperate with this movement.

During the festival you held a groundbreaking and cornerstone-laying ceremony—you wanted a temple constructed as soon as possible. You mentioned that the Deities, Rādhā-Rāsavihārī, should not remain standing in a bare tent but should be protected by a silver-and-teakwood *śimhāsana* on a marble altar.

The following words are etched in my memory because it was an impassioned plea to the congregation, an invitation that I could not resist:

Unfortunately, when we study the *Bhāgavata* we immediately jump over to kṛṣṇa-līlā with the gopīs. That is not the process. The process is first of all you try to understand Kṛṣṇa. Without understanding Kṛṣṇa, which is very difficult subject matter... Kṛṣṇa says that *yatatām api siddhānām kaścid māṁ vetti tattvataḥ*. So the preliminary study of Kṛṣṇa is *Bhagavad-gītā*. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa explains Himself. In the Seventh Chapter, we shall begin from tomorrow morning, the study of this *Bhagavad-gītā* in the morning. Please try to come. So we have opened this center in Bombay to give you facilities. Please try to take it. Please come and encourage us, and we shall continue this movement, here in this center, as long as possible.

With these words you invoked the many people who had attended the festival, but it was as if you had spoken to me directly. I was enthused and stirred by the inspiring message.

Each day of the festival I arrived long before the evening program began. I took a local train from Kirti College in Dadar, downtown Bombay, to Santa Cruz, and then a bus to Juhu. This was about an hour's journey. On arriving, I would borrow *Kṛṣṇa* book and read, or just associate with the devotees. At times they invited me to take *prasādam* with them. I was curious about how they walked and how they talked, and I observed their lifestyle closely. I also remember dancing in the *kīrtanas* enthusiastically.

I was later informed by the devotees how happy you were that ISKCON would now occupy the new Juhu property, and you frequently spoke of your plans of erecting a spectacular ISKCON temple there. You repeatedly spoke of constructing a temple of an international stature, like a Holiday Inn hotel. You ordered the devotees to immediately arrange a ten-day public festival on the newly acquired land.

You wanted everything organized before your return in two weeks.

Slowly and hesitantly, devotees began to move onto the Juhu land and prepare for the festival. Mr. Sethi, a neighbor and life member, hired a work crew to cut down the weeds and other vegetation, and other life members came forward to assist. The arrival of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsavihārī at Juhu also meant increased difficulties for the devotees, who now had to struggle to maintain the morning *pūjā* and cook six daily offerings in an inadequate kitchen. The tent in which Rādhā-Rāsavihārī was housed at times swayed dangerously in the wind. But They tolerated these inconveniences simply because you prayed to Them, “My dear Sir, please remain here, and I shall build a beautiful temple for You.”

Like many other Indians, I was impressed and inspired by how the Westerners had taken to India’s culture. Their commitment to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, *sanātana-dharma*, seemed very deep. Their dedication was obvious. I did not doubt their authenticity.

The “smart Indian intellectuals,” however, had doubts. Historically, the British had initially come to India with the promise of doing trade under the name of The East India Trading Company. Gradually they had not only succeeded in business but had also taken over the whole country. Now the Westerners were back in the country, this time with *dhotīs*, *kurtās*, beads, and the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, and some Indians thought the Westerners who once came as businessmen had now returned as sādhus, knowing the Indians’ weakness for their own culture. “We can’t be fooled,” they declared. “On the surface you may appear like sādhus, but you are here to deceive us. You are spies, CIA agents in disguise.” Because of this misperception, there was a lot of unfavorable media coverage of the movement. The image presented was that the devotees were not following any principles but were living like hippies. A movie with this theme was released and became famous throughout India. It was called *Hare Rama, Hare Krishna*. The movie showed Western youngsters in India, wearing dhotīs and saris and chanting “Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Rāma,” but also taking intoxicants and mixing freely between the sexes. For several years after that, whenever we went out preaching we would hear people singing the soundtrack from that movie.

The bad publicity did not affect me in the least. You explained the situation with much clarity. You said, “All Indians are devotees. They

have just been misled by politicians.” Your policy was to fan the small spark of inherent devotion into a blazing fire.

I stopped going to college after this pandal program. For me it was a foregone conclusion that I was going to accept you as my spiritual master, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda. There was no need for anyone to preach to me, nor do I remember at any point thinking “Yes, now I am convinced.” I was *immediately* convinced. In 1971 I developed an attachment for ISKCON devotees, and I naturally felt that ISKCON was my home and you were my spiritual master. Perhaps the connection was already there from a previous birth and I was again looking for you and hankering for your shelter and mercy. ISKCON was the first institution I ever joined, and you were the first and will be the last spiritual master I will accept. Since the day I joined ISKCON, the thought of leaving has never occurred to me.

A few days after the festival at Juhu ended, I composed an application letter to join ISKCON. I addressed it to “The President, ” wrote it out by hand, and then took it to a typing institute to have it professionally typed. Because this was an “International Society, ” I wanted to present myself appropriately. I signed the typed letter and took a bus out to Juhu to deliver it personally. In the letter I explained that I had attended the ISKCON festivals put on by the devotees in both 1971 and 1972 and had studied their literature. I expressed my appreciation for their lifestyle, dedication, devotion, and great sacrifice. Borrowing some of the terms I had seen on the pandal advertisements, I complimented their dazzling *āratis*, ecstatic *kīrtanas*, and sumptuous *prasādam*. I stated my willingness to follow the four regulative principles and apologized for having taken the reader’s time away from Kṛṣṇa by making him read my application. At the end of my letter I begged the temple president to consider the application favorably and to accept me as a devotee.

When I arrived at Hare Kṛṣṇa land I asked to see the president. I expected to find him sitting behind an official desk in a sprawling, opulent office. Girirāja Dāsa, the temple president at that time, a simple *brahmacārī*, was not at all hard to find—he happened to be walking passed me. Wherever the temple president stood became a working office space! I thought my letter would sit for some time in pending files, and probably my history had to be checked and my application weighed against others. But Girirāja stood and read the letter on the spot, right in front of me. As soon as he realized what my intention was, he excitedly waved the letter above his head,

getting the attention of everyone around, and yelled, “Hey, we’ve got a new *bhakta!*” I was officially accepted.

It was not long thereafter that a barber arrived on the scene. Before I knew it, Mahāmsa Swami taught me how to put on a dhotī. It was not even an overnight change— within a few hours I was transformed into a *brahmacānī*. The very same afternoon, I went with Gargamuni Swami, who was in charge of school preaching, to a school program. There was *kīrtana* and a talk, and I was given the job of translating from English to Hindi. Further, I was transformed into a preacher on my very first day in your Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Some months later I was formally given shelter by Your Divine Grace in the form of initiation.

That was my very first service in your transcendental mission, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda. You have been so very merciful upon me that I have remained engaged in such soul-satisfying services for all these years. And yet the desire to serve and to please Your Divine Grace has only increased over time. I most humbly beg at your lotus feet to keep me engaged with energy and enthusiasm and in this manner serve your divine purpose eternally.

Your humble servant,

Lokanāth Swami

*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*

*tāte Kṛṣṇa bhaje, kare gurura sevana
māyā-jāla chuṭe, pāya k ṇera caraṇa*

“If the conditioned soul engages in the service of the Lord and simultaneously carries out the orders of his spiritual master and serves him, he can get out of the clutches of *māyā* and become eligible for shelter at Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 22.25)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my only means of shelter at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. I am not qualified for anything, but by your mercy I can try to help you in your mission of reclaiming the conditioned souls of Kali-yuga.

Some say 2012 is a year of disaster—
Civilization will cease forever after.
We don’t think this to be the case:
Prabhupāda is here to save our race.

Who else can help suffering humanity—
Bring them to transcendent eternity?
The effects of Kali are here a while more,
Extending to every land and shore.

Thousands of years are still to come,
With quarrel and fear for everyone.
The personality of Kali is not done yet—
There are elaborate plans that must be met.

Weaving his mesh throughout the land
With consummate ease and skill of hand—
This has been done many times before;
Now he has come for one time more.

Though the world is tremendous and vast,
Kali's arrangement is set and cast.
Being possessed of boundless might,
All that is good he continues to fight.

Just like Parīk it from days gone by,
Prabhupāda is here to turn the tide.
His voice is drumlike, loud and low,
His face suffused with rosy glow.

He shines with many a lucky sign
And many an ornament so divine.
Although not towering in his height,
He is a tiger in gait and might.

No precious mine more rich could be,
No burning flame more bright than he.
With devotees and friends he has begun
Implementing his plan for everyone.

With astounding power this great saint
Has done what others fear to contemplate.
Confronting Kali straight and true,
He turned his plans completely askew.

Continuing on and pushing deep,
He will not tire nor ever sleep.
One may ask how the age will go on
In front of someone so right and strong.

He is possessed of great compassion.
Kali too will benefit in a fashion:
He will see his divine face
And get the mercy of His Divine Grace.

'Tis proper and right in many a way
That I to him should honor and pay.
Forget not all the words I say,
Nor let the occasion slip away.

We offer water to his lotus feet,
The gift of honor and a high seat.
The arm of fate, the arm of the Lord—

Immense power in him is stored.

To follow him is my only hope;
Otherwise it is difficult to cope.
He picked me up like magic art;
I dread to think we could be apart.

Thank you, Prabhupāda, for all you've done.
Please keep me close, your most fallen son.
If it weren't for you, where would I be?
I'd probably drown in the Kali sea.

Let us rejoice and chant his name.
The spiritual world is ours to gain.
Who but him can allay our fear?
All his glories the world should hear.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

May we be with you forever.

Your lowly servant,

Rāmāi Swami

Hanumatpresaka Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

In all the circumstances where we travel or can imagine traveling, we find no shelter but to always have the recollection of your lotus feet. They are warm, substantial, and always stimulated by your travel on the spiritual field. This is our maybe mistaken but humble perception of your mercy and association. Then you kindly give us a little service to accomplish there, always chanting the *mahā-mantra*.

What more do we need?

This is the seed of unlimited universes of devotional activity. On this, the worlds of Goloka and Gaura-*līlā* can expand and expand. We hope that these efforts in glorifying your books are successful. We are struggling, struggling, struggling so hard to let people—professors—experience, see, the content of these books. They are very nice. It is a great task to try to relish even a little of them in proper proportion. We hope to be always engaged in this *saṅkīrtana* with your proper disciples.

Your very minor servant,

Hanumatpresaka Swami

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

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

Dear Guru Mahārāja,

You once said, “My only desire is that all people become happy and prosperous in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” What a glorious mission you have brought to this Western world! By your mercy the message of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the message of divine love, which was never broadcast before in the West, is now appreciated and accepted everywhere.

While trying to serve your desire to fulfill Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s prophecy, I started to understand that the less I think about myself and the more I think about others’ well-being, the happier and more satisfied I feel. I’m trying to learn from your wonderful example how to surrender my life to your service without ulterior motive. As you said: “I am just trying to organize a worldwide movement not for any personal ambition but to execute superior orders, and by the grace of Kṛṣṇa we are getting good encouragement. So I request my students to cooperate fully.” [Letter, 26 July 1970]

We should try to satisfy you by fulfilling this request of yours. But you warned us: “The poison is personal ambition.” Unfortunately, we are more than ready to swallow this horrible poison instead of drinking the nectar of selfless and humble service. I pray at your lotus feet to save me from this tendency of looking for name and fame, with the excuse that everything is done only for preaching. In our heart of hearts we should cry out to achieve purity of purpose and to develop our love for Guru and Gaurāṅga and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Falling at the dust of your lotus feet, I beg to remain

Your foolish servant life after life,

Bhakti Sundar Goswami

“That My Bubble May Not Burst”

Most dear, revered, incomprehensible, merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisance in the dust of your divine lotus feet.

In the book *Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!* (first published in 1994) I wrote about my “nonentity-ness”: “Crowds do not run to greet me when I visit an ISKCON temple, nor do I have bundles of fan mail to neglect.... Whatever I do, good or bad, does not make much difference to anyone.” Times have changed. Now I am an established ISKCON guru—albeit well behind the biggies, but enough of a celebrity to no longer have to travel by public bus, and to be greeted with *kīrtana* in many places (nice!), and yes, to have plenty of emails (from disciples and others) that I try to keep up with.

Within ISKCON, the role of guru is the most challenging and challenged institution. Now that I have come to this razor’s edge, I pray that you maintain me in your service and protect me so that pride and complacency not spoil all that I am doing. Among the many servants of yours who are considerably more qualified than I, several have buckled under the strain of accepting disciples. My only hope for remaining fixed in this service is to constantly remember that despite being considered a dispenser of mercy, I am in every respect dependent on your mercy, and no less so than when I first came to the shelter of your lotus feet. Please grant me the sanity to play my part in pushing forward your mission, with full energy and with full confidence in your protection, and with the understanding that I am not and can never be anything but fully dependent on your mercy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda! I am still trying to come to grips with the paradox of being a guru, a spiritual master. How can a devotee, who is supposed to be the servant of everyone, be the master of anyone? Because you are a topmost devotee, you made it seem most natural to be simultaneously a servant and the spiritual master of the whole universe. You repeatedly stated that to be a guru is easy, yet you set a most difficult standard to emulate. To be a guru like you is not easy. Many facets of your divine personality—for instance, your natural charm and humility, and your defiance of physical laws,

such as those governing jet lag—seem far beyond my ability to emulate or even imitate. It is more realistic for me to try within my capacity to follow your example of selfless dedication to the *saṅkīrtana* mission.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my disciples annually celebrate a function to honor me, which they call Vyāsa-pūjā. I trust that you are satisfied with that, for you have stated, “My glory will be when my disciples are worshiped all over the world.”¹ Yet there is a clear distinction between Vyāsa-pūjā in my honor and Vyāsa-pūjā in honor of Your Divine Grace. You are praised for being the great *mahā-bhāgavata* who, by representing the previous *ācāryas* and by your own extraordinary transcendental qualities, performed incomparable acts in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world. On the other hand, the only praise that might be appropriate for me is that of being your faithful follower. To be a true follower of Your Divine Grace is no small thing, yet there will always be a gulf between you, the singular *mahā-bhāgavata* who widely distributed authentic love of Kṛṣṇa, and your many followers who, according to their realization, based on what they have heard from you (*yathā-mati-rutam*²), attempt to follow your example.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, because you are the mighty *mahā-bhāgavata* who founded ISKCON, to be your directly initiated disciple is a position of status in ISKCON today. Any “Prabhupāda disciple,” even if deviated from his initiation vows and diverged from your teachings, is honored by juniors as a senior citizen of ISKCON—which is appropriate, for any cultured society respects its elders. Whatever else those disciples of yours may or may not have done throughout subsequent years, the struggles that they undertook for establishing Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the modern world should not be forgotten.

Nonetheless, to be a disciple of Your Divine Grace means more than being a relic or a mascot, more than merely socializing and reminiscing. Respect is accorded due to one’s connection with you, but a living connection means to strive to live and act as you did. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you wanted your disciples to be gurus, spiritual leaders of mankind, and, in pursuance of your own unprecedented activities, to further vigorously promote the *saṅkīrtana* movement. You refused to fade away in old age, instead taking the freedom it afforded to go out into the world. You were not content to accept the honor accorded to elderly *sādhus* but ventured among hea-

thens and hippies. By personifying *amāninā mānadena*, you turned such dishonorable people into *sādhus* who now are worthy of the highest regard. You gave us everything—the real thing—and simply asked that we likewise give it to others.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please take me beyond formality and grant me the privilege to follow in your footsteps. Let me not merely splutter and snuff out—another candle that could have given more light but simply faded away with the rest. Nor let my goal be merely to be remembered, or to create mythology meant to be perpetuated, or to playact as an icon who might seem genuine to those who have not actually heard your message. Śrīla Prabhupāda, please protect me from my wicked mind, which is ever prone to indulge in cheating. I want to be true to you and to others and not fail either you or the devotees of ISKCON, who are so dear to you.

One quality of a pure devotee is to be *apramatta*³ (not crazy). Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the only person whom I completely trust to be sane in all respects. Fully sane means fully free from even the subtlest of material desires. I am still insane—deeply insane. My only hope for sanity is to follow your instructions.

*ācāryera mata yei, sei mata sāra
tāñra ājñā lañghi' cale, sei ta' asāra*

“The order of the spiritual master is the active principle in spiritual life. Anyone who disobeys the order of the spiritual master immediately becomes useless.”⁴

Śrīla Prabhupāda, during my very first days in your ISKCON I imbibed this principle, and it has sustained me in your service throughout all these years—to simply do what you have told us to do, with full trust that you are the intimate representative of Kṛṣṇa who is fully empowered by Him to deliver the entire world to His lotus feet. You are the master and we the servants, and we have no other duty than to obey your command. As we practically experience, all spiritual strength, all success, follow from this principle. The essence of your instructions is to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness seriously and propagate it vigorously. Please bless me that, despite the madness of my mind, I always adhere to this simple formula.

Śrīla Prabhupāda! *māyā*, in her typically inverse manner, is worshipping you by increasingly revealing your identity as the Founder-

ācārya of ISKCON. By demonstrating the perils of not adhering to your instructions, *māyā* helps convince us that all your plans are perfect and that to be an *ācārya* in your service means to serve your order; attempts to do otherwise simply result in disaster. We await the day when, as a movement, we will awaken from the collective amnesia of forgetting that all success is guaranteed if we simply stick to the simple principle of simply following your instructions.

In the meantime, the global insanity level is ever increasing, and only thanks to you can we still ascertain what is sane and what is not. Amid the insanity, we ever-more-deeply take shelter of your books, which truly are the only solace from the madness of this Kali-yuga. While associating with devotees who continue to follow your instructions (fortunately, within ISKCON there are still many such devotees), we marvel at how some of those who are meant to convey the teachings in your books seem to have never read them.

Śrīla Prabhupāda! Please grant me and all your aspiring followers the intelligence to understand that, although subsequent to your departure our knowledge and awareness of the extensive Vaiṣṇava culture and literature have inevitably increased, there will never be any question of “going beyond” what you have given us. It is you who are saving us all, and you live forever in your books. Please awaken in us the realization that in your books you have presented everything we need to know for becoming fully Kṛṣṇa conscious.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your dear Lord Kṛṣṇa has kindly awarded me both a body and a personality that are not very attractive to women, and throughout all these years you have saved me from my lower bestial nature and protected me from gross capitulation to the charms of Cupid. Now that by default I am a little big shot in ISKCON, *māyā* is offering me enhanced opportunities for self-inflation, in the form of certain disciples and others seeming to regard me as something that I am not. To consider myself anything other than simply an aspiring servant in your service would certainly be a great disservice to one and all, and a major obstacle in my attempted service to you. Therefore I pray that you again save me.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I never liked pettiness. I have always seen everyone around me as absorbed in petty concerns, and even their pressing issues as being mere trivia. I did not want that, and yearned for something better. I nearly despaired, but then I found

you (or rather, you most mercifully found me). I will forsake crores of gross materialists and even scores of *sādhus* who do not, as did you, clearly and emphatically emphasize surrender to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. At least for me, you are the standard by which *sādhus* are to be judged; they are genuine to the extent that they reflect your character, qualities, and commitment to preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness “as it is.” They hold no appeal for me if they are significantly different from you. I want to associate with you, serve you, and be like you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, to be your disciple means to ever aspire for the intense, unalloyed dedication to Kṛṣṇa that you personified and preached. I pray to live by and for the compelling spiritual truths that you incessantly delineated, and to not substitute them with a mere semblance of the vital Kṛṣṇa consciousness that you have given. May I ever cling to what I hear from you, and not be compromised by social niceties or supposed institutional necessities. Please award me the courage to truly represent you as I should, even if the whole world (including many who consider themselves yours) berate me for doing so. May I be ever unpopular if that is the price for clearly repeating the message that I so clearly hear from you. I deem this to be the true standard of a disciple, yet it is not easy to attain.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, although profoundly respecting all previous *ācāryas*, I know that my connection with Kṛṣṇa is primarily through you. Reading various writings of and about our previous *ācāryas* has enhanced not only my knowledge of and appreciation for our *sampradāya* and its gifts, but also my awareness that you are the most illustrious representative of the *sampradāya*, having been sent by Kṛṣṇa and the previous *ācāryas* to expertly present their message in a manner just suitable for the unique circumstances in which you preached Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Moreover, it was particularly Your Divine Grace who saved me.

*brahmāṇ a bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-Kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja⁵*

Kṛṣṇa oversees each *jīva*'s wanderings throughout the material universes, and for the most fortunate He ordains that at a certain point they meet a bona fide guru. And Kṛṣṇa arranged that I meet you, not any other of the exalted devotees who have come to this world to uplift fallen *jīvas*. It is Kṛṣṇa's desire, and my eternal good

fortune, that I be linked especially with you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I gauge my spiritual standing according to my relationship with you, according to how much I remember that your mercy, which is attainable by following your orders, is the active principle in my life. Knowing that I am dependent on you, I pray for your mercy, feel grateful, and want to act as your humble servant. Everything else—my advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness (or lack thereof) and my various preaching endeavors—follows from that principle. Without remembering that your mercy is all that I am made of, then whatever I do, however much others might laud it, is just a sham.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I need to keep your shoes upon my head. My only proper and safe position is at your feet. But I cannot fully avail myself of the shelter of your shoes if I retain interest in sense gratification in any form or have any inclination toward *māyāvāda*. Please purify me by immersing me in your service. Just as you saved me so many years ago from intense distress by accepting me, please now save me from comfort and delusion and again make me your disciple.

In the dust of your lotus feet and aspiring to be the servant of your servants,

The very fallen.

Bhakti Vikāsa Swami

1 Told by Bhakta Dasa Prabhu; Śrīla Prabhupāda Tributes 2011, p. 153.

2 *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.6.36.

3 *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Madhya 22.80.

4 *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 12.10.

5 *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Madhya 19.151

The spiritual master is present in many forms even when the spiritual master is no longer on the earth. The disciple can serve the *vapuḥ* when the spiritual master is on the earth and then his *vānī* when he leaves to enter the divine pastimes of the ever-joyful Lord. The *vapuḥ* is the spiritual master's personal presence and the *vānī* is his mission.

How does the spiritual master come to us, when he is no longer on the planet? Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī mentioned during his last days on earth, that the spiritual master is always with the disciple in a variety of forms. Bhaktisiddhānta acknowledged the support from these various forms of gurudeva; he had lost his spiritual master and his father, two of his most prominent spiritual guides, within one year of one another – 1914, 1915.

Although devastated, post departure, he had an extraordinary experience. Bhaktisiddhānta was feeling, “How shall I preach to the world the pure message of Śrī Caitanya and establish the heart's desire of my gurus? I have no support of people, no support of wealth and I do not have any learning or intelligence which can attract the common people.” This feeling of void was answered by a visionary dream.

Bhaktisiddhānta saw in that apparition, the Pañca-tattva and their *sañkīrtana* associates as well as Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī, Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī and others in the disciplic succession all come before him and give him this assurance. They spoke, “Don't you worry at all. With supreme enthusiasm preach the conclusion of pure devotion, in intense earnestness chant the glories of the name, abode, form, attributes, associates and pastimes of Godhead at various places. All of us will help you. There is no need to worry. The support of unlimited people, countless wealth and boundless learning await the blessing of being engaged in the service of your preaching. They will be received when they are necessary. No type of worldly hindrance or danger will be able to make any obstruction for this great work of yours. We are always with you.”

Meditating on those varieties of post departure manifestation of Śrī Guru, I relate the following:

You are present with me via the transcendental literature that you have so exhaustively compiled. What would I do without the messages of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*? Several times a week I try to understand them more clearly to present them to others. So wonderful is what I call the factor of merciful, divine, redundancy. Everything that you had to say to us has been repeated many times in your purports, personal letters, morning walks, arrival addresses and other verbal, written and video-graphic presentations. This is especially merciful because it means that the tendency to misunderstand is reduced. The possibility of misunderstanding would have been great, especially of important elements of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, if they had only been presented once, with one example, without further evidence or corroboration. But that is not the way you did things, for that matter, the Vedic literatures are themselves mercifully redundant.

We have been given a divine parity check via this method of multiple versions of the same topic. The more that someone studies your literary legacy, the more it is seen as consistent and exhaustive. The nectar is there and the world becomes clear. What to do becomes understandable.

You are present in the holy name. Who would have thought to chant 'Hare Kṛṣṇa' on their own as a spiritual process? Although in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition, *nāma* is central, none of us were or ever would have been exposed to this tradition. When I chant the Lord's holy name, I remember that it is you who have made me aware of it; moreover, you made aware of its IMPORTANCE. Your link is that same link to which all the ācāryas have clung – the link or lifeline that can affect deliverance of any human. This is the special mercy of Caitanya relayed to us by you. Harer nāma eva kevalam.

You are present as the senior devotees, guiding me. You spent much time with certain devotees training them to lead; training them to understand the deeper levels of the task of bringing neophytes up to full Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is easy to falsely imagine that we understand Kṛṣṇa or devotional service and it is easy to think that we know how to lead others, but often in these activities there are booby traps and pitfalls. Without the guidance of advanced devotees, where would we be? Devotees learned to serve Kṛṣṇa by serving you and now newer devotees learn to serve Kṛṣṇa by following those you trained. Following in the footsteps.

You are present in the Deities that you installed. In the Western world, we would have never understood that God, Kṛṣṇa, has form. The major religions are not clear on the matter; even some directly reject this divine form. As Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, points out (*SB 2.9.31*, cited *Cc. Ādi 1.51*), that the transcendental knowledge is not only scientific, but also contains mysteries. This strange sounding verse was originally spoken by Viṣṇu to Brahmā at the beginning of the universe. As you indicate in your purports, the meaning is that these mysteries are the name, form, qualities and pastimes associated with the real Supreme Person. Without these details, our relationship with God is incipient only. Truly neophyte. Deep commitment and love can only happen when a full image of the Supreme is understood. Therefore, the understanding and devotion to a Deity form is the stepping stone to understanding the worship of the Lord that broadens into divine relationship. This mystery would have been beyond us, had it not been for you.

You are present in the devotee saṅga. My godbrothers and god-sisters all around are living proof that Kṛṣṇa consciousness has worked for them and continues to work for them. What if we were forced to practice devotion solo? There would be no support and no outside visible evidence that the life-style of devotion can factually work. After all, mostly everything in the material world seems to go against the practice of self-surrender to the Supreme by service. It might then seem that the glorious and noble path is only a wonderful ideal, too high for the real mortal world and impractical in this world of hard knocks and ubiquitous selfishness. Realizing this commitment around us in our saṅga is actually your hand lifting us, through each other.

You are present as a worldwide network of centers. It is amazing that anywhere that you go on planet earth, there is temple somewhere, not far away. In such a few short years, who could imagine that such a matrix could be developed? What does the future have in store? These centers are all individual oases in a dry material desert.

You are present in a special way that I felt for the first time this year. You are present as the ISKCON Movement collectively struggling to bring itself into full sail. Devotees meet to discuss the issues of the day, but over the years, as I have recently been made aware, devotees have been working in committees to understand and cre-

ate the social infrastructure

to make ISKCON fully functional and give it an internal structure commensurate with its size. Small organizations do not need much internal development and young organizations have not yet developed any internal facilities. But ISKCON is no longer small, nor is it such a young organization. Needed internal refinements and social organs are not an option, they are a necessity. These devotees have been inspired by you to take on this task and their work is very inspiring. Here again is your hand.

You are present in your lecture tapes and videos as well as the recollections of the devotees. Because of our modern technology, our planet is threatened, but there are also useful aspects to this technology, when properly deployed. It is amazing that even today, 35 years after your departure, I can still see you chanting in *Tompkins Square Park* or hear you speaking in Nairobi, Kenya. The tone of your voice, the details of the philosophy, the setting, all have not faded like an old flower, but remain ever fresh, ever able to uplift.

Bhaktisiddhānta said, “It is my gurudeva who is graciously present in all these different forms. If he is not graciously present in all these different forms, who would then preserve me? Those whom my gurudeva has made his own are my saviors. The order of the gurus, which have in their nature the protecting power of the Divinity, are always present in different forms and figures to bestow their mercy on me. All of them are specific manifestations of the Śrī Guru who confers spiritual knowledge” (*Ray of Viṣṇu, Final Days Chapter, Paragraph 7*)

The guru lives on for the disciple in his vānī. This vānī can be perceived by those who make the simple effort to serve it.

Your servant,

Candraśekhara Swami

Hard Learned Lessons

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

When my health failed me from 2005 – 2010, I kept wondering what lessons you and Kṛṣṇa wanted me to learn. It was a difficult period. Practically all my service was taken away from me. Overnight I ceased to be an active GBC member and traveling *sannyāsī*. Even service to those who had taken shelter of me was curtailed. I could do little more than hear and chant. All the while, I meditated on one verse:

*tat te 'nukampāṁ su-samīk amāṇo
bhuñjāna evātma-k taṁ vipākam
h d-vāg-vapurahir vidadhan namas te
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk*

“My dear Lord, one who earnestly waits for You to bestow Your causeless mercy upon him, all the while patiently suffering the reactions of his past misdeeds and offering You respectful obeisances with his heart, words and body, is surely eligible for liberation, for it has become his rightful claim.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.14.8)

I soon learned, though, that meditation and realization are two very different things. It is easy to repeat verses and even to meditate on them to some extent, but to realize their purport is something much deeper.

Near the end of 2010 the focus of my prayers became very narrow and specific. My simple prayer was: “Śrīla Prabhupāda and Lord Kṛṣṇa, I beg you to please allow me to serve your devotees in any way you would like me to.” This prayer was offered with as much sincerity as I could muster—often with tears in my eyes.

Soon thereafter, in early 2011, my health mysteriously began to improve. The change was dramatic and quick, but would it last? I had my doubts and decided to take a conservative approach, watching

and waiting patiently.

My health, strength, and energy levels continued to improve. Your dear servant Bhūrijana Prabhu, one of my closest friends, visited me during this period. He had been teaching the *Uddhava-gītā* in Vṛndāvana and brought with him some special spiritual potency. By the end of his short visit I had undergone some sort of spiritual transfusion. He gave me something very special, and whatever it was I was transformed—both physically and spiritually.

With regained health and vigor I made a plan, in consultation with Bhūrijana Prabhu, consisting of steps I could take to resume some level of active service. We decided that my first step would be to leave Bhaktivedanta Hospital and visit ISKCON Hong Kong for a week. Then I would travel to the Philippines and base myself there for some time. With the guidance and support of Bhūrijana Prabhu, I made a plan to depart from Mumbai for Hong Kong on April 3, 2011.

The long-awaited day came, and the trip to Hong Kong was smooth. There, as planned, I gave my first two public preaching programs in over five years. I was apprehensive, and I felt deeply dependent on your mercy. All went surprisingly well.

Today, more than a year later, I have been able to resume much of my prior service—including a fair amount of traveling.

The hard lessons that I strongly believe you wanted to teach me are four.

First, keeping close and loving relationships with dear godbrothers is essential to progressive spiritual growth. I must associate with and serve my godbrothers as often as possible.

Second, the opportunity to serve the Vaiṣṇavas is most precious. I should never take it for granted. I must serve the Vaiṣṇavas as often and as much as possible—without reservation.

Third, *nāma-bhajana* is my most important service, and everything else is secondary. *Harināma* is what you came to give. You wanted us to “just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.” But you also wanted us to chant with love. I therefore pray that you bless me to chant without offense, with full attention and genuine love in my heart, praying for the

mercy of Your Divine Grace, the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas, and the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.

Fourth, service to Kṛṣṇa is a rare opportunity. After so many lifetimes, somehow or other I have been given this gift. I must never take it for granted or regard it as some mundane duty or obligation. I must take full advantage. With great determination, patience, enthusiasm, and love I will strive to perform whatever service is given to me.

With a straw between my teeth, I beg you to please bless me to always remember these four hard learned lessons for the remainder of my life. My only desire is to serve you sincerely and without reservation by following what you taught me. Please accept this humble service of mine.

Your aspiring disciple,

Giridhārī Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. I beg you to make me an insignificant particle situated there eternally. I can find nowhere else in the three worlds that is safer or more secure. All glories to you, and all glories your mercy, which has flooded the world with Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I continue my ongoing effort to express in my offering a particle of the vast and expansive qualities that adorn you. This year I am contemplating how you perfectly exemplify the Vaiṣṇavas qualities of *akāma* (desirelessness) and *anīha* (indifference to material acquisitions).

You often said that there is no such thing as being entirely desireless. As Rūpa Gosvāmī says,

*anāsaktasya vi ayān yathārham upayuñjataḥ
nirbandhaḥ Kṛṣṇa-sambandhe yuktaṁ vairāgyam ucyate*

“When one is not attached to anything but at the same time accepts anything in relation to Kṛṣṇa, one is rightly situated above possessiveness.” In other words, since the living entity must have desires, detachment from material desires and this world is best achieved by replacing material desires with desires to serve Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, since one’s degree of “desirelessness” is proportionate to the extent of one’s desire to serve Kṛṣṇa and your desire to serve Kṛṣṇa is unlimited, you perfectly showed the quality of *akāma*. You constantly “shot the rhinoceros,” wanting everyone to see the immeasurable opulence of Kṛṣṇa. Your ardent desires to see that everything be offered to Kṛṣṇa and to see the holy name spread to every home are spiritual desires that reflect your *akāma*.

You demonstrated the principle of *anīha* as the personification of *yukta-vairāgya*, following in the footsteps of your Guru Mahārāja, who defied the limited perception of renunciation by using everything—modern conveyances and clothing, money and printing presses—for preaching. However, at the same time, sometimes your *dhotī* would have holes in it. As you said many times, “Everything for Kṛṣṇa, but not a farthing for sense gratification.” You

were given expensive watches, rings, and other items, only to give them away to your disciples or have them sold to print books or to finance other preaching programs.

Thus you perfectly exemplified, to the highest degree, the principle of detachment from anything not related to Kṛṣṇa while seeing everything in relation to Him. Only by holding on to your lotus feet can I be pulled away from my attachments. As you said, sometimes a *sannyāsī* is attached to his paraphernalia: “Sometimes, even after renunciation, one becomes attached to a temple or to the few things that constitute the property of a *sannyāsī*.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.5.8, purport)

Only by your guidance can I hope to understand, in practice, that nothing is mine except the causeless mercy you are kindly extending to me. That possession is worth more than all the material wealth and property in the fourteen worlds, and I must protect it by obeying your every instruction. By your transcendental influence I can become so attached to this valuable gem that I will never allow *māyā* to steal it away.

Your aspiring servant,

Guru Prasād Swami

*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*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most prostrated obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace for continuously showering your mercy upon the ever-growing worldwide ISKCON Vaiṣṇava community.

We can perceive your plan for the distribution of your mercy when we contemplate how you intelligently designed ISKCON as a worldwide preaching federation of your faithful disciples and granddisciples. Even second and third generations of devotees are receiving your bountiful mercy through their practice of your systematic teachings. They recognize that your mercy plays the most important role in their spiritual lives.

This year I lost six disciples within six months, and their passing away in different circumstances gave me spiritual confirmation of your unfathomable mercy.

Three were very young, in their twenties. One was a young *mātāṅgī*. She was swept away in the sea at Swarga Dwar, in Jagannātha Purī, along with two devotee friends, after having *darṣana* of Lord Jagannātha. She had been inspired to come for the first time to India on pilgrimage to the holy places. The success of her devotional service was in giving up her material body at Purī. Leaving one's body at Śrī Kṣetra affords one immediate liberation to continue one's devotional life. The second of my young disciples who left his body was a twenty-two-year-old Vraja-vāsī *brahmacārī*. He had been very ill. I was personally instrumental in taking care of him from his childhood. To leave the body in Vṛndāvana is most glorious, since such a departure promotes the soul to intimate devotional service of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. My third young disciple to depart was Bhānu Dāsa, who very enthusiastically served Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi in his temple during the daytime and worked hard to support his family at night. He would communicate only with devotees. He

sacrificed himself beyond his physical capacity, for he was born with a defective heart. But he could not get the required medical attention when the health crisis came, so he happily chose to tell his companion to keep chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* along with him as he left his body. His sudden departure shocked me and the entire devotee community. But I was enlivened to learn from one of his friends about his Vaiṇava attitude at the end. His passing away was not in vain, for his good character and his fidelity to Guru and Kṛṣṇa were unimpeachable. He must have been reborn in a situation that afforded him a better opportunity to continue his advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The way he passed is confirmation that the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* makes devotees courageous in the face death and able to retain their confidence in your mercy.

Then there was my own mother, who passed away at an advanced age while retaining her Kṛṣṇa conscious composure till her last breath. I was with her for one week in the hospital. She wanted me to be with her because she considered me her guru from the beginning of her devotional career. Both my parents, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura Dāsa and Haṁsarūpa Devī Dāsī, desired that I be with them at their last moment. I was fortunate enough to fulfill the desires of them both, although ten years separated their departures. My father had had the glorious association of Your Divine Grace in the form of your recorded chanting of the *mahā-mantra*, and this enabled him to know the time he was going to pass. At that time he gave me his right hand to hold and leaned forward so that I could support him with my left hand and loudly chant the *mahā-mantra* in his left ear. In less than ten minutes he left his body. My mother witnessed all this, along with two other family members, who were also chanting along loudly. So my mother wanted me to be present when her turn came. Amazingly, her Kṛṣṇa consciousness was far advanced, for she had lived a very simple but pure Vaiṣṇava brahminical life like my father. In the week I spent with her before her departure, she would become absorbed in telling me about her kitchen duties and related memories of her young days, which she repeatedly blurted out in her delirium due to kidney failure. But when I would cause her to come to her external senses, she would open her eyes wide and give me a big smile. Then she would become shy and say, “Oh, it is nothing.” We stopped all medications to let her go naturally, and that caused her hands and legs to begin twitching. She would hold her *japa-mālā* open in two hands, but her twitching would make it fall to the bed. Yet she would insist that we

give her the *mālā* back, or she would grope for it with her twitching hands. This went on until the last day. When the time approached I placed under her pillow an electronic device that continuously plays Your Divine Grace's chanting of the *mahā-mantra*, and your chanting guided her back home, all the way to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's kitchen, where she may be happily serving.

Another of my disciples who passed away was the devotee wife of my best friend, who is one of your dear spiritual sons. Like my mother, she was a simple devotee housewife. Somehow or other this lady and her husband had been my shelter at the very beginning of my spiritual life, and it was at their place that I lived, served, and assisted in raising their two sons. I was summoned to come to her bedside for her final journey. She was undergoing rapid multiple system failure. Seeing her imminent death approaching fast, she became grave, but at the same time her face was graced with a wide transcendental smile and wide-open eyes. Many devotees were fond of her due to her gentle, loving demeanor, and lots of them converged at her deathbed and served her through chanting the *mahā-mantra* and giving words of comfort. She responded to all of them with a calm and grave smile, like a self-realized *muni*.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, if you had not so mercifully graced us with your *vapu* and *vāṇī* forms, which are gross manifestations of Lord Kṛṣṇa's mercy, along with your subtle mercy, which reaches out to a wider realm through your granddisciples' *saṅkīrtana* efforts, it would be difficult to understand the nature of ignorance, the cause of our miserable life. Your granddisciples are reminders of my own salvation. Therefore, along with them, you are my totality, and I am ever obliged to serve you as a whole.

Begging to serve you eternally, I remain

Yours,

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet and allow me to remain there forever as an insignificant speck of dust.

It is my inconceivable good fortune that I came to the shelter of your lotus feet and became an object of your causeless mercy. You delivered me from an extremely miserable condition and blessed me with a life full of indescribable joy. You literally picked me up from the gutter and made me whatever I am today. You gave me so much, and I am eternally indebted to you for that.

When thousands of devotees from all over the world were prepared to travel for thousands of miles to get a moment of Your Divine Grace's association, you allowed me to be with you all the time although I was just an insignificant newcomer.

You considered translating your books into Bengali one of the most important tasks, and you offered that service to me. You told me that in Bengal Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavism was well known and that the people there were already well acquainted with that philosophy through the writings of our previous *ācāryas*. Therefore, this translation had to be of a high standard if they were to recognize and respect it. I expressed my doubt about my ability. However, you just smiled and assured me that I would be able to do the task. Little did I know at the time that by your mercy a lame man can literally cross a mountain and a blind man see the stars.

You told me to offer this life to Kṛṣṇa and explained in detail how vicious this material world is and how precarious is our condition here. I naturally resolved to do that with a grateful heart, and you allowed me to taste the ecstasy of the spiritual life. To close all the doors behind me, you decided to give me *sannyāsa*. However, at that time some leading devotees expressed their apprehension about my getting *sannyāsa* so quickly. But you stayed firm in your decision and assured them about your confidence in me.

Although I was an extremely new devotee, you made me your secretary, the highest position one could get in ISKCON at that time, and allowed me to stay with you all the time. You mentioned that

“secretary” means the one who knows the secrets and confidential matters and knows how to keep them secret.

Once, when a senior godbrother of mine chastised me quite heavily for some minor mistake, you heard everything while sitting in the next room. When I went to you after that incident, my heart was heavy with humiliation and pain. The way you spoke to me soothed my aching heart: “The sign of real advancement is not in the position we hold but in being tolerant in all circumstances and remaining unperturbed in every situation.” Then you explained that happiness and pain, honor and disgrace, are simply due to the results of our past deeds, but we must transcend that duality and remain unaffected by them.

When you did not eat for days together, you asked me to go and find out what kind of *prasādam* the devotees were getting. When I came back and told you that the quality and standard of the *prasādam* was not very good, you called the temple president and chastised him. I felt bad that because of me he got chastised. When everyone left the room you told me, “Make sure that the devotees get nice *prasādam*. That is the only sense gratification they have.” Then you explained to me that the first and foremost responsibility of a leader is to take care of his followers. You said, “You take care of them and they will do anything for you.”

You are the perfect example of such a leader, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You took care of your followers in the most wonderful way, and that is why they were prepared to do anything for you and offered themselves completely to your service.

One day you asked me not to cook for you, saying, “You can see that I can’t eat anything. Still, why are you cooking? You have so many things to do. Why are you wasting your time cooking for me?”

I told you, “I cook, hoping that someday you will feel better and would like to eat something.”

You replied, “I will get better only when I leave this world.”

I broke down crying. In a very soothing voice you said, “Is this what you learnt from me? Is this what I taught you? Didn’t I teach you that the spirit soul is immortal and never-changing. It is only the body that changes and finally dies when the soul leaves the body.”

When you left this planet, those instructions remained as my guiding beacon. Although my heart ached with constant agony due to your separation, I tried to remember that you were always there. At that time I used to imagine that just as a mother sometimes hides while teaching her son to walk, urging him to start walking by searching for her, similarly you are hiding behind some invisible curtain so that I will search for you and thus develop my ardent desire to go where you are.

Those days I used to think I had so many things to do here. Therefore, I needed to stay. Now that I have done whatever you wanted me to do, please allow me to go back to you. You have already called back so many of your dear children. Now please allow me to have this good fortune.

Aspiring to be your eternal servant,

Bhakti Chāru Swami

B.K. Śramaṇa Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I offer my respectful obeisances at your lotus feet again and again.

I am trying to write this offering because of you. What would I know of *guru*,

Kṛṣṇa, spiritual life, Vṛndāvana, *prasādam*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*,

Caitanya-caritāmṛta, and all the other books you have given us.

My life is just one thing after another based around what you have given me.

Even if what I have done or said has been wrong, I only know of even the attempt at the wrong doing because you gave me opportunity. I only know of the wrong, because you taught what is right and pointed me in that direction. You have made me conscious of

what is right and what is wrong and to desire to do what is pleasing to you and the Lord. Previously, I had no idea what was right or wrong.

My life is just what you have given me. I sit and try to do *pūjā* to my Deities. What would I know of Deities, *pūjā*, *mantras*, cleanliness, offerings, praying, *kīrtana*, *bhajana*, obeisances, if you had not given these to me. The Deity is non-different from the Lord you told us. What would I have known of that? But now there is something that just sits and prays, even talks to my Lords when I am moving around from place to place, doing so many things. You have given me that Dearest Friend. You have given me life, you have given me the Lord, and have given me to the Lord. I had no understanding before you came into my life.

You have given me to my Lord.

I may be a crazy person as some will no doubt attest to, but one thing I am very grateful for and hold onto, is the fact that I am yours and that you are still with me and giving me everything from day to day, in fact moment to moment. You and your mercy are pervading my existence in one way or another. Even when I feel guilt so heavily for my wrongs, I thank you for that, as I would know no guilt for my stupidity if not for you.

You are actually my life and soul. You have given and are giving life to this foolish individual. But you are giving so much love and mercy, and that is what I am made of and what keeps me going.

Sorry for my offenses and nonsense Śrīla Prabhupāda. Hoping one day to be the devotee you would have me be.

Jaya Prabhupāda.

The insignificant,

B.K. Śramaṇa Swami.
The soul you named Balabhadra Dāsa.

TRIBUTES
BY
INITIATED
DISCIPLES

Your ever present beauty remains highlighted by your loyalty to your most revered spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who you referred to in your 1936 Vyāsa-pūjā as “the present ācāryadeva” who is the “tenth disciplic representative from Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, the original representative of Śrī Caitanya who preached this transcendental tradition in its fullness.”

Your Divine Grace, our own Śrīla Prabhupāda, are the eleventh representative. Then, you wrote “The knowledge that we receive from our gurudeva is not different from that imparted by God himself and the succession of the ācāryas in the preceptorial line of Brahmā. We adore this auspicious day of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā-tithi because the ācārya is the living representative of Vyāsadeva, the divine compiler of the Vedas, the *Purāṇas*, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the *Mahābhārata*, and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.”

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you remain our perfect representative of God, living forever in our hearts. As such, your Vyāsa-pūjā is very much adored by us, giving us opportunity to surrender ourselves again at your lotus feet. In your words, “for the elimination of all our differences bred by our unsubmitive attitude.” You urged your godbrothers to completely surrender to the real ācārya in a spirit of ardent inquiry and service, as spoken by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā*, pointing out that the Vyāsa-pūjā allows one to “offer humble services and homage to the feet of the ācārya and in turn enable us to be favored with the capacity of assimilating the transcendental knowledge so kindly transmitted by him to all persons without distinction.”

You perfectly followed in his revered path by showering the same mercy upon us and all others, “without distinction.” You went on to repeat that “we should hear from him patiently.” May this same request become your order upon us because in doing so, you expressed how one will gain release “from our present causeless unwillingness for serving the Absolute and all souls.” I am embarrassed to bow before you, requesting once again your causeless mercy, yet I have no other recourse. I remain in the category of “ignorant children,” that you referenced, but by your causeless mercy, the torch of truth coming from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, carried

forward by the previous ācāryas and placed in your precious lotus hands, has ‘kindled a small fire within to dissipate the invincible darkness of empirical knowledge’ within our own heavy hearts. “The ācārya’s message is to take us back to our original home back to God,” and our humble duty is to accept this message with a grateful heart and follow the life saving instructions given within. While you called your spiritual master “an eye-opener,” you not only opened our eyes, but also our hearts by your divine love. Your humility as expressed in this homage is soul rendering : “Let me with all my earnestness pray at the lotus feet of my diving master to allow me to suffer the lot for which I am destined due to my past misdoings, but let me have the power of recollection that I am nothing for 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 the humility at my command.”

May I always remain attached to bowing down at your lotus feet with humility, hoping for that joyous day when we again meet.

From a fallen devī dasī,

Mālatī Devī Dasī

Madhusūdana Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances and this small offering of appreciation.

You had a business card made circa 1966 saying ISKCON—Centers around the World when there was only one temple in ISKCON.

You turned one tiny storefront into a worldwide federation of hundreds of temples and many farms; and a small group of devotees into many, many thousands.

You delivered the most detailed, consistent explanation of God and His Personality.

You are the key to unlock the chain of the modes of nature.

You're not a decoration to be possessed.

You're not small, but larger than life.

You're present where there's sincerity of thoughts and actions.

Your birth in this world was the rising of the spiritual sun for us.

You make Kṛṣṇa, the Person, alive for us.

You broke open the storehouse of confidential knowledge of God through your books.

You made it possible to think of Kṛṣṇa and the entire spiritual world.

You pointed us towards the light at the end of the dark tunnel where we were endlessly wandering, life after life, in darkness.

You diminish the pride of your disciples.

You exist in my godbrothers and sisters.

You transmit the sounds, sights, smells, tastes, and touch of the spiritual world directly to us through your words.

You achieved all this, not because you were a shrewd businessman, but because you are the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead.

You continue to lead us, and I am running behind, trying to catch up to join the many devotees surrounding you.

I pray to be able to serve you life after life.

Madhusūdana Dāsa

To His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda, my exalted spiritual master, beloved father, and dearest friend.

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

“The lotus feet of our spiritual master is the only way we can attain pure devotional service.”

There is no way we can do it on our own, but it is only by your grace and at least a drop of our sincere desire to serve you, Kṛṣṇa’s pure devotee.

I remember we were all packed in the Brooklyn Temple with you, and were chanting ‘*Śrī guru-vandanā*.’ All of a sudden you stopped in the middle of *kīrtana*, and asked, “Do you know the meaning of this prayer?” The room was in hushed silence and everyone was dumbstruck, not knowing the translation at all. You then emphasized “how it was pertinent to know this prayer’s meaning.” Just meditating on the meanings of all the verses glorifying our spiritual master is so enriching and fulfilling. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for always guiding us.

To constantly hear about you, your teachings, and serving you is our true solace, therefore not being apart from you.

Recently, I heard on a Śrīla Prabhupāda Memoir, a devotee, in their memories, related seeing you on photos before meeting you and feeling your presence. And then they finally had the opportunity to seeing you in person and experienced that it was actually non-different to feeling your divine presence. Just as a lover is reminded by a particular object, experience, or pastime bringing back memories of their beloved, so it is like with us; your children and grandchildren taking shelter of your teachings and hearing of your transcendental dealings that elicits the most profound happiness.

Many years ago, I was painting with another devotee artist. At one point, she related a Śrīla Prabhupāda pastime. When Śrīla Prabhupāda was very ill he was hardly eating anything. Then a devotee walked in bringing an offering of fresh strawberries and

immediately Śrīla Prabhupāda lit up wanting to eat them. It was so uplifting to hear, that in the midst of the project I was working on which had vines and flowers in various intricate designs, I added strawberries throughout it, making me so happy meditating on Śrī la Prabhupāda.

Dearest Jagad-guru, I remember the pastime of Hanumān and the little spider trying to serve Lord Rāmacandra. I feel like a tiny spider trying in my minute way to serve your transcendental lotus feet amongst the many sincere Vaiṣṇavas and Vaiṣṇavīs who shine as such beautiful examples. It is only by your mercy I can ever do anything. From distributing *prasādam* to sharing about Kṛṣṇa amongst the lost souls who are my art students and others I come in contact with. It is my greatest pleasure knowing that it pleases you most.

I pray I never forget your unlimited kindness.

I remain your daughter always,

Kañcanabālā Devī Dāsī

Dāmodara Dāsa

“There is no time, it is all just a flash,”
you said, and I’m still sitting in your class,
forty-five years later, or no time at all,
touched by your greatness, heeding your call
to bring what you teach to the high and the low
anesthetized creatures. I see you glow
with love and truth. Nothing’s changed.
You are the proof that Kṛṣṇa’s arranged.

Dāmodara Dāsa

Hṛṣīkeśa Dāsa

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

Dear Gurudeva,

I remember living with you and discussing things in Bengali – it was long ago yet I recall your voice, your humor, your logic, and your translation of *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* and so many books that I lost count. It was easy to discuss with you – so easy to ask you any questions. You were very kind to me. And that is what I cherish.

I recall the occasion at Fredrick Street before returning to India when you wept out of concern that we might forget your teachings. Guru Dāsa, Mukunda, and Śyāmasundara all remember. And the other times we communicated until your last letter to me in 1977. I remember those times which are branded in my memory.

Now I'm about the age you were when you went to the West – yet I am still not able to understand Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. So please allow me to remember you and never forget. May your memory be my salvation.

Hare Kṛṣṇa!!!

Your servant,

Hṛṣīkeśa Dāsa

Patita-pāvana Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your holy lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I was recently watching the film 'The Full Nectarine'. In this film you are like the brilliant sun, and your disciples are like the sparkling rays of the sun. This film was made at the

Brooklyn Botanical Gardens in New York in the summer of 1968 by your dear disciple Dāmodara.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, where is Dāmodara now?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in this film Ekāyanī. is in the role of Rādhārāṇī. Her older sister Indirā is in the role of Kṛṣṇa. Where are these devoted sisters now?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in one scene we see Balāi offering a plate of fruit to Indirā. We can also see her younger sister Līlāśuka. Where are these dedicated sisters now?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, among the devotees walking with you in the park, we see Advaita and Uddhava. Where are these BBT men now?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the *kīrtana* we can see Devānanda and Rāya Rāma. Where are these departed souls now?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in this film Nayanābhirāma plays the student who harasses Lord Caitanya. We can also see Rohiṅkumāra. Where are these charismatic preachers now?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in one scene we see Bali-mardana and Ṛṣi Kumāra talking in an animated manner with Nayanābhirāma. Both accepted the renounced order of life. Where are these former *sannyāsis* now?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in this film Jaya Rāma is in the role of Lord Caitanya. Your servant Puruṣottama is in the role of Lord Nityānanda. Where are these illustrious devotees now?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, among the devotees in the *kīrtana* we can see Śāradīyā-devī as well as Kāñcanabala. Where are these faithful Vaiṣṇavīs now?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the *kīrtana* we also see Yadurāṇī and Govinda dāsī. Where are these surrendered souls now?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in this film we can see Madhusūdana, Jayādvaita, Satsvarūpa, and many others. Where are these senior devotees now?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in one scene we see the temple president Brahmānanda in the role of Śrī Advaita ācārya serving *prasādam* to Lord Caitanya and Prabhu Nityānanda. Where is that stalwart Vaiṣṇava now?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in this film the role of the *sannyāsi* who conducts the fire sacrifice for Lord Caitanya is played by me. Where am I now? In the *Antya-līlā* 6. 193, Lord Caitanya compares materialistic life to a hole into which people pass stool. Śrīla Prabhupāda, for many years I have tried my best to find happiness in that hole. Finding only bitter disappointment, intense frustration and shocking embarrassment however, it is becoming clear to me that this hole is not a suitable place to live. Now, in my later years being diseased, decrepit and distraught, I can only cry for a life wasted.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as my encounter with the crematorium approaches at an alarming speed, as my broken and decaying body enters into the oblivion of eternal time, and after my soul is purified in the burning fires of hell, please bless me to take birth among your sincere followers.

Thank you for your mercy.

Your aspiring servant,

Patita-pāvana Dāsa

Cintāmaṇi Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

Only because of you, my life became meaningful. I was desperately searching and you came to my hometown and personally initiated me and performed my fire sacrifice. I only had to wait two weeks. It was a risk you took, for I am still unqualified.

Only because of you, somehow this fallen soul got such a sweet taste of the holy name. During your lecture at Ohio State University,

on May 12, 1969, you had the entire audience mesmerized, Allen Ginsberg amazed, and then the most ecstatic *kīrtana* I have ever experienced. The audience of students was dancing and chanting, and I was electrified by the force of the holy name.

Kṛṣṇa IS the name and by your grace we got to realize it! Beyond the wildest imagination, the bliss was tangible. When oh when can it happen again? You broke open the storehouse of love of God and we were drowned in ecstasy!

Only because you wanted a temple opened in Japan, that same year I went to that land with no money, a husband I didn't know, and no friends. Because you empowered me, I went out on *harināma-saṅkīrtana* almost daily, and book distribution even though I didn't speak Japanese. How was it even possible? It was only because you wanted the Japanese people to have an opportunity to hear the holy name and become devotees. You visited twice to oversee your books being printed at Dai Nippon and I got to cook for you and was encouraged to go on, simply because you said "Cintāmaṇi, thank you very much." Then I felt like I could go on forever. Just a moment of your association and magically everything was alright.

Now it is 2012, so many years later. So many ups and downs, changes, moves, deaths, illnesses, tests, etc. It hasn't been as easy as when you were present, not for me anyway. I need some mercy, please, to continue to carry on enthusiastically. Cynicism sometimes replaces innocence, but by one stroke you can kick away all obstacles. Your standard is so high and golden, can I ever measure up? What I used to think I would achieve in one lifetime seems so far away. Separation from a pure devotee like yourself is painful. I only wish I could have done more for you.

You are the saviour to so many of us and you brought knowledge, light and love into the world. Your love for Lord Kṛṣṇa was contagious and even though you are in the books, I still miss your words and glance of encouragement.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please help all of us. Please make Lord Kṛṣṇa come alive for me and fill my heart with love like you did before.

Your unworthy but hopeful daughter,

Cintāmaṇi Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet

Somehow by the will of Providence I was destined to meet

Your Divine Grace although completely unqualified in all respects

You showered me with mercy & personal service beyond my wildest dreams such as allowing me to massage you during your three month stay in the UK

You transformed my mundane life & gave meaning to why I had taken birth

You filled my heart with love for you & Kṛṣṇa & opened my eyes to spiritual worth

You magnanimously engaged me in ways I never imagined as I'm such a hopeless case

You never gave up on me regardless of my defects & faults

You called me a green mango when others derided your decision to have faith in me

You were convinced that in time the green mango would ripen but I'm not so sure when that day will come

You lovingly allowed me to name Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara in our Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir in Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma

Then you called me to your side & instructed that we must chant during *kīrtana*.

Nitāi-Gaura, Rādhē-Śyāma, Jaya Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma!!!!

You were determined that I remain in Vṛndāvana with my family for the rest of our lives & become Brijabāsis

I am praying for the day that I at least follow this simple & final instruction in order that I may be able to please you in this life

Praying for your eternal love & shelter.

Your foolish servant,

Dhanañjaya Dāsa ACBSP
Camp: Amsterdam

Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu Dāsa Adhikārī

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances time and time again at your wonderful lotus feet. In this fallen condition, I beg that you please be merciful to me, O saviour of the whole world. I feel I have no power to glorify you, my dear lord, but still I feel it my duty to say something on this most auspicious of days – your 116th appearance day Śrī Vyāsa-pūjāNandotsava.

*ei rūpe brahmāṇḍe kono bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-kṛpāya pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*

[Cc. Madhya 19. 151]

I have been travelling throughout the universe in so many species of life but somehow or other I have obtained the *bhakti-latā-bīja* by your causeless mercy, my dear lord. My only prayer is that you allow me to continue to cultivate this by the watering process of hearing and chanting in the association of your society of pure devotees which you have created. I have heard it said you wanted to create 500 moons but I feel you have instead created 5000 moons. Your glory knows no bounds in all the three worlds. I beg that I may be a small part of your plan to re-spiritualize the whole of human society by establishing your much-wanted desire for a *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma* institution.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. May the whole world one day bow down to your lotus feet in pursuance of the standard you have set.

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas
tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇam kurute
lokas tad anuvartate*

[Bg. 3. 21]

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda! All glories, all glories, all glories to you, my lord and master.

Your insignificant servant,

Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu Dāsa Adhikārī

Svarūpa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

As I get older I am appreciating more and more the fact that at the age of 69 you boarded the Jaladuta and sailed for America to launch the greatest worldwide spiritual movement in modern times.

From the moment the Jaladuta docked in Boston, September 17, 1965, to when you left this world on November 14, 1977 you tirelessly worked to carry out the wishes of your Guru Mahārāja for bringing the message of Mahāprabhu to the English speaking world. You initiated and trained up thousands of disciples, translated and wrote volumes and volumes of books, recorded classes, lectures, conversations, *kīrtanas* and *bhajanās*, and you opened centers, farms, restaurants and schools throughout the world.

You came to America at a time when the younger generation was restless, rebellious and calling for revolution and you fulfilled our desires by giving us the positive alternative to all that we were wholesale rejecting. You had come from another world bearing the most wonderful and valuable gift imaginable and granted our wishes in a way that was beyond the scope of our wildest imagination. And you accomplished all this in barely more than a decade, starting at an age almost ten years older than I am now.

When I try to put it all into perspective I am unable to without considering that it was nothing short of a miracle. As you wrote in your poem to your spiritual master in March, 1952 (when I was born)... "Miracle done, your divine grace."

Your servant,

Svarūpa Dāsa

Balabhadra Dāsa and Caya Devī Dasī

*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,

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

"When the bull and the cow are in a joyful mood, it is to be understood that the people of the world are also in a joyful mood. The reason is that the bull helps production of grains in the agricultural field, and the cow delivers milk, the miracle of aggregate food values. The human society, therefore, maintains these two important animals very carefully so that they can wander everywhere in cheerfulness. But at the present moment in this Age of Kali both the bull and the cow are now being slaughtered and eaten up as foodstuff by a class of men who do not know the brahminical culture. The bull and the cow can be protected for the good of all human society simply by the spreading of brahminical culture as the topmost perfection of all cultural affairs. By advancement of such culture, the morale of society is properly maintained, and so peace and prosperity are also attained without extraneous effort. When brahminical culture deteriorates, the cow and bull are mistreated, and the resultant actions are prominent by the following symptoms. [1.16.18, *Śrīmad-*

As the Cows See It

A dialogue between some of the cows at the ISCOWP farm – one cow protection farm amongst others that you inspired by your dedicated, worldwide Kṛṣṇa conscious teachings.

Gaurāṅgi: It is spring. Bright green, fresh, lush grass will now be the everyday meal for all my friends and I. Happy day! Happy days ahead. No more hay to eat, now only fresh grass instead of dried grass. Ah! But let me not forget the herbs and scrumptious leaves that I also love to eat. I will now have days of scratching my back on those heavenly smelling Russian olive branches. And more days of roaming the pastures; taking rest under the shade of the trees at noon, sitting on the hilltops to feel the evening breeze and drinking from fresh cool springs.

Too bad they put up that high fence around the garden. It was such fun eating the different vegetables and herbs. But then again I don't mind eating the excess that they may give me. It is a nice addition to the fresh grass, herbs and leaves.

I've been here all my life, but I hear of a different lifestyle from my new herd mate Mādhavī. She recently came here from a commercial dairy and she tells of a life so different from mine that I can't even imagine it.

Mādhavī: I have to pinch myself to be sure I am living here at the ISCOWP farm. I didn't know what was going on when Judy put me in the trailer and we went on a long trip. Judy is a very good friend of mine who milked me at the dairy where I was living. I was milking for practically all my life. I am six years old and I had a baby every year since I was two in order to make enough milk for my owner. If a boy was born, I never saw him again. If a girl was born who couldn't produce milk, I never saw her again. My heart broke. My heart is broken. I am not so friendly to humans. Why should I be? What's going to happen next?

I couldn't get pregnant again and therefore I was headed to the auction to be sold for meat. But Judy had an idea and she wrote to ISCOWP.

Judy: Hello folks, it's Judy from the Home for Wayward Holsteins up here in Southwest Pennsylvania USA. I realize this is a lot to ask, but I don't know of anyone besides you that rescues cows, so here goes... is there any possibility you might be able to rescue a cow?

My favorite cow in the herd that I milk is due to be culled (killed), probably sometime this month. She didn't breed back, and the farmer has been "milking her down" until she reaches the point she's no longer profitable, then its buh-bye! She has been milked for almost two years running now, so it's getting close.

She is a nice cow. I call her Madeleine or Maddy and she knows her name, although obviously you could change it. She's a Holstein, average size, a white-on-black cow. Pretty face with a crooked blaze. In good health, she's a little on the fat side. She's had a couple of recent flare-ups of mastitis, very mild, we haven't had to use antibiotics just Udder Comfort to clear it up. (I can dry cow treat her when she leaves the herd, that should take care of it for good.) Her feet aren't the greatest – she isn't lame right now, and she'll probably be even better when she's not standing on concrete 24/7. I think she's just getting worn out from being milked for so long without a break! She has a nice personality, likes people, isn't flighty, holds her own in the herd but isn't dominant or pushy or a bully to the other cows. She is one of the old girls who stand in the back of the holding pen and patiently wait their turn. Just a nice cow.

She's in her 3rd lactation now, about six years old, and has given 95, 000 pounds of milk, something like 11, 000 gallons! Truly a mind-boggling amount when you think about it. I think she deserves a nice retirement. :) Of course, I would like to take her myself, but I already have my four girls and gosh, it's hard taking care of them as it is. I don't have any help or any equipment here; it's just me and my pitchfork and wheelbarrow. :)

Again I realize this is asking a lot, but as they say, desperate times call for desperate measures!!! I would love to see some publicity given to how retired dairy cows make great pets and can have long, happy, healthy lives (my Christine has been with me since 2004, she's nine now, never any problems other than she eats like a fat pig, LOL.)

Mādhavī: Thank you Lord Kṛṣṇa and you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that

ISCOWP was able to rescue me.

I remember my arrival day. It was the beginning of winter. I was glad to get out of the trailer. So, no problem there. Then I walked into the geriatric barn. I was the only one there. It was nice in there and I began to eat the hay. Still, I was a bit scared as everything was strange to me. Judy said goodbye after a while and then a while later everyone left. The next few days I moped a lot because I was scared and lonely. I also had been milking before I left and Judy had just dried me up right before I came. My body was a bit uncomfortable too.

Then Śyāmā and Āśā came to join me. We became fast friends. In many ways they were a blessing to me and also a heartache. Śyāmā, who was very old, left her body during the winter. It was a sad time for me.

I had never seen a cow die before. So many friends and some children of mine were taken away and I never saw them again. I try not to think of their destinations. This is the first time I have seen a friend die naturally.

Āśā: Śyāmā was 25 in human years old and 125 years old in cow years. She was a healthy cow and never had any health problems. Her disposition was gentle, caring and peaceful. She could be depended upon to be friendly to guests and careful around them. In the last few years she was slowing down. When all of us were on pasture, we would find her trailing way behind us. However, last summer we followed her as she lead us up the hills.

One day, when Balabhadra went to feed and water us, he found Śyāmā lying in a bad position in the barn and she couldn't move. He got some devotees to help roll her over and they got her into a sitting position. She never got up from that position. For four days, Balabhadra brought her food and water. She didn't drink the first two days, but she did eat. On the third day she drank and ate, but that evening she lay down and could not get back up into a sitting position.

Mādhavī: I talked to her and I licked her profusely. I loved to lick her thick furry winter coat. I had come to love her as she was very kind to me when I was adjusting to my new home. She was very weak and didn't want to fight anymore to live. I had a hard time accepting

that, but then I began to realize she had a good life as a protected cow. She told me that she had known 21 other cows and oxen that had left their bodies naturally at the ISCOWP farm. She said it was time for her to leave and she was thankful for the good life she had.

I watched as Balabhadra would sit next to her and speak to her, stroking her body. I could see how much he cared for her and how her weakness was painful to him. That's when I began to trust him.

Āśā: On her last day, she was sprinkled with Rādhā-kuṇḍa water, dust from Govardhana Hill and from ISCOWP's Girirāja. She wore a pavitra from Lord Nṛsmhadeva in Māyāpur and was listening to Śrīla Prabhupāda chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* on Balabhadra's iPhone laid next to her ear. She left her body in this way.

She was buried the following day on the ISCOWP farm next to Big Śyāma. I know she has gone onto greener pastures.

Mādhavī: I thought the pain would not go away. It was just me and Āśā in the geriatric barn. I painfully felt Śyāmā's absence. I knew there were other cows in the herd, but the geriatric barn doors were closed to keep me warm. My coat had not thickened enough by winter and Balabhadra thought it would be too cold for me if the doors were opened. You see I never went outside the barn when I was at the dairy. Unlike the ISCOWP cows, I had never been on pasture and therefore my body didn't know the difference between spring, summer, fall or winter. Śyāmā and Āśā told me the ISCOWP cows began to grow their winter coats before winter.

Then Gaṇḍa entered the geriatric barn. He is a very large older ox, and I was a little afraid of him. There were no oxen at the commercial dairy. All the males born there are sent to a feed lot to be fattened for meat or sent to live in a cramped veal crate where they can't move to be sold for veal. Some of my sons went there and I have nightmares thinking about it.

Gaṇḍa proved to be a gentle soul and very easy to get along with. He was having trouble with his arthritis and was put in the geriatric barn so it would be easier for him to get food and water.

Then one day in March, Balabhadra opened the geriatric barn doors.

Āśā: All winter I was telling Mādhavī about the joy of pasturing. I couldn't believe she never had the experience. She really didn't understand what I was saying and I knew she would have to experience pasturing for herself.

However, I did have one concern about Mādhavī pasturing. Her tail was cut off. It was cut off at the dairy; I think to make it easier for her owner to milk her. But, we cows need our tails to swish away the flies that bother us in the summer. How will Mādhavī get rid of the flies? Somehow I will have to help her.

When Balabhara opened the geriatric barn doors, I was first to pass through the barn doors as I knew what was ahead. Mādhavī came through the doors after me. We both didn't get too far as we started eating the fresh grass immediately. Oh what a wonderful taste!

Balabhadra had made a temporary fenced path to a small flat pasture. We followed his lead and we entered the heavenly planet of the tastes and smells of spring pasture. Mādhavī was running and jumping in delight!

Mādhavī: Now I have been on spring pasture for a few weeks. I can't say how happy I am. It seems that so much misery is behind me. I wish my children could have come here. I wish all the cows I have ever known could go to a cow protection farm. I pray that before I die there are many more cow protection places for many more cows.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please give the devotees the realization and the strength to develop such farms. I know that you wanted many such farms near every temple. I pray to Lord Kṛṣṇa that your desire will become true. If you had not dedicated your life to explaining the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the world, the concept of cow protection would have never come to the Western world. Because of you, I have a life as a protected cow. I am eternally grateful to you and so are all your followers who have had their minds, hearts and eyes opened to my worth, to my right to life.

How extraordinary you are. How you could change the minds and soften the hearts of meat eaters to become cow protectors. So close to Lord Kṛṣṇa, you understand the importance, the beauty,

the worth, the need to protect the cow and you have managed to transport that knowledge to your followers. To you, all the protected cows and their cowherds are eternally grateful.

We humbly offer our obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. Our eternal thanks to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your servants,

Balabhadra Dāsa and Caya Devī Dasī

Kulaśekara Dāsa

My memoirs are being edited at present and there are many intimate stories of my interactions with His Divine Grace. For this Vyāsa-pūjā offering, I will share one significant interaction.

In New Vṛndāvana 1976, I had just finished completing the first magazine edition of “*Brijabāsi Spirit*”. I had delivered three finished collated-bound copies to Śrīla Prabhupāda at his final darśana on the Friday night. He was leaving the next morning for the New York Ratha-yātrā. I had not seen him all week outside of the morning lecture as I had been trying frantically to print the magazine and show him some finished copies before he left.

He started by pulling my leg, as he loved to do! “Prabhupāda’s Palace *ki Jaī!*” he reads off the front cover with a photo of the dome being poured. “What is this *ki Jaī!*?” he asks.

“You know Prabhupāda, ‘*kī jaya!*’” I say enthusiastically. I am sure it’s spelled wrong! Embarrassed, but hopeful that I pleased him. “Oh *kī jaya!*” he says, as if he were understanding it for the first time – just pulling on my chain... he loved to poke fun at my Britishness. He looked carefully through each page, and then sat talking about Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma coming home from the fields with their cowherd boyfriends and cows.

Rādhānātha Dāsa – now Swami – had given him a large print of his Deities from the brahmacārī-āśrama that I had taken and printed for him. He had put it in a nice frame and presented it to His Divine

Grace. It sat in front of him along with the three copies of the magazine.

Śrīla Prabhupāda started describing the dress of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in detail, as if he were describing a picture. It was rare to hear Śrīla Prabhupāda talk about Vṛndāvana pastimes. Mostly it was philosophy in the lectures. This was pure nectar! One problem was that he stared at me without blinking – THE WHOLE TIME! Full nectar, and the whole time he is staring at me. In the end it got extremely uncomfortable, as it was way too much mercy! I would look up at the ceiling and back down and he was still staring. I would look at the wall and then back and he was looking right into me. One atom was never so blessed with a laser beam stare! After forty minutes I paid obeisances and left as it was all I could bear. After I stood up, he looked away.

The next morning Śrīla Prabhupāda left for New York, and I was the very last person on the road to wave goodbye to him. I had chosen a spot way down the road where there was a curve, where he could not help but notice me for an extended period as the car approached and I saw him *praṇāma* in acceptance of my obeisances.

That night I drove all night with Kuladri Dāsa and Dulāla-candra Dāsa, arriving on Ratha-yātrā morning, 1976, in New York. Śrīla Prabhupāda was out on his morning walk, and we were hanging out outside. Everyone was called to go into the lobby as Śrīla Prabhupāda was returning from his walk. We all gathered in the lobby, when suddenly the brass and glass double doors flew open, and an effulgent and garlanded Śrīla Prabhupāda strode in with about 40 men behind him. They were all GBC's and *sannyāsīs*. We offered the nama orṅ prayers to Śrīla Prabhupāda, and it sounded like the Brahmā's visiting Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā. 400 devotees in a huge granite-walled lobby to the 55th street temple. The echo and reverb were almost deafening.

As we were standing up, I got to my knees and I heard in a very loud voice, "Oh you have come! Thank you! Thank you! You have come!" And I am thinking "Oh no..." I stand to full height and sure enough, Śrīla Prabhupāda is making a bee line straight towards me – still speaking at the top of his voice so that everyone could hear. "You have come! Thank you! Thank you!" By that time he had covered the 20' from where he had entered and was now standing 1' from my face, so there was no mistaking who he was addressing.

I was extremely humbled by this and figured that it would have a significance to all the men around him who were running the movement. He was in excellent health and vibrant spirits. He looked like he could easily live another 20 years or so.

The next day I was called into Ādi-keśava's office. He said, "I don't want to tell you this Kulaśekara – as you're puffed-up enough already – but Tamāla told me that I have to tell you. This morning when we were coming down from Śrīla Prabhupāda's room to the Temple in the elevator, Śrīla Prabhupāda turned to Tamāla, and in an excited voice said "Where is Kulaśekara? Is he leading *kīrtana*!" Tamāla said he thought I was cooking capātīs. Śrīla Prabhupāda said "Oh!"... "So tomorrow you are leading guru-pūjā." (Actually Rohinī-kumāra and myself were cooking 1, 000 capātīs for breakfast *prasādam* – two of us. He was rolling the balls and feeding them through the rolling machine and I was cooking, turning, puffing and buttering 30 at a time!)

When I came into the temple room to lead guru-pūjā the next morning, I had a freshly shaved head and had put on clean cloth and fresh tilaka. There were 400 devotees in the temple room, and a pathway through them up to the front of the vyāsāsana with the best drum waiting for me. Śrīla Prabhupāda was already sitting on the vyāsāsana and was beaming at me. I started singing the Gurvaṣṭakam and got to the third verse, and was too overwhelmed to sing, so I motioned to one of my close godbrothers who took over on the fourth verse. There were maybe 20-30 mṛdaṅgas, 100+ pairs of karatālas... you could say a very ecstatic *kīrtana* ensued! Śrīla Prabhupāda and I were just looking into each other's eyes with love for the whole duration. I had tears pouring down my face from the second verse and they did not let up... if ever there was a fifteen minute period I could relive this lifetime, that was it.

Śrīla Prabhupāda came to London before he passed away. I believe he wanted to see Śrī Śrī Rādhā - London-īśvara before departing, as they were so significant in his attempts to satisfy the desires of his Guru Mahārāja in establishing a Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Temple in the heart of London. That was the last time I saw His Divine Grace, even though he requested all the devotees to come to India for his departure. The GBC (Governing Body Commissioners) decided one devotee from each country could go. I was chosen from England but declined as I had already said my goodbye to him in private at the Manor that trip and could not bear to see him

in any more pain.

The humble servant of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, eternally,

Kulaśekara Dāsa

Manamohinī Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Days of glory, I was there when Your Divine Grace walked among us, and mercy poured forth in the shape of a nod, a smile, a chastisement; when a perfect example and direct instruction were always present to guide us at our every baby step. Our fledging army was young, weak, misguided and full of bad qualities, but because of your purity and your love for us, we persevered. We recognized that this was the real deal, a way of life worthy this meagre lifetime to pursue, and you made it possible. Pleasing you was all that mattered. Life was so simple then, and the planet seemed auspicious. To watch you, try and impress you, live for your glances and nods and laughter. By serving you, we were serving the entire disciplic succession beginning with the Supreme Lord. Each day we would realize the amazing grace and mercy that was ours, and so we began, collectively, to water our spiritual creepers in earnest.

You are the brightest jewel, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and this earth was lit up by your effulgence. You gave us an open secret that could only be revealed to us by a pure lover of God. You held the key and patiently opened our hearts. The goal, you explained, was simply to become madly in love with our Creator, the most attractive, richest, strongest, famous, wisest and most aloof, a Supreme Personality Who chose to be an enchanting bluish cowherd boy named Kṛṣṇa. You worked tirelessly to write over 60 books carefully explaining all facets of the Absolute Truth for us fallen conditioned souls. Though lofty and beyond our mundane comprehension, you made the process easy and sublime... just chant, dance and eat *prasādam*. Our goal became clear and our lives became lives full with meaning and direction, and full of precious memories.

About ten years went by much too quickly with countless nectarean pastimes, our *Śrīla Prabhupāda-caritāmṛta*. Such memories leave us humbled with amazement and gratitude at the causeless mercy that was, and will always be, all of ours. Though you're gone in form, we can come together and share remembered pieces and insure that the knowledge passed down to us remains preserved and undiluted. It is our duty to see to this, our life's mission until it is our turn to leave. Until then, we can and will go on remembering you, our beloved *Śrīla Prabhupāda*. And the days of glory will continue.

Your eternally grateful daughter,

Manamohinī Devī Dāsī

Bhakta Dāsa

ALL GLORY TO ŚRĪ GURU AND GAURĀṄGA!

My Eternal Father, Friend, and Preceptor,

Falling at your divine and sacred feet again and again I request you to mercifully accept my most respectful obeisances:

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

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

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

Your disciple and my dear godbrother Gurukṛpā told me that when he asked you what is the most important verse in all the Vedic literature, you said:

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

“Unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master, all the imports of Vedic knowledge are automatically revealed.” (Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.23)

By inconceivable fortune I met your disciples in August 1969, and when they showed me the poster of Your Divine Grace, you reached out to me through that photograph, and from that very instant, my life was transformed. All I could do was ask your disciple, “What should I do?” and he told me, “Meet me here tomorrow at 2pm and I will take you to the temple in Los Angeles”.

From that day, until now, I have reposed all my faith in you and by your blessings I have absolute certainty that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the source of all that exists, the Supreme Controller, the Supreme Friend, and the Supreme Enjoyer.

Once you wrote me that we must sell your books by “Preaching, not by cheating”. Not being certain of what you meant by using the term “cheating”, I asked you to kindly clarify this.

In the next letter you wrote:

“So far the meaning of the word “cheating, ” there are only three things to be known, that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Enjoyer, the Supreme Proprietor of everything, and the Supreme Friend of everyone, and we say that honesty is acting upon the knowledge of these three facts. So if one is always acting under these three facts, knowing Kṛṣṇa to be the Supreme Proprietor, Enjoyer, and Friend, then he is truly honest, and if one is not acting in this knowledge, then he is always cheating or being dishonest. So if you apply this to your techniques for selling literature to persons in the *sañkīrtana* party, then you will understand what is the meaning of the word “cheating.”

Over the ensuing years, I have realized that all of us, who have taken our birth here are cheaters, and we are all being cheated. Only those rare souls who have fully given up the false ego of having some interest separate from Lord Kṛṣṇa are not cheaters.

I am praying to Your Divine Grace to please bless me so that I may truly be a real disciple, not simply in name or title, but in reality.

Once in the spring of 1970, after you had completed giving us a class on the *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, you suddenly roared into the microphone, “Either you love Kṛṣṇa, or you love the vaginal!” All your disciples present were stunned, they could hardly breathe upon hearing these words, so blunt, so bold, and yes, so absolutely perfectly true.

You called this the “Vagina licking civilization”. Who but one who is free from all illusion, all vice, and has no ambition for material gain could speak such truths?

Once, you asked all the devotees, “Are all of you chanting at least sixteen rounds every day?”

I, a young, new recruit, raised my hand and uttered, “No Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am not chanting sixteen rounds.”

You asked me, “Why are you not chanting sixteen rounds?” I stammered, “Your Divine Grace, I am working for about 24 hours a day and only resting for four hours, and I do not have time for chanting my rounds.” You ROARED, “Then sleep two hours CHANT SIXTEEN ROUNDS!”

Unknown to me at the time, few devotees were chanting sixteen rounds, as it was the idea of the temple president that working was more important than chanting. Of course, Your Divine Grace wanted us to work hard AND chant sixteen rounds.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Canto 3.29.5, Devahūti speaks to Lord Kapiladeva: “My dear Lord, You are just like the sun, for You illuminate the darkness of the conditional life of the living entities. Because their eyes of knowledge are not open, they are sleeping eternally in that darkness without Your shelter, and therefore they are falsely engaged by the actions and reactions of their material activities, and they appear to be very fatigued.

I am very fatigued by this ocean of actions and reactions. There is no other way. Who is kind like you Śrīla Prabhupāda?

Once one brahmacārī somehow or other had a sexual episode with some girl he met on *saṅkīrtana*. His temple president kicked him from the temple, and this temple president called all the other temple presidents advising them to not let this brahmacārī in the tem-

ple. By some fortune at that time you came to San Diego Temple. This devotee came and he wanted to stay and he wanted to talk with you. I did not have the heart to not allow him, so he was able to meet you and tell his story. When he explained that he was not being allowed to stay in the temples, you said, "If they will not allow you to stay with them, then you come and stay and travel with me."

Never, not once did you act in a way that will draw anyone further from Kṛṣṇa. Always, without fail, your only interest is to bring every *jīva* closer to Kṛṣṇa. You never saw any separate interest.

Your Divine Grace, when will I become like you, and not see myself as having some independence and separate interests? This is my desire, but except for your mercy, how is this possible?

Your Divine Grace, I am yours birth after birth, wherever you are I am going to follow you.

Your eternal servant,

Bhakta Dāsa

Karṇāmṛta Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda. My obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga.

Making an official offering to you is an interesting exercise, since I pray, and speak my heart to you throughout the day, as I am sure do most of your other disciples. Although I write for purification and to please you, on such occasions, I am also including your other disciples in our conversation, as even you have done in your offerings. This changes the flavor of my offering which speaks to the necessity of the time. We are having a family conversation, with you, our dear brothers and sisters, and anyone who may hear about it.

Standing before you and my godbrothers and sisters, I make the following offering:

In a small rural area in North Carolina,

an American born Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava
prepares to observe the “birthday” anniversary
or “appearance day” of his *guru*:

I

The meaning of *guru* is difficult to understand
even for those who have one; what to speak of
in the West, the place of the rugged individualist,
where having a *guru* is foreign idea.

Though having a teacher or mentor is acceptable,
honoring or giving homage to a *guru* is suspect.
At the time of the American Revolution, the rebelling
colonists said that they would not bow down to any man.

Many people falsely think that having a religion is a crutch
for people who can't face the naked truth of life,
or having a *guru* is for people who are weak
and can't think for themselves.

Actually having a *guru* is for people
who want to think more deeply about
subjects which most ignore, like death,
disease, old age, suffering, evil, and God.

II

Outsiders conjecture, accepting a *guru* is blind conformity,
yet actually it's a challenge to the status quo
of being an exploiter of the world, by reviving a natural life
of giving, fostering peace, love, lasting happiness.

It is not an outdated tradition
but a system of apprenticeship where
one hears realizations beyond spiritual theory
and sees it practiced, inspiring one to follow.

In any arena we tend to become like
the people we are with; and when
we spend time with those who are more
spiritually advanced, our hearts are changed.

In history we see that even great *gurus* have their *guru*, as do incarnations of God. They teach by example the importance of having good guidance, and the power of saintly association.

III

It takes real modesty and honesty
to realize the insignificant
nature of our existence in
this vast universe and tiny planet.

accepting a *guru* is meant to help one
develop real humility by assisting him
and accepting service to Kṛṣṇa
according to his guidance.

Whereas the scripture is considered
the “passive” agent of Divinity,
the *guru* is the “active” agent because
he gives us feedback, while the scripture does not.

The ultimate evidence for the value of
anything is one’s direct experience, so
we will only appreciate the value of having
a *guru* if we have urgency for guidance.

IIII

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, my life has been so blessed
by accepting you as my *guru* and best friend,
giving me a spiritual foundation for living,
a way of deep, yet practical thinking.

And I get to feel your presence within
receiving guidance from your books and talks
as well as from those who imbibe your spirit
kindling the spiritual fire brighter than ever.

I have the opportunity to share my heart
with the next generation, and forgetful devotees
praying to teach what I stumbled to learn
at least being a steady, faithful devotee.

The life you have given is an enlivening experience,
feeling joyful, and fixed, in my *sādhana* and giving,
endeavoring to be a sane, balanced, informed devotee,
at your feet in *sevā* to Śrī Caitanya’s mission.

Karṇāmṛta Dāsa

Aditi Devī Dāsī

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Little miracles happen every day. The gardenia plant that almost died this last winter is now giving a flower every other day to offer to you at our evening *āratī*. The half-bag of organic potatoes that was forgotten in the cupboard over the winter. I found it, and the potatoes had developed roots. I planted them and now the plants are rising up through the earth.

These little miracles are a reflection of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s amazing energies. I am very thankful for these and other miracles Kṛṣṇa has blessed me with. The greatest miracle in my life was meeting you and your devotees. I first saw and met devotees and accepted some literature in the Bay area of California in the late 1960’s, and after praying the Jesus prayer regularly for six months or so, I once took a small plate of delicate *prasādam* on the edge of the Berkeley campus (I believe it must have been Lord Nityānanda’s feast). Soon after “casting my fate to the wind”, I flew to Europe (Lord Chaitanya’s full moon shining brightly in the night sky), and stopped off in London – it was the spring of 1970. It was there that I joined the beautiful temple of Rādhā-London-Īśvara at 7 Bury Place. I could understand that having asked Lord Jesus for His mercy, the next logical step was to chant God’s names and engage in His service, and to serve His pure devotee who was now on the Earth. So I began devotional service with the help of my dear godbrothers and godsisters: Mukunda and Jānakī, Guru Dāsa and Yamunā, Śyāmasundara and Mālatī, Mandākinī, Bhakta Tom (aka Tribhuvanātha) and other wonderful devotees.

One can read about the founding of that temple in HDG Mukunda Goswami's wonderful book, *Miracle on 2nd Ave.*

And the greatest miracle of all – finally I met you, Śrīla Prabhupāda – the most important event of my life. I had to wait a year and a half to meet you. I guess I needed the purification of devotee association, the holy name, and devotional service before I could meet you in person. You had told me in my letter of initiation in the summer of 1970 to learn Kṛṣṇa consciousness from my older godbrothers and godsisters, and to always remain humble.

When you came to London, everything happened so fast. My old boyfriend came from Copenhagen right after you arrived; and although there had been times when I had thought of leaving, there was no thought of leaving once I had your personal *darśana*. I cooked for you, received the Gāyatrī *mantra*, and within a few days I was in your room saying goodbye to go off to Paris, to marry Locanānanda Prabhu, and then to proceed (after some months of helping in Paris) to Geneva to open a temple.

In your room (while saying goodbye) you said about Geneva: “It is not a very big city, but it is a very important one.” You also said that you would come to visit, and you smiled very encouragingly. And to show us your omniscience, you asked several times whether we would be landing at a certain port in France, and Hari-vilāsa Prabhu, the temple president from Paris with whom I would be traveling, said, “No, Prabhupāda,” we will be landing in another. But when we arrived in Dover to depart from England, there was an announcement that because of weather conditions we would have to change our destination and so, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were right. We did land in the port you had mentioned.

Now so many years have passed since that summer of 1971 when I met you. We did go to Geneva, and after extreme hardships we opened a temple which was later closed by our GBC, as well as several new centers in Germany. When you came to Paris the next summer (1972), you were very upset: “I am opening temples, and you are closing them.” you said to the GBC. Then Guru-Gaurāṅga Prabhu who had come to help in Geneva, said he would go back to Geneva, and you were very happy. There was a temple in Geneva until 1978, and then Gaura-Nitāi were moved to a farm, and then to Zurich.

You visited Geneva in 1974, as you said you would. That house is still there, and the family who lives there told a visiting devotee on pilgrimage, that sometimes they have a dream in which two figures with upraised arms are swaying side to side. Thus Gaura-Nitāi are still present there in spirit, and it would be wonderful to somehow or other preserve that house as an historic site. There is now a beautiful temple in Zurich and the same Gaura-Nitāi, that Guru-Gaurāṅga Prabhu brought through customs and established in Geneva, preside in Zurich. But you desired a temple in Geneva, and I have been trying for several years to think how we can make that happen again. Fortunately there are a few devotees who live in Geneva, and I am hoping that a few more will come and organize programs and preach there. Several of my godsisters (who used to be in Europe) are willing to go and preach and chant there this summer. Especially there are French-speaking devotees who reside in and near Zurich who are familiar with Switzerland, and most importantly, they are very wonderful devotees. I am praying, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that they will make Geneva their base and influence the world from there. Geneva is not a big city, but somehow it is a very important city. It is important because the United Nations and other international organizations have made Geneva their headquarters. The world's leaders need to hear the holy name, and your prescription on how to attain world peace. Please let us fulfill your dream of a center there, Śrīla Prabhupāda. By your mercy, anything is possible. That is my wish, Śrīla Prabhupāda: that again a temple or center will be established in Geneva, and that the holy name will be heard there and enter the hearts of the leaders of the world. Please help us to work together to achieve this for you.

Your fallen and insignificant servant,

Aditi Devī Dāsī

Bhūtātmā Dāsa

When considering how to glorify our spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda, the possibilities are limitless. Just as the qualities of Kṛṣṇa are unbounded, so are the qualities of His most dear servant. Through his translations and Bhaktivedanta purports, Śrīla Prabhupāda reveals the intimate details of this vast ocean of tran-

scendental bliss, form and qualities. These divine communications fill our hearts with awe and wonder. As the raincloud pours water even on the rocks and pebbles, so by his unconditional mercy, Śrī la Prabhupāda introduces even the most undeserving souls to the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

“Causing great astonishment” – this is the definition of amazing. With straw in my mouth, I ask, “What could possibly be more astonishing, more wonderful, more amazing, than your magnanimous appearance into my frivolous life?” Born in the 50’s, a child of the ‘burbs of Los Angeles, my *karma* had brought me to a silly life of rockin’ to “*Little Deuce Coupe*” and “*Be True to Your School*”. It had brought me to the *māyā* of watching professional rasslin’ on Wednesday nights via KTLAChannel 5. In the midst of all this “*California Dreaming*”, how could I imagine I would, before I had even finished my teenage years, become a disciple of one of history’s greatest Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*?

Admittedly, I possessed some sentiment to learn about truth, but lacked both knowledge and discipline. My philosophy amounted to a mundane hodge-podge of interpretations of Buddhism/Taoism/Christianity et al. But once contacted by the incredible spiritual potency of Your Divine Grace, all confusion and misgivings were swept away; replaced with clarity and comprehension. You immediately blessed me with meaningful faith in the Personality of God, and then revealed an unimaginably wonderful Supreme Being.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you brought me to a world, to a reality, wherein God is not a formless energy, nor a grumpy old man in the clouds, but instead is the All-Attractive Supreme Personality. You revealed that God is a musician, a flutist, who stuns animals and melts rocks with His melodies. You opened my eyes to Kṛṣṇa, the midnight dancer, the trickster cowboy, the crafty dwarf of incomprehensible beauty. Your pure knowledge lifted me beyond this shell of matter with visions of a Supreme Person who flies on the back of a monstrous eagle, a divine bird who kills and eats snakes for breakfast. You showed me how Kṛṣṇa is a warrior and a chariot-eeer, who breaks His vow to save His devotee; who appears as an enraged man-lion, ripping open the abdominal cavity of a cruel father, then tosses the dangling intestines around His neck as a bloody necklace. You penetrated my dull brain with the astonishing pastimes of Kṛṣṇa transforming Himself into a woman of unrivaled beauty, who is lustfully pursued by His (Her) close associate, Lord

Mahādeva, who himself smokes *gañjā* and leads a tribe of ghosts. And you taught me of the Original Person's elder brother Balarāma, who sometimes drags entire cities about the countryside with His plowshare, and other times, having lost a chess match while inebriated on honey liquor, smashes out the teeth of a fellow who derisively grins over his defeat.

It is all too wonderful, it is all too splendid, and only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could make such amazing narrations entirely believable and everlastingly enjoyable. You have delivered the eternal reality of *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. It is your matchless gift to the world, only available via the potency of a perfect pure devotee, a soul whose consciousness is directly absorbed in the activities of the Lord. It is a long way from the surfboards and woodies of 1960's So Cal. It is a long way from the dry illusions of my *karma*. However inadequate my words may be, please let me thank you, again and again, for coming to carry me away.

Bhūtātmā Dāsa

Nandalāla Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Despite a long winter's nap in the lap of *māyā*, you never left me. During those long years, I, who was determined never to return, dreamed of you repeatedly, heard the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* sung and chanted in my sleep, and dreamed of the devotees.

Despite all my many other failings, my faith in you has never wavered. I was never tempted to seek shelter elsewhere. I have never doubted you or a single word you have ever spoken or written. I know I can reach the perfection of my eternal existence simply by following and realizing everything you have taught us. A million

tongues and unlimited intelligence will never be sufficient to thank you nor to glorify you. I love you forever. May I always find a way, small or large to serve you and to express my never-ending love, awe, appreciation and gratitude.

Thank you for allowing me to be,

Your servant,

Nandalāla Devī Dāsī

Raṇadhir Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Offering my obeisances to you, I am reminded once again of the vast gulf that, by my choosing, separates me from you. Your presence completely transforms my life, yet I cannot begin to understand you. We are unimaginably different. All I want is adoration and distinction, and all you want is to humbly serve Kṛṣṇa. Yet no matter how far I stray, I am still bound to you, like a tiny fragment of meteorite compelled by gravity to travel its parabolic orbit around the Sun, sometimes nearer, sometimes closer, but always very far away.

You have generously explained to me how to bridge the gap, but I am so dumbstruck by the material nature that I cannot, will not, follow even the simplest of your instructions. I can only pray that the same forces that dragged me so unwillingly into your presence will one day bring me closer to you again. I can only pray that the infinitesimally small amount of service I have accidentally given you will somehow prime the way for more service to follow.

Perhaps then, my obeisances will be more than empty words.

Your reluctant servant,

Raṇadhir Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances and all glories to you and to all of the very special previous *ācāryas* who have so kindly introduced us to that blissful young Couple – the duo of Vṛndāvana – the innocent, loveable, worshipable and eternal Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, whom we also crave to protect and serve just as you do and as you have so graciously demonstrated to us in real time how you yourself so do that.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have stated in your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that anyone in Kali-yuga who even thinks about serving the Lord will receive the credit for those dreams – even if they are never brought to fruition. I have had so many dreams and ambitions to serve you but as the unfortunate sinner that I am I have never been able to do anything as yet. I do remember how you “struggled in the wilderness” in New York for some time and you are the most pure – so the future looks a little bleak for us. However, we are still hoping against hope that one day, with your blessing we shall be able to become pure enough to be regarded as your true representatives and find the power to carry out your order – even in this lifetime. We do realize that purity is the force and we should not falsely present ourselves as your representatives for the sake of some temporary distinction – we must be actually be pure-hearted. You once described a neophyte as being “a person who is very expert at preaching but actually has no conception of what is truly pure devotional service”.

A devotee friend commented that someone had asked him why you had decided to begin your Movement in New York which is such a sordid place with many crazies. He immediately replied that Kṛṣṇa sent you there because it was the perfect place to introduce *japa mālā* – notably because half of the residents were already walking around mumbling to themselves. Anyway, jokes aside, we realize that you had full faith in the Lord and despite all of the tribulations and troubles, you persevered and that perseverance eventually paid off to our good fortune.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, while you were physically present here with us, we diligently recorded your every spoken word knowing full well

that you were “*sa mahātmā sudurlabha*”, a very, very, rare soul. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you so very humbly opened the doors for all other Vaiṣṇavas to come forward and preach anywhere on this tiny planet – you alone did all the hard and dirty work just so that other Vaiṣṇavas could easily follow in your footsteps. As you have so often said, “first save yourselves then think of saving others” and that we should not again become part of the problem instead of part of the solution. We offer a multitude of *daṇḍavats* to those of your serious and constant disciples that have stayed the course.

We are still begging your forgiveness and mercy Śrīla Prabhupāda, and thanking you profusely for giving us this wonderful opportunity to request the privilege of devotional service and if we should be so unfortunate as to have to drag on in this material hell much longer we pray that at least whatever we are doing shall be a testament to your majesty and glory and never a discredit to your good name.

Your eternally aspiring servant,

Rukma Dāsa

Viṣṇu Dāsa

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

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

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

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

*bhaktisiddhānta-śiṣyāya bhaktivedānta-nāmine
prasannāya praśāntāya tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

Let me offer my obeisances unto my Guru Mahārāja, who is a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who is always calm and joyful, and who bears the name Bhaktivedānta.

*vṛndāvane ramaṇa-reṭi-prasiddha-bhūmau
tatrāpi kṛṣṇa-balarāma-supāda-mūle
jñānam param̃ parama-kṛṣṇa-sudharmīty uktam
dantas tu deva prabhupāda namo namas te*

In the transcendental land of Vṛndāvana's pleasing Rāmaṇa-reṭi sands, situated at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, Śrīla Prabhupāda is delivering the highest knowledge about Kṛṣṇa. I repeatedly offer my respectful obeisances unto the lord at whose lotus feet all the *prabhus* sit – from an 8-verse poem written in 1975 by Paṇḍit Ananta Śāstrī.

Śrīla Prabhupāda blessed this planet with his presence on Sept. 1, 1896, when the sun was travelling through the heart of the astrological sign of Leo. Leo's symbol is the lion who's qualities are nobleness, kingliness, patience, perseverance, and bravery. Śrīla Prabhupāda exhibited all of these qualities.

His Moon was in the *devic* or godly *nakṣatra* of Mṛgaśira which attributed to his truthful, peaceful and gentle nature. It denotes one who projects truth and beauty. Being in Taurus where the Moon is exalted, the degree his Moon was in foretold of extraordinary perceptive and mental capabilities.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Moon was also in Taurus in the *nakṣatra* Rohiṇī right next to Śrīla Prabhupāda's *nakṣatra* Mṛgaśira. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has always been right next to Śrīla Prabhupāda. Śrīla Prabhupāda exemplified extreme patience and steadfastness, with only one goal on his mind, the mission given to him by his beloved *guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. He persevered the obstacles of heart attacks while crossing the ocean on the Jaladuta, but the compassion in his heart for the suffering of humanity and his *guru's* blessings gave him the courage to reach the American shore. He had only 40 rupees, a few books and his invincible will power to carry out his *guru's* desire to bring the message of Lord Caitanya to these Western countries. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself spoke of His pure devotee Śrī la Prabhupāda in this way.

ya idam̃ paramam̃ guhyam̃ mad-bhakteṣv abhidhāsyati

bhaktiṁ mayi parāṁ kṛtvā mām evaiṣyaty asaṁśayaḥ

For one who explains this supreme secret to the devotees, pure devotional service is guaranteed, and at the end he will come to Me.

*na ca tasmān manuṣyeṣu kaścīn me priya-kṛttamaḥ
bhavitā na ca me tasmād anyaḥ priyataro bhuvi*

There is no servant in this world more dear to Me than he, nor will there ever be one more dear.

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇaṁ kurute lokas tad anuvartate*

“Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.”

And Prabhupāda is also much more than just a great man, he is the *śaktyāveśa-avatāra* sent to save the Western countries from impersonalism and voidism and to revive the world’s Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He is more than just a saint or *sādhu*, he is *jagad-guru* Śrīla Prabhupāda, the one at who’s feet all other *gurus* and saints prostrate themselves.

I lived in Vṛndāvana from January to October of 1977. A few months before Śrīla Prabhupāda passed away, I woke up on the guest-house rooftop before the sun arose, when a huge comet or shooting star with a very long blue tail shot across the sky from the North. It took about 20 seconds to cross the sky and finally disappear in the South. I had never seen such a vivid and gigantic shooting star as this and had never seen one that big afterwards. I went to a well-known astrologer/ palm reader not far from Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir, and his son, an ISKCON devotee, translated for me the Bengali he spoke. I asked him what such a big comet or shooting star could mean when it appears to pass directly over you. He shook his head and said “This is very inauspicious. A great saint, king, or leader will soon leave this earth making it more unfortunate for this planet. This great person will pass away somewhere near to where the comet was most visible.”

It was definitely very visible that morning over Vṛndāvana.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda departed from his manifest body November 14, 1977, everyone who ever heard of him or knew him felt a great sorrow and vacancy in this world. Actually a great fear overcame his followers everywhere. It was a selfish fear, as in that of a child who felt they would be helpless and in danger without one's mother or father. Indeed Śrīla Prabhupāda was this planet's true guardian, the real compassionate refuge and spiritual strength for all of earth's creatures. But due to the modes of passion and ignorance, many did not recognize him. Those who were fortunate to recognize him could not keep themselves from loving him and wanting to selflessly follow him. The day his lotus feet stepped down upon this planet, everyone became immediately spiritually benefitted whether they knew it or not. And that is the *śakti* of the pure devotee of Rādhārāṇī. That is the inconceivable *acintya-śakti* of Lord Kṛṣṇa's beloved emissary, Śrīla Prabhupāda. He came to save everyone through his *vānī* (words), and when his body no longer functioned, his *vānī* continued to change the hearts and minds of countless souls. In this way, Śrīla Prabhupāda never left us, he never died. Quoting Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura:

He reasons ill who tells that Vaiṣṇavas die, when thou art living still in sound The Vaiṣṇavas die to live, and living try to spread the holy name around.

Concerning *vānī* in 1969 Jan 13 Lecture in LA, Śrīla Prabhupāda said: "... *vapuḥ* means the physical body, and *vānī* means the vibration. So we are not concerned about the physical body. Not concerned means... We are concerned, of course, because the spiritual master, those who are *ācāryas*, their body is not considered as material. *arcye śilā-dhīr guruṣu nara-matir*. Just like the statue of Kṛṣṇa, to consider that 'This is a stone...' Similarly, *arcye śilā-dhīr guruṣu na...* *Guruṣu* means those who are *ācāryas*, to accept their body as ordinary man's body, this is denied in the *śāstras*. So although a physical body is not present, the vibration should be accepted as the presence of the spiritual master, vibration, What we have heard from the spiritual master, 'that' is living."

Although we understand this theoretically, it is impossible to not feel the loss and the sadness when the pure devotee apparently leaves his body and leaves us here without his transcendental bodily presence. Śrīla Prabhupāda's body was getting weaker and weaker day by day.

He said I should go to Māyāpur, they need my artwork there. I left on the train from Mathurā, arrived in Māyāpur, then one day visited the Kolkata temple where I heard a riot broke out back in Māyāpur, then I became very ill.

My visa expired and so I had to return to New York. We had our 24 hour chanting shifts going, praying for Śrīla Prabhupāda’s health, but then we received the news that he had passed on. It was Nov. 14, 1977. I was in the Manhattan Rādhā-Govinda temple with many devotees crying and some not wanting to believe it, and some struggling with their emotions. It was a very sorrowful time as temples around the world were filled with tears and a sense of great loss. We felt that we were now without our divine guidance, our pure connection to God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda loved us and gave his very life for our salvation before we had a chance to truly show him our gratitude.

That day was sunny outside in New York, but our hearts were cloudy and raining inside. Many devotees changed that day. They became more serious, more desperate for spiritual answers, more resolute to know what Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted of them. Some kind of strange phenomena was taking place in the hearts of many, if not in all of Prabhupāda’s followers. It may have taken weeks, or months, but a new strength was growing in his follower’s hearts and minds, as though Prabhupāda didn’t really leave us after all. We began to remember his words: “The spiritual master lives forever by his divine instructions, and the follower lives with him.”

*śrī-guru-caraṇe more bhakti koro dāna
ye caraṇa-bale pāi tattvera sandhāna*

O Vaiṣṇavas, please give me the gift of devotion to my spiritual master’s feet. By the power of his feet, I will find the truth.

Aspiring to serve the followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Viṣṇu Dāsa

My dearest Prabhupāda,

Thank you for lifting this veil on this vast and mysterious creation. I find myself inconceivably fortunate to have met you and to have learned from you. While I often succumb to *māyā's* powerful influence, I try daily to force my restless, insatiable mind back to the lotus feet of Lord Caitanya.

This universe, this mighty creation, is so much more than is realized by tiny humans or even by knowledgeable gods and demons. Only the pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa can understand the Lord's creation in its entirety. The irony is that we need not understand the creation; we need only understand that Kṛṣṇa is the Creator and we are His tiny parts and parcels. Any true and lasting happiness we wish for can be achieved ONLY by working to please Kṛṣṇa and His pure devotee. Everything else, our homes, our bank balances, our beloved family members; all are phantasmagoria, destined to become memories at best.

Words are just words, I know. The way to repay you for the knowledge you have given your disciples is to give that knowledge to others. This is your wish; that the books, and songs and *prasādam* you gave us will flood the earth and be accessible to any soul fortunate enough to understand their true value.

I do not ask for your blessing: You gave that many years ago. I ask that Kṛṣṇa allow me to give up my bodily misconceptions and use my life energy in your service, in order that your blessing not be wasted on me.

Your foolish, obstinate daughter,

Mahāsinī Devī Dāsī

Intimate *Guru-sevā*: The Spiritual Catalyst

By Babhrū Dāsa

When I was younger, I spent as much time surfing as I could.

Because most of the spots my friends and I surfed on the island of O‘ahu were coral reefs, and these were the days before surfboards had leashes, our surfboards frequently had dings, holes in the fiberglass surface that would let water into the Styrofoam core. Because I had a good eye and hands for the job, I regularly patched dings in my board and those of my friends. Anyone who has worked with fiberglass knows that, while the resin and fiberglass give strength to the surfboard, the resin hardens only when we add a hardener or catalyst beforehand. Successful surfboard glassing and repair depend on just the right elements, especially judicious use of catalyst. It is the essential constituent in the process, the element that makes the whole process effective. Using just the right catalyst in the “curing” or polymerization of the resin produces the strongest, most trustworthy surfboards.

Spiritual practice also has a number of elements that work together to ensure its success. And as with surfboard manufacture and repair, it has one essential constituent which seems to serve as a catalyst. That catalyst is devotion to the *guru*, which all authorities have characterized as absolutely essential to spiritual progress. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja says in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* that the spiritual master’s instruction is “the active principle in spiritual life”: *ācāryera mata yei, sei mata sāra*. The Bengali word Śrīla Prabhupāda gives as “active principle” here is *sāra*. Another way to understand this word is *essence*, or *essential principle*. Consequently, we can see that surrender to the *guru* is itself the essence of spiritual life, and failure to do so means we completely miss the point of spiritual endeavor, which renders our attempts at progress useless. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says in *Bhakti-sandarbha* that satisfying the *guru* is the main cause of attaining divine love and service.

In each of the centers for Kṛṣṇa consciousness established by Śrīla Prabhupāda and his followers around the world, devotees begin each day with a meditation on the *guru* by singing Śrīla Viśvanātha

Cakravartī's *Gurvaṣṭakam*. In the eighth of his prayers, Cakravartī Ṭhākura says,

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*

“By the spiritual master’s mercy, one may receive Kṛṣṇa’s blessings; without the *guru*’s grace, no one can make any spiritual progress.” So Śrīla Prabhupāda established from the beginning the central position of the spiritual master in the lives of spiritual practitioners.

But, as in surfboard construction and repair, where we attain optimal results by adding just the right catalyst in just the right manner, we attain optimal results in cultivating *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* by developing a particular kind of service to the *guru*. We see in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* that practical spiritual life is built on the foundation of taking shelter of the spiritual master, which includes several items. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains the first items of *sādhana*: *guru-pādāśrayas tasmāt kṛṣṇa-dīkṣādi-śikṣaṇam/ viśrambheṇa guroḥ sevā*. A *sādhaka* takes shelter of a *guru*, accepts initiation, takes instruction from, and serves the *guru* with faith, with trust. Sometimes we see the word *viśrambha* translated as respect, or reverence, but a quick exploration of that word reveals that the relationship with the spiritual master should be much more than the kind of distance implied in words such as respect and reverence.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī himself defines *viśrambha* later in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, in the context of discussing the mood of friendship. He says that it is a deep, familiar trust, free from any sort of restriction or control. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī further explains that deep trust implies not only freedom from excessive reverence and fear, but also a sense that friends are in no way different from each other. Elsewhere, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī says it is a sense that one’s own life, body, mind, intelligence, clothes, and everything else are one with those of the object of love. So *viśrambheṇa guroḥ sevā* seems to point to service based on a real sense of identity with the *guru* to the extent that the disciple has no doubt whatsoever that the *guru* has only his or her best interests in his heart; the disciple then has complete freedom to act with no interest other than the *guru*’s. As Śrīla Prabhupāda sometimes defined Kṛṣṇa consciousness as the sense that “I am Kṛṣṇa’s, and Kṛṣṇa is mine,” we may also define *guru-bhakti* as the sense that “I am the *guru*’s, and he is mine.”

So just how deeply does this confidence based on identity run? How far does this intimate trust extend? Viśvanātha Cakravartī seems to answer this in a commentary on a verse in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*'s fourth canto:

A devoted and chaste wife, while absorbed in the service of her husband, may ignore even her own children. Similarly, a disciple who is deeply absorbed in the service of the *guru* may even ignore practices such as hearing and chanting, knowing that by *guru-sevā* alone he can easily attain complete perfection in devotion. And just as a devoted wife ignores her own pleasures and home comforts, so too does a disciple completely absorbed in *guru-sevā* ignore even the divine bliss arising out of hearing and chanting, nor does he seek out the kind of secluded place suitable for such *bhajana*. That is the instruction in this verse. The *Vedas* also proclaim the supremacy of service to the *guru*.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's analogy in no way minimizes the practices of *sādhana-bhakti*. Our experience, in fact, is that the *guru* teaches us to engage progressively in cultivating those practices. Rather, it points out, as Viśvanātha says himself, "the supremacy of service to the *guru*" over all else.

The essence of devotional service for a disciple, then, seems to be dedication to the service of the spiritual master without any reservation, with complete confidence that such service will carry us to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. This confidence finds support in Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's assurance that those of us who regularly chant his eight beautiful verses of praise for the *guru* during the *brāhma-muhūrta* will certainly attain direct service to Vṛndāvanātha, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Using just the right hardener in appropriate amounts yields the strongest shell for a surfboard, giving the surfer the greatest confidence in the board for riding even the most powerful waves. In a similar way, real devotion—confident, intimate, affectionate service—to the spiritual master most effectively "cures" our spiritual practice, transforming it into pure devotional service. Such *viśrambhena guroḥ sevā* best equips the practitioner for confidently riding the waves in the ocean of the nectar of devotion.

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

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

My dear spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to you, my eternal father, master, guide, and most dear friend and well-wisher.

Just as Lord Kṛṣṇa's name is most holy, and just as by chanting His holy names one gets association with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the name of His pure devotee is similarly holy, and by chanting it one gets the association of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the supreme personality of servitor Godhead. How many times since the day you saved me, that I have said these two prayers containing your divine names? It must be hundreds and thousands of times, perhaps millions. And each time this beautiful glorification of you passes through my lips, with it comes a reminder of my surrender to you, and your compassion towards the fallen souls such as I. So happily I gave you my life, Śrīla Prabhupāda, barely out of the school of ignorance, and so happily it was and still is my highest goal and blessing to try and serve you, up until the last breath of this mortal body. I can never thank you enough for all that you have done and continue to do, for so many countless souls you benedict with Kṛṣṇa consciousness and divine love. Thank you for including me as one of these such souls.

These two *ślokas* which I learned as a new disciple, state your identity, your divine nature and origin, and your mission to your spiritual master. Saying them with a head bowed down at your lotus feet, brings the revelation of my true and only identity – to attempt to be nothing more than your humble and sincere servant. These two *ślokas* are the essence of my life, and my direction and illumination through this horrible age of Kali-yuga. Whenever the pressures of this worldly existence seem insurmountable, these two prayers to your lotus feet give me, strength, hope, assurance, and divine shelter. You are eternally and fully present in these two *mantras*, and I pray to you on this most auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, to be able to remember them always, especially at the time of my death.

So many misconceptions the conditioned souls of this world are born with, and attach themselves to, and carry throughout their precious human lives. But you have clearly shown that such attachment is simply ignorance, the influence of the *māyā* energy of the Lord. You have so lovingly established and taught that by surrendering to the pure devotional service of the Lord, through the guidance of his bona fide representative spiritual master, this seemingly endless ocean of *māyā* becomes like a small amount of water in the hoof-print of a calf, and thus one can easily step over and beyond it. By delivering to the conditioned souls the *māhā-mantra*, Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare, they get the opportunity to understand that there is no difference between the name of Kṛṣṇa and Himself, no difference between the form of Kṛṣṇa and Himself, and no difference between the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and Himself. The careful, attentive, and offenseless chanting of these names you have brought to the lips, minds and hearts of your followers, give them entrance into the divine world of pure devotional service, the abode of the divine couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is the special carrier of that divine love to the inhabitants of Kali-yuga. To calculate the mercy you have bestowed on the conditioned souls of this world through your divine instructions, would perhaps be even difficult for Ananta Śeṣa with his unlimited mouths, to enumerate properly. So fortunate was I, am I, to be one such insignificant recipient of your mercy.

One time, in the early evening back in the summer of July, in Denver, as you sat in your rocking chair on your porch, surrounded by maybe fifteen of your eager and loving disciples, I witnessed your simple nature of stressing the importance of taking fully to the devotional life of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which you carefully explained through your books and Bhaktivedanta purports. One young man, who used to help me distribute advertisements of our *bhakti-yoga* club meetings at the universities, sincerely asked you, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, what is the position of a person wants to be a devotee, but due to his material attachment, just can’t seem to take to it”? The question was an admittance of his own position at the time. He liked Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the association of devotees, but didn’t commit himself as your other followers happily did. With a gentle wave of your hand, you caringly replied, “Some are fortunate, and some are not”. That was enough and all that you answered him.

Each of us has the opportunity, through Your Divine Grace and mercy, to enter the pure devotional life to Kṛṣṇa and to give up the useless service of *māyā*, the illusory life of failed attempts in material happiness and where there is no satisfaction of the soul.

Also in Denver, when you arrived at the temple for the first time, attracted by that *yātrā*, 's number one position of distributing your books, I was asked ahead of time by the temple president to sing the song '*Ohe VaiṣṇavaṬhākura*', by Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura, that I had committed to memory during my many days of *saṅkīrtana*. As you sat on your *vyāsāsana*, I offered my heart and soul to you by singing this divine song of one of the past *ācāryas* of our disciplic succession, playing the tune on the harmonium. You sat there, surrounded by you loving disciples, enjoying the devotional song that you had taught and shared with us. These songs you had explained, were not from or of this world, but of the world of Goloka Vṛndāvana.

When I finished the song, you leaned over and asked, trying to see around the many bodies of the your devotees, "Who sang this?" I humbly responded by raising my hand, and you then asked, "Do you know what is the meaning?" I then began, "Oh venerable Vaiṣṇava, O ocean of mercy, be merciful unto your servant. Give me the shade of your lotus feet and purify me." You then delivered an elaboration of the song, and gave a short address to the devotees, thanking them for their efforts in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

We were and still are so fortunate to try and help you in the mission of spreading love of Godhead. I have made so many mistakes and fall downs in my trying to remain your servant. On this day, I pray for your mercy and forgiveness, and that you allow me to continue to serve you as you desire.

We wish to build a great temple and display of the spiritual culture of India in this present place where I am based – Sedona, Arizona. Yearly, so many millions of people from all over the world come here in search of a divine or mystical experience. And mostly they leave without a clear understanding of the bona fide process of enlightenment. Please bless our humble attempts to establish a place here that may capture their attention and reveal to them the most definitive and timely process for real emancipation from the material existence – the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya.

Thank you for sharing with all of us your divine pastimes, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your fallen and aspiring servant,

Daśaratha Dāsa

Nara Devī Dāsī

My very first contact with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, occurred in Hawaii, while under the care of, at the time, Sai. He had us studying and reading your books every day. Then, in Brooklyn, New York, I remember seeing a painting of you in the temple room. You appeared very stern, and very serious. I would think of the word “heavy,” as you are heavy with knowledge of *Vedānta*, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa.

Not too soon after, you came to visit us in Brooklyn, at that Henry Street Temple. I then saw you for the first time ever, in person, and knew instantly that I had finally “come home,” and that my life would finally become complete and sublime, and all my questions answered. The love I felt from you for all of us, your sons and daughters, literally knocked me off my feet, and it seemed my feet did not touch the ground for days after.

I received my first initiation from you, along with hundreds of others, on that visit you made. I made my promises, with full intention of keeping them for the rest of my life. You chanted on my beads, and gave me my name. I knew then that my spiritual quest was over, and that by taking shelter of your lotus feet, my life would become perfectly situated.

Now, decades later, I look back on the life I’ve lived since. Somehow or other, I have kept you in my heart. I have stumbled and fallen, getting back up again, and remembering you, and because of you, I have kept on trying. I know I do not appreciate you anywhere near as much as I should. I make complex the very simple instructions you gave me to become happy in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I am a fool of fools, yet, you have given me hope, and love, even in my darkest hours, and I know you have not left me alone. Perhaps in

some future lifetime, if by some miracle I can take birth where you are once again spreading this message of love of God to anyone who will receive it, I can make a little more progress in my efforts to please you, by following your instructions, and by trying myself to enlighten others about this wonderful process of helping them to remember their dormant love for Kṛṣṇa. I feel that if I did fully understand what you have done for me, I would be unable to stay in this body. I have full faith that if I can somehow or other stay in the association of your blessed devotees, and if I can persevere in my desire to please you, perhaps in some future lifetime I can achieve in a minuscule way these desires I have deep in my heart.

You are *jagad-guru*, the most beloved of Govinda. I am eternally indebted to you. My most urgent prayer is that in some way, and in time, I can begin to repay that debt.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, all glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga! All Glories to your most precious devotees, of whose mercy I beseech, so that someday I can also be one of your precious devotees.

Nara Devī Dāsī

Nārāyaṇī Devī Dāsī

I remember Śrīla Prabhupāda during my day in the same way that many people here in Vṛndāvana remember Kṛṣṇa. They think of Kṛṣṇa's *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā*, His pastimes during the different hours of the day. I think of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā*—what he did during the different hours of the day.

For many years Śrīla Prabhupāda would rise at 1 am to translate *Śrī mad-Bhāgavatam*. Hari Śauri writes:

One of the professors asked him how long it had taken him to complete the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, especially wondering when he found time to write. Prabhupāda told him it took a year and a half to complete the seventeen volumes and explained his schedule. "I write in the night. I go to bed at half past ten, and I get up at half past twelve. Then I finish my

chanting, if there is any balance, and then I begin dictating. And the morning they take it and type it. So this dictaphone is always with me, wherever I go, so my writing book is not stopped. Maybe few pages, but something is there daily. Little drops of water wears the stone.” TD 2. 7 Toronto 76

I pray that the purports of *Bhāgavatam* will remain in my heart to guide me throughout my day.

At 5am Śrīla Prabhupāda would chant his *japa*, sometimes sitting, sometimes walking, chanting slowly and clearly. I pray I may chant with attention, avoiding offenses.

At 6am Śrīla Prabhupāda would go on his walk, chanting, debating, enlightening, observing the world through the eyes of *śāstra*. He would return for greeting the Deities at 7am and then give *Bhāgavatam* class. I remember one time at Deity greeting how pleased he was with the flower decoration of Rādhā-Govinda in Calcutta, with dozens of lotus flowers, roses, *mogra* and *campa* garlands. I pray I may always serve Rādhā-Govinda under his direction so he may again be pleased.

After breakfast Śrīla Prabhupāda would meet guests and manage his worldwide ISKCON. As Śrīla Prabhupāda was always in ISKCON, so I pray to always be with him in ISKCON in the association of devotees.

After lunch Śrīla Prabhupāda would rest, then meet guests again from 4-9:30 pm. At night, taking rest at 10 or 11pm, he would then rise at 12:30 or 1am to again translate. I pray that I can always remember Śrīla Prabhupāda throughout my day. I beg his mercy to continue my devotional service, even through the difficult times. When problems arise, I try to remember his words about the importance of cooperation with devotees, knowing that if we can work together, this will surely please him and we will again join him in the spiritual world.

Here are some excerpts about Śrīla Prabhupāda’s schedule:

From Hari Śauri:

6:00 a.m. — Wash, brush teeth, and take Āyurvedic medicine.

6:30 - 7:30 a.m. — Morning walk.

7:30 - 8:30 a.m. — Greet the Deities, *guru-pūjā*, then *Śrī mad-Bhāgavatam* lecture from the Seventh Canto.

9:00 - 9:30 a.m. — Breakfast of fruits and *chīra*.

9:45 - 11:15 a.m. — Rest on roof for an hour and then meet people (usually by appointment).

11:15 - 1:15 p.m. — Massage with oil.

1:15 - 1:45 p.m. — Bathe.

1:45 - 2:30 p.m. — Lunch *prasādam*.

2:30 - 3:00 p.m. — Sit in room or chant *japa*.

3:00 - 4:00 p.m. — Rest.

4:00 - 5:00 p.m. — Meet specific people, or chant.

5:00 - 6:30 p.m. — Give public *darśana*.

6:30 - 9:30 p.m. — Meet public or senior devotees, GBC business or just chat.

9:30 p.m. — Take hot milk, massage and rest.

12:00 - 1:00 a.m. — Rise and translate.

5:00 a.m. — Light rest or *japa*.

From Satsvarūpa Mahārāja:

Similarly, Śrīla Prabhupāda's daily schedule is well-known to his devotees. We can meditate on Prabhupāda at different times of the day. For example, Prabhupāda rose around 1 a.m. to write. He took *prasādam* at specific times, chanted his Gāyatrī at specific times, and had scheduled meeting times for guests. He took a noon bath and a little nap afterwards, and he was usually prepared to lecture in the evening. As we go through our own day's activities, we can medi-

tate on Prabhupāda's schedule and even try to do some of the things he did at the times he did them. That will fill our minds with remembrance of Prabhupāda. PM 4. 4. 5

SDG was asked:

“Could you give some suggestions how an ISKCON manager can keep clear consciousness?” I started speaking about Prabhupāda's routine and how he kept his schedule. I said Prabhupāda was a liberated soul, but he also acted like a very strict *sādhaka*. He kept the temple schedule and chanted *japa* every day. Then just by glancing at Prabhupāda on the *vyāsāsana*, I felt inspired to describe his daily schedule.

He took rest around 10 p.m. and got up around 1:00 a.m. to translate *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. After that he chanted *japa*, then went on a walk, then came back and gave the *Bhāgavatam* class. He did everything at specific times during the day. He didn't easily stray from that schedule in the name of an emergency. We might do that, “Oh, I didn't chant my rounds today. I didn't do any reading,” but Prabhupāda rarely did. Prabhupāda's disciples knew that he did more management than anyone, and yet they were astounded by how he could keep following the spiritual schedule. The atmosphere in Bombay when they were fighting for the land and consulting many lawyers was intense. Usually in the evening, the devotees would meet with Prabhupāda and discuss their strategy for the law case. Right in the midst of all these managerial discussions, Prabhupāda would look at his watch and tell them it was time for class and *kīrtana*. The devotees would think, “How could Prabhupāda possibly go to class and *kīrtana* in the midst of all these heavy events?” But he did. PM 4. 6:

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray to always remember your activities during the moments of my days.

Your servant,

Nārāyaṇī Devī Dāsī

Pañcaratna Dāsa

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

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

You told of two birds
My body, the tree
My experiences, the fruits
One bird is me

The other, my friend
Watching and waiting
Till I tire of my folly
And turn to Him

Overcome by illusion
My friend I couldn't see
Till embodied in you
He came before me

By your words I awoke
You turned me around
From darkness to light
From lost to found

With you as my guide
To the Lord in my heart
Eternal bondage now over
Now a new start

My master, my friend
No kindness more great
Than you've shown to me
A foolish ingrate

To keep me in service
You've discounted each fault
The smallest good quality
By your love you exalt

Now each day dawns brighter
Each step takes me nearer

To life and love supreme
Under your shelter

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda

Your unworthy servant,

Pañcaratna Dāsa

Sucaryā Devī Dāsī

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*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.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you kindly continue to inspire and educate us through your translations of Vedic *sāstras* – *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Nectar of Devotion*, *Nectar of Instruction*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and your references to the many other Vaiṣṇava literatures. I am forever grateful to you my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda. I really enjoy reading all your books and especially your *Introduction to the Bhagavad-gītā*. You have written a concise summary and given us more nectar throughout the verses and purports of all your books. What a great gift of transcendental knowledge you have given us!

By your grace, in 1970, the devotees were chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in downtown Vancouver, Canada... I heard the sound of the *kīrtana* from a distance. I asked my friend, “What is that sound?” It was so unusual – unique and attracting... she said, “Oh! That’s the Hare

Kṛṣṇas' singing". We came upon the group singing and dancing and playing musical instruments... They looked so divinely beautiful. I tried to ask some questions but they were all singing. One man gave me a *BTG* and asked for a donation which I gladly gave.

I returned to school in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. While in a bookstore downtown (1971), I heard once again that beautiful sound of the divine music of the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees. This time, I was determined to ask them exactly what they were doing singing on the streets (all over Canada it seemed) first in Vancouver, now in Hamilton – with bald heads, pony tails, and sheet-like clothing. I waited... quietly watching their movements. They danced in unison... clinking cymbals and drums in a sweet rhythm. "Who are they", I wondered? I hoped they weren't aliens. If they were, they had a definite sense of goodness about them.

One gentleman saw me watching and walked over. I quickly asked, "What are you doing?" He answered, "We are singing the names of God". I replied, "That's great... but why do you look so unconventional?". He replied smiling, "Our spiritual master has asked us to come out on the streets and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa."

"Well – he must be someone quite special if you are doing all this for him."

I purchased a *Bhagavad-gītā*... it was the first edition, soft bound with Lord Viṣṇu on a bluish cover. They invited me to visit the temple. It was quite close to my home. After a few months of visiting the Hamilton Temple and continuing my college classes, they asked if I wanted to live in the temple. I told the devotees Kṛṣṇa consciousness is great but I was not ready for initiation. I explained to my father that I'd found the meaning to life... it was in the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement and could I live in the temple? He said, "It's just a phase... you may not still be a Hare Kṛṣṇa when you are 50." As a dear father he gave his approval, as long as I continued to attend college. Dad said, "You are my daughter, I will support you even if I don't understand your decisions."

I remember, so fondly, as you translated your books Śrīla Prabhupāda, and we would receive cases of your newly printed books. *Easy Journey to Other Planets*, *Śrī Isopanisad*, *Nectar of Instruction*, *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, *Kṛṣṇa* book and then each consecutive volume of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Then the 17 volumes of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Thank you for all these books that are teaching us how to live a life to please you.

Thank you for the kind lessons you always teach... the most intense lesson was my first day on *harināma-saṅkīrtana* in Hamilton, Ontario, 1971. I had recently joined the temple, and was attending college classes from Monday to Friday, helping in the kitchen on the weekends and decorating our temple altar with flowers. Our altar held a picture of Śrī Pañca-tattva, Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrī la Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. One Saturday morning, the temple president, Dharmarāja Prabhu said, “You must go out with the *harināma* party today.”

“Oh no, I can’t do that Prabhu... I like Kṛṣṇa, but don’t want to go out on the streets chanting”... I knew all my friends would be downtown on a Saturday. He replied firmly, “You must join the *saṅkīrtana* party. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu will surely give you His full blessings.” I wasn’t sure what that meant. He continued, “Just meditate on the lotus feet of the devotees on the *saṅkīrtana* party and everything will be okay”. I went out reluctantly... my very first *harināma*. We wove gracefully through the crowded street. HG Uttama-śloka Prabhu, was the temple commander and *saṅkīrtana* leader. I kept my eyes fixed on the devotees shoes, praying for Lord Caitanya’s mercy. I looked up and saw one of my friends, but she avoided my eyes... looked away then crossed the street so as not to meet up with me. That hurt. I made a note to pray for the strength in my own life to never be a “fair weather friend”, as it is painful.

Then the most amazing thing happened on that first *harināma*... the sky above began to clear... as if curtains were opening. My friend, and all these people, were conditioned souls, walking aimlessly on the street... shopping, working or socializing... they were covered by illusion and suffering. They were under the grips of material nature... facing the cycle of repeated birth and death. The real happiness... the really joyfulness was right here in the *saṅkīrtana* party... dancing and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa with the devotees of the Lord. Wow... this is Lord Caitanya’s mercy. Much later, I read a prayer in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

‘May the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the form of Lord Śrī Caitanya bestow His causeless mercy upon us. His smiling glance at once drives away all the bereavements of the world, and His very words enliven the auspicious creepers of devotion by expand-

ing their leaves. Taking shelter of His lotus feet invokes transcendental love of God at once.' (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 3. 63)

In those early days, our main communication with the other temples was via telephone, sometimes a fax and of course snail mail. Email, skype and text messaging were just not discovered yet. The devotees would excitedly phone the other nearby temples with news of Śrīla Prabhupāda... what he had said on morning walks, what recipes he had taught the devotees, where he was traveling to and the book distribution of BTGs. The book scores were really important – we were all intensely competing to distribute the most BTGs. Of course LA always won. Śrīla Prabhupāda said this is very important work and we wanted to help Śrīla Prabhupāda in his mission. This was our life. Each day we attended *mangala-ārati* at 4:30am, had a full morning program, a great *prasādam* breakfast, then out on *harināma* come rain or shine. We returned for a delicious lunch of *dāl*, *capātīs*, rice, *sabji* and nectar drink, then back out again all afternoon distributing BTGs and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Every evening we had a *Bhagavad-gītā* class and when *Kṛṣṇa* book was published, we would read a chapter at night with hot milk and *puris*, or popcorn with ghee. We did this for a year, and then some of us were sent to Dallas for Deity service.

You are always present with us Śrīla Prabhupāda; directly in your temple *mūrti*, and here in Dallas, you are dressed so attentively each day by many devotees in our community. You are personally present in your books, videos, MP3s, in your instructions, in your voice – that is filled with pure love for your beautiful Kṛṣṇa. You are in the hearts of your dear devotees. You have given power of attorney to those great souls who have seriously taken your teachings, the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu, to heart. They in turn are educating and inspiring so many souls, uplifting them to the “highest perfectional platform of life” that you always speak of in your books and have written of in your thousands of personal letters. You are giving us the secret to success in life. “Those who follow this imperishable path of devotional service and who completely engage themselves with faith, making Me the Supreme goal, are very, very dear to Me”. (*Bg.* 12. 20)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have written clear instructions on how to continue in our devotional life. I am eternally grateful to you. I pray to give this life to you, to somehow please you although I am unqualified and fallen.

“Especially in this Age of Kali, *saṅkīrtana* alone is sufficient. If the members of our temples in the different parts of the world simply continue *saṅkīrtana* before the Deity, especially before Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, they will remain perfect. There is no need of any other performances. Nevertheless, to keep oneself clean in habits and mind, Deity worship and other regulative principles are required. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says that although *saṅkīrtana* is sufficient for the perfection of life, the *arcana*, or worship of the Deity in the temple, must continue in order that the devotees may stay clean and pure. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura therefore recommended that one follow both processes simultaneously. We strictly follow his principle of performing Deity worship and *saṅkīrtana* along parallel lines. This we should continue. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 6. 3. 25, purport)

I humbly thank all your wonderful disciples, grand-disciples, followers, friends and well-wishers for their kindness, friendship, advice and instructions. Praying for the good fortune of always meditating on the dust of their lotus feet and being able to serve them with practical and valuable service. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving personal instructions on how to construct the Śrī Māyāpur Vedic Planetarium—this beautiful place will inspire the whole world to learn how to surrender to Kṛṣṇa with love and practical devotional service.

Your servant, your daughter,

Sucaryā Devī Dāsī

Saṅkarṣaṇa Dāsa Adhikārī

My dearest spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

How can we fathom our unlimited good fortune to have gotten the shelter of your lotus feet? It is not possible for us to even begin understanding the unlimited depth of our good fortune. You have rescued us from countless lifetimes of hell in the cycle of birth and death. How can we ever repay you for the unlimited mercy you

have causelessly bestowed upon us? It is not possible.

Personally, all I can do is beg that I may serve you forever and that I may never forget that I am the eternal disciple of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami. Whether I remain serving your mission for countless lifetimes in this material existence or I return to Goloka Vṛndāvana to serve you in my eternal *rasa* with Kṛṣṇa, my humble prayer is that you bless me to always remember that you are my spiritual master, that it was you who saved me from unbearable misery and restored me to my original pure identity as a servant of Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on 17th December 1973 in Los Angeles, you gave us, your disciples, the most awesome order:

“Just become perfect in the understanding of this science and become *guru* and deliver the whole world.”

We know that we are completely incompetent and unfit for accomplishing such a herculean task. But at the same time we know that with the order of the spiritual master comes the full potency to successfully carry it out. We also know that it is only you who are sufficiently empowered to do this. Therefore we can only pray that you will kindly empower us as your instruments to fully assist you in this unlimitedly sublime world-delivering mission.

Your humble servant always begging for your foot dust,

Saṅkarṣaṇa Dāsa Adhikārī

Nava-yauvana Dāsa

Śrīla Prabhupāda in Tehran by Nava-yauvana Dāsa

I arrived in Tehran with my devotee wife, Mañjarī, in September, 1973. We went there to join my friend, Ātreya Ṛṣi and his wife, Vidhi-bhakti, to open a new preaching center, the first in the Middle East. Prabhupāda was scheduled to visit the next month, in October, 1973, so when we got there we immediately started to prepare for his arrival. At the last minute, Prabhupāda cancelled the visit,

due to legal problems with the land at Juhu. We were disappointed, but he promised us he would visit at the next available chance. That chance came in early March, 1975.

At that time there were four of us, plus Parivrājākācārya Swami in Tehran. Parivrāj took *sannyāsa* when he was 21 and arrived in Tehran when he was 22 or 23, a very young *sannyāsī*. He and I went to the airport to meet Prabhupāda. Ātreya went inside the airport, I waited on the sidewalk as the “greeter,” and Parivrāj drove the car. I remember Prabhupāda coming out of the airport by himself — which was a bit of a shock to me. I was holding a garland the ladies had made. I carefully placed it around his neck and offered my obeisances on the ground — something we never did in public in Tehran. As I was getting up, he said “Jaya” in a deep voice. He didn’t ask me my name or make any small talk. I told him that the car was coming, and we waited in silence for the car and for the others to clear customs and come out of the airport. We gave Prabhupāda a large room on the ground floor of the villa (a house with a garden and swimming pool and servants’ quarters in the back), that which Ātreya was renting and we were using as both temple and living quarters. We improvised a *vyāsāsana* with a comfortable chair covered with Mañjarī’s silk wedding sari (the nicest piece of cloth we had). The guru-pujā consisted of a few of us singing and one of us offering āratī to Prabhupāda. The *Bhāgavatam* class was very, very short — two or three minutes. Everything was informal. It felt like a family: our guru with four young householders, a young *sannyāsī* and a baby.

Prabhupāda stayed for three days. The only opulence we gave him were two very expensive Persian carpets for the floor of his room. It was still cold in Tehran in early March, so he mostly stayed in his room except for a short morning walk in a park near the mountains north of the city. Then we returned to the house for guru-pujā and class. He was very mellow with us — never any orders or complaints,... only encouragement to continue our strategy of “preaching to the intelligent class.” His door was always open to us. We would go into his room to bring guests to him or just sit with him at all times of the day and evening.

One time I came in with a small group of Indian ladies who were some of our early contacts. He spoke to them in Hindi, so I could not follow the conversation. As we got up to leave, one of the ladies stayed seated and said to him in English that she had a question

that she wanted to ask him in private. Prabhupāda agreed but indicated to me with his eyes and a hand gesture that I should sit back down again... He did not want to be left alone with the lady.

Prabhupāda appeared peaceful and sometimes jolly in Tehran. One time I walked by his room and saw him laughing with Ātreya, who was helping him put on his *sannyāsa* luṅgī. Another time, I brought in some flower vases with fresh flowers and clumsily spilled water from one of the vases on the expensive carpet right in front of him. I was embarrassed but needed to explain that I had to dry up as much of the spilled water as possible; otherwise it would ruin the expensive carpet. He said “*Ācchā?*” and seemed interested in the subject of carpets, relieving me of my distress at disturbing him by my carelessness.

As for deeper realizations, Prabhupāda’s visit consolidated my faith in him as my guru. He was always my guru, but he was also the Founder-*Ācārya* of the world wide movement known as ISKCON. As the movement grew, access to Prabhupāda had become restricted. However, in Tehran, we were in a very different environment. We were semi-underground in our preaching, and we were not so involved with the external happenings in ISKCON. Prabhupāda embraced us as such and gave us his personal encouragement. He made us feel not like we were an insignificant part of his large organization... but that we were intimately connected with him and with his life mission. His caring presence and his ease around us touched me deeply.

We had to wait until August, 1976 for his next visit. By then, the temple population had doubled or tripled... there were ten or twelve adults and two or three kids, including my own son, who was a baby at the time. Things had become more temple-like but still intimate,... and I was very excited about his visit. That was good luck for me... because Prabhupāda always reciprocated with everyone according to their mood. When he arrived I became like a fly on the wall of his room. I managed to spend as much time with him as possible. Some mornings he called me into his room at 5am, to continue discussing something he had been talking about the previous evening. We went on morning walks. Some days he decided to sit in the garden rather than walk. ..(He had a cold and was not feeling so well,... although that did not interfere with his powerful preaching energy.) After guru-pujā and a very short *Bhāgavatam* class, I would sit with him in his room throughout the morning... and again

in the afternoon and until late in the evening..., listening to him,... telling him of our experiences meeting people in Tehran, feeding him news clippings about this or that subject, and introducing him to a constant flow of guests as they arrived. By that time many outside people were starting to become interested, so it was more intense than his first visit. There were more devotees and more visitors to share the space with, but I felt as if I was in Prabhupāda's "zone," able to focus on him and not get distracted. In many ways I could appreciate his perfection. One time I told him that everything he said made perfect sense to me,... that just by his speaking he managed to clear all my doubts. It was a crude attempt to glorify him... but it was sincere and he accepted it.

Things went on like that for seven or eight days, and when it was time for him to leave, I accompanied him to the airport with several devotees. But when we got to the airport, the other devotees went here and there to get the boarding passes and check the luggage, and I was left alone in a room with Prabhupāda for ten to fifteen minutes. We sat on two folding chairs next to each other in a shabby waiting area at the old airport in Tehran. He was silent. There did not seem to be a need to say anything, so I also kept quiet. He was in a grave mood... a different mood from in the house. Finally one of the devotees came to help him go to a bus that was waiting on the tarmac. I had a pair of *karatālas* with me, so I started to softly sing the praṇāma prayers as Prabhupāda got up to leave. I stood there singing as he walked away. I never imagined at the time, but that was how I said goodbye to him. It was the last time I saw him in this world.

Time has washed away most of the details of my moments with Śrī la Prabhupāda in Tehran, and in the many other locations where I saw him and sat at his feet: Detroit, Boston, Brooklyn, New Vṛndāvana, L.A., Calcutta, Māyāpur, Vṛndāvana and New Delhi. I was not mature enough at that age to catch more of his inner mood. Yet, he has managed to stay in my heart all these years, not because of any devotion or knowledge or proper obedience on my part, but due to his compassion — perhaps a result of those extremely fortunate moments of contact with him. The impressions of his presence deeply penetrated my heart. They have kept me from needing to look beyond him for spiritual guidance in these later years, despite my relative isolation. I have met many Vaiṣṇavas since Prabhupāda left us, but I never felt the need to accept any as my śikṣā-guru. I don't judge or belittle my godbrothers who took

shelter of other sādhus, but I certainly think that no one I ever met in this life comes remotely close to the qualities shown to me by Prabhupāda.

Unfortunately it' has also been my personal experience that after his departure, the organization Śrīla Prabhupāda founded for us to live in, did not follow his inner mood and his spirit of compassion. After Śrīla Prabhupāda departed, rather than humbly follow his instructions to cooperatively “boil the milk, ” the movement became contaminated with personal ambition. We mistakenly thought that the spiritual śakti Prabhupāda had imparted in us was ours, rather than his. Amongst the disciples that Prabhupāda had invested the most power in, the leaders whom he had made responsible to guide the society, many demanded that their godbrothers follow them rather than we have us collectively follow Prabhupāda's instructions to purify ourselves through hearing and chanting. Many sincere devotees who did not obey these demands of their godbrothers were shamed and humiliated, marginalized or driven out. Of course, there are various reasons why the vast majority of Prabhupāda's disciples left the movement. But the misappropriation of the legacy left by Prabhupāda to all of his disciples was a significant contributing factor in the attrition of Prabhupāda's disciples from ISKCON. Over the years, corrections and reforms were attempted, but the root problems were never adequately addressed. Ironically, some of the reformers were co-opted and joined the status quo. Meanwhile many other sincere disciples left the movement.

Rather than inviting open discussion amongst all of Prabhupāda's disciples, the movement seemed to core problems were institutionalized core problems into a corporate structure. One result is that in today's ISKCON the opinions of older devotees who left the movement are unsolicited and seem largely unwelcome. And with the exception of a few disciples who stayed on as managers, teachers or leaders one rarely meets a disciple of Prabhupāda in any of Prabhupāda's temples. An intelligent newcomer would naturally wonder: what happened to all of Prabhupāda's disciples?

Māyā is very strong, but Kṛṣṇa consciousness is stronger. Prabhupāda's disciples have not forgotten Prabhupāda – nor has Prabhupāda has forgotten them. On the contrary, anyone who was ever touched by Prabhupāda's powerful mercy, his remarkable kindness and his super- potent preaching still remembers him. To this day, Prabhupāda is acting to purify all of his disciples in various

ways and myriad places, on this planet and in many other worlds. It is my belief that he will continue to do so, until each of us has safely returned to our eternal abode, even if that takes some of us millions of lifetimes.

In this higher sense, none of Prabhupāda's disciples have been disenfranchised. The real franchise is the eternal service connection between the empowered guru and his sincere disciple. It is not the external institution but the heart of Prabhupāda that lives forever. And his disciples will live with him.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Nava-yauvana Dāsa

Vāṇinātha Dāsa Brahmācārī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to your lotus feet, which are cooling to the misery-laden conditioned souls burning in the fire of material life.

Thank you for *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *The Nectar of Devotion*, *tulasī-pūjā*, the morning program, *bhagavat-prasāda*, the *mahā-mantra*, the Deities of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and Gaura-Nitāi, and Jagannātha, Subhadrā, and Balarāma, *hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana*, book distribution, and all the opportunities provided by your goodness for Vaiṣṇava association all around the world.

That life can actually be full and satisfying without becoming implicated within the cycle of repeated birth, old age, disease and death, is so new to our minds that we can still only begin to appreciate what a "Matchless Gift" you have provided by your magnanimous preaching of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Please reveal to us more and more what we can accomplish for spreading your glories all over the world by way of our repaying our eternal debt to you.

Patita-pāvana Śrīla Prabhupāda! Haribol! Hare Kṛṣṇa!

A thousand times, the humble servant of your servants,

Vāṇinātha Dāsa Brahmācārī

Advaita Ācārya Dāsa and Ārcya Devī Dāsī

The Path of Destruction

The path of destruction has been obliterated simply by your divine presence and association

The future brings us hope in the form of the holy names

Darkness hides its face when you begin to speak

Just as when the sun rises everything is revealed

Your mercy is limitless. From the highest to the lowest of souls, all are able to receive it

Dear Prabhupāda, please look kindly upon us poor conditioned souls

Please deliver us from harm's way so we may be with our Lord, our God Kṛṣṇa to stay

The most fallen servants,

Advaita Ācārya Dāsa and Ārcya Devī Dāsī

Most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to your unalloyed and dynamic devotional service to your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and to Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* mission!

The more I struggle to understand and implement and share your instructions, the more my life becomes sublime. Not necessarily easier, but sublime and relishable. What you did in your life for us, and all souls in this world, was far from easy, and yet you showed us how even adversity can be accepted as beneficial.

I see how I avoid, or deny or repress, aspects of my conditioning which seem difficult or distasteful or painful, which Kṛṣṇa does not just take away, but apparently leaves for me to deal with by taking further shelter of you. You said that human life is a life of responsibility, and Kṛṣṇa, in *Bhagavad-gītā*, tells Arjuna to consider everything He has said, and then to make up his own mind.

Yes, Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Doer, Master and Friend, but He appreciates and wants our independent, individual, conscious choice to give our energy and love to Him. He does not force us to follow and love you or Him. You stress that blind faith and obedience is useless; and you said that we love you, because you love us. We have the choice, eternally, to give you and Kṛṣṇa our love, or not.

I find that Kṛṣṇa is constantly giving me the opportunity to make that choice, to take that responsibility. As I gradually apply and understand your practical and perfect process of surrender, more and more, I experience that my devotional advancement hinges on how much I choose to engage the difficult or painful parts of my conditioned self in your service, instead of selfishly. I am gradually taking full responsibility, instead of avoiding the pain or adversity.

For instance, I see terrible fear within myself, and my habit is to act according to it, instead of according to your teaching. For example, if I speak out, even appropriately, about apparent injustices, abuse or deviations, within your movement, I may risk being criticised, or rejected, even ostracised. If I am too attached to, and fearful of los-

ing, the societal profit, adoration or distinction, or the respect or influence, arising from being your *dīkṣā* disciple, I may give in to that fear. My old habit was to take the “path of least resistance” – acting according to my fear – instead of choosing the path of integrity, truth and justice.

If I let that fear remain my master, I am thus choosing to give up my faith in your and Kṛṣṇa’s direction to depend fully on Him, and be thus protected, and released from the bondage of that fear.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am committed to becoming fully faithful in you alone, and yet I see that there is a battle going on within me. How deep is my faith? When it comes to the crunch, and the weight of my old habit, the fear and the crazy mind’s conviction are pushing, pushing, pushing, where do I turn? Do I take the “easy route”, stay in my familiar “comfort zone”, or do I remember who I really am: an eternal, glorious, beloved spirit soul, the servant of the servant of your divine instructions, a soldier in your ‘saṅkīrtana’ army... ? Do I remember you and fight!?!?!?

I sometimes hear from godbrothers that, “Oh, if I speak out about that situation, than I may become the brunt of negativity...” or “Yes, that situation or conflict should be resolved, but I can’t do anything about it .. I am powerless...” And that is what my own mind tells me, too! But then I remember your example, and your instructions. If you had said that – in response to the instructions of your beloved Prabhupāda, or in the face of the indifference or obstruction from some of your godbrothers, or in facing serious conflicts and deviations within your ISKCON – where would we be now?

I see this kind of weakness, confusion, deviation within myself, and all around: clouds of darkness and fear and confusion and chaos; and I wonder, what can I do? In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.28.48, purport) you answer [my emphasis added] “... The main business of human society is to think of the Supreme Personality of Godhead at all times, to become His devotees, to worship the Supreme Lord and to bow down before Him. The ācārya, the authorized representative of the Supreme Lord, establishes these principles, but when he disappears, things once again become disordered. The perfect disciples of the ācārya try to relieve the situation by sincerely following the instructions of the spiritual master. At the present moment, practically the entire world is afraid of rogues and non-devotees; therefore, this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is start-

ed to save the world from irreligious principles. Everyone should cooperate with this movement in order to bring about actual peace and happiness in the world.”

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, I sorely want to become fixed in the face of these adversities. Please continue to bless and support me in making the choices by which I assist in expanding your glories and your mission. Help me to choose my courage, and conviction and confidence in you, instead of my fear, my attachment, my lethargy. I firmly believe that such surrender to you is the only way to save your institution, and thus the world, from their terrible state of disarray.

I am certainly far, far from being as faithful – the “sold-out” disciple – as you are, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but your instructions are never limited by my old habits or stubbornness, or disqualification (“ahaituky apratihātā...”). Of course, if I continue the habit of choosing to ignore your teachings and example, and keep myself arrogantly independent, thinking that on my own I can do anything substantial for you, I will remain lost, confused, frustrated. Kṛṣṇa will not force me to accept the unmotivated and uninterrupted nature of devotional service, and the attendant satisfaction – utter and complete. That depends on my choice!

Kṛṣṇa is giving me the freedom to choose: to act for Him, or for *māyā*, at every moment. It is easy to say, “Let Kṛṣṇa do it”, or “it’s all Kṛṣṇa’s mercy, it’s all up to Him”. It’s easy to avoid the responsibility of our commitments, and take the less frightening, cowardly, “way” out. However, as you say, Śrīla Prabhupāda, Kṛṣṇa did not tell Arjuna just to lie down in the chariot, and sleep, and He, Kṛṣṇa, would fight the war. No, He said – and you instructed – and showed us how to stand and fight, remembering, and dependent upon Kṛṣṇa; fully enthusiastic, deeply convinced and committed to the process; and leaving the result up to the Lord.

I often wondered why I feel so uncomfortable when, if I perceive things as amiss, but do not speak up or do anything about it. Then, recently, Kṛṣṇa showed me something from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which really struck me.

“A wise person should not enter an assembly if he knows the participants there are committing acts of impropriety. And if, having entered such an assembly, he fails to speak the truth, speaks falsely

or pleads ignorance, he will certainly incur sin.” (S.B. 10.44.10)

Of course, I may be mistaken about my perceptions, neither should I expect utopia in this world, but I must act in faith to the standards and principles you taught and exemplified.

By your profound kindness and tolerance of this fallen, rebellious fool, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am gradually becoming more aware of this wonderful freedom Kṛṣṇa is offering me, along with the confidence and strength to make the difficult choice between my selfish fear and my innate spiritual courage. I beg that you continue to bless me with the association, clarity and courage to make such choices that progress the uncontaminated broadcasting of your glorious and perfectly compassionate example. Somehow, mystically, you are increasing my awareness of the importance, nay necessity, of discerning these dualities within me, and developing new habits. Habits by which I give up choosing my selfish fear, anger, attachment, lust and lethargy, and rather transform them by engaging them in your service.

Your fallen, but grateful and determined servant,

Ātmānanda Dāsa

Goṣṭhabihārī Dāsa and Mahāviṣṇu-priya Devī Dāsī

Dearest divine spiritual father, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

How wonderful to have another opportunity to reflect upon all that you mean to us; all that you have given to us; all that you have done for us, who are the most fallen, being always distracted by the material elements. For all the true wealth that continually blesses our lives each day because of you, we are so grateful. You have positioned us on the royal road to spiritual perfection. All we must do is follow your instructions.

All of our good fortune was created solely by your determination

only. Your sacrifices, your strength of character and strong desire to serve your dearest Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, allows us to humbly stand before you today, bathed in the sweetest memories of being with you in America (and other places on this planet). These memories of you will last us lifetimes. Recalling them now is as if they happened only yesterday. Memories which are so indelible, ever fresh, become sweeter with time. Remembrances, carved on our hearts always, bringing joy and new revelations when devotees repeat them to each other. As we mature, we are gaining more insight into your true greatness. We are getting clearer understanding of the magnitude of your devotion and the simple sincerity of your heart.

I was 18 years old when I read the *Newsweek* cover article about the hippie movement on the East and West coasts of the US. In the coverage of the East Coast, there was one paragraph about the Swami in the Bowery who was giving out freely, a mystical *mantra* that could change your life. I was so captivated by that one, short paragraph with your picture on the streets of the lower East side. The picture displayed an older, kindly gentleman of slender frame, with a most serious facial expression. I instantly knew I would have to find you! But, how? I was as far away from NY City as anyone could be in America. Growing up in Hawaii, I was thousands of miles away from the West Coast of the United States!! I had no money or means of getting to NY.

Still, I prayed that God would somehow let me find you. The *mantra* was written in the article, so I immediately tried to memorize it. I thought it was a tongue twister at first. I wrote it on an index card. Then I taped the card above my head, onto the ceiling, so that when lying down on the top bunk in my dorm room, I could easily see the *mantra* and remember it. I also wrote it in acrylics in large letters, on my sliding closet door. I put a note on my dorm room door stating that anyone wanting entrance had to recite the *mantra* first! And I enforced it.

Slowly, I noticed that my room had become more peaceful. It was now a place of calm and I was able to concentrate better. It seemed more like a place of meditation than a room in a girl's dormitory. I continued my made up rituals, but felt continually pulled forward in wanting more spirituality in my life.

After college, I began teaching but found myself lost, bewildered and uncertain about my future. My parents' impending divorce

forced me to question everything I held dear. What was the purpose of this life that I had been given? What is my relationship with, or can I have a relationship with God?

You answered all of my questions completely and thoroughly in your *Bhagavad-gītā*, *As It Is*. I moved into the Honolulu temple in April of 1975, determined to have a fuller experience of real spiritual life. Then you personally arrived, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that May of 1975. What an amazing experience to have your personal *darśana*, like the fulfillment of a long awaited dream. The Swami from the Bowery had come to me, to where I was! What great fortune this was! A friend told me that if you tossed a block of wood with a knot hole in it, into the ocean, the chances of a turtle surfacing from the bottom, coming up with his head through the knot hole, was akin to the same statistical chance of meeting a pure devotee of the Lord in this lifetime. How very rare this was!

You stepped into our lives and everything changed. It was as if time stood still. Wherever you traveled, this wonderful, glowing bubble of spiritual energy encapsulated you as well as all of us. We were all transformed by your presence and your energy. What a force of nature you commanded in that small frame! (I imagined you so much taller). We were so blissful, enthusiastic and always clamoring for the nectar that flowed from your lips in every word that you spoke, and from every pore of your body as you moved about us. We were transfixed by your purity, focus, breadth of wisdom, your gracefulness, kindness and every single, gesture that you made. We could truly meditate upon you and become totally satisfied.

You told us so many amazing things that we thought were inconceivable that anyone would even know. Once, you said in a lecture, that there are millions of universes and in every universe there is *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. All of them are different as Kṛṣṇa has different pastimes in each universe. But in every *Bhāgavatam*, is the story of this ISKCON movement, where the *mlecchas* and *yavanas* are blissfully chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. You brought the culture of *bhakti* face to face with us. You empowered us to see first-hand the purity of your love, so distinct and profound, that it left us wide-eyed and speechless.

Once you were on the *vyāsāsana* speaking and you stopped mid sentence, displaying the symptoms of someone struck by awe and reverence. You didn't move but continued to stare into space for

some time. No one knew what to do. Someone started chanting and we all followed suit. After a few minutes, you came back to our plane of reality and quietly stated that Nārada Muni had just been present. Then you went on with your lecture, as if nothing extraordinary had happened. Meanwhile, our brains were spinning to try and comprehend what you had just said!

You displayed for us all the symptoms of someone thoroughly in love with Kṛṣṇa, whose 24 hour daily life had no other purpose but Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You wasted not a second of your precious time. Every sentence, every word, every thought, every wish was only about how to serve Kṛṣṇa better and how we should assist you in this by becoming determined in pursuit of this request.

You would awaken at midnight daily to translate the potentially ecstatic episodes of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. You showed us how dedicated to this translation service you were, being the first request of your Guru Mahārāja to you. You relished writing, hearing and speaking *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as your life's business. You would humbly say that Kṛṣṇa spoke every word to you, and you were just the vehicle. Feeling the great urgency for the world to have these books in English; artfully presented, scholarly researched and endorsed yet accessible to everyone; you diligently paid attention to every detail. On the order of your *guru*, you filled our vacant world with the truth and beauty residing in these revered spiritual literatures. You carefully entrusted this *sevā* to your disciples around the world, for translation into many languages. You beat the *brhad-mṛdaṅga* loudly, passing on this sacred service of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and giving us the opportunity to distribute these sacred, rare books in all parts of the globe.

I cannot imagine the kind of life I would have today had you not come into mine. Had you not been so submissive, begging to be the Lord's puppet, praying to Him to "Make me dance. Make me dance, as You like, " how bereft we would all have been. I did not understand then, as I do now that this material world is a place of suffering with danger at every step. That old age is one of the four great miseries of life; that daily, our breath is being stolen away and we are moving closer and faster toward our demise.

You spoke nothing but the Absolute Truth always. We are indebted to you for boarding the Jaladuta that auspicious day, and bravely traveling to this god forsaken land. How many lifetimes have we

played upon the wheel of *saṁsāra*? How long will it take for us to become fully realized and dedicated? Meditation upon you is an exercise in refocusing our commitment and centering our determination, which we are in need of oftener and oftener as we age.

Thank you, dear Gurudeva, for everything and for all manner of your blessings. While we are so undeserving, yet so fortunate, we beg to remain humbly, forever in your sublime service.

Your disciples,

Goṣṭhabihārī Dāsa and Mahāviṣṇu-priya Devī Dāsī

Caitanya Devī Dāsī

Jaya Prabhupāda!

(This is meant to be sung to the melody of Amazing Grace)

Your Divine Grace, savior of the human race.
I prostrate myself before thee.

I was so lost, until you appeared
in this Western hemisphere.

The holy names upon your lips
Sweet names of Lord Hari

The veil of darkness is no more
Sounds of the *Bhagavad-gītā* now roar

The pure words spoken from your lips
The nectar it flows so free

Should I become an insect, bird or fish,
your causeless mercy is my eternal wish

You taught we are all spirit soul
and Kṛṣṇa is our eternal friend

I pray and beg unto your lotus feet
our relationship will never end

The golden Age for ten thousand years – shining brightly
as the sun.

Gaurāṅga’s mercy of sweet *harer nāma*,
still resounding since your arrival first begun.

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

Caitanya Devī Dāsī

Govindamohinī Devī Dāsī

I offer my humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of my exalted Spiritual Master A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the great Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* in the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya-sampradāya.

It is very rare to have the association of such a great, pure unalloyed devotee of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s calibre. He is a *nitya-siddha* (eternally liberated soul) and *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*, a great personality, empowered by Kṛṣṇa for the purpose of preaching in this material world. Unless one is empowered, he cannot impart Kṛṣṇa consciousness into the heart of the conditional souls like Śrīla Prabhupāda did.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s character is faultless, and he taught His disciples by his own perfect example, He was always engaged in devotional service and NEVER fell down under any circumstances. He is a *mahā-bhāgavata* and has pure unalloyed love for Kṛṣṇa and can see Him eye to eye. He is transcendental to the modes of nature and was never affected by the mind’s demands, or the urge to speak anything other than *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, the actions of anger and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals. He is an eternal associate of Lord Caitanya and appeared in this material world to spread Lord Caitanya’s mission all over the world in order to deliver the

poor suffering conditioned souls. Because of His pure unalloyed love for Kṛṣṇa and spotless character, His transcendental books have so much spiritual potency. They have the power to change the hearts and minds of the living entities by giving them pure knowledge of Kṛṣṇa and of their eternal constitutional position as parts and parcels of the Supreme Lord.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was so kind and merciful; he came to the west at the advanced age of 70, even suffering a heart attack on board the ‘Jaladuta’ just to fulfil the order of his spiritual master to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the western countries. We can never repay Śrīla Prabhupāda for all the gifts He has given us, we are eternally in his debt. He worked so tirelessly, establishing the shelter of His ISKCON, preaching, accepting and training disciples, opening many temples all over the globe. He worked so hard translating and writing his transcendental books full of nectarine stories of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes and scholarly presenting the highest spiritual philosophy, which defeats the atheistic theories of the materialistic rascal scientists. He gave us the great *mantra* of deliverance, the “*mahā-mantra*”, chanting this *mantra* is the recommended method for God realization in this Age of Kali. This transcendental sound vibration cleans away the dust of material contamination accumulated over countless lifetimes in this material world and awakens our true spiritual identity. It is only by the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda, our spiritual master that we can become Kṛṣṇa conscious; only by pleasing the spiritual master can one make any spiritual advancement. It is not possible to become Kṛṣṇa conscious by one’s own efforts or by the instructions from higher authorities, one has to be blessed by the dust of the lotus of a pure devotee. When we follow Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions and try hard to please him by submissively and humbly serving his mission, we can feel his presence by his mercy. I offer my humble obeisances to all of the many wonderful disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda, past and present. They are the stalwart disciples who have performed sincere service and assisted Prabhupāda in his mission. I pray that after suffering the results of all my sinful reactions I may serve Śrīla Prabhupāda and the Vaiṣṇava, life after life. All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your unworthy servant,

Govindamohinī Devī Dāsī

Speaking straight-from-the-shoulder, isn't it a fact that all or most of us are not as spiritually advanced as we sometimes tend to think or portray? Raise your hand if you are entirely, or very nearly beyond the bodily concept of life. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states that unless and until we are beyond the bodily concept of life, we could fall down at any moment. To be situated beyond the bodily concept of life or as we say, "I am not this body", is often denigrated in the name of Kṛṣṇa conscious advancement as something very unexceptional – but yet, how many of you raised your hands?

A couple years ago, I met a godbrother who is very erudite and an eloquent speaker. He asked me what stage of spiritual advancement or realization I was experiencing at the present time of my life. I replied that in a very inceptive way I'm starting to feel and appreciate that I'm actually not this body. His face remained expressionless and appeared quite disappointed. He replied, "No, I don't mean 'I'm not this body', but what spiritual advancement and realization?" I was a little dumb-founded and tried, not very successfully, to reiterate that it seemed to me to be imperative and not inconsequential that we aspire to be beyond the bodily platform in a very real and fixed manner. It appeared to me, at that juncture, that he had utterly dismissed my entire *raison d'être*, reason or philosophical justification for existence.

I then asked him the same question back: "What stage of realization are you presently experiencing?" "Sweetness," he replied. "The sweetness of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Their pastimes." I thought to myself and replied that both our answers are not really different, as it is certainly requisite to go beyond the bodily concept of life to experience transcendental sweetness and that indeed is a forerunner and accompaniment for the other. However, he didn't seem at all moved or impressed by my answer.

I later pondered that if he, in fact, was already beyond the bodily concept of life and could actually fathom the same, he surely would possess and show humility and empathy for my fledgling, spiritual endeavor to become free from bondage to the material body, having himself experienced the same stage and struggle and battle with *māyā*.

Be that as it may, within our war with *māyā*, there is one critical and preeminent factor that defines our temperament: Remorse, for our misdeeds and defeat in battles with *māyā*, if born of genuine humility and continuous sincerity to serve the Lord and His pure devotee, is always unceasingly met with the mercy and forgiveness of Śrīla Prabhupāda. His forgiveness is always paramount and quite amazing, especially for those of us who are not yet fully beyond the bodily concept of life. It doesn't matter how senior one may be, or one's ashram or position – the only element that really counts for something and endures is how much Kṛṣṇa consciousness one actually possesses, regardless if others see or acknowledge it or not. So, we should not make the foolish and dishonest mistake to think that we are speaking here of someone else or a 'bad' devotee. We're talking about you and me, and most of us. Śrīla Prabhupāda told one of our godbrothers in Māyāpur, "That people may say you are a 'bad devotee', but what's important is that they say you are a devotee."

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your servant,

Śatadhanya Dāsa

Somadāsa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances, all glories to you.

You know that I'm not qualified to glorify you. You know who I am. You know how fallen I am. But as your disciple it is my duty and an honor to offer you some praise on your appearance day. You are glorious, and among other things, you are saving me. As you said about your Guru Mahārāja, "What can I say, he was a Vaikuṅṭha man." But at the same time your glories are like an ocean. Hopefully I can glorify a drop of your glories.

Sometimes when I'm looking at a picture of you, I wonder how I could have gotten so lucky. Actually it is a miracle of Your Divine

Grace. How could someone like me end up as a disciple of you? Because you came to the West I got the opportunity to associate with your disciples and hear Kṛṣṇa's holy name, and later I got your association and you accepted me as your disciple. What mercy! My good fortune cannot be estimated. Somehow or other, by your grace, I have stumbled under a waterfall of mercy.

Please keep me in the association of your servants. Please empower me to please you.

Your servant,

Somadāsa Dāsa

Sureśvara Dāsa

“Three Ways to Fly”

Like sage Nārada, Śrīla Prabhupāda was continually flying everywhere to rescue fallen souls. That's why, for most of us *dīkṣā* disciples, many of our encounters with His Divine Grace were at airports. My first *darśana* had happened at Detroit's Metro Airport, my second at Dallas's Love Field.

It was September 1972. After Prabhupāda's American Airlines jet touched down on the tarmac, we ushered him into the airport's VIP room for a press conference. Quickly Prabhupāda mounted a makeshift *vyāsāsana* and, without any preliminaries, announced: “So, there are three ways to fly”

A well-dressed reporter from the *Dallas Morning News* stood next to me holding a notepad, her pen poised to catch Prabhupāda's next words: “*Mantra*, pigeon, and machine.”

To Prabhupāda's serious disciples, this kind of pronouncement, however exotic, sounded simply wonderful. And absolutely true. But to a snappy reporter like the lady standing next to me, it was grist for the evening paper. Sensing a story, she carefully spelled Prabhupāda's words on her pad: *m-a-n-t-r-a*, *p-i-g-e-o-n*, *m-a-c-h-i-n-e*.

“Formerly,” Prabhupāda continued, “certain kinds of pigeons were trained to carry people from one place to another. And *mantra*, simply by vibrating a certain *mantra*, *yogī* could dip into the Ganges and travel thousands of miles in a moment.”

Suddenly the reporter interrupted with a question: “Were these ways of flying more efficient than today’s jumbo jets?”

“Oh yes,” Prabhupāda replied, “for one thing, there were no,” Prabhupāda leaned off-mike and asked, “How you say – jackh- ighs?”

“Highjacks, Prabhupāda, highjacks.”

As Prabhupāda was aware from the news, a Palestinian terrorist group had just murdered all of Israel’s Olympic athletes at the Games in Munich and highjacked a passenger plane to get away, the first “skyjacking” ever.

Prabhupāda leaned back into the microphone and declared: “Yes, there were no highjacks.”

Not to be dismissed, the reporter took her best shot: “Well, Swami, if you know all these ways to fly, then why did you fly American Airlines today to Dallas?”

Without missing a beat, Prabhupāda smiled with charming eyes: “To be one with you.”

Disarmed, the lady turned to me and loudly whispered, “I like that man!”

Pointed questions, perfect answers.

Fly us home, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on the wings of your blessed mission to bring everyone back to wonderful Kṛṣṇa.

Praying for a pointed smack from your cane, I remain

Your aspiring servant,

Sureśvara Dāsa

We recently heard a hysterically funny devotee “stand-up comedian,” narrate his version of a horserace. We can pull from the punch line of this analogy of how all the sense gratification, fall downs and nonsense horses are in the lead to the finish line. Suddenly, by a long shot, coming up is Prabhupāda’s Mercy and he is taking Kṛṣṇa Prem with him.. .

With overwhelming gratitude, we offer our humble obeisance to Śrī la Prabhupāda, our spiritual master. He is teaching us how to be a human being.

Līlā-mañjarī Devī Dāsī and Padmanābha Dāsa

Trai Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

You have not produced just one successor but many, and through your books, more and more. I am seeing you more and more in your sincere followers. You have a number of disciples who have been strictly following your instructions for over forty years now and we are seeing them becoming mature, empowered devotees. They are touching the hearts of thousands of people all over the world. This is another proof of you being the empowered *ācārya* for this age.

You have taken anyone who was willing to follow your instructions and transformed them into great devotees. I am seeing your greatness in these wonderful devotees who each exhibit a small fraction of your qualities. Your qualities are numerous like a fathomless ocean. Each of your sincere followers can exhibit only a fraction of

these. Your unlimited qualities are expanding and will continue in the line of ISKCON. Your mercy is all that we are made of.

I see devotees like Vaiṣeṣika Prabhu, who is inspiring devotees all over the world in book distribution. Kālakaṅṭha Prabhu is setting an example in university preaching in America.

Badrinārāyaṇa Prabhu and Svavāsa Prabhu have steadily run your temples bringing them to success. Rādhānātha Swami and Nirañjana Swami are taking care of and inspiring thousands of devotees all over the world. The more I think about it, the list gets longer and longer. Your transcendental touchstone power has touched so many and they are touching so many and on it will go for the next ten thousand years.

I pray to you that I might stay and serve you and all these great souls forever.

Your insignificant servant,

Trai Dāsa
Bologna, Italy yātrā

Ādideva Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

I first met you in the foyer to your rooms on Henry St. in NYC. Your first statement to me was a definition of your institution, ISKCON – the one I wanted to enter: “These rooms are not for my enjoyment. This is an educational institution for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

You took a building in Brooklyn and transformed it into a spiritual

embassy for escapees from the mundane world. You used everything for Kṛṣṇa's service and you taught us how to do as well. Forty years later I stand in a Tṛṇavarta type dust storm, eyes sand filled, trying to help in your effort to create spiritual embassies all over the world.

Spiritual life is a circle. Kṛṣṇa's mercy is available but only through the agency of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Her mercy is given through the mercy of Lord Caitanya, but only by approaching Nityānanda. Approach to Nityānanda is available through the Six Gosvāmīs, coming down through Bhaktivinoda, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, and finally through you. But one can only find and approach a self-realized soul such as you, by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. May the circle be unbroken, but please let me remain within that circle. Let my relationship with you and your other devotees grow deeper. Let the dust settle and the sand loosen from my eyes. Let the goal, unalloyed devotion to *guru* and Gaurāṅga, become crystal clear in my heart. When I chant Hare Kṛṣṇa let my desire, my intent, be only "Please accept me. Please accept me."

Thank you for your many blessings. Thank you for initiating this fallen creature in a corner of a dark universe. I am totally dependent upon your mercy. Please allow my heart to open. Finally, please allow my wife and I to help expand your mission through our deeds and character.

Your servant,

Ādideva Dāsa

Prṥthu Dāsa Adhikārī

*om̐ 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.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Today on the auspicious day of your appearance may I offer this most paltry attempt at your feet.

You are the most precious devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa that has come into this darkness.

Your life had only one purpose:

Saving the fallen, your only desire.

As you once said:

“The people might not understand our message.

But Kṛṣṇa will be pleased.

And that is our mission.”

I remember back in 1973, at Upsalla/Sweden University – you lectured before many – apparently by socialist dogma affected students, describing Vedic society, the four *varṇas*, *brāhmaṇas* being first class, *sūdras* 4th class.

One openly agitated student challenged you: “Of course you think that you are first class, sitting on a high seat, everybody bowing down to you, garlanded with flowers”.

I sat no more than four feet away from you, my German blood boiling. Hoping for an indorsing sign, I was ready to jump into action to give this rascal a good trashing.

Just the opposite happened:

Visually taken aback, you waved your hand, almost pleading, and said calmly:

“No, I am not first class. I am actually fifth class.”

The room fell into dead silence.

Then you added: “Because I am the servant of everyone.”

I saw two big tears coming from behind your spectacles, rolling down your cheeks.

It was one of these awesome moments.

And yes, that was the truth:

You are actually the servant of the whole world.

Your only mission has been to rescue as many people as possible, and as long as you were on this planet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my only hope.

I have disappointed you many times.

Still I am hanging in there, trying to be of some use.

Please don’t kick me away.

Please allow me to render some service at your lotus feet.

*akṣnoḥ phalaṁ tvādṛśa-darśanam
hi tanoḥ phalaṁ tvādṛśa-gātra-saṅgaḥ
jihvā-phalaṁ tvādṛśa-kīrtanam
hi sudurlabhā bhāgavatā hi loke*

“O devotee of the Lord, to see you is the perfection of the eyes, to touch your body is the perfection of bodily activities, and to glorify your qualities is the perfection of the tongue, for it is very rare to find a pure devotee like you.”

Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya (13. 2)

Your humble servant,

Pṛthu Dāsa Adhikārī

All glories to Your Most Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

I cannot begin to thank you as it will take the eternal life of my soul to do so properly.

As I grow older in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I become more and more aware of what you have given us, and trying to save us from, everywhere, at every moment, and in everything, as I go through life.

We see everything around us through your words, knowledge, wisdom, and compassion. There is nothing you have not thought of, or covered in programing a process by which anyone who takes to it, can be free from taking another material birth ever again. The magnitude of this mercy on us is truly monumental.

Anywhere and everywhere we go in the world, somewhere we come across someone carrying a bead bag.... You, Śrīla Prabhupāda have done that.

You have opened temples and brought Kṛṣṇa to every town and city on the planet. Every Janmāṣṭamī hundreds of Kṛṣṇas are being worshiped on this Earth. You Śrīla Prabhupāda, have done this.

You have introduced the Ratha-yātrā festivals all around the world.

You travelled the globe, preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness to anyone and everyone who came in touch with you.

You taught us how to be clean, how to cook for Kṛṣṇa, what to cook for Him, what He likes, does not like, and the very words He speaks.

Only you have the greatest skill of telling the Absolute Truth in the simplest of words, and most effective way.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, put the *dhāmas* on the map. The whole world has heard of them because of you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

You are the greatest of yogīs because you awoke in our hearts the

desire to serve and love Kṛṣṇa again, to re-establish our eternal constitutional position.

And when you have spent the day tirelessly instructing, teaching, preaching, travelling, printing books, etc etc, and we went to bed at night, you stayed up and translated books. I remember late one night in Vraja, the wind started to blow very strongly, I looked over the balcony onto your roof, where you translated, and I could hear Your voice still speaking into the microphone, while Upendra was frantically running around, trying to keep your papers from flying everywhere.

You are always detached and renounced, by living simply, and by example always, and without opulence. When you received a gift, soon afterwards, you gave it to someone. Even when Puṣṭa Kṛṣṇa brought a Mercedes in Vraja, you had it returned, thinking practically that it would be too expensive to maintain, get parts for, etc. You selected the sturdy Ambassador instead, one in Vraja, Bombay, and Calcutta. (It was nice to see the one in Bombay this last Ratha-yātrā in January).

I was fortunate to have been personally instructed by you regarding my service to the Deities in making clothes when Kiśorī and I went to show you the outfits before, and after the opening of the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple. You asked us several questions, and instructed us on how to go about it. I pray to Kṛṣṇa to keep it my very soul's mission.

Please Śrīla Prabhupāda, forgive me for the offences I committed at your lotus feet, the *dhāmas*, and the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas.

I have accepted my defeat, you are my only hope, please never cast me away.

I beg for an eternal place at your lotus feet.

Your eternal spiritual daughter,

Viśva Devī Dāsī

Devadharmā Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Thank you for sailing across the dangerous ocean
Just to teach us about pure love and devotion
It was on your Guru Mahārāja's instruction
You came to start this great spiritual revolution.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You risked your life for the service of Lord Caitanya
And to grace us with the mercy of Lord Nityānanda
With gorgeous temples, Deities, philosophy and *prasādam*.
Along with the chanting and dancing from Goloka-dhāma

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Although by age, you were very old
You were undeterred by heat or cold
Your purpose was to increase the fold
In Kali's kingdom, a Kṛṣṇa stronghold.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Your preaching was very bold
Your message will never grow old
You taught us about the nature of soul
And how to achieve the highest goal.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

You came on the greatest transcendental mission
To guide us back to Godhead, our original position
You were also filled with the greatest ambition
To fulfill Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's prediction.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You were on what seemed a mission impossible
But by Lord Caitanya's mercy it became possible
You converted the *mleccha* into a Vaiṣṇava
Simply by chanting, dancing, and lots of *halavā*.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are like the thunderous rain cloud
Which for some seems scary and loud
But your work is to put out the blazing fire
To save us from burning material desire.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are like a river flowing steadily
Over the rocks and out to the sea
Reminding us of our ultimate destiny
Kṛṣṇa's abode, the ocean of ecstasy.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Although you gave us the highest knowledge
You also wanted to have a *varṇāśrama* college
So that all mankind can achieve perfection
And for that you gave us so much direction.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You have planted the *bhakti-latā* seed
So that all the *jīvas* can be freed
And as a good seed will bear good fruit
We still see so many in Kṛṣṇa's pursuit.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

There was such magic in your glance
Which made us want to sing and dance
And because you were always in trance
Seeing you gave us great assurance.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Some may think you are dead and gone
But your instructions will live on and on
Your words, like Kṛṣṇa, are eternal Sun
Bringing light to the hearts of everyone.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Once I had to look into your ever-loving eyes

While you asked me to fetch you some supplies
But what a surprise, to see the tears welled up in your eyes
Incredible mercy and compassion, your heart simply cries.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your mercy, all the *devas* have pursued
So how can we show you enough gratitude
Please help us to develop the right attitude
Help us to continue in humility and servitude.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

We thank you for Your Divine Grace
And coming to save the human race
We thank you for bringing Kṛṣṇa to this place
And allowing us to see His beautiful smiling face.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We thank you for showing us the best way to live
We thank you for showing us how best to give
We thank you for the great gift of *nāma-saṅkīrtana*
We thank you for the great gift of Śrī Vṛndāvana.

Devadharmā Dāsa
New Zealand

Madana-mohana Dāsa

This is a day that we honor Śrī Vyāsadeva, the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa that put down in writing all descending knowledge. By reading the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* first canto, second verse, we understand that He wrote the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in his maturity and again in the fifth chapter we are given more insight as to why. He was instructed by his spiritual master, Nārada Muni to present only direct glorification of Kṛṣṇa, if he wanted to be free from his despondency, and everyone else as well.

Now five thousand years later, as Kali-yuga is really taking off, the

need has never been greater. It is the tradition to honor the spiritual master on his birthday as he is the representative of Śrīla Vyāsadeva. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have excelled all others in representing him by getting Śrīla Vyāsadeva's name and works distributed like never before. Taking your spiritual master's instruction as your life and soul, you build a society dedicated to take your translations and then produce the books, all the while reading, studying, living by, and distributing Śrīla Vyāsadeva's works, especially the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. There has never even been so many of Śrīla Vyāsadeva's books printed and given out. By using all the modern facilities, you put the one, in front of all those zeros. And you did it all with such charm.

I like to say, I have, Śrīla Prabhupāda's Kṛṣṇa. There are many others who talk or write about Kṛṣṇa, but none of those Kṛṣṇas have the charming influence to get so many fallen souls to fall in love with Kṛṣṇa. You are so loving – revealing to anyone who reads your books. It is stated in your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1. 2. 16 purport (By serving the servants of the Lord, one gradually gets the quality of such servants,) thus you have taken on the qualities of whom you serve and think about most, your spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa.

You have explained that Kṛṣṇa has four special qualities that even Lord Viṣṇu doesn't have, but three of those four remain theoretical to me, Kṛṣṇa's flute, His wonderful childhood pastimes in Vṛndāvana, and His beauty, however Kṛṣṇa being surrounded by devotees with the topmost love, I feel blessed that I met one of them. We sing everyday "*kandarpa-koṭi-kamanīya-viśeṣa-sobharī*" [Bs. 5. 30]

His unique loveliness charming millions of Cupids, and we see that in you, by how capably you charm the soul right out of the body of reporters or so many untouchable outcasts. Because you love Kṛṣṇa; you love all His parts and parcels and they all love you. If anyone had the divine good fortune to come in contact with you, they were able to feel, maybe for the first time in their sojourn, divine love. That awakes us and we are indebted to that mercy.

We offer and pay our obeisances to your lotus feet. Those lotus feet reveal themselves to be the portal to the spiritual world. It is said in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, these modes are very difficult to overcome, (underestimated, in my option, impossible) but simply by following your prescription of *sādhana* you purify us. Your *sādhana*, I like to call "festival *sādhana*", because like the spiritual world, all the

talking is singing, *kīrtana* or *ślokas*, and all walking is dancing and jumping as we realize out eternal nature of *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. As Śrīla Vyāsadeva gave in his *Vedānta-sūtra*, *ānanda-mayo 'bhyāsāt* (*Vedānta-sūtra* 1. 1. 12). You gave us your *Bhaktivedānta-sūtra* coining the saying, “chant and be happy”. So if we just follow the orders of the spiritual master, we chant and are happy.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for enabling the descendent of the internal potency to all the fallen souls, like no one has ever done before. Kṛṣṇa likes to see His devotee out do even Himself. Like Lord Rāma built a bridge, but His servant jumped.

All glories to your lotus feet.

Your humbled servant,

Madana-mohana Dāsa

Bhajahari Dāsa Adhikārī

*om̐ ajñāna-timirāndhasya
jñānāñjana-salākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena
tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

I am standing in the darkness of ignorance, and you, Śrīla Prabhupāda are forcing open my eyes with the torchlight of knowledge.

I offer my respectful obeisance unto you.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala*, Lord Caitanya foretold the coming of an empowered devotee who will take the *saṅkīrtana* process everywhere. He said “I want to flood the whole world with the chanting of the holy names. I will personally preach and flood India with *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, and My *senapati-bhakta* (great devotee warrior) will come and preach in different countries, and flood the world with the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.”

Surely you are this great Vaiṣṇava warrior. I have tried to glorify

some of your wonderful qualities and pastimes in the following verses. If I have been over familiar, or made foolish mistakes, kindly forgive me. I do not know Kṛṣṇa, I only know something of you, but you have allowed me your priceless association, and I will be forever in your debt.

Lord Caitanya's Senapati-bhakta

Many years since you appeared
Many years Kali has feared
You, the deciding factor
Lord Caitanya's *senapati-bhakta*

Eighteen ninety six the year
By your mercy, you appear
Four years before twentieth century
Warrior Vaiṣṇava – make your entry

Even at an early age
Try to free souls from the cage
Ratha-yātrās of your childhood
Engage all in the neighborhood

Instructing others what to do
Comes so easily to you
Everything you say is right
For you were sent to start the fight

In this age, there'll be no blood
Your fight is to start a flood
Of books, *prasāda* and holy names
Engage us in *saṅkīrtana* games

In twenty two a friend brought you
To meet with your eternal guru
You present logic – unsound
Siddhānta turns your head around

Reject degree, reject Gandhi
Later reject family
'Calcutta Boy' took your employ
From 'Simha-guru' – brought us joy

He asked you to preach in English
Challenge he knew you would relish
Spent your live preparing to do
Something only you knew how to

In thirty three – formal surrender
Knowing service you must render
You were told “There’ll be a fire”
Warned of godbrothers in *māyā*

In forty four, *BTG* born
At sixty three your life forsworn
Took *sannyāsa* at holy place
Determined to save, human race

Sacred passage on a steamboat
While on board in diary wrote
Caitanya-līlā, only solace
Risking all for His Divine Grace

On the Bowery you began
Sarasvatī’s faithful man
Let them call you ‘Swamiji’
As you planned to set us free

Speaking strong with urgent voice
Explaining that we have a choice
If Lord Kṛṣṇa we all serve
“*Dāya-bhāḥ*”, what we deserve.

Young souls meet you, feel your love
Know you were sent from above
Bhakti-latā-bīja you gave
The seed to free us from the grave

In sixty-six, you start ISKCON
Knowing you do not have long
Give the books that are the basis
For ten thousand year oasis

This Age threatens to go wrong
But you came with dance and song
Trained up preachers, trained up cooks

Worked all night to translate books

Thinking big, as it should be
You carry Mahāprabhu's plea
To each country, village, town
Vaiṣṇava warrior, wears the crown.

Train them up and then move on
On lotus lips, eternal song
Golokera prema-dhana
Harināma-saṅkīrtana

Time is short "I am old man"
Send out six "Do what you can"
London an important place
Crossroads of the human race

They did well, as time has shown
In this, our land, your movements grown
Time now to consolidate
See your mission inundate

Once you wrote to Dhanañjaya
'Keep the temple free from *māyā*
Forgive them once, forgive them twice
Be merciful, forgive them thrice

More than that, do not allow
The rules are there, they must all follow
Disciple must mean discipline
Left right, left right, keep them in trim'

'Those who live here, must be stronger
Few hours rest, their day is longer
If they don't take rest till three
Still they can't miss *maṅgala-āratī*

If they cannot come to this
Does not mean they'll miss all bliss
Near the temple they can stay
Come take *prasādam* every day

Now there's much work to be done

Like the Father, also the son
You stressed preachers we must be
Don't try for *bhajanānandī*

Gopī-bhāva Club in L. A.
Thought with Kṛṣṇa, they could all play
You chastised with quivering lip
Furious they had made this slip

Serve Kṛṣṇa with awe and reverence
Is the safe path for deliverance
You teach this and with good reason
Other paths, danger of treason.

Once when asked about pretender
Who to Kṛṣṇa was offender
You replied, both sure and quick
Told us "In his face I kick"

"If one feigns *samādhī*" you said
With a smile "kick them on their head"
If they feel no agony
Bow down quick, repeatedly

Half man, half lion protects you
Watching everything you do
There can be nothing you lack
Lord *Narasimha* guards your back

Life from life comes, that's a fact
Only rascals dispute that
So called scientists you fight
You're not crazy, you are 'right'

You created Vaiṣṇava armies
Wearing *tilaka*, led by swamis
Bead bags held out at the ready
Sixteen loaded, they're all steady

As they fan out 'cross the land
They follow strategies you planned
Temples, restaurants, preaching outposts
Rounding up all, haunted by ghosts

The ghosts that tell them they can be
Happy in this world, and free
To capture their minds we must act
Bring them to you, make a pact

Once they've chanted Kṛṣṇa's name
They'll be cured, no more insane
Then they'll want to join the army
Led by Prabhupāda Swami

On the battlefield of life
Logic sharper than a knife
Out with you on morning walks
Relishing your fighting talks

You are bold, strong and courageous
Kṛṣṇa's military genius
Making plans to free each soul
From the hell of Kali's goal

You will never taste defeat
You conquer every foe you meet
Always overcoming *māyā*
Śrīla Prabhupāda "JAYA"

Sometimes soldiers leave the field
No strength left, weapons to wield
Must take a break, but not for long
Be back soon, when they are strong

When in battle, soldiers fall
You are well-wisher to them all
Father's love, full of compassion
Wish all would follow your fashion

To attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness
You tell us, a lifetime's business
If one feels in weak condition
Can still fight from safe position

Śrīla Prabhupāda come quick
I am wounded, lame and sick
Save me from complete defeat

I lay prostrated, at your lotus feet

Please pick me up and take me home
I've been insane, mouth full of foam
Please comfort me as fathers do
Again let me sit close by you

So many years since you appeared
So many years Kali has feared
You, the compassionate factor
Lord Caitanya's *senapati-bhakta*

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, if I had three wishes, I would first wish that I will remain forever able to remember you and engage perpetually in devotional service under your guidance. Secondly, I would wish for you to empower me to establish spiritual restaurants all over the UK, where the tired and lonely people could come and experience Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a relaxed atmosphere. Finally, I would wish to be empowered to distribute millions of your transcendental books. On this most auspicious day, I offer you my repeated obeisance.

All glories to you

Your fallen disciple

Bhajahari Dāsa Adhikārī

Bhavatārīnī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

All glories to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *yugala!*

The first time I ever saw you, I was reminded of a lion, a swan, and a lotus flower. It was June 1971, and you were returning to New York from Gainesville, Florida, where you had been on a television

show. You had a two hour layover in Atlanta, Georgia.

I was living in the Atlanta temple with my husband, Fred, my four year-old son, Vṛndāvana Dāsa, and my two year-old daughter Kuntī.

Preparations had begun weeks in advance. A conference room at the airport was secured by the temple and a small *vyāsāsana* was made to replicate the picture from the cover of a *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* booklet with Lord Brahmā and Nārada Muni. Devotees from other temples came to help. A feast was made, and flowers, flags, and festoons turned the room into Vaikuṅṭha.

The plane landed as we gathered at the gate with a rousing *kīrtana*. A metal staircase was attached to the plane, the door opened and people began to file out. Suddenly, the doorway was filled with light and you appeared.

Your complexion was like molten gold. You poised to descend the steps. Your head was held high, a cane in one hand, your silk saffron robe moving softly in the breeze. I thought:

“How regal you look, like a noble lion. ”You reached the tarmac, removed the marigold garland from around your neck and placed it on the devotee standing next to you. Then the garland I had made was placed around your neck. It went all the way to your feet, framing your whole body. You began to come towards us, gliding across the tarmac. Your feet didn’t seem to touch the ground. I thought:

“He moves like a swan. ”

As you sat on the *vyāsāsana*, you emanated a blue effulgence. I thought;

“He appears like a lotus flower blooming from his seat. ”

I had saved a rose for my daughter to give to you. She ran up, gave it to you and ran and hid behind my *sārī*. My son also wanted to give you a flower, but I thought boys weren’t supposed to give you flowers, so I didn’t supply one for him. He managed to find a beautiful saffron flower with lots of petals, gave it to you, then paid his full *daṇḍavats*. You told him, “Thank you very much. ” He was ecstatic. For days after, he told everyone he saw: “Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke

to me, he said “Thank you very much. ”

A play, *The Brahmin and the Cobbler*, had been prepared. The *brahmācārī* playing Nārada Muni entered the stage which was taking place at your feet in front of the tables. He became overwhelmed by your presence and began paying obeisances, to you, to the other actors, to the audience, to the walls, to the doors preventing the play from continuing. You began to speak.

“Just see, Nārada Muni is so humble that he pays obeisances to everyone and everything.”

Then you narrated the entire play as if that was the plan.

After the play, you were served *prasādam*. You took a cube of watermelon between your thumb and two fingers, leaned your head back and very elegantly tossed it into your mouth. Then an accordion room divider screen was closed in front of you so that you could honor *prasādam* in private,

After some time the screen was opened. A middle aged man from India was sitting in front of you. You asked him what he did for a living.

“I am a biologist at Emory Hospital, ” he said.

You replied: “Oh, you are killing frogs!”

He answered: “We are killing them so that we can understand them better.”

You retorted: “I would like to know you better; may I kill you?”

He fell like a rod at your feet and kissed your shoes as he answered:

“You may do whatever you like with me. ”

It was time for you to leave. You began walking to your gate. A devotee had brought his mother who was dying of cancer in a wheelchair. She dove onto the floor in front of you, saying: “Prabhupāda, I am dying!” You patted her on the head and told her, “Do not worry, you will be all right. ” At that time you stole my heart and mind.

Over the years, I have studied your books and found that my first impressions are confirmed by *guru*, *sādhū*, and *śāstra*. These are the three check points and balances you have given us to validate philosophical points.

The *guru* is sometimes compared to a lion. A dark cave may be full of snakes and jackals and other beasts but as soon as the lion enters and roars they all flee. Our hearts may be full of so many enemies but as soon as we chant the holy name as given by you they flee.

The swan is able to drink milk out of water without getting water. So you are able to extract the nectar and *bhakti* from our mixed service. The lotus flower blooms pristine from mud and water rolls off of the lotus leaves without mixing.

You are able to come here and extract us from the mud of material existence. Of course, all material qualities never touch you but roll off like water on a lotus leaf.

Thank you for saving me from this world of illusion and blessing me with the incomparable holy name.

Aspiring to serve you eternally,

Bhavatārinī Devī Dāsī

Dhīraśānta Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Sometimes I am asked by devotees who have never met you, what it was like to be in the midst of such a great personality as yourself during the time when you were physically present before us.

Not to disappoint the enquirer too much I will say, “It was a most wonderful experience never to be forgotten.” However, at the same

time with regret I will also often express dissatisfaction in my lack of understanding the full extent of your greatness at that time, as well as what you would accomplish over a significant period of future history.

If only I could turn the clock back knowing now a little more about you, I am certain my attitude and service mood would have been so different. Little did I know your appearance and accomplishments in this world were predicted by the Lord Himself as well as by great personalities within our line of succession.

In the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* it is mentioned that when Lord Kṛṣṇa was about to leave back to His abode, Mother Gaṅgā wanted to leave too as she was concerned about having to take on the sins of so many persons during the Kali-yuga period. Kṛṣṇa asked Gaṅgā-devī to stay even though Kali-yuga was approaching. He reassured her His dear associate would appear in that age and spread the holy names in every country of the world. Many devotee preachers would come to Māyāpur and bathe in her waters and purify her of the sinful reactions of materialistic persons of Kali-yuga who have taken bath. Kṛṣṇa said, “By this chanting the whole world will become eka-varṇa (one class) one designation, (hari-bhaktas) devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa for 10, 000 years. Then after this period the devotees will see the full force of Kali-yuga overtaking the world. At that time your sacred waters should hide under the earth and wait for the next Satya-yuga.

In his *Caitanya-maṅgala*, Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura wrote: Lord Caitanya said, “I want to flood the whole world with the chanting of the holy names. I will personally preach and flood India with *harināma-saṅkīrtana* and my *senapati* (commander-in-chief) *bhakta* will come and preach in distant countries and flood the world with the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.”

In the *Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura narrates how Lord Nityānanda spoke to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī about the future of Māyāpur.

Lord Nityānanda prophesized: When our Lord Caitanya disappears from this world the Ganges will swell and almost cover Māyāpur for a hundred years. Then the water will recede and Māyāpur will again be manifested. “A very wonderful temple will be built in Māyāpur and from that temple devotional service to Lord Caitanya will spread all

over the world.”

In his *Caitanya-sikṣāmṛta*, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura also wrote: “In a future time devotees from America, Europe, Russia and China would join with their Indian god brothers in Navadvīpa-dhāma and dance and chant ‘Jaya Śacīnandana’ together”. He also wrote that a great personality would appear to fulfil this prediction.

On your appearance in this world an astrologer calculated that you would cross the ocean and open a hundred centres.

The first words to you by Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī were a prophecy, “Why don’t you spread Lord Caitanya’s movement around the world.” When asked by the Bombay maṭha leaders regarding you joining their temple he replied saying, “It is better that he is living outside your company. When the time comes he will do everything himself.”

After acquiring land at Māyāpur and constructing a simple bhajana-kuṭīr, during a morning walk you spoke of Māyāpur being your International Headquarters. For the disciples present at that time, looking around and seeing only rice fields, it was hard to imagine how this would one day be a reality.

Although this last part of my offering to you cannot be backed up by any śāstric evidence, still I would like to think, or should I say I am certain, one day this will also be accomplished by you:

Once, the servants of Yamarāja approached Yamarāja and complained about something which they were very concerned about. Here is the conversation between Yamarāja and his Yamadūta servants.

Yamadūta 1: We are disturbed by a few matters.

Yamarāja: Oh, let me know your issues.

Yamadūta 1: Hell is getting empty by each passing day and if this situation continues, we will need to close down hell and this is just because of a devotee of Kṛṣṇa.

Yamarāja: Devotee? How is a devotee doing such miracle?

Yamadūta 1: This devotee is a representative of Kṛṣṇa and although he has already left his material body and returned to the spiritual world, his magic is still working like anything.

Yamarāja: Whom you are speaking about?

Yamadūta 2: Prabhujī, it is obvious, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I don't know what he told his followers but they are preaching and preaching and preaching, and because of their preaching no one is coming to this hell.

Yamarāja: Yes, you are right, this is a concern...

Yamadūta 1: Even we cannot touch them or take them to hell.

Yamraja: Why? They must have made some mistakes... and for making certain mistakes they can be brought to my hell.

Yamadūta 1: We can't take them. Everyone is going to Kṛṣṇaloka because they know a transcendental secret.

Yamarāja: Which transcendental secret?

Yamadūta 1: They know that "In whichever state you quit your body; in your next birth you will attain the same body." That's why every devotee keeps chanting Kṛṣṇa's name and never stops chanting. They practice to chant the Lord's holy name so at the time of death they will be able to attain the Lord.

Wherever they go - they keep on chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, which is so powerful that these devotees become very sharp and smart. They always chant loudly so that people around them can also hear. The sound is everywhere. Some senior devotees are totally renounced and are travelling from country to country giving classes on Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Yamarāja: This is a big issue and problem for hell. But at least I am happy that we still have a lot of prisoners in hell.

Yamadūta 2: No Prabhu. Śrīla Prabhupāda has revealed every secret to them. These people are observing Ekādaśīs to give benefits to their forefathers, and therefore hell's population is decreasing. Especially because of Indira Ekādaśī! Due to Indira Ekādaśī a

lot of souls have been released from hell. If a relative of a sinner suffering in hell gives some charity in the name of the sinner, he can leave hell and enter the heavenly planets. Or if a sinner's relative observes Indira Ekādaśī fasting for his suffering kinsman, the kinsman goes directly to the spiritual world. And moreover – they observe every single Ekādaśī as per the directions given by Śrīla Prabhupāda and thereby give comforts to their forefathers in this hell.

Yamarāja: Oh my Kṛṣṇa... I am getting concerned with these devotees. Why don't you put these devotees in some turbulence so that they will be afraid and will forget to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa?

Yamadūta 2: Prabhuji – It's not easy... whenever we create some problems for these devotees, they start chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and thank Kṛṣṇa for giving them a test, or for their purification. They are not afraid of any problem. They think that whenever Kṛṣṇa sends some problem, it means that Kṛṣṇa loves them and is testing their sincerity. They are not afraid of anything. They know that Kṛṣṇa is everywhere. They sing the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* in every situation. They are making us mad. We are really sitting idle just because of these devotees.

Yamadūta 1: Even one more problem is there. They are making every place like Vṛndāvana. They are building new temples and spending money in Kṛṣṇa's service. They have installed so many deities in people's homes. I can tell you that these devotees are making such a big mess in this material world. I am sure that if they continue to work with this speed, they will make everyone go from this world to Kṛṣṇaloka.

Yamarāja: Oh my Kṛṣṇa!! Save us from these devotees!

Yamadūta 1: Yeah... better to request Kṛṣṇa to give us another job...

Yamarāja: What is their *mantra*?

Yamadūta 1 and Yamadūta 2 (In chorus): Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare. Suddenly they both became invisible and Yamarāja understood that they were going upwards to the spiritual plane.

Then there was nothing more Yamarāja himself could do so he

too started chanting – “Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.

Śrīla Prabhupāda it is now clear to me you are a Vaiṣṇava of the highest order with the power to create *bhakti* where none existed before. You are an *ācārya* who both carried the age-old message of the paramparā and intelligently applied it to the present day world. In this you are unique, even among Vaiṣṇavas.

I am very grateful to be able to assist you in whatever small way in this great mission of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Please continue to shower me with your merciful glance.

Your unworthy servant,

Dhīrasānta Dāsa

Gauragopāla Dāsa

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 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-vṛnda*

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

It is so important to continuously study the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda who has given us so much knowledge, when we turn away or forget to do this, then *māyā* will rush in and fill our minds – I learnt this the hard way.

Śrīla Prabhupāda further explains – “Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not an

artificial imposition on the mind; this consciousness is the original energy of the living entity. When we hear the transcendental vibration, this consciousness is revived. This chanting of 'Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare' is directly enacted from the spiritual platform, and thus this sound vibration surpasses all lower strata of consciousness – namely sensual, mental and intellectual. As such, anyone can take part in the chanting, without any previous qualification". (Hare Kṛṣṇa 1966 Album)

Śrīla Prabhupāda continues – “Every one of you. What is your realization? You write your realization – what you have realized about Kṛṣṇa. That is required. It is not passive. Always you should be active. Whenever you find time, write. Never mind – two lines, four lines, but you write your realizations. *Śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*. Writing or offering prayers or glories this is one of the functions of a Vaiṣṇava. You are hearing, but you have to write also. Then, writing means *smaraṇam* – remembering what you have heard from your spiritual master”. (Śrīla Prabhupāda Los Angeles, 1971)

Śrīla Prabhupāda – “Human society, at the present moment, is not in the darkness of oblivion. It has made rapid progress in the fields of material comforts, education and economic development throughout the entire world. But there is a pinprick somewhere in the social body at large, and therefore there are large-scale quarrels, even over less important issues. There is need of a clue as to how humanity can become one in peace, friendship and prosperity with a common cause. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will fill this need, for it is a cultural presentation for the respiration of the entire human society”. (The foreword *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*)

Śrīla Prabhupāda – “At the present moment, to speak the truth, the whole population of the world are demons and animals. It may be a very strong aspersion on the people of the world, but this is the fact. But still, because they are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, so originally they were pure; it is therefore the mission of Kṛṣṇa to get back His parts and parcels to home, exactly like a father likes to get back his son at home because this son had gone out of home for false happiness.

But the people are so mad, they are talking so many nonsense

things – nonsense philosophy, nonsense science – and our task is to meet all of them and at the same time pacify them in their lunatic condition. So I am sure you are a very good soul to act on behalf of Kṛṣṇa, and do it nicely. Kṛṣṇa will give you the proper intelligence. He is sitting in your heart. Simply he wants to see us working sincerely”. (Letter to Girirāja, May 15, 1972)

The above quotes from His Divine Grace are very encouraging because he has given us all we need to know within his books, lectures, letters, morning walks and other tapes. Śrīla Prabhupāda you have also told us how we first came to this mundane material world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda – “In the broader sense everyone comes from Kṛṣṇaloka. When one forgets Kṛṣṇa he is conditioned (*nitya-baddha*), when one remembers Kṛṣṇa he is liberated (*nitya-siddha*)”. (Letter to Mukunda, June 10, 1969)

Śrīla Prabhupāda – “So, even in the Vaikuṅṭha, if I desire that ‘Why shall I serve Kṛṣṇa? Why not become Kṛṣṇa?’ I immediately fall down” (July 8, 1976 in Washington, D. C.)

Śrīla Prabhupāda – “We cannot say therefore that we are not with Kṛṣṇa. As soon as we try to become Lord, immediately *māyā* covers us. Formerly we were with Kṛṣṇa in His *līlā* or sport. But this covering of *māyā* may be of very, very, very, very long duration; therefore many creations are coming and going”. (Letter from Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1972 to devotees in Australia, Madhudviṣa Swami)

Those who choose not to continue serving Kṛṣṇa in Goloka, or who have chosen first to become envious of the Lord’s position as the Supreme Enjoyer, cannot remain spiritually ‘aware’ of their *nitya-siddha* Kṛṣṇa conscious body in Goloka and therefore fall down to the *nitya-baddha* stage. There is no material cause for this ability to choose and fall because free will is a part of every marginal living entity’s make up.

Śrīla Prabhupāda – “By misusing his independence, the living entity falls down from the service of the Lord and takes a position in this material world as an enjoyer. That is to say, the living entity takes his position within a material body. Wanting to take a very exalted position, the living entity instead becomes entangled in a repetition

of birth and death. He selects his position as a human being, a demigod, a cat, a dog, a tree, etc. In this way the living entity selects a body out of the 8, 400, 000 forms and tries to satisfy himself by a variety of material enjoyment”. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4. 28. 53)

In this way such a ‘fall down’ is certainly NOT a physical one as *nitya-siddha* but rather a ‘sub-conscious’ (*nitya-baddha*) one that is a dream state that places the marginal living entity’s ‘awareness’ within the dreams of Mahā-Viṣṇu in His *mahat-tattva* creation.

This material dream state referred to as the ‘sub-conscious’ (*nitya-baddha*) characteristic, of the marginal living entity, is called so because it is opposite the ‘conscious’ state (*nitya-siddha*). So the ‘sub-conscious’ state is called *nitya-baddha* while the ‘conscious’ state is called *nitya-siddha*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda - “This material creation is the spirit soul’s ‘dream’. Actually all existence in the material world is a ‘dream’ of Mahā-Viṣṇu, as the *Brahma-saṁhitā* describes:

‘This material world is created by the ‘dreaming’ of Mahā-Viṣṇu. The real, factual platform is the spiritual world, but when the spirit soul wants to imitate the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he is put into this dreamland of material creation”. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4/29/83)

Śrīla Prabhupāda - “After being in contact with the material modes of nature, the living entity develops the subtle and gross bodies. When the living entity is fortunate enough to associate with Śrī Nārada Mahāmuni or his servants, he is liberated from this ‘dreamland’ of material creation and the bodily conception of life”. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4/29/83)

Śrīla Prabhupāda - “Everything happening within time, which consists of past, present and future, is merely a ‘dream’. This is the secret in understanding all the Vedic literature”. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4. 29. 2b)

Śrīla Prabhupāda – “Factually all of material existence is only a dream. Thus there is no question of past, present or future. Persons who are addicted to *karma-kāṇḍa vicāra*, which means “working for future happiness through fruitive activities,” are also dreaming. Similarly, past happiness and

present happiness are merely dreams.

The actual reality is Kṛṣṇa and service to Kṛṣṇa, which can save us from the clutches of *māyā*, for the Lord says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.14), *mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etāṁ taranti te*: “Those who surrender unto Me can easily cross beyond My illusory energy”. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4. 29. 2b Purport)

Śrīla Prabhupāda – “This material world is a product of the *mahat-tattva*, which is a state of the Lord’s dreaming condition in His *yoga-nidrā* mystic slumber in the Causal Ocean, and yet the whole creation appears to be a factual presentation of His creation. This means that the Lord’s dreaming conditions are also factual manifestations. He can therefore bring everything under His transcendental control, and thus whenever and wherever He does appear, He does so in His fullness”. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1. 16. 26-30)

Śrīla Prabhupāda – “By following the rules and regulations and instructions of the spiritual master, he can also become *siddha*. He can become again *nitya-siddha*. So the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is to make the *nitya-baddhas* again *nitya-siddha*. To bring them - it is a difficult task”. (London lecture on the *Bhagavad-gītā* 13-14, July 14, 1973)

Śrīla Prabhupāda – “So, even in the *Vaiṣṇava*, if I desire that “Why shall I serve Kṛṣṇa? Why not become Kṛṣṇa?” I immediately fall down. That is natural. A servant is serving the master, (but) sometimes he may think that, “If I could become the master”. They are thinking like that; they are trying to become God. That is delusion. You cannot become God. That is not possible. But he’s wrongly thinking”. (Excerpt from an ‘Evening *darśana*’ on July 8, 1976 in Washington, D. C.)

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for the volumes and volumes of books, letters and lectures, the formula to perform pure devotional service that begins with chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of the pure devotees.

Śrīla Prabhupāda – “The greatest achievement for a devotee is to become a servant of the servants. Actually no one

should desire to become the direct servant of the Lord. That is not a very good idea. Being the servant of the servants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the highest benediction one can desire.” (Cc. *Madhya* 14. 8)

Your fallen yet inspired servant,

Gauragopāla Dāsa

Gokulānanda Dāsa

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the empowered deliverer of gaura-kṛpā.

Lord Caitanya has been appropriately glorified by His chief follower, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, as *mahā-vadānya-avatāra*, the most magnanimous of all incarnations. So great was His heart’s desire to give the highest perfection, the love of God, even to the least qualified, that His divine sentiment of audārya, of freely giving love of Kṛṣṇa to everyone, overflowed into the pure hearts of His many devoted followers. In deep communion with Mahāprabhu’s unlimited compassion, *gaura-kṛpā*, they have all joined forces to help bring mankind back to reality: to the eternal spiritual realm of pure love, where Lord Kṛṣṇa shares His supremely sweet loving play with innumerable pure servants. In that eternal festival of divine love, all of the Lord’s loving associates swim in the limitless waves of His splendorous beauty. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has now opened the floodgates of that *prema-niketana*, that ocean of divine love, and He has made that perfect realm of limitless happiness come down in an unprecedented shower of divine mercy as the *saṅkīrtana* movement. Thus, by the simple process of *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, all the wayward souls of this temporary world have been offered the greatest of blessings, the blessing of so easily regaining their rightful natural place in the eternal service of the Lord. Although such perfection is rarely accessible, Mahāprabhu has thus sent His empowered associates – carried by His gaura-śakti – to deliver such sweet gifts to every doorstep. Emanating from their empowered pure hearts, that *gaura-śakti* has spread the divine light of love and hope throughout this world of suffering.

From within the Lord’s inner circle, Śrīla Prabhupāda was specifi-

cally chosen to be the greatest ever channel of this divine flood of *gaura-kṛpā*. His appearance in this world is thus the fulfilment of the vision of Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura, as well as the expressed desire of his glorious son, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, to see the great mercy of *karuṇā-avatāra* Śrī Caitanya inundate the whole world. Having spent his entire life deeply absorbed in pure devotion to *guru* and Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda was thus able to deeply realize the sublime truths of *kṛṣṇa-tattva* revealed to the world by Śrī Caitanya and His empowered followers such as the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Sustained by such perfect revelations, he spent his entire life's energy to share these greatest truths for the salvation of all mankind.

One may wonder what the secret of his amazing success was. As in all such matters, the key is also contained in his enlightened books. He often quoted the axiomatic verse “*yasya deve parā bhaktir...*” – that all the truths of transcendental life are fully revealed only to one who has implicit faith in *guru* and the perfect Vedas. We can readily observe in Śrīla Prabhupāda's own life how great his own faith was in his perfect master's every word. After repeatedly being told to spread the sublime message of Mahāprabhu to the English-speaking world, he made that instruction his heart and soul; his life's only mission. Nourished by his unconditional faith, he was thus able to bring down the rare miraculous empowerment of Mahāprabhu Himself, *gaura-śakti*, to fully carry out this divine order and become the perfect architect of the worldwide Hare Kṛṣṇa explosion. A veritable volcano of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Śrīla Prabhupāda was thus able to eventually spread *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* on an unprecedented scale by also attracting thousands of dedicated disciples. Safe and secure in the shelter of his enlightened guidance, they also shared in his faith and preaching potency to most effectively transmit the *yuga-dharma* of *harināma* to countless others.

One obvious measure of Śrīla Prabhupāda's unique potency is the power of his chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. As a pure devotee of Śrī Caitanya from birth, Śrīla Prabhupāda is *nāma-premī*, a devoted lover of the holy name. When he sat down under that tree in New York's Tompkin's Square Park to chant for the pleasure of his great Masters, his pure love for the holy name was able to start working miracles into the hearts of his listeners. When these first fledging followers then started attending his classes, he simply preached the glories of the holy name, along with long potent *kīrtanas* that really changed their hearts. And thus he empowered

them to also spread the chanting everywhere, as it quickly became the anthem of the new hippie counter-culture. Then the Beatles also picked it up from Śrīla Prabhupāda's first recording; and George Harrison recorded the London devotees to spread it further through the radio all around the world.

All this amazing spiritual epidemic is nothing short of a miracle, all emanating from Śrīla Prabhupāda's potent pure chanting. Such are the glories of *gaura-kṛpā*, so abundantly flowing from Śrīla Prabhupāda's heart and lips. May we all continue to bathe our hearts and minds in this divine flood of mercy and thus help spread this greatest blessing to the whole world. All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda! All glories Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga!

Gokulānanda Dāsa
ISKCON Montreal

Haridāsa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

With all respect and perpetual hope in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mercy, though I am fraught with insincerity and misfortune, I offer these words on your appearance day.

You say in your prayer to the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa:

“He (Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī)... bestows devotional service to Kṛṣṇa in various places throughout the world. His desire is very powerful, and thus he is causing the holy name of Lord Gaurāṅga to manifest throughout the countries of the Western world. In all the cities, towns, and villages of the earth, extending to all the oceans, rivers, and streams, everyone is chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and Rāma.”

Somehow (you said “it is all Kṛṣṇa's arrangement”) you came to each of us *personally* to establish Kṛṣṇa consciousness in our

hearts and fulfill your spiritual master's powerful desire. Thank you for having it in your heart to do so and for the

Mantras chanted
Seeds planted
Mercy granted
Tears cried
Miles fled
Risks took
Feasts cooked
Bells rang
Songs sang
Names spoken
Illusions broken
Smiles showed
Glances bestowed
Steps walked
Words talked
Phrases minted
Books printed
Gifts gave
And lives saved.

Your servant's servant,

Haridāsa Dāsa

Janmanālaya Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

1974 Vṛndāvana – The construction of your house is nearly completed, but the work on the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple has not yet begun.

There are the songs of the peacocks, and from distance we hear the *kīrtanas* in the temples of Vṛndāvana. You have taken us here, us, the homesick souls. You have taken us out of the foreign milieu of our cramped merely personal worries and set us down in the

field of eternal Vṛndāvana.

Vṛndāvana – something deep in me is perceiving something of immense value. This is one of the richest times in my life. Instead of being in mad anxiety about the ego, I find myself responding to the world and all its mysteries in an entirely different way. For the first time I bow down in ignorance and confess my limitations. In your presence I bow down and give up my heroic and jealous possession of the life I know and understand – and I am able to allow you to unveil my vision.

The complexity of this world, which bewilders everybody, is becoming transparent. Trust arises. You are there and in your presence the feeling that we live in eternity and yearning for the soul's own milieu, comes so naturally into existence. The soul cycles and circles home and the beauty of your compassion is guiding us in our journey towards home. You want us to be disciplined in the way we live, to be thoughtful and careful in our values and expressions. In times life becomes difficult, I find relief in remembering these moments in your presence.

Could I just once more, experience these eternal moments when you were present there in Vṛndāvana, one more time experiencing being fully absorbed in simply trying to please you – and could I one more time listen to Yamunā Mātājī sitting there in front of your house and singing “*gopīnāth, mama nivedana śuno...*” – one more time taste the Ekādaśī feasts, which your godbrother Ānanda Prabhu cooked for us there – and one more time greet you with *daṇḍavats* when you came back from a tour in the West. These moments are eternally imprinted in my soul and they are light up darker moments in my life.

Allow me to serve you. I want to be there when you call for me, not sleeping but fully awake; then all my *anarthas* go to sleep.

Your servant,

Janmanālaya Dāsa

Rādhā-kuṇḍa Devī Dasī

O my most beloved, dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda! With a straw in my mouth, I fall down and offer my daṇḍavats in the dust of Your golden lotus feet.

O My Most Mystically Miraculous Śrīla Prabhupāda! Your Divine Grace has astounded the entire world with Your unfathomed mystic powers!! You are the transcendental tsunami of causeless mercy, love, and compassion, flowing straight from Lord Caitanya's Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu. You are the most splendid, charming, brilliant moon arising from the four extremely powerful waves of this Eternal Ocean of Pure Nectarean Devotional Service! Śrīla Prabhupāda, You possess the unparalleled mystical opulence of pure kṛṣṇa-prema, and You are our opulence.

O Most Merciful One! That very auspicious day, when You decided to shower Your Liquid Nectar over America, You took Your two karatālas and sang that very first *harināma-saṅkīrtana* to ever happen in USA!! In Tompkins Square Park, You stood there, apparently all alone! But Lord Nityānanda must have been chuckling like anything to see You sweep the entire surface of the globe with *harināma-saṅkīrtana* and Your thousands of BBT *bṛhad-mṛdaṅgas*!!!!... Capturing the hearts of NOT ONE but... BZILLIONS of Jagāis and Mādhāis!!!! AAAAAHH!! How exciting!! How You made Śrī Śrī Nitāi-Gaurāṅga Happy!! Who could imagine how Your ISKCON Bullets (*gulab-jāmunas*) and your BBT Time Bombs were going to change the face of the entire planet!!! Little did the Communists know when You entered Russia like a needle that Your soft golden lotus feet would kick out their Communist Regime! WOW!!! Dismantle the Iron Curtain and change the hearts of millions of Russians, Germans, French, Spanish, Christians, Muslims, Italians, Hindus, English – the world had never heard of Kṛṣṇa! I had to look 'Kṛṣṇa' up in the dictionary... and it wasn't there!!! On and on!!! Your tsunami waves! One after the other!!! Hare Kṛṣṇa was the #1 pop song all over the world!!! JAIHO!!! *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* Published by the largest book publisher in the world!!!! JAIHO!!! Ratha-yātrā down New York's Fifth Avenue!!! The most important street in the world!!!! JAIHO!!! You transplanted Vṛndāvana-dhāma to hundreds of Hare Kṛṣṇa Temples all over the world, even in Muslim and communist countries!!! JAIHO!!! Pig eaters, cow eaters become humans, cow lovers, and lovers of Kṛṣṇa!!! EXCELLENT Śrī la Prabhupāda!!! EXCELLENT!! BRAVO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

O Mighty Magnificent One! Who can describe the infinite potency

of Your two golden Lotus Feet? Maybe Lord Ananta Śeṣa can glorify You properly!! SO MANY miracles You performed AND HOW MANY MORE ARE YET TO COME!!! In a few years You wrote more than 70 books!!! At the same time lecturing and circling the world 14 times in ten years! For You, there is no such thing as impossible!! No such word!! BZILLIONS OF JAGĀIS AND MĀDHĀIS... .TURN THEM INTO DEVOTEES... NO PROBLEM!!!! When they say that You are some great pure devotee, a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*, etc they just don't understand Your full glories. Once your servant, Sudhāmā told us that he asked You who You were in kṛṣṇa-līlā. He informed us that You said "If I told you, you would faint!!!" Rūpa Gosvāmī was Rūpa Mañjarī. Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura revealed that he was Kamala Mañjarī. But they all predicted that the General – in-Chief Senapati was yet to come to do the real magic of spreading this *mahā-mantra* ALL over the entire globe. And of course, that was YOU! Oṃ Viṣṇupāda Paramahaṃsa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottaraśata Śrī Śrīmad A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda!

O Most Celebrated Famous One! Anticipating that You would be ushering in the 10, 000 year Golden Age, Lord Kṛṣṇa had everything necessary sent to this Earth planet: printing presses, paper mills, cars, *saṅkīrtana* vans, computers, tape recorders, dictaphones, Brahmānanda Prabhu, Jayapatākā Mahārāja, and many other *mahā-rathīs*, airplanes, airports, cameras, videos, blenders! Milk powder for Simply Wonderfuls!! Everything was all set and waiting just for You to make Your Legendary Divine Appearance!!! How Exciting!!! All the demigods showering flowers!! In the 1400s when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came, He desired to walk and preach! But for You, His most dear devotee – ONLY THE BEST! He wanted You to zip around in 747s and Rolls Royces!!!! As Lord Kṛṣṇa wanted Arjuna to get all the credit so Lord Kṛṣṇa wanted You to be known as the world famous *yuga-ācārya*, the eminent *senapati mahā-bhāgavata* that spread the holy name to every nook and corner of the planet! He desired for the next ten thousand years, the world would have darśana of YOUR Beautiful Divine Form in photographs, and videos! He wanted everyone to receive and read YOUR Divine Books... .the most astounding, illuminating, resplendent, magnificent, brilliant books this planet has ever seen!! He wanted the whole world to hear YOUR awesome bhajanas and lectures... .NOT HIS!!!! Imagine if we had recordings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu!! But He wanted the world to taste the liquid nectar flowing from YOUR lips!! When we hear Your voice we are immediately transported to the spiritual world! Because Your voice

is mixed with pollen of the Lotus Feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, it can impart kṛṣṇa-prema even in the heart of demons! Today, all the devotees play Your nectar tapes in their rooms 24 hours... all night..all day, non-stop!!! Akhaṇḍa-Śrīla-Prabhupāda!! We're addicted to You, Śrī la Prabhupāda!!!

O Most Munificent One! It is said that one becomes a joker if he tries to repay the spiritual master. Endowed with a prolonged life of Lord Brahmā, still we could not express our indebtedness to You. Thank You Śrīla Prabhupāda!! Thank You! Thank You! Millions of times Thank You Śrīla Prabhupāda... till the end of time..Thank You!!!! As a token of our deepest appreciation, we try to follow Your order to distribute Your books and *prasāda*! And it is the most joyous, ecstatic engagement!! Thank You for engaging us! You write in Your S.B. 4th Canto Purport “The disciple would rather die than fail to execute the Spiritual Master’s order. He should be prepared to lay down his life and abandon all personal considerations to fulfill the spiritual master’s order” You said in L.A., “If you distribute these books, Lord Caitanya will come personally and take you back to Godhead! ”A dead man doesn’t preach. It is inappropriate that a Vaiṣṇava is living and doesn’t preach!” I want everyone out on *saṅkīrtana* party every day.” In Cc.Madhya19.159 You state “To stop preaching to chant in a solitary place is material activity!”. I humbly beg that You please remember this sevā and kindly engage me till my last breath.

O *Para-duḥkha-duḥkhī*! We are missing You Śrīla Prabhupāda. It’s 35 very, very long years since You left us behind. We simply cry from the core of our hearts when we remember You. Memories of You are our most cherished possessions... our most valuable diamonds and gems that we store in the treasure of our hearts. We take them out from time to time and see them glisten in tears of separation. Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda when will we see You again? Lord Caitanya and Lord Kṛṣṇa come to this Earth once in the 24 hours of Lord Brahmā, or billions of years. How often do You come here?? Your absence is very painful.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya, “Of all kinds of distress, what is the most painful? He replied, “Apart from separation from the pure devotee, I know of no other unbearable pain.”

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, catching hold of Śrī Caitanya

Mahāprabhu's lotus feet said, "After unlimited births, I have gotten Your association. Now providence is breaking that. If a thunderbolt hits my head or if my son dies, I can tolerate that. But I cannot endure the sorrow of separation from You!"

Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura once said with tears of love in his eyes to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, "We are exceedingly afflicted Oh Lord and Master! Without You our lives are very dark and gloomy. What was the reason for Your leaving us behind to suffer the excruciating pangs of separation from You? Your leaving us behind is a far more cruel chastisement than death itself! Now kindly return and give us Your mercy. Please forgive us for whatever reason You've left us behind".

Also Queen Kuntī prayed to Lord Kṛṣṇa, "My Lord! Is it true? Are You going away leaving us all behind, though we are completely dependent on Your presence here? We have no other means of protection other than Your lotus feet and You want to leave us!? AAAH! That is not a good proposal! Do not leave us!". We also begged You not to leave us as we had no other shelter other than Your lotus feet and You also didn't listenī "I will smash my head against the rock and enter into fire! Where will I find the awesome reservoir of all wonderful qualities as You? Being unable to obtain the association of Lord Gaurāṅga, Narottama simply weeps."

"O Most Beloved One! Today, the remembrance of You came to me because I have a very great longing I am calling to You. I am Your eternal servant, therefore I am desiring your association so much. O in Your company I will experience great joy once again! I will roll on the ground in ecstasy! O! When will that day be mine again?"

Hā hā Prabhupāda! Nā ṭheliha rāṅgā-pāya, tomā vine ke āche āmāra." Oh My Dear Lord! Please do not push me away from Your reddish lotus feet, for who is my beloved except for You?

Āmi to' kāṅgāla – so lowly – yet still-aspiring to be Your humble servant.

Rādhā-kuṅḍa Devī Dasī

Nandanandana Dāsa

YOUR DIVINE GRACE

Prabhupāda: “Grace means he’ll willingly give you mercy.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I do not exaggerate when I say that you are personally Lord Caitanya’s *audārya* (magnanimity) manifestation. Magnanimous means generous, kind, noble, forgiving, humane, liberal, valiant, and magnificent. Your Divine Grace possesses all those qualities transcendently. If we further make the derivatives from magnificent, then Your Divine Grace are dignified, excellent, glorious, mighty, beautiful, illustrious and grand. Still further defining grand, it means: higher in rank, status or dignity than others having the same title; majestic, stately, dignified, elevated, sublime, grave, preeminent, extraordinary, commanding, overwhelming, foremost and awe-inspiring.

But Your Divine Grace particularly won us over by your great humility.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is said in the Scriptures that one must search and approach a bona fide spiritual master, but in our case Your Divine Grace came to us; in this way making the unfortunate greatly fortunate. It is all due to your boundless mercy. Others vituperate us, deride us and laugh at us due to our low birth, have it not being for you, we would have stand without a chance.

*tad-vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evābhigacchet
samiṁ-pāṇiḥ śrotṛiyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham*

“To learn transcendental subject matter, one must approach the spiritual master. In doing so, he should carry fuel to burn in sacrifice. The symptom of such a spiritual master is that he is expert in understanding the Vedic conclusion, and therefore he constantly engages in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”
(*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1. 2. 12)

In this way we can understand that Your Divine Grace is Lord Nityānanda’s mercy incarnation. So, by your kind recommendation we are getting Caitanya-Nityānanda’s rays of benediction.

And, how can we get Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s mercy without Lord Nityānanda’s grace? Only by Your Divine Grace’s benedictions we

can receive Caitanya-Nityānanda's blessings to enter into the understanding of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa pastimes. *Nitāiyer karuṇā habe braje rādhā-kṛṣṇa pābe.*

Due to my being conditioned by material nature, by mother *māyā*, I think I am this loaned body, this idea is reinforced by others calling me by different names and designations. I am so foolish that I believe all these false ideas, not bearing in mind my *guru's* instructions. I also pray to mother *māyā* to kindly release me from her grip; after all she is the Lord's servant, His *śakti*. She is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's expansion and subordinate. If Lord Nityānanda is pleased, He will recommend me to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and then be released from *māyā*. But, all this is possible only by your loving mercy Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Somehow or other I entered into this material world like entering a pawnshop and getting a bad bargain in the form of a loaned material body, only you came to wake us up from this bad deal and to invite us to make the best use of a bad bargain. Since I am already here, please engage me in your *saṅkīrtana* movement, I beg at your lotus feet. You are very dear to the Lord as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18. 68-69), you are the savior of the fallen, no doubt about it.

Please give me strength to serve you.

Please give me purity to serve you.

Please purify my heart. What can I do but beg unto your lotus feet, I am fully dependent upon you.

Your Divine Grace, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I only beg to serve your lotus feet, *janme janme prabhu sei*, you are my Lord and Master birth after birth.

Your undeserving servant,

Nandanandana Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

By your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I'm able to look back on the past year and view apparent calamities forced upon me as blessings. Even though I do not remember any other time in my life when I suffered as much as I did this year, nor cried as much at your lotus feet, I am deeply grateful for the glimpses of *śāstric* light you allowed to come my way in my darkest hour(s).

My meditation began with "Why me?" After attempting to serve you faithfully for so many years, is this the result?!

Fortunately, however, due to a regulated life behind me of repeatedly opening your Matchless Gifts of the daily *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class, chanting sixteen rounds and rendering some daily service, I could not maintain this victim mentality for long. By the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas I was able to recall that any suffering I experience is but a TOKEN of what I have caused another to suffer in the past. This soon gave way to the deepest feelings of remorse for having inflicted such distress on others. This naturally heightened my sensitivity to avoiding *aparādha* to any living entity, what to speak of the dear Vaiṣṇavas.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please allow me always to remain in the priceless association of your faithful followers who are fixed in service at your lotus feet. By their mercy I may not forget that my happiness lies in service to you. The following prayer, by you, reminds me what to pray for, so as not to get stuck praying for mere liberation when I'm faced with another token of what I deserve. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving me shelter.

Your shameful servant,

Rāgātmikā Devī Dāsī

Sarvamaṅgalā Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

All glories to Your Divine Grace by whose mercy, such a blind fool as myself was engaged in the service of the Lord.

Only you came to save the *mleccha* world from hell – only you cared enough about our suffering

Only you had the courage to personally forge out our path to Godhead, guided only by the hand of the Lord

Only you had the wisdom and discernment to give us the *śāstra* in a language we could understand

Your purports captivated our minds and hearts, giving us new life and an intention for eternity

The relief you offered can never be repaid – you gave us the vision to see the error of our ways

Although not yet pure, our inner vision of you still encourages us to keep trying, no matter the odds

Your poetry in speech, the written word and physical movement has captured us forever

Our only fear is to lose sight of you, lose taste for hearing you or lose hope and faith in your mercy

Now we are older, we have even more appreciation of the sacrifices you made in your later years

We marvel at the youthful zest with which you spread the glories of Lord Caitanya's movement

And we get a taste of the ecstasy for which always anxious we are as we recall you dancing

And sporting in the transcendental mellows of preaching love of God to all who encountered you

Effulgent representative of the Golden Avatar, you carried the message, imbued with His grace

Despite imperfections, our inner longings seem increasingly more felt as all else pales into insignificance

Most of our life is spent – so many failings and falling short – but we have not yet lost sight

Only due to Our Ever Well Wisher, holding the shining lamp of knowledge to show the way and the pitfalls

Though we stumble, we lean on your words, smiles and inner reassurances

Miraculously, the promise of our goal in life exceeds the fear of falling away from the path

Because of you alone, we know that divine mercy exists and our small offerings are counted

We see others going before us with strong faith in you – we witness their transformation

We know we are completely dependent on you and your instructions – nothing else

I pray for forgiveness once again and attempt to serve you with more depth and commitment

Life is only for this – without this, there is no life.

Though I become blinded and confused by the material energy, I know all you have said is true

You are beyond doubt, the great emissary of this age, predicted by the Lord and His devotees

My eternal gratitude for touching me to the core with your merciful glance and instruction

For giving me the loving service of the Lord in His name, form, pastimes, paraphernalia and associates

I fervently pray I may be of some more use in service to the movement for which you sacrificed everything.

With deep gratitude for being your lowly servant,

Sarvamaṅgalā Devī Dāsī

Sevānanda Dāsa

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

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

O Prabhupāda! It's time again to submit our Vyāsa-pūjā offerings at your lotus feet. How does one adequately offer glories to one whose glories are unlimited? How can one whose transcendental glories are unlimited, who is our lord birth after birth, be properly glorified with 1,500 words, when 15 trillion words would not be enough? This is my dilemma.

Though it is my loving duty, I do feel despondent and very much overwhelmed with this impossible task. The anguish of separation, as well as duty, forces me to make such a futile attempt. I propose that even if I were like Śrī Ananta Śeṣa, with thousands of hoods so huge that while they are supporting all the planets in the universe, like so many mustard seeds, He cannot even feel their presence and, with thousands of mouths and trillions of years, He could not describe even a single day of the Lord's glories (Cc. Ādi. 5.117-121), I would have the same problem.

Or even, if I were like Śrī Vyāsadeva's scribe, Lord Śiva's son, Śrī Gaṇeśajī, I could never attain the goal of adequately glorifying your exalted, unlimited, transcendental qualities and activities. Alas! Though it is said, "By the mercy of the Lord, the lame can scale mountains, and the dumb can speak eloquently".

O Prabhupāda! You spent years performing inconceivable *bhajana*, prayer, study, and *tapasya* in preparation to please your Guru Mahārāja in order to save others. In daily *mādhukarī*, you used to beg door to door for scraps of paper on which to write your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* purports.

You used to walk the roundtrip (maybe 20 miles) to Mathurā to sit and preach and distribute your BTG magazine in tea stalls and never even drink water there to save your Guru Mahārāja's dignity. You used to regularly make roundtrips to Delhi, Chandi Chowk, to see the printer for your BTG's and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams*. Trips that would exhaust a young man.

Already in advanced old age and poor health, you left sweet Vṛndāvana to travel alone to the cold and dark unknown of the Western world, all with no dollars, no friends, or relatives, with only some books to sell. All for your Guru Mahārāja, for Kṛṣṇa, and out of your oceanic compassion for the suffering living entities. You gave us Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement and *yuga-dharma*. You said, "I do not mind if I have to live in hell to serve Lord Caitanya's Mission." (Jaladuta diary entry on Gaura-pūrṇimā). You gave us Kṛṣṇa, and you gave us the means to create Vaikuṅṭha – '*śṛṅvatām sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ puṅya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ*'- [SB 1. 2. 17]. And of course, you carried Śrī Vṛndāvana wherever you went. O Prabhupāda! You personally suffered to see the suffering of the conditioned souls.

You gave your very life, you gave your everything, and you saved the world!

You once said that, "You wanted to fight `til your last breath." And that's just what you did, translating from your deathbed. Some god-brothers came to see if you were still alive, and you said, "You tell them that I am still here beating on this drum, this *brhad-mṛdaṅga*."

saj-jana, durjana, paṅgu, jaḍa, andha-gaṇa
prema-vanyāya ḍubāila jagatera jana

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness Movement will inundate the entire world and drown everyone. Whether one be a gentleman, a rogue, or even lame, invalid, or blind."

uchalila prema-vanyā caudike veḍyā

strī, vṛddha, bālaka, yuvā, sabāre ḍubāya

The flood of love of Godhead swelled in all directions, and thus young men, old men, women and children were all immersed in that inundation.”

*jagat ḍubila, jīvera haila bīja nāśa
tāhā dekhi’ pāñca janera parama ullāsa*

When the five members of Śrī Pañca-tattva saw the entire world drown in love of Godhead and the seed of material enjoyment in the living entities completely destroyed, They all became exceedingly happy.” [Cc. Ādi 7:25-27]

O Prabhupāda! You feel suffering at the sufferings of the materially conditioned souls. As disciples we pray, ‘What can we do to give you relief?’ The answer rings back, ‘Follow your instructions, orders, and wishes.’ ‘What can we do to remember you and your instructions?’ The answer echoes, ‘Follow your orders and instructions.’ ‘What can we do to become useful?’ The answer flashes like lightning, ‘Follow your instructions, your orders, and just become useful.’ ‘What can we do to please you?’ Like a thunderclap in answer, ‘Follow your orders, your wishes, and our vows.’ ‘*Yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo*,...’ ‘Only by pleasing you...’ That is the route to our perfection. That is the only way for our redemption.

It is amazing that we could ever forget you for even a moment, just as amazing as it is that we can forget Kṛṣṇa. But it happens, repeatedly. The black curtain of *māyā*’s energy falls upon us as suddenly as a death strike from a black snake on a little mouse. As soon as we are careless on the razor’s edge of spiritual life. Or, try to pursue a material desire, or as soon as we become ‘a little puffed-up,’ ‘Durgā’s energy makes me feel like I am trudging along at the bottom of the 12 mile deep Marianas Trench.

Only the holy names accompanied by your causeless mercy can cut through this ‘*māyā*.’ And your mercy is causeless and oceanic.

Regarding forgiveness for our failures, you once said, “The first time, okay, second time, okay, but third time, I take off my shoe!”... chuckling... you then said, “Actually the spiritual master is unlimitedly merciful, but do not take advantage.” However, as you taught us, “In the hospital the patient must take the prescription of the

doctor. "And good medicine may be bitter to the taste. Not that we can concoct. Spiritual life can at first be bitter, then turn sweet like nectar as we become well. This is your Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement in the service of Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga. Always chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa! We must preach. We must have *harināma-saṅkīrtana* every day, we must distribute your books fulltime, we must study your books, we must attend your temples and centers with full morning and evening programs, we should take advantage of listening to your recorded *japa* chanting and lectures, we must associate with Kṛṣṇa's devotees, we must only take *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*, and every-body must preach according to their capacity.

Preaching Caitanya Mahāprabhu's cult throughout the world is more important than staying in Vṛndāvana or Jagannātha Purī for one's own personal satisfaction. Spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission; therefore His sincere devotees must carry out His desire.

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

The devotees of Lord Caitanya must preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in every village and town in the world. That will satisfy the Lord. It is not that one should act whimsically for his own personal satisfaction. This order comes down through the *paramparā* system, and the spiritual master presents these orders to the disciple so that he can spread the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. It is the duty of every disciple to carry out the order of the bona fide spiritual master and spread Lord Caitanya's message all over the world." *Cc Madhya* 16. 65 purport.

O Prabhupāda! You are still living within our hearts, directing us, and possessing us. Your inspiration is never-ending, We cannot-forget you, if we tried, Nor should we! At initiation, we sighed with relief, " O, now I am saved!" What I did not realize then, was that at that time, I became yours. Your eternal servant. I also swore my oath to you, and to the Deities, and to Śrī Viṣṇu – the Fire. You and your orders became then my life and soul. And we must try and give back – we must try to repay you, though our debt is eternal and not possible to fully repay.

O Prabhupāda! I pleased you a couple of times in the past. Kindly be merciful to me, allow me, empower me to please you again.

Kindly forgive my offenses and give me a place in the cooling shade of your lotus feet.

Your fallen servant,

Sevānanda Dāsa

Vedavyāsa Dāsa

*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,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

In 1972 in Los Angeles, you told your disciples during *Bhāgavatam* class: “Every one of you follow the instructions as you have received; chant sixteen rounds regularly, without fail, and follow the regulative principles, hear about Kṛṣṇa, and preach about Kṛṣṇa — every one of you become a spiritual master. Simple thing.”

And then you continued saying:

“Sometimes people in India say, “Swamiji, you have done wonderful.” I don’t know. I’m not a magician. But, so far I am confident that I did not adulterate the words of Kṛṣṇa. That’s all. That’s my credit. I did not like to take the position of Kṛṣṇa. I remained a servant of Kṛṣṇa, and I spoke what Kṛṣṇa said. That’s all. This is my secret. So everyone can do that. There is nothing magic. The magic will act as soon as you become a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa. The magic will be done by Kṛṣṇa, not by me or you.”

In “*Prayers to the Spiritual Master*”, Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura calls upon us:

*guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete koriyā aikya,
ār nā koriho mane āsā*

“Make the teachings from the lotus mouth of the spiritual master one with your heart, and do not desire anything else.”

Gurudeva! Kṛpā-bindu diyā, O Gurudeva, please give me a drop of your mercy and enable me to cast aside all selfish motives, so that my heart may become one with your instructions. Let me become a perfect instrument in your hands. Let my only desire be to propagate ‘*kṛṣṇa-upadeśa*, what Kṛṣṇa has said, or what is spoken about Kṛṣṇa —without adulteration— wherever I go.

In the purport to Text 5 of Chapter 13 of *Ādi-līlā*, you ask all of your followers to assist you in the mission to spread Kṛṣṇa’s word everywhere: “Only the devotees of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu can dissipate the darkness of Kali-yuga, the ignorance of the population of this Age. No one else can do so. We therefore wish that all the devotees of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement may reflect the supreme sun and thus dissipate the darkness of the entire world.”

In the text, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī glorifies the devotees of ŚrīCaitanya Mahāprabhu as *candra-gaṇa*, a host of moons, who reflect the principal moon, Caitanyacandra, by distributing *prema-jyotsnāya*, the full light of love of Godhead, all over the three worlds.

By your personal example you have shown us what the effect will be if the heart becomes a perfect reflector of the Supreme Sun and the Supreme Moon. Such a heart becomes a touchstone, and the waves of *bhakti-bhāva* that emanate from it will touch the hearts of fortunate *jīvas* and leave there an indelible impression. With this vision in mind, you founded ISKCON and opened temples all over the world. As you said in another class, in 1975 in Vṛndāvana: “Why we are establishing so many centers? Just to give the people in general the chance of association. It is very important thing, association. *Saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmaha*.”

By your divine association you touched our hearts and transformed countless crows into swans. And you expected us to follow your example, above all, by becoming pure chanters of the holy name. As you said in 1969: “Our devotional practice and purity shall be so strong that wherever we chant there will be immediately an impression in the audience for devotion to Kṛṣṇa.”

Your heart was a perfect reflector and thus invited Kṛṣṇa do His magic. It was a perfect reflector, a powerful touchstone, because you made the words from the lotus mouth of your spiritual master one with your heart.”

I pray that, by your grace, my heart too will be blessed with a fraction of your touchstone quality, a fraction of your reflector quality, so that Kṛṣṇa can do His magic. If then, as a result, even only one fortunate soul becomes attracted to the Supreme Magician and takes shelter at His lotus feet, I will consider my life successful.

Your aspiring servant,

Vedavyāsa Dāsa

Yādavendu Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I'd just like to express my gratitude on your 116th birthday for your efforts in delivering the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the world.

You were prepared to go through any difficulty to fulfil the order of your spiritual master, but your primary aim was to deliver the fallen conditioned souls of the Age of Kali. Your movement has not yet manifest its full glory, there are still problems to overcome, but I believe the day will come when ISKCON will (by your grace) exceed all expectations, fulfilling the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Your servant,

Yādavendu Dāsa

Yājñavalkya Dāsa

Every morning, immediately before I begin my devotional activities, I say a little prayer to remind myself of my extraordinarily fortunate position: “By the causeless mercy of Śrī Nityānanda Rāma, I have been granted initiation into the line of devotion coming directly from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself, by a bone-fide *jagad-guru*, Śrīla Prabhupāda. This is a rare, matchless gift, and I must not squander it.”

In 1965, you gave up your blissful quarters at the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple in Vṛndāvana to come to this dark land, just to fulfil the orders of your Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. What astonishing wonders you accomplished in just 12 years!

The debauchery of so-called ‘*gurus*’ and *bhogī-yogīs* coming to the West from India and Tibet causes so many to be suspicious and jaded. Yet your character always remained absolutely spotless. The teachings of Śrī Caitanya are the absolute pinnacle of theistic thought, bar none, and you presented these peerless teachings, pure and unadulterated.

How greatly wonderful and fortunate we are to have been able to have the blessings of your association!

Still aspiring to be the servant of your servant,

Yājñavalkya Dāsa

Yaśomatī Devī Dāsī

All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Recently, I was preparing a talk for the Vyāsa-pūjā of one of your disciples, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I welcomed the opportunity to ponder on your good qualities and how they are manifested in your disciples. On that day, I was meditating on your compassion, as it stood out significantly in this particular devotee. I have certainly seen your compassion shining brightly in many of my godsiblings,

nieces and nephews. Many lives are being changed as my godbrothers/sisters relentlessly continue to preach and give shelter to newcomers, in spite of unforeseen, severe challenges due to their aging bodies and other complications of this material world. In sickness or in health, with their mind, body and spirit, without any fear that the process will work on all, they go on with renewed strength, remaining detached from the result of their efforts. I stand in awe.

Compassion is a clear manifestation of the faith one has in the process of chanting the holy names. When one truly believes in the power of the holy name, how can he/she hold on to this precious gift without sharing it? The more one gives it away, the more one has, however if one holds on to it without sharing, all his knowledge and realizations leak away as if stored in a cracked pot. There is nothing that can compare to this most precious jewel which you distributed wholesale around the world and still are through your sincere disciples.

Could you please bless me with this deep faith so that I can also, learn to have compassion on others and share the glories of the holy name, before any semblance of realization permanently escapes the self-centered and cracked vessel of my heart.

I admire their dedication as I can, at most, bear witness. Unable to remove my mind from its enthronement, I leave no place for *jīva-doyā* or *guru-bhakti* to enter my heart. Being thus blinded from opportunities of true service, I stagnate, pretending to be a devotee. I envy the devotion of others and wonder if one day you will also favor me with this same faith and a clear vision of how I can best please you.

I pray for true, causeless and uninterrupted devotional service.

Nityānanda Prabhu was going everywhere offering the holy names to everyone he met. Haridāsa Ṭhākura described him as a mad man while conversing with Advaita Ācārya. He even approached violent drunkards, known to be inimical. My godbrothers and god-sisters may be described as mad also for going on at the cost of their well being. In my eyes, this madness makes them heroes worthy of praise as they understand the real meaning and purpose of their life while I pay lip service to dedicating my life to your mission. You are my life, your mercy is all I am made of, yet as I outwardly pretend to be a devotee my mind remains my true master. When

will the outside truly match the inside? When will my service truly begin?

Please be merciful onto me, as I attempt to purchase sincerity with my daily *sādhana*.

I was reading the other day a translated essay from your Śrīla Prabhupāda, HDG Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and became very touched by this statement as it reached me like a sharp arrow:

“The five transcendental relationships exist in all completeness within the Supreme Lord,”

This was nothing new, he then continues:

“but we will be unable to gain transcendental knowledge of the Lord if we engage our moods in the worldly counterparts of these five instead of dedicating them to the Supreme Lord Himself.” – Prabhupāder Upadeśāmṛta

“Unable to gain transcendental knowledge of the Lord,” I remembered You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, also telling us the same and went back to see.

“When a person becomes attracted by Kṛṣṇa and is in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he does not care for any worldly duties, even though very urgent. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is so powerful that it gives everyone relief from all material activities. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written a very nice verse wherein one gopī advises another, “My dear friend, if you desire to enjoy the company of material society, friendship and love, then please do not go to see this smiling boy Govinda, who is standing on the bank of the Yamunā and playing His flute, His lips brightened by the beams of the full moonlight.” Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī indirectly instructs that one who has been captivated by the beautiful smiling face of Kṛṣṇa has lost all attraction for material enjoyments. This is the test of advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness: a person advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness must lose interest in material activities and personal sense gratification.

This is when I realized how you purchased our hearts, using

such a gentle approach, not forcing anything but encouraging and nurturing our fledgling attraction. I so admired your compassionate words fostering your disciples to grow into loving dedicated servants of the servants of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. What would have happened to us without your tender guidance? You expertly filtered the strong words of your *guru* so that we could embrace them. A truly empowered representative!

Such is your legacy, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You must be so proud of your sincere disciples and grand-disciples who go on soothingly presenting Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission to the suffering Kali-yuga souls, opening their arms, and hearts, welcoming new comers as they patiently train them in living a truly human life, a life wherein service to the holy name is the center.

I pray at the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatīour whole *guru-paramparā* that they may guide me to serve you better, to understand and live out my part in your glorious mission without regards for my personal ambitions or comforts.

I seek their blessings to one day also become “a madly dedicated servant.”

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your servant,

Yaśomatī Devī Dāsī

Ekānātha Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Being an uneducated low class wretched fool, how can I fully appreciate your exalted spiritual position? All I have done is aimlessly

wandered throughout the material world for millions of lifetimes simply for the sake of flickering sense pleasure. But by your exceedingly sublime mercy you destroyed the dense darkness of ignorance by the shining light of transcendental knowledge.

Your sharp witted mind was always striking. You were once asked by a lady reporter, “Why do you people have bald heads?” You immediately retorted, “Why do you have bare legs?” She was unable to counter your argument. You went on to say, “Better to have warm legs and a cool head.

You must have a cool head to understand this Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy.”

Having seen you only a few times before I moved to India, it was always in a formal mood. In Calcutta 1973, I was pleasantly surprised and very much delighted to see you conversing with your guests in a very relaxed and joyful mood. You looked extremely happy and were fully at ease. You appeared just like a small boy completely happy and at peace. Being a very young servant in the movement at that time, I thought, hey, this spiritual life got some definite potential. Wouldn't it be wonderful to feel like Prabhupāda does permanently? These were my neophyte thoughts then, and still are. Each time I see a picture of Your Divine Grace in that setting, like the one on the rooftop in Bombay, it reminds me what I experienced in Calcutta back then.

I wanted to thank you with all my heart for your divine mercy and blessings. I desire that someday I want to return you a substantial and meaningful favor, one way or another.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Your menial foolish servant,

Ekanātha Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept these words of reflection and appreciation as my humble obeisance to you on this day of celebrating your appearance:

It is early and still dark as *maṅgala-ārati* ends, and the six or seven of us present touch our heads to the tile floor, hearing and responding to the *prema-dhvani*. No longer do we hear the village dogs that have kept their barking vigil by the hundreds throughout the night: now they sleep, satisfied that they have faithfully kept all dangers at bay. We are in a small, rather make-shift temple outside Mendoza, western Argentina, near the Andes Mountains—an unlikely place to be hearing *saṁsāra-dāvānala-līḍha-loka-trāṇāya*.... After *tulasī-pūjā*, Baladeva Prabhu reads briefly from *Nectar de la Devocion*. With my minimal knowledge of Spanish, I recognize that he is reading the section in which you describe Kṛṣṇa’s flutes.

In a gentle sort of way, a feeling of simple well-being and appreciation comes to me at this moment: How wonderful it is that Kṛṣṇa has different flutes, of different sizes, for different occasions and purposes! And how wonderful it is that we can hear and know this detail about Kṛṣṇa; and that we can hear and know this and so much else about Kṛṣṇa and the process of approaching and serving Him by means of hearing from your “summary study” of Rūpa Gosvāmī’s treatise; and that anyone and everyone can know all this—not just English speakers, as you kindly wrote for the likes of myself in English, but also, by the tireless efforts of your many translators, Spanish speakers and Putonghua (Mandarin) speakers, and speakers of more and more languages worldwide; and we can come to know, by means of this simple practice of morning *sādhana*, including hearing briefly every day from *Nectar of Devotion*, just how wonderful is Kṛṣṇa... !

This description of Kṛṣṇa’s flutes are in Chapter 26 of the *Nectar of Devotion*, entitled “*Stimulation for Ecstatic Love*.” You wrote, “*Muralī* is about eighteen inches long with a hole at the end and four holes on the body of the flute. This kind of flute produces a very enchanting sound.” I like to think that it is quite “routine” for you to hear this enchanting sound of the *muralī* flute; that one day by your

grace and my determined service I may also hear this sound (or the sound of any other of Kṛṣṇa's flutes); but also that actually your words are, when I properly hear them, in themselves constituted of the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute—the means by which Kṛṣṇa sends his message through the darkness of this world into our hearts. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for kindly giving me and all of us, your faithful followers—including this small group of souls in this remote place—this opportunity to hear about Kṛṣṇa's several flutes, and thus to become filled in the heart with the divine music that Kṛṣṇa ever plays for and with us.

Your eternal servant,

Kṛṣṇa-kṣetra Dāsa
(Oxford)

Lalitā-sakhī Devī Dāsī

Śāstra confirms that the spiritual realm is unlimited, that this material world is but a tiny clouded portion of eternal existence. To guide the *jīvas* wandering there to their home of unlimited loving relationship, the Lord sends his divine messengers. Those servants, Śrī Guru to us, are so dear to Kṛṣṇa that He becomes attracted to the *jīvas* who serve them. Śrīla Prabhupāda used the example: love me, love my dog. If you love those dear to me, then I love you. *Gurudeva* offers us the opportunity to discover an unlimited life of love, and by affectionately serving the *guru*, Kṛṣṇa will notice us and want to bring us to Himself. Kṛṣṇa sends the *guru*, and it is only through *guru* that we can approach Kṛṣṇa.

If Śrī Guru's world is that ever-expansive place of love, is it logical to consider that his message to us is only available enclosed within four walls? Can the unlimited spiritual realm exist within the confines of our limited perception? Is it really glorification to limit Śrī Guru to a particular institution, when his own world is beyond conception? Śrīla Prabhupāda gave us far more than the organization he founded and led. Progressive development in any field of activity requires organization for effective management of people and resources. We should certainly dedicate ourselves to serving him in that capacity, but if in doing so we reject all other participants

in the Lord's unlimited pastime, we risk disservice.

Just a glimpse of Śrīla Prabhupāda's greatness is that he attracted and created by his devotion many thousands of followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, spread the chanting of *harināma* all over the world, authored an impressive number of transcendental books to attract and educate people, and inspired his students to give their lives to spreading those teachings through book distribution and maintaining beautiful temples.

But we must be careful to not judge our personal spiritual success by the external results of outreach alone. We must measure our personal internal development. Are we becoming selfless servants of the Vaiṣṇavas? Śrīla Prabhupāda's goal for us was, in his own words, to "become lovers of Kṛṣṇa." Anything less is not full success. Can we ever really love Kṛṣṇa without appreciating all those whom Kṛṣṇa loves?

Just as a loving parent trains a child to responsibly move in life outside the home, our spiritual father would expect us to grow and engage in healthy interaction with a wider world than the family home in which we took our birth. The world houses many other Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava groups who share the goal of serving Kṛṣṇa's dear servants, of bringing lost souls to their loving master for His pleasure. We limit the glories of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda by confining them to our childhood home. He was said to be capable of building a house in which the whole world could live.

Can we reasonably expect the whole world to be accommodated in the house of our spiritual birth? Perhaps it behooves us, the disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda, to extend ourselves to accommodate a bigger house in which all Vaiṣṇavas reside, not rejecting our original family but instead embracing our dear relatives. Differences in style and detail will exist, but the important principles by which we live are shared.

The topmost devotees recognize every living entity, what to speak of other Vaiṣṇavas, as serving Kṛṣṇa. One must start somewhere to develop love for all of Kṛṣṇa's servants. Śrīla Prabhupāda's glories will not be diluted by such extension, rather they will expand to reveal his ultimate gift, a world composed only of love and appreciation for all of Kṛṣṇa's servants.

All glories to our beloved *gurudeva*, His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Begging for service to the servants of the servants,

Lalitā-sakhī Devī Dāsī

Jñānagamyā Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances, all glories to you and your incredible International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

Rather than go into a long dissertation of my faults and foolishness, I simply wish to offer you my thanks for allowing me to participate in your movement now for almost exactly forty years.

I have seen your society grow and flourish over these most enjoyable years. I am inspired by the devotees coming today to surrender their lives to your mission. They see your example shining still, even many years after your physical presence. Daily classes from your books create in these devotees the same inspiration you gave us by your personal association. One needed only to try to understand your message to appreciate the unique and colossal impact of your words. Now more and more of the intelligent class of men and women you wanted to attract are coming to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet as your unfettered, unlimited mercy continues to rapidly spread world-wide.

Of course, we early pioneers were also intelligent but, as pioneers are often found to be rather dirty and course we were also not so careful with the management of the Society. Still ISKCON is in a flux situation, trying to create a mission that is truly open to all and yet pure, steadfast, and spiritually realized in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and your instructions.

When one sees the horror of false ego, its motivation for profit, adoration and distinction, that lies behind all but a few of our moves and motives one seeks to retire from the roles of leadership and

management and even participation.

When one is “on to himself” in this regard he becomes morose and timid. Motivation is lost and momentum slows when one sees his own faults all too clearly. Unless one is pure at heart, a condition you so kindly exemplified for us, he will not persevere in the society you have created.

And so I take shelter of the basic process of chanting and hearing on a daily basis, waiting for that pure transformation to mystically elevate me to a platform of pure humility. From that vantage, looking up to all my devotee associates, your children and family, I pray to be of some simple service at their feet.

Thank you for the spiritual life you have given me, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thank you, I am grateful.

Please forgive my countless offenses. Please take me home, back to Godhead, back to Kṛṣṇa.

The materially useless,

Jñānagamyā Dāsa

Kāla Dāsa

Hare Kṛṣṇa,

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

May your mercy be available to everyone, for that is the medication needed to free us all from the addictions and allurements by which *māyā* has captured us (me). I don't say this whimsically but base my prescription on years of observation and documentation. Lives have been changed for the good. Lives have been saved from ruination. Lives have been enriched through your guidance and recommendations. How many lives have been thus affected is very hard to say because the medication seems to never run out; there seems to be an endless supply, evidenced by ongoing reports of

wondrous changes taking place in people's lives, simply by reading your books, simply by hearing your recordings and simply by hearing stories about you from your many followers.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your appearance on this planet may not have been what you wanted, but Lord Kṛṣṇa knew how your presence here was just what we needed. The timing was perfect, the audience was receptive, the need was immediate. Everything was just right and you took full advantage of the situation, never letting up for even a moment; you showed us what life in the spiritual world is like through your example.

You had no lack of energy, most of your young followers found it hard to keep up. So all we could do was follow you. Being ever kind and remembering why you were here you would stop and let us catch up. I am praying from the depth of my being, could you please let me catch up once more, as the distance (due to my own weakness) is creating a gap that is bigger than I ever thought would grow. My speed and energy is curtailed by my own sickness, which I have left untreated and now makes me vulnerable and easy to material influences. I have become easy prey for *māyā* and she is sure to finish me off if you don't once again step in to protect me.

You see what I've just done in writing this? I start off with a prescription which I, in the end, fail to apply, in proper doses, to myself. I've always been proud in telling others what's good for them but so lacking in self discipline. Even in writing here, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, prove to be my teacher, for just talking with you it becomes evident that my wicked past is still a part of my present. There's one thing I need to make my life have any meaning at all and that is that you kindly remember me at the time of my leaving this body. I know you have a lot of better things to think about than me. You have so many nice and sincere followers. But here's the thing, they're doing nicely and I'm not, so I need you more than ever and I want you to know that I'm not saying this whimsically. I have nowhere else to go, so I'm lying down tired, in the footprints of your divine lotus feet, in all humility at my command... grant me the opportunity to come close to you once more. Please wait up for me... I will catch up if you only wait. Please, please wait. I will get up if I see you wait, but if you keep walking at your normal speed then all hope for me is lost. Will you come back and look for me? I think I'm still on the path. Those are your footprints I see, right?

I have to get up and quit lying down. What right do I have to ask you to wait for me? I have no real right, I only have this strong feeling that you love me and won't leave me here, will you?

After all, why did you come here in the first place? You knew how weak I was! You knew I was a basket case! You won't give up on me, right? You can't! I won't let you. I'm going to get up and run, grab hold of your *dhotī* and I won't let go, even if your guards beat me. You won't let them beat me, will you Śrīla Prabhupāda? You know I'm mad right, so please don't let them beat me, please protect me out of pity. Remember I once served you nicely? It was OK, right?

I can easily ramble on and on but I know you have to go for *darśana*. Thanks for waiting, I feel a little closer again just by writing here on this wonderful occasion of your blessed appearance anniversary.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my plea.

Your aspiring servant,

Kāla Dāsa

Bhūmi Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your Lotus feet.

Once again, we, your disciples, come together to offer homage to you, on your divine appearance day. We are privileged to be able to participate in this joint effort of tributes and I cannot begin before I have thanked H.H. Jayādvaīta Swami and his staff, of hardworking and dedicated devotees, who have made this opportunity available to us and are determined to get this book published, paid for and distributed to all participating devotees in time for your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, the most important of all Vaiṣṇava holy days. The emergence of this book of Tributes is a sign that health is being restored to your ISKCON movement and for this and many other

reasons I am optimistic for our future.

When you departed this world in 1977, you left an exciting, thriving and vibrant movement. Everything was in place for ISKCON to move forward with the strong foundation you had laid out for us. What you accomplished in only a few short years was predicted by Lord Caitanya and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and is the stuff of legends. You were personally instructed by your Guru Mahārāja from your very first meeting to take up this great mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and make it available for the entire world. Fulfilling this urgent desire of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura became embedded in your heart and as you matured in years, you did not slow down to retire to a quiet life in the holy *dhāmas* as so many other devotees have traditionally done.

Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja says, “My dear Lord Nṛsimhadeva, I see that there are many saintly persons indeed, but they are interested only in their own deliverance. Not caring for the big cities and towns, they go to the Himalayas or the forest to meditate with vows of silence [*mauna-vrata*]. They are not interested in delivering others. As for me, however, I do not wish to be liberated alone, leaving aside all these poor fools and rascals. I know that without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, without taking shelter of Your lotus feet, one cannot be happy. Therefore I wish to bring them back to shelter at Your lotus feet.” [SB 7. 9. 44]

You have shown by example how a Vaiṣṇava devotee is pained with compassion for those lost souls who insist on rotting in the material world. Such a magnanimous soul feels great anxiety to see the pitiful state of the fallen conditioned souls, of this age of Kali, and desperately wants to give them the opportunity to be rescued from this miserable cesspool, regardless of their attachment to remaining here. Hence, Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja refers to those of us who foolishly waste our human form of life as “fools and rascals”. A true Vaiṣṇava will never give up on these poor foolish dwellers of this age and say, “They are such rascals, let them rot!” Rather, he is busy night and day, scheming how to bring some fortune into the lives of those who are destined for millions of lifetimes of unbearable suffering.

This human form of life is a great boon. 99.99% of the humans in this world will never see another human birth for countless lifetimes, suffering unbearably for the incredibly sinful acts committed

in a futile attempt to enjoy, while completely forgetting God.

Nāmācārya Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura says: “My dear Lord, do not be in anxiety. Do not be unhappy to see the condition of the *yavanas* in material existence.” [Cc. *Antya* 3. 52]

In your purport you say: “These words of Haridāsa Ṭhākura are just befitting a devotee who has dedicated his life and soul to the service of the Lord. When the Lord is unhappy because of the condition of the fallen souls, the devotee consoles Him, saying, “My dear Lord, do not be in anxiety.” This is service. Everyone should adopt the cause of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to try to relieve Him from the anxiety He feels. This is actually service to the Lord. One who tries to relieve Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s anxiety for the fallen souls is certainly a most dear and confidential devotee of the Lord. To blaspheme such a devotee who is trying his best to spread the cult of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the greatest offense. One who does so is simply awaiting punishment for his envy.”

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a vessel of compassion. In you dwells an unswerving determination to deliver the fallen. In this regard, you have instructed us not to waste our time supporting stop-gap solutions nor should we adopt “causes” that only address the material suffering of a living entity, such as feeding the hungry, animal rights, helping to put an end to war or any number of other so-called welfare programs, which simply saves the “shirt of the drowning man”. You have given us the example of how the hand may foolishly want to be independent of the body, thinking, “why shall I put food into the mouth and feed the belly, what about me?” But the hand can only be nurtured fully if he serves the stomach and places food into mouth, thereby serving the entire body. We are never independent.

Another wonderful example you give is that of the tree. If we attempt to water each individual leaf, the entire tree will dry up and wither. The water must be applied to the root and then the entire tree receives nourishment and can thrive. There is no other way; we do not need to “occupy” anything, join forces with the 99%, become a vegan, or an animal rights activist, or feed the starving masses (other than those that are starving for Kṛṣṇa’s mercy in the form of *prasādam*). What we need to do is get back out on *saṅkīrtana* – fill the streets with the holy names and distribute your books. Śrī la Bhaktisiddhānta called the printing press “the BIG *mṛdaṅga*”. A

chanting party with its many *mṛdaṅgas* and *karatālas* can be heard for only a couple of blocks at the most, but when one book is distributed, it can find its way all over the world and into every home.

Somehow when we follow your simple program we make tons of devotees. Granted, you left us when we were still in our infancy as a movement and the ensuing chaos had all but brought your preaching mission to a stand-still in North America and other places in the world. We seriously let you down, and for that we should all feel great regret.

In a letter to one of your disciples you said, “We have got so much vital spiritual knowledge to distribute to the public and they are in desperate need of it. The whole world is going to hell and everyone is suffering. In light of this, how can we argue amongst one another and neglect our responsibility for reclaiming these fallen souls for going Back to Home, Back to Godhead.”

This is my meditation as I celebrate your holy Vyāsa-pūjā day, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda. To assist you in your mission, we must adopt your mood of bringing this Kṛṣṇa consciousness to each and every soul on this planet. I pray that I may become completely focused on this, your mission, and in doing so, please you as you have pleased your spiritual master and the entire disciplic succession.

In eternal gratitude,

Your disciple,

Bhūmi Devī Dāsī

Durgama Dāsa

Most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Everyday I’m indebted to you – listening to your lectures on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, especially the one which you gave comment re-

garding Kuntī-devī’s prayers ‘*vipadaḥ... apunar bhava-darśanam*’ [SB 1. 8. 25 in Los Angeles, 3rd January, 1974]. In so many ways you make it clear that there is no alternative but to tolerate. This world is full of calamities and you gave us all the transcendental instructions. It is always so easy to be in touch with the Supreme Lord by chanting His holy name. By your mercy everything is possible. You are an ocean of mercy, full of compassion and concern for the well being of everyone. You are the friend to all. Please Śrī la Prabhupāda bestow again your causeless mercy on this foolish fallen soul by giving the energy to serve you more in distributing the transcendental books to those who may not want in the beginning, but because of your magnanimity and inspiration difficult things become easy. Also by the mercy of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva, every day in Māyāpur-dhāma, lucky souls are doing nice service. I try to be always grateful and bow down by serving your lotus feet divine, and read your ecstatic books that you so kindly translated and explained for the benefit of the world. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Please bless the devotees in Tripura state of India and in particular – Udaipur, a temple near Agartala – the people create difficulty for us. Please give a prayer to your Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva to help us.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, all glories to you again and again.

Your dedicated devotees in Udaipur and your menial servant,

Durgama Dāsa

Tāraṇī Devī Dāsī

Prabhupāda gave the world the most precious gift of all, the books he translated. For 5000 years these scriptures have been waiting for Prabhupāda.

Along with Lord Caitanya’s Advent, Prabhupāda has given the world proof that chanting the *mahā-mantra* will wake you up in one lifetime. That is 16 rounds a day, four regulative principles and read the books. There, go home. So easy even this fallen soul could do it. So you want to go home?

Try this simple formula Prabhupāda has given to everyone by the grace of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, and go home. Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Tāraṇī Devī Dāsī

Arjuna Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

By your infinite and causeless mercy, we are beginning to realize how you are the most important representative of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda. In the *Prema-vilāsa*, when Mahāprabhu, absorbed ecstatically in *kīrtana*, danced through Kānāi Nāṭaśālā, He began to roar out the name Narottama. When Nityānanda asked Him why He was calling out this name, Mahāprabhu answered, “My Lord. You do not know your own glories. When we went to Jagannātha Purī, you daily shed tears of divine love. I managed to capture your divine love and save it. Now I will keep it here in the Padmavatī River for Narottama Dāsa.”

Lord Nityānanda was always deeply absorbed in divine love. This *paramānanda*, or highest bliss, (*nityānandaṁ ahaṁ naumī sarvānanda-karaṁ param*) was thus taken from Lord Nityānanda and given by Mahāprabhu to the *ācāryas* of our disciplic succession. You received this most precious treasure of Gaura-Nitāi's *prema-dhana* from your Guru Mahārāja, *Parama-mahā-bhāgavata* and *mahānta-sad-guru* His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, and you are now widely and most liberally distributing this mercy to one and all throughout the whole world through your sincere and faithful representatives. The ecstasy of such love of God vastly surpasses any pleasure derived from intoxication or sex, so it is imperative that we qualify, (*ṭṛṇād api su-nīcena, taror iva sahiṣṇunā, amāninā māna-dena, kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ. Raising my hands, I declare, “Everyone please hear me! String this verse on the thread of the holy name and wear it*

on your neck for continuous remembrance.” Cc. Ādi 17. 31, 32), in order to receive this *prema-dhana* from Your Divine Grace if we really want to go back home, back to Godhead.

You are the greatest representative of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma. Like Lord Balarāma you forge our hearts in the white hot furnace of pure devotional service and thus burn away all our past sins and entangling bad *karma*. With His plow weapon, you break up the drought hardened earth in the core of our hearts and rip out all the weeds of *kāma*, *lobha* and *pratiṣṭhā/pūjā*. By hearing your sweet and love saturated chanting of the all powerful holy name you shower our hearts with nectar and make it a fit place for growing the vine of devotion. With tremendous blows of Lord Balarāma’s *muṣala*, [His club-like pestle], (*nityānandāveśe kaila muṣala dhāraṇa*, Cc. Ādi 17. 16), like the blacksmith’s big hammer, you shape our hearts, minds and intelligence into a formidable and razor-sharp sword of *divya-jñāna*, divine knowledge and detachment, (*asaṅga-śastreṇa dṛḍhena chittvā*, Bg. 15. 3 and *jñānāsim acyuta-balo dadhad asta-śatruḥ svānanda-tuṣṭa upasānta idaṁ vijahyāt* SB 7. 15. 45). With this sword we easily cut asunder all the hard knots of material attachments and conditioning. As we read in your Matchless Gift: Liberation in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, chapter 7, “Śukadeva Gosvāmī says that one can put an end to material life by one stroke (*kevalayā*). There is no need to first undergo severe penance and austerity, practice celibacy, control the mind and the senses, give in charity, perform great sacrifices and become very truthful and clean. Simply by one stroke—by accepting Kṛṣṇa consciousness—one immediately rises to the highest position.

By just taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one develops all transcendental qualifications. The goldsmith uses a small hammer and taps the gold many times, but the blacksmith uses a large hammer and with one stroke his job is finished. This is the blacksmith’s method: we take the big hammer of *bhakti-yoga* and finish all material life. There is no need to undergo the many lesser disciplines, nor to follow any other process. Since such a method is not practical in this present age, the goldsmith method has to be discarded. The solution is to take the blacksmith’s hammer of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and finish off all sinful reactions immediately.”

Thank you for this priceless mercy. Thank you for giving us Lord Nityānanda’s nectarean *prema-dhana*, (*divya jñān hṛde prakāśito, prema-bhakti jāhā hoite, avidyā vināśa jāte, Śrī Guru-vandanā* by-

Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura), by which we can reject the conditioning of our habitual material pleasures. Thank you for thus purifying our minds and enabling us to become again attracted to Lord Kṛṣṇa's exquisite and delightful flute playing, (*vamśī-vādye gopī-gaṇera vane ākarṣaṇa Cc. Ādi 17. 237*).

Thank you for your wonderfully glorious ISKCON. Thank you for giving us such a well trained GBC body of saintly devotees. Thank you for inspiring them to facilitate the ISKCON Leadership Sanga meetings in Māyāpur this year, and thus so nicely inspiring us and all your ISKCON society. Thank you for the uplifting association of so many brilliant and dedicated ILS servants and savants. Thank you for the daily opportunity of having the privilege of practicing Lord Gaura-Nitāi's *yuga-dharma*, *śrīharināma-saṅkīrtana*. Thank you for the *bṛhad-mṛdaṅga* of transcendental book distribution.

You accepted those of us who were the most fallen as your disciples. We have not heard of or seen anyone else as compassionate as your lotus self. You are the most merciful *ācārya* who came and taught a hard hearted world the true meaning of compassion. Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi are so very merciful in uplifting the fallen souls of this degraded Age and you are the personification of Their combined mercy. As H.H. Satsvarūpa Mahārāja relates in '*Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlā, A World Tour*', of when you were in Mexico, you quietly told Hanumān, who had fallen from his *sannyāsa* vows,

“Lord Caitanya is God. He can spread this movement all over the world in one second without the help of anyone if He likes. I am not God. I am simply a servant of God. I require so much assistance to help me spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. If someone renders even some small service to help me, I am eternally indebted to him. You have rendered so much assistance to me, how could I reject you?”

Just see the depth of your compassion!

When you were on a morning walk in Mauritius in October 1975, when asked about the possibility of the government becoming perfect in this day and age, you commented,

“Even in our camp, there are so many rascals. Even they have come to be reformed, they remain rascals. They cannot give up their rascal habits. Therefore it has been generalized – *manda* –

all bad. But the only difference is, in our ISKCON camp, the rascals are being reformed. Outside there is no one being reformed. There is no hope of their becoming good. Outside, there is no hope. That is the difference. By following Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's reformatory process, one can become good. Mahāprabhu's name is *patita-pāvana*. He is delivering all bad men. In Kali-yuga there are no good men at all – everyone is bad, so how the government will be good?"

You have the vision of a *mahā-bhāgavata* of the highest caliber. Some of your less advanced godbrothers dared criticize you for having us address each other as "Prabhu", saying that there are only two *prabhus* as instructed by Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata*, but you saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead everywhere and in everyone, and teach us to do the same. You practically demonstrated the last instructions given by Lord Kṛṣṇa to Uddhava in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11th Canto, Chapter 29, Verses 12 to 22, as follows,

"With a pure heart one should see Me, the Supreme Soul within all beings and also within oneself, to be both unblemished by anything material and also present everywhere, both externally and internally, just like the omnipresent sky. O brilliant Uddhava, one who thus views all living entities with the idea that I am present within each of them, and who by taking shelter of this divine knowledge offers due respect to everyone, is considered actually wise. Such a man sees equally the *brāhmaṇa* and the outcaste, the thief and the charitable promoter of brahminical culture, the sun and the tiny sparks of fire, the gentle and the cruel. For him who constantly meditates upon My presence within all persons, the bad tendencies of rivalry, envy and abusiveness, along with false ego, are very quickly destroyed. Disregarding the ridicule of one's companions, one should give up the bodily conception and its accompanying embarrassment. One should offer obeisances before all—even the dogs, outcastes, cows and asses—falling flat upon the ground like a rod. Indeed, I consider this process—using one's mind, words and bodily functions for realizing Me within all living beings—to be the best possible method of spiritual enlightenmentī. This process is the supreme intelligence of the intelligent and the cleverness of the most clever, for by following it one can in this very life make use of the temporary and

unreal to achieve Me, the eternal reality.”

Dear Guru Mahārāja, please be merciful to this fallen rascal and keep me in the shelter of constant divine service to your lotus feet.

Always begging to remain,

Your servant, and the servant of your servants,

Arjuna Dāsa
Mauritius

Bhojadeva Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances, bowing down to the dust particles at your lotus feet.

You have most gloriously appeared as the perfect, self-effulgent and brilliant ambassador of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Rāma, the Saviors of the fallen, to engage everyone in the pure and eternal loving service of the Lord.

By your unlimited mercy and compassion, you have descended to offer the means, as well as the conclusion of spiritual perfection, to any person willing to follow your most able guidance.

From the East, where misconceptions and impersonalism have clouded the spiritual landscape, to the West where slavery to materialism and charlatan leaders in every position have only increased the misery and exploitation of the general mass of people, you have personified and taught the exact scientific method for self-realization in this age of Kali, as directly revealed by the Lord Himself.

With unbreakable conviction to execute the holy order of your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, you have fearlessly demolished the prisons of ignorance with the clemency of knowledge, potentially freeing all inmates needing a second chance, whether they be leaders of science, re-

ligion or politics, or common ordinary men.

Engaging a Noah’s Ark-like collection of followers from almost every walk of life, your transcendental purity has sparked a worldwide revolution in consciousness, which continues steadily as a chain-reaction of conscious growth, individually and collectively.

You have explained that one’s relationship to God is based on a loving and active principle. This eternal and active principle concomitantly rejects criminally exploiting or artificially renouncing that which belongs to God. Rather, it is in the dedication of everything within our mental and physical possession to the loving service of the Supreme Lord, that the individual soul finds its eternal activity, identity, and reciprocal loving relationship with the Lord.

We pray that we may somehow please you, and be allowed to assist you in your mission to please your spiritual master, reuniting the lovelorn of this world, with the Supreme Beloved.

Your lowly servant,

Bhojadeva Dāsa

Nirākulā Devī Dāsī

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

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

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In your commentary on the *Nārada-bhakti-sūtra* 1. 8 you write:

Only by the combined mercy of the pure devotee — the bona fide spiritual master — and the Supreme Lord Himself can one attain pure devotional service to the Lord. If someone is fortunate enough to find a pure devotee and accept him as his spiritual master, then this spiritual master, out of his causeless mercy, will impart the

knowledge of pure devotional service. And it is the Lord, out of His causeless mercy, who sends His most confidential servitor to this world to instruct pure devotional service.

By the divine grace of the spiritual master, the seed of pure devotional service, which is completely different from the seed of fruitive activities and speculative knowledge, is sown in the heart of the devotee. Then, when the devotee satisfies the spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa, this seed of devotional service grows into a plant that gradually reaches up to the spiritual world.

I still marvel at my extreme good fortune, for I am undoubtedly the recipient of such a rare gift.

As a young teenager I was seeking answers to my questions about the purpose of life and God. My sincerity or fervor for answers were by no means on par with the inconceivable mercy that I received when I came in contact with your disciples and books, or when you magnanimously accepted me as your disciple.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the ideal example of a perfect disciple. You took to heart the order of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and came to the West to save us all. You started a revolution.

I am ashamed and humbled before you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, because I have wasted so much of my life; the life that you have given me. Attempts at expressing my heartfelt gratitude feel disingenuous and hollow because I have not put that appreciation into action.

Please hear my fervent prayer that I may be graced with the intelligence, sincerity and determination to be of some service to you, your mission and the Vaiṣṇavas. I beg you to please help me to take up your mood and allow me to assist you eternally, in whatever capacity you deem fit, in your service to your Guru Mahārāja and Nitāi-Gaurāṅga.

Eternally your servant,

Nirākulā Devī Dāsī

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
constant is your gaze.
You see so clearly
as we stumble through this haze.

You speak of eternity
without any lack.
We dance and sing
but turn to you our back.

We don't realize
that it's you sitting there,
accepting our service
and hoping we will share

the mercy you have shown us
with the rest of the Earth,
knowing all that God created
is of equal worth.

We pick and we choose
according to our whim.
As the souls walk by
we neglect to mention Him.

The time keeps on passing
and the need covers all.
Are we just too busy
to give His name a call?

If we look into your eyes
we see constant is your sight.
We touch your lotus feet
as if it was our right.

You live in eternity
but stay here with your love.
I pray we be those humble servants
that you are speaking of.

Your aspiring servant,

Mṛgākṣī Devī Dāsī

Ramyā Devī Dāsī

Looking for God I was
Led to you
Unaware of your greatness
I stumbled into your presence
And at first was dazzled
Later, wind and rushing sounds
Heralded your arrival as,
Small and effulgent, you
Came towards me.
I looked into your eyes
They were oceanic.

A turning point
Your being in my life
The brightness of your presence
The thoughtfulness of your absence
The shining sword of your message
Uncompromising, unwavering, unequivocal
Always pure
Your teachings in my life.

Crowded with people, pains, pleasures
Perplexities and plans
Your presence like a golden thread
In a faded tapestry
Your mercy in my life.
Coming towards me, your *mūrti*
I look into your eyes
They are oceanic
You eternally in my life

Ramyā Devī Dāsī

Rukmiṇī-priya Devī Dāsī

To my eternal *guru* Śrīla Prabhupāda,

When someone has shown you the path to Vaikuṅṭha, how can you express your gratitude or even attempt to repay that gift.

It is impossible!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, What you have bestowed upon all of us fallen souls is priceless and we can only bow down to your lotus feet and eternally be grateful for that gift of your association.

I pray my rascal mind will never diminish or take for granted what a blessing it is to have your association through your teachings and your legacy.

Rukmiṇī-priya Devī Dāsī

Jagaddhātṛī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupada

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet, which are the embodiment of the perfection of all opulences.

Your unique position among Lord Caitanya's intimate associates radiates around the globe. Every word, thought and action is saturated simultaneously with supreme confidence and complete humility. Your total absorption in executing your service for His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Mahārāja's pleasure inundated us with waves of ecstatic love. We knew that no matter what happened, if we simply took shelter of your association, we were safe, we were loved; this is why we "*danced in the street, telling everyone we meet, we're going home*".

Several times I wrote you a letter; these were passed on to you when I could 'penetrate' the 'saffron forest' of *daṇḍas* surrounding you. And quick as a wink, you would slide my letter into your pocket

or desk drawer. A ‘conspiracy’ of two, you letting me know that you are always my well-wishing friend.

Now, almost 40 years later, we perform our daily services, knowing that every offering is noted and encouraged. You are transcendental to space and time. All blessings come from you, although you always humbly said to us “Thank you very much” after hearing from Your Divine Grace. It is impossible for me to fathom the height of your glories, and the depth of your love and humility at the lotus feet of your Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Because you are the embodiment of Lord Nityānanda’s mercy, all you ask is that we offer this gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to other souls. I beg you to allow me the association of your true disciples, and the exalted cousin/brothers of Lord Caitanya’s family.

Your mercy is all that I am made of. Please allow me to serve you eternally.

Your servant,

Jagaddhātṛī Devī Dāsī

Anavadyāṅgi Devī Dāsī

My dearest, beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I fall in the dust of your lotus feet begging mercy for this fallen undeserving soul. I almost did not write this because I feel I do not have any qualifications. Then last night I thought of all the thousands of young people you took as your disciples, allowing them your shelter and guidance back home, back to Godhead and wondered where have they all gone? Less than 500 are submitting their tributes here to you, who alone came here to save us.

Where would we be today if you had decided not to come to the West as your godbrothers did, and stayed in the safety of the holy *dhāma* of Vṛndāvana and the association of *sādhus* and Deities of Goloka?

What would life be like without all the wisdom you have left us in the many volumes of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *The Nectar of Devotion*, *The Nectar of Instruction*, and so many others, what to speak of your countless letters, lectures, etc. You have given mankind all the knowledge that is needed to take us safely into the future for the next ten thousand years as well as lead us all home.

You also gave us each other and taught us the importance of *sādhu-saṅga*. You established temples in every major city where we could engage our senses in the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa along with Jagannātha Svāmī and his transcendental siblings, Baladeva and Subhadrā as well as Gaura-Nitāi. You gave us joyful festivals such as Ratha-yātrā and the Sunday Love Feasts, and Śrī Caitanya's ecstatic *saṅkīrtana* and book distribution to share with the rest of the world.

There is no way for me to count all the blessings you have given us, and all you have required is for us to chant sixteen rounds a day and follow the four regulative principles. This I tried to maintain while you were still present, but after you left I have gradually fallen further and further from my vows. Thus I no longer qualify as your servant.

I pray at least never to forget you and Kṛṣṇa and always remember you. May you bless me that the end of this life be spent in the holy *dhāma* with the association of *sādhus* – again taking up chanting tirelessly and free from offenses recite the holy names of our sweet Lord: Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for making the sacrifice to come to America and for dragging this wretched soul from the bottom of the barrel of drugs and illicit sex life.

Begging to again serve you and take total surrender of your protective feet,

Anavadyāṅgi Devī Dāsī

To His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami,

You once said to a reporter: “If you want to know me, then you must know about me from me. You can not speculate about me. If you speculate that “Swamiji is so rich,” or “Swami might have so much bank balance also,” or.... This is all speculation. But when I say that my bank balance is such and such, that is right knowledge.”

This was to illustrate the idea that one can only understand Kṛṣṇa through the disciplic succession. Scholarship and fame have value only when they are connected to Kṛṣṇa and we should beware of those who act for their self-aggrandizement. In your case it is easy to see that we can trust you because you constantly bring the attention of everyone on Kṛṣṇa. In all your books, letters and conversations, we see Kṛṣṇa only. You always bring those who hear you to the conclusion of serving Kṛṣṇa.

Today we are celebrating the glorious event of your appearance and it is the time when your disciples offer you praise. You have taught us to do so not because you wanted to receive recognition but rather because you wanted to instill in us the devotional attitude that is inherent in the citizens of the spiritual world. Just as Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is presenting *gopīs* to Kṛṣṇa in order to increase His pleasure, similarly you have made all attempts to present individuals to the lotus feet of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja for the completion of his mission. You never credited yourself for any success. This is what makes you so qualified as an *ācārya* of such a great movement.

Those who have had the grace of being touched by your nectarean words are so fortunate because they have been eternally blessed with the gift of love of God. That is the ultimate gift a living entity can offer to another and you have done it for so many fallen souls.

All glories unto you!

Praghoṣa Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Today I am feeling grateful for how you guided us to work according to our own propensity in such a way that we can become purified and ultimately attached to the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa.

For us you are the personification of *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva* in that you are inconceivably “other-worldly”, that is, always with Kṛṣṇa, yet simultaneously “down-to-earth,” compassionately walking beside us, explaining everything necessary for our freedom from bondage. You had complete confidence in your plans for rescuing conditioned souls because these plans came from the perfect statements of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which you dedicated so much of your time to presenting and explaining. These plans were two-fold, namely, teaching the science of *sādhana-bhakti* and the implementation of *daivi-varṇāśrama*.

The *Bhāgavatam* elucidates how a common man in Kali-yuga can easily perfect his life thus:

*dharmah svanuṣṭhitaḥ puṁsām
viśvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ
notpādayed yadi ratim
śrama eva hi kevalam*

The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labor if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead.

[SB. 1. 2. 8]

*ataḥ pumbhir dvija-śreṣṭhā
varṇāśrama-vibhāgaśaḥ
svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya
saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*

O best among the twice-born, it is therefore concluded that the highest perfection one can achieve by discharging the duties prescribed for one's own occupation according to caste divisions and orders of life is to please the Personality of Godhead.

[SB. 1. 2. 13]

*tasmād ekena manasā
bhagavān sātvatām patih
śrotavyaḥ kīrtitavyaś ca
dhyeyaḥ pūjyaś ca nityadā*

Therefore, with one-pointed attention, one should constantly hear about, glorify, remember and worship the Personality of Godhead, who is the protector of the devotees.

[SB. 1. 2. 14]

In the purports of these verses, you write:

“In any one of the above-mentioned castes and orders of life, the four processes, namely glorifying, hearing, remembering and worshiping, are general occupations. Without these principles of life, no one can exist. The actual object of glorification is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has created everything manifested before us. The tendency to glorify others or hear others must be turned to the real object of glorification--the Supreme Being. And that will bring happiness.” [SB 1. 2. 14]

“[W]e have to engage ourselves in occupational engagements that will evoke our divine consciousness. This is possible only by hearing and chanting the divine activities of the Supreme Lord. The hankering soul must be satisfied by the perfect scientific process of perfect devotional service.” [SB 1. 2. 8]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my realization is that persons of any *varṇa* or

āśrama can come to the divine status by gaining the opportunity to hear and chant the divine activities of the Lord and His devotees, which are found within your books. Without your giving us the subject matter for hearing and chanting, it would not be possible for common men of Kali-yuga to get the opportunity to engage in *daivivarṇāśrama* and ultimately acquire an attraction for Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* mission, for occupations would otherwise simply be a further cause of bondage.

On this day of Vyāsa-pūjā, we worship you as the source of all auspiciousness for persons of Kali-yuga. We pray that we can always keep your association by continuously hearing from you and that we can be instrumental in giving your association to others in the form of your books.

Always hoping for your continued blessings,

Your servant,

Ṛṭhuśravā Dāsa

Kadambā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you for accepting me as your disciple and for giving me (and the world) the shelter of your instructions. What you have given us is of inestimable value. You taught us by example to include the all-important "One" in front of our valueless material zeros. You taught us our identity is tied to Kṛṣṇa and not to this temporary body. The whole world searches after its profit; while we have found the real prophet in you.

Some people came to you knowing they were looking for a spiritual teacher. That wasn't my case – I am the rock that gets rained on because it is in the garden. Lucky for me Kṛṣṇa guided me to the garden of your devotees. Once there, that rain of mercy fell upon me, too. Because of that, I could begin to make my life godly. You brought us the lotus feet of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda. In doing that we cannot understand the mercy you extended to

us. How would we have ever come in touch with those lotus feet, except for you?

Guide us Śrīla Prabhupāda and let us hear you. Many of us are now approaching the age you were when you first came to America. Not many of us would take the kind of risk that you did. You have given us a chance. Let us be generous enough to give a chance to other souls not yet in knowledge of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the *mahā-mantra*. People live their whole lives fighting battles they believe are worthy causes and never address the real problems of life. Your books can change the direction of their lives, just as your words changed the direction of our lives.

You are Divine Grace.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, again and again,

In gratitude,

Kadambā Devī Dāsī

Citraka Dāsa

My dearest spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Please accept my most humble and insignificant obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace who convinced me to change my ungrateful attitude towards the all love deserving, adorable ‘Prince’, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, pure devotee of the Lord, I am one of these degraded souls that having betrayed this Supreme Personality, I have taken a material body which I was using before I met you to imitate the Godhood of the Lord. Now, since I met you, I am using it to try to be forgiven for this sin and become again dear to Him.

Thus, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you made me one of the most fortunate persons in the universe right now! Coming into contact with you, a self-realized soul and Vaiṣṇava *ācārya*, was the best thing that could ever happen to me! And by the mercy of Śrī Caitanyadeva

it happened! Now I feel that while I was looking for broken glass in the nightmare of my material exile, I was gifted with a diamond!

I have never possessed a real diamond to know how it looks, but I definitely know how the character and personality of a saint looks after having experienced your presence!

After having met such diamond-like personality as you Śrīla Prabhupāda, I came running to surrender to your service. Such is the faith you instilled in me through your example, and through you, to your teachings, Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the Lord! I became convinced that you were not interested in my money, in becoming famous or attracting female admiration but you were serious and authorized in handling my spiritual life, therefore I was conquered and convinced to submit completely unto your lotus feet!

When I saw you it was such a beautiful experience to behold the vision of a living saint, a liberated soul, a person beyond the influence of the *guṇas*! You were the first and only person I found to be completely satisfied with who you were, what you were doing and where you were. Always! Because you were free from any karmic reaction, your actions were completely driven from higher knowledge and love of God rather than being in the realm of hard labor imposed to the prisoners of Durgā-dhāma. It was like the difference of attitude and mood you find in a touristic place amongst the anxiety-free tourist visitors and the preoccupation and boredom of the people who work there.

Before you, all who approached me were only interested in engaging my body and energy – originally belonging to Kṛṣṇa and therefore stealing it from Him for their service. Either for sex pleasure, for economical gain, or for lording it over me. And the same was my attitude towards others.

Then I met you. Your personality revealed an amazingly opposite way of relating. Another way of loving, other motivations. Even if in the beginning I approached you out of curiosity, questioning for knowledge and possibly for another selfish pleasure in an 'exotic' way, I was blessed instead with the vision of your Vaiṣṇava qualities and, through you, to gain an understanding of the real attractiveness and goodness of the Lord. You made me aware that:

“Kṛṣṇa is within you. He is sitting within your heart as a friend, not as

an enemy. Kṛṣṇa is always your friend. *Suhṛdam sarva-bhūtānām* [Bg. 5. 29]. You are searching out friends to talk with, to joke with, to love. Kṛṣṇa is sitting there for that purpose. If you love Kṛṣṇa, if you make friendship with Kṛṣṇa, if you love Kṛṣṇa, then your life will be successful. You haven't got to search out any other friend. The friend is already there. Either you are a boy or a girl, you will find a nice friend within yourself." – Lecture, New Vṛndāvana, June 7, 1969

But fortunately I am aware that all these gifts of yours can only be mine when I distribute them to others. So I keep examining myself: Am I serious with the spiritual life of others like you were with mine? Am I pure in my motivations in dealing with others, as you were with me? Do I inspire and generate faith in Kṛṣṇa consciousness through my example to others like you did with yours? Am I good to present the attractiveness of the Lord and His world as you were with yours to me? And even though the image that emerges with the answers to these questions is not always what it should have been for your satisfaction, I am happy, Śrīla Prabhupāda that I do have a desire to come to the standard of what will please you and, thanks to this love and gratitude for you, I remain very motivated to try each and every day to achieve it – following your instructions, thus giving my life its real meaning.

Your ever grateful, insignificant aspiring servant,

Citraka Dāsa

Mohan Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

We all love to glorify leaders, movie stars, pop stars etc. They have become our heroes and we pay good money for movies, CD's, books about them.

But we can only be let down by them in many, many ways. They line their pockets with our hard-earned money and live the high life, and we live in a dream world enhanced by them.

But ultimately what do they give us? Temporary sense gratification.

Promises of wealth, security, love and escape from our suffering.

Whereas if we glorify and serve bona fide spiritual leaders then we can get eternal satisfaction.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are the bona fide spiritual master who has have given us the promise of eternal happiness with freedom from birth and death.

And even in this world this spiritual joy and happiness is available to us all regardless of race or religion.

I am fortunate to have tasted this joy and happiness in my lifetime due to you dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

And even though you are not physically with us, you have left us real spiritual wealth.

These are your books, lectures, and association with devotees.

By following your instructions/teachings which come from scriptures such as *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, it is possible for us to be liberated from material suffering and go back to Godhead.

BUT, unfortunate as I am, I am still your most fallen (disciple), unable to dedicate myself fully to you. I am praying that you accept whatever meagre offering I can give at your lotus feet.

Your unworthy servant,

Mohan Dāsa
Leicester, UK

Oṃkāra Devī Dāsī

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your mercy has uplifted and purified so many of us fallen souls.

You have endured multiple sacrifices to preach this mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and we, your servants, need to somehow endeavor to further spread this love of Godhead.

Thank you, my beloved Gurudeva. Thank you, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your servant,

Oṃkāra Devī Dāsī

Parividha Dāsa

*oṃ ajñāna-timirāndhasya
jñānāñjana-salākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṃ yena
tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I feel so fortunate to have come in contact with your society, with your teachings, with chanting *japa*, *prasādam* and the association of devotees. Three times daily I meditate on you and am grateful to you for all you have given me.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Your unworthy disciple,

Parividha Dāsa

Rāma Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In 1973 you accepted me as your disciple and, even after having met me, you did not reject me. Thank you from deep within myself

for your causeless mercy and for the short periods of your association. I relish so much the memory of when you held my hand and we read the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* together.

Rāma Dāsa

Ramānya Dāsa

*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*

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

Dear and divine Śrīla Gurudeva Mahārāja Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I would like to begin my most insignificant and humble offering to your beautiful lotus feet on this most blessed day of the entire year; your most glorious, blessed Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā celebration festival.

First of all, thank you very much for coming to the Bhūmi-maṇḍala, in West Bengal. Then in 1965 you came to the West, New York, USA, to save all of us from going to hell (by eating the better fruits of *māyā*, in the form of repeated birth and death), by your unlimited mercy and only by your own desire.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, saved us and gave us eternal life.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, every year on this auspicious day, it is so nice to see so many different Vaiṣṇavas from all over the world coming together to celebrate your holy appearance day. It is so significant that you came and manifest your special personality, on the day after *Nandotsava*, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-bhagavān-janmāṣṭamī*.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, divine Guru Mahārāja,

These are just a few scriptural evidences of your divine and very

special position. It is impossible to describe all of your transcendental activities in a very short time.

Dear Guru Mahārāja, you are predicted in the journal *Vaiṣṇava-toṣaṇī* by His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktinoda Ṭhākura, the great and prominent *ācārya*, and father of your spiritual master; Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

In the future, will be the appearance of a very great personality who would come to the West and preach the message of Lord Gaurāṅga, and fulfill the prediction of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

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

My name will be preached in all the countries, and towns that exist throughout the world (*Caitanya-bhāgavata*, *Antya* 4. 126)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your unlimited mercy, you fulfilled the prediction and wish of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, traveling all over the world 14 times at a very advanced age.

The other prediction by His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktinoda Ṭhākura:

“Alas! When will that day come when all greatly fortunate souls in countries such as England, France, Russia, Prussia, and America, and other countries will take up banners, kettledrums, *mṛdaṅgas*, and *karatālas*, and thus cause the ecstatic waves of *harināma-kīrtana* and the singing of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s holy name to rise into the streets of their towns and cities?

“O when will that day come, when pure and transcendental *kṛṣṇa-prema* (Love of God) will be the only religion?”

(from the *Sajjana-toṣaṇī* of Śrīla Bhaktinoda Ṭhākura)

In one morning conversation in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, you mentioned in a very humble way that you are the person who is fulfilling the predictions. In the San Francisco temple on the day of your Guru Mahārāja’s disappearance celebration, you said it was the same year that Śrīla Bhaktinoda Ṭhākura sent his book Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, His Life and Precepts to the Western countries – that

was same year of your holy appearance (1896).

Your most significant accomplishment is the spreading the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* (holy names of the Lord as directed by your Guru Mahārāja, which you followed without deviation. By chanting the holy names every day in New York's Tompkins Square Park, you turned western *caṇḍālas* and *mlecchas* into *brāhmaṇas* and swamis. On 5th Avenue, you gave us more chanting of the holy names and the 3-chariot Ratha-yātrā.

In Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura's *Caitanya-maṅgala* in the 16th century, there is a prediction regarding the future appearance of a great *senapati-bhakta* who will preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. ŚrīlaKṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, also in the 16th century, stated a prediction by Lord Caitanya: "*pṛthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma/sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma*" -"my holy name will be chanted in every town and village"

Dear Divine Master and Śrīla Gurudeva, you formed your own, ISKCON Movement, practically speaking your own, *sampradāya*. It spread all over the world like a miracle, at the same exalted level of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī's Gauḍīya Math; at the level of Śrīla Śrīpāda Rāmānujācārya's Śrī-sampradāya; and Śrīpāda Madhvācārya's *sampradāya*. You gave us so many different instructions how to worship a great *paramahansa-ācārya*. You gave us the order of how to write your name in each and every centre: "Founder-Ācārya."

Divine Guru, on the holy celebration of your glorious centennial year, one very important astrologer in South Florida USA mentioned to me, "Śrīla Prabhupāda will be well known all over the world, like a great saintly personality."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you saved the human race. You came to preach all over the world, and left so soon, and although society did not recognize you at that moment, in the future, you will be recognized.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, our shelter and our guide, nobody gave us as much as you and nobody will. You mention so many times, "Everything is in my books". The books will last ten thousand years, and so many generations will be benefited from them. You teach us how to read them, distribute your books, and teach us how to preach like you. You teach us how to challenge the so-called mod-

ern scientists, *māyāvādīs*, false *gurus*, and so-called incarnations. In the Golden Age of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the process is simply to chant and dance, and eat *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*. There is no other way.

A great personality like you, clad in saffron cloth, wherever you went became Vṛndāvana. A loving mood was manifested; we could feel it – on your morning walks, visits to your room, lecturing on the *vyāsāsana*, or in preaching programs. Your lotus feet purified the planet and clean the Earth of this bad *karma*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, divine Guru Mahārāja; just like the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, you teach us by your perfect example. I have had the great opportunity to personally see how little you were eating, sleeping, and performing so much devotional service. By preaching and translating your precious books, you demonstrated and confirmed to us that you came with a special mission.

You made us chant 24 hours *kīrtana* on a few occasions, and in the 1977 in Vṛndāvana, you made us chant the holy names and we felt the ecstasies of the holy name for many months. All ISKCON temples were chanting the *mahā-mantra* 24 hours a day, and by this, you demonstrated all the predictions about the holy name – circum-ambulating the planet and simultaneously purifying the Earth.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your voice is so warm, sweet, and pleasant, sometimes changing from rose-like to deadbolt, to correct and instruct your disciples.

Dear Guru Mahārāja Śrīla Prabhupāda, please help us to remain very, very small and humble to maintain and preach in your mission and save the world at large.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, our shelter and our guide, please help us not to fall into illusion, *māyā*. And even we know all these facts and evidence still some think that everything is lost and leave your ISKCON mission, going and taking shelter in Gauḍīya Math centers, and swamis. But in this way they lose the opportunity of serving you in your sacred mission. Yet, some think there is no-one in charge, and after your departure, no-one is going to carry on your ISKCON work. Some have followed others who have questioned your decisions, some others force their views on others and say they think they know the facts and the others do not know.

Some are using your opulences as their own, until they see themselves alone. Yet some others will say he is as good as you, until they find themselves turn back into a mouse again. Some other will performed acts until time reveals the facts, yet, some others will twist your words for selfish motivations.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, divine Master, our shelter and our guide, please help us to remain very, very small and humble to keep on serving your lotus feet.

In Vṛndāvana, you mentioned that “your love for me will show in how much you cooperate; rise early in the morning, shower, and perform *maṅgala-ārati*. In this way, you will remain in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

This is your instruction always, that you will never leave the one who is following your instructions.

O master, our shelter and our guide, Śrīla Prabhupāda, bless give us your blessings to be very very staunch in our desire to remain at your lotus feet and serve you always in your sacred mission, Lord Caitanya’s mission.

“Prabhupāda-stotram” (1)

*krṣṇaika-ceta mada-moha-vināśa-kṛṣṇārin
mad-dṛṣṭi-gocara prabho prabhupāda-svāmin
doṣābhivṛtti-paraduṣita-manda-buddheḥ
śaktyāveśa-avatāraṅintayāmi caraṇau tava bhakti-hetoḥ*

O Lord, O Prabhupāda, May you always be the object of my vision. Only the name of Kṛṣṇa can destroy my pride and illusion. Although my mind and intelligence are contaminated by wicked inclinations, I meditate upon your lotus feet in causeless devotion.

All glories to your holy appearance day, Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā!

Your insignificant aspiring servant at the dust of your beautiful lotus feet,

Ramaṇya Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances on the occasion of your divine appearance in this world.

We are now coming to what you described as the “fag end of life” and not infrequently we hear news of another of your devoted disciples leaving this world to continue their association with you on another plane of existence. While thinking of this not long ago I was contemplating my own demise and was thinking what would be some of the last things I would like to do/say. One that came to mind was to express my deepest gratitude and thanks to all of your devotees for their wonderful association and kindness that they have shown me in this life. And it occurred to me that I also wanted to express my gratitude to you. Let me therefore take this occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration to do so.

I want to thank you for giving us *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, the *yuga-dharma*, to take the Lord in the form of His holy name to the conditioned souls of Kali-yuga, and the *pādayātrā* led by Lokanātha Swami.

For transcendental books I want to thank you for your most wonderful *Bhagavad-gītā*, the super-excellent *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with their Bhaktivedanta purports, and the science of *bhakti-yoga*, *The Nectar of Devotion*.

I want to thank you for the enchanting Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Madana-mohana in Vancouver, the heart-melting beauty of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rādhākānta of New Orleans, the awesome and magnificent Pañca-tattva of Śrīdhāma Māyāpur. Thank you for the dedicated servants of all the Deities around the world, who dress them so gorgeously, creating a transcendental feast for the eyes.

For the chroniclers of your pastimes, I want to thank you for Yadubara Prabhu and Viśākhā Mātāji for their film and video that will inspire devotees for millennia, for Hari Śauri Prabhu and his *Transcendental Diaries*, for Kūrma Prabhu, Hayagrīva Prabhu and Girirāja Swami for their chronicles.

I want to thank you for the wonderful Kiev temple led by Acyuta-priya Dāsa, for the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir and your *samādhī* and designers Surabhi Swami and Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhu, the Lotus Temple at Spanish Fork led by your wonderful and creative devotees Cāru Prabhu and Vaibhavī-devī. And the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium led by your devoted Ambarīṣa Prabhu.

I want to thank you for all those dedicated devotees who have worked to translate your books into so many languages so that we truly have a global mission, and for the thousands of transcendental book distributors who have delivered your grace to the “not yet” devotees, headed by Tripurāri Swami, Praghoṣa Prabhu, Vaiśeṣika Prabhu, Vijaya Prabhu and many thousands of others.

I want to thank you for giving us the colorful Ratha-yātrā all over the world to bring Lord Jagannātha’s mercy to so many conditioned souls. For the Ukrainian *bhakti-saṅgama* festival (the best anywhere) and the Russian *sādhū-saṅga* festival; for the colorful cultural “Polish Tour” led by your devoted Indradyumna Swami, for all the *kīrtana-melās* springing up all around the world, for Dnepropetrovsk’s Sadācāra Dāsa and his heart-rending dramas and for putting on 60+ Ratha-yātrās in 90 days each summer, and for all of the dedicated and hard-working festival devotees all around the world.

For *kīrtanīyas* I want to thank you for the inimitable Aindra Prabhu, the joyfully delirious Aditi-duḥkha-ha Prabhu, Śrī Pahlāda Prabhu who makes me dance with joyful abandon, artistic Maṅgalānanda Prabhu whose artistic songs always make me cry, for Yamunā-devī, for Kaṇāmṛta-devī, for the Gandharva-like Śiṣṭakṛt Dāsa, for the legendary Viṣṇujana Swami’s *haribol-kīrtanas*, and Agnideva Prabhu who would rock the Los Angeles temple.

I want to thank you for the Russian and Eastern European *yātrās* and all of their sweet, enthusiastic and dedicated devotees who gave me a place to grow over the past seven years.

I want to thank you for giving us windows to the spiritual world and the wonderful artists through whom they manifest including Yadurāṅī-devī, Muralīdhara Prabhu, Baradrāja Prabhu, and so many more.

For bold and revolutionary devotees I want to thank you for

Haṁsadūta Dāsa and Harikeśa Dāsa.

I want to thank you for all of the devotees who have taken up the selfless service of cow protection headed by Balabhadra and Kūrma-rūpa Prabhus, and for all of the devotees who have endeavored tirelessly to create farming, village communities and expand the understanding of *varṇāśrama-dharma* around the world, led by Paramānanda Prabhu, Śivarāma Swami, Bhakti Vikāśa Swami, Bhakti Rāghava Swami, Nityānanda Dāsa and Kīrtanānanda Swami.

For devotees who have been special for me I want to thank you for Amarendra Prabhu and Gāyatrī-devī and the devotees at the Gainesville temple in our early days, for Hṛdayānanda Dāsa Goswami, Madanamohana Prabhu, Śrī Nandanandana Prabhu, and Prabhupāda Dāsa.

For highly intelligent and independently minded thinkers who know how to apply the philosophy I want to thank you for Gaura Keśava Prabhu and Kṛṣṇa-kīrti Prabhu.

Thank you for those devotees who have endeavored to keep your ISKCON on the right track through so many trials including the “loyal opposition” headed Bahūdaka Prabhu, the 50-man Committee headed by Trivikrama Swami, and into the 1990s, Kuṇḍalī Prabhu.

I want to thank you for the inspired *bhakti-vṛkṣa* program and preachers who are taking Kṛṣṇa consciousness into every town and village, targeting for example, every Metro stop in Moscow.

For bold preaching to defeat atheistic agenda scientists I want to thank you for Drutakarmā Prabhu and Viṣṇu Swami.

For humble, selfless and dedicated leadership I want to thank you for Nirañjana Swami and Indradyumna Swami.

I want to thank you for the Indian *yātrā* that is full of dedicated god-brothers and second-generation devotees who make big temples, big festivals and big Ratha-yātrās, big *prasādam* distribution, and big preaching.

I want to thank you for the many competent and dedicated devotees who have given so much to train and guide children in Kṛṣṇa

Consciousness, especially Bhakti Vidyā-pūrṇa Swami, Lakṣmī monī-devī, Ākūti-devī and Urmilā-devī.

I want to thank you for giving me service in the areas of Spiritual Economics, *daiva-varṇāśrama* and Establishing the Eternal Religion. These are not just assignments but gifts that you have bestowed upon me, and I pray to prove worthy of them.

I want to thank you for this wonderful world of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Your Deities are the most beautiful in this world. Your devotees are the most wonderful people in this world. Your festivals are the most enchanting in this world. Your teachings are the most sublime, edifying, enlivening and uplifting. Your vision for the future of the world in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the most attractive for all. The world, the culture, the association, the teachings, the music and dance, the activities, the art, the dancing, the dramas, the temples, the Deities that you have given us are all the most wonderful that can be imagined and are unsurpassed – a reflection of the wonderful person who gave life to them. I want to express my deepest heartfelt appreciation and thanks for all of these gifts that you have bestowed upon not only myself, but upon all of your followers. You have indeed given us life, for without this wonderful world of Kṛṣṇa consciousness this world would certainly be dead and absolutely void.

There are an unlimited number of expressions of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this world that were seeded by you and I cannot possibly know all of it. I have included those Deities, devotees, places, events and aspects of Kṛṣṇa consciousness that have given me joy and inspiration. Omission of others unknown to me or unmentioned is not meant to minimize them and their glorious service.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you created these places, the pastimes, the events and the devotees that so consumed and intrigued us and that forcibly carried thousands of us along in your wake as you swept through the world to distribute the *bhakti* of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It was you who planted the seed of *bhakti* in all of these wonderful devotees. They nurtured it with the water of their own nature and the fertilizer of their personality, producing the wonderful fruits that the world can now experience in the form of this Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement. It is due to all of this mercy that I have had a wonderful life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For all of this mercy I am eternally indebted to you Śrīla Prabhupāda. No doubt there will be countless

more who will continue to expand this wonderful world of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and eventually capture the entire world, nay, the entire universe.

This is all due to your mercy. On this splendid occasion we glorify and honor you as *jagad-guru*, the savior of the fallen, greatest exponent of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and the most merciful servant of Lord Caitanya. May your praises forever be sung! All glories! All glories! All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your humble servant,

Dhaneśvara Dāsa

Ariṣṭahe Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet on this auspicious occasion.

Another year has passed and your mercy has prevented me from falling down because somehow or other I have been able to do my service and follow your instructions – not perfectly, but according to my limited ability. A lot of strength has originated from the source of my elevated, renounced godbrothers. Their lectures, *kīrtanas* and seminars have infused me with the power to continue with my service, although I am weak almost to the point of glancing at or lending my ears to *māyā*. All glories to my iPod!

Emotions or sentimentality can really pollute the consciousness, therefore it is very important to hear our philosophy from those you have empowered. When our faith is weak and surrounded, as we are, by ignorance and illusion, our only shelter is submissive aural reception.

Most of my thoughts these days revolve around death with a frightening flavor of fear, which is due to ignorance. Therefore to drive away this nightmare born of darkness, the sunlight or moonlight of *kṛṣṇa-kathā* is the savior. My service is deity worship – it is sweet,

austere and almost inconceivable, but it is only available through your mercy. One devotee explained that *rasa-tattva* and *jīva-tattva* are not so difficult to understand but *guru-tattva* is very difficult to understand. But Śrī Guru is the embodiment of forgiveness, otherwise how is it possible that I am still here in this movement? The snake of false independence is always there hiding in the dark cellar of our polluted consciousness, causing fear. We are hesitating to surrender, fearing that we will lose something. Maybe it is a psychological issue or just a lack of faith.

I would like to appreciate other devotees, bowing down with genuine humility, but unless one comes to the platform of *niṣṭhā*, how is it possible? I would like to extend my gratitude to Ajita Prabhu who recommended me for initiation although I was not ready for it. He must have been very softhearted. After all these years, I am still aspiring to become your disciple, not only in word but also in deed. There are so many devotees I have offended who have tried to help me on the rocky road of self realization. They have been like doctors who have tried to help a diseased person. I cannot name them all, only Kṛṣṇa knows. May they forgive me, may the Lord forgive me, and may you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, forgive me and allow me to take my medicine although I am unwilling, with the hope that one day the divine mercy of the holy name will rise on the horizon of my heart – effulgent like the sun; soothing like the moon; the best of friends; the sweetest consort; an ocean of bliss; fathomless; without shores. Maybe similar to the ocean of milk, mixed with honey, where the waves are personified *prema*, and myself the most insignificant fish-like *jīva*, intoxicated to the utmost by that taste. When will that day be mine, when will I belong to Him, who is my Lord and master.

Your Divine Grace indicates the mercy of the Supreme Lord. When I see you, I see Him. There is no greater offender than me but at the same time I am your innocent child. There are so many devotees I should be grateful to. The difficulty is to remove the false ego, so that your loving hand becomes visible. Sometimes the mother has to punish the child for its best interest. If one can see it like that than the frightening things in the world become understandable.

By the mercy of Yogīndra Prabhu and His Holiness Smita Kṛṣṇa Swami, my glorious godbrothers, I was able to write this. How wonderful this ISKCON society is. Together with all its devotees, it is like an oasis in this desert of Kali-yuga for those who are thirsty

for spiritual life. Being a third class devotee I would like to offer my humble obeisances, at least mentally, to those great souls who try to preach the gospel of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and who have understood the sublime position of Śrīla Prabhupāda. May they all bestow their blessings upon me and glance mercifully upon me.

Your aspiring servant,

Ariṣṭahe Dāsa

Dīna Śharaṇā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this very glorious and auspicious day of your appearance, please accept my most fallen obeisances!

Again this year has shown how all-pervading your presence is in this world and in the life of the devotees.

ISKCON SPT organized the ILS meeting. After a long time, the GBC has again met with the leaders of our movement. By this step the attempt to narrow the gap between the GBC, the leaders in the movement, and the rank and file devotees worldwide was a success. This is an important steppingstone for future events that will further attempt to bring all ISKCON devotees back to a common cause despite the diversity of opinions.

This year was also a very moving year.

This is the story of Anne and her son.

It was Rādhārāṇī's Appearance day 2005. I was getting ready to take a shower to cook a feast on her honor when the bell rang. Anne and her son had just arrived from Ukraine and were looking for a Hare Kṛṣṇa temple. They found my private address on the Internet, walked some ten miles to the top of the hill where I lived with my husband, and stood at the door. We had a wonderful day together celebrating Rādhāṣṭamī.

Some years later Anne showed up again. Her struggle against cancer had left her skinny and pale. She had intensified her relationship with her native religion, the Christian Orthodox belief. “I did not have the good fortune to meet His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda,” she once said to me. “But you are his disciple. You are serving him. I cannot do what you do. So please serve him also for me.”

Again she did not show up for some time. Two weeks ago she had her boyfriend call us: “She is asking for you to come visit her in the hospital. She is not feeling very well.” My husband Cakravartī Prabhu and I had just returned from the Māyāpur GBC meeting and Vṛndāvana. So I threw a little picture of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī, a bottle of Rādhā-kuṇḍa water, and a few Tulasī mahā leaves in my bag as a present for her, and off we went.

On the hospital bed Anne was lying moaning because of intense pain. Her face lit up when she saw us. My husband and I chanted softly and massaged her feet to give her a bit of relief. I reminded her about how we had first met on Rādhāṣṭamī back in 2005. I put a few drops of Rādhā-kuṇḍa water and Tulasī leaves in her mouth. Her eyes opened wide with satisfaction. Then Cakravartī thought of calling her son in Ukraine and told her: “I will look after him.” She whispered, “I know.” As he went out of the room I started a louder *kīrtana*, clapping my hands softly, as an offering to the Lord. Her attention on the holy name became visibly enhanced; it appeared as if she was trying to sing along, although she could not speak. Cakravartī Prabhu returned with Anne’s son on the line. After he spoke to his mother for a few minutes, her breath calmed down. . .

The nurse told me, “Now you can close her eyes.”

I was shocked! I had not understood she had already departed!

After a few moments of silent reflection, my husband Cakravartī Prabhu called Anne’s son again. From the phone’s speaker I could hear him loudly exclaiming, “This is Kṛṣṇa’s arrangement! This is Śrīla Prabhupāda’s arrangement! For my mother and for me, thank you! Thank you, Kṛṣṇa! Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! This is glorious! I was able to tell her everything I always wanted to tell her! Thank you! Thank you!”

Anne departed last Sunday, on Rāmacandra’s appearance day, at

noon. The sun was flooding the room with a bright white light. The sound of the holy name of the Lord was floating in the air... Invisible gentle beings surrounded us. . .

*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

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

Anne was Orthodox Christian. She was not serving in ISKCON; she had no regular sādhana. But at the critical time she remembered you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and had the presence of mind to called upon your disciples to assist her.

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

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

My husband Cakravartī Prabhu and I had just come for a hospital visit...

In the middle of this immense universe, where material nature can be like an uncheckable tsunami wave, you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, stand firmly on the rock of devotion, like a torch spreading its light far and wide into the world for all the lost entities to see.

Again and again I am wondering how it is that I had the good fortune and the presence of mind to recognize you some forty years ago and understand the urgency of surrendering to your lotus feet. Your glory is so inconceivable that even the most insignificant of you disciples can reflect it and make it accessible to others.

*daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etān taranti te*

“This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it.”

*ananyāś cintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣāṁ nityābhīyuktānām yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*

“But those who always worship Me with exclusive devotion, meditating on My transcendental form—to them I carry what they lack, and I preserve what they have.”

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have shown us how to surrender.

May I be able to continuously surrender unto your lotus feet and serve you eternally.

Your fallen servant,

Dīna Śharaṇā Devī Dāsī

Rāmanātha-sukha Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. You are not obliged to accept my obeisances, you may do as you like. I am a most unqualified and rebellious disciple, so you may ignore me if you wish, but today I fervently pray that you please do accept my humble obeisances, even though I am a fool and pretender devotee. All glories are for you Śrīla Prabhupāda as you are very rare and unique in the history of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavaism. You are the empowered *mahā-bhāgavataguru*, *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*, who, even after your passing to Goloka Vṛndāvana decades ago, continues to bestow pure *prema-bhakti* on your many sincere followers, as well as showering *prema-dharma* to the fallen souls of Kali-yuga. Who can understand your inconceivable-mystical potencies?

This year has been filled with wonderful remembrances of your sweet Vṛndāvana mood. Wherever you travelled, you brought with you Vṛndāvana consciousness. Even though I have been prevented from physically travelling to Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma for many years, by some mystical arrangement of the Lord, I will soon be given the opportunity to also participate in that sweet Vṛndāvana mood by having *darśana* of Śrī Girirāja Gopāla. As I write this offer-

ing, I eagerly await the arrival of Girirāja from Rādhā-kuṇḍa to my altar here in Stockholm. Why He wants to come to me, I can't really understand.

But He will be here in just a few days now and I am anxiously awaiting His appearance on my altar and in my life. I am most unqualified and do not know how to take care of Girirāja. Somehow or other by the will of Providence, the all auspicious Lord will soon be with me and take part in my daily morning *bhajana* and *pūjā*. Who can understand the inconceivable-mystical potency of the Lord?

When I think of Girirāja I also meditate on you Śrīla Prabhupāda. I feel that it is you who has attracted the attention of Giri Govardhana, not me. In the form of your bead bag given to me in the San Francisco temple in 1994, you have attracted Girirāja to your Vṛndāvana mood of pure *prema-bhakti*. My most cherished possession is that sacred bead bag used by you in San Francisco in the early 1970s. This magical bead bag was transferred from my care to Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa for eight months of this year and worshiped on an altar of a *vraja-vāsī*. In the form of that bead bag you took regular bath in Rādhā-kuṇḍa and kept Girirāja company. I feel that Śrī Girirāja first manifested at Rādhā-kuṇḍa just to be near you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your form as a bead bag deity.

When I think of my good fortune of Girirāja's imminent arrival, then I automatically think of you as you continue your *vraja-līlā*, spreading the sweet mood of Vṛndāvana, even now in 2012. Who can understand the inconceivable-mystical potency of both the Supreme Lord and you, the dear-most devotee of the Lord?

I also have the opportunity to meditate on you when I perform my service of cooking at Govinda's in Stockholm, Sweden. Only by your mercy have I been allowed to again serve you in preparing and distributing *prasādam* for the benefit of the confused Kali-yuga souls. Devotees understand from *Gurvaṣṭakam* that you become satisfied when you see *bhagavat-prasādam* being enjoyed and relished. So every day that I cook, I try to envision your satisfaction. But how do I inject Kṛṣṇa consciousness into the offerings prepared for you and the Lord's satisfaction? I struggle with this question since I feel unqualified as a Brahmincook. I keep a picture of you cooking *prasādam* on the wall of Govinda's kitchen. That somehow pacifies my mind so that I feel the preparations made by me under your guidance are in actuality *bhagavat-prasādam*. Who can un-

derstand the inconceivable compassion of the Lord and His pure devotee as they distribute the mercy of *prasādam*?

Days later, I continue to write my offering, but now Girirāja Gopāla has been on my altar for three days. What mercy! What compassion! What love! I want to show you a picture of Him, but how can I with only a written offering? Soon, in the form of your bead bag, you will again join Girirāja, but this time on my altar here in Stockholm. Your bead bag is being brought from the shores of Rādhā-kuṇḍa to Stockholm by a very sincere and enthusiastic devotee. When you again join Girirāja, then my life will be complete. With you in the form of your bead bag, Girirāja, and Gopīśvara Mahādeva on my altar, all that remains is that I create that same altar within my heart. Then only will I begin to understand your eternal presence and compassion on this insignificant and fallen Kali-yuga soul. Who can understand the inconceivable-mystical love exchange between you and your disciples?

On this Vyāsa-pūjā day, I pray that you continue to reveal and unlock the mysteries of your presence within your bead bag. I pray that you continue to reveal more of your inconceivable potencies that manifest through the association of your pure devotees. I pray that you allow me the privilege of devotional service to Śrī Śrī Girirāja Gopāla. I pray that I will continue to assist you in distributing *bhagavat-prasādam*. I pray, but you don't have to accept my prayers. You can do with me as you like. Who can understand your unlimited and unconditional mercy on this insignificant devotee?

It is your *prasādam* Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mercy, which I continually seek and strive for. *prasādam* distribution, mercy distribution, is my very life and soul. If I have understood anything of your transcendental glories it is the understanding that your mercy, your *prasādam*, is all that I am made of.

Your insignificant and foolish disciple,

Rāmanātha-sukha Dāsa

“T’was then when the Hurdy Gurdy man came singing songs of love

T’was then when the Hurdy Gurdy Man came singing songs...”

T’was then when Śrīla Prabhupāda was sent to us from above, Lord Nityānanda’s grace, down, for us, from above.

Down for us in all power and humility,

Then when he came singing us songs of a splendid reality.

We soon were rising, singing, sweeping, weeping

His delivering voice ringing above,

“*Jīv jāgo!*”

Sighing, smiling, crying, roaring,

Servants now of a true devotee’s love.

Chanting, cooking, cleaning, reading

Gāyatrī, *prasāda*, mid-morning rounds

Done sometimes on the nod!

But not often, and less often later!...

Once we got an inkling of what really matters.

Caitanya-maṅgala, circa 1500 A.D. by Śrīla Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura Gosvāmī,

contemporary and Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava historian/biographer of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu bol:

“*yadi pāpī caḍi dharma dure deśe yāya
mora senapati-bhakta yāibe tathāya*”

“If some sinful people escape (His *saṅkīrtana* movement) and giving up religious principles go to far off countries, then My *senapati-bhakta* (Great General amongst the devotees), will come at that time to give them Kṛṣṇa consciousness”.

The temple is a place not for eating and sleeping, but as a base from which we send out our soldiers to fight with *māyā*.” (Śrīla Prabhupāda Letter, 3/8/1973)

“Down through all eternity, the crying of humanity...”

“Oh! Help them Lord Kṛṣṇa! Please help us, Śrīla Prabhupāda!”
“Books!” he emphasized, the transcendental bombs;
To blast them to kingdom come, Śrīla Prabhupāda!
Blast them well, our Prabhupāda!
Pull us up from hell, make us come alive!
The competition cooperation
Lead us to; the liberation of the nations!

Parking lots, city streets, malls, wherever people gather,
To eat, to cross the street, door to door, office to office,
Whatever street you’re on doesn’t matter.
Bang the Kṛṣṇa gong!

Airports, sneakers on cold concrete,
Sagging shoulder,
The heavy book bag holder.
Late night *prasāda*
A young life gladly striven
In the service of God.

Actually it was often good fun to meet
The people of the world.
Banners unfurled,
Śāstra held affectionately in hand
Distributing books like walking hot sand
At the beach, on fire!
And when you found some time to talk,
Empowered now by grace,
You sure knew how to preach!
NOTHING EVER got me ‘higher’,
Faster, farther, better, than
Saṅkīrtana!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Los Angeles, December 9, 1973: [...]
Soul is immortal. Soul is eternal. These things are described
in The *Bhagavad-gītā*. In the beginning, this is the beginning
lesson: *dehino ‘smin yathā dehe kaumāraṁ [Bg. 2.13]* This
is the beginning of spiritual understanding.

What have you done Śrīla Prabhupāda, on the grand scale of hu-
manity? How successful has been the preaching in the mind of the
common Western “modern” man? Beyond the worldwide-move-
ment and millions of devotees, and millions more to come, I mean?

Source: newsweek.com:

25% according to a 2008 Harris poll, say they fully accept the concept of transmigration of the soul.

2008 Pew Forum survey, 65 percent of us believe that “many religions can lead to eternal life”

37% of even white evangelical Christians believe that other paths can also lead to God!

30% of Americans call themselves “spiritual, not religious,” according to a 2009 NEWSWEEK Poll, up from 24 percent in 2005.

Stephen Prothero, religion professor at Boston University, has framed the American propensity for “religion” as “very much in the spirit of Hinduism. So agnostic are we about the ultimate fates of our bodies that we’re burning them—like Hindus—after death... .agrees Diana Eck, professor of comparative religion at Harvard. So let us all say “*om*.”

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Have thus liberated hundreds of millions of sleeping persons
Into the life-re-awakening knowledge of
Their eternal deathless pure spiritual bod.
Decimating the material fraud, Revealing their lies with superlative
reason

Worldwide, Kṛṣṇa was an obscure Name,
The “eighth incarnation of Viṣṇu”
But it is you, Śrīla Prabhupāda,
who manifest Lord Kṛṣṇa’s fame so well.
Now His Name is known everywhere,
Every town and village!
Everywhere in India, “oh yes!, they are knowing it very well”,
who is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and even who is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu!

Now here we are, many years later
Yet it is eternity
And we are still here with you
And we feel and know you are also with us
And for this, we are eternally grateful.

We, your tried and true soldiers,
Are at your service, our servant of God,
Great General and Eternal Commander A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Tamohara Dāsa

Mahākratu Dāsa Vanacārī

I first met ACBSP during my first visit to India in October 1971, at the Delhi Pandals. When I first met His Divine Grace, I considered him to be like the father I never had.

When I left India (about 6 months later) very sick, I continued with my study to become a Psychiatric Nurse. Some devotees came to my house and I asked them if I could visit the Temple, Bury Place. They said “of course you can”. I came to the Temple and stayed on for some years. I went to Africa in 1975, and from there I went to India, where I served Your Divine Grace in the library party. Later, I went to the Middle East (about 1978-9).

After reading the twin volumes of *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*, I really loved that book, and still read it to this day.

There are nine processes of *bhakti, śravaṇam, kīrtanam smaraṇam* etc. If you can do all nine, that's very good, but if you can do 8, 7, 6, or even one of them that is good.

*By the mercy of Śrī Guru receives the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
Without the grace of Śrī Guru, a person cannot get the goal
of spiritual perfection. [Gurvaṣṭakam, Verse 8]*

I am fully indebted to Śrīla Prabhupāda because he is giving me so many gifts. He is giving me the holy names, containing the highest form of thought, aspiration and ideal, who also gives services to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is like a golden mountain indicating the way of *kṛṣṇa-līlā*.

Kṛṣṇa-nāma is the sweetest of the sweet and the most auspicious of all thatauspicious. It is the fully ripened fruit of the Vedas, and the

embodiment of knowledge. Even if someone chants this holy name only once with faith or indifference, they are immediately delivered from the ocean of birth and death. (From *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*)

Jaya Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda!

Mahākratu Dāsa Vanacārī

Mānya Dāsa

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda I fall at your lotus feet
I often wonder how our paths did meet

Understanding now, your grace and splendor in all abundance
How could I sit with your devotees and pundits?

My only qualification was this human form
That I abuse, degraded and tried to adorn

While dancing and chanting the illusion song
I heard your voice say come along

Śrīla Prabhupada help me as my body grows old
To hear, chant and remember the eternal sound you have told

Only by your mercy can I understand
The dangers of the material energy in this foreign land

How can I see without your guidance and merciful glance?
It's in your books the key to stopping the dance

“*Punar mūṣiko bhava*” (become mouse again) I heard you say
On that glorious initiation day

When you are given a wonderful gift

Don't waste it away in the ocean and float adrift

Help me Śrīla Prabhupāda regain my spiritual sense
By associating with your devotees and not committing of-
fense

Kṛṣṇa is yours please help me to understand
His name, glories and activities of that spiritual land

The gift you have given can never be repaid
Only by your mercy and smiling glance
Can I control my mind and stop this illusionary dance

Your unqualified servant,

Mānya Dāsa

Balabhadra Bhaṭṭācārya Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your gloriously
effluent lotus feet.

At this stage in my life I feel impelled to focus more deeply on your
mission of exposing as many people as possible to the glories of
the Lord. This has become my constant meditation.

You have blessed me in uncountable ways and I do not feel the
need or have the urge to seek more blessings for myself. Instead
I simply pray that you will empower me to somehow assist you in
your mission of exposing as many *jīvas* as possible to the glories
of the Lord.

When I think of how you sacrificed so much for all mankind by the
simple act of public *kīrtana*, I become overwhelmed with sadness
realizing how little I do to actually follow in your footsteps.

In some small insignificant way I try to go out as much as I can with
devotees for public chanting. This is indeed the best way for me to

finish my life and to truly glorify you.

For the past fourteen years here in Atlanta, we have organized a program for your glorification called “Śrīla Prabhupāda Super Saturday.” We observe this wonderful celebration the first Saturday of every month. Since the time that I retired as president of the Atlanta temple in 2005, I have led a public *kīrtana* group a few hours before the celebration of Super Saturday. This has become my life and soul. This gives me a sense of purpose and it also served to encourage other devotees to focus on this extremely important devotional activity of public chanting. I have also worked with the wonderful devotees of the Philadelphia temple to establish Super Saturday here. In fact Śrīla Prabhupāda, as I write this simple offering, I am here in Philadelphia preparing to go out with the devotees for their first Super Saturday *harināma*. We pray that this will be pleasing to you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda what you have revealed to the world is unparalleled in the history of Vaiṣṇava culture. This very simple activity of public chanting is the topmost expression of compassion for all the living entities. I remember in one of your lectures that we listened to on Super Saturday, wherein you stated that when you first started public *kīrtana* you did not have a *mṛdaṅga* or *prasādam* to distribute, just the holy names. You also said that even if the people do not hear the chanting, that it did not matter because the chanting would still have a spiritual impact.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray that I can encourage devotees, at least here in America, to adopt this idea of “Śrīla Prabhupāda Super Saturday” along with *harināma*, book and *prasādam* distribution, similar to what my dear godbrother Vaiśeṣika is doing in Silicon Valley, and in this way we can truly keep you and your vision in the center of the movement and our lives, and in turn do the best possible service to all mankind.

Your humble servant,

Balabhadra Bhaṭṭācārya Dāsa

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I was merrily living my life thinking that the world is here for my enjoyment. I happened to meet some of your disciples who told me your message. You said that this world is temporary and is really here for Kṛṣṇa's ultimate enjoyment. You also said that our time here is limited. For the first time I began to realize that I would not live forever. I have heard from a devotee who was diagnosed with cancer about how devastating it was for them. I should really take the news of my mortality in the same way this devotee took the news of their cancer, but I am too illusioned, thinking I will live for a long time. You had engaged these disciples in Kṛṣṇa's service and they said they could engage me in Kṛṣṇa's service. I slowly began the process of *sādhana-bhakti*: hearing, chanting, remembering Kṛṣṇa. The association of your disciples was becoming the most important part of my life.

I have so much for which to thank you. Your message was simple and ecstatic. "Always remember Kṛṣṇa, and never forget Kṛṣṇa." "Chant and be happy" and "give the chanting to others, so they can be happy". "Read my books and distribute them." "Associate with devotees and give that association to others." "Become Kṛṣṇa conscious and make others Kṛṣṇa conscious" How can I ever repay you? By making these instructions my life and soul. By remembering them I remember you, the perfect example, the *ācārya*. When will that day come when I will be sincere enough to be counted as one of your disciples? By your unfathomable mercy I have been able to stay in the association of your devotees. They help me to remember and serve you. Please help me to avoid the allure of the material energy which could separate me from your disciples and your service. Some people say I am a good swimmer, but I will never be able to swim across the ocean of material nature. Please continue to throw me the lifeline of your mercy and maybe one day I will catch it, embrace it, and then you can pull me up to the safety of the shelter of your lotus feet.

Your floundering servant,

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Dāsa
ISKCON Toronto

My very dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories unto your lotus feet.

*vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam
etān vegān yo viṣaheta dhīraḥ
sarvām apīmām pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt*

A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind's demands, the actions of anger and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, these words of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī describe perfectly, you, a divine person. I take shelter of your divine feet eternally. You make my life perfect by teaching the chanting of the *mahā-mantra*:

Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

Thank you for teaching me how to offer whatever I eat to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you said that by eating *prasādam* we are going back to Godhead. It is very difficult to understand God but it becomes very easy by following your instructions and trying to constantly engage in devotional service.

Thank you. I'm trying to serve you.

Your fallen servant,

Kulāṅganā Devī Dāsī
Bhaktivedanta Manor, England

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. May those feet keep protecting me till the end of this lifetime and grant me eternal residence where the ācāryas live in pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Going over again the phases of this life, both before joining the movement and after, I cannot but realize how you were always there to protect me. Your descent to this world is what caused the Supreme Lord to maintain alive unworthy people like myself so that we may meet you one day.

You protected me from the anguish caused by the untimely death of my mother, from the insensitivity of relatives, from the concupiscence of greedy people, from the hypocrisy of friends, from the illusory love of the opposite sex, from drugs, from the desire to end my life, from cheating religions and philosophies, and from my uncontrolled mind.

My ability to remain engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness remains solely due to your protection, tolerance, and affectionate mercy.

As you well know, I have no merits, and when I see valuable devotees becoming victims of the illusory energy, I pray to Lord Nityānanda to bless me with a great anxiety about losing your protection, which is my only hope.

Some months ago I wrote a song that depicts both the mood I am in and what I should at least try to achieve in this lifetime.

Please accept it.

Your worthless disciple,

Madhusevita Dāsa

I Shouldn't Have You Come Save Me Again

Dear body and mind, so much love I gave you throughout my life—

I washed you, fed you, served you, and took care of you as if you were myself....

Now that you are old and crippled and almost dying by will of time,

I recall my Master's words: "For one who is attached, his life will end in pain."

Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda, you said if one does not complete his course and then is born again, the Master out of mercy may come down to rescue his son, but no...

I shouldn't have you come save me again, I shouldn't have you come save me again....

For so long I was engaged in idle talks and useless thoughts—

I could have better served my Master, but my mind just kept pushing me down....

Now that the end is near I realize I served just lust and greed—

my only hope my Master's mercy, which can liberate even a fool like me....

Whatever time is left I'll dedicate fully to you. It's late, I know—I feel ashamed. Still I should try to complete my work within this present life because...

I shouldn't have you come save me again, I shouldn't have you come save me again....

Please allow me

to join you again, to join you again, to join you again;

there's no other place I'd like to go—the world is void without your Feet.

Please allow me to join you again.

So still there is hope, Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda, because of your unprecedented mercy, and if I do sincerely try to serve you and love you, then I am sure...

You will not have to come save me again, you will not have to come save me again....

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please allow me at the end of life to join you again... .

Mahādevī dasī

My obeisances unto you Śrīla Prabhupāda

I pray every day to glorify you, to find a way
in whatever I do, say, offer or give away.

*cakṣudāna dīla-yei, janme janme prabhu sei
divya-jñāna hṛde prakāśita*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you open our darkened eyes
as you fill our hearts with transcendental knowledge
This *jñāna* cuts through the disguises and lies
in the emotional ocean of lust and commotion.

I pray to serve you sincerely, my dear Prabhupāda
striving for unconditional love and devotion,
with simple genuine *vijñāna*,

Attachment to your lotus feet is the perfection that fulfils all
desires.

I feel close to you when I'm chanting my rounds
and during the internal Gāyatrī
When I talk to you, you so patiently listen to me
and you definitely and practically respond to me.

I especially feel close to you when I quietly
sit and read from your books
to Tulasī-devī, or to you or to your devotees

I feel your presence in singing *bhajan*as
and *kṛṣṇa-nāma* in your Temple

In hearing *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*
In sharing your eternal glories with others,

In sharing kindness with your guests 'n' your devotees
or with my elders, younger sisters and brothers

I feel your presence within me, all around me.

How simply wonderful that we
can feel close to you
in so many ways, every day

Your eternal presence can be perceived
in hearing the *śabda*
of your sacred voice and in distributing *prasāda*

When I'm reading your books
or working with your Bhaktivedanta Folio... .

I feel close to you in your letters,
conversations, and morning walks

Your *Bhagavad-gītā* seems like a new book every year
Arjuna and you showing us how to serve without fear

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when O' when will I truly love you
to reciprocate with all the love you give me so endlessly?

I pray every day to have my consciousness purified
by the words emanating from your lotus mouth

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, when O' when will I truly love you
so that I can offer you pure devotional service?

You amaze me how you live so magnanimously
in so many places at the same time...

In your books, in my home, on the altar, in your samādhi,
in your Vṛndāvana house, on your *vyāsāsana*, in *kṛṣṇa-*
nāma

and in your *bhajana-kuṭīr* at Rādhā-Dāmodara... .

And I'm truly grateful to see you so alive specifically
in the hearts and devotional services of all your devotees.

Ironically to me, you even live so compassionately
in my own polluted heart;
epitome of magnanimity.

Wherever there is Kṛṣṇa, there you are.
I want to spread your holy name and fame
all over the three worlds, my dear Prabhupāda

Serving you selflessly, tirelessly, effectively
ahaituky apratihātā is what I need

Another year with your Vṛndāvana devotees
whom you still allow me to try and serve heartfully

As time ticks by, I know that death is nearby
I keep praying to serve you faithfully with chastity.

*teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ bhajatāṁ prīti-pūrvakam
dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ yena mām upayānti te*

Kṛṣṇa tells us Personally...

“For one who is constantly devoted to serving Me with love
I give the understanding by which he can come to Me.”
(Bg 10.10)

When O when will I be constantly devoted
serving you with love?

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please glance favorably on me
All I can do is try and please you
with some attempted devotional service every day
and beg for this understanding
by which I can come to you, always be with you.

Hoping against hope, breath after breath til' death
I beg to serve your Mission in Vṛndāvana in Purī...
wherever I go, may I glorify you with sincerity

You told us when foreigner devotees in India,
especially American-bodied devotees,
when we wear devotee dress with *japa-mālā*, tulasī neck
beads

This is preaching, this is pleasing to you because
Indian people are impressed and intrigued
with your Western devotees serving in India.

If they want to be more like America
that means to chant HARI HARI BOL!!!

I get to share your fame in my traveling and preaching
in Hṛṣīkeśa, Jagannātha Purī, even just to Delhi

People say HARE Kṛṣṇa just by seeing me!
So many questions of curiosity,
all answers coming from what you are giving me

O' when O' when, Śrīla Prabhupāda, will I truly love you?
I pray to be who you want me to be.

You once told me in New Vṛndāvana
when I came to you to get my cookie..

You heard my heart and you saw the real me
“Do not be fearful, I am always with you.”

Please use me, my dear Prabhupāda... as your Mahādevī Dasī

PS: I humbly ask you to glance most favorably on your 2nd/3rd
generation of young foreigner devotee artists who are propagating
the Classical Cultural Arts of India around the world. They totally
mesmerize and enliven audiences with the *bhakti* mood you have
so kindly given them. You have mentioned that the Cultural Arts
performed to please Kṛṣṇa will attract Lakṣmī-devī Herself and the
masses to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. “Extraordinary power, victory, op-
ulence and morality... wherever there is Kṛṣṇa.”

Please, Prabhupāda, please glance favorably on your devotional
artists, particularly your American grand-daughters, Caitanya-Nitāi

Devī Dasī and Gaura-prema Devī Dasī, born and raised in your
Temples to serve Kṛṣṇa.

Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/Hare Rāma Hare
Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

Lakṣmī-Nṛsimha Dāsa and Paṭṭarājñī Devī Dāsī

Who is Śrīla Prabhupāda?

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

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

Under the shade of the great oak tree,
In the middle of a park in New York City,
Sat Prabhupāda with total focus of mind
Chanting the names of Kṛṣṇa, holy and sublime.

Few, at that time knew what to make of you
Entranced, they stared at a *sādhu* of golden hue
With love freely flowing from your pure heart
Sweet sacred song wafting through Tompkins Square Park.

Some call you a barber who shaves us clean
From lust, anger, greed, and living a bad dream
Our hearts were unkempt with a tangle of desire
A pure-hearted Vaiṣṇava, for this we aspire.

Some call you a washer man diligently cleansing
Contaminated hearts with the soap of chanting
With the pure water of knowledge gently flowing
You scrubbed our hearts clean 'til we were glowing.

Some call you a tailor expertly sewing
Karma, jñāna, yoga – a tapestry flowing
Together with the thread of pure *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*
sādhana empowered with *kṛṣṇa-śakti*.

Some call you the captain guiding our ship
Crossing the ocean of nescience; a perilous trip
Body is our boat, Vedas the wind
And you, Prabhupāda, guiding us within.

Some call you a gardener planting the seed
In the hearts of the sincere fully in need
Of a special design to set us free
From illusion's grasp and sinful deeds

Lord Kṛṣṇa gave us the blessing of you
Then you gave us Kṛṣṇa, the cowherd boy blue
Through Kṛṣṇa's name you planted the seed
saṅga through *vānī* you eternally feed
The creeper of devotion planted deep in our heart
Eternal love stalled then you powered a jumpstart.

You are our well-wisher, our mentor and friend
A spiritual revolutionary, bucking orthodox trend
You are very simply a pure devotee of God
Attracting Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa like a lightning rod.

No one can measure the breadth of your success
You are the conductor of the Goloka Express.
While others stayed in India ringing the bell
You chose to give Kṛṣṇa in heaven and hell.

You are the guide on the *mahājana's* traversed path
You help us avoid the pitfalls of pride and wrath
A realized master in transcendental knowledge
One second with you learned more than 4 yrs. of college.

Guru and Gaura said "give Śrī Nāma in every town
You fulfilled the order with faith in the power of sacred
sound
You're the best servant and top general under Nitāi's com-
mand
You gave us entry to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's holy land.

If thousands of mouths were bestowed upon me
I could never praise you adequately
Suffice it to say you're my life's very breath
Please bless this lowly soul with service 'til death.

The pages have turned, we're on the last chapter
My heart is yours, my heart you have captured
Just give me the strength to share the holy name
I beg for nothing else, neither riches nor fame.

Your unworthy servants clinging tightly to your lotus feet,

Lakṣmī-Nṛsiṃha Dāsa and Paṭṭarājñī Devī Dāsī

Laṅgagaṇeśa Dāsa

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

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

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

My Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

The auspicious *mahotsava* appearance of Your Divine Grace has caught me once again feeling inadequately prepared to offer my gratitude appropriately. Humbly, I offer my respectful obeisances in the dust at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, who so gallantly has plucked me from the turbulence of the ocean of nescience, that I may properly see my precarious condition.

This is the 35th year that has transpired since your departure from our physical senses, leaving them bereft of satiation, in the ocean of grief of separation from your holiness. Yet, we grow closer to Your Divine Grace daily, due to the uncanny nature of your merciful glance within our memory.

As we members of ISKCON continue to evolve your plan to inundate Bhūmiloka with the *yuga-dharma* of *harināma-saṅkīrtana* from our growing urban centers, and expand the Vṛndāvana-like farming communities throughout the world as the exemplary ideal contained within Śrī Kṛṣṇa's heart – manifest on this planet; I pray

for the understanding that we all need to effectively cooperate together to attain the realizations necessary, that we may overcome the envious tendency for diatribe rather than constructive criticism in our neophyte consciousness.

Due to the ‘Damocles’ – effect of impending death that this material environment is fraught with, and the advancement in the age of direct disciples of Your Divine Grace; it is most important that I beg your forgiveness for all of my shortcomings in failing to help you to achieve a consensus of effort amongst ALL of my godbrothers and sisters to integrate our individual personalities more firmly and cooperatively in the above-mentioned services.

Where we *have* successfully developed independent efforts at carrying-on the *saṅkīrtana* mission including the ongoing distribution of your books, and we *have* similarly carried on the farming-community efforts in much fewer locations; the process of combining the two efforts into an *effective* partnership has fallen far short of what you have described in your books, lectures and vision for us. Your objective of having the preaching centers (urban Temples) operate as an ‘induction-center’ which, after the initial introduction of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, would then direct those who do NOT participate in direct *saṅkīrtana* services (or support services) to the establishment of a farming community within reasonable travelling distance from the Temple – has *not* been realized! I am truly *ashamed* to make such a statement 35 years after you have left it in our hands!

Although there remains a variety of obstacles, and my personal shortcomings are too numerous to list here, I remain confident that the process will continue to evolve, as Lords Gauracandra’s and Nitāicandra’s intent is clear! I pray to see the ongoing integration and expansion of your plans to give every living entity access to a localized taste of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s “Vṛndāvana atmosphere”!

Personally, as you well know, it has been my heart and soul’s wish and effort since 1975 to collect information, collate that information into a plan and to share the ‘plan’ for a coordinated effort to establish this aforementioned integration of farm communities with our urban temples.

Thank *you* so much for allowing me the good association of Śālagrāma Dāsa Adhikārī’s patience and wisdom in helping me these last three+ years to solidify these thoughts and efforts into a

functional service. Your personal hand in allowing me to experience the camaraderie of his insights, and his personally developing the 10-part power-point series for presenting the value of “rural farm communities” to the devotee congregation (as well as the general public), and share in this pleasure of your service is so wonderful in this regard! As a result, more are becoming interested in this effort, and are gradually also participating individually and collectively in a variety of similar projects.

Please allow me to continue serving you despite my numerous faults. You remain my only hope, inspiration and shelter. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

For Your pleasure: <http://www.SelfSufficientCommunities.org>

Your servant,

Laṅgagaṇeśa Dāsa

Mahākṣa Dāsa

My dear sweet angel of love, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Thank you so much for coming this terrible time and place to save me. That was so sweet of you!

Thank you even more for always staying with me, whilst I proceeded to make a complete mess of everything.

I know it has been a long time, but I will soon be back from *saṅkīrtana* again, with a lot of scars and wounds, having bagged the earth. I know you would much rather I came back immediately having distributed just one book. But it's too tempting trying to get the result for what you already did anyway!

The spare,

Mahākṣa Dāsa
England

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

It is by exceptional good fortune that we have been blessed by Lord Caitanya with your *darśana* and association which have transformed our lives.

In the Vālmīki *Rāmāyāna* (*Yuddha-kāṇḍa*) Lord Rāmacandra extols the qualities of Śrī Hanumān who returned from Laṅkā not only with the news of Śrīmatī Sītā-devī, but in the process destroyed a good portion of Laṅkā, the city of Rākṣasas, thus making it easier for Lord Rāmacandra to execute His mission. Recognizing Śrī Hanumān as a first class servant, He delineated the qualities of the three classes of servants:

- 1) The servant of the first class does more than what his master asks.
- 2) The servant of the second class, although having the capacity, only does what the master asks.
- 3) The servant of the third class, although having capacity does not do what the master asks and is therefore lowly.

Certainly you have not only fulfilled the order of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura to preach in English, but even crystallized the precepts and culture of Lord Caitanya globally, in a systematic, scientific and unprecedented manner.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given meaning to our lives, when everything seemed hopeless and we shall always remain indebted to you for your kindness.

There is no way for us to repay the debt that we owe to you, and we could not absolve ourselves of that debt in so many life-times, but we can only prostrate in gratitude before you and Lord Kṛṣṇa, and pray that you shower your mercy on us, birth after birth.

I take liberty to recount a pastime of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu

from *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala* by Śrī Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura:

Once upon a time, In His own house, Lord Caitanya, all of a sudden said,

“I am going home”. Only Murāri Gupta could understand what He meant, and he explained that He was going into His devotees’ hearts, where He resides and engages in His pastimes. Similarly, the Lord says [SB 9. 4. 68]:

*sādhavo hṛdayaṁ mahyaṁ
sādhūnām hṛdayaṁ tv aham
mad-anyat te na jānanti
nāhaṁ tebhyo manāg api*

The pure devotee is always within the core of My heart, and I am always in the heart of the pure devotee. My devotees do not know anything else but Me, and I do not know anyone else but them.

Having your *darśana*, I felt that Lord Kṛṣṇa was very much with you. It was the greatest and best moment of my life when I had your *darśana*; the moment that destroyed my ignorance and opened the gateway to eternal life.

*yadyapi āmāra guru—caitanya Dāsa
tathāpi jāniye āmi tāñhāra prakāśa*

Although I know that my spiritual master is a servitor of Śrī Caitanya, I know Him also as a plenary manifestation of the Lord. (*Cc. Ādi 1. 44*).

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your lowly servant,

Mahāmana Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda – Your Loving Ways

You follow your *guru*,
And I follow you.
Without you, Śrīla Prabhupāda,
I would not know Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth.

I swing Him on a swing,
He dances on my tongue,
I eat His *mahā* remnants,
And chant in *kīrtana*.

That blue cowherd boy
Whom you love devotedly,
By your causeless mercy,
Is now known to me.

Happiness and joy
Accompany my days;
Love and devotion
Decorate my ways.

What words can I express?
What can I say?
I love you, Śrīla Prabhupāda,
For your giving ways.

Selflessly you welcomed me,
Though strangers at the start.
The initiation you granted me,

Did melt my steel-clad heart,

You saw within me my soul's tiny spark,
Which you carefully fanned into flames.
And now I sing, dance and chant
Kṛṣṇa's transcendental holy names.

With your mercy I shall do this 'till the end of my days,
When I pray that I'll meet you one day face to face.
Without you I floundered and now I am saved.
Thank you for everything, Your Divine Grace.

Your eternal servant,

Padyāvalī Devī Dāsī

Tattvavit Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Most humble *praṇāms*.

Some London buildings have round blue signs informing the passerby that a famous or outstanding person lived there and accomplished something. You preached at a Jayal, you said, where a cell that held Gandhi prisoner is venerated. On America's East Coast one might see: "George Washington slept here." Kṛṣṇa teaches, "Whatever the greatest one does, that very thing other persons will do. Whatever standard the greatest one enacts, that the world follows" (Bg. 3. 21). Kṛṣṇa's words encourage and persuade Arjuna to act. Similarly, you inspire people to follow your example. You take the lead, set standards. You establish precedents, change paradigms, and act as an ideal model. Thus, to your credit, your followers also teach and preach; translate, write, edit; distribute books; and perform many types of devotional service on progressively higher levels.

There is no one whose acts are more dearly loved by Kṛṣṇa than one who reveals Kṛṣṇa's supreme secret to *bhaktas*. The supreme secret, *paramaṁ guhyam* (Bg. 18. 68), the greatest secret of all,

sarva-guhya-tamam (18. 64), is told to Arjuna: *iṣṭo 'si me dṛḍham*—“you are so much loved by Me!” This can apply to every heart and soul, not just Arjuna. Your disciple, Garuda Dāsa (Graham M. Schweig), whose ideas and translations I’m using, writes in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2007) for Harper Collins, “At the highest level, yoga is a secret state of union within supreme love, bestowed by divinity, who is also subsumed in this union. Indeed, yoga is the power of love that transforms the heart and to which even divinity submits.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by discharging the most sublime service to your spiritual master and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, following Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, you enable us to act in *paramparā*. Gratefully, I remain

Your servant,

Tattvavit Dāsa

Phalinī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this holiest of holy days—the day of your auspicious appearance on this forlorn planet—please accept my *daṇḍavat praṇāms* in the dust of this earth which has been so lucky to be touched by your lotus feet.

Every time I write a Vyāsa-pūjā letter, I always say “thank you for this” and “thank you for that.” To thank you is my natural inclination, because you gave me the greatest gift. You reintroduced me to Kṛṣṇa. You taught me how to chant Kṛṣṇa’s holy names. You gave me the Matchless Gift, the chance to reawaken my love for God that has been dormant in my heart for countless lifetimes. You taught me that Kṛṣṇa’s holy name is a treasure far greater than even a touchstone. Thank you for telling us how Sanātana Gosvāmī threw his touchstone in the dust pile because he had a greater treasure. He had the greatest treasure in his possession—even greater than a touchstone—the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

Thank you for being willing to accept the position of *guru* even though you

were *uttama-Adhikārī* and saw everyone not only as a devotee, but as better a devotee than yourself. You accepted the *madhyama-Adhikārī* position on the order of your spiritual master so that we westerners could have a chance to love Kṛṣṇa again. You sacrificed, you pushed yourself beyond what even your Guru Mahārāja expected of you. You preached in a language which was not your own, just so that we fallen English-speaking souls of Kali-yuga could have Kṛṣṇa again.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I am so grateful.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when I was a little girl, I used to think about God a lot.

I used to hanker like anything to know more about God than the Bible, my Catechism book, the priests, the nuns and, my parents and teachers could tell me. I sat in my garden, thinking about Him and wanting to know His name. People used to tell me, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.”

“Okay”, I thought, “I won’t take His name in vain, but would you please tell me what His name IS?” But they didn’t know. They couldn’t tell me. When you came, you told me what God’s name is. You solved the mystery. Thank you for reminding me what God’s name is. Thank you for challenging me, for giving me the chance to daily chant and hear Kṛṣṇa’s holy names with full, undivided attention, like a child crying for its mother, free from offenses. I am so, so grateful for the opportunity to chant and hear the Lord’s holy names.

Prabhupāda, when I was little I used to scoot my bed up close to my bedroom window at night. I was supposed to be sleeping, but I couldn’t sleep.

Instead, I would open my window, and for hours, I would look up toward the stars and talk to God. I missed Him so much. I didn’t know what He looked like, or how to pray to Him properly, but I would try to talk to Him anyway. When you came, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you taught me what God looks like and how to talk to Him, how to pray to Him properly. Thank you for reminding me what God looks like and how to pray to Him in a way which is most pleasing to Him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when I was young I wanted to be with God. But

I didn't know how to get back home to be with Him, and no one could tell me how to find my way back home. When you came, you gave me the road map how to get back home, back to Godhead. You explained that in order to return home, back to Kṛṣṇa, one must first uncover his love for Kṛṣṇa. You said that love of God is already there in everyone's heart, and that it just has to be uncovered. You taught me how to cleanse my heart by chanting and hearing the Lord's holy names. You told me, "Just hear." This, you explained, would clean my heart, reawaken my love for Kṛṣṇa, and ensure my return to the spiritual world so I could again be with Him. I am so, so grateful.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for showing me how to get back home to Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when I was a child, I was told that one should love and serve God, but no one was able to give me practical instructions 'how' to love and serve God. When you came, you taught me how to love God and how to serve God in practical ways. You exposed the impracticality of trying to convince someone to love God without describing God to that person. You asked, "How can you love someone if you know nothing about Him?" So you taught me about Kṛṣṇa. You described His beautiful form, His all-attractive features, His transcendental pastimes. You taught me about the place where He lives and what He does there. You gave me historical accounts of His pastimes, both here on earth and in other realms. You taught me about Kṛṣṇa's friends and family members and about the planet Goloka where He eternally resides with His dear devotees. You introduced me to the Person, Kṛṣṇa. You gave me reasons to love Him. You gave me suggestions how to serve Him. You taught me how to serve God here in this world, how to practice always remembering Him and never forgetting Him, how to offer everything I do and say and think and perceive as a moment-to-moment offering at His lotus feet.

I am so grateful. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for telling me about Kṛṣṇa and for giving me practical guidance as to how I can uncover my love for Him by rendering devotional service to Our Lord at every moment of every day.

Always, always thanking you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, for the sacrifices you made, for your love, your guidance and your mercy.

I beg to remain,

Your eternally grateful daughter,

Phalinī Devī Dāsī

Jagadvīra Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

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

It is now 47 years since you arrived in the USA (September of 1965). It seemed from the material point of view that you came with almost nothing, but actually you came with the most valuable message. And now in 2012, that same message is still being broadcast. Your transcendental books are still being distributed. The holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa is still being chanted. Devotees are still chanting at least 16 rounds a day. Lord Jagannātha is still being worshiped and Ratha-yātrā is still going on in many cities around this planet.

Prasādam is being served profusely every day to many fortunate souls. Devotees are also writing books about you and your pastimes.

I often wonder how you managed in the first year that you arrived in New York – especially at the age of 69. You had no money, but you thought, anyway let me try.

“When I was alone in your New York, I was thinking, who will listen to me in this horrible, sinful place? All right, I shall stay little longer; at least I can distribute a few of my books, that is something. But Kṛṣṇa was all along preparing something I could not see, and He brought you to me one by one, sincere American boys and girls, to be trained-up for doing the work of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu”.

You moved from place to place with very limited funds trying to start a worldwide movement for the benefit of the whole world, where life was based on the four principles of meat-eating, gambling, intoxication and illicit sex. An impossible task, one would no doubt

conclude from the non-Kṛṣṇa conscious angle of vision. But your vision was different – you had the backing of the disciplic succession and the authority of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu who stated that in every town and village, His name would be heard.

In that cold winter of 1965/1966, seeing and experiencing snow for the first time, you patiently flamed any small sparks of interest in what you were trying to freely give. Then, with the help of Michael (Now Mukunda Goswami) and some friends, you found the 26 Second Avenue storefront and officially registered the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. At that time (1965), I was 15 years old and was attending Secondary school in England. In 1969 I was working in the city of London and left England in April to travel overland to India and on to Australia. You arrived in London in September of 1969. But it wasn't until you came to Australia in April 1972 that I was fortunate to meet Your Divine Grace. Upon meeting you the direction of my life changed from a life based on the assumption that I am this body and my purpose in life is to give some pleasure to this body. I travelled far and met many lost souls, but it wasn't until I came in contact with you that my meaningless life had any real direction.

I remember it well the first time I entered your ISKCON temple. As I was entering the door, the feeling came over me that now I have come home.

So now here we are in 2012 and the same message is still being presented, the same *mantra* and you are still the Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. And you will always be so and your transcendental books are the foundation of your great movement. And as we enter more in to the age of Kali more lost souls will be coming to take shelter of your International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. Are we ready to accommodate them? Governments around the world are having serious troubles – too many problems to list here and more and more people are looking for answers. We have to distribute more of your books, we have to get more people to read and understand them, more *harināma saṅkīrtana*, more *prasādam*. Every town and village should be our goal as this is your desire, as well as that of our previous *ācāryas*.

You worked tirelessly to establish the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, making sure that your transcendental instructions were available and understandable for all. So today we remind our-

selves of your great mission and pray for your causeless mercy that the seemingly impossible will be possible by Your Divine Grace.

Your aspiring eternal servant,

Jagadvīra Dāsa

Rājendranandana Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

All glories to Your Divine Grace Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahaṁsa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda!

With your permission I would like to try and offer a drop or two of your unlimited glories for your pleasure. Every morning in *guru-pūjā* we sing “the Vedic scriptures sing of your glories.” This is so very true in every respect. Any description of the post of *guru* you certainly qualify for. And, unlike most *gurus*, there are predictions specifically of you and your mission. “In the *Padma Purāṇa* it is said the *guru* must be situated on the topmost platform of devotional service *mahā-bhāgavata-śreṣṭha*. The first class devotee is the spiritual master for all kinds of people or for everyone, *gurur nṛṇām*. As Rūpa Gosvāmī says in the *Upadeśāmṛta*, the *guru* is a *gosvāmī*, a controller of his mind and senses. Such a *guru* can accept disciples from all over the world. *Pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt*. “. [Cc *Madhya* 24.330, purport]

Why did you tirelessly travel over the entire globe preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness at the cost of such personal inconvenience and sacrifice? Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī prayed about Sanātana Gosvāmī, “The Vaiṣṇava is an ocean of mercy to the fallen conditioned souls; indeed he is so compassionate that, although for

himself he knows no unhappiness, he feels unhappiness on account of their suffering.” Or as Prahlāda Mahārāja prayed to Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, “O best of the great personalities, I am not at all afraid of material existence, for wherever I stay I am fully absorbed in thoughts of your glories and activities. My concern is only for the fools and rascals who are making elaborate plans for material happiness and maintaining their families, societies, and countries. I am simply concerned with love for them” [SB 7.9.43]. “My dear Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, I see that there are many saintly persons indeed, but they are interested only in their own deliverance. Not caring for the big cities and towns they go to the Himālayas or the forest to meditate with vows of silence. They are not interested in delivering others. As for me, however, I do not wish to be liberated alone, leaving aside all these poor fools and rascals. I know that without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, without taking shelter of your lotus feet, one cannot be happy. Therefore, I wish to bring them back to the shelter of your lotus feet”. [SB 7.9.44]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this is just the tip of the tip of the iceberg of the countless glories of the bona-fide spiritual master, and of course they all indicate your transcendental glories. But unlike most, you came to perform unheard of and even unbelievable service to the Lord. There are several predictions of you and your activities that became self-evident after or even during your manifest *līlās*: “In as many towns and villages as there are on the surface of the earth, My holy name will be preached” – Lord Caitanya (CB), “Even if the sinners reject religion or flee to foreign countries [ī] I will send more *senapati bhakta*, My military field commander, to go there and deliver them” – Lord Caitanya (*Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala*), “After 5, 000 years My *mantra-upāsaka*, worshiper of the holy name, will appear in this world and spread the chanting of My holy name everywhere”

Lord Kṛṣṇa (*Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa*), or as Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura wrote in *Sajjana-toṣaṇī* in 1883, “A personality will soon appear in order to preach the teachings of Śrī Caitanya and move unrestrictedly over the whole world with His message.”

Thank you so much for your oceanic compassion and selfless acts of love, delivering countless living entities, including myself. If I may be so bold Śrīla Prabhupāda, may I offer a prayer for blessings and benediction.

I find myself praying to you a lot these days. So this prayer will not

be anything you haven't heard before. I'm trying, I'm yearning, to grow beyond materialistic devotional service. For how many countless lives have I held on to unlimited selfish material desires? If not for your picking me up and giving me the shelter of your divine instructions I would for countless more lives continue to do so. I do not hold onto so many desires compared to the past, but letting go completely of such foolishness seems very difficult, almost impossible sometimes. Indeed without your service, it would be humanly impossible. Because of the mercy (your mercy) of *sādhū-saṅga* I can see (hear) pure devotion close at hand. To the degree that I become victimized by pride, that vision evaporates like a mirage. But pure devotional service IS NOT a mirage. It is the only reality! The illusion is that I have anything of my own worth being proud of. *aḥaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā*

kartāham iti manyate. By my own endeavors I have only created pain for myself and others. As I slowly mature I understand and realize anything and everything I do or possess that is pleasing to you, the Vaiṣṇavas, and Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu is only by your causeless mercy. Causeless because I certainly don't deserve your favour. To quote words you humbly spoke, "I am unfortunate, unqualified, and most fallen." Only for me these are not words of humility, it's a pathetic description of what I really am.

Śrīla Prabhupāda even when I do enter into the temple of pure *bhakti* I probably will never measure up to the hopes and expectations that you have for a disciple, that of becoming a moonlike devotee. I can understand that as my false ego diminishes. I can even accept it. So my repeated prayer to you is please fulfil my desire and empower me to become a humble sincere servant of your followers. I know that everything of this world is temporary, insignificant, and of no value except service to the Vaiṣṇavas. To become the servant of the servants I know I have to tolerate. As you said, "you might tolerate as I tolerate you." I have to realize I am so insignificant; One ten thousandth the tip of a hair is lower than trampled upon straw or grass. With purified vision I will see the good qualities of others that deservedly make them the object of my respect. As for myself I have already admitted I'm just a reservoir of bad qualities. So please grant me this benediction, that I realize my constitutional identity as the servant of your servants. As you said, "no I'm not first class, I'm fifth class, the servant of all the other classes." Whenever I do render some *vaiṣṇava-sevā* and give you proper gratitude I am getting an increasing taste for this

endeavour. Then I know that full faith in chanting the holy names can be granted. Then my secret inner most desire to be an instrument of yours in helping fallen and suffering conditioned souls will become a constant desire, meditation, and activity. But fool as I am, let me try and assimilate this one drop of mercy and become fixed in my first desire so as to deserve and be granted the ability to truly and deeply influence and inspire others in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Yearning to please you,

Your insignificant disciple,

Rājendranandana Dāsa

Kamrā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you, my spiritual master and dearest loving father.

You have given me everything that is meaningful in life, including life itself. You have saved me in every respect.

As Kali-yuga advances dramatically, I appreciate the truths and mercy you have offered ever more strongly. What you have spoken and written maintains its veracity in every situation, and shines ever more brightly against the impending darkness of the Age of Kali. Your words and example are solid pillars of support, timeless wisdom, and loving encouragement as everything I have known, everything from which I have tried to take shelter, birth after birth, reveals its seductive and ephemeral nature and crumbles before me.

I have prayed countless times since I came into contact with your teachings and family of devotees to be able to offer something meaningful to you in this lifetime. I don't know what that will be, but I see that the changes that have occurred in myself by trying to live your instructions have inspired other people to come into association with you through your books and the rich lifestyle you so kindly

offered us. I pray to be able to hang onto your feet through eternity, and by doing so, by your mercy, take as many people with me as possible, to that supreme destination to which you hold open the door.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for everything, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I beg to remain,

Your humble servant,

Kamrā Devī Dāsī

Tāraka Dāsa

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

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

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances repeatedly in the dust of your lotus feet. On this anniversary of the blessed appearance of Your Divine Grace in this world, may your glories of be broadcast and heard far and wide.

Every day we witness the miracle of fallen souls, even *yavanas* and *mlecchas* from every corner of the globe, taking to spiritual life and chanting the holy names in great ecstasy. Śrīla Prabhupāda, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is spreading like wildfire throughout the whole world, all by the force of your extraordinary devotion.

What you have done Śrīla Prabhupāda, is unprecedented in the history of the world. It has become more clear than ever that Your Divine Grace is not just a pure devotee and *jagad-guru* or great world-*ācārya*, but a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*, the very specially empowered emissary of the most magnanimous golden avatar, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are that great soul chosen by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to spread His mission to every town and village of the world. You are the spearhead of His mission and the fountainhead of His mercy.

In more than one instance, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* asserts, “The value of a moment’s association with the devotee of the Lord cannot even be compared to the attainment of heavenly planets or liberation from matter, and what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which are for those who are meant for death.” (SB 1. 18. 13) What then, can be a greater benediction than to have the association of Your Divine Grace?

How fortunate we are then to have been blessed by your merciful glance, Śrīla Prabhupāda; to have had the chance to serve your lotus feet and assist you in your mission. And how very fortunate we are to have your continued association in a multitude of ways. You are present in your name, your instructions, your words both written and recorded, in your pictures and in your *mūrtis*. You are present in your delegated representatives, in the countless varieties of your service, in the words and actions of those who follow you strictly as well as in the hearts and minds of all those who follow your instructions. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are present in your disciples who are initiating your grand-disciples. You are present in our memory of you and your wonderful, transcendental *līlā* and you are certainly and most mercifully present in your International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. In these, and many more you are ever present, guiding, teaching, correcting, reciprocating our service and interacting with us in limitless ways.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your expert transcendental arrangement the world will be blessed by your association for thousands of years to come. But of all the ways you have made yourself available, you have especially invested yourself in your extraordinary books. Now your Bhaktivedanta Book Trust is publishing your books in nearly one hundred languages. These amazing, transcendental time bombs continue to be distributed in ever-increasing numbers, transforming the lives of people in regions of the Earth that have

never before had access to the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, each of your books with its immense potential may endure for lifetimes and may pass through innumerable hands. Each individual who so much as handles that book and appreciates its quality or beauty will get a start in spiritual life. And what to speak of those who read them; even one line or one word. Their lives will be transformed and they will very soon become servants of Lord Gaurāṅga. Perhaps they will themselves become distributors of your books. To contemplate the resulting expansion of Lord Caitanya's movement through this astounding geometric progression of the distribution of your mercy absolutely boggles the mind.

What might the future hold? I got a small clue when I happened to see a television one day. There was a broadcast of a Christian preacher speaking to an audience of thousands in a huge venue. What caught my attention was that I heard this man speak the phrase "pure devotional service". Then repeatedly I heard him use phrases and words in ways that I have only heard spoken by Your Divine Grace or one of your followers. As I listened, this preacher began to sound more and more like an ISKCON devotee. In fact, Śrīla Prabhupāda, this man's sermon began to sound very much like one of your own lectures. He spoke about pure devotion, distinguishing it from material activity and even mixed devotion. He was talking about pure devotional service; selfless, unconditional, unmotivated love of God.

My curiosity piqued, I watched with rapt attention as the preacher explained the importance of pure devotion, distinguishing it from material piety. He even criticized Christians who pray for material benedictions. As he spoke I saw that he was glancing repeatedly at a book on his podium which had a great many pages marked with slips of paper. At one point he stepped out from behind his podium and began to pace about the stage, speaking excitedly while holding the open book in his hands.

As the viewing angle switched from one camera to another and another I was suddenly jolted by what I realized I was seeing. What that man had in his hands was a first canto *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*! I saw it very clearly. The distinctive cover depicting the spiritual sky was absolutely unmistakable. Śrīla Prabhupāda, this Christian preacher was speaking from your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* before a live audience of thousands of attentive listeners in that auditorium

and on national television before an audience of millions. He had discovered the immense value of your pure, *paramparā* message.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this is just one small example of your extraordinary influence and hints at what is to come. Soon such things will be commonplace. Transcendental time bombs are ticking away and detonating everywhere. One day Śrīla Prabhupāda, the entire world will recognize the tremendous value of your books and their lives will be transformed into one of ecstatic Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

In words similar to my previous quote, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* reaffirms in a later canto, “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.” (SB 4.30.34)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am unable to estimate my good fortune at having received your causeless mercy and I am unable to adequately express my gratitude for the many ways you have blessed me with your association. My debt to you cannot be repaid, but I beg for the chance to try. I can think of nothing more desirable than to serve your lotus feet birth after birth and to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from your lotus mouth.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have become feeble both in mind and body and am unable to properly glorify you. My efforts remain insufficient and flawed. I beg you to please forgive the many deficiencies in my attempt and to kindly accept my humble offering.

Thank you for saving my life, Śrīla Prabhupāda and for turning this hippie into a happy. Throwing myself repeatedly in the dust of your lotus feet, I beg you to please forgive my many offenses and allow me serve you always. Please keep me forever under the shelter of your divine lotus feet and in the association of your wonderful servants.

With utmost gratitude, I humbly beg to forever remain,

Your servant,

Tāraka Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I sit here before you as your insignificant follower, having not done very much.

But still, I am your eternal servant and you are my eternal master, simple and sublime.

Actually, you are the master of simple and sublime.

“Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and be happy”. “back home, back to Godhead”. “a home in which the whole world can live” “what is the difficulty” and of course. “simply wonderful”!

But there was a time when I was so entangled in mundane life, so entangled in illusion and in sinful activity, that I was not able to understand your sublime simplicity, nor could I understand the sublime and simple nature of your ISKCON. You may remember then when I was young, I was simply morose and there was not an ounce of happiness left in my heart. Those were days of intense self-sorrow. In my eyes, the people of the world seemed hell-bent on destroying themselves and in great despair, so did I.

But somehow you saved me from that hellish fate and it was only due to your mercy and simply due to your service that everything changed.

At least for me things changed and so much so, that sometimes in reflection I find myself in a state of wonder and surprise at how I’m now always feeling happy. I have almost completely forgotten what it is like to be morose.

And now I understand you much better and how you are always with me; in your books, in your instructions, in my memories and in my dreams—and you are not at all complicated. You are simply sublime.

You have shown me that there is no need to over-think it all. Just think of Kṛṣṇa.

There is no need to over-law book it all. Just follow four regulative principles.

There is no need to be too overwhelmed. Just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and be happy.

And it is that very simple.

Yours is a movement of consciousness, of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness and it is flooding the hearts of people everywhere, in all walks of life. It is a living movement of spiritual practice, of purification, of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and it gives personal tangible progress in spiritual happiness for everyone.

Your ISKCON is the home in which the whole world can live, and remarkably, the people of the world do not even have to leave their homes in order to live in yours.

This is the real wonder, the real purpose, and the real benefit of your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. That people as morose and downtrodden as myself, can come with a simple yet sincere heart-felt prayer to the Lord for help, and Kṛṣṇa is so kind that you are still here to lift them up out of their darkness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have shown me that Kṛṣṇa is happiness personified and I have seen that you are also happiness personified and knowing these two things only, I have also become simply happy.

I am eternally grateful and eternally indebted to you.

Your insignificant servant,

Venugopāla Dāsa

The disciple gets a chance to attain pure devotional service by association with a bona fide spiritual master. One gets the association of such a pure devotee by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. By such fortune the seed of the pure devotional service is planted. By regular hearing, that seed begins to grow out of this material world and comes to rest at the Lotus Feet of the Lord.

One cannot compare the association of a pure devotee of the Lord with any experience in this world. The pure devotee is fixed in Kṛṣṇa's service and he sees all living entities as Kṛṣṇa's parts and tries to bring them to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa who resides within everyone's heart reciprocates with His pure devotee by enlightening the conditioned souls to engage in pure devotional service.

Because the pure devotee does not desire anything for sense gratification he is peaceful. The conditioned souls become peaceful by the association of such a pure devotee. Without the association of a pure devotee the conditioned souls suffer by hunting after material enjoyment. Such unfortunate persons work hard day and night trying to satisfy their senses. Others being frustrated with such a futile attempt to become happy seek out liberation. Still others are desirous of attaining some yogic powers or *siddhis* like being able to control others minds etc. However, all such persons are never peaceful.

The creeper which grows from the seed of pure devotional service when properly watered expands beyond this material world. The creeper can be destroyed at the root by offending a pure devotee.

There are other seeds that one may sow within the heart. If one is less fortunate one may get the *karma-bīja*, *jñāna-bīja*, political *bīja*, social or philanthropic *bīja*. However, the creepers that grow from these seeds do not produce pure devotional service. Pure devotional service only sprouts from the *bhakti-latā-bīja* which comes to the disciple who satisfies the spiritual master. Otherwise, the results of *karma* and *yoga* take root within the heart.

The *bhakti-latā-bīja* grows by the watering process. We water the seed of devotional service by hearing and chanting which pleases the spiritual master. One can satisfy the spiritual master by repeat-

ing his instructions and by this watering process the creeper of pure devotional service grows and grows.

There is no better way to repeat the instructions of Śrīla Prabhupāda than by distributing his books. As Śrīla Prabhupāda has mentioned “if you really want to please me then distribute my books”. This is the perfect way to water the *bhakti-latā-bīja*.

On this wonderful day of the appearance of His Divine Grace Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, we pray at his lotus feet that he may be pleased upon us. For without his satisfaction our efforts will not bring the desired result of pure devotional service. We again and again fall at his lotus feet and beg for that thing which is not obtainable by traveling to all the universes. We pray for that which is the only thing worth struggling for, pure devotional service.

Bhīma Dāsa

Citi-śakti Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my prostrated obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

It is due to your unfathomable kindness and mercy as well as that of the Supreme Lords, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and Prabhu Nityānanda that I have been released from the prison house of material life.

There are no words to express my gratitude to you. I can only pray that the Lord will help me to serve you and to please you eternally. I pray for unflinching faith and for freedom from all sinful qualities, so that I can help spread your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. I am fully dependent on your mercy and direction.

Please accept my service to your lotus feet and enable me to always follow your instructions. Please forgive me for my weaknesses and bless me with spiritual strength and insight. My life belongs to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I am eternally indebted to you.

Your humble servant,

Citi-śakti Devī Dāsī

Dharmādhyakṣa Dāsa

All honor to *mahā-śaktyāveśa-avatāra* A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, *mahā-paramahaṁsa*.

In 1944, Śrīla Prabhupāda followed his *gurudeva*'s instruction to distribute “*Back to Godhead*” door to door, in chaotic political storm.

In 1967 Śrīla Prabhupāda, beyond all heaven, to Ashbury came with maybe eleven... Śrīla Prabhupāda came to California “to manifest Viṣṇu’s *mahā* presence, ‘a higher taste’, the wisdom of eternal grace, Song of God *Bhagavad-gītā*, the infinite solace for the human race”.

Promoters of the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane etc, created a poster to come hear and chant... love’s eternal call, one and all.

By the 70’s it was a much larger show, devotees and bands, Beatles and George, yes for sure, *bhakti* and *siddhānta* pure.. .

In 1974, 50,000 in Golden Gate Park experienced ecstasy from Śrīla Prabhupāda... .

In 1975, Śrīla Prabhupāda created New Jagannātha Purī in Berkely, installing Deities for all.

Śrīla Prabhupāda lives forever within his teachings... preaching, chanting, dancing and distributing *prasādam* is whole and perfect... love, forgiveness and mercy is the way, that A.C. Bhaktivedānta came to say... peace and tranquility are yours forever in a certain way.. .

How and why Śrīla Prabhupāda handed the holy name to

all, is his eternal pastime.... the Lord's mercy is free, and Śrī
la Prabhupāda is the key. .

Dharmādhyaḅḅa Dāsa

Nāgarī Devī Dāsī

Please accept my most fallen obeisances!

The first time I saw a devotee was in Hollywood California in 1968. I heard the sound of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* at a rock concert in Atlanta in 1970 or 1971. I couldn't get the tune out of my head... I am so grateful to Śrīla Prabhupāda for sending his merciful servants to rescue me from this material illusion, and have the opportunity to learn about Kṛṣṇa. I was initiated in Gainesville, Florida on Easter Sunday in 1974.

Mahalo Śrīla Prabhupāda for saving my life!

Hare Kṛṣṇa,

Nāgarī Devī Dāsī

Rāsalīlā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

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

Although I can never thank you enough or properly glorify you, I remain eternally indebted to you. I can only pray that my clumsy attempts to serve your mission and your devotees is pleasing to you.

Everything good in my life is due to Your Divine Grace. I thank you over and over again for having more faith in me than I had in myself, and for helping me to develop faith in *guru* and Kṛṣṇa.

Shortly after your departure from this material world, your dear godbrother, Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, emphatically declared that we, your followers, were the most fortunate because we have as our *gurudeva*, the most wonderful spiritual master! He further stated that this was so because you were the empowered *ācārya* who was able to bring Śrī Harināma to every town and village, ALL OVER THE WORLD!

By Your Divine Grace, so many millions of suffering, conditioned souls like myself, have been able to realize real love in their lives and the joy of chanting the holy names of the Lord. You have shown by your example that it is never too late to do something wonderful for *guru* and Kṛṣṇa and that faith in the order of *guru* is the quintessential element for success in spiritual life.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda for all that you are and all that you have done – and for so kindly tolerating me.

JAGAD-GURU, Śrīla Prabhupāda, *kī jaya* !

I remain yours in service and gratitude,

Your humble daughter and aspiring servant,

Rāsalīlā Devī Dāsī

Tṛpti Devī Dāsī

Śrīla Prabhupāda please hear me
though fallen, still I love you dearly
from my heart I thank you truly
for the love you give so freely
for your causeless mercy on this fallen soul

No one can describe your glories
we can only tell our stories
how your love transformed our worries
lifting us from *māyā*'s deep dark hole

In darkest hours when I nearly

left this world I cling to wearily
you appeared to tell me clearly
in your presence fear can take no hold

You are giving *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*
empowered by eternal *śakti*
cleansing hearts with Kṛṣṇa's *śānti*
one by one your words have changed the world

Spoiled now for *māyā*'s folly
those fortunate to hear your calling
are no longer lost and falling
by Your Grace they've made Kṛṣṇa their goal

Such is your exalted mission
entrusted with the Lord's transmission
we'll never fathom your position
Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet are your abode

Prabhupāda, I know you hear me
I feel your presence always near me
feel the love you give so freely
from my heart I thank you truly

Thank you for your causeless mercy evermore

Tṛpti Devī Dāsī

Yādavendra Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your holy lotus feet on this Vyāsa-pūjā day, 2012.

Another year has passed and it seems to me that the older we get, the faster time passes just as while climbing a mountain the view becomes more encompassing. We also observe that some of us become a little exhausted after forty or so years of active, adventurous and often intense devotional service and consequently make

appropriate adjustments. In the early days a common saying was: “Work now, *samādhi* later.”

We may also take solace from the following passage of SB4. 21. 33,

“The question may be raised that since the Lord is supposed to be worshiped by great demigods like Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva and others, how can an ordinary human being on this planet serve Him? This is clearly explained by Pṛthu Mahārāja by the use of the word *yathādhikāra*, “according to one’s ability.”

In contrast to some of my godbrothers and godsisters, there were only a few occasions when I was privileged to have a direct exchange with you while you were physically present. In Hyderabad, December 1976, while you were giving *darśana*, a temple authority entered the room and asked for some manpower. I thought to myself: “Well, let me take advantage of the presence of my spiritual master, stay at *darśana* and hear.” But this was not to be and immediately with your commanding tone of voice you said to me. “You also go.” And I went indeed.

A few days later, on a morning walk at the Hyderabad farm, I clearly remember mentally offering my back for you to step on to cross a small ditch. I must have been inspired by the story of Vāmanadeva and Bali Mahārāja. Of course, it would have been more practical and useful to proceed with action because your feet can kick away all stumbling blocks. But I was too reserved and you did cross the ditch otherwise. On that Hyderabad stay you also strongly chastised one of your disciples for sleeping in.

In 9th September 1972, in a letter to Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, You state:

“You mentioned that your pathway has become filled with stumbling blocks, but there are no stumbling blocks, I can kick out all those stumbling blocks immediately, provided you accept my guidance. With one stroke of my kick I can kick out all stumbling blocks.”

Therefore my humble request is Śrīla Prabhupāda, with your powerful transcendental lotus foot, please kick out of my heart whatever is left of my personal *anarthas*.

There is no happiness in the prison house of the material world. Floods, earthquakes and various wars confirm the version of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1. 19. 20 that material nature's function is to sometimes crush the conditioned souls:

“Prahāda Mahārāja, while praying to Lord Nṛsimha, said, “O my Lord, I am very much afraid of the materialistic way of life, and I am not the least afraid of Your present ghastly ferocious feature as Nṛsimha. This materialistic way of life is something like a grinding stone, and we are being crushed by it. We have fallen into this horrible whirlpool of the tossing waves of life, and thus, my Lord, I pray at Your lotus feet to call me back to Your eternal abode as one of Your servitors. This is the summit liberation of this materialistic way of life. I have very bitter experience of the materialistic way of life. In whichever species of life I have taken birth, compelled by the force of my own activities, I have very painfully experienced two things, namely separation from my beloved, and meeting with what is not wanted. And to counteract them, the remedies which I undertook were more dangerous than the disease itself. So I drift from one point to another birth after birth, and I pray to You therefore to give me a shelter at Your lotus feet.”

Neither is the path of *bhakti* easy “when it is practiced factually according to the rules and regulations”, as you state in the purport of *Bhagavad-gītā* 7. 3. You have chosen to set the bar especially high. As a godbrother recently put it, ‘You are super great. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!’

The *ācārya* is a perfect *brāhmaṇa* and has unlimited intelligence in guiding the activities of his disciple. SB 6. 7. 15 P.

Therefore, as you have taught us, I wish to pray along with King Kulaśekara in *Mukunda-mālā-stotra* 33.

*kṛṇṇa tvadīya-pada-paṅkaja-pañjarāntam
adyaiva me viśatu mānasa-rāja-haṁsaḥ
prāṇa-prayāṇa-samaye kapha-vāta-pittaiḥ
kaṅṭhāvarodhana-vidhau smaraṇam kutas te*

“O Lord Kṛṣṇa, at this moment let the swan of my mind enter the tangled stems of the lotus of Your feet. How will it be possible for

me to remember You at the time of death, when my throat will be choked up with mucus, bile, and air?”

Thank you again for initiating us into the chanting of the ultimate sound vibration:

Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

Your insignificant servant,

Yādavendra Dāsa

Kṣīracora dāsi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to you on this most auspicious occasion of your appearance day.

As a *nitya-siddha* devotee, you have always known Kṛṣṇa. You came to the West, where no one knew Kṛṣṇa; where most of the population wandered lost in the darkness of ignorance and forgetfulness of God. Yet within 12 short years, you changed the course of thousands, if not millions of lives. And somehow or other, by your grace, you changed mine as well.

Almost 40 years have passed since I first came in contact with you, through your *Bhagavad-gītā*. Over the past year, I have been reading your books again, on a daily basis. What sweet nectar! What compassionate love! What causeless mercy! Re-reading your books now, in the second half of life, I have come to realize that in my youth I never fully appreciated the depth of your intelligence as a writer, as a philosophical scholar, and as a lover of God. You are indeed *jagad-guru*, teacher to the world, and by your grace, you have given the highest truth, unparalleled by any other.

My partner has also begun reading your books, and has accepted you as his spiritual master within his heart. He tells me “Although I never met Śrīla Prabhupāda, I feel that I am with him when I’m

reading his books.”

How many times have you told us that you are personally present in your books? In this way, we are blessed with the causeless mercy of the Lord, through association of His pure devotee. Through your books, you continue to give us your association, and indeed, you are still here, giving us everything.

How can we ever repay such a matchless gift?

I humbly pray at your lotus feet, for your grace to understand and appreciate the depth of this gift, for forgiveness of offenses committed both knowingly and unknowingly, and for an opportunity to offer some small service to you.

I am forever in your debt, and pray to remain,

Your servant,

Kśīracora dāsī

Ratha-yātrā Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Thank you very much for saving my life and taking me out of this darkness of the material world. If it wasn't for a pure devotee as yourself coming to the Western countries to distribute this spiritual knowledge, I would still be stuck in the circle of birth and death. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I found your magazine Back to Godhead on my doorstep! Thank you for coming to me. Your BTG magazine opened my eyes to God, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You instructed us to chant Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy names "Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare" and follow four simple rules. You have given us a spiritual life and a purpose in life.

When you appeared in the temple I joined and initiated me as your

disciple, (first in Evanston and second in Detroit where you personally gave me my Brahmin thread and Gāyatrī *mantra*, word by word), I was really amazed by this good fortune. All I could do was bow down and offer my humble obeisances, for you are the direct representative of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His consort, Rādhārāṇī.

I'm writing this in Hong Kong and Korea where I am now distributing your large books, two of us distributed 423 *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams* and 60 *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (Chinese) in Hong Kong, we just arrived In South Korea.

Your instructions are planted in my heart, I cannot forget them! This old body full of aches and pain becomes full of bliss each day I preach your words. Human society is being given the knowledge that this world of suffering and darkness can be stopped by the mercy of the pure devotee and everyone can go back home, back to Godhead. This is my duty as your disciple, the same with you, when your spiritual master told you to distribute this knowledge in the West.

Your words stay with me, "I shall always be your personal guide, whether physically present or not." Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for your personal guidance and support, so true and real as it is now and back when I first met you and available to all that connect with you and follow your instructions.

Sincerely yours,

Your humble servant,

Ratha-yātrā Dāsa

Rādhāpriya Devī Dāsī

Africa, March 31st 2012 (Rāmāī's 25th birthday)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Despite my utter insignificance, I pray that you please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Thirty-eight years have passed since my eyes could see your moving form in front of me, since I could watch your noble, strong, soft expression in your always surprisingly smallish stature, since I could marvel at the mesmerizingly beautiful dance of your delicate fingertips as they moved to do something so normally unremarkable as a slight touch on a cheek, or to notice a young boy who had only just recently joined, hand you a scarf which you graciously accepted as you walked from the temple room.

It's 38 years since these ears heard the *step step* of your lotus feet as you walked across the fields surrounded by your disciples, since I was so charmed by your playful response from the *vyāsāsana* after a little child loudly exclaimed "Prabhupāda" and you said "yes" in a deep voice, or since I heard the quiet thud of the doors closing which had cloth tied from handle to handle so they wouldn't bang shut, a constant reminder that you were really so close, just in your room upstairs.

You know Śrīla Prabhupāda, I was always at the back, a shy, a new girl, everyone else being so much more worthy of closeness to you.

On morning walks when I was fortunate enough to join you, I always followed at the back. Sitting in your room, I was always at the back. After I had dressed Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gokulānanda and you were taking *darśana*, shaking and overwhelmed with emotion, I stood at the back. When you were so carefully carried downstairs on your chair palanquin, I watched from the back, with tears in my eyes.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my eternal spiritual master. Somehow or other, only through your causeless and ceaseless love for all conditioned souls, you picked me up when I was only 16, like a helpless fledgling bird just dropped from the family nest, too small to fly on my own.

You picked me up in your soft hands and taught me how to honour *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* with my right hand, sitting on the floor, how to dance for the Lord's pleasure from one foot to the other, back and forth, like the rocking of a great ship, sailing across the ocean of nescience, and how to jump with arms stretched high when compelled by the sweet sound of the *kīrtana*. You taught me how to invite the holy name onto my tongue in *japa* and now, how to sing from my heart as if it has wings.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, it's 39 years since my mind was first captured by your promise of unconditional, unmotivated, unending devotional service in ecstatic love and clearly I am still a new girl, yet when I do see you again I will run to you as fast as I can and fall at your feet. Although I only deserve to be kicked away, I have no other shelter.

By your unfathomable kindness I will beg you to please offer me up to your Beloveds and engage me forever in pure devotional service under your guidance.

You have assured us that that day will come. Inconceivable in my case, yet true due to your and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's endless compassion and mercy pouring constantly onto the forest fire in my heart.

It so often feels impossible to know when to end a wonderful *kīrtana* and now it feel impossible to end this offering to you.

My gratitude to you cannot be fully expressed even if I were to make millions and millions of Vyāsa-pūjā offerings. But for you I would surely not be able to live, what to speak of living with any sweet, blissful taste of devotional service.

This fledgling life is all I have to offer. Please do with me as you see fit, snatch me away even as you did Rāmāi, and make me yours forever.

Always your helpless servant,

I remain, your new girl,

Rādhāpriya Devī Dāsī

Jaya Jagannātha Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

I would like to thank you very much for accepting me as your disciple, when you came to visit your temple in Mexico City for the second time. I have not taken full advantage of your personal association (*vapuḥ*), or your instructions or your books (*vāṇī*), but I will try somehow to keep you within my mind to get some spiritual strength (*bala*), to become strong, to be able to become a devotee, then disciple and a good person, to help people that somehow get in touch with this aspiring servant of Your Divine Grace, Śrīla Prabhupāda's lotus like feet.

Now I am reading your *Kṛṣṇa* book, which is very nice. I hear that those who have a chance to read the *Kṛṣṇa* book will become devotees, so that is my hope. I also came to know that by reading one *śloka*, one line, or half of a *śloka* or line, that they get purified, so please kindly allow me to gradually get strong and realized wherever I am reading or speaking to others.

I would really like to fully understand whatever I have learnt, by reading your books. Sometimes I feel very nice after repeating and remembering what I have read, but sadly, when the time comes to applying those teachings, I fall short. But somehow, within the core of my heart, I have faith (*yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau*), which I have developed by keeping in touch with your books, your devotees, disciples and your Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement. Please keep me near all of them, physically, mentally and spiritually, and I am sure that sometime in the future I will be able to become pure and render some service to your books, by reading them and practicing wherever I assimilated and pass them out in big quantities. Allow me to render some service to your disciples, my godbrothers and sisters and to your Movement by going regularly to the Rathayātrā festival every year in Guadalajara or Mexico.

That is my humble prayer to you, on this holy day of your appearance, and let me fully realize that name that you very mercifully

gave on my initiation day.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya*,

Jaya Jagannātha *kī jaya*.

This lowly servant of yours,

Jaya Jagannātha Dāsa

Mṛtyuhara Dāsa

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

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

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

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

This is the day that the disciple glorifies his spiritual master.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you are the bona fide spiritual master that came into our countries to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

You came without personal motivation; you came because your spiritual master instructed you to do this service for him.

Who is such a person that leaves his land, affection, friends, parents and family to go to help unknown people in such a hellish place as the West?

In the material world, an old person usually retires to his/her home and tries to enjoy the rest of thier life.

You did the contrary; after a complete life dedicated to the mission of your spiritual master, in the end of your life, you took the burden

of coming to our land and saving us.

Yes, you saved us, but I am not sure that I'll be able to take your instruction for the rest of my life.

You did your service in a perfect way, made no mistake on your part. This is your special and unique quality; you could satisfy the order of your spiritual master.

You dedicated your life with this fixed point in your head: 'how can I satisfy my spiritual master'.

This is your main teaching, and you have shown it by your own example.

You are such an incredible personality, who can be equal to you?

Many years have passed since you left this world and my feeling is that we do not need your physical presence because what you did during your stay in this material world has been to prepare the field so nicely that we could do the rest of the job by following your instruction and your behaviour.

This is your immense quality, with your physical presence or without your physical presence, this movement is going on anyway. This is your power.

This is the power of such a personality; even after many years your presence is clearly tangible.

Your disciples all over the world are serving you with such enthusiasm and affection.

I just came from Māyāpur-dhāma. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I tell you frankly, you have such dedicated disciples, excluding me, all of your disciples are giving you their life.

This movement is in good hands, do not worry. Your disciples are taking the burden in the same way as you took it when you came to the West. Not only your disciples, but the disciples of your disciples are also doing the same service. This is again the proof of your immense power.

You trained all of them in the best way. Perfect teacher, perfect students.

So this Vyāsa-pūjā day and this Vyāsa-pūjā book will go on for thousands of years, and I hope that everyone will have the opportunity to write his/her offering to you, even the disciples that are not personally initiated by you.

Trying to be your servant,

Mṛtyuhara Dāsa

Sanat-kumāra Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

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

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

I am trying to keep you in the center in my life, helping by keeping a program in my house. Please allow me to serve you. My daughter Rādhārāṇī Devī Dāsī is keeping the program going on.

Prabhupāda-stotram:

*kṛṣṇaika-ceta mada-moha-vināśa-kṛṣṇārin
mad-dṛṣṭi-gocara prabho prabhupāda-svāmin
doṣābhivṛtti-paraduṣita-manda-buddheḥ
śaktyāveśa-avatārañintayāmi caraṇau tava bhakti-hetoḥ*

O lord, O Prabhupāda, may you always be the object of my vision. Only the name of Kṛṣṇa can destroy my pride and illusion. Although my mind and intelligence are contaminated by wicked inclinations, I meditate upon your lotus feet in causeless devotion.

*vaiṣṇavaṅḍāvane ramaṇe-reti-prasiddha-bhūmau
tatrāpi kṛṣṇa-balarāma-supāda-mahārājaūle
jñānaṁ paraṁ parama-kṛṣṇa-sudharmīty uktam
dantas tu deva prabhupāda namo namas te*

In the most holy land of Vṛndāvana, in Ramaṇa-reti, at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, you are preaching the topmost knowledge of the Supreme Personality, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the fountainhead of religion. O master of the senses, O my lord, Śrīla Prabhupāda, let me offer my obeisances unto you.

*namas te namas te kṛpā-pūrṇa-dṛṣṭi
namas te namas te mahānanda-dhātrī
namāmo namāmaḥ punar rakṣa rakṣa
prasiddha-prabho pāhi mām dakṣa dakṣa*

I offer my obeisances unto him, whose glances are full of mercy and who is the bestower of transcendental bliss. O renowned lord, protect me and kindly shower your compassion again and again.

*bhaktisiddhānta-śiṣyāya
bhaktivedānta-nāmine
prasannāya praśantāya
tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

Let me offer my obeisances unto my Guru Mahārāja, who is a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, who is always calm and joyful, and who bears the name of Bhaktivedānta.

*śrī-vaṅga-bhūmi-jana-bhūṣaṇa gaura-līla
gaurāṅga-bhāva parisāraṇa-mātra-śīla
rādhā-mukunda-pada-padma-mano-vilāsin
ānanda-rāśi prabhupāda namo namas te*

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

Your servant,

Sanat-kumāra Dāsa

Śrīla Prabhupāda – A Remembrance.

Once you hear Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings and your heart resonates with their truth, you cross a Rubicon where there is no going back. During the long hot summer of 1974 in Amsterdam, unable to defeat the arguments of the ardent devotees who preached to me, I made that commitment.

My memories of those devotees – the words they said, the way they helped themselves to the *mahā-prasāda* I held in my hand for two hours too absorbed in listening to eat – are pleasing ones.

My association with Śrīla Prabhupāda has always primarily been through *vānī*; however those times I was graced by living in a temple when he visited are carefully stored and shine like new when I take them out and polish them through remembrance.

I first saw Śrīla Prabhupāda in spring, 1975 when he came to Bury Place and Bhaktivedanta Manor. The word ecstatic was one we frequently used, but we were ecstatic in those days. Nothing was too much as we prepared for his visit. We cleaned and we scrubbed and we polished those two temples till they glowed. I had the great fortune to clean Śrīla Prabhupāda's bathroom at Bury Place – but that's another pastime. In all, we did our best to make those temples spotless – inside and out and from top to bottom. Nothing was left untouched. The Deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-London-īśvara and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gokulānanda were lovingly dressed and the altars were glorious festivals of flowers to honor our spiritual master.

The day of his arrival came and, as it was in those days, we piled into various vans and cars. Everyone, barring one or two dedicated *pūjārīs*, went to meet Śrīla Prabhupāda at London Heathrow Airport. While waiting for Śrīla Prabhupāda to make his way through customs and immigration, the sounds of our enthusiastic *kīrtana* resounded throughout the airport.

'He's here! Śrīla Prabhupāda's here!' someone shouted and, as one, we dropped to the floor to pay our obeisances. When I stood, and the *kīrtana* had resumed, Śrīla Prabhupāda was still

a little distance away, but I squeezed through to the front. I was desperate to see this person to whom I sang, to whose portrait I offered flowers every day and whose name I said in prayer when paying my obeisances.

As he came closer, I was surprised to see how slight and physically small he was, yet, as he approached, there was no doubt, I felt his presence. Although partially hidden from view by the taller *sannyāsīs* who accompanied him, there was one brief moment when I caught a clear view of his face; my heart responded and lifted up in joy. Then he turned his head, looked at us all, and smiled. In response, the *kīrtana* increased in volume and we leapt and danced for Śrīla Prabhupāda's pleasure. That was all we wanted – to please him and thus through him, please Lord Caitanya and Lord Kṛṣṇa. And that was the gift he gave us.

All Glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

All Glories to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga.

All Glories to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa

Añjanā Devī Dāsī

Medhavī Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

*kāmādīnāṁ kati na katidhā pālītā durnideśās
teṣāṁ jātā mayi na karuṇā na trapā nopasāntiḥ
utsrjyaitān atha yadu-pate sāmpratāṁ labdha-buddhis
tvām āyātaḥ śaraṇam abhayaṁ māṁ niyuṅkṣvātma-dāsyē*

O my Lord, there is no limit to the unwanted orders of lusty desires.

Although I have rendered them so much service, they have not shown any mercy to me. I have not been ashamed to serve them, nor have I even desired to give them up. O my Lord, O head of the Yadu dynasty, recently my intelligence has been awakened, and now I am giving them up.

Due to transcendental intelligence, I now refuse to obey the unwanted orders of these desires, and I now come to You to surrender at Your fearless lotus feet. Kindly engage me in Your personal service and save me. [*Bhakti Rasamṛta Sindhu* 3. 2. 35]

You mentioned in one purport that sometimes a devotee has to experience some of the *karma* from his/her previous sinful reactions in the dream state rather than physically in an awakened one. His Holiness Kadamba-kānana Swami has mercifully been visiting Cape Town on a regular basis and on one occasion, after a very enlivening talk and an even more blissful *kīrtana* and *prasādam*, I returned home. While sleeping, there was an indescribable dream – both weird and horrible simultaneously. Coming to some sort of external consciousness, I picked up my beads and began chanting, hoping that the holy name, even imperfectly chanted would remove my confusion and fear. I was puzzled why, after quite a spiritual day did this happen? The above verse from *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, quoted in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* came into my memory.

I had learned the verse years ago and felt that I had imbibed some of its meaning. But fully understanding this verse, means that one's material life is completely finished, mine obviously isn't. As years have gone by, I accept the respect offered for being your disciple and having some connection with you while actually I only pretend to be so. When in the presence of your real disciples, I feel extremely out of place.

I humbly beg that you please engage me in your personal service and save me.

Your still aspiring servant,

Medhavī Dāsa

Sukhāvahā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I prostrate myself at your lotus feet offering you my heart. On this most auspicious day of your appearance I reflect on how to adequately honor you.

Dear Father, you have given me a precious heirloom seed of *bhakti* to plant and cultivate. I immaturely thought that if I simply kept the vows to you at initiation that I would become a pure devotee. I now understand that those vows are simply the beginning – the planting of the seed. You gave many instructions how to cultivate our *bhakti* seed, yet we do not all have the same type of soil (body and mind) or weather (*karmic*) conditioning. So, when I saw my tiny, baby creeper drooping, I made that mean that I had failed you, that I was a useless servant.

Somehow dear Father, you and your beloved Kṛṣṇa continue to pick me up and teach me new ways to nourish my *bhakti* creeper. Being very attentive and reflective on the health of my creeper teaches me to be open and receptive to applying principles you have given us in your words. Am I adding too much water, is it not enough? Each day is different because there are so many variables that affect my “weather” conditions.

Sometimes I feel sad, dear Father. We miss your constant and clear vision looking over our shoulder to guide us. So, I ponder on what you would be telling me today. I ask you and Kṛṣṇa many times what you want next. You always send me answers. I simply need to be very attentive and watch.

Your life will always be an inspiration for me. You yourself showed how you created a movement from nothing. Your faith in Kṛṣṇa was unflinching. At the same time, you tried many different avenues. You spoke to many different individuals and many groups. You were attentive to what was working and what was not working. If something was not working you would change it. You were firm and convinced, depending on Kṛṣṇa, yet so flexible and adaptable – always taking into consideration the details of what you were dealing with.

What a priceless gift you have given. How can I properly honor you and this gift? How can I live the words you have so kindly spoken? These words I write are a paltry attempt to glorify you. The real test is how I conduct myself in the world. How do I speak to others?

What am I thinking if others do not agree with me? Am I continuing to grow? Am I deepening the quality of my devotional attitude?

Please, dear Father, bless me that I may continue to uncover my buried soul; that I may day by day, deepen my relationship to you. Thank you for your patience and love.

Your aspiring servant,

Sukhāvahā Devī Dāsī
New Vṛndāvana

Mīśra Bhagavān Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your great appearance day.

When you came to Atlanta in February 1975 you illuminated the entire building as you entered the front door, brilliant as the sun. Young men puffed and panted trying to keep up as you swiftly made it to the temple room to greet their Lordships Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi.

When the curtains opened and their Lordships were manifest, you bowed down before them. I was right behind you and realizing a once in a lifetime opportunity, I grasped your two lotus feet and held them for a precious half a minute. Thank you for not kicking me away.

You did many special activities that weekend including playing *mṛdaṅga* to the song *Parama karuṇa*, offering *ārati* to your Guru Mahārāja on his appearance day, and opening the floor for questions at the end of the Sunday Feast lecture.

I knew that you did not regularly ask for questions so I shot up my arm in earnest. When you called upon me I blurted out the first thing that came to my 16 year old mind. “Śrīla Prabhupāda, how can I perfect my devotional service?” You replied, “Just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and everything else will come. It’s very simple.”

The next morning His Holiness Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami introduced me to you saying, “This is Bhakta Michael, he joined our party at a young age.” Looking up from behind your desk you smiled at me and said, “Oh very good.”

After we Rādhā-Dāmodara men were seated, you told us, “You have a good leader in Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja, if you follow him I will be pleased.” Then you thanked us for distributing your books and *Back to Godhead* magazines. You said, “I am always thinking of you boys in the vans and am very grateful that you are helping me in my service to my spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja.”

In this way you gave me my life’s mission: to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, distribute your books, and for other details take instruction from Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami. Thus you took care of this one insignificant disciple with just a spark of your splendor.

I pray that I may remain forever engaged in those activities you ordained unto me and stay in the association of your thousands of sincere disciples and grand disciples that are continuing to help you in your service to your spiritual master.

Your servant,

Miśra Bhagavān Dāsa

Nandagopa Dāsa

My most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I would love to offer not only words but my heart and soul to you because I am sure this is the best investment in life.

I do not know how I got such great mercy in my life to come in contact with Your Divine Grace and your glorious movement but regardless of all that, the fact is that I realize more and more the necessity to place my whole life at your lotus feet and serve your glorious *saṅkīrtana* mission with all my strength and intelligence.

So last year, me and my wife Priyasakhī Devī Dāsī came up here in Kullu Valley, Manali, in the Himalayas, and we started a small *nāma-haṭṭa* center where we hold a regular Sunday feast, and during the week we visit different families in their houses, holding programs, and we also participate in a big festival called Dussehra, where thousands of people come, and we exhibit and sell your books.

We are both praying to allow us to continue serving your great *śarīkī rtana* mission life after life and we also pray to please always give us your merciful glance and encouragement to go on and increase our quality and quantity of our service to Your Divine Grace.

Prostrating my soul, body, and mind at your lotus feet.

Your insignificant servant,

Nandagopa Dāsa

Samapriyā Devī Dāsī

What follows is a newscast from the early 1970's discovered during a recent renovation of the main office of the **Global Broadcasting Company**.

Good Evening.

We have just been informed, from reliable sources, according to recently uncovered data based on logic and common sense, that the popular "landing on the moon" achievement in 1969 has officially been declared a hoax.

It seems that we have been brainwashed ladies and gentlemen. And I quote:

"Recent efforts to travel to the moon provide a prime example of this kind of lucrative mass "brainwashing," which is still succeeding with a large portion of the gullible public. Despite the tremendous volume of propaganda proclaiming the "conquest of outer space," we have information from a

very reliable source, the Sanskrit Vedic scriptures, that the so-called “astronauts” never actually went to the moon. Although most people hold it as an article of absolute faith that man first reached the moon in July, 1969, the manned moon landing is actually a colossal hoax.” (Says a prominent member of the ISKCON society).

We have been duped ladies and gentlemen. It has also recently been made public, that to assume there is life only on this earth planet, and the heavens are a mere display for our pleasure, is an act of the greatest ignorance and presumptuousness. This comment by the leader of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness:

“*ātmavat manyate jagat*. That is the conditioned soul’s qualification that if he is a fool. Everyone, he thinks, “He is like me.” That is nature. *ātmavat manyate jagat*. “Everyone thinks others like himself.” If he is a fool, he thinks all are. So these things are no argument. Nobody has seen God? How do you take the statistics? Can you say like that, any statistics, that nobody has... Maybe you have not seen him, one who has seen God. That is quite possible because you have not scrutinizingly studied all the men of the world. Then how you can say, “Nobody has seen”? You have not seen the man who has seen Him. He will not admit his fault. He will accuse others, “Nobody has seen God.” Why? You may not have seen, but why you say, “Nobody has seen”? You have not seen that person who has seen God.”

As we see the increase of crime, abortion, cow-killing and the sale of weapons of all descriptions, even in our schools, researchers now have concluded that the problem could have originated in our own backyards. Scientists and psychologists are now conjecturing, due to revolutionary information from the most elite sources, that the entire educational system of modern society is being compared to a “slaughterhouse”. It has been concluded that what we are teaching our children is the cause of the violence, ignorance and hardship in the world today.

“Thus *Śrī Īśopaniṣad* very strongly warns that the culture of nescience is different from that of knowledge. The universities are, so to speak, centers of nescience only; con-

sequently scientists are busy discovering lethal weapons to wipe out the existence of other countries. University students today are not given instructions in the regulative principles of *brahmācārya* (celibate student life), nor do they have any faith in any scriptural injunctions.” Says Bhaktivedanta Swami.

All this newly found information that is certain to change the world, stumping modern society and affecting the very fiber of the way we live our lives, has been passed down through a chain known as the disciplic succession.

Though researchers have been battling since time immemorial to find the origin of life, the simple fact, presented by this chain, that we are not our bodies, has sent the scientific community to the other side of the moon – so to speak. The soul within the body is our true identity. This realization, accompanied with the acceptance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the complete Whole, from whom everything originates, is a shock to the scientific community that bodes ill to the welfare of our entire economic system. Furthermore, this deputed chain says that proof is clearly revealed in *Śrī Īśopaniṣad mantra 1*:

“Everything animate or inanimate that is within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for himself, which are set aside as his quota, and one should not accept other things, knowing well to whom they belong.”

This reporter has also been informed that the chain is now represented by one of its most powerful links in human society. His name – A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, affectionately called Śrīla Prabhupāda by his followers. What’s more ladies and gentlemen, though this revered Swami is no longer amongst us in what is known as his *vapuḥ* form, he is well represented by his followers.

And I quote:

“He lives forever by his divine instructions and the follower lives with him.”

Through propagation of his translations of Vedic literature and the resounding chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, findings reveal, ladies and gentlemen, that life the way we have known it, is now at an end. And all this is due to the arrival of one single stately refined, elegant, determined, kind, generous, self-realized, selfless, humble, prideless, nonviolent, simple, self-controlled, renounced, sober, servant of his own spiritual master, to the shores of our great nation. He says he has come to save us all. Representing the will of God and specifically the *saṅkīrtana* Movement of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, a change in the lives and hearts of all men, women, and children who come in contact with Śrīla Prabhupāda or of any of his followers is deemed spontaneous.

For those of you who refuse to comply with this new regime, which advocates say, will restore the soul to a life of eternity, bliss, and knowledge, please be assured that provisions will be made to facilitate your desires. Reliable sources have given the astounding number of 8,400,000 different kinds of arrangements. ”

Thank-you for your attention.

Hare Kṛṣṇa!

Samapriyā Devī Dāsī

Sarvopama Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You saved my life. You and the devotees saved my life. In 1970 I was stumbling through Times Square in New York City. I saw a group of Hare Kṛṣṇas chanting and dancing. They were like a freshly blooming lotus flower against the drab, dull and grungy background of the then still very squalid Times Square. I fell in line behind the last devotee. He turned and beamed a *brahmāstra* of a smile right at me and captured my heart. It was Jayādvaita Brahmācārī. Like Gaura Dāsa, who is very grateful to all the wonderful devotees who have organized this Vyāsa-pūjā offering, I am also very grateful.

I was born into a family of atheists. The first thing they told me when

I was about a year old was that there was no God and religion was a primitive and silly superstition. I bought into that and became recognized as a radical through high school and even part way into college. Then I met the devotees and they blew away all my arguments. I couldn't beat them so I had to join them. They are still re-parenting me.

In 2007 I met Janānanda Swami in Vṛndāvana and told him that I went out every day on *harināma-saṅkīrtana*. He smiled and told me it was Śrīla Prabhupāda's number one priority. The only time I feel really free from anxiety is when I'm out in public chanting the holy name. A lot of times people come running up and say, "Where have you guys been anyway?"

Śrīla Prabhuada, under your direction, we paid our dues and invested our energy in the best possible way. Now if we simply go out in public and offer that wonderful demonstration of faith, we can pick up where we left off and continue with your effort to save the world.

Yours in Their service,

Sarvopama Dāsa
Salt Lake City, UT

Viraha Bhavan
Stuyvesant Falls, New York

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

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

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

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

*tvaṁ naḥ sandarśito dhātrā
dustaraṁ nistitīṛṣatām
kaliṁ sattva-haraṁ puṁsām
karṇa-dhāra ivārṇavam*

“We think that we have met your goodness by the will of providence, just so that we may accept you as captain of the ship for those who desire to cross the difficult ocean of Kali, which deteriorates all the good qualities of a human being.” (SB 1. 1. 22)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I feel very fortunate to glorify you on your 116th Vyāsa-pūjā day.

My body is 56 years old. At this age, you are living in Vṛndāvana as a *vānaprastha*. You are writing books and trying to fulfill your Guru Mahārāja’s order to preach in the West. You will take *sannyāsa* in a few more years. At that time, your Guru Mahārāja will come to you again in a dream and push you to become A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami.

Your life is a model on how to fulfill the order of Śrī Guru.

I want to please you with my service. It would be nice to have you tell me exactly what to do at every moment. We see from your life

that is not to be expected. We have to be sincere and take risks in our service to you. We have to depend and pray that our decisions are in-line with your desire. This is how a *bhakta* grows in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

When you were physically present, I aspired to become your personal servant traveling with you and taking care of your personal needs. After reading the memoirs of your servants, I see that I would not have been able to serve you in that capacity. I did not have the endurance, humbleness, and intelligence required for that service. Therefore, Lord Kṛṣṇa did not arrange that service for me.

My body was perfect for selling *Back to Godhead* magazines on the street corners of Chicago. Especially during the sub-artic winter weather in February. This is why that service was arranged for me at that time.

Lord Kṛṣṇa has sent different devotees to render the various services that you require in your mission. Some are larger gears turning and moving this “preaching machine”. Others are small, insignificant screws who seem to have no importance to the untrained eye. But, all the parts, big or small, are need for the perfect running of any machinery.

To date, I am struggling to find what I am supposed to do in your service. I am keeping the vows I made at my initiation. But, I feel I need to be more effective in your preaching mission. I take solace in what you must have experienced when you gave up your household life for full-time preaching work. There were no guarantees, only dependence on Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga.

We see in retrospect that events in your life were precise and timely. You have stated that you should have surrendered immediately after your first meeting with your Guru Mahārāja. But, your Guru Mahārāja said to one of your godbrothers in latter years, “leave him outside the *āśrama*, he will act in the future.”

Being a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, you have no material motivation. Therefore, your decisions are not made as a result of pride, envy, or hankering for recognition.

I, on the other hand, am still affected by false ego with all its faults. How am I to do the right thing in your service?

It is by your unconditional love for your disciples, that you are accepting my faulty service and still guiding me.

I pray on this Vyāsa-pūjā day that you continue to keep me in your service.

I am not a pure devotee. I pray that you give me a sign of reassurance that I am engaging myself properly in your preaching mission.

Your servant,

Śikhi Māhiti Dāsa

Vaiyāsaki Dāsa

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

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

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Once again I offer you my yearly report. First, I want to thank you for saving me from being fool number one. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to make this life successful by serving your lotus feet. During your manifest pastimes on planet Earth you engaged me in the *saṅkīrtana* mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In 1975 you requested devotees to come to India to preach, and I volunteered immediately.

In India, I was engaged in distributing full sets of your books to all the colleges, universities, and libraries throughout the country. We called it the *Encyclopædia of Vedic Knowledge*. In 1976 I went with Satya-nārāyaṇa Prabhu to Kashmir. We distributed full sets of your books to many Islamic colleges and libraries. It was there that I met a gentleman from the Oriental Library of Kashmir who had purchased your three volume First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* before you left India for America. When we returned to Vṛndāvana to give our report, you remarked, “I went to Kashmir before going to

America.” I was thrilled to reply, “Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I met that gentleman you distributed your books to, and sold him a standing order for all the rest of your books.”

It was a glorious *darśana*. The closeness that I experienced with you after distributing your books to the same person that you had distributed to back in 1965 was amazing. The feeling cannot be described in words.

In 1977, I was chosen to distribute your *Encyclopedia of Vedic Knowledge* throughout Southeast Asia. When we were in the Islamic Republic of Indonesia you heard about our successful distribution of your books in the universities and libraries there. You stated, “Whoever preaches in the Muslim countries, I take the dust from their feet and place it on my head.” This blessing from you inspired us to continue preaching with renewed vigor. Even after your physical departure from our vision.

In 1978, the GBC asked me to go to the Islamic Republic of Bangladesh and start our ISKCON mission there. Within the first year I found several favorable gentlemen and we registered the first Hindu society in that country. After three years of preaching, we established two centers: in the capital city Dhaka, and in Puṇḍarīka-dhāma, the *janma-sthāna* of three exalted associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Now in 2012, I wish to report that I returned to Bangladesh where I had planted seeds some 34 years ago. More than 20 centers have since been established, along with many *nāma-haṭṭas* around the country. Devotees have spread your glories through books and *kīrtanas* all over Bangladesh. I was overjoyed to see so many young bright-faced Vaiṣṇavas dancing and chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* in front of beautiful altars with Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Śrī Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā Mahārāṇi, as well as Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi-*vigraha*. I was still able to preach in Bengali, although a little rusty, but everyone appreciated that I was speaking their language. It was an inspiring and uplifting experience for me to return to Bangladesh and associate with these wonderful Vaiṣṇavas.

Today, I write from Delhi. I am thinking about your blessing for anyone who preaches in the Muslim countries. When I look back over the years, I have preached in six Islamic countries. This is all by your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, because I have no qualification to

plant seeds of *bhakti*, nor would I have any seeds to plant at all!

Thank you for accepting me into Śrī Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* mission and engaging me in His service. For this I am eternally grateful. The disciple can never repay the debt to the spiritual master. But he can dedicate his life to trying to repay that debt. Today, I re-dedicate myself to try and repay my debt to you. Without your mercy I am simply an ignorant fool, lacking in all Vaiṣṇava qualities. I am mainly interested in my own happiness.

My humble request is that you continue to bless me so that my life remains a benefit to others. My only prayer is that this may be my last life in the material world.

I remember you instructed, "First deserve, then desire." Therefore, I promise to continue traveling and preaching in order to deserve the benediction of returning back home, back to Godhead. Kindly allow me to enter into the *nitya-līlā* of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda as your eternal assistant.

Your foolish unqualified disciple,

Vaiyāsaki Dāsa

Subhaṅgī Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda!

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

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

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

The first of Lord Caitanya's 108 names is 'Viśvambhara' – which means that He is the sustainer of the universe. But how does Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the most ecstatic dancer of the universe,

the most merciful *avatāra* of all the four *yugas*, the most intimate devotee of Lord Jagannātha, the most learned *paṇḍita* of His time in whole Bengal and the amazing son of Śacīmātā and Jagannātha Mīśra, whose childhood pastimes were full of naughty pranks and miracles – how does He sustain a family, a society or the whole universe? How does He sustain it?

Maybe Lord Caitanya is holding up the whole universe with His strong arms eternally? Or does He send out qualified experts trained by Himself – such as farmers, gardeners, landscapers, architects, doctors, social workers, astronomers, weather specialists etc. in all directions, in order to keep the diverse mechanisms of sustenance in the universe running smoothly? Or does He send out *kṣatriyas* and security guards to safeguard an automatic procedure of sustenance of the universal machinery against any disturbances?

No, not like this. Then how?

He sustains the universe with His unlimited love and His causeless compassion. A German proverb says, that “with love one can move mountains” – “Liebe kann Berge versetzen!”

It is His love which is maintaining and sustaining the universe as He is the source of all Kṛṣṇa’s expansions thus providing sun, wind, rain and all other requirements, etc. It is His love which is repairing relationships in the universe between families, societies, nations and religions.

It is His love, by which He cares for His devotees and by which He is even willing to deliver the fallen conditioned souls. In times of disturbance – Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda describes in his *bhajana ‘Śrī Godruma-candra’* – “Lord Gaurāṅga acts like a powerful hammer which smashes the sin and oppression of the mad-dog of Kali-yuga. He is absorbed in distributing the holy name of Kṛṣṇa out of His immense compassion, prescribing it as greatest medicine to relief every being from the material existence” to make an end to repeated births and deaths.

In this incredible way, Lord Caitanya, as Lord Viśvambhara, sustains the universe – with all His love and compassion.

And exactly in the same way Śrīla Prabhupāda did – with all His

love and extreme compassion.

Not only did he assist Lord Caitanya by engaging with His disciples in Mahāprabhu's *harināma-saṅkīrtana* movement worldwide in order to sustain the universe, but also by establishing single-handedly a society for *bhakti-yoga* – drowning millions of suffering conditioned souls in an ocean of love and happiness, by giving us this wonderful chance to engage us devotees of all nations together in loving devotional service to one Supreme Godhead – to please the sustainer of the universe.

Thanking you over and over again in the name of not only all devotees worldwide, but all beings that are blessed and benefitted by your appearance on this planet, I am praying with Śrīla Bhaktinoda Ṭhākura in his *bhajana 'Gurudeva! Boro kṛpā kari'* – “But when, O my master, will you mercifully give this (aspiring) servant of yours the qualification to fulfil your order? Then my mind will be peaceful, I will be able to endure all difficulties and serve Śrī Hari with single-pointed focus.”

Your bitterly aspiring servant,

Subhaṅgī Devī Dāsī

Tirthakāra Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

My humble obeisances to my beloved *gurudeva* Śrīla Prabhupāda on the occasion of his holy appearance day 2012.

After visiting ISKCON Amsterdam in December 1974, you appeared in a dream to me which prompted me to join, shave up and shortly after, in August 1975, I received my first initiation at the ISKCON Paris temple.

Now nearly 35 years after you disappeared from our sight (but not

our hearts) it amazes me what an impact you have had on my life... and so many others, the *śraddhā* we had and have in you, and the mercy we received still keeps us going in our meagre attempt to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. Even without the association of god-brothers and godsisters it's impossible to forget you.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Tirthakāra Dāsa

Śrīniketana Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

The other day a “Brahmin” gentleman in his late sixties came to meet me to give some donation for the Deities. In our conversation it turned out that he was a journalist stationed in Bombay during the 1970's and 80's. And, as he was a pious man, he visited your Juhu temple regularly. He is appreciative of ISKCON and its achievements. He related many incidents that took place during that time, from the point of view of a journalist. He praised you and your accomplishments in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness around the world. And most important of all, he had the great fortune to listen to your lectures at the Bombay pandals.

In short he was much impressed, but was either unable or unwilling to really do more, like taking up the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Upon his return to Mauritius he became a life-member and bought a set of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and whatever books he didn't have.

Now after 40 years of being exposed to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, to some degree or another he told me that “time has come now, I must make a serious effort to develop *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.” He said that “as soon my present engagement is finished I want to accept a *guru* and I will come to Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir to practice *bhakti-yoga*.”

What at first had seemed to me like another pious man praising himself in relation to his own devotion to Kṛṣṇa eventually turned out to be something more deep. Immediately the *Bhagavad-gītā* 4.34 came to my mind and I quoted it to him. “Yes, this is what I have to do. This is the only way,” he exclaimed enthusiastically!

Needless to say, his statement gave me utmost satisfaction. “Just see, Kṛṣṇa inspires another soul to surrender to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s lotus feet!” I thought to myself.

After he left, I reflected that more than half a lifetime after his first contact with your Movement, the seed that was planted started to show signs of germination. How wonderful! He actually started to realize the inevitable: If I want Kṛṣṇa, I have to approach His pure devotee, inquire from him submissively and render service to him. The realized soul will then impart knowledge unto me because he has seen the truth.

During your time, you literally “preached up a storm”. Actually this is going until now through your books and sincere followers. Literally thousands of souls who have come in contact with you will someday or another manifest similar symptoms like the gentleman who came to see me that night.

You touch the spirit soul with spiritual teachings. Inevitably there must be reactions. When and where is another question. But it will happen. Of this there is no doubt in my mind. And all credit is yours. All glories to Your Divine Grace. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for what you did for us conditioned souls.

I am begging to be eternally engaged in your service.

Your unqualified disciple

Śrīniketana Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your compassion and mission to rescue the most fallen, *patita-pāvana* you are.

With my dull brain and senses, I will never fully comprehend how extraordinarily fortunate I am to have had the benefit of your personal association and instruction. I fear I will never fully be able to take advantage of this rare circumstance, no matter how resolute I determine to be. I can only hang on by the rope of your mercy which binds me to you as I struggle against it.

It is too late to start over in this life, and I have wasted so much time in fruitless pursuits.

My only hope is that I have accumulated enough good fortune over the years to be able to fully focus on your instructions in my last years. As old friends and family fall by the wayside, defeated by time, I understand that I have lost nothing and gained everything by dedicating this life to serve your mission.

Where many people I know are thinking their lives are almost over, I see that mine has just begun. My future is bright and engagement limitless in your service. You have opened the doors to a spiritual awakening that were closed to us for countless births. Now as we follow the path you have laid out for us, we who have faith are not crippled by fear, doubt, and regret that plague so many at the end of life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your mercy, we have escaped a very dark future.

The years spent in your sublime association were the happiest of my life. Never since have I been able to recapture that feeling, no matter which direction I turned. Not by sense gratification, not by immersion in your books, not by association of my more advanced godbrothers, and certainly not by profit, adoration, and distinction.

You have written:

“Please always try to remember me by my teachings and we shall always be together. Just like I have written in the first publications of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, “The spiritual master lives forever by his divine instruction and the disciple lives with him.”, because I have always served my Guru Mahārāja and followed his teachings I am now even never separated from him. Sometimes *māyā* may come and try to interfere but we must not falter, we must always follow the chalked out path laid down by the great *ācāryas* and in the end you will see.” Letter to Cidānanda, Bhaktivedanta Manor, 25th November, 1973

Oh, how I wished this worked for me, but the empty space left by your absence is not so easily filled. My position is more like that of Arjuna after the departure of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

“O Emperor, now I am separated from my friend and dearest well-wisher, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore my heart appears to be void of everything.” [SB 1. 15. 20]

Some may say this is my ignorance, but it is the closest thing to real love that I have experienced. I understand that the antidote to this separation is to focus on your instructions and words, and that there is no difference between *vāñī* and *vapuḥ*. I am grateful for both, but completely sold out to only one.

Please Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless me that someday I may have your intimate association once again.

Your fallen and useless servant,

Ambarīṣa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

This Vyāsa-pūjā day is very important. I remember the last time you very kindly give me your personal association in New York in the last Ratha-yātrā festival that you blessed us with your holy presence. I know you are still present in your books, which I try to read, and understand. By Your Divine Grace, since August 28th, 1977, you gave us the Ratha-yātrā festival here in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. By Jagannātha's mercy I have settled down here, and I was able to render service to your temple by helping with the incense factory for some time. I got married, I have two children and so on, but early this year I lost my wife – she passed away. I hope she is in a better situation to be able to be blessed by devotional service to the Vaiṣṇava and Śrī Jagannātha, that you gave us before you went back to Śrī Rādhā-Govinda's transcendental abode – Goloka- dhāma.

So allow me to increase my attachment to the service of Your Divine Grace, which is the means to render service to Śrī Jagannātha, Śrī Baladeva and Śrīmatī Subhadrā-devī. Please also let me take part in the Ratha-yātrā festival as I have been doing along with my sons for the rest of our lives.

Cārudeha Dāsa

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda – I offer my homage, allegiance, and reverence at your feet. All glories to your very existence, which is timeless and full of light.

I sit here contemplating the fact that you formally accepted me as your disciple some 37 years ago. As I think about that number, I find it difficult to believe that such an amount of time has elapsed – nearly 40 years.

That fire sacrifice in 1975 seems like another lifetime, and, at the same time, paradoxically, it seems like only yesterday. So many years, and still I am the same flawed person. Perhaps I am still waiting for it to dawn on me – to really hit me – that you are my spiritual master. If I truly believed it, I think, I would feel more a part of who you are and the mission you represent, and this, in turn, would inform my character. Wouldn't it?

At that initiation, you attempted to transform Steven Rosen into Satyarāja Dāsa. But such an alchemical transformation, I know, is a dance that requires my active participation. And I have been a wallflower.

Along these lines, I notice that my enthusiasm and spirit often waxes and wanes like the moon, which has gone through uncountable phases over these many years. And so sometimes I wonder, "When does one stop being bounced around by the vicissitudes of time?"

The answer, no doubt, is found in your very example: You just do it – NOW!

Your enthusiasm and steady determination to serve your Guru Mahārāja has been a beacon for me over the years, even if I don't always show it. Indeed, you are like the moon, and my greatest hope – usually forgotten or ignored, due to my relentless penchant for distraction – is to serve your ISKCON and its devotees, to somehow assist those bright, unwavering stars in the firmament, perpetually extending their light to all.

This light has made a clear path for me, and my intention is to follow it. My sincere hope is that as I follow this illuminated byway, I am

also able to make a clear trail for others. But this, I am convinced, will only happen if I steadfastly keep my sights on your ever-expanding light.

Please bless me that my vision can remain thus focused. This is my prayer on your Vyāsa-pūjā Day, and, with your grace, it will remain my prayer for every day to come.

Your eternal (if distracted) servant,

Satyarāja Dāsa

Tridaṇḍi Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble and respectful obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet.

All glories to Your Divine Grace at whose lotus feet all masters sit.

Your Divine Grace is the fountainhead of inspiration for generations of devotees.

Everyone becomes profoundly touched by even a small contact with Your Divine Grace.

By coming in contact with you, incontrovertibly a part of Your Divine Grace consciousness is instilled within the heart of that fortunate soul. Since, unlike the contaminated consciousness of the conditioned souls, Your Divine Grace consciousness is not different from yourself and actually “IS” Your Divine Grace; being absolute even a part is not less than the whole. It’s so powerful that it’s capable to perform transcendental superhuman tasks.

The fortunate soul thus becomes an actual ‘carrier’ of Your Divine Grace and, while encountering other souls, spreads Your Divine Grace consciousness around, like an ‘infection’ of transcendental consciousness. In this way every ‘contactee’ becomes a fortunate soul and a carrier himself. And even if some soul is already

fortunate being on the way back to the transcendental realm, still by such a contact it becomes even more fortunate because Your Divine Grace is a crest-jewel amongst the pure devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As a result of such 'infection', a lost soul gets immediately pulled out of his misery; a neophyte devotee obtains progressive peace of mind, freedom from doubts, strength, and the firm conviction to continue advancing on the transcendental path despite any hindrance; an advanced devotee endowed with full faith reaches the necessary steadiness so not to ever waver under the fierce thrust of the winds of material illusion – ignorance, passion and goodness – and becoming even more 'infectious' spreads Your Divine Grace consciousness around more and more; whereas a fully realized pure devoted soul feels his transcendental bliss increasing unlimitedly.

Even when at the preliminary stage the consequences of contracting such an 'infection' may not yet be manifested, still, like a very highly radioactive particle that, no matter if big or small, in due course of time will reveal its powerful destructive effect, Your Divine Grace consciousness keeps acting till it brings about the dissolution of the fortunate soul's material entanglement and her awakening to the desire to purely serve the Supreme Lords Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Also when at times it seems that someone is not affected, because he keeps himself 'protected' by the 'prophylactic' method of insisting on inhaling the material atmosphere, nevertheless he functions as a 'healthy carrier' and 'infects' with Your Divine Grace consciousness those souls that come in contact with him. We have seen it many times. In this way, by this overwhelming transcendental pandemic that is expanding in every direction, everyone is getting the opportunity to come in contact with Your Divine Grace and catch this same influence: Your sublime Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the mood of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's supreme merciful form.

In fact, it's obvious to anyone poor in material envy that Your Divine Grace is the perfect embodiment of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's desire to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness far and wide till the boundary of the material universe. You are *jagad-guru* and *mahā-patita-pāvana*.

'Infected' by Your Divine Grace transcendental Kṛṣṇa consciousness, every one of us is bound to realize the futility of so-called material responsibilities and our real responsibility as spiritual soul will again regain its prominent place in our consciousness.

Devotee: Śrīla Prabhupāda, many people say that because we have quit college or a job to become Kṛṣṇa conscious, we are irresponsible.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We are not irresponsible. But we are in such a position that we have passed all material responsibilities. This is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [11. 5. 41]: *devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇām piṭṛṇām na kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇī ca rājan*. “One who has fully surrendered to Kṛṣṇa no longer has any responsibility to demigods, great sages, relatives, society – anyone.” As long as you are not Kṛṣṇa conscious, you have a responsibility to all these persons. But one who has taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness without any reservation – he has no material duties, no material responsibility. This is the statement of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Our only responsibility is to serve Kṛṣṇa.

Devotee: So, Śrīla Prabhupāda, when you told the guest last night that she should give up her responsibilities –

Śrīla Prabhupāda: And take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Not that you give up all responsibilities and do nothing. First take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Give up something, take something. Then it is all right.

Devotee: Śrīla Prabhupāda, when you speak of taking care of our responsibilities for Kṛṣṇa, doesn't that also have a material aspect to it? For instance, in our Movement parents must also bring up their children, take care of them, train them to read and write, and so on.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. But why are we taking care of the children? Just to make them Kṛṣṇa conscious. This is our responsibility in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We should think, “Here is my child. Let me make him Kṛṣṇa conscious.” This is why we are taking so much care to train our children in the *guru-kulas*. We are not irresponsible.

Devotee: So when we say that we have finished all material responsibilities by surrendering to Kṛṣṇa, that doesn't mean we've abandoned execution of duty?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. Who says that?

Devotee: Well, some people say that we've taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and now we've given up all our social duties.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the main social duty. This is the main duty of the human form of life. Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*: "Give up all other duties and just surrender to Me." So we have surrendered to Kṛṣṇa, and we are taking responsibility for pushing forward the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. I am an old man, yet I am travelling all over the world, thrice in a year. Who else would take such a responsibility? In Kṛṣṇa consciousness we have greater responsibility. It is just like when you become a big officer in the government: you become overburdened with responsibility. Fulfilling material responsibilities is useless. Simply a waste of time. Here in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is real responsibility. I explained this to the guest last night. Even if you take responsibility, what can you do? You cannot do anything. Suppose your son is diseased. He is suffering, and you have taken responsibility for seeing that he is cured. You have brought a good physician; you have brought good medicine – everything. But in spite of all your efforts, your son dies. Then what is the value of your responsibility? Actually, you cannot do anything. So what is the use of saying, "I am responsible"? *Andhā yathāndhair upanīyamānāḥ*. One blind man says, "I take responsibility. All of you other blind men – follow me." So what is the use of such responsibility? Both the leader and his followers will simply fall into a ditch. Similarly, the leaders of all the nations in the world are saying, "Follow me. I am responsible. I will bring peace." But as soon as there is a war, thousands and thousands will be killed. Where is the leaders' responsibility? As soon as one atom bomb is dropped, many thousands will be finished. Where is the leaders' responsibility? They cannot bring peace. They can make a monument: "This soldier has died. This soldier has died." But they cannot save the people from death.

Devotee: But these people say that we devotees also must die. Everyone must die.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, but we die to live forever. *tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti*. This is our last death.

Devotee: Then they will say, “How do you know?”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Become my student; then you will also know. Therefore there is a Vedic injunction: *Tad vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet*. Because you are a fool, a rascal, you must approach a *guru*. That is the only way to know the Absolute Truth. Otherwise there is no possibility of knowing about eternal life; you will remain foolish forever and suffer.

Devotee: So, how do you define the word responsibility in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You have this human form of life: realize God. This is responsibility. Otherwise, you are finished. Your only responsibility is to understand God. Vedic culture is meant for understanding God. In the past many, many kings left everything and went to the forest to realize God. Bhārata Mahārāja, after whom India is called Bhārata-varṣa, was the emperor of this planet thousands of years ago. At the age of twenty-four he left everything to realize God. This is Vedic culture. Caitanya Mahāprabhu had a very nice position as a *gṛhastha* (householder). He had a beautiful wife, an affectionate mother, good friends. He belonged to a *brāhmaṇa* family. He was a learned scholar – everything first class. He was God Himself, yet He left everything just to teach us the process of realizing God. This is Vedic culture. So, you asked me, “What is the definition of responsibility?” Do you understand what responsibility is?

Devotee: We have this human life; we must realize God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes – nine words. We define the whole of responsibility in nine words. Let the rascals understand it. (August 1975 Paris)

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I only desire Your Divine Grace association. Please forgive my faults and weaknesses. Please keep your ISKCON movement united and always protected under the shelter of your perfect instructions. And please keep me with Your Divine Grace forever. I beg you again and again to please never let me go.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kījaya!*

Aspiring to become your eternal servant,

Tridaṇḍi Dāsa
Italy

Āśālatā Devī Dāsī

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances on to your lotus feet again and again.

You are an extraordinary personality; direct messenger of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Today is a very auspicious day; you came on this earth planet to deliver mankind without discrimination.

To follow the order of your Guru Mahārāja you took charge to go to the Western world to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Not only in the Western world but you spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness across the whole globe.

No one could have done it except you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your ISKCON is very special. In contrast, we have been going to various non-ISKCON temples on *saṅkīrtana* to distribute your books. Those temples do not have what ISKCON has – Deity worship, devotional service, book distribution, preaching, *harināma*, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and philosophy.

When we go to other ISKCON centres, I see people are tending to-

wards ISKCON more and more. More and more centres are being opened. It is all because of you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your purity and power is still spreading ISKCON.

Your glories are unlimited. I don't know how to describe them. With one mouth how much can I say? I can only say that until the moon, sun, and stars remain, your glories will spread in the three worlds.

Your greatness is great, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You had a very busy schedule to propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Yet, whenever we wanted to see you or talk to you, you had all the time for us. How great! You are matchless.

Day in and day out, so many years have gone by, but your memories are always fresh. Śrīla Prabhupāda, truly that is the only reason that we are still in ISKCON and Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Thank you for accepting and keeping me at your lotus feet. Please make me always serve you and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa no matter what the circumstances may be.

Thank you so much for all the mercy. I am always seeking your mercy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!* ISKCON *kī jaya!*

Your worthless servant,

Āśālātā Devī Dāsī

Drutakarmā Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You appeared in this world to give people the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the literary incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. Many years ago, one of your disciples gave me one of the *Bhāgavatam* volumes that you printed

in New Delhi. I feel your presence in this book. In Vṛndāvana and Delhi, you translated the First Canto of the *Bhāgavatam*, typing the manuscript on your typewriter. Then you found a printer in the old part of Delhi. You raised enough money from donors to get the printing started. You were engaged in every aspect of the printing. You purchased paper and had it sent to the printing shop. You checked and corrected the proofs of each page. You supervised the binding of the pages into books. You designed a cover, and oversaw the printing of the cover. The money you gave to get the printing started was not enough to cover the entire cost of printing, so the printer gave you one hundred copies of the printed *Bhāgavatam* volume to sell. You personally sold those copies to bookstores and government education offices in Delhi. Your first volume was one third of the First Canto of the *Bhāgavatam*. When that volume was printed, and you were distributing it, you were also continuing to translate the rest of the First Canto and raising money from donors to finance the printing of the second volume, and then the third. When you had all three volumes of the First Canto printed, you decided you were ready to come to the West. You came, bringing with you 200 sets of your

Bhāgavatam First Canto volumes. Somehow, I am fortunate to have received one of these original Delhi *Bhāgavatam* volumes. They remind me of your mission, which you have passed on to your disciples and granddisciples.

Now there are huge arrangements to keep your books in print and distribute millions of copies of them all over the world. But in Delhi in 1962-1965, you were doing it alone. When I have my copy of the Delhi *Bhāgavatam* in my hands, I feel very close to you. I can see you translating the *Bhāgavatam* verses, consulting a book of commentaries of the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*. I can see you humbly approaching donors. I can see you personally arranging the printing. I can see you personally selling the books and gathering reviews. I can see you packing books to take with you to the West. You are still doing all these things through your loving disciples and granddisciples, who are pleased to serve as your instruments. You also wanted your disciples to write, and I am trying to serve you in that way.

Your humble servant,

Drutakarmā Dāsa

*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*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

- most glorious Śrīla Prabhupāda,
- most merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda,
- the greatest spiritual master,
- most perfect master,
- the greatest Vaiṣṇava,
- the most important messenger of Lord Caitanya,
- my Gurudeva,
- most important teacher to all the world in this Kali-yuga,
- teacher of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*,
- deliverer of the *Bhagavad-gītā* As It Is to the Western world,
- instructor of Deity worship,
- creator of *bhakti* inspiration within us,
- translator of so many Vedic texts,
- perfect provider of transcendental knowledge,

O saviour of your disciples,
O saviour of the most sinful of sinners,
O most dear servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa,
O giver of 'Matchless Gifts',
O true messenger of the Supreme Lord,
O introducer of the Ratha-yātrā festival all over the world,
O Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa
Consciousness,
O spreader of *harināma* in every town and village,
O benefactor of beautiful temples all across the world,
O giver of Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy which we can
understand,
O provider of the chanting and hearing process and devo-
tional service,
O flooder of *harināma* all over the world,
O Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have opened the door back to
Godhead for everyone,
O Gurudeva, You have given me your causeless mercy
and I am always indebted to you.
O Prabhupāda, I live with the memories of your personal
association and kind mercy on me and the whole family,
O Śrīla Prabhupāda, please keep me bound to your lotus
feet so I can serve you always.

Your worthless servant,

Śubhaviḷāsa Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to you, on this special day of your appearance.

May I offer my eternal thanks to you, for bringing the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya to so many lost souls in the Western countries and beyond.

Many criticized you for giving this jewel of knowledge to those they considered not qualified, but you preached boldly, speaking only Kṛṣṇa's words.

When the spirit soul is qualified through previous good fortune, and by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, he is awarded the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master.

Just as bell metal when mixed with mercury produces gold, you have poured the nectar of the holy names within our hearts, burning our *anarthas*, or unwanted things, and shining the mirror of our soul.

You have showed us by your example, what pure devotion to Kṛṣṇa is, the symptoms of unalloyed devotional service, and how we can develop the ecstasy of returning back home, back to Godhead in this life.

The battlefield of Kurukṣetra goes on within each and every one of us.

Kṛṣṇa is there, as our strength and guide, waiting for our ultimate surrender to his desire.

Kṛṣṇa becomes indebted to that devotee who offers pure devotional service. Please allow me to always be close to you.

I beg to always have your mercy, read your books, listen to your lectures, and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa without offense.

I beg to always think well of, and serve the devotees who are engaged in the *saṅkīrtana* movement.

I beg to be allowed to keep the association of advanced devotees, who can inspire, and teach me the art of surrender.

I beg at some time in this life, to understand your plan for me, and place in the spiritual world.

I beg with folded hands, prostrated at your lotus feet, to be able to join your spiritual army, preaching the glories of the holy name for all of eternity.

Thank you for blessing me.

Your unqualified servant,

Ugreśa Dāsa

Anīha Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On this day of your divine appearance we thank you for the infinite mercy by which we are able to remember and glorify you, knowing that if we are able to approach you by *praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā*, by prostrated obeisance, submissive inquiry and the rendering of devotional service, the resulting downpour of your compassion will extinguish the blazing forest fire of our material existence.

“A bona fide spiritual master is by nature very kind toward the disciple. Therefore when the student is submissive and is always ready to render service, the reciprocation of knowledge and inquiries be-

come perfect.” (Bg. 4. 34, purport)

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, in *Jaiva-dharma*, quotes from the *Bṛhan-nāradīya Purāṇa*(4. 33): “*Bhakti* is awakened when one associates with *bhaktas* of Śrī Bhagavān. Association with *śuddha-bhaktas* is attained only by the accumulation of transcendental pious activities performed over many lifetimes.”

We cannot imagine how anyone could perform sufficient transcendental pious activities to attain your association, even in billions of lifetimes. Hearing your wonderful pastimes we pray that your divine lotus feet be established forever as the deity of our heart.

Today, remembering how you came into the New Māyāpur cow shed at afternoon milking time, I pray that you engage me eternally as a servant of Kṛṣṇa’s cows. I also pray to be able to sweep the floor for you and to distribute your books. My memories of you may be fleeting but there are others with great love for you and lovingly they share their memories. Śrutakīrti Prabhu recounts how in Los Angeles you told him to read from *Kṛṣṇa* book: “Go on. Read from anywhere. Kṛṣṇa is like a sweet ball. Wherever you bite, it tastes good.” I pray for unflinching attachment to your books and for following your instructions, and for the mercy of all these affectionate godbrothers and godsisters.

All the scriptures proclaim you to be non-different from the Supreme Lord Himself and this is accepted by all pure saints but simultaneously you are the most beloved of the Lord, being His most confidential servitor. By the mercy of Śrī Guru one receives the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Without the grace of the spiritual master one cannot make any advancement.

Therefore I repeatedly offer my most humble obeisances unto your lotus feet.

Your fallen servant,

Anīha Dāsa

Respected Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances on this auspicious day. All glories to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī and all glories to you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, whatever you had a desire to do for Kṛṣṇa it was fulfilled. Your wish was that people from all over the world will come and enjoy Māyāpur. You wanted to make a huge temple in Māyāpur for Rādhā-Mādhava, and today the work is going on night and day.

You wanted us to grow flowers and vegetables and food for Kṛṣṇa. Now a nice piece of land has been purchased in Talasari (just outside of Mumbai) which has big fruit trees like mango, chico, cashew nuts, and amla. The villagers in the area are getting free medical treatment from a homeopathic doctor. Plus the persons getting treatment also chant the holy name and take *prasādam* and enjoy themselves.

There was a big festival on the Talasari land on the opening day. Many local school children came and helped decorate with flowers. The children enjoy coming to the farm because now they can associate with devotees and serve Lord Kṛṣṇa.

ISKCON has made a center so people can come there and serve Kṛṣṇa and the cows. The cows are nicely being taken care of and are increasing in number.

The devotees at the farm make cow products from cow dung and urine. These cow products are being sold to the public that visits your Juhu temple.

We hope that by your mercy we will be able to make this farm project a success.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please give us your mercy that whatever we do for preaching, book distribution and any other *sevā* we may become successful.

Śrīla Prabhupāda please open our eyes from the darkness of *māyā* and help us to perform pure devotional service without any diffi-

culty. Please give us a desire to perform devotional service birth after birth.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your servant,

Jalatalā Devī Dāsī

Ādirāja Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet on this most auspicious day of your divine appearance on this planet.

You have opened our darkened eyes with the torchlight of transcendental knowledge. You rescued and are continually rescuing enumerable conditioned souls from the raging waves of the ocean of birth and death by throwing us the lifeline of the holy name, which is the only means of liberation in this Age. We must always remember that Your Divine Grace has saved us and is saving us at every moment.

Thank you for appearing in my dreams over the years, always extending your hand and smiling to comfort me and show me your unconditional love. You seem to know that I'm ashamed to consider myself as one of your disciples because I'm so fallen. But despite my fallen state, you continue to transmit your transcendental vision into my heart.

In my heart I see all my godbrothers and godsisters, their children, and all your grand disciples pleasing you by humbly coming together to fulfill your desire to save all the conditioned souls helplessly drowning in the vast ocean of Kali-yuga. Since your greatest suffering was that the mass of people was misdirected, then this has become our greatest suffering. Our purpose is to relieve you and ourselves of this suffering by doing everything we can to help humanity in its darkest hour. You always knew the world is poised

for a magnificent demonstration of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. On your behalf, you authorized ISKCON to invite the world into a common vision and strategy of manifesting the Golden Age that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wants to unfold for the next ten thousand years.

You taught us how to realize the purport of religion so we can reveal the devotional paths of the world's religions and top them off with realized knowledge about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. "We are not after making very many initiated members" you said, " but our concern is that people understand this philosophy in wider circles." The human race desperately needs a vision. By broadcasting a vision of how your teachings can help bring about world peace, ISKCON, by your grace, can easily engage ever-widening circles of millions of people in Kṛṣṇa's devotional service. You have explained so wonderfully how we humans are spiritual souls who are all absolutely equal, we're all family, we're all from the same source, we all share the same purpose, and how we're all here on Earth to help one another on the way back home to Godhead. This is the essence of spiritual knowledge that you have always known the human race is ready to embrace.

By your causeless mercy you gave us the means to perfect our human form of life by returning back home to Godhead. Your books will last as the law books for humankind throughout the Golden Age. You taught us everything about alleviating the suffering of the conditioned souls by reestablishing a human society based on realizing our eternal loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa and all living beings. You taught us how to establish the principles of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, develop self-sufficient farm communities, protect Kṛṣṇa's cows, distribute your books, and engage as many people as possible in reading your books, honoring *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*, chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, and associating with the devotees. Essentially, you and only you have created a house in which the entire human race can take shelter. Your house has doors and windows that are always wide open for anyone to enter and experience the transcendental satisfaction of having returned to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. And most importantly, you taught us by your perfect example how to present Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the world with love and devotion.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you taught us how important it is to you for us to work cooperatively for your pleasure. You have given us ample mercy by your example and instructions to sincerely serve the mis-

sion you worked so tirelessly to establish. We can begin a new phase of ISKCON by bringing everyone together again with a heartfelt apology from those who may have caused any wrongs to any devotee women, children and men since your departure. We know that every devotee is equally dear to you. You have always been and will always be everyone's genuine well-wisher. We also know that our love for you can be best demonstrated by our love for one another.

I miss you dearly Śrīla Prabhupāda and love you with all my heart. I know my life is worthless unless I again devote myself fully to remembering you by remembering your mission. Therefore, I will try my best from this moment on to allow you to guide me to do whatever you wish me to do.

Your eternal servant,

Ādirāja Dāsa

Rāmabhadra Dāsa

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

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

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

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

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

“Unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and

the spiritual master, all the imports of Vedic knowledge are automatically revealed.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

With gratitude we thank the Supreme Lord Śrī Nityānanda Rāma, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and the Gauḍīya-sampradāya disciplic succession ācāryas for directing Your Divine Grace to the Western world of sin and misery, to reclaim us, your insignificant, unqualified, and unfortunate menial servants.

All glories to your divine appearance and Vyāsa-pūjā. Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for guiding us on the path leading to Rādhā-Govindadeva’s eternal realm Goloka Vṛndāvana-dhāma. I heard an arrival address delivered by Your Divine Grace and you stated “my Guru Mahārāja was the tenth in line of disciplic succession from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, I am the eleventh, and all of you are the twelfth”. That order carries with it a great burden of responsibility to be qualified recipients of your empowering mercy. Such an order is directed with potency to achieve its goal, to all who serve Your Divine Grace successfully with sincere loving dedication, and the dynamics of such an empowering order also require all such qualified and empowered recipients to have broad vision, in an attempt to expand your mission by empowering others, leading devotees to the ultimate spiritual purpose of Kṛṣṇa consciousness propagation. Śrīla Prabhupāda, to become Kṛṣṇa conscious and more Kṛṣṇa conscious as we distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. Such transcendental spiritually motivated Kṛṣṇa conscious saṅga, whose life’s mission is fulfilling your transcendental mission Śrīla Prabhupāda, such great souls are rendering pure devotional sevā at your lotus feet Śrīla Prabhupāda, such sincere and favorable devotional sevā enables all such sincere servants to clearly recognize the need, the hope, and the urgency to fulfill the ultimate mandate of your vision statement that “all of you are the twelfth”. Caitanya Mahāprabhu ordered everyone Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*yare dekha tāre kahe ‘Kṛṣṇa’-upade’ce
āmāra ājñāya guru haṅā tāra ei deśa*

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

We owe you an eternal debt Śrīla Prabhupāda, we contribute regularly only when we offer sincere devotional service, to reclaim and guide the unfortunate souls to a life free from sin and misery by absorption in pure Kṛṣṇa conscious sevā, to wonderful Vaiṣṇavas whose association uplifts our spirit to Kṛṣṇa consciousness by their empowering purity, and to Guru and Gaurāṅga our master and Lord ever caring for and protecting us by directing us perfectly to the ultimate shelter of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the highest achievement of the soul's natural awakening, to our eternal Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in relationship with Kṛṣṇa face-to-face, in ecstatic kṛṣṇa-prema.

We may have different levels of faith in your order Śrīla Prabhupāda and in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī says:

*śraddhā'-śabde—viśvāsa kahe sudṛḍha niscaya
kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma kṛta haya*

“śraddhā is confident, firm faith that by rendering transcendental loving service to Kṛṣṇa one automatically performs all subsidiary activities. Such faith is favorable to the discharge of devotional service.”

In your own wise words you guide us to the topmost path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness understanding:

“That faith means unflinching faith without any deviation, with full understanding.” What is that understanding? *Kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma kṛta haya*: “One who engages himself in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, it is to be understood that he has seen all activities of auspiciousness.” That means he has already finished or passed the examination of pious activities. *Kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma kṛta haya*. This is the beginning. Unless one takes it firmly that “Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead...” And if anyone is engaged in the transcendental loving service of Kṛṣṇa, then it is to be understood that he has done all pious activities. This is this faith, this kind of faith, unflinching faith. When we have got this unflinching faith, that is the beginning of *bhāgavata* life. *Bhāgavata* life means devotional life, direct connection with the Supreme God. That is *bhāgavata* life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as a great ācārya and true Gosvāmī your senses are controlled by the master of the senses Lord Śrī Hṛṣīkeśa, in this

fact we have unflinching faith. Śrīla Prabhupāda you always think of Kṛṣṇa and never forget Kṛṣṇa, in this fact we have unflinching faith. Your Divine Grace is pure and free from all sin, we have unflinching faith in this fact Śrīla Prabhupāda. As a true Bhaktivedanta we have unflinching faith you are the greatest scholar of *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and the broad range of *bhāgavata-śāstra*.

Because Your Divine Grace properly grasped the transcendental knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness from the right source, meaning Your Divine Grace heard the wisdom of *śāstra* directly from the master of *śāstra* Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, we therefore have unflinching faith that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are the most qualified person to hear Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy from – even to this day.

Therefore Śrīla Prabhupāda we honestly and humbly admit, for us to speak with appropriate knowledge and truth, and have unflinching faith in the words we offer in your homage, in our humble, and insignificant attempt to shine a light of hope, leading others properly to the best resource for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, although only highlighting a tiny segment of your greatness and vast glories as we offer your divine grace homage, our best option is turning to the infallible, perfect, and supreme truth of *śāstra*, to enhance with true literary justice, the glorification of a person so wonderful, great, and magnanimous as Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda. Therefore we quote:

*tatra tatrāñjasāyusman bhavatā yad viniścitam
pumsām ekāntataḥ śreyas tan naḥ śamsitum arhasi*

TRANSLATION

Please, therefore, being blessed with many years, explain to us, in an easily understandable way, what you have ascertained to be the absolute and ultimate good for the people in general.

PURPORT

In *Bhagavad-gītā*, worship of the *ācārya* is recommended. The *ācāryas* and *gosvāmīs* are always absorbed in thought of the well-being of the general public, especially their spiritual well-being. Spiritual well-being is automatically followed by material well-being. The *ācāryas* therefore give directions in spiritual well-being for peo-

ple in general. Foreseeing the incompetencies of the people in this Age of Kali, or the iron age of quarrel, the sages requested that Sūta Gosvāmī give a summary of all revealed scriptures because the people of this age are condemned in every respect. The sages, therefore, inquired of the absolute good, which is the ultimate good for the people. The condemned state of affairs of the people of this age is described as follows.

In this age, men are victims not only of different political creeds and parties, but also of many different types of sense-gratificatory diversions, such as cinemas, sports, gambling, clubs, mundane libraries, bad association, smoking, drinking, cheating, pilfering, bickerings, and so on. Their minds are always disturbed and full of anxieties due to so many different engagements. In this age, many unscrupulous men manufacture their own religious faiths which are not based on any revealed scriptures, and very often people who are addicted to sense gratification are attracted by such institutions. Consequently, in the name of religion so many sinful acts are being carried on that the people in general have neither peace of mind nor health of body. The student (*brahmacārī*) communities are no longer being maintained, and householders do not observe the rules and regulations of the *grhastha-āśrama*. Consequently, the so-called *vanaprasthas* and *sannyāsīs* who come out of such *grhastha-āśramas* are easily deviated from the rigid path.

In the Kali-yuga the whole atmosphere is surcharged with faithlessness. Men are no longer interested in spiritual values. Material sense gratification is now the standard of civilization. For the maintenance of such material civilizations, man has formed complex nations and communities, and there is a constant strain of hot and cold wars between these different groups. It has become very difficult, therefore, to raise the spiritual standard due to the present distorted values of human society. The sages of Naimiṣāraṇya are anxious to disentangle all fallen souls, and here they are seeking the remedy from Śrīla Suta Gosvāmī.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we pray and beg at your lotus feet for your special mercy so we not become victims of Kali-yuga but rather we become victorious in Kali-yuga. We pray for your special mercy Śrīla Prabhupāda, so that we distribute your mercy freely to the less fortunate, so they do not become Kali-yuga victims but rather by your loving mercy Śrīla Prabhupāda, let the less fortunate become very fortunate Kṛṣṇa conscious victors. Let us always strive for pure

Kṛṣṇa conscious hearts and fixed Kṛṣṇa conscious minds, so we are qualified for your divine mercy to enter us and spiritually surcharge our hearts, so we are transformed into potent capable messengers, able to give the great victory of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the fallen, unfortunate, victims of *māyā*'s Kali-yuga prison house. Please Śrī la Prabhupāda, by your divine mercy, make us all winners of the race to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious before the timekeepers' clock expires on our current Kṛṣṇa consciousness run. Please bless all the devotees with the high taste of Kṛṣṇa consciousness victory, in pure ecstatic love of Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda all the devotees want to surrender their hearts and souls in pure devotion at your transcendental lotus feet. Please help us Śrīla Prabhupāda we are drowning in an ocean of misery and sorrow, be kind to your insignificant, unqualified, unfortunate menial servants.

Your eternal servant,

Rāmabhadra Dāsa

Śrī Nandanandana Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

There are so many times I remember what little association I had with you. I never felt like I needed much because I had already read all of the books that had been published at that time, and from that you had answered all of my questions. I was firmly convinced about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, though it still took me a few years to finally join the movement. I had also been listening to your lecture tapes for years, so I was fairly fixed in the knowledge by the time I was ready to become a full time devotee.

Nonetheless, I had still visited many temples before that, and even done service for you, like cleaning your room before you arrived for a Ratha-yātrā in Chicago. Then when I finally shaved up when you were visiting Denver, I got to do some direct service by taking your luggage to the airport. That was a time when many of the *sannyāsis* in the movement arrived to be with you. It was a very exciting time. Then, when you were leaving, after I had brought your luggage to the airport, the devotees arrived from the temple to see you off. I remember that you sat in one of the airport chairs waiting to board the plane and all the devotees sat on the floor in front of you. I sat in a chair across from you on the other side of the devoteesso I could look directly at you and see you above the heads of all the devotees. We were all sitting, chanting *japa* and I was just gazing at you, and then you looked directly at me. You kept looking at me for several seconds in a very serious mood, until I had to look away. But that mood of seriousness imbibed me with the same mood toward my service to you and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Thus, no matter whether I felt blissful or not, I became very intent on my service, especially reading your books. That is what actually made me a devotee, and what has kept me a devotee, the association with your books.

Later, when I was the temple treasurer in Denver, I would get these notes from the reports I would receive from Los Angeles which had quotes from you saying things like, “I wrote my books for all of my disciples, and they need to read all of my books.” Or “I want my disciples to learn and then write according to their own understanding.” So I took that instruction to heart and also, in that same mood of seriousness that you gave me when you looked at me at Denver airport, kept working on preaching in this way, which is now the way I preach to so many people around the world, by writing introductory literature.

You were the inspiration, you gave the instruction, you gave me the seriousness of the service, and you changed my life and motivated me to do what I never thought I could do. Now I am simply trying to pay back in some small way the great blessings you gave to me for my spiritual development.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for all the sacrifices you made, and I can only hope that you are somehow happy with the service that I have continued to perform all these years.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your unworthy servant,

Śrī Nandanandana Dāsa

Drumila Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble obeisances.

If I may, I would like to share two dreams I had with you that illustrate your kindness and compassion. You said that in general, (I'm paraphrasing) dreams have no significance. One sees a mountain, one sees gold, then he dreams of a golden mountain. It is simply mental concoction. But you said in a *Bhāgavatam* purport that if one sees the spiritual master in a dream, then that has significance. So I was living in Hawaii and I had two dreams with you that were approximately one year apart.

In the first dream, you were sitting on a big red *vyāsāsana* on the corner of a very busy intersection. Fanned out before you were about 400 devotees listening to you speak. I was fortunate enough to be right next to your big red bolster cushion on your right side. As I listened to you speak, I began to 'space out'. Looking into the traffic I began thinking, 'I'm so fallen, I'm so low, I can't get it together, I can't do anything to please you'. Just then your powerful voice broke through my consciousness, and you said, in a stern, deep voice, "What is that!? What were you thinking?!"

I ducked down and said "Oh – nothing Śrīla Prabhupāda." In a deeper, sterner voice, you said, "No! You were thinking something! What was it!?"

This time I hung my head and not able to look at you, I verbalized everything I had just been thinking. I said, "Śrīla Prabhupāda, I'm so low, I'm so fallen, I can't get it together. I can't do anything to please you. Just then, I immediately felt enveloped by a cloud of your mercy, love and compassion. You immediately changed your demeanor, and in a soft voice you said, "Do not think that it will happen overnight..." "

I woke up just then, and I took it to mean that we've been in the material world for countless lifetimes, conditioned to want to gratify our senses. So to come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not an easy thing. And as you often times stated in your books, "Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a gradual process."

In the next dream, I was standing on top of a building in the early morning hours, in the downtown warehouse district of Los Angeles. I saw you walking along side an empty two story brick warehouse which took up the expanse of an entire block. You were the classic Śrīla Prabhupāda, walking with cane in hand striding with a swan-like gait. You were in full *sannyāsa* garb with a *cādara* over your shoulder and head tilted back. I mischievously thought to myself, 'Oh there's Śrīla Prabhupāda, I think I'll follow him to see what he's doing.'

When I caught up to you, you had already walked about fifteen feet into the warehouse which was lit only by the light filtering through the double wide entrance. Just then you turned around, and with your cane pointed at me, you said in a loud, deep voice, "You! What are YOU doing here!?"

I immediately folded my hands and dipped my shoulders down and said in a stuttering, stammering voice, "I.. I.. I was just following you to see if you were alright."

In an even louder, deeper and sterner voice you said, "If you came back in two weeks, I would be alright, but I'm wondering about YOU! (pointing your cane at me again) How are YOU doing?"

This time I fell to the ground on my hands and knees with my head touching the ground and like in the previous dream, began to say, "Śrīla Prabhupāda, I'm so low, I'm so fallen, I can't get it together, I can't do anything to please you." Just then, as in the previous dream, I felt an energy of love and compassion radiating from you. You placed your hand on my head, and in a very soft voice you whispered, "Anyway, I love you."

At that very moment I woke up from my dream, and sat upright in my bed, gasping, "Oh!.. Oh!" I couldn't believe my good fortune to have had such a wonderful dream with you. Every word, every detail of this dream is just as I have stated. I have not added or deleted anything from this. It happened exactly as I have described it.

All glories to your infinite compassion Śrīla Prabhupāda for kindly appearing to me and letting me associate with you in this way. I am undeserving as you know. But you are infinitely compassionate. All glories to your divine lotus feet.

One of your most fallen disciples,

Drumila Dāsa

Makhanacora Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances!

You have given us so many gifts to help us with our quest to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. The first is your books. They are like the rising sun that dissipates all the darkness. These classics of the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, explained by you, make it very clear what our position is in this world and what our duty is if we want to get closer to Kṛṣṇa. They should be read daily by anyone who claims to be your follower.

Second is the association of devotees. You have created ISKCON for that purpose, because we all know that a single stick can be easily broken, but if you bundle sticks together you get strength that can't be broken. Even for those of us who are disillusioned with ISKCON and its leadership, we should understand that the principle of association still holds. In that case our quest should be to find some devotees of equal mind and have regular programs of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That will help us. That association will bring new life to our desire to be Kṛṣṇa conscious. We have been doing this for years here in Seattle and I can testify that it is enlivening every week. To have *kīrtana* with the devotees is salve for the soul. To hear the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and discuss it amongst devotees brings the soul to life.

Every time, I go away feeling enlivened and invigorated. As I see it this is the *nāma-haṭṭa* program envisioned by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura that can go along simultaneously to the big temple pro-

grams of ISKCON.

I remember at different times knowing devotees who really didn't want to chant in *kīrtana* or attend the *Bhāgavatam* class. They would rather do something else.

That is not the association that I want. I want the association “*kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ... tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalam*” Who are eager to chant in *kīrtana*, and hear and understand the *Bhāgavata* philosophy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless me with this type of association. Then I can make my life a success.

Your servant,

Makhanacora Dāsa

Pālaka Dāsa

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

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

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and not only delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism, but the entire world which has become heavily influenced by these Western materialistic ways!

Out of your kindness, compassion and love, you arrived on American soil with this prophesied mission of Lord Caitanya's. Desiring to rescue the entire planet Earth, you the faithful servant of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, strictly followed the *paramparā* system, thus bringing with you the pure unadulterated message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness originating from the Supreme Lord Himself. Your determination to introduce these spotless teach-

ings has proven successful beyond a doubt. You presented these original teachings “AS IT IS”, without the slightest tinge of self-adoration, profit or distinction and as a result of your uncompromising purity, it is becoming accepted and regarded as the Absolute Truth.

You first established Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West, and from there spread it all around, saving and inspired countless conditioned souls to join your movement.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you surely are adored as the greatest exponent of Vedic teachings in the Western World. However, your glories certainly will ever increase as generation upon generation of conditioned souls cross your path by way of these Bhaktivedanta Purports and discover you actually do live forever via written sound. Your emphasis on books being the basis and purity the force behind successful preaching, has instilled your missionary spirit in this generation of servants. So if I may, I pray at your lotus feet that we never forget that it is your purity, it is your force and they are your books that have the ability to change the entire world back to Kṛṣṇa consciousness! Now as your direct followers, we must also instil your missionary preaching spirit in this next generation of followers, because we understand how this meant everything to Your Divine Grace.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you assure that all we need to know is already there in your books, thus you taught us everything. Now it is up to us to take full advantage of this causeless mercy of yours. You are so kind, and we were so foolish that you had to teach us even how to properly pay our obeisances unto you. You chose the proper words and actually composed the prayer we say daily just so we could understand your exalted position correctly and offer respects in accordance with our *paramparā* system. I especially appreciate how you selected these words “You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and delivering the Western countries”. Yes Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is you who is kindly preaching. Not that you have preached and now you have stopped preaching. No, you are still preaching and will perpetually do so as long as your books remain in print and are continually distributed by the millions all around this Earth as you so desired.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you will never die as you live forever in your words and we, your followers will utilize for generations yet to come.

Begging to remain your eternal servant birth after birth.

Pālaka Dāsa

Vaibhava Dāsa

All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I try to follow the position and the service of your presence in the Movement of Śrī Caitanya.

During each *brāhma-muhūrta*, as the sun is near to rise, we celebrate, through yours, and our chanting of the holy names, the transcendental meeting between Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and in Vṛndāvana the Supreme Lord is attempting to go to the hill of Govardhana together with His calves.

As the transcendental repetition of the holy names increase their enlivening power each morning, the books you gave us to be read daily are always bringing something new. It has been the best gift with which you enriched us. That knowledge is ever-fresh. The books prove with their simplicity, as ‘Caitanya’ means ‘original, constitutional, living consciousness’, I understand it proves how this process you teach us is the life and soul of us living beings.

On this day, we are together with you. As we usually celebrate during a *guru-pūjā*, which appears to conclude the first hours as the *siddhānta* of the meaning of the chanting of the holy name of the Supreme Lord, such *siddhānta* is “to be grateful to everything, and everybody who reminds us about Śrī Kṛṣṇa”; the first ring of this *kṛṣṇa-smaraṇam* chain are you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your little servant,

Vaibhava Dāsa

Vegavatī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

One of your precious daughters, an artist herself, by temperament, asked me once, in Vṛndāvana, “Do you think that beauty can save the world?” I don’t recall how I answered that day. I hope I said yes.

Somehow, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the thoughts that are coming to me tonight, as I try to find words to express how I feel about you, are reminding me of the sort of beauty that redeems.

Your glance. Your smile. Your voice. Your unfathomable purports. They can redeem the world.

What a beautiful thing to carry in the core of one’s heart.

Please may I never forget you. Please bless me to love and to serve, in the company of your faithful followers, that rascal joking Cowherd Boy, Whose part of a plenary part is breathing universes in and out, and controlling the movements of time over the lives of the countless living entities. With love. in spite of the world’s appearances to the contrary.

Your very insignificant servant,

Vegavatī Devī Dāsī

Jaya Gurudeva Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

As you continue to push on the transcendental mission of Śrī

Caitanya,
gaura-vāṇī,
Spreading Krishna consciousness,
Love of God,
Through your books, your disciples and granddisciples,
Disciples of your disciples,
The demoniac machines-civilization,
Strains and struggles,
Just to maintain an untenable, unsustainable status quo.

To the question raised by your disciple:
When will the communists defeat the capitalists?
You answered nonchalantly:
What do we care? Let them go to hell.
Our only business is to spread Krishna consciousness.

Destined to be the only feasible alternative to our current demoniac civilization,
The civilization you are proposing, is that of Krishna consciousness –
The ultimate common sense.

In 1974 you predicted the end of the era of cars and airplanes.
You said no one will want them anymore.
They will be obsolete.

From 1967 to 1977, for ten years,
You have continually urged all of us, pounded us,
Your young and inexperienced disciples,
In letters, during lectures and conversations,
To live on farms,
To grow our own food,

You said that if growing food grains becomes a worldwide priority,
Our planet could feed ten times the amount of its present population,
There is so much land lying vacant, you have said on several occasions,
But people do not grow food.
They prefer living in pigeonhole-flats in big, big cities, ~
Working in offices and factories,
Producing bolts and nuts,
Going to the cinema, bars and restaurants,

And consume food, without ever producing it.

You instructed us on how to start sustainable rural projects,
Producing our own food grains, vegetables, fruit and honey,
Protecting our cows, making ghee from butter, so much ghee,
That it could be supplied to local Hare Krishna restaurants,
People would come from far and wide, just to taste the best food
on Earth,

bhagavat-prasādam

Cooked in pure ghee made from the milk of our own cows.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
As an empowered devotee of the Supreme Scientist, Lord Sri
Krishna,

You are also an expert in many ‘mundane’ sciences:
Chemistry, physics, economics, business management,
Agriculture, biology, zoology, just to mention a few,

You are foremost amongst logicians.
When a disciple told you,
That a famous philosophy professor at Berkeley University,
Had denied the existence of eternity,
You challenged:
“If there’s no eternity, then why do you try to avoid death?”

You have wisdom,
The most prized and rare commodity on Earth,
Your godliness and purity,
Paired with genuine humility,
Divine Grace,
Make you an outstanding spiritual leader, respected by all
For many a generation.

You have been instrumental in ushering a new era in
human history:
From a civilization of demons,
Be it communistic or capitalistic,
To a civilization of divines!

Your dog, lying at your feet, ready to be kicked,

Jaya Gurudeva Dāsa

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories to you on the most auspicious appearance day celebration of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

You are the savior of the fallen. Without your mercy we would be doomed – going around in circles without getting anywhere – lost souls in a materialistic, unfeeling world. You taught us everything that is auspicious – from rising early to capture the best time of the day to chanting the holy names at every opportunity. Yes, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa – in *japa* mode – getting rid of nonsense thoughts and becoming more transcendently situated – in *kīrtana* mode – loudly, ecstatically and dancing happily.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by flooding the world with your books there is some hope for humanity in Kali-yuga. Your books are the basis for changing the consciousness of the human race into one of thoughtful spirituality and love of Kṛṣṇa, instead of being crazy, pursuing sense gratification.

How magnanimous of you to leave your quiet and peaceful life in Vṛndāvana to travel to a world unknown to a *sādhu* like you. I cannot thank you enough for your sacrifice. I feel completely indebted to you.

You taught us that service to Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate goal and the only way to cleanse the dust from our hearts and get rid of our ignorance.

Speaking about your wonderful qualities and listening to your pastimes is the real nectar for me – you are sublime and most exalted. You are my inspiration and you make me determined to keep on the path of *bhakti*. You are non-different from your instructions.

I've recently been staying in Śrī Māyāpur-dhāma, Lord Caitanya's transcendental abode, where your mercy is constantly flowing. I pray that I may stay here and serve you, however humbly, and never let go of your golden lotus feet.

Your servant,

Atītaguṇā Devī Dāsī

Bhagavān Ācārya Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. Your appearance in this world was something extraordinary. You came to spread the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness for suffering mankind. Out of compassion for a world full of lost souls, you single handedly saved millions from the greatest fear. Especially here in the USA, where Vedic knowledge was practically unheard of, you taught the essence of spiritual life, chanting the holy names of God, Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare, thus giving all conditioned souls the opportunity to revive their eternal love of God. You taught through your books as well as your exemplary behavior. Indeed, you are ever alive in your books, and your message, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's instruction to remember Kṛṣṇa by chanting His holy names constantly, is still being heard and followed by increasing numbers.

The *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* was the first book of yours that I read. It had such an impact on me that I was ready to join your movement after reading that book alone. It was as if I were hearing something I already knew deep inside. You answered all of my questions with such clarity, unlike other authors of books I had read that were all very vague in their descriptions of the Absolute Truth.

You boldly declared that the Absolute Truth is Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

You always set a perfect example of how to live a Kṛṣṇa conscious life. Somehow or other we must always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him. By Kṛṣṇa's infinite mercy I was drawn to you, and by your mercy I am gradually becoming attracted to Kṛṣṇa. Through your books, I get your association every day. I know the only way to show my appreciation is to become more serious about full surrender to Kṛṣṇa, to rededicate my life for serving your mission. On

one of the few occasions that I had the fortune of your personal association, you told me to continue spreading the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. However, having left the association of devotees after your departure, I have wasted most of my life. Why am I prolonging the suffering? Simply due to ignorance and illusion. I want to please you and Kṛṣṇa more than anything. I pray that Kṛṣṇa helps me get back on the battlefield in the war against *māyā*. It's so much more glorious to die fighting than cowering in the corner.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says, "Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth." Thank you for all that you did, especially for your wonderful books.

Your most insignificant disciple,

Bhagavān Ācārya Dāsa

Cakrī Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

You have given me so many things to be thankful for. Most of all, remembrance of Kṛṣṇa, which changed my life forever. Because of this, although I tried, I could never be happy with anything else. As I grow older, my singular desire to practice and preach your teachings is becoming more prominent. With old age knocking at the door, I realize that there is nothing else left to do.

You have given us the means to achieve our spiritual desires. You constructed a beautiful morning program, which can give us all spiritual benefits. Early in the morning we can have a beautiful *darśana* of Their Lordships and sing the wonderful *saṁsāra*-prayers. It is stated that just by chanting these prayers, we can go back to Godhead. Then you gave us the wonderful worship of Śrīmatī Tulasī-devī, a very intimate worship of the Lord through his beloved *gopī*. We generally chant the English first, since you

instructed us that we should know the meaning of the prayers that we sing. In the prayer it is stated, “Whoever takes shelter of you has his wishes fulfilled. Bestowing your mercy upon him, you make him a resident of Vṛndāvana.” Thus you are giving us a chance to live in Vṛndāvana, and assist the intimate associates of Kṛṣṇa. Again, this is your divine mercy. After so much purification we have the opportunity to chant the holy names on our beads. You taught us that by chanting attentively, we could meet the Lord. Then, we get to greet Their Lordships, beautifully dressed and decorated with flowers and ornaments. By worshiping you in the *guru-pūjā* ceremony, we get the chance to realize the importance of the spiritual master and appreciate all that you have given us. And, after that, we perform *harināma-saṅkīrtana* in front of the Deities. After performing so many devotional activities the ecstatic *kīrtana* becomes the highlight of the morning. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class then follows. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca*. “Devotees derive great satisfaction and bliss from always enlightening one another and conversing about me.” And then we can relish the *mahā-prasādam* in the association of devotees.

So you gave us this wonderful complete program to revive our Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You stated that this process is simply recreation. Once you challenged your audience, “Just tell me, ‘Swamiji, this is not recreation’”. No one accepted your challenge, because it is true that this process is simply joyful.

I also have been experiencing that by giving Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others, your presence can be strongly felt. This was your order, to distribute your books, and give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. And it can be practically felt that you are pleased by this. It is very inspiring to see so many of your disciples, trained by you, doing such wonderful service, and being wonderful examples for everyone to follow, and helping and guiding all the devotees. I pray to you to be able to get their association and service.

Please forgive me for my offenses, and please allow me to continue to take advantage of the resources you have given us, and to expand your movement as much as possible. Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!*

Aspiring to always serve you,

Cakrī Dāsa

Dearest Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances beyond the shade of your lotus feet.

All glories to Your Divine Grace and your transcendental mission!

We are perfectly unqualified to approach your *vyāsāsana* on this auspicious day of your appearance in this world, so we humbly beg for mercy to be able to express a few words of gratitude for saving us, fallen souls born in the West from Christian families.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have created our pious account by engaging us in your *saṅkīrtana* mission as soon as we joined your movement and have causelessly introduced us to the enchanting world of the Divine couple, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Her beloved Śyāmasundara eternally sporting in Vṛndāvana-dhāma with your *Kṛṣṇa* book in French.

We are so grateful to you because you attracted us with your beautiful *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* overloaded with transcendental knowledge.

You overwhelmed our mind with your divine temple worship, and captivated our heart with your sweet *bhajanās* expressing your longing for the Lord's company. Thank you Prabhupāda for entrusting us with the holy names, the process to awaken our love for Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Govinda and for taking us back home in our spiritual body to our eternal abode in this lifetime.

The nectar of your instructions keeps us alive in this world and we beg for empowerment to share your books and teachings with others around us, with no other motive than your pleasure and satisfaction.

Please bless us so we can always feel your presence by our side and never deviate from your instructions.

Shy as a blue lotus who blossoms in the night

Radiant as the full moon who lights up our heart
Illuminating all darkness with soothing rays
Lonely across the world Prabhupāda chants always
Appeared on this bright day my *guru* leading light.
Prostrated in your dust we see your lotus feet
Rare such a *mahātmā* we long again to meet
A glance a smile from you each word is so precious
Brave bold and confident we seek your lighthouse
Humbly begging shelter we chant the holy name
United we are strong purity is the link
Prabhupāda wrote his books and we enhance his fame
Attached to Śrī Guru we give up other game
Determined to succeed we avoid the cheater
And at Your lotus feet we humbly surrender

Your grateful servant,

Kṛṣṇa-kīrtana Devī Dāsī

Nitya-tṛptā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble and prostrated obeisances in the dust of your most merciful lotus feet. I pray that I may always be blessed with devotional service to Your Divine Grace and remain your humble servant eternally.

As each year passes in this life, and I am somehow or other able to remain in ISKCON and serve at the BBT, gratitude fills my heart. You are so very kind to this fallen soul, no words can express this feeling accurately.

By your mercy, through your books and lectures, pictures and letters, I feel your presence. You are as alive in my heart today as in 1974, even more so. Although I had very little association with you in person, my relationship has always been through prayer and *japa* meditation.

You are the guiding light in my life, and my only desire is to remain fixed in service at your divine lotus feet.

Your fallen servant,

Nitya-tṛptā Devī Dāsī

Gaura Keśava Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

It has now been forty years, for me at least, since you came into my life. Your influence has shaped my whole adult life and that of many thousands of others. You continue to personally touch and guide all those who read your books or come in contact with your followers. I can only marvel at your potency and these remarkable events.

What you have done and continue to do, in the lives of all those whom you have touched, is so extraordinary that we can hardly

live a moment without thinking of our connection with you in some way. We feel it deeply at every moment. It is bitter sweet because you gave your whole life for us and for your Lord. Yet I, for one, am unable to offer anything significant by way of gratitude.

Just know that I feel my deepest appreciation to have somehow or other come in contact with you and your dear most followers. You live on, not only in your teachings, but also in each and every one of them. In this way the Lord's mercy, flowing through you, has expanded exponentially and filled this world.

You set the whole world on fire with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. May that blaze continue unabated until it burns away the sins of the entire world. You have set the stage for this. The players simply have to follow your script. All I can do is observe the scene. I feel like a humble understudy, having a slim grasp of the script and no potency to enact it. Your direction is all that the actors must consider in order to be seriously empowered to fulfil this purpose.

All glories to the ongoing saga of the spreading of the glories of the Lord and His holy name. Your life and teachings continue to fuel the Hare Kṛṣṇa explosion. All glories to you! All glories to you!

Gaura Keśava Dāsa

Atmātmā Dāsa and Śacīmatā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances, all glories to your lotus feet.

Thank you for coming and picking me up from the ocean of *māyā*. *māyā*-devī had kept me entertained as a conditioned soul in her duty as the guardian of those who have strayed from the lotus feet of the Lord. She has many associates who have assisted her, primarily lust, anger and greed.

As a conditioned soul trying to break out from the shackles of the material energy, pushing past ignorance, speeding through passion and dwelling in goodness. Still unable to see which way is up

as the ropes of the material energy dragged this conditioned soul in an unending ball. You are the manifested mercy of the Lord. It is only by your good grace that I have understood the real purpose of this life and I am always indebted to you for your kindness upon this fallen soul.

It is amazing to see how you have come with Lord Kṛṣṇa, giving the supreme mercy to all the fallen souls who came into contact with you. Every moment given to carrying out the order of your Guru Mahārāja, and pleasing him absolutely.

Now as your follower, I have no other mission than to somehow please you in your service. Your instructions are given in all your books to all the world. Whatever we do as your followers, is simply to repeat that which you have so lovingly given to us. Keeping intact your teaching, ever mindful of your position as the Founder-*Ācārya* of ISKCON. Your vision is giving us understanding of how this world should be and in what direction it should go. There is no one who has given us a greater understanding of our real selves, the Supreme Lord, this world and the spiritual world than what is within your books, presented 'as it is'.

What could this world become if the populations followed your teaching? But they will not follow, until for many it is too late. The writing on the wall is within your books and lectures. The urgency you gave us to pass on this knowledge is becoming ever more apparent.

The reprieve and boon for this time is within your books – you are the mercy of Lord Caitanya upon the fallen souls. Everything is possible by the mercy of the pure devotee of the Lord, you are the moon of Gaurahari, because you are the pure servant and representative of the Supreme Lord.

Please continue to instruct me, your servant. Allow me to hold onto your *dhotī* so that you may drag me back to the spiritual world with you. Whatever your command is then allow me to please you, there is no better place than to be the servant of the servant of the Lord.

Your servants in Winchester,

Atmātmā Dāsa and Śacīmatā Devī Dāsī

*nāmāny anantasya hata-trapaḥ paṭhan
guhyāni bhadrāṇi kṛtāni ca smaran
gām paryaṭaṁs tuṣṭa-manā gata-sprhaḥ
kālaṁ pratikṣan vimado vimatsaraḥ*

Thus I began chanting the holy name and fame of the Lord by repeated recitation, ignoring all the formalities of the material world. Such chanting and remembering of the transcendental pastimes of the Lord are benedictory. So doing, I traveled all over the earth, fully satisfied, humble and unenvious. SB 1.6.26

My tribute to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Vyāsa-pūjā this year consists of my appreciation that he is empowered to attract, instruct, and save conditioned souls heavily in the clutches of illusion by merely his remote association. Most of his followers and even many of his disciples, including me, were never able to have much, or any personal *vapuḥ* association with His Divine Grace. Nonetheless, Śrīla Prabhupāda appeared (and still appears) to us very vividly in the form of his disciples, the *mahā-mantra*, and his *vānī*. So much so, that very bad habits and deep attachments to non-devotee relationships are more or less easily given up in favor of devotional service in the association of devotees.

In my case, I saw Śrīla Prabhupāda briefly from a distance in 1976 (as I described in my tribute last year) but left him unceremoniously for TSKP i. e. to return to Sweden. I could have stayed there in France for the impending initiations with him personally present, but rather returned to Stockholm (my *prabhu-datta deśa*) and was initiated here in Sweden where my service to him was meant (and still is) to take place. The then local GBC, Jayatīrtha Prabhu, performed the fire *yajña*. In the middle of his *mantra* recitation, a child started screaming his head off and brought the procedure to a screeching halt for a minute or two. Jayatīrtha Prabhu looked at me squarely before resuming and said “let this be a lesson to you!”. At that time I read by chance the above verse and felt that Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke to me personally in the purport. “Such a devotee, after his initiation by the Lord or His bona fide representative, takes very seriously chanting of the glories of the Lord and traveling all over the world so that others may also hear the glories of the Lord.”

The child Nārada as described in the 6th chapter of the 1st canto was in his previous life the son of a maidservant and was given the Lord's revelation in his heart. The boy heard His voice only with the message, "I regret that during this lifetime you will not be able to see Me anymore. Those who are incomplete in service and who are not completely free from all material taints can hardly see Me." The boy bowed his head in gratefulness at this "remote control" initiation and "was conducted by one single desire: to go back to Godhead" which awaited him in due course. The boy took no notice of worldly formalities and traveled without pride or possessions with the desire to glorify and remember the Lord. And as far as possible, to distribute the holy name to others, according to personal capacity.

May I always remember the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda and quote them without difficulty.

Yogīndra Dāsa

Akrūranātha Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

For this auspicious anniversary of your divine appearance in this world, I would like to reflect on the historic importance of what you have done, not only in the lives of your many sincere followers, who you have saved from repeated birth and death, but in the larger cultural forces at work throughout the world.

As noted in your preface to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, human society has made rapid progress in technology and is now broader and less geographically limited than in past ages. This is even more so now than in the 1960s when you wrote those prophetic words, that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will fill the need for a clue as to "how humanity can become one in peace, friendship and prosperity with a common cause," because it is a cultural presentation for the respiration of the entire human society.

You have presented *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* very expertly, as “the transcendental science not only for knowing the ultimate source of everything, but for knowing our relationship with Him and our duty toward perfection of the human society on the basis of this perfect knowledge.”

Of course it is not a science for mere “armchair philosophers”, but for those who are serious enough to apply the principles in their day to day lives and interactions. And yet it is not merely an expression of religious sentiment: the literature you have bequeathed to the world is of the highest importance, dealing with the most important subject matter, *ātma-tattva* or knowledge of the ultimate truth, directed at liberating the spirit soul from the contamination of matter.

You wrote that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* should be introduced in the schools and colleges, having been recommended by the great student-devotee Prahlāda Mahārāja in order to change the demonic face of society.

The true significance of your achievement cannot be fathomed by us. Lord Caitanya, the most merciful avatar, who is Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, appeared on this earth within our historical memory, during the time of Columbus’ voyages, of Martin Luther’s dissent from the Catholic Church, and of Henry VIII’s reign as King of England. In a mood of great compassion, Lord Caitanya inaugurated the great *saṅkīrtana* movement for the deliverance of the world, but in the so-called “West” this momentous event had scarcely been recognized until you, carrying the orders of your Guru Mahārāja on your head, established the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness and the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.

Even still, the world has not come to recognize the importance of Lord Caitanya’s appearance, or of the literature left by His devotees such as the Six Gosvāmīs, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī and Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura, or your own Bhaktivedanta purports. Western scholars, if they know of these things at all, tend to see them as significant only within India or Hindu society, or they may see your “Hare Kṛṣṇa” movement as some kind of phenomenon within the 1960s hippie counterculture or with the flowering of “New Age” interest in meditation and yoga. They do not understand how significant it is that in the Vaiṣṇava *bhakti* tradition of Vedic India, the true explanation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord

Kṛṣṇa, and how He is known through unalloyed devotional service, has been expounded and elaborated in great detail with reference to unimpeachable authorities, and made accessible through chanting of the *mahā-mantra*.

Yet, with your books and the spiritual movement you founded and followers you trained, you have laid the groundwork for a broadening and deepening of appreciation for the sublime profundity of pure Vaiṣṇava literature like *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and of the great spiritual culture passed along by perfect Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* such as Your Divine Grace, at once philosophically profound and practically beneficial and open to all.

We do not lament that the worlds' leading scholars, scientists, politicians, philosophers and poets have not yet sufficiently recognized the importance of your books, but rather take it as an opportunity for service. It is a worthy life's mission to strive, individually and collectively as your faithful servants, to bring these teachings and your magnificent books to the attention of both the broader public and the cultural elites who are arbiters of significant cultural achievement. History will record how this movement has saved the world. It is only a matter of time, and we are grateful to be engaged as instruments in the early stages of this great historical, cultural spiritual renaissance.

Your humble servant,

Akrūranātha Dāsa

Hari Dāsa

The Affection of Śrīla Prabhupāda

This offering has been adapted from a story written by Premāñjana Dāsa based on a conversation with Hari Dāsa in Juhu, Mumbai.

As a child, Hari Dāsa would beg for money, wash glasses in a tea stall and wash taxis. He also used to pickpocket and commit petty crime just to go to Jayal as it was only there

that he would receive basic necessities.

It was in Jayal, while emptying the dustbins that Hari Dāsa found an English issue of *Back to Godhead*, which somebody had thrown away. On the front page was a picture of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Hari Dāsa noticed that Śrīla Prabhupāda was wearing an expensive watch and decided to steal it. The watch was his next 'target'. On the very same day of his discharge from prison, Hari Dāsa searched for the ISKCON temple, and eventually found Hare Kṛṣṇa Land, which at that time, was like a forest with a small hut.

The young Hari Dāsa approached Girirāja Mahārāja and Jagat-puruṣa Dāsa with the picture he found in Jayal, and asked: "Where is Śrīla Prabhupāda?"

Jagat puruṣa Dāsa told him that Śrīla Prabhupāda was not in Mumbai, but he was coming soon.

Hari Dāsa planned to stay in Juhu to wait for Śrīla Prabhupāda. He acted as a devotee so he would get a place to live, some shelter and food. After staying at the temple for four days, Girirāja Mahārāja insisted Hari Dāsa get his head shaved. Everyone loved him and treated Hari Dāsa with love and affection. He began to abandon his bad habits while he was in the temple, and forgot all about stealing. Hari Dāsa was engaged in devotional service and started attending all the temple programs. He told everyone in the temple that he had been in Jayal and that he was a thief. Soon, the young Hari Dāsa learned that Śrīla Prabhupāda had come to Hyderabad.

Hari Dāsa told Girirāja Mahārāja that he wanted to go to have *darśana* of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Mahārāja declined and told him that there was a lot of service to be done in Juhu, so he could not go. Hari Dāsa was firm in his desire of having *darśana* of Śrīla Prabhupāda, and told Mahārāja that he should let him go to Hyderabad or he would just steal money from temple and go anyhow, with or without his permission. Mahārāja finally allowed him to go.

It was an early morning when Hari Dāsa reached Hyderabad. He immediately went to the crowded pandal program where Śrīla Prabhupāda was lecturing on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and sat right in front of him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was looking at Hari Dāsa and Hari Dāsa was looking at Śrīla Prabhupāda. Śrīla Prabhupāda was wondering how an Indian boy came and sat right in front of Him. All the other girls and boys were Western, and Hari Dāsa was an Indian (among devotees). As he went into his car, Śrīla Prabhupāda told someone to bring Hari Dāsa to his room. Hari Dāsa was given a seat in one of the other cars and went to meet his spiritual master. Hari Dāsa told Śrīla Prabhupāda that he came from Jayal to steal his watch. Śrīla Prabhupāda told him to not to steal, and handed over his watch to Hari Dāsa. Hari Dāsa told Śrīla Prabhupāda that he had already changed his mind and would not steal Śrīla Prabhupāda's watch.

Hari Dāsa had the habit of stealing money from the temple. He used to get money from the Deity kitchen or devotee kitchen, and would take one or two rupees, which in 1972 used to be a very big thing.

On one occasion, when Śrīla Prabhupāda was at Hare Kṛṣṇa Land, Hari Dāsa got a little extra money to buy fruits and vegetables for the Deity kitchen and Śrīla Prabhupāda's kitchen. On one such shopping trip, Hari Dāsa noticed a huge billboard for Cadbury's *5-Star chocolate*, and he took five rupees from the *bhoga-lakṣmī* and bought some chocolate.

Hari Dāsa had to go through Śrīla Prabhupāda's *darśana* room to get to Śrīla Prabhupāda's kitchen. He paid obeisances to Śrīla Prabhupāda, and as he was doing so, the chocolates hiding in his bead bag slipped out and fell right in front of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

“What is this?” Śrīla Prabhupāda asked.

Hari Dāsa had no means to escape or lie as he was caught red-handed. So he gave one chocolate to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda took one bite from the chocolate. “What have you given to me?” he asked. “Show me the packet.” “It has cocoa!” said Śrīla Prabhupāda, looking at the ingredients. “We don’t have cocoa. Why do you eat all this?” “This is sweet”, said Hari Dāsa, and quickly went to the kitchen to wash fruits and vegetables.

His Divine Grace entered the kitchen and started to make *halavā* right in front of Hari Dāsa. Even after Hari Dāsa’s offense, and being caught red-handed, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave him some *halavā* as a ‘punishment’.

“Śrīla Prabhupāda always gave a higher taste just to help us to give up the lower taste, ” said Hari Dāsa. “Śrī la Prabhupāda used to give the example that if you want someone to leave ‘*guru*’ you give Him ‘*rasagullā*’ – this is how Śrīla Prabhupāda taught us by example. ” Hari Dāsa gave up chocolate at that very moment.

Although Hari Dāsa stopped eating chocolate, he did not give up stealing. The temple gave him some money to purchase construction materials, and one day Hari Dāsa stole 60 rupees, the highest amount he ever stole. It was a hot summer afternoon, and Hari Dāsa took a shower and slept with his wet towel on a wooden bunker with the stolen money in his hand.

Jagat-puruṣa Dāsa saw the money in Hari Dāsa’ hand and took it from him, which led to a tussle.

“You have stolen temple money, ” said Jagat-puruṣa. “So what!” retaliated Hari Dāsa.

Jagat-puruṣa was a tall American *brahmācārī* who was very sweet and soft spoken. He explained to Hari Dāsa that stealing the temple’s money and using it for personal use was as bad as chewing the flesh of your spiritual master. Hari Dāsa, who had already fell in love with Śrīla Prabhupāda, immediately felt guilty, and started feeling to feel he was chewing the flesh of Śrīla Prabhupāda and felt very, very bad. He decided then that he would not steal from the temple anymore. From then on, Hari Dāsa’s stealing habits changed forever. Instead of stealing from the temple, he would bring money

from outside, into the temple.

Just like Kṛṣṇa, The Supreme Personality of Godhead has unlimited glories, So, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is dearest to Kṛṣṇa, manifested his glories to his disciples like Hari Dāsa from time to time. These pastimes and interactions of Śrīla Prabhupāda will be remembered and cherished by followers and admirers for time to come and have the power to evoke the dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness in all of them.

Baḍa Haridāsa Dāsa

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On your divine appearance day, I pray that my words and songs may always glorify you – my most merciful master, who saved me.

As you explained many times, the poor bewildered, conditioned soul cannot even know who he is. Such is our unfortunate position. Coming on behalf of your Guru Mahārāja and Lord Caitanya, you have kindly picked me up and given me a glimpse of the truth.

The desire in our heart to get out of this world of illusion and to become a pure, spotless servant of the Lord was planted by you. You carefully clear away all conflicting and confusing desires with you powerful words. You nourish the pure desire with you sweet songs of devotion.

I pray I may always hear your divine voice in my heart of hearts, that I may live in your instructions and always have the good fortune to share your love with whomever I meet.

Praying to become the servant of your servant,

Baḍa Haridāsa Dāsa

Gaura Dāsa

“I bow down to the beautiful lotus feet of my spiritual master, by whose causeless mercy I have received the supreme

holy name, the divine *mantra*, the service of the son of Śacī mātā, the association of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rūpa Gosvāmī and his older brother Sanātana Gosvāmī, the supreme abode of Mathurā, the blissful abode of Vṛndāvana, the divine Rādhā-kuṇḍa, and Govardhana Hill, and the desire within my heart for the loving service of Śrī Rādhikā and Mādhava in Vṛndāvana.” Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I am very grateful to H.H. Jayādvaita Swami for thinking of all his godbrothers and godsisters, and arranging for this publication to facilitate us to write our homages to you. This is the third year, and each year, there will be less and less of your first wave of disciples to write for this publication. They need to express themselves and we need to hear from them while we can. It may be the last homage for some in this lifetime. You initiated 5000 disciples, and last year 250 wrote for this, so we have many more to contact! I have personally written to over 200.

You have explained that Lord Kṛṣṇa has several types of *avatāras* in which He descends to attract the fallen conditioned souls back to His abode. Mohammed and Jesus Christ are amongst them. But not all *śaktyāveśa-avatāras* are empowered to the same degree. The way you intensely spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness through your books during the twelve years you traveled the world, is unparalleled in the history of the human race.

You said “Don’t try to become a better *paramahansa* than your spiritual master” by skipping *Bhāgavatam* class.

You said to Yamunā-devī: “You westerners are so restless,” he admonished. “Why can’t you remain in the same place? Stay where you are.” We questioned, “But Śrīla Prabhupāda, they are saying that if we aren’t in ISKCON, we lose your blessings and cannot make advancement.” Prabhupāda replied, “ISKCON is where you are chanting the holy name – that is ISKCON.” We re-joined: “They are saying we don’t have any association here and are therefore in *māyā*.” He replied: “Association can be two or two hundred. If you are two and compatible, you can become perfect in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If you are 200 and are not, then no one will make advancement.”

I live in separation of your chanting and dancing devotees. Please ask your Kṛṣṇa to help me get the realization that I can be with you at every moment when I read your books or chant my rounds. You continue to empower generations who study your books very seriously, and continue to awaken Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the hearts of millions all around the world through their book distribution. You have left us so much wisdom to ponder and apply. You said, “Everyone can become a first class speaker. Simply cram the purports of my books. The references are there, the philosophy is there. Everything is there. So if you do it, everyone will be pleased with your speaking”.

I need to develop a better memory to “cram your purports”. Please help me to organize my time better so that I may associate with you more often through your books. I calculated that if I could read approximately 50 *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verses a day, I could complete the 18, 000 verses it in one year. There are 11, 519 verses in your crest jewel of translations, the *Śrī Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. If I read thirty one and a half verses a day, I could finish that in one year. Where is there time to argue, find fault or stare at computer screens excessively? Your books are all attractive, because they are Kṛṣṇa’s books written through you. I need to become more conscious of my offenses so that I can develop more attraction for reading and studying them.

Before I met your devotees, I had read a “Penguin Classic” version of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and listened to a record album of verses spoken with a sitar playing. This intrigued me, but the conclusion was not clear. Little did I know that in just a couple of weeks, after receiving your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, I would become inspired to drive with your devotees from Winnipeg to Chicago to meet Your Divine Grace at O’ Hare Kṛṣṇa Airport! This would be the most life-transforming thing I had done.

I had the amazing great fortune to be in your personal presence at three locations: Chicago, Detroit for my first initiation, and Māyāpur. In Chicago, July of 1975, I received your blessing to see Śrī Śrī Kīśora-Kīśorī. I also saw Lord Jagannātha for the first time. I liked His big smile very much, and thought that it made a lot of sense that God should have a big smile. I curiously watched you do the *abhiṣeka* ceremony, pouring the yogurt over golden Deities, while you installed many sets of Gaura-Nitāi Deities for the Rādhā-Dāmodara Traveling *saṅkīrtana* Party. One day I walked behind one

of the buses. The door was open, and the exotic looking *esarāja*, *tampura*, and harmonium, with the decor of the beautiful temple arches inside, beckoned me to get on board, but I was afraid I might never be able to leave !

Your disciples Uttama-śloka, Kalki, and Jitendriya Prabhus were very kind to me, and encouraged me to gradually surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa. During a Sunday Feast, Tripurāri Swami “turned the screws” on me, and put on the pressure to get serious and join your mission, reminding me how everyone was wasting their life in the futile pursuits trying to find happiness through sex, money and things that has never made anyone happy. Many devotees were instrumental to inspire me to take shelter of you.

After a few more months of seeking name and fame, as soon as I decided to move into Śrī Śrī Kiśora-Kiśorī’s temple, I entered into the very intense atmosphere of big book distribution headed by the elite team of *saṅkīrtana* commandoes under the leadership of your “incarnation of book distribution”, Tripurāri Swami. They would be in bed by 8pm and up by 2am to chant their rounds. They were, and are amazing. I was given the privilege to go out to the airport and serve your staunch *saṅkīrtana* servants, Praḥoṣa, Manasuta, Vaiśeṣika, Divyaṅga, Sura, Jīva Gosvāmī, Mṛgendra, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, Svavāsa, Raghunātha, Kalki, and Ratha-yātrā Prabhus, who were pumping out thousands of your books every day! I had the privilege to load up the *prasādam* and the *saṅkīrtana* van daily with many boxes of your books, and I ran back to the lockers to fill their book bags all day long. If I was lucky, I had a chance to distribute a few too. Huge air containers of your books would arrive at the temple, and it was our life to distribute them. I experienced such a wonderful camaraderie with them, and they became my new heroes. There was a fierce transcendental competition going on to see who could distribute the most books for you, and then on Sunday, we would take extra rest, and then spend the entire day ecstatically chanting *ślokas* and *bhajanas* together. I loved it! It was the most fun I ever had! I watched some of the top celebrities in the world being stopped by my godbrothers and walking away with Your Divine Grace’s books.

Thirty seven years have passed in a flash since that most auspicious moment when I met you. I am reassessing my situation and realize that I still have a long way to become “fully surrendered to Kṛṣṇa”. I don’t feel I have progressed very much. My heart must

be as black as coal but I will never give up trying to surrender to Kṛṣṇa. Please give me the intelligence and help me cultivate the sincerity to know what it will take to achieve my goals to become as steady as a rock, to rise early, attend *maṅgala-ārati*, chant my rounds, and profusely read and distribute your books and participate in *kīrtana*. Without serious, unwavering daily *sādhana-bhakti*, the “ISKCON sandwich” of morning and evening programs, where is there a question of coming to *rāgānuṅga* spontaneous devotion? The sands of time are running out. Life is passing by very quickly, and I only have a little time left to become your fixed up disciple. I need all the help I can get! Please help me recognize it when it is there, and inspire me to take it.

To regulate our lives, you authorized the process of Deity worship, the *arcanā-paddhati*, to be utilized. Please give me the intelligence and sincerity to implement it in my life. I have a wonderful Deity worship story to share with your followers, which describes your intimate connection with the Deity. I met one godbrother, Ameyātmā Prabhu, online who told me this amazing story about you and Rukmiṇī-Dvārakādhīśa, that to the best of my knowledge has not been published before.

“Back in ‘78 or so, when Satsvarūpa Mahārāja was working on his *Prabhupāda-līlāmṛita* he sent one person around to interview your disciples. The interviewer asked me if I had any stories about Śrī la Prabhupāda and I had several I wanted to share. I began by relating a story I had not told anyone else about up to that time. It occurred in 1974, in LA, and he was the first devotee I had ever shared the story with:

Śrīla Prabhupāda was coming to LA. The last time he had come, I went with the hundreds of devotees who had greeted his arrival at the airport and was looking forward to it again. But, just as the devotees were leaving to go to the airport one senior devotee asked me to stay back. There were still things that needed to be done, like cleaning or decorating the temple. I was disappointed, but I could see someone had to do the service. I was planning, though, on going out to the curb to greet Śrīla Prabhupāda as he got out of the car. Still, when Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived there were last minute things to do, and I wound up having to stay in the temple room. That was Kṛṣṇa’s blessing in disguise.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda entered the temple followed by hundreds

of devotees I was standing near Rukmiṇī-Dvārakādhīśa's altar. Śrī la Prabhupāda greeted Gaura-Nitāi, took *carṇāmṛta* and came before Rukmiṇī-Dvārakādhīśa. Hundreds of devotees had huddled as close to Śrīla Prabhupāda and were engaged in singing LOUD. This was in the older L. A. temple room, the one that is now the FATE Museum, so it was less than half the size of the current LA temple room. Devotees pushed from behind and I found myself standing right next to Śrīla Prabhupāda. I had to push back on the devotees behind me to keep from touching him, but our faces were very close. I am short for American standards and so he and I were the same height. As Śrīla Prabhupāda was standing before Rukmiṇī-Dvārakādhīśa I could hear him SPEAKING, not TO, but WITH Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "So, I see you are dressed very nicely. Are they dressing you like this every day?" There was a short pause, then Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "Oh, very nice, very good.

How is the *bhoga*? Are they cooking nicely for you?" Pause "Oh, very good. Are you enjoying it?" "Oh very nice". I obviously could not hear Kṛṣṇa speaking, but, I could hear Śrīla Prabhupāda and I could see that he was not just asking Kṛṣṇa questions, but he was HEARING Kṛṣṇa reply. With the loudness of the singing, I don't think anyone else could hear Śrīla Prabhupāda, but I was pushed up so close to him, we were the same height, I could hear him clearly. When he addressed Kṛṣṇa, even though the Deities in LA are Rukmiṇī-Dvārakādhīśa, Śrīla Prabhupāda addressed them as "Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Madhava".

Then, after this Śrīla Prabhupāda went on to greet Jagannātha, I was no longer so close, and then sat on his *vyāsāsana* and devotees offered *guru-pūjā* then Śrīla Prabhupāda gave his arrival address. During the arrival address Śrīla Prabhupāda mentioned that he could see that the Deities are being dressed nicely and he could tell the cooking was nice, and he told us that if we can remain engaged like this, serving the Deities like this for the rest of our lives, we can go back home, He asked that we not decrease our service. But, he knew the Deity services were going on nicely at that time because he asked Kṛṣṇa Himself, and Kṛṣṇa actually told him".

You are a wish fulfilling tree Śrīla Prabhupāda. On this auspicious day of your divine appearance, I pray to you to make the desire in my heart completely one with yours, by learning to purely love and

serve the servants of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, so that the name you gave me of “Gaura Dāsa” and the identity you reminded me of, as His eternal servant, can truly be fulfilled in this lifetime.

Your eternal servant,

Gaura Dāsa

Guruprasāda Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet on this auspicious occasion of Your Divine Grace’s Vyāsa-pūjā. It is only by your causeless mercy I got to have the *darśana* of Your Divine Grace in spite of being such a materialistic person. I remember very well the first fortunate moment I obtained your glorious *darśana*. I am forever grateful for your causeless mercy.

The year was 1975. Your visit to Canada got shortened due to a situation in India and your divine presence was urgently required there. On a quick visit to Montreal temple you could spend only a few hours due to rearranged flight schedules. One of the devotees called me at work and informed me about your visit at just about the time that you were arriving at the airport. I rushed from my work place using the public transportation. By the time I reached the temple you had already arrived there and were being taken around within the temple. As I entered the temple hall I was surprised that no one was there. Then I came up the stairs of the building adjacent to the *prasādam* serving hall. As I entered the *prasādam* hall I saw Your Divine Grace a few feet away coming towards the same entrance. I did not expect it but somehow fell and offered my *daṇḍavats* at your lotus feet. As I stood up, I saw a benevolent smile on your face. You enquired which place I came from and then if I am chanting the *mahā-mantra*. I responded to both and that I was trying to chant. You kindly instructed me, “Why only trying? Just chant, what is the difficulty?” Only much later I realized that you knew all my *anarthas* which prevented me in following such an easy process to awaken our true selves. All those who were at the Montreal temple on that day to participate in the washing of your lo-

tus feet and the *guru-pūjā* must have felt very fortunate. Afterwards there was a short meeting with the devotees in the small room near the main alter. H.H. Śivarāma Swami (then a *brahmācārī*) kindly arranged for me to sit with the devotees. I had an opportunity to ask a question: what one should do to progress spiritually in this life? Again your response was to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* regularly. Śrīla Prabhupāda your message is simple and authentic. Often you told that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is simple for the simple people. I am yet to become simple, humble and sincere in order to fully realize how simple the process you have given to us is.

During your visit to Montreal temple in PIE IX Blvd, which was bought hardly a year earlier, you gave the devotees suggestions about how to turn that long unused building into a nice temple. For me it is a miracle to witness how that unused building did turn into a nice temple within two years, with the installation of the graceful tall Deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Manohara, the name chosen by Your Divine Grace.

In 1976, you wanted to stay longer in Canada and spent a whole week in the temple of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṣīracora Gopīnātha in the new location on Avenue Road. I was again fortunate to go along with the devotees of Montreal to Toronto. The experiences I had that week were so profound, enough to convince that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness process is for me too.

Later on in response to my letter you kindly instructed me to remain in the association of devotees who are following the devotional process. Then in 1977, you showered your mercy on this lowly servant by accepting me as your disciple.

I fall at your lotus feet praying, “*gurudeva!kṛpā-bindu diyā, koro’ei dāse, tṛṇāpekḥā ati hīna... śakti-buddhi-hīna, āmi ati dīna, koro’ more ātma-sātha*”. Please kindly bestow your mercy upon me. Let me always remember you as the ocean of mercy “*śrī-guru karuṇā-sindhu, adhama janāra bandbū*”, which gives me the hope that someday in the future I too will become a true servant of Your Divine Grace. Meanwhile let me remain in the association of the devotees rendering service to them.

I pray at your lotus feet to remain always grateful, humble, sincere and simple.

Your lowly, aspiring servant,

Guruprasāda Dāsa

Jānakī Devī Dāsī

By the mercy of the Spiritual Master:

A dumb man can recite beautiful poetry

A lame man can cross mountains

And a blind man can see stars in the sky

This has always struck me as an amazing statement, by which I have been able to have the confidence, that by serving, as faithfully as I can, the instructions of our beloved spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, ANYTHING is possible. If we can obtain the mercy of our spiritual master, if we can somehow or other please him, then our lives can be fulfilled. What is the use of a long life simply concerned with the animal propensities – better a short life, offered in dedication to a qualified spiritual guide.

You are that qualified spiritual guide, who has selflessly and expertly shown us the path of devotional service, the way and means to get out of the entanglement of birth and death, the wheel of *sarṁsāra* in which we are helplessly trapped – if we are without your mercy.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for all the kindness and mercy you have bestowed upon us over the years. By your mercy, I now have the privilege of serving at your Kṛṣṇa Avanti School and with your City Centre project coming up in Leicester very soon, I can see countless opportunities for many more souls to take shelter of your lotus feet, by becoming involved in your wonderful mission.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, kind and loving father, please bless our humble attempts to serve you. May we continue to be inspired to assist you in your mission and kindly bless us that our service may be pleasing to you.

Your fallen but aspiring servant,

Jānakī Devī Dāsī
Leicester, UK

Jaya Mādhava Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most auspicious day in 2012, of your divine appearance, I offer my most respectful obeisances to you, my eternal spiritual master.

Please accept them from me, your most unqualified disciple.

Somehow or the other, it is beyond my comprehension, you came into my life and changed it dramatically forever – this two-legged animal that you accepted as your disciple, Jaya Mādhava Dāsa from America. Anything good or auspicious in my hopeless life is only due to your causeless mercy upon me.

I have lived in your house of ISKCON for over 40 years now, and I throw myself at your divine lotus feet as your eternal spiritual son and thank you a billion times over for letting me learn how to become a human being and *kṛṣṇa-bhakta*.

When I first became a devotee (1970s), I came with an open heart and a desire to surrender to you and Lord Kṛṣṇa, somehow in all these years I have not surrendered to you or to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and I lament my fallen condition.

How wonderful you are to have let me into your ISKCON house and be in the wonderful association of your real devotees, all over the world, for all these decades... I can't repay you, nothing I can do can repay your kindness (mercy) to me.

You once told us your disciples, "I live forever in my books". I'm preaching to the Russian devotees here in Moscow, Russia for over ten years now. I always ask them to read and distribute your books to all the Russian fallen souls.

I ask you humbly to guide and protect ISKCON in Moscow and Russia from the envious and demoniac. Please bless and always protect the ISKCON devotees and temples in Russia.

I ask this sincerely with folded hands. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I care about your ISKCON and its devotees and temples.

I have witnessed it before and after you left us. Many times I worry about your ISKCON Society and I pray to see it restored in America, England and Europe, etc... AS IT WAS, when you were personally with us. Śrīla Prabhupāda.

There are things changed in ISKCON which deeply trouble me... please bless ISKCON and its devotees. In the final days you were personally with us and you made the order, "Do not change anything, (in ISKCON)", and I take that order for your ISKCON very, very seriously.

If there is anything thing that needs to be changed it's 'my heart' to surrender to you and Kṛṣṇa, and by your grace someday become a real devotee and worthy of the title "Prabhupāda disciple". Please forgive me for falling way short of that mark.

You taught me and us, your disciples the meaning of love – the true meaning of it. You taught true devotional service, unselfish, unmotivated service to Kṛṣṇa. That's a gift to all humanity. How to serve and love God, Kṛṣṇa, and His devotees. A priceless gift.

Now, after many decades, I can say I truly have love and gratitude for you, my spiritual father. You gave your life unselfishly to save us fallen souls from the worst fate of repeated birth, death, disease, and old age and by your causeless mercy, I am still at your lotus feet and in the association of your wonderful granddisciples in Russia and devotees all over our earth planet.

You taught us how to remember and regain out long lost love for God, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In decades and centuries to come, your greatness will be more known, and this

ISKCON you created will be revived and re-stored for all the suffering masses by your divine will. I see the beginning of your will and mercy to the Russian people and I'm in awe of it. There is so much mercy flowing from you when we obey your instructions. This I have

seen and see now in Russia.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have a prayer/request as your fallen disciple. Please watch over and give protection and strength and blessings to all ISKCON devotees, all over the world in these hard and dangerous times in Kali-yuga. In the Age of Hypocrisy and Quarrel, we see it everywhere now as an epidemic in all nations and institutions. Kali-yuga, *māyā* is powerful.

Shine your mercy on those who want to follow your exact instructions with special attention to Russia/Ukraine (former Soviet Union).

Please let me serve your mission for Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in Russia if you will be so kind or let me serve you anywhere, but please do not let me go away from your ISKCON and its devotees.

This is my prayer, to be with your devotees in ISKCON wherever that may be – heaven or hell, life after life, and eternally with Lord Kṛṣṇa.

With great love and respect,

Thank you, Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your spiritual son and servant,

Jaya Mādhava Dāsa
Moscow, Russia

Prabhupāda Dāsa

I would like to attempt a short expression of glorification of and appreciation, love and respect for my eternal spiritual master and father, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

I am quite insignificant. This life will be over. It already feels as if I have somehow been thrust forward, way into the future. “2012” seems, well, uncanny, and how did I get here so quickly? So as I enter my last years, months, days and hours, I would do well to take stock of my great good fortune of having personally met His Divine

Grace. He certainly is far from an ordinary being. And his distance from the ordinary (or even from the “prominent,” “special,” “outstanding,” etc. categories of persons) is proving to increase with each year. His potency, for instance, can be registered by his sound vibration, say in encouraging and empowering Ambarīṣa Prabhu to personally take up the construction of the grand temple in Māyāpur. And now, in the “present-future” we see that same potency bursting from the subtle planning stage out into the physical emergence of the greatest temple to appear within the last thousand years! So soon shall we be awestruck and overjoyed to witness the grand opening of such a uniquely grand edifice housing the gorgeously overwhelming divine forms of Their Lordships.

This temple, albeit great, is but only one single example of our master’s amazing influence, his ingenious foresight, his total confidence and his unlimited mercy on behalf of his own venerable Guru Mahārāja as well as Mahāprabhu Himself.

There is no argument; Śrīla Prabhupāda is the self-effulgent emissary, the greatest among whomever one chooses to dub “great.” It is inspiring to unreservedly proclaim Prabhupāda’s glory to one and all. Is there any of the twenty-six devotee qualities (as listed in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*) with which Śrīla Prabhupāda was not fully, actually magnificently decorated? Just to launch this movement, such an extraordinary degree of tolerance, magnanimity, humility and certainly “*para-upakāra*” (doing good for others) was required. Otherwise, how could ISKCON have even begun, what to speak of “exploded” (in the positive sense, of course, as in the “Hare Kṛṣṇa Explosion”). Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda is conclusively worthy of our worship.

I hope to survive in this mortal frame at least long enough to witness the grand opening of the great temple (scheduled for 2016). I eagerly anticipate having *darśana* with His Divine Grace as he shall be seated in his own wonderfully opulent place almost worthy of him. Already it is a fact that “his glories are spread all over the three worlds “. But now let this earth planet, in a sense, catch up with the rest of the universe by increasingly recognizing the magnitude of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s glories. Let us continuously contribute to the expansions of his reputation, his teachings, and save this world in its darkest hour.

(Dear readers, please allow me now to speak in the 2nd person.)

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. However lowly I am, however fallen in so many ways, I beg you to nonetheless accept me in your eternal entourage and sometimes permit me to again obtain your *darśana*. Of course your association is freely available in your transcendental books, actually Kṛṣṇa's books manifested by your divine grace. I humbly pray to take full advantage of your association in any and every way it is available. I look forward to seeing you in the great temple, by your mercy.

Your humble servant, at your lotus feet,

Prabhupāda Dāsa

Nidrā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this most wonderful day when everyone can glorify you in a special way.

Your glories are spread every day in almost every part of the globe by this mission. The book distribution is your preaching; it is your glories and that of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and the entire *paramparā*.

When we read or hear about the preaching and all services rendered, it is a cause for celebrating how wonderful you are because it is due to your blessings.

On your order some of us here are going door-to-door with your books, more so than in previous years. We feel your mercy and that of Lord Nityānanda making this happen. Bless us to always aspire to become pure instruments. Your books are your preaching and we therefore see how amazing is your service to Gaura-Nitāi; your preaching is like no other outreach in this universe.

What is going on now in this world is showing the entire universe how special you are. Please bless us to serve you in this mission eternally.

You are the personality with the most gratitude but we would like to try to learn to express that gratitude with full Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for allowing us to serve you.

Your aspiring servant,

Nidrā Devī Dāsī

Indrānuja Dāsa Adhikārī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Prostrated obeisances at your feet. All Glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga.

It has been many long years since your birth and the world has turned many times again since your disappearance and now as I look around it strikes me we have come of age as devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

As I sit in front of my computer my dear wife gives me a running commentary on *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*. This is the commentary by you dear friend Śrīla BR Śrīdhara Svāmī. As I listen I am amazed at his erudition and how he manages to bring nectar to our ears. Sometimes I feel this gift was late in coming then I stop myself knowing I was not ready just as when I finally surrendered to you, my dear Prabhupāda, I was somewhat late.

I can reflect on my desire to go to India in 1977 hoping to directly serve you but was told I may not go or if I did I risked offense to you by offending my authorities. Alas if I had only known your heart perhaps I would have gone in any case but that was not to be.

So now I await my chance again to once more be with you and I reflect on your poem that has inspired me since I first heard it in 1976 and in particular one verse as follows:

O dear friend, in Your company I will experience great joy once again. In the early morning I will wander about the cowherd pas-

tures and fields. Running and frolicking in the many forests of Vraja, I will roll on the ground in spiritual ecstasy. Oh when will that day be mine?

And in reflecting on that verse I also wonder when will that day be mine when I can wander the pastures with you and your dear friend Kṛṣṇa and play with and serve you both. Such wonder do I feel when I read this that I wonder “*am I simply a saḥajiyā?*” “*Do I have any right to imagine I have entrance into this sacred realm?*” But then I consider why this would have been made available to us if not to lead us on to Vraja and eternal bliss.

I know I am unworthy but I am becoming serious to end my sojourn in the world now and in so doing I hear your call. Now I am coming to the *fag end* please bless me with the desire to see this through so soon I can serve you once more.

Praying at your lotus feet and begging for mercy I remain always.

Your humble servant,

Indrānuja Dāsa Adhikārī

Jīvapāvana Dāsa

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda who personally saved me from the hellish conditions created by me by the misuse of my minute independence through the sojourn of my pathetic material existence throughout countless births and deaths.

I also offer countless *daṇḍavat praṇāms* unto all the Vaiṣṇava devotees of the Lord who have helped me in my spiritual life and who are selfless oceans of compassion towards all *jīvas*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda thanks.

Thank you for your direct physical association. I will always treasure those moments as the most important in my life.

Thank you for your books and recorded words. They will always remain my reference point to distinguishing reality from illusion.

Thank you for the general association of devotees. I will always remember the ecstatic service rendered with them.

Thank you for the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. It is now the constant vibration of my life and the heartbeat of my soul.

Thank you for your guidance from within. By it I never feel alone.

Thank you for sending really advanced devotees to hear from. I will always see them as your representatives.

Thank you for saving me and guiding me to the ultimate goal of life. When I think of it I cry.

“If one gets a bona fide spiritual master and acts according to his direction, then his perfection of life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is guaranteed.” (Bg. 18:57 Purport)

All glories to *gaura-vānī-pracāriṇe* Śrīla Prabhupāda

Rādhe! Rādhe!

Dāsānudāsa,

Jīvapāvana Dāsa

Jñāna-śakti Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

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

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

By the mercy of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa I got my *harināma* initiation in the last group of devotees which you very kindly accepted, even when you were in your *līlā* or last pastime in Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma. You allow us to perform *harināma-saṅkīrtana* all over the world by chanting the holy name.

Somehow I am always in touch with your books, give them to the devotees and whoever wants to take them.

Please allow me to keep in touch with your books and your disciples, my godbrothers, by giving them your holy books.

Your servant,

Jñāna-śakti Dāsa

Keśīdamana Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept the humble obeisance of your servant at your lotus feet.

In a lecture in San Francisco, *Cc. Ādi-līlā*, 7. 78-81, you taught us all:

“You cannot deviate from the order of the spiritual master by an inch if you really want success.”

Also you have taught us many times:

“The order of the spiritual master is the life and soul of the disciple.”

So Śrīla Prabhupāda, my spiritual master and dearest well-wisher, on your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, I am bearing these essential teachings upon my head and installing them within my heart.

Hare Kṛṣṇa,

Your servant,

Keśīdamana Dāsa

Mahendrāṇī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Every morning we sing to you:

*mahāprabhoḥ kīrtana-nṛtya-gīta-
vāditra-mādyan-manaso rasena
romāñca-kampāśru-taraṅga-bhājo
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

We bow down to your lotus feet because you are a highly elevated spiritual master who is constantly and ecstatically absorbed in Mahāprabhu's *kīrtana*. In these *kīrtanas*, Mahāprabhu's close associates are assisting Him in relishing the sweet taste of *vraja-prema* and distributing its glories. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are one of Lord Caitanya's close associates. You are expertly assisting Him in distributing this *vraja-prema* to the fallen souls of Kali-yuga like me.

Lord Caitanya is Rādhā-Govinda in Their most merciful form. Lord Caitanya's Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma is non-different from Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma. His close associates are Rādhā-Govinda's close associates in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. You are one of those close associates. You live in that land that is so lush and lovely, 'a charming place where the earth is made of shimmering gold' (Śrīla Viśvanātha Ṭhākura's *Rūpa-cintāmaṇi*), where every grain of sand, every wave of the river, every breeze is a loving, personal, conscious being. In 1967, you were sitting with your disciples on the beach at Long Branch, watching the surfers. You told them "On Kṛṣṇaloka everything is conscious. The water is conscious, the land is conscious. And everything is blissful. Here that is not so". In the spiritual world

where you live, each of the unlimited associates of Rādhā-Govinda can have a one on one relationship with Them. There are no obstacles of time and space.

Although you live in such an incredibly wonderful environment, for the pleasure of Your Lords, who are great oceans of mercy, you came here to this dull, shadow world to help us; to wake us up from our long slumber, ‘submerged in matter’ (this is how you described our situation in the purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 1. 4. 30); to tell us that we belong to that other real world where you serve in complete bliss and ecstasy; that in that world all our heart’s innermost desires will be fulfilled beyond our wildest dreams; to let us know that we have within us, our own specific love for Kṛṣṇa, with some unique specialty that no one else has and Kṛṣṇa is waiting to taste this special love. You came to show us the path to developing our real selves, so we can assist you there eternally.

Thank you for coming Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thank you for reaching out to me. Thank you for all the treasures you continually give us. Please bless us to be able to fully surrender to you, to give our minute independence into your hands and become your instruments. Then we can progress happily on the path of *bhakti*.

Your servant,

Mahendrāṇī Devī Dāsī

Manohāriṇī Devī Dāsī

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

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

“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, serv-

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to you who have showered your mercy on this fallen soul. I seek refuge from the storm of this material existence at your lotus feet. And, you have so kindly bestowed this safe haven upon the devotees.

A copy of one of your books was given to me by my brother when I was a young teenager. I took one look at your beautiful effulgence and knew instantly that I must learn more about “this Swami and his teachings”. I began to read *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, and your merciful nectar flowed from page to page.

I was so fortunate to have become your disciple at the Chicago temple in the association of so many sincere devotees, worshipping Your Divine Grace and Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Kīśora-Kīśorī through temple service and the distribution of your books.

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

*śrī-caitanya-mano-'bhīṣṭaṁ sthāpitaṁ yena bhū-tale
svayaṁ rūpaḥ kadā mahyaṁ 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?”

Gurudeva, I hope that you accept my meager, yet sincere morning prayers and offerings to you. Those are the times I am reminded to never forget the sacrifices you made so that this fallen child may remember where she came from and where she may return one day.

On this auspicious anniversary of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I offer prayer for your continued spiritual guidance. Please help me to always remain in your service and help spread your message so that I, and other lost souls, may open our eyes and come out of the darkness into the light.

Your humble servant eternally,

Manohāriṇī Devī Dāsī

Matsyāvatāra Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my respectful obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

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

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

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

You've revealed the mystery of life by unfolding its meaning before me.

The meaning of life is love and, in the perspective of eternity, everything can be understood under a different light.

You opened my eyes to allow me to see the Divine Presence.

Although I can only glimpse His splendor at a distance, this is sufficient to enlighten my path and to guide my choices.

Although I can only sense His charm, this feeling produces in me a joyful desire to live and serve in harmony with the sacred teachings.

Although I have not yet seen God, I have faith in Your words and in those of the *ācārya* such as Nārada who says: "God is Love, Love

is God”, because I feel that God lives forever in real acts of love, and it is in this way that He ineffably reveals Himself to those who live in the spirit of *prema-bhakti*.

Although I have not yet seen God, I have faith in the words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa who says: “Always think of Me, be My devotee...” because, to some extent, I realized that only if I rely on God He can lift me from all worries and, in this mood, I can feel the magnificence of life in the universe.

Thank you for giving me the key to the treasure of knowledge.

Awareness stems from the discovery of our ontological and spiritual nature. If we are aware of our nature of *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*, we can understand and perceive ourselves as part of the whole, in harmony among ourselves and with our common Origin: God, the Supreme Person, the Supreme love, Who eternally loves all and lovingly provides for all.

From you I have learned how to get rid of fear, anger, animosity and loneliness.

From you I have learned how to regain full and authentic joy.

From you I have learned how to regain harmony within myself.

From you I have learned how to regain freedom and salvation.

From you I have learned to win in my defeats.

Which supreme treasure allows us to live happily, fulfilled and satisfied in all circumstances? It is the treasure of the intimate relationship with God.

Where is this treasure? In everyone’s heart.

How can we achieve it? By practicing *sādhana-bhakti* with faith and constancy, preferably in association with the true *bhakta*.

Gratitude and appreciation are the foundation of my devotion to Thee, glorious Master!

Wilt thou grant me the gift of *prema-bhakti* so my actions can be inspired and efficiently serve you here and now, in the perspective of eternity.

From my heart filled with love: Thank you!

Your insignificant servant,

Matsyāvatāra Dāsa

Pañcagaṇḍa Dāsa

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda!

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

You have performed many herculean tasks, converting total materialist animals into aspiring devotees of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu!

Your entire life is an inspiration for me; your determination is superhuman, and you are a completely empowered, eternal associate of the Supreme Lord. By your grace you have given me the opportunity to render service in some small way to assist you in your service to your Guru Mahārāja. I am very unworthy and beg for your blessings and strength to continue serving your Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir in Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma!

I see many visitors who come to visit your temple here in Vṛndāvana and they are completely amazed by the beauty of your temple, enlivened by the powerful *kīrtana* that resounds all day every day and how you have converted the most fallen from all parts of the world into Vaiṣṇavas. I pray that I can remain fixed at your lotus feet, always eager to hear you and broadcast your message, very enthusiastically all over the entire world.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servant,

Pañcagaṇḍa Dāsa

Daiva Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your sublime lotus two feet!

All glories to you and the most merciful Pañca-tattva and your glorious mission as Their *sañkīrtana* general to inundate this horrible Kali-yuga with ecstatic, emotional love of Godhead.

Your mission continues to grow and expand in ways inconceivable to ordinary mundane calculations. You predicted that one day in our very lifetime millions of people would come to our *daiva-varṇāśrama* farms and become Kṛṣṇa conscious. Somehow or other, you have allowed this *durdaiva*, most unfortunate ‘Kali-yugite’, an amazing opportunity to help you in fulfilling this infallible prediction on these, your Hawaiian *dvīpas*, islands. This year we will begin our first industry-recognized organic farming training program for the unemployed.

The curriculum was written by your most dear and empowered cowherd disciple, Śrīmān Balabhadra Prabhu, and will be funded by the federal government on federal farmland. The goal is to teach the unemployed, per your request, how to grow food, give them *prasādam*, and work, and thus become self-sufficient and the opportunity to become God conscious, Kṛṣṇa conscious, through this simple living method.

You are the most empowered personality in the history of the universe, EVER, to be deputed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to spread His glories and thus deliver the masses back to Godhead. Following you, we are thus inevitably guaranteed all success even though we stumble and fall like a child learning to walk. Please allow me the blessing to continue in your service as I stumble along in a feeble attempt to hold on to your order and bless

me to never give up trying to help you in your mission to your Guru Mahārāja and Śrī Pañca-tattva.

Your aspiring servant,

Daiva Dāsa,
Hawaii yātrā

Nandakumāra Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet on this most auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

Once at a festival where Your Divine Grace spoke to thousands of people, a member of the audience asked, “Swamiji, can you show me some miracle?” Your Divine Grace replied, “What miracle do you want to see? We Vaiṣṇavas are not after miracles. We only want to serve the Lord. The *yogīs* show some miracles, we do not. But you see these Western people chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and dancing, is this not the greatest miracle? What more do you want to see? This is my miracle. Can you make them dance?”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have the potency to deliver the whole world, nay, the entire universe.

Samagra jagat tārīte pare jane jane. One single Vaiṣṇava can deliver the entire universe.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you never claimed any credit for your extraordinary achievements. You always stated that whatever success was there, it was only by the grace of your beloved Guru Mahārāja. This is your humility, but also teaching us at the same time the most

important and confidential teachings of *bhakti*, one can only get the grace of Kṛṣṇa by the grace of Śrī Guru. A Vaiṣṇava is never falsely proud but happily remains the servant of the servant.

One is reminded of Śrī Rāmānujācārya's teachings to Anantācārya.

“A Vaiṣṇava is like salt. Although salt brings out the total flavour of a gourmet preparation more than any other part, it remains hidden, and we glorify every other ingredient but the salt. Similarly, a true devotee performs all kinds of service, even great things, but prefers to remain hidden, not seeking credit or glory.”

But we know that just as Kṛṣṇa could not be hidden by Devakī whilst in her womb, your wonderful qualities and glorious achievements cannot be hidden from the world because of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's love for you and the love of your disciples and grand disciples who continue to broadcast your glories to every town and village.

Because your heart is full of selfless devotion it is Vṛndāvana, and Kṛṣṇa eternally resides in Vṛndāvana and never leaves Vṛndāvana. This is your desire: to transform our hearts into Vṛndāvana

A grateful heart is humble

A humble heart is tolerant

A tolerant heart is forgiving

A forgiving heart is compassionate

A compassionate heart is loving

A loving heart is devotional

A devotional heart is a Vaiṣṇava

*bhakta āmā preme bāndhiyāche hṛdaya-bhitare
yāhān netra paḍe tāhān dekhaye āmāre*

“That *bhakta* who has bound Me up with the rope of love in his heart, Wherever he looks he sees Me, only he can give Me to you”
[Cc. Madhya 25. 127]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a *paramahansa-ṭhākura*, and the Vaiṣṇava *ācārya*. You have Kṛṣṇa and you are able to give us Kṛṣṇa. Therefore this fool, this rascal, runs after you begging “give me Kṛṣṇa, give me Kṛṣṇa” and falling at your lotus feet again and again I offer this humble prayer : “O beloved spiritual master, you are always in the presence of the cowherd girl, Śrī Rādhā, the daughter of King Vṛṣabhānu. Please award me service at your lotus feet, which are the proprietors of devotional service. Please place me in the ocean of joy by bestowing upon me happiness in the mellows of service at the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā in the groves of Vraja-dhāma.”

Your hopeful servant,

Nandakumāra Dāsa

Arcana-siddhi Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my insignificant obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to your wonderful pastimes in spreading Lord Caitanya’s mission throughout the world. Please accept this simple offering of glorification.

It was quite sudden.
My material life stalled,
coming to a screeching halt
I lost interest in the world.
Praying to find my spiritual path –
my guide and *guru*.
I examined professors,
advisors, my rabbi
and even a homeless man
who looked ancient and wise
until he spoke useless words

Kṛṣṇa heard my prayers
and directed me to your disciples.
While visiting the *āśrama*,
they pointed to your picture saying

“This is Prabhupāda, he’s your *guru*.”
My heart resonated with everything
your devotees spoke—
Their teacher must be my teacher so
I bowed down and felt real shelter—
when you accepted me as your disciple
my search ended; my journey began.

Like traveling through Himalayas foothills
sometimes going down to go up
either way, I called out to you
for spiritual strength,
guidance and clarity.
Mystically I feel your shelter—
I’m never alone or lonely.

You have returned to the *nitya-līlā*
Absorbed in eternal pastimes—
yet we remain connected
through your books, your instructions
and your devoted disciples

When I serve you properly,
free from the desire for profit and fame
I feel your pleasure and reciprocation—
you give me a tiny glimpse of the eternal world—
my desire increases to enter that realm
as you have always given me hope and faith
to continue the journey;
with my bead bag and your guidance
the path is becoming less arduous.
Bhakti’s like a mango in the sun
ripening and becomes sweeter.

I am eternally grateful to you for
coming to the West and delivering
this insignificant *jīva*.
I beg to remain your servant
life after life,

Arcana-siddhi Devī Dāsī

Gāndinī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my humble obeisances.

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

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

You appeared on this day in this world to awaken many, many living beings – to take them back where they belong – Śrī Kṛṣṇa's abode. Otherwise without your causeless mercy they would have to remain in this material world.

Let me try to glorify you millions and millions of times, let my tongue repeat the holy name – the *mahā-mantra*:

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

... along with your holy name, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

My humble request to Your Divine Grace: please kept me serving your lotus feet along with the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord Śrī Jagannātha, Śrī Baladeva, and Śrīmatī Subhadrājī.

Your servant and daughter,

Gāndinī Devī Dāsī

Prahlāda-bhakta Dāsa

All glories to our wonderful Śrīla Prabhupāda!

I was considering the difference between Śrīla Prabhupāda and ordinary people; and why he was so attractive to those young people in New York In 1966.

Unlike us ordinary people, Śrīla Prabhupāda was 100% convinced that Kṛṣṇa was real. His relationship with Kṛṣṇa was as tangible as having Kṛṣṇa stand in front of him. The rest of us don't have that vision. Kṛṣṇa to us is a concept. And that is one of the differences between Śrīla Prabhupāda and ordinary people. To be in the presence of such a person must have been extraordinary. Who could fail to become his follower?

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!*

Your ever grateful servant,

Prahlāda-bhakta Dāsa

Amṛtāṁśa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Kṛṣṇa just keeps on ticking in my heart. He is ever-ready for me. Although due to the time factor we have left the temples that sprang up from your breathing, we continue to follow your instructions. You are the elegant, cultured, high-class, iconic *kṛṣṇa-bhakta* the world pursues to satisfy our need for a true, meaningful, loving, long-term relationship. While listening to your morning walks and seeing a photo of you surrounded by Vaiṣṇava, of your making, I thought, "That is the person I want to be with; oh, what beautiful people, so far removed from the dull headed masses. These are truly my people." You attract my soul, intelligence, mind, and senses by your transcendental clarity and animated personality.

As we move about this earth we invariably and unconsciously spread the name of Kṛṣṇa to everyone we meet. The deep implications of hearing Kṛṣṇa's name that defeats the descriptions and analysis of poets, scientists, and all authorities; rejuvenates and restructures my brain. And therefore, I feel really good about telling everyone about Kṛṣṇa as it is the highest expression of goodwill. Speaking about Kṛṣṇa sends more blood into my heart than any other topic. I become completely alive, sharp-minded and focused on sharing true love when speaking about Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is the valuable, powerful treasure you gave me to share. To me, hearing about

Kṛṣṇa is so precious a gift that I can only return your gift by my absolute obedience to you.

You have said that we were all previously devotees and have come to help you spread *kṛṣṇa-nāma*. Maybe I was a molecule of oxygen that entered a Vaiṣṇava's lung and I therefore attained causeless mercy; whatever the instance, we are now all together in one atmosphere breathing out Kṛṣṇa's name in ecstasy. Whether in a temple with numbers of devotees, or alone, we all resonate the name of Kṛṣṇa by Your Divine Grace and appeal to the minds of our fallen friends through your every written and spoken word. I cherish your every book, audio tape and photo. Your tone of voice, your glance, your walk and gestures are to me all sign posts on the road to Goloka Vṛndāvana. Being born in a Western country it is most unlikely that the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* be my favorite sound to hear over and over again, all day long, every day, every year!

You say you did not do some magic to get us to do this chanting but truly it is extremely magical; miraculous. In those rare, glimmering moments when I realize how fortunate I truly am, I completely break down and cry and sob, thanking you for coming into my life and throwing back the curtain of darkness to reveal the unlimited, inconceivable, lovely Kṛṣṇa. When you were in the U. S. A. in '67 I was only in the eighth grade asking, "What color is God?", and no one knew. Yet you have all the answers to every question I ever had and even questions I never had; what better a person to serve with love than you?

You are my most dear friend who has my ultimate good in your heart; and I will follow you to the ends of creation to satisfy your instructions, just to see your smile spread across your face like the most magnificent sunrise. Please allow me to know and to follow all of your instructions; saturate me more and more with your transcendental being. Give me the strength of an ant, the span of life of Brahma, the daring of Indra and the foresight of an eagle to satisfy your desire to please your *guru*. I enjoy being with you and Kṛṣṇa more than any other persons. Even though I never had the grace of your *vapuḥ*, you are around me all the time; I can feel you, see you and hear you every moment. You completely protect me at every step; of this I have no doubts. Some may recount the one word that you said to them directly that inspires and sustains them. Yet you are speaking directly to me in 700 verses of *Bhagavad-gītā* As It Is, directly in 18, 000 verses of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as well

as directly in all the verses of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, the purports of these books and all the other books, tapes, videos, letters etc. you have left with me to imbibe and speak to others. What greater fortune is available than to hold one of your books and how more fortunate to open it. And without the least effort turn a page and be engulfed by your life's work and that of all the previous *ācāryas* sending me directly to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. Just by the simple action of opening the book and reading one word is time and space travel of the highest mystic *yoga*.

You have saved me from death and so I will live forever and ever and ever. You have handed me the success of this human birth on a transcendently fragrant golden platter. All glories to you for being such a simple humble follower of your *guru*. Although you admit your imperfection in a class on *Bhagavad-gītā* 2. 7-12 in New York City, March 2, 1966; to me you are the most perfect by that admission itself. In every aspect of the word adorable, you are the most adorable person. You are the real godfather, the hero's hero, by the miracles you have performed the best of the *līṣṇa-bhakta ācāryas* in history. Allow me to spread Kṛṣṇa's name forever and ever and ever more with a drop of your absolute faith and determination and full dedication to Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Your ever humble servant,

Amṛtāṁśa Dāsa

Śārngā Ṭhākura Dāsa

Dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, wonderful Lord of lords and innumerable universes, Lord of hearts and minds everywhere, delightful mysterious Lord of *gopīs* and other pure souls, including our Śrīla Prabhupāda; I offer my obeisances unto Your line of disciplic succession in which Lord Caitanya appeared and which set the stage for our Founder-*Ācārya* His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrī la Prabhupāda to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness around the world.

I am simply praying that I can write something about my spiritual master.

I know that Prabhupāda is exalted among spiritual masters. Śrīla Prabhupāda has created a whole world of faithful disciples and followers, here and now, and far into the future. He has planted in our hearts the desire and enthusiasm to participate in and support his ISKCON Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. He has empowered even us late bloomers and hopeful souls to be Kṛṣṇa conscious daily – even moment-to-moment, surrendering to the needful that Kṛṣṇa presents to us. I hear Prabhupāda speak of Kṛṣṇa as he shares his love and realized knowledge given directly by the Lord Himself. I watch as he joins us around the world to keep the blaze of Kṛṣṇa consciousness going strongly in our hearts and in the world.

There is no doubt that Śrīla Prabhupāda is here with us. Perhaps I too can discover who I am, and how to serve in this society of devotees; devotees who, out of gratefulness, duty and love take the spirit of Prabhupāda's mission deeply into their hearts and souls. And in doing so everything favorable to serving Kṛṣṇa and His devotees becomes my identity more and more.

I am continuously discovering how glorious our beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda is, and just how approachable he is. I feel he is inviting me even now, after so much time in limbo, to come close and be with him by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. With heartfelt cries of helplessness therefore, I am bowing down before him, eager for his blessings as they pour over me.

I am praying to take up this life of *śaraṅāgati* Śrīla Prabhupāda, with full faith and trust in you and Kṛṣṇa, and the devotees who serve you.

Your servant,

Śāringa Ṭhākura Dāsa

Haridāsa Ṭhākura Dāsa

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please accept this offering at your lotus like feet.

I'm thinking of what words to use and my conclusion is that everything I can think of has been thought of before.

Souls far, far greater than I have extolled your glories in the past and I'm thinking like the spider trying to aid Hanumān build that bridge across to Śrī Laṅkā. I'm trying but my trying is mainly mental and half-hearted, at least that is how I perceive it.

I don't feel worthy to be in the presence of my godbrothers and sisters as I'm too insignificant in my thoughts and my past actions were far from exemplary.

Those years spent on the streets of the UK and Europe seem to belong to someone else. I have lost track of who I was and the feelings I had back then, to the extent of it being a hazy like dream that I can't quite get in touch with.

I do remember the love that was felt for you and your purpose and the family-like atmosphere generated by your presence, even though you were usually somewhere else in the world.

I love you Śrīla Prabhupāda, I love my godbrothers and sisters and all other devotees and that is the truth even though my actions may not always show it.

To live in this material world without the association of devotees is very, very painful and to tolerate this is the sign of a madman. I am such a madman and who would know better than you and I?

I am surprised that you tolerate my presence and stupidity, and the guilt of my existence must be painful for you to see but I will one day triumph over this pit of iniquity that we see as a place to enjoy in.

I fall at your feet and beg forgiveness for all my sins and ask you for the help to change my future to a brighter one where we are all laughing, smiling and kicking on *māyā's* face.

But before I go, I'd like to say one thing more: there was never anyone like you, there is no one in this world like you and even after your external presence was gone from my sight I never felt the need to take shelter of anyone else but you. You are the *summum bonum* of everything for me, my life and my soul and my saviour

and the saviour of human kind and every kind. I also know that due to your continual presence in this world your ISKCON goes on, and for all its supposed faults it will always go on whatever the fault finders may say to the contrary. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Your most fallen disciple,

Haridāsa Ṭhākura Dāsa.

Jīvananda Dāsa Vanacārī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my most humble obeisances on this blessed day of your transcendental appearance.

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am so thankful that you have given me your causeless mercy. I know that I am not able at this point to fully appreciate your mercy upon me but I pray that someday I may do so.

As the years go by I am becoming more and more aware of your greatness and your merciful nature. You, due to your surrender to *guru* and Kṛṣṇa, gave up everything to come to this Western world to save the fallen conditioned souls like me. Although I have no qualification whatsoever, you have given me an opportunity to serve the Supreme Lord by serving you. Although I can never repay you for your causeless mercy I pray that I may spend the rest of eternity serving your lotus feet.

You are so merciful that you have made it quite clear what your desires are and how to serve you. You have kindly told us again and again in your spoken words as well as your books what your mission is and what you would like us to do. You have given us the example to follow.

It is clear that your mission is the same as that of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu in that you have come to save all living entities in this material world and take us back home, back to Godhead. Therefore I pray to you that I may be a part of your mission and have no other desires other than that.

You have spoken and written the words necessary to save the entire world when taken seriously by those that hear them. My only desire is that I may spread your transcendental words to as many souls as possible as well as help them to put your instructions into practice in their lives. I ask that you allow me and empower me to touch the hearts of the unfortunate fallen souls by speaking your divine words as you would have me do.

I know that in order to truly praise you and show my love for you that I should do so by following your example and conveying your words to as many living entities as possible. Your divine words are like the words of an angel who has come to save the world. I need nothing else to assist you than to always be absorbed in your words and to spread them to everyone.

Please accept this humble poem offering on this most auspicious day of your appearance.

The Words of an Angel

An offering to His Divine Grace
Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Losing sight of God and attracted by glitter
My life was once meaningless and tasted so bitter

Simply involved in struggle and unable to cope
Your words gave my life meaning and filled it with hope

Śrīla Prabhupāda you are the Angel to Kṛṣṇa so dear
That spoke soul healing words into my unworthy ear

And anyone can escape *māyā*'s treacherous hooks
By the words you have put into your transcendental books

Our souls can be saved from Yamarāja's court
If we simply take to heart your Bhaktivedanta purports

You have changed my life in unlimited ways
Please let me distribute your words for the rest of my days

So this world let me travel and continue to roam
Spreading your glories on my way back home

When the words of an Angel fall on our ear
They remove all doubts and take away our fear

So for those swimming in ignorance with nothing quite clear
I pray the words of an Angel might fall on their ear

Your most unworthy disciple and eternal servant,

Jīvānanda Dāsa Vanacārī

Kośarūpā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances prostrated at your lotus feet.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for coming to this world to deliver us. After millions of years of wandering throughout untold planets in uncountable species of life, that we were in the right place at the right time to have your association and accept your shelter is incomprehensible. Becoming the recipients of your causeless mercy has been the turning point in our very long sojourn in this material world. You have indeed made our good fortune.

By your grace we have the opportunity to perfect ourselves in this life through devotional service, and be catapulted to Goloka Vṛndāvana, reinstated as servants of the servants of the Lord.

I am very small, with so many frailties and disqualifications. Like a child who desires to grasp the moon, I stand here at the shore of your mercy, praying for guidance and hoping my endeavors in devotional service please you.

In the eighth canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* you write, “Bṛhaspati

informed Indra that Bali Mahārāja’s prowess was not his own but that of his exalted *guru*, Śukrācārya. We sing in our daily prayers, *yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo yasyā prasādān na gatiḥ kuto ’pi*. 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 8.15.29 Purport]

Please empower me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to serve you and your mission with love and devotion. Please bless me with enthusiasm to share the gift of transcendental knowledge and the holy name with others.

Your eternal servant,

Kośarūpā Devī Dāsī

Satyavatī Devī Dāsī

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have unflinching faith in, HDG Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī and Lord Kṛṣṇa and unalloyed devotion to Them. You are the possessor of all *anubhāvas*.

“The *anubhāvas* or characteristics of a person who has developed the bud of *bhāva* are as follows: tolerance, no wasting time, detachment from enjoyment, pridelessness, confidence in the Lord’s mercy, longing for the Lord, taste for chanting the name of the Lord, attachment to discussing about the Lord’s qualities, and attachment to living in the abode of the Lord”. (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*).

In spite of having a high position, you remain humble. Though the crest jewel among the *vraja-vāsīs*, you went out to the Western countries and offered respects to the meat-eaters. (Thus, by giving initiation to us the most fallen).

“Faith in the words of the spiritual master and in the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the secret of success”. You said. I bow to have faith by practicing the five *āṅgas* of *bhakti*.

1. The power of serving the Deity – by experiencing the sweetness

of the Lord's form one will consider everything else to be insignificant.

2. The power of hearing *Bhāgavatam* – by hearing the most auspicious goals of *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa* one develops *ruci*.

3. The power of association with the pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa – by such one's consciousness dwells in the indescribable Śyāmasundara who has appeared in our heart.

4. The power of chanting the name of the Lord – by giving up all external objects our heart has become completely blissful.

5. The power of residing in a holy place – Śrīla Prabhupāda you opened the door for us to enter Mathurā, Māyāpur, Purī, Varṣāṇā, Vṛndāvana.

The other day a new devotee asked what it was like to have met you face to face? How can I describe such a good fortune? You are my all and all, my spiritual master, my well-wisher, neither one had showed such love and compassion for the fallen souls of the Western countries nor, one could ever pay such debt. I responded; “Let me tell you about Him, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupādaī *brahmāṇḍa brahmite... bhāgyavān jīva... guru-kṛṣṇa*

Your servant,

Satyavatī Devī Dāsī

Annadā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances on this day of your divine appearance.

You have given each of us an ongoing invitation to regain our life of pure devotional service in your association and under your guidance.

I treasure this more than anything in the world. I want to be strong in service to you. I want to understand your instructions and apply them without deviation. Your desire for this planet is that we all learn to love Śrī Kṛṣṇa, know Him, and serve Him. That means to learn to love Your Divine Grace, know you and serve you. The disease of impersonal-ism and voidism has afflicted the soul of society like a cancer, and by your delivering the holy names and process of pure devotional service, we can be healed.

Time is of the essence, and daily we can see how Lord Caitanya's Mission is pushing forward by your compassionate energy in spite of all our shortcomings.

We see the younger and newcomer generation spontaneously enthused, energized and purified by your Divine association. All who come in contact with you seek further involvement and association with you and your transcendental movement. You are aware of everything directly or indirectly within your movement; and within this movement we look to you and always will for direction and rectification. You live forever, and the follower lives with you. This is our solace, redemption and impetus in all we undertake to try to please you.

I pray that I can talk less and do more for you. My being is fully dependent on your mercy. There is much to be done for your mission, and I beg you to empower me to be simple, sincere, honest and pure in your service, in spite of all odds.

I pray to be forever happy in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and to be able to spread that happiness. I pray to be able to always chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and be happy.

You once asked me how the Paris temple was doing and I replied that it was very dynamic. You were pleased and said, "yes the temples should always be dynamic with preaching".

Wherever your preaching spirit is, the devotees automatically are surcharged with the dynamic bliss of preaching pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I pray that this dynamic spirit increase more and more, without hindrance; and that the happiness and wellbeing of the inhabitants of, at least, this planet Earth, where we are all attempting to preach, will increase without bounds, as they taste the fruits of Lord Caitanya's foremost preacher's mercy. All Glories to you Śrī

la Prabhupāda.

Your lowly daughter and disciple,

Annadā Devī Dāsī

Bhuvaneśvara Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you.

You said, Māyāpur was your place of worship, Bombay was your office and Vṛndāvana was your home.

When you were given the land for the Vṛndāvana temple, it was far away from the town. You were not worried because you could see that in the future this would be a flourishing area. Now it has become a reality. Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir is visited daily by many thousands of people. Our guest house is always full. Everyone will agree that the Deity worship is going on very wonderfully. Book distribution is ever increasing. The daily scores are astounding. Every single day booming *kīrtanas* are performed.

To fulfill your desire, some of the major aspects of Kṛṣṇa consciousness can be seen on a ground scale here at Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir. Masses of people from all walks of life are happy to visit the temple. They get to see the Deities, take *prasādam*, purchase books and hear the astounding *kīrtanas*. This is all due to your mercy and the mercy of your Guru Mahārāja. Many people from the educated classes are taking to the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Other spiritual groups are surprised to see so many people wearing tilaka, neck beads and śikhā. These are the signs of a Vaiṣṇava. You did not care for the feeble minded attitude of the smārta-brāhmaṇas who claim that everything depends on birth. You tried to fulfill the desire of Lord Caitanya that the holy name would be spread to every town and village throughout the world.

You always remain with us in your vānī in the form of your books and in your samādhi. We can easily pray and offer obeisances to

you here every day.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for everything you have given us.

May we try our best to always stay fixed at your lotus feet by following your instructions sincerely.

Your humble servant,

Bhuvaneśvara Dāsa

Jaganīya Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances

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

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

Thank you very much to allow me to offer some words in this very special day of your Vyāsa-pūjā.

I am a widow for many years, but somehow by your causeless mercy, I am keeping you within my heart. I try to come to the temple as much as possible and to the main festivals and help wherever the circumstances allow me. I have many daughters and grandchildren, and by your mercy they keep in touch with your movement and the devotees.

So please let me increase my dedication and devotion to your feet that someday I will be fully dedicated to serving Your Divine Grace, along with the big family that I have.

Your aspiring servant,

Jaganīya Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your glorious lotus feet as I beg our humble seats at those feet which are non-different from Viṣṇupāda or abode of Viṣṇu, Vaikuṅṭha. On this earth you are the most dear to Kṛṣṇa because you gave every single breath to spread His glories.

We witnessed you were the humblest of the humble. The only pride you ever took was that you were sārasvata, the humble follower of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

By the mercy of your spiritual master you were able to give the greatest contribution to the history of the devotional line and scriptural authenticity by proving through factual demonstration that what is given in the scriptures is absolute and correct .

For example, in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Madhya-līlā, while giving instructions to Sanātana Gosvāmī, Lord Caitanya explains the process of *bhakti* as *abhidheya*, the process by which Kṛṣṇa – who is *sambandha* – is obtained.

There, the Lord says there are two kinds of jīvas – *nitya-mukta* (sometimes called *nitya-siddha*), and *nitya-baddha*. *Mukta* enjoy with Kṛṣṇa in His abode, the transcendental happiness of hearing, chanting, and serving the Lord in His pastimes. The *baddha* or conditioned jīva is suffering the pangs of misery due to forgetful of Kṛṣṇa. The Lord said, in *Cc Madhya-līlā* 22: 14, 15

*kāma-krodhera Dāsa hañā tāra lāthi khāya
bhramite bhramite yadi sādhu-vaidyā pāya
tāñra upadeśa-mantre piśācī palāya
kṛṣṇa-bhakti pāya, tabe kṛṣṇa-nikaṭa yāya*

“In this way the conditioned soul becomes the servant of lusty desires, and when these are not fulfilled, he becomes the servant of anger and continues to be kicked by the external energy, *māyā*. Wandering and wandering throughout the universe, he may by chance get the association of a devotee physician, whose instructions and hymns make the witch of the external energy flee.

The conditioned soul thus gets into touch with devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and in this way he can approach nearer and nearer to the Lord.

How true we were totally lost in the abyss of ignorance, and we met *sādhū-vaidyā*, Your Divine Grace and you gave us the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā mantras* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam mantras*, and by the strength of these, *māyā piśācī* (the witch of the external energy) started fleeing.

Most of us were absorbed in the illusory net of *vikarma* (prohibited karma). We didn't even know what is *jñāna* and yoga, but by kindly giving us your transcendental books, you so kindly and patiently explained what is *karma*, what is *jñāna*, what is yoga and what is *bhakti*. Then on the basis of scriptures, showed how bhakti is superior and much more easy and practical and blissful to perform. Again Lord Caitanya tells Sanātana:

*ei saba sādhanera ati tuccha bala
kṛṣṇa-bhakti vinā tāhā dite nāre phala*

“Without devotional service, all other methods for spiritual self-realization are weak and insignificant. Unless one comes to the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, *jñāna* and yoga cannot give the desired results.”

Madhya 22.19:

*naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitam
na śobhate jñānam alam nirañjanam
kutaḥ punaḥ śaśvad abhadram īśvare
na cārpitam karma yad apy akāraṇam*

“When pure knowledge is beyond all material affinity but is not dedicated to the Supreme Personality of Godhead [Kṛṣṇa], it does not appear very beautiful, although it is knowledge without a material tinge. What, then, is the use of fruitive activities—which are naturally painful from the beginning and transient by nature—if they are not utilized for the devotional service of the Lord? How can they be very attractive?”

PURPORT

This is a quotation from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.12). Even after writing many Vedic literatures, Vyāsadeva felt very morose. Therefore his spiritual master, Nārada, told him that he could be happy by writing about the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Up to that time, Śrīla Vyāsadeva had written the *karmakāṇḍa* and *jñāna-kāṇḍa* sections of the Vedas, but he had not written about *upāsana-kāṇḍa*, or *bhakti*. Thus his spiritual master, Nārada, chastised him and advised him to write about the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore Vyāsadeva began writing.

*tapasvino dāna-parā yaśasvino
manasvino mantra-vidaḥ su-maṅgalāḥ
knemaṁ na vindanti vinā yad-arpaṇaṁ
tasmai subhadra-śravase namo namaḥ*

“Those who perform severe austerities and penances, those who give away all their possessions out of charity, those who are very famous for their auspicious activity, those who are engaged in meditation and mental speculation, and even those who are very expert in reciting the Vedic *mantras* are not able to obtain any auspicious results, although they are engaged in auspicious activities, if they do not dedicate their activities to the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I therefore repeatedly offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose glories are always auspicious.’

Even though born in India, we didn’t understand the complexities of spiritual life full of such seemingly spiritual looking activities. You Śrīla Prabhupāda being empowered by Lord Caitanya could explain such complex things to our dull brain so easily that in twelve short years, thousands and lakhs of people in hundreds of countries have started practicing the highest process of *bhakti-yoga* and they became preachers of the same.

What to speak of us? As explained by Śrīla Prabhupāda in his purport above, even Lord Vyāsadeva, the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, a clairvoyent sage didn’t quite understand it until his *mahā-bhāgavata* guru Nāradaḥ explained it to him. Vyāsadeva is addressed by Nārada as *mahā-bhāga*, greatly fortunate, *amogha-dṛk*, whose vision is infallible (who can see past, present and future) *śuci-śravā* and *satya-rata*, who has not just heard, but compiled all holy sound vibration, and most truthful person.

Nāradajī told him “Even though you are the most learned person in the entire universe, you are feeling unfulfilled, anxious because you have not described pure bhakti-yoga free from *karma*, *jñāna* and yoga .That is why you feel something missing in the heart. After this meeting with Nārada, inspired by Nārada, Vyāsa compiled pure devotional scripture *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* which is the highest literature in the world.

Such a confidential, most exalted knowledge you were able to transmit to Kali-yuga’s most fallen creatures so expertly in such a short time, which surely proves Lord Kṛṣṇa personally empowered you without which it is simply not possible.

kali-kālera dharma—kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana
kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana

“The fundamental religious system in the Age of Kali is the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Unless empowered by Kṛṣṇa, one cannot propagate the *saṅkīrtana* movement.

Because of your selfless activity of so kindly awakening sleeping souls like us, you are glorified in all the scriptures as good as God:

sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvyata eva sadbhiḥ
kinto prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam

The spiritual master is to be honored as much as the Supreme Lord, because he is the most confidential servitor of the Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and followed by all authorities. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is a bona fide representative of Śrī Hari [Kṛṣṇa].

Such a powerful personality so kindly left your spiritual transcendental home, Vṛndāvana, and appeared in America because if you hadn’t, no *sādhū* would have ever gone there and they would be sleeping in hellish sleep for who knows how long.

All these statements below sing your glories. You provided practical demonstration for them

*bhavāpavargo bhramato yadā bhavej
janasya tarhy acyuta sat-samāgamaḥ
sat-saṅgamo yarhi tadaiva sad-gatau
parāvareṣe tvayi jāyate ratiḥ*

“O my Lord! O infallible Supreme Person! When a person wandering throughout the universes becomes eligible for liberation from material existence, he gets an opportunity to associate with devotees. When he associates with devotees, his attraction for You is awakened. You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead—the highest goal of the topmost devotees and the Lord of the universe.”

*kṛṣṇa yadi kṛpā kare kona bhāgyavāne
guru-antaryāmi-rūpe śikhāya āpane*

“Kṛṣṇa is situated in everyone’s heart as the *caitya-guru*, the spiritual master within. When He is kind to some fortunate conditioned soul, He personally gives him lessons so he can progress in devotional service, instructing the person as the Supersoul within and the spiritual master without.

Madhya 22.49:

*sādhu-saṅge kṛṣṇa-bhaktye śraddhā yadi haya
bhakti-phala ‘prema’ haya, saṁsāra yāya kṣaya*

“By associating with a devotee, one awakens his faith in devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. Because of devotional service, one’s dormant love for Kṛṣṇa awakens, and thus one’s material, conditioned existence comes to an end.

*mahat-kṛpā vinā kona karme ‘bhakti’ naya
kṛṣṇa-bhakti dūre rahu, saṁsāra nahe kṣaya*

“Unless one is favored by a pure devotee, one cannot attain the platform of devotional service. To say nothing of *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, one cannot even be relieved from the bondage of material existence.

PURPORT

Pious activities bring about material opulence, but one cannot acquire devotional service by any amount of material pious activity—not by giving charity, opening big hospitals and schools or working

philanthropically. Devotional service can be attained only by the mercy of a pure devotee.

Without a pure devotee's mercy, one cannot even escape the bondage of material existence. The word mahat in this verse means "a pure devotee," as Lord Kṛṣṇa confirms in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.13):

*mahātmānas tu mām pārtha daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ
bhajanty ananya-manaso jñātvā bhūtādīm avyayam*

"O son of Pṛthā, those who are not deluded, the great souls, are under the protection of the divine nature. They are fully engaged in devotional service because they know Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible."

One has to associate with such a *mahātmā*, who has accepted Kṛṣṇa as the supreme source of the entire creation. Without being a *mahātmā*, one cannot understand Kṛṣṇa's absolute position. A *mahātmā* is rare and transcendental, and he is a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Foolish people consider Kṛṣṇa a human being, and they consider Lord Kṛṣṇa's pure devotee an ordinary human being also. Whatever one may be, one must take shelter at the lotus feet of a devotee mahātmā and treat him as the most exalted well-wisher of all human society. We should take shelter of such a *mahātmā* and ask for his causeless mercy. Only by his benediction can one be relieved from attachment to the materialistic way of life. When one is thus relieved, he can engage in the Lord's transcendental loving service through the mercy of the *mahātmā*.

Madhya 22.52:

*rahūgaṇaitat tapasā na yāti
na cejyayā nirvapaṇād grhād vā
na cchandasā naiva jalāgni-sūryair
vinā mahat-pāda-rajo-'bhīṣekam*

"O King Rahūgaṇa, without taking upon one's head the dust from the lotus feet of a pure devotee (a *mahājana* or *mahātmā*), one cannot attain devotional service. Devotional service is not possible to attain simply by undergoing severe austerities and penances, by gorgeously worshiping the Deity, or by strictly following the rules and regulations of the *sannyāsa* or *grhastha* order; nor is it attained by studying the Vedas, submerging oneself in water, or exposing

oneself to fire or scorching sunlight.’

*naiṣāṁ matis tāvad urukramāṅghrim
spṛśaty anarthāpagamo yad-arthaḥ
mahīyasāṁ pāda-rajo-’bhiṣekaṁ
niṣkiñcanānām na vṛñīta yāvat*

“Unless human society accepts the dust of the lotus feet of great mahātmās—devotees who have nothing to do with material possessions—mankind cannot turn its attention to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Those lotus feet vanquish all the unwanted, miserable conditions of material life.’

*’sādhu-saṅga’, ’sādhu-saṅga’—sarva-śāstre kaya
lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya*

“The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment’s association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.

PURPORT

According to astronomical calculations, a *lava* is one eleventh of a second.

Madhya 22.55:

*tulayāma lavenāpi
na svargaṁ nāpunar-bhavam
bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya
martyānām kim utāśinaḥ*

“The value of a moment’s association with a devotee of the Lord cannot be compared even to the attainment of the heavenly planets or liberation from matter, and what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which is for those who are meant for death.’

All the above statements prove that it is not accidental that this great Movement started because you reached right the place at the right time and accidentally you were successful. But your success is part of the scientific spiritual principles. Today, or any day you can go to any planet anywhere and the result will be the same – deliverance of millions of souls.

We are so fortunate that we have taken shelter of your fearless lotus feet. Even though we are very neophyte fallen degraded creatures, we have hope that if we keep your lotus feet in our hearts, we will join you again in your *saṅkīrtana* movement again. Please keep us in your shade.

Forgotten Kṛṣṇa
We fallen souls.

Paying most heavy
The illusion's toll.

Darkness around
All untrace,

The only hope
His Divine Grace.

Thank you very much.

Your servant

Yaśomatī-nandana Dāsa
ISKCON Ahmedabad

Ravīndra Svarūpa Dāsa

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

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

The Founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, who is the indwelling animating spirit of our institution and the ever-gracious guide for all members who strive resolutely to perfect their *vāṇī-sevā* to him—that personage blessed us with this instruction during his last days: “Your love for me will be shown by how much you cooperate to keep this institution together after I am gone.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke often on the theme of cooperation. The English word is derived from a Latin verb meaning “to work together with,” but a study of Prabhupāda’s use of this term reveals it to be for him—and us—a concept enriched with profound spiritual import. In a lecture delivered in Seattle in 1968, Śrīla Prabhupāda conveyed this import with characteristic simplicity: “When you do something in cooperation with the Lord, that is called *bhakti*.” Adding a little fine tuning to it—for even those who refuse cooperation with the Lord remain subject to His control—Prabhupāda said, “So automatic [i.e., voluntary] cooperation is *bhakti*, and forced cooperation is *karma*.”

Cooperation is the vital principle of healthy social relationships, and as such it has its highest application in divinity. Since God is supremely personal (“the Supreme Personality of Godhead”), then He is supremely social, for personhood becomes manifest only in relationships with other persons. For that reason, as Prabhupāda said many times, “Kṛṣṇa is never alone.” His devotees become part of his own identity: “When we speak of Kṛṣṇa, ‘Kṛṣṇa’ means Kṛṣṇa with His devotees,” Prabhupāda said in Los Angeles in 1969. He explained:

Kṛṣṇa is never alone. Kṛṣṇa is with Rādhārāṇī. Rādhārāṇī is with the gopīs. And Kṛṣṇa is with the cowherd boys. We are not impersonalists. We do not see Kṛṣṇa alone. Similarly, “Kṛṣṇa” means with Kṛṣṇa’s devotees.

Although the Supreme is one without a second—in other words, absolute—as the supreme person, He is also supremely relative, entering into relationships with many, many devotees by means of His multitudinous divine forms. Herein lies his inconceivable greatness: Not only is he supremely absolute, but he is at the same time supremely relative. (In fact, we know his relatives by name—Yaśodā, Nanda, Balarāma, etc.) In such a way, a transcendent relativity is manifest as a society of the utmost cooperation, and through the conduct of those relationships the Lord eternally increases in beauty, opulence, bliss, and knowledge.

The highest calling of the self-alienating living entities is to become full members of that society. *Bhakti-yoga* is the practice by which we become prepared to join it. Cultivating our aspiration, we await that day we may be so favored as to be invited in.

We can therefore understand salvation as ultimate social integration. Conversely, damnation is ultimate isolation.

By cooperation, by *bhakti*, we become increasingly integrated into the divine society, closer to Kṛṣṇa and closer to His associates, and at the same time we try to bring others with us.

“And this is the highest yoga, ” Śrīla Prabhupāda said in 1968 in San Francisco.

If you push on this movement of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then you’ll be performing the highest type of yoga. Don’t be misled by so-called ‘yogas.’ This is yoga. Yoga means cooperation, cooperation with the Supreme.

Here in this age of dissension we are to cultivate the *yuga-dharma*, which is the yoga of cooperation. Making the satisfaction of Śrīla Prabhupāda our common and unifying aim, we become closer to each other and, by the self-same effort, to Śrīla Prabhupāda, to the Six Gosvāmīs, to Śrī Caitanya, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa...

Prabhupāda therefore put much stress on this principle of cooperation. When internal dissension threatened his own organization in 1973, he wrote to Kirtanānanda Swami:

Now this displeasing of godbrothers [within ISKCON] has already begun and gives me too much agitation in my mind. Our Gaudiya Math people fought with one another after the demise of Guru Maharaja but my disciples have already begun fighting even in my presence. So I am greatly concerned about it.

He followed with a now famous disquisition on the principle of unity in diversity:

Material nature means dissension and disagreement, especially in this Kali-yuga. But, for this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement its success will depend on agreement, even though there are varieties of engagements. In the material world there are varieties, but there is no agreement. In the spiritual world there are varieties, but there is agreement. That is the difference. The materialist without being able to adjust the varieties and the disagreements makes every-

thing zero. They cannot come into agreement with varieties, but if we keep Kṛṣṇa in the center, then there will be agreement in varieties. This is called unity in diversity. I am therefore suggesting that all our men meet in Mayapur every year during the birth anniversary of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. With all GBC and senior men present we should discuss how to make unity in diversity. But, if we fight on account of diversity, then it is simply the material platform. Please try to maintain the philosophy of unity in diversity. That will make our movement successful.

The principle of cooperation, then, is the driving force of unity in diversity. And the principle of unity in diversity, affirmed Śrīla Prabhupāda, is “philosophically known as *acintya-bhedābheda*—simultaneous oneness and difference,” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 10.113, purport)

In the aesthetic realm as well, beauty is unity in diversity. And the greater the diversity, the greater the value of the unity. (The divine society maximizes both.) Prabhupāda employed an aesthetic example to explain the potency of cooperation in *saṅkīrtana*. Speaking to devotees in Māyāpur in 1976, during a time of dissension, he stressed how cooperation is the essence of our movement. He explained that Lord Caitanya Himself is pleading for our help, our cooperation, and similarly he, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is making the same plea:

You are cooperating; therefore I am getting the credit. Otherwise alone what could I do? *Ekākī āmāra nāhi pāya bolo*. Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself wanted our cooperation. He is God, Kṛṣṇa. And therefore cooperation is very important thing. Nobody should think that “I have got so great ability, I can do.” No. It is simply by cooperation we can do very big thing. “United we stand; divided we fall.”

Saṅkīrtana, Prabhupāda went on to explain, means that many varieties of people are coming together:

That is Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mission, combined together. All nations, all persons, they should combine together. There is hope in our society, combination. There are Hindus; there are Muslims; there are Christians; there are black, white. Combine them.

And then he gives the example of a bouquet assembled from diverse flowers. When the individual flowers are all thus unified, each becomes enhanced in its own beauty—even if by itself it had not seemed so attractive.

Each and every flower take alone—it is not beautiful. But when they are combined together, it looks very beautiful. It is attractive. And that is wanted. Because from the spiritual platform we are all working. *Paṇḍitāḥ sama-darsīnaḥ*. Spiritual platform, every one of us, we are servant of Kṛṣṇa.

Here, then, through the principle of cooperation, the highest principle of divinity is made manifest in this world by Lord Caitanya as the most exalted antidote to this most debased age of dissension.

Śrīla Prabhupāda did not want our individuality suppressed. Quite the opposite. Yet when there is individuality there will inevitably be disagreement. Acknowledging this, he coached us in ways to repair any breaches. When the *Bhāgavatam* relates the moving reconciliation between Mahārāja Pṛthu and Indradeva after their fierce conflict, Prabhupāda remarks (in his purport to *Bhāgavatam* 4.20.18):

Both King Indra and Mahārāja Pṛthu were envious and angry with each other, but since both of them were Vaiṣṇavas, or servants of Lord Viṣṇu, it was their duty to adjust the cause of their envy. This is also a first-class example of cooperative behavior between Vaiṣṇavas. In the present days, however, because people are not Vaiṣṇavas, they fight perpetually among one another and are vanquished without finishing the mission of human life. There is a great need to propagate the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in the world so that even though people sometimes become angry and malicious toward one another, because of their being Kṛṣṇa conscious such rivalry, competition, and envy can be adjusted without difficulty.

Bhakti is the yoga of cooperation; it is social yoga. It is to be cultivated in and exemplified by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. To be sure, we are a highly diverse group, with many members of distinct individuality, sometimes richly ornamented with idiosyncrasies. Yet as we become unified through our love for Śrīla Prabhupāda, we will realize the blessings of this yoga. Of course, as yoga, our discipline requires some austerity, as de-

scribed by Caitanya Mahāprabhu. We must aspire after the humility of the grass underfoot by not seeking or welcoming any praise, honor, or recognition from others. In *bhakti*, the way up is the way down. We must seek the forbearance and magnanimity of the fruit tree by offering to others all respect and appreciation. We wish to remain undisturbed even when there is every reason to be disturbed. In this way, we will remain fixed and steady in our practice and so become increasingly closer to each other, to Śrīla Prabhupāda, and through him to all the previous ācāryas and saints, and to Śrī Kṛṣṇa with his beloved associates. Moreover, with the powers and virtues thus acquired, we will transform ourselves, as individuals and as a society, so as to be able to encompass the entire world within the embrace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, fulfilling the destiny seeded within the name “International Society for Krishna Consciousness.”

Ravīndra Svarūpa Dāsa

Arjuna Dāsa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my respectful obeisances unto your lotus feet. You are very dear to Lord Gaurāṅga, having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

As I sit here alone with my thoughts and reflections, it is wonderful to observe, that after so many years, your mercy and glories are still burgeoning all over the world, with no end in sight. This appreciation and amazement has dawned in my heart. And really, it's only the beginning. All glories to Your Divine Grace and spiritual *śakti*.

It was always a known miracle how, at an advanced age, you sparked such an amazing worldwide movement which spread like wildfire, against all odds! Historians will take note. We appreciated this wonderful, surreal fact years ago, even as it was unfolding.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you left India alone, on the now famous Jaladuta, in a humble donated compartment, carrying a few boxes of the sacred texts of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, painstakingly translated and printed by your good self. You carried a bag of oatmeal, some rupees, suffered heart irregularities, sea sickness, deep separation

from Vraja, and not knowing whether to turn left or right after docking. There may have been only some vague idea of who would meet Your Divine Grace, at this destination! Your place of stay was also completely unknown. That was just the beginning of an amazing spiritual journey, and revolution you planted in the hearts of practically uncivilized Westerners!

Keeping your diary, and writing some beautiful heart wrenching prayers that are now part of your transcendental legacy, was a prophetic, devotional and historical undertaking, 'a stroke of genius', even under such austere conditions. We are so very grateful for your 'poems, prayers and promises', Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Planting the profound original yoga and *kīrtana* on western soil, handed down from Śrī Caitanya, the Six Gosvāmīs, and all their divine followers, is amazing in itself! Even I, a foolish Lower East Side kid, got to witness the devotees chanting up and down Eighth Street, in New York's West Village from 1966.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you started the distribution of sanctified food-stuffs, even if it was just one cut up apple, wherever you travelled. Your followers were trained in the art of cooking and offering. You took the *kīrtana* to the streets, and delivered the holy names fearlessly to one and all!

Presently, yoga and *kīrtana* is flourishing all over the world, it is immensely popular! You, Śrīla Prabhupāda are the original '*kīrtana-aeer*'. And oh, the Sunday love feasts! Happy hippies were attracted, and there was festival after festival.

You showed us the true meaning of success, devotion, worship, and grace. What an astonishing display of *guru-niṣṭhā*, and such strong faith in Kṛṣṇa's names. You even made *sannyāsīs* out of the Westerners, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and brought them and an entourage to India, to re-attract what is now proving to be thousands of Indians back to their Vedic roots. Many temples, and the incredible legends of Māyāpur, Juhu, and Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temples were born!

Visiting Russia for only a few days with pure desire, we see now the wonderful flood of chanting the holy names throughout that region, and the incredible enthusiasm of the Russian people.

Even after severe heart issues, and going back to India, after which

most thought you may never return, you came back with more determination than ever.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you were a legend in your own time, and your glories are growing far and wide, globally and universally. Even China is now opening up, with the Chinese *Bhagavad-gītā* in circulation! Such is the power and the desire of the pure devotee!

As the years have gone by, finding myself much older, your empowered global spiritual effort is even more astounding and impressive than ever before! My energy seems so anaemic and impotent at this age already, so diminished by over gratifying the senses. I doubt I will even be able to manage my own mind, what to speak of performing any devotional act. And you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, would not even have begun your journey for another eight years, according to my present age! It is absolutely so remarkable how empowered you are to have accomplished such wondrous activities at such an advanced age, and within about twelve years!

You were not finding very much result in 1965, and were even considering returning to your sacred home in Vraja. But in 1966, when ISKCON got incorporated, things really got cooking! Thermo-nuclear dynamic spiritual energy began flowing. Tirelessly, you preached and travelled, defending your loving disciples from certain criticisms. Gallantly and boldly, like a lion, preaching against the atheists, envious critics and impersonalists, putting them in their place, and protecting the honor of our *Gauḍīya-Brahmā-sampradāya*.

Countless accomplishments, recording Hare Kṛṣṇa *kīrtanas* and *bhajanās*, heard around the world. You led the most ecstatic *kīrtanas* ever Śrīla Prabhupāda, they shook the planet! I witnessed tears in your lotus eyes, intense trembling in your body, and the most beautiful smiles! Sometimes you went into spiritual trance. When you sang *Jaya Rādhā-Mādhava* before classes, you went so deep into ecstasy, transported to the spiritual world, taking us with you! *Kṛṣṇa-prema* was in the air!

Hands on management, (lower, middle, and upper), training the untrainable, so much attention to detail in inspiring young western boys and girls to become pure Vaiṣṇavas. What tolerance and patience you displayed! Even your *Bhagavad-gītā* manuscript was stolen, and a madman was in your midst! Sometimes there was rebellion, ups and downs, victories and temporary defeats.

Still, amazing temples were built and or purchased. There were festivals, and theatre groups, what to speak of the inauguration of Ratha-yātrās in the West, even as some more health issues came upon Your Divine Grace!

There was conversation after conversation, translating work, realized purports, editing and book publishing going on. Letter after letter, signature after signature, morning walks and instructive talks. Countless morning and evening classes. You met so many dignitaries, important persons around the world, prolific writings manifested, miraculous BBT book productions (even noted in the Encyclopaedia Britannica). You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, inspired the printing of your books and distributing them all over the world in very novel ways. BTG magazine was printed and sold, the Spiritual Sky business was booming, BBT warehouse operations, in which I had the honor to do some meager *sevā*, shipping out container after container of your transcendental book bombs all over North America, distributing them 'profusely' as you had instructed me! Plus, letter correspondence, and dipping incense... ..all this was going on inside the BBT owned structure in Culver City.

Large and small scale global preaching programs were organized, Indian pandal programs in which tens of thousands attended, with book/ *prasādam* distribution! Trouble shooting constantly! Training servants, changing servants and secretaries! Dispatching devotees to different parts of the world. GBC was organized, undone and again redone!

Gorgeous Deities were installed, and wonderful worship was established. Sanctified food distribution all over the world. Ecstatic airport adverts, with joyful/tearful arrival addresses, heart wrenching departures! Śrīla Prabhupāda, you exhibited joy, tears, laughter, gladness, gravity, disappointment, satisfaction, kindness, and love. The Hare Kṛṣṇa explosion emanating from your divine loving grace!

Practically until your last hours with us, weakened and laying in bed, having not eaten for weeks, you were absorbed in translating the *Brahmā-vimohana-līlā* (Brahmā's bewilderment, 10th Canto).

Śrīla Prabhupāda, Your Divine Grace, you are the personification of 'transcendental', showering your blessings upon all mankind! Absolutely unheard of accomplishments, and ever expanding pres-

ently, even without your physical presence!

How I have come to appreciate what you have given and created all over this planet, the older I get! You are giving so much mercy to hundreds and thousands of lost *jīvas*, such as myself. Oh savior of the whole human race, Śrīla Prabhupāda! What unfathomable loving grace! Can it be anything less? I bow down to your lotus feet with great awe and reverence again and again. Oh master be merciful unto me, give me the shade of your lotus feet, your fame is spreading all over the three worlds, help me take shelter of your lotus feet.

(Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura)

I hope to appreciate more and more, my accomplished godbrothers, godsisters, nephews, nieces, the youth, other ISKCON well-wishers and life members absorbed in your service. May all the envy and criticisms that I may feel toward any of these advanced souls be removed from my heart, and may I be able to do some insignificant *sevā* to please them.

It's going to take some 'amazing grace' for me to get it right, and get back into the *sādhu-saṅga*, as the curtain is closing! I have very little hope of accomplishing very much in your *sevā*, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but maybe I can begin with loving appreciation of those in the fire of devotional service to Your Divine Grace.

Seems I am falling in and out of grace since time immemorial. I have simply abused all the precious time given since initiation, and I am short circuiting with fear presently, in knowing that time is slipping quickly into the future.

Have my offenses and nonchalant nature in devotional service gone too far? I shiver a bit to think about this. I occupy the mode of ignorance, and am so deeply sunk in this tamasic state, and worldly ego, that I still cannot snap out of this major indolence! Is there any chance whatsoever that I can melt the heart of at least one great soul, so that some mercy can flow my way once again?

Only by your grace and the mercy of your sincere followers do I stand any hope or chance to go forward. I find no determination nor inspiration in this hopeless state, only the fear that I abused this opportunity that you gave me years ago, and it may never pass

my way again. I lament this condition. I even lament this ‘thinking of myself’ meditation. ‘I, me, mine’, mentality. I pray to cast off this self-absorbed ignorance and become self-forgetful.

Make me an instrument in your will. I hope to serve, and not want to be served. I hope to inspire hope where there is none. I hope to give and not want to be given. I hope to love without looking for love. (St. Francis).

Arjuna Dāsa is longing for some inspiration to serve, even in the smallest way at your lotus feet. Might something come my wretched way soon Śrīla Prabhupāda? I will never deserve this occurrence; it would only be out of your extraordinary divine grace. This fallen soul is simply a damned mercy case. So covered am I, that there is no feeling compassion, mercy, tenderness, no tears, no weeping, what to speak of love toward any other soul, nor for the holy name – I am just selfishly and hopelessly dedicated to my well-being.

Oh Śrīla Prabhupāda, oh Supreme Personality of the servitor of Godhead, oh world *ācārya*, with just one last breath and ounce of hope, I cry out with sincere feeling to please enter into your most compassionate service once again. Are these just hollow, shallow, dry words of present emotion? Let us see the morning after!

Presently Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am making some feeble effort in chanting *japa*, reading and passing out your transcendental books, hearing some *kathā* and *kīrtana*, associating slightly, bowing down, speaking a bit to others, who are lending a merciful ear to this mercy case, wandering in Vraja, taking *darśana*, praying, and hoping against hope.

Your aspiring servant,

Arjuna Dāsa
Dallas, Texas

